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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, February 9, 2016

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FARENTHOLD).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 9, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BLAKE FARENTHOLD to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair would now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FARENTHOLD) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your special blessing upon the Members of this people's House. They face difficult decisions in difficult times, with many forces and interests demanding their attention.

Enlighten the hearts of those who are faithful and tireless in securing equal justice under the law. Fulfill the hopes of those who long for peace and security for their children. Guide and protect all elected officials and all who choose to serve this Nation through public service.

Unite Your people and keep them focused on essentials that reflect Your kingdom, even in the midst of conflicting opinions, philosophical differences, and the contentiousness of an election season.

Bless us, O God, and be with us all this day and every day to come. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BABIN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MAKING GOVERNMENT WORK BETTER

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, our charge in Congress is to be very careful and frugal and honest with the people's money that they send via their hard-earned tax dollars.

Today we have an opportunity to make good on part of that with our commitment to making the government work better for the people it serves, control spending, and work at finally getting down the national debt.

The VA medical facility construction process is broken and highly in need of major reform. For example, in Colorado, the VA spent at least triple, probably quadruple, even quintuple, what it was expected to spend on the construction of a replacement hospital due to mismanagement and lack of accountability.

The GAO found in 2013 that the VA's four largest medical construction projects were experiencing significant delays and massive cost increases. In my district, the VA plans to build two replacement clinics, in Redding and in Chico, which the VA says will take 5 years.

In order to streamline and improve the VA's medical facility construction process, the House will vote on H.R. 3106 today, which is sponsored by Chairman JEFF MILLER of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

The bill includes commonsense reforms that will require the VA to use industry standards for medical facility construction projects and increase congressional oversight.

I am proud to support this bill and to continue to work to be accountable to the American people, especially our veterans, who need and deserve clear access, present access, and timely access to the health care they deserve.

FLINT, MICHIGAN, WATER CRISIS

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, the families and the children exposed to high levels of lead in my hometown of Flint deserve action by the people who did this to them.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

The State of Michigan—Governor Snyder's administration—created this public health emergency through their own inaction and by decisions that their appointed emergency manager made in the city of Flint, which has led to this crisis. They need to act in a manner equal to the gravity of this terrible situation.

The Federal Government can help as well. The President has already declared a state of emergency, but Congress can act, too. I have legislation that I introduced last week that is a comprehensive set of solutions that not only deals with the need to replace those lead service lines that are leaching lead into the water system in households, but also provides the kind of support for children and families to get through this crisis and give them, as individuals, and my community, as a community, a chance on a future.

Resources are needed, not just a get well card, not just an apology, but we need financial resources. The State needs to step up. I am asking this Congress to do so as well.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 8, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 8, 2016 at 3:26 p.m.:

That the Senate communicates S. Res. 364 (relative to the death of Marlow Cook).

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 9, 2016.

The Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 9, 2016 at 10:44 a.m.:

Appointments:

Washington's Farewell Address.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

THE BUDGET MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114-86)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

As I look back on the past seven years, I am inspired by America's progress—and I am more determined than ever to keep our country moving forward. When I took office, our Nation was in the midst of the worst recession since the Great Depression. The economy was shedding 800,000 jobs a month. The auto industry was on the brink of collapse and our manufacturing sector was in decline. Many families were struggling to pay their bills and make ends meet. Millions more saw their savings evaporate, even as retirement neared.

But thanks to the grit and determination of the American people, we rescued our economy from the depths of the recession, revitalized our auto industry, and laid down new rules to safeguard our economy from recklessness on Wall Street. We made the largest investment in clean energy in our history, and made health care reform a reality. And today, our economy is the strongest, most durable on Earth.

Our businesses have created more than 14 million jobs over 70 months, the longest streak of job growth on record. We have cut our unemployment rate in half. Our manufacturing sector has added nearly 900,000 jobs in the last six years—and our auto industry just had its best year of sales ever. We are less reliant on foreign oil than at any point in the previous four decades. Nearly 18 million people have gained health coverage under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), cutting the uninsured rate to a record low. Our children are graduating from high school at the highest rate ever. And we managed to accomplish all of this while dramatically cutting our deficits by almost three-quarters and setting our Nation on a more sustainable fiscal path. Together, we have brought America back.

Yet while it is important to take stock of our progress, this Budget is not about looking back at the road we have traveled. It is about looking forward. It is about making sure our economy works for everybody, not just those at the top. It is about choosing investments that not only make us stronger today, but also reflect the kind of country we aspire to be—the kind of country we want to pass on to our children and grandchildren. It is about answering the big questions that will define America and the world in the 21st Century.

My Budget makes critical investments while adhering to the bipartisan budget agreement I signed into law last fall, and it lifts sequestration in future years so that we continue to invest in our economic future and our national security. It also drives down deficits and maintains our fiscal progress through smart savings from health care, immigration, and tax reforms. And, it focuses on meeting our greatest challenges not only for the year ahead, but for decades to come.

First, by accelerating the pace of American innovation, we can create jobs and build the economy of the future while tackling our greatest challenges, including addressing climate change and finding new treatments—and cures—for devastating diseases.

The challenge of climate change will define the contours of this century more dramatically than any other. Last year was the hottest on record, surpassing the record set just a year before. Climate change is already causing damage, including longer, more severe droughts and dangerous floods, disruptions to our food and water supply, and threats to our health, our economy, and our security.

We have made great strides to foster a robust clean energy industry and move our economy away from energy sources that fuel climate change. In communities across the Nation, wind power is now cheaper than dirtier, conventional power, and solar power is saving Americans tens of millions of dollars a year on their energy bills. The solar industry employs more workers than the coal industry—in jobs that pay better than average.

Despite these advances, we can and must do more. Rather than shrinking from the challenge, America must foster the spirit of innovation to create jobs, build a climate-smart economy of the future, and protect the only planet we have. To speed our transition to an affordable, reliable, clean energy system, my Budget funds Mission Innovation, our landmark commitment to double clean energy research and development funding. It also calls for a 21st Century Clean Transportation initiative that would help to put hundreds of thousands of Americans to work modernizing our infrastructure to ease congestion and make it easier for businesses to bring goods to market through new technologies such as autonomous vehicles and high-speed rail, funded through a fee paid by oil companies. It proposes to modernize our business tax system to promote innovation and job creation. It invests in strategies to make our communities more resilient to floods, wildfires, and other effects of climate change. And, it protects and modernizes our water supply and preserves our natural landscapes. These investments, coupled with those in other cutting-edge technology sectors ranging from manufacturing to

space exploration, will drive new jobs, new industries, and a new understanding of the world around us.

Just as a commitment to innovation can accelerate our efforts to protect our planet and create a sustainable economy, it can also drive critical medical breakthroughs. The Budget supports a new “moonshot” to finally cure cancer, an effort that will be led by the Vice President and will channel resources, technology, and our collective knowledge to save lives and end this deadly disease. It also supports the Precision Medicine Initiative to accelerate the development of customized treatments that take into account a patient’s genes, environment, and lifestyle, as well as the BRAIN Initiative, which will dramatically increase our understanding of how the brain works.

Second, we must work to deliver a fair shot at opportunity for all, both because this reflects American values and because, in the 21st Century global economy, our competitiveness depends on tapping the full potential of every American. Even as we have rebounded from the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes, too many families struggle to reach the middle class and stay there, and too many kids face obstacles on the path to success.

Real opportunity begins with education. My Budget supports the ambitious goal that all children should have access to high-quality preschool, including kids from low-income families who too often enter kindergarten already behind. It also supports States and cities as they implement a new education law that will place all students on a path to graduate prepared for college and successful careers. The bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act sets high standards for our schools and students, ensures that States are held accountable for the success of all students, including those in the lowest performing schools, spurs innovation in education, helps schools recruit and support great teachers, and encourages States to reduce unnecessary testing. And because jobs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics are projected to grow faster than other jobs in the years ahead, the Budget makes critical investments in math and science. Through a new Computer Science for All initiative, the Budget will expand the teaching and learning of these important concepts across America’s schools, better preparing our Nation’s students for today’s innovation economy.

Higher education is the clearest path to the middle class. By 2020, two-thirds of jobs will require some education beyond high school. For our students and for our economy, we must make a quality college education affordable for every American. To support that goal, the Budget strengthens Pell Grants to help families pay for college by increasing the scholarships available to

students who take enough courses to stay on track for on-time graduation, allowing students making progress toward their degrees to get support for summer classes, and providing scholarships to help incarcerated Americans turn their lives around, get jobs, and support their families. It also offers two years of free community college to every responsible student and strengthens the American Opportunity Tax Credit.

In addition to preparing students for careers, we must help workers gain the skills they need to fill jobs in growing industries. My Budget builds on the progress we have made to improve the Nation’s job training programs through implementation of the bipartisan Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. It funds innovative strategies to train more workers and young people for 21st Century jobs. And it doubles down on apprenticeships—a proven pathway to the middle class—and supports a robust set of protections for the health, safety, wages, working conditions, and retirement security of working Americans.

Even as we invest in better skills and education for our workforce, we must respond to dramatic changes in our economy and our workforce: more automation; increased global competition; corporations less rooted in their communities; frequent job changes throughout a worker’s career; and a growing gap between the wealthiest and everyone else. These trends squeeze workers, even when they have jobs, even when the economy is growing. They make it harder to start a career, a family, a business, or retirement.

To address these changes and give Americans more economic security, we need to update several key benefit structures to make sure that workers can balance work and family, save for retirement, and get back on their feet if they lose a job. The Budget supports these priorities by funding high-quality child care, encouraging State paid leave policies, extending employer-based retirement plans to part-time workers, putting us on a path to more portable benefit models, and providing a new tax credit for two-earner families. It also modernizes the unemployment insurance system, so that more unemployed workers receive the unemployment benefits they need and an opportunity to retrain for their next job. And, if that new job does not pay as much initially, it offers a system of wage insurance to encourage workers to rejoin the workforce and help them pay their bills. The Budget includes tax cuts for middle-class and working families that will make paychecks go further in meeting the costs of child care, education, and saving for retirement. It builds upon the demonstrated success of the Earned Income Tax Credit by expanding it for workers without children and non-custodial parents.

Providing opportunity to all Americans means tackling poverty. Too many Americans live in communities with under-performing schools and few jobs. We know from groundbreaking new research that growing up in these communities can put lifelong limits on a child’s opportunities. Over the past few years, we have made progress in supporting families that were falling behind. For example, working family tax credits keep more than 9 million people—including 5 million children—out of poverty each year, and the ACA provides access to quality, affordable health care to millions. Nevertheless, we need to do more to ensure that a child’s zip code does not determine his or her destiny. Improving the opportunity and economic security of poor children and families is both a moral and an economic imperative.

The Budget funds innovative strategies to support this goal, including helping families move to safer neighborhoods with better schools and more jobs, revitalizing distressed communities to create more neighborhoods of opportunity, preventing families experiencing a financial crisis from becoming homeless, and ensuring that children have enough to eat when school is out for the summer. It also supports efforts to break the cycle of poverty and incarceration through criminal justice reform.

Finally, as we work to build a brighter future at home, we must also strengthen our national security and global leadership. The United States of America is the most powerful nation on Earth, blessed with the finest fighting force in the history of the world.

Still, this is a dangerous time. We face many threats, including the threat of terrorist attacks and violent extremism in many forms. My highest priority is keeping the American people safe and going after terrorist networks. That is why my Budget increases support for our comprehensive strategy to destroy the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), in partnership with more than 60 other countries, by eliminating its leadership, cutting off its financing, disrupting its plots, stopping the flow of terrorist fighters, and stamping out its vicious ideology. If the Congress is serious about winning this war and wants to send a message to the troops and the world, it should specifically authorize the use of military force against ISIL.

The Budget also sustains and builds the strength of our unmatched military forces, making the investments and reforms that will maintain our Nation’s superiority and ensure our advantage over any potential adversary. It also makes investments to ensure that our men and women in uniform, who sacrifice so much to defend our Nation and keep us safe, get the support they have earned to succeed and thrive when they return home.

Cybersecurity is one of our most important national security challenges. As our economy becomes increasingly digital, more sensitive information is vulnerable to malicious cyber activity. This challenge requires bold, aggressive action. My Budget significantly increases our investment in cybersecurity through a Cybersecurity National Action Plan. This Plan includes retiring outdated Federal information technology (IT) systems that were designed in a different age and increasingly are vulnerable to attack, reforming the way that the Federal Government manages and responds to cyber threats, and recruiting the best cyber talent. It will also help strengthen cybersecurity in the private sector and the digital ecosystem as a whole, enhancing cyber education and making sure companies and consumers have the tools they need to protect themselves. But many of our challenges in cybersecurity require bold, long-term commitments to change the way we operate in an increasingly digital world. That is why, to complement these steps, I am also creating a commission of experts to make recommendations for enhancing cybersecurity awareness and protections inside and outside of Government, protecting privacy, and empowering Americans to take better control of their digital security.

To ensure security at home, we must also demonstrate leadership around the world. Strong leadership means not only a wise application of military power, but also rallying other nations behind causes that are right. It means viewing our diplomacy and development efforts around the world as an essential instrument of our national security strategy, and mobilizing the private sector and other donors alongside our foreign assistance to help achieve our global development and climate priorities. The Budget supports this vision with funding for effective global health programs to fight HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other illnesses; assistance for displaced persons and refugees, including from Syria; and expanding educational opportunities for girls, among many other critical development initiatives.

As we make these investments to meet our greatest challenges, we are also working to build a 21st Century Government that delivers for the American people. The Budget supports efforts to make the Federal Government more efficient and effective, through smarter IT delivery and procurement, improving digital services, eliminating outdated regulations, and recruiting and retaining the best talent. It also invests in a new approach to working in local communities, one that disrupts an outdated, top-down approach, and makes our efforts more responsive to the ideas and concerns of local citizens. The Budget supports the use of data and evidence to drive pol-

icymaking, so the Federal Government can do more of what works and stop doing what does not.

The Budget is a roadmap to a future that embodies America's values and aspirations: a future of opportunity and security for all of our families; a rising standard of living; and a sustainable, peaceful planet for our kids. This future is within our reach. But just as it took the collective efforts of the American people to rise from the recession and rebuild an even stronger economy, so will it take all of us working together to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

It will not be easy. But I have never been more optimistic about America's future than I am today. Over the past seven years, I have seen the strength, resilience, and commitment of the American people. I know that when we are united in the face of challenges, our Nation emerges stronger and better than before. I know that when we work together, there are no limits to what we can achieve. Together, we will move forward to innovate, to expand opportunity and security, and to make our Nation safer and stronger than ever before.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 9, 2016.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 25 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1503

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RIBBLE) at 3 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

COMMISSION ON CARE FINAL REPORT DEADLINE EXTENSION

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4437) to extend the deadline for the submittal of the final report required by the Commission on Care.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4437

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL OF FINAL REPORT BY COMMISSION ON CARE.

Section 202(b)(3)(B) of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-146; 128 Stat. 1773) is amended by striking "Not later than 180 days after the date of the initial meeting of the Commission" and inserting "Not later than June 30, 2016".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to add any extraneous material on H.R. 4437.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4437, a bill that I am honored to sponsor, to extend the deadline for the submittal of the final report that is required by the Commission on Care.

The Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act, which Congress passed in 2014 in response to the Department of Veterans Affairs' crisis that saw far too many veterans waiting too long for the care that they needed, required the establishment of a Commission on Care to examine veteran access to care and recommend how to best organize the VA healthcare system over the next 20 years.

The law required the Commission to develop a final report 180 days after their first meeting, or by February 20, 2016.

However, the Commission has requested that Congress extend the reporting deadline to June in order to provide the commissioners more time to develop their findings and recommendations. As such, H.R. 4437 would extend the Commission's final reporting deadline to June 30 of this year.

The Commission's work is vitally important to determining the future of the VA healthcare system, and I am proud to sponsor this bill to allow the commissioners more time to carry out their mission on behalf of our Nation's veterans.

I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 4437, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4437, of which I am an original cosponsor.

When the Congress passed and the President signed into law the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014, we included a section requiring an independent assessment of the hospital care, medical services, and other health care furnished in medical facilities of the VA. We also established a Commission on Care to examine the access of veterans to health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs and strategically examine how best to organize the Veterans Health Administration, local health care resources, and deliver health care to veterans over the next 20 years.

The Commission has contacted us to explain that they will not be able to meet the statutory deadline of presenting their report to us in time, and would like an extension until June of 2016.

I feel this is a very important report, and I am willing to extend the authorization for the Commission on Care in order to receive this information.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support H.R. 4437.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4437.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONSTRUCTION REFORM ACT OF 2016

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3106) to authorize Department major medical facility construction projects for fiscal year 2015, to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the administration of Department medical facility construction projects, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3106

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Construction Reform Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CONSTRUCTION REFORMS.

(a) APPLICATION OF INDUSTRY STANDARDS; ASSISTANCE.—Section 8103 of title 38, United

States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsections:

"(f) To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall use industry standards, standard designs, and best practices in carrying out the construction of medical facilities.

"(g)(1) The Secretary shall provide to a non-Department Federal entity with which the Secretary has entered into an agreement under subsection (e)—

"(A) design, planning, and construction assistance before the entity issues a request for proposals for the design or construction of the super construction project covered by the agreement;

"(B) any documents or information needed for the entity to carry out the responsibilities of the entity with respect to the super construction project; and

"(C) upon the request of the entity, any other assistance that the entity determines necessary to carry out such responsibilities.

"(2) Any assistance provided under paragraph (1) shall be provided to the non-Department Federal entity on a non-reimbursable basis.

"(h)(1) With respect to a proposed change to a contract entered into by a non-Department Federal entity with which the Secretary has entered into an agreement under subsection (e) that is estimated at a value of less than \$250,000, the non-Department Federal entity shall issue a final decision regarding such change not later than 30 days after the date on which the change is proposed.

"(2) With respect to a proposed change to such a contract that is estimated at a value of \$250,000 or more—

"(A) the Secretary may provide to the entity the recommendations of the Secretary regarding such change;

"(B) during the 30-day period beginning on the date on which the entity furnishes to the Secretary information regarding such change, the Secretary may issue the final decision regarding such change; and

"(C) if the Secretary does not issue a final decision under subparagraph (B), during the 30-day period following the period described in such paragraph, the entity shall issue a final decision regarding such a change not later than 90 days from when the entity furnished information regarding such a change to the Secretary.

"(i) The Secretary shall ensure that each employee of the Department with responsibilities relating to the construction or alteration of medical facilities, including such construction or alteration carried out pursuant to contracts or agreements, undergoes a program of ongoing professional training and development. Such program shall be designed to ensure that employees maintain adequate expertise relating to industry standards and best practices for the acquisition of design and construction services. The Secretary may provide the program under this subsection through a contract or agreement with a non-Federal entity or with a non-Department Federal entity."

(b) LIMITATION ON PLANNING AND DESIGN FOR SUPER CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 8104(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4);

(B) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph (3):

"(3) The Secretary may not obligate or expend funds for advance planning or design for any super construction project, until the date that is 60 days after the date on which

the Secretary submits to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives notice of such obligation or expenditure."; and

(C) in paragraph (4), as redesignated by paragraph (1) of this subsection, by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(C) The term 'super construction project' means a project for the construction, alteration, or acquisition of a medical facility involving a total expenditure of more than \$100,000,000, but such term does not include an acquisition by exchange."

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by paragraph (1) shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to a construction project that is initiated on or after that date.

(c) CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF CERTAIN PROJECTS.—

(1) PROJECTS THAT EXCEED SPECIFIED AMOUNT.—Subsection (c) of section 8104 of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

"(c)(1) The Secretary may not obligate funds for a major medical facility project or a super construction project approved by a law described in subsection (a)(2) in an amount that would cause the total amount obligated for that project to exceed the amount specified in the law for that project (or would add to total obligations exceeding such specified amount) by more than 10 percent unless the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives each approve in writing the obligation of those funds.

"(2) The Secretary shall—

"(A) enter into a contract with an appropriate non-department Federal entity with the ability to conduct forensic audits on medical facility projects for the conduct of an external forensic audit of the expenditures relating to any major medical facility or super construction project for which the total expenditures exceed the amount specified in the law for the project by more than 25 percent; and

"(B) enter into a contract with an appropriate non-department Federal entity with the ability to conduct forensic audits on medical facility projects for the conduct of an external audit of the medical center construction project in Aurora, Colorado."

(2) USE OF EXTRA AMOUNTS.—Subsection (d) of such section is amended—

(A) in paragraph (2)(B), in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking "Whenever" and inserting "Before"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(3) The Secretary may not obligate any funds described in paragraph (1) or amounts described in paragraph (2) before the date that is 30 days after the notification submitted under paragraph (1) or paragraph (2)(B), as the case may be, unless the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives each approve in writing the obligation of those funds or amounts."

(3) NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) COMMITTEES REQUIRED.—Subsection (d)(1) of such section is amended by striking "each committee" and inserting "the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and

the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives".

(B) USE OF AMOUNTS FROM BID SAVINGS.—Subsection (d)(2)(B) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

"(iv) With respect to the major construction project that is the source of the bid savings—

"(I) the amounts already obligated or available in the project reserve for such project;

"(II) the percentage of such project that has been completed; and

"(III) the amount of such bid savings that is already obligated or otherwise being used for a purpose other than such project."

(d) QUARTERLY REPORT ON SUPER CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—At the end of subchapter I of chapter 81 of title 38, United States Code, add the following new section:

"§ 8120. Quarterly report on super construction projects

"(a) QUARTERLY REPORTS REQUIRED.—Not later than 30 days after the last day of each fiscal quarter the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives on the super construction projects carried out by the Secretary during such quarter. Each such report shall include, for each such project—

"(1) the budgetary and scheduling status of the project, as of the last day of the quarter covered by the report; and

"(2) the actual cost and schedule variances of the project, as of such day, compared to the planned cost and schedules for the project.

"(b) SUPER CONSTRUCTION PROJECT DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'super construction project' has the meaning given such term in section 8104(a)(4)(C) of this title."

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of the chapter is amended by adding at the end of the items relating to such subchapter the following new item:

"8120. Quarterly report on super construction projects."

(e) ACCELERATED MASTER PLANNING FOR EACH MEDICAL FACILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—

(1) EXISTING FACILITIES.—Not later than December 31, 2016, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall complete a master plan described in paragraph (3) for each medical facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) NEW FACILITIES.—For each medical facility of the Department for which construction is completed after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall complete a master plan described in paragraph (3) for the facility by not later than the earlier of the following dates:

(A) The date on which activation is completed.

(B) The date of the formal dedication of the facility.

(3) MASTER PLAN DESCRIBED.—A master plan described in this paragraph is, with respect to a medical facility of the Department, a plan to inform investment decisions and funding requests over a 10-year period for construction projects at such medical facility—

(A) to meet the health care needs of a changing veteran population through a combination of health care from the Department and other community resources; and

(B) to maximize the best use of the land and structures comprising such medical facility.

SEC. 3. ASSISTANT INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR CONSTRUCTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 3 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 312 the following new section:

"§ 312A. Assistant Inspector General for Construction

"(a) IN GENERAL.—There is in the Office of Inspector General an Assistant Inspector General for Construction. The Assistant Inspector General for Construction is responsible for conducting, supervising, and coordinating audits, evaluations, and investigations of the planning, design, contracting, execution, and construction of facilities and infrastructure of the Department, including major and minor construction projects and leases.

"(b) QUALIFICATIONS.—Each individual appointed as Assistant Inspector General for Construction shall be an individual who has expertise in construction and facilities management.

"(c) REPORTS.—(1) Not later than 60 days after the appointment of an individual as the Assistant Inspector General for Construction, and every calendar quarter thereafter, the Assistant Inspector General for Construction shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report summarizing the activities of the Assistant Inspector General for Construction during the 120-day period ending on the date of such report.

"(2) In addition to the report required in paragraph (1), and the requirements contained in section 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.), the Assistant Inspector General for Construction shall promptly provide to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives the findings of any investigation undertaken by the Assistant Inspector General for Construction, and shall notify the Committees promptly if the Assistant Inspector General for Construction identifies any serious or flagrant problem or deficiency relating to the administration or operation of any construction program of the Department, if, during the course of any investigation, the Assistant Inspector General for Construction determines that Congress should take immediate action.

"(3) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to authorize the public disclosure of information that is—

"(A) specifically prohibited from disclosure by any other provision of law;

"(B) specifically required by Executive Order to be protected from disclosure in the interest of national defense or national security or in the conduct of foreign affairs; or

"(C) a part of an ongoing criminal investigation."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 312 the following new item:

"312A. Assistant Inspector General for Construction."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Mem-

bers may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to add extraneous material on H.R. 3106, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I do rise in support of H.R. 3106, as amended, the Construction Reform Act of 2016. This bill would strengthen the Department of Veterans Affairs' major construction program by making a number of needed improvements to VA's construction management processes.

As the owner and operator of one of the Federal Government's largest real property portfolios, VA manages a complex and costly major medical facility construction program.

In recent years, that program has been fraught with failures and mismanagement that has led to millions of dollars of cost increases and years of schedule delays on all of VA's major medical facility construction projects.

The most glaring example of these failings can be seen in the construction of the replacement VA medical center in Denver, Colorado.

The discussion surrounding that facility—if my colleagues will recall—began more than 16 years ago, in 1999. Construction is now expected to conclude in 2018. Upon completion, that project will be more than \$1 billion over budget and many, many years behind schedule. That is assuming, of course, that the project does not experience any further delays.

To prevent any further construction calamities like the ongoing one in Denver, this bill would require VA to use industry standards, standard designs, and best practices for all medical facility construction projects; to complete a master plan for each VA medical facility; and to provide regular reports on super construction projects.

To further strengthen oversight of VA's construction projects, the bill would also create an assistant inspector general for construction within the VA Office of Inspector General.

These are commonsense reforms that will lead, ultimately, to better facilities for our veterans and better use of our taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. I urge all my colleagues to support this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the chairman for his fair and even leadership on this committee. While we don't agree on all issues, I feel he has made an effort to allow all voices to be heard, and for that I want to thank him. I thank the chairman for bringing this important legislation to our attention.

As we have seen by recent events, the VA has been challenged with major construction projects. Before they undertook the most recent medical center construction projects, it had been at least 15 years since a new medical center had been built.

This lack of experience showed and continues to show today. Not one of the major hospitals is on its original timeline. However, the VA has demonstrated they are able to do small, less complicated projects on time and under budget.

The bill also references “a non-department Federal entity to provide full project management services for the super construction project, including management over the project design, acquisition, construction, and contract changes.”

We all know from experience that there is only one Federal entity that fits that description, and that is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

For those projects that have not broken ground yet, the VA and the Corps of Engineers are already working on plans to include the Corps in the planning and construction of major projects over \$100 million.

I continue to believe that the threshold for a super construction project should be at least \$250 million. As a member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I know how busy the Army Corps is in responding to the projects that the committee requires them to complete. It is important that they do not get bogged down with projects of insufficient complexity. I will continue to watch the construction process and follow the complexity issue to determine if the threshold needs to be increased in the future.

I am pleased this legislation also includes an assistant inspector general for construction. Oversight of the projects needs a person who has the expertise to evaluate the complexity of VA's ongoing construction projects.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN), my good friend, a member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and somebody who has been on this from the very, very beginning.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Construction Reform Act of 2016, an important piece of legislation that will further reform VA's severely troubled major construction program.

For decades, the Government Accountability Office has documented hundreds of millions of dollars in cost overruns on mismanaged VA major construction projects. GAO reports from 1981, 1993, 2009, and 2013 all reflect

a stunning degree of bureaucratic incompetence in VA's construction management. In my own district, a single VA hospital project is over \$1 billion over budget, and years behind schedule.

VA's construction failures represent billions of wasted tax dollars that should have gone towards VA's core mission: taking care of our Nation's veterans.

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Since 2012, the House Veterans' Affairs Committee has conducted at least six separate hearings exploring the VA's construction failures, and this bill's reforms incorporate many of the committee's findings.

First, it forces the VA to leave hospital construction to the experts—to Federal construction managers like the Army Corps of Engineers. In fact, the contractor on the troubled Aurora, Colorado, project demanded that the Army Corps of Engineers take over the project from the VA before they returned to work on the project.

Previously, in 2014, the House unanimously passed my legislation, which required the Army Corps to take over the VA's most troubled projects, including the project in Aurora. I am pleased that my colleagues in both the House and the Senate are now fully supportive of this transfer of authority.

Second, this bill introduces a much-needed improvement over the contract change order process. The GAO and the Veterans' Affairs Committee identified the VA's inept change order management as a major driver of both cost increases and project delays.

Third, the bill creates a new, independent assistant inspector general for construction who would be required to report directly to Congress when significant construction problems have been discovered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. COFFMAN. As we learned with the project in Aurora, the VA went to great lengths to hide the significant problems with the project from the American people, insisting in congressional hearing after hearing that the project was on time and on budget. It was not until the project's contractor sued the VA—and won on every count in December of 2014—that the VA finally admitted it had significant problems with the Aurora project.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this measure and continue with the long-needed construction reforms in the VA.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Members to support H.R. 3106, as amended.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3106, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: “A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the administration of Department medical facility construction projects.”

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, AND HEALTHCARE IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3016) to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the role of podiatrists in the Department of Veterans Affairs, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3016

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Employment, Education, and Healthcare Improvement Act”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—VETERANS HEALTH CARE

Sec. 101. Role of podiatrists in Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 102. Priority of medal of honor recipients in health care system of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 103. Improvement of care provided to newborn children.

Sec. 104. Comptroller General audit of budget of Veterans Health Administration.

Sec. 105. Outreach to veterans regarding effect of certain delayed payments by Department of Veterans Affairs Chief Business Office.

Sec. 106. Department of Veterans Affairs pilot program on dog training therapy.

TITLE II—VETERANS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND TRANSITION ADMINISTRATION

Sec. 201. Establishment of Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration.

Sec. 202. Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition.

TITLE III—EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Sec. 301. Modification and improvement of transfer of unused education benefits to family members under Department of Veterans Affairs Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program.

- Sec. 302. Clarification of eligibility for Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship.
- Sec. 303. Approval of courses of education and training for purposes of the vocational rehabilitation program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 304. Authority to prioritize vocational rehabilitation services based on need.
- Sec. 305. Recodification and improvement of election process for Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program.
- Sec. 306. Clarification of assistance provided for certain flight training and other programs of education.
- Sec. 307. Consideration of certain time spent receiving medical care from Secretary of Defense as active duty for purposes of eligibility for post-9/11 educational assistance.
- Sec. 308. Work-study allowance.
- Sec. 309. Vocational rehabilitation and education action plan.
- Sec. 310. Reduction in redundancy and inefficiencies in vocational rehabilitation claims processing.

TITLE IV—ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

- Sec. 401. Centralized reporting of veteran enrollment by certain groups, districts, and consortiums of educational institutions.
- Sec. 402. Provision of information regarding veteran entitlement to educational assistance.
- Sec. 403. Role of State approving agencies.
- Sec. 404. Criteria used to approve courses.
- Sec. 405. Compliance surveys.
- Sec. 406. Survey of individuals using their entitlement to educational assistance under the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 407. Improvement of information technology of the Veterans Benefits Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 408. Technical amendment relating to in-State tuition rate for individuals to whom entitlement is transferred under All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance.

TITLE V—OTHER MATTERS

- Sec. 501. Amount of loan guaranteed under home loan program of Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 502. Longitudinal study of job counseling, training, and placement service for veterans.
- Sec. 503. Limitations on subcontracts under contracts with small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans.
- Sec. 504. Procedures for provision of certain information to State veterans agencies to facilitate the furnishing of assistance and benefits to veterans.

TITLE I—VETERANS HEALTH CARE

SEC. 101. ROLE OF PODIATRISTS IN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

- (a) INCLUSION AS PHYSICIAN.—
- (1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 74 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 7413. Treatment of podiatrists

“For purposes of this chapter, the term ‘physician’ includes a podiatrist.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7412 the following new item:

“7413. Treatment of podiatrists.”.

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 7401(1) of such title is amended by striking “Physicians, dentists, podiatrists,” and inserting “Physicians, dentists.”.

(b) QUALIFICATIONS.—Section 7402(b) of such title is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “or of doctor of osteopathy” and inserting “, doctor of osteopathy, or doctor of podiatric medicine”; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by inserting “podiatry,” after “surgery,”;

(2) by striking paragraph (5); and

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (6) through (14) as paragraphs (5) through (13), respectively.

(c) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT.—Section 7403(a)(2) of such title is amended—

(1) by striking subparagraph (C); and

(2) by redesignating subparagraphs (D) through (H) as subparagraphs (C) through (G), respectively.

(d) MODIFICATION OF PAY GRADE.—

(1) GRADE.—The list in section 7404(b) of such title is amended by striking “CLINICAL PODIATRIST, CHIROPRACTOR, AND OPTOMETRIST SCHEDULE” and inserting “CLINICAL CHIROPRACTOR AND OPTOMETRIST SCHEDULE”.

(2) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply with respect to a pay period of the Department of Veterans Affairs beginning on or after the date that is 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) CONTRACTS FOR SCARCE SERVICES.—Section 7409(a) of such title is amended by striking “podiatrists.”.

(f) PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION.—Section 7421(b) of such title is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (3); and

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through (8) as paragraphs (3) through (7), respectively.

(g) MEDICAL DIRECTORS.—Section 7306(a)(4) of such title is amended by inserting “, doctor of podiatric medicine,” after “doctor of medicine”.

(h) APPLICATION.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to podiatrists employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs as of the date of the enactment of this Act or who are appointed on or after such date.

SEC. 102. PRIORITY OF MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS IN HEALTH CARE SYSTEM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) ENROLLMENT PRIORITY.—Section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: “and veterans who were awarded the medal of honor under section 3741, 6241, or 8741 of title 10 or section 491 of title 14.”; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking “veterans who were awarded the medal of honor under section 3741, 6241, or 8741 of title 10 or section 491 of title 14.”.

(b) ELIGIBILITY.—Section 1710(a)(2)(D) of such title is amended by inserting after “war” the following: “, who was awarded the medal of honor under section 3741, 6241, or 8741 of title 10 or section 491 of title 14.”.

(c) EXTENDED CARE SERVICES.—Section 1710B(c)(2) of such title is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking “or”;

(2) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) to a veteran who was awarded the medal of honor under section 3741, 6241, or 8741 of title 10 or section 491 of title 14.”.

(d) COPAYMENT FOR MEDICATIONS.—Section 1722A(a)(3) of such title is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking “or”;

(2) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) to a veteran who was awarded the medal of honor under section 3741, 6241, or 8741 of title 10 or section 491 of title 14.”.

(e) APPLICATION.—The priority of enrollment of medal of honor recipients pursuant to chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by this section, shall apply to each such recipient, regardless of the date on which the medal is awarded.

SEC. 103. IMPROVEMENT OF CARE PROVIDED TO NEWBORN CHILDREN.

Section 1786 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “seven days” and inserting “42 days”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than October 31, 2016, and each year thereafter through 2020, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on the health care services provided under subsection (a) during the fiscal year preceding the date of the report, including the number of newborn children who received such services during such fiscal year.”.

SEC. 104. COMPTROLLER GENERAL AUDIT OF BUDGET OF VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 73 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 7330B. Comptroller General audit of VHA budget

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall periodically conduct an audit of elements of the budget of the Veterans Health Administration, including the budget formulation, execution, allocation, and use of funds.

“(b) SELECTION OF ELEMENTS.—(1) In selecting elements of the budget of the Veterans Health Administration for purposes of an audit under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall take into consideration—

“(A) knowledge of the programs of the Veterans Health Administration;

“(B) current issues;

“(C) national priorities; and

“(D) priorities expressed by the appropriate congressional committees.

“(2) Not later than 30 days before conducting an audit under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees notice of the elements selected by the Comptroller General for purposes of the audit.

“(c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—In this section, the term ‘appropriate congressional committees’ means—

“(1) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Committee on the Budget of the Senate; and

“(2) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7330A the following new item:

“7330B. Comptroller General audit of VHA budget.”.

SEC. 105. OUTREACH TO VETERANS REGARDING EFFECT OF CERTAIN DELAYED PAYMENTS BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CHIEF BUSINESS OFFICE.

(a) OUTREACH.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct outreach, including through national and local veterans service organizations, to inform veterans of how to resolve credit issues caused by delayed payment of a claim for emergency hospital care, medical services, or other emergency health care furnished through a non-Department of Veterans Affairs provider. The Secretary shall establish a toll-free telephone number for veterans to report such credit issues to the Chief Business Office of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—During the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall annually submit to Congress a report on the effectiveness of the Chief Business Office in providing timely payment of proper invoices for emergency hospital care, medical services, or other emergency health care furnished through non-Department of Veterans Affairs providers by the required payment date during both the five-year period preceding the date of the report and the one-year period preceding such date. For any part of the period covered by a report under this subsection that occurred before October 1, 2014, the report shall evaluate the provision of such payments by the Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

(2) MATTERS INCLUDED.—The reports under paragraph (1) shall include, for each period covered by the report, the following:

(A) The number of veterans who contacted the Secretary regarding a delayed payment that negatively affected, or will potentially negatively affect, the credit of the veteran.

(B) The total amount of interest penalties paid by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under section 3902 of title 31, United States Code, by reason of a delayed payment.

(C) The number of proper invoices submitted, listed in a table for each quarter and fiscal year of each such period that includes—

(i) the total amount owed by the Secretary under the proper invoices;

(ii) the payment status of each proper invoice, as of the date of the report; and

(iii) the period that elapsed until each proper invoice was paid, including an explanation of any delayed payment.

(D) Any comments regarding delayed payments made by medical providers.

(E) A description of the best practices that the Chief Business Office can carry out to provide timely payment of a proper invoice, including a plan to improve such timely payments.

(c) QUARTERLY REPORTS ON PENDING CLAIMS.—During the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Chief Business Office of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress quarterly reports on the number of pending claims for reimbursement for emergency hospital care, medical services, and other emergency health care furnished through non-Department of Veterans Affairs providers. Each such report shall include each of the following:

(1) The total number of such pending claims for each hospital system of the Department, as of the last day of the quarter covered by the report.

(2) The total number of veterans who submitted such a pending claim in each State, as of such day.

(3) The aggregate amount of all such pending claims in each State, as of such day.

(4) As of such day—

(A) the number of such pending claims that have been pending for 30 days or longer;

(B) the number of such pending claims that have been pending for 90 days or longer; and

(C) the number of such pending claims that have been pending for 365 days or longer.

(5) For each hospital system, for the quarter covered by the report—

(A) the number of claims for reimbursement for emergency hospital care, medical services, and other emergency health care furnished through non-Department of Veterans Affairs providers approved during such quarter;

(B) the number of such claims denied during such quarter; and

(C) the number of such claims denied listed by each denial reason group.

(d) COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study that evaluates the effectiveness of the Chief Business Office in providing timely payment of a proper invoice for emergency hospital care, medical services, or other emergency health care furnished through non-Department of Veterans Affairs providers by the required payment date.

(2) SUBMITTAL.—The Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report on the study conducted under paragraph (1), including the total amount of interest penalties paid by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under section 3902 of title 31, United States Code, by reason of a delayed payment.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “delayed payment” means a proper invoice that is not paid by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs until after the required payment date.

(2) The term “proper invoice” has the meaning given that term in section 3901(a) of title 31, United States Code.

(3) The term “required payment date” means the date that payment is due for a contract pursuant to section 3903(a) of title 31, United States Code.

SEC. 106. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PILOT PROGRAM ON DOG TRAINING THERAPY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Commencing not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of the Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot program under which the Secretary shall enter into a contract with one or more appropriate non-government entities for the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of addressing post-deployment mental health and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms through a therapeutic medium of training service dogs for veterans with disabilities.

(b) DURATION OF PILOT PROGRAM.—The pilot program required by subsection (a) shall be carried out during the five-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the pilot program.

(c) LOCATIONS OF PILOT PROGRAM.—In entering into contracts for purposes of the pilot program, the Secretary shall seek to enter into contracts with appropriate non-government entities located in close proximity to at least three but not more than five medical centers of the Department.

(d) APPROPRIATE NON-GOVERNMENT ENTITIES.—For purposes of the pilot program, an appropriate non-government entity is an entity that is certified in the training and handling of service dogs and that has a training area that would be appropriate for use in educating veterans with mental health conditions in the art and science of service dog training and handling. Such training area shall—

(1) include a dedicated space that is suitable for grooming and training dogs indoors;

(2) be wheelchair accessible;

(3) include classroom or lecture space;

(4) include office space for staff;

(5) include a suitable space for storing training equipment;

(6) provide for periodic use of other training areas for training the dogs with wheelchairs and conducting other exercises;

(7) include outdoor exercise and toileting space for dogs; and

(8) provide transportation for weekly field trips to train dogs in other environments.

(e) DESIGN OF PILOT PROGRAM.—Each contract entered into under subsection (a) shall provide that the non-government entity shall—

(1) ensure that veterans participating in the program receive training from certified service dog training instructors;

(2) ensure that in selecting assistance dogs for use in the program, dogs residing in animal shelters or foster homes are looked at as an option, if appropriate, and ensure that all dogs used in the program have adequate temperament and health clearances;

(3) ensure that each service dog in training participating in the pilot program is taught all essential commands pertaining to service dog skills;

(4) ensure that each service dog in training lives at the pilot program site or a volunteer foster home in the vicinity of such site while receiving training;

(5) ensure that the pilot program involves both lecture of service dog training methodologies and practical hands-on training and grooming of service dogs; and

(6) ensure that the pilot program is designed to—

(A) maximize the therapeutic benefits to veterans participating in the program; and

(B) provide well-trained service dogs to veterans with disabilities; and

(7) in hiring service dog training instructors to carry out training under the pilot program, give a preference to veterans who have successfully graduated from post-traumatic stress disorder or other residential treatment programs and who have received adequate certification in service dog training.

(f) ADMINISTRATION.—In order to carry out the pilot program under section (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

(1) administer the program through the Recreation Therapy Service of the Department of Veterans Affairs under the direction of a certified recreational therapist with sufficient administrative experience to oversee the pilot program; and

(2) establish a director of service dog training with a background working in social services, experience in teaching others to train service dogs in a vocational setting, and at least one year of experience working with veterans or active duty service members with post-traumatic stress disorder in a clinical setting.

(g) VETERAN ELIGIBILITY.—The Secretary shall select veterans for participation in the pilot program. A veteran with post-traumatic stress disorder or other post-deployment mental health condition may volunteer

to participate in the pilot program, if the Secretary determines that there are adequate program resources available for such veteran at the pilot program site. Veterans may participate in the pilot program in conjunction with the compensated work therapy program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(h) **COLLECTION OF DATA.**—The Secretary shall collect data on the pilot program required under subsection (a) to determine how effective the program is for the veterans participating in the program. Such data shall include data to determine how effectively the program assists veterans in—

- (1) reducing stigma associated with post-traumatic stress disorder or other post-deployment mental health condition;
- (2) improving emotional regulation;
- (3) improving patience;
- (4) instilling or re-establishing a sense of purpose;
- (5) providing an opportunity to help fellow veterans;
- (6) reintegrating into the community;
- (7) exposing the dog to new environments and in doing so, helping the veteran reduce social isolation and withdrawal;
- (8) building relationship skills, including parenting skills;
- (9) relaxing the hyper-vigilant survival state;
- (10) improving sleep patterns; and
- (11) enabling veterans to decrease the use of pain medication.

(i) **REPORTS TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than one year after the date of the commencement of the pilot program under subsection (a), and each year thereafter for the duration of the pilot program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the pilot program. Each such report shall include—

- (1) the number of veterans participating in the pilot program;
- (2) a description of the services carried out under the pilot program;
- (3) the effects that participating in the pilot program has on the following—

(A) symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder and post-deployment adjustment difficulties, including depression, maintenance of sobriety, suicidal ideations, and homelessness;

(B) potentially relevant physiological markers that possibly relate to the interactions with the service dogs;

- (C) family dynamics;
 - (D) insomnia and pain management; and
 - (E) overall well-being; and
- (4) the recommendations of the Secretary with respect to the extension or expansion of the pilot program.

(j) **DEFINITION.**—For the purposes of this section, the term “service dog training instructor” means an instructor who provides the direct training of veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder and other post-deployment issues in the art and science of service dog training and handling.

TITLE II—VETERANS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND TRANSITION ADMINISTRATION

SEC. 201. ESTABLISHMENT OF VETERANS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND TRANSITION ADMINISTRATION.

(a) **VETERANS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND TRANSITION ADMINISTRATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Part V of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new chapter:

“CHAPTER 80—VETERANS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND TRANSITION ADMINISTRATION

“Sec.

“8001. Organization of Administration.

“8002. Functions of Administration.

“§ 8001. Organization of Administration

“(a) **VETERANS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND TRANSITION ADMINISTRATION.**—There is in the Department of Veterans Affairs a Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration. The primary function of the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration is the administration of the programs of the Department that provide assistance related to economic opportunity to veterans and their dependents and survivors.

“(b) **UNDER SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND TRANSITION.**—The Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration is under the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition, who is directly responsible to the Secretary for the operations of the Administration.

“§ 8002. Functions of Administration

“The Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration is responsible for the administration of the following programs of the Department:

- “(1) Vocational rehabilitation and employment programs.
- “(2) Educational assistance programs.
- “(3) Veterans’ housing loan and related programs.

“(4) The verification of small businesses owned and controlled by veterans pursuant to subsection (f) of section 8127 of this title, including the administration of the database of veteran-owned businesses described in such subsection.

“(5) The Transition Assistance Program under section 1144 of title 10.

“(6) Any other program of the Department that the Secretary determines appropriate.”.

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.**—The tables of chapters at the beginning of title 38, United States Code, and of part V of title 38, United States Code, are each amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 79 the following new item:

“80. Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration 8001”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Chapter 80 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on October 1, 2017.

(c) **FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES.**—For fiscal years 2017 and 2018, the total number of full-time equivalent employees authorized for the Veterans Benefits Administration and the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, as established under chapter 80 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), may not exceed 21,913.

SEC. 202. UNDER SECRETARY FOR VETERANS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND TRANSITION.

(a) **UNDER SECRETARY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 3 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 306 the following new section:

“§ 306A. Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition

“(a) **UNDER SECRETARY.**—There is in the Department an Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition, who is appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition shall be appointed without regard to political affiliation or activity and solely on the basis of demonstrated ability in—

- “(1) information technology; and

“(2) the administration of programs within the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration or programs of similar content and scope.

“(b) **RESPONSIBILITIES.**—The Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition is the head of, and is directly responsible to the Secretary for the operations of, the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration.

“(c) **VACANCIES.**—(1) Whenever a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition occurs or is anticipated, the Secretary shall establish a commission to recommend individuals to the President for appointment to the position.

“(2) A commission established under this subsection shall be composed of the following members appointed by the Secretary:

“(A) Three persons representing education and training, vocational rehabilitation, employment, real estate, mortgage finance and related industries, and survivor benefits activities affected by the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration.

“(B) Two persons representing veterans served by the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration.

“(C) Two persons who have experience in the management of private sector benefits programs of similar content and scope to the economic opportunity and transition programs of the Department.

“(D) The Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

“(E) The chairman of the Veterans’ Advisory Committee on Education formed under section 3692 of this title.

“(F) One person who has held the position of Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition, if the Secretary determines that it is desirable for such person to be a member of the commission.

“(3) A commission established under this subsection shall recommend at least three individuals for appointment to the position of Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition. The commission shall submit all recommendations to the Secretary. The Secretary shall forward the recommendations to the President and the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives with any comments the Secretary considers appropriate. Thereafter, the President may request the commission to recommend additional individuals for appointment.

“(4) The Assistant Secretary or Deputy Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs who performs personnel management and labor relations functions shall serve as the executive secretary of a commission established under this subsection.

“(d) **QUALIFICATIONS OF RECOMMENDED INDIVIDUALS.**—Each individual recommended to the President by the commission for appointment to the position of Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition shall be an individual who has held a senior level position in the private sector with responsibilities relating to at least one of the following:

- “(1) Education policy.
- “(2) Vocational rehabilitation.
- “(3) Employment.
- “(4) Job placement.
- “(5) Home loan finance.
- “(6) Small business development.”.

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 306 the following new item:

“306A. Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Title 38, United States Code, is further amended—

(1) in section 306(c)(2), by striking subparagraphs (A) and (E) and redesignating subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), and (F), as subparagraphs (A) through (D), respectively;

(2) in section 317(d)(2), by inserting after “Under Secretary for Benefits,” the following: “the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition,”;

(3) in section 318(d)(2), by inserting after “Under Secretary for Benefits,” the following: “the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition,”;

(4) in section 516(e)(2)(C), by striking “Health and the Under Secretary for Benefits” and inserting “Health, the Under Secretary for Benefits, and the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition”;

(5) in section 541(a)(2)(B), by striking “Health and the Under Secretary for Benefits” and inserting “Health, the Under Secretary for Benefits, and the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition”;

(6) in section 542(a)(2)(B)(iii), by striking “Health and the Under Secretary for Benefits” and inserting “Health, the Under Secretary for Benefits, and the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition”;

(7) in section 544(a)(2)(B)(vi), by striking “Health and the Under Secretary for Benefits” and inserting “Health, the Under Secretary for Benefits, and the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition”;

(8) in section 709(c)(2)(A), by inserting after “Under Secretary for Benefits,” the following: “the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition,”;

(9) in section 7701(a), by inserting after “assistance” the following: “, other than assistance related to Economic Opportunity and Transition,”; and

(10) in section 7703, by striking paragraphs (2) and (3) and redesignating paragraphs (4) and (5) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 306A of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), and the amendments made by this section, shall take effect on October 1, 2017.

TITLE III—EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

SEC. 301. MODIFICATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF TRANSFER OF UNUSED EDUCATION BENEFITS TO FAMILY MEMBERS UNDER DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) RATE OF PAYMENT.—Subsection (h)(3)(B) of section 3319 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, except that the amount of the monthly stipend described in subsection (c)(1)(B) or (g)(3)(A)(ii) of section 3313, as the case may be, shall be payable in an amount equal to 50 percent of the amount of such stipend that would otherwise be payable under this chapter to the individual making the transfer”.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by this section shall apply with respect to an election to transfer entitlement under section 3319 of title 38, United States Code, that is made on or after the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 302. CLARIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR MARINE GUNNERY SERGEANT JOHN DAVID FRY SCHOLARSHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 701(d) of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 128 Stat. 1796; 38 U.S.C. 3311 note) is amended to read as follows:

“(d) APPLICABILITY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to a quarter, semester, or term, as applicable, commencing on or after January 1, 2015.

“(2) DEATHS THAT OCCURRED BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, AND DECEMBER 31, 2005.—For purposes of section 3311(f)(2) of title 38, United States Code, any member of the Armed Forces who died during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on December 31, 2005, is deemed to have died on January 1, 2006.”.

(b) ELECTION ON RECEIPT OF CERTAIN BENEFITS.—Section 3311(f) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “A surviving spouse” and inserting “Except as provided in paragraph (4), a surviving spouse”;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph (4):

“(4) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN ELECTIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—An election made under paragraph (3) by a spouse described in subparagraph (B) may not be treated as irrevocable if such election occurred before the date of the enactment of this paragraph.

“(B) ELIGIBLE SURVIVING SPOUSE.—A spouse described in this subparagraph is an individual—

“(i) who is entitled to assistance under subsection (a) pursuant to paragraph (9) of subsection (b); and

“(ii) who was the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces who died during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on December 31, 2005.”.

(c) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Paragraph (5) of subsection (f) of section 3311 of title 38, United States Code, as redesignated by subsection (b)(2), is amended by striking “that paragraph” and inserting “paragraph (9) of subsection (b)”.

(d) YELLOW RIBBON G.I. EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.—Section 3317(a) of such title is amended by striking “paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 3311(b)” and inserting “paragraphs (1), (2), and (9) of section 3311(b) of this title”.

SEC. 303. APPROVAL OF COURSES OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR PURPOSES OF THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3104(b) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: “To the maximum extent practicable, a course of education or training may be pursued by a veteran as part of a rehabilitation program under this chapter only if the course is approved for purposes of chapter 30 or 33 of this title. The Secretary may waive the requirement under the preceding sentence to the extent the Secretary determines appropriate.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to a course of education or training pursued by a veteran who first begins a program of rehabilitation under chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code, on or after the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 304. AUTHORITY TO PRIORITIZE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES BASED ON NEED.

Section 3104 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by section 303, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c)(1) The Secretary shall have the authority to administer this chapter by prioritizing the provision of services under this chapter based on need, as determined by the Secretary. In evaluating need for purposes of this subsection, the Secretary shall consider disability ratings, the severity of employment handicaps, qualification for a program of independent living, income, and any other factor the Secretary determines appropriate.

“(2) Not later than 90 days before making any changes to the prioritization of the provision of services under this chapter as authorized under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a plan describing such changes.”.

SEC. 305. RECODIFICATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF ELECTION PROCESS FOR POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 3326. Election to receive educational assistance

“(a) INDIVIDUALS ELIGIBLE TO ELECT PARTICIPATION IN POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.—An individual may elect to receive educational assistance under this chapter if such individual—

“(1) as of August 1, 2009—

“(A) is entitled to basic educational assistance under chapter 30 of the title and has used, but retains unused, entitlement under that chapter;

“(B) is entitled to educational assistance under chapter 107, 1606, or 1607 of title 10 and has used, but retains unused, entitlement under the applicable chapter;

“(C) is entitled to basic educational assistance under chapter 30 of this title but has not used any entitlement under that chapter;

“(D) is entitled to educational assistance under chapter 107, 1606, or 1607 of title 10 but has not used any entitlement under such chapter;

“(E) is a member of the Armed Forces who is eligible for receipt of basic educational assistance under chapter 30 this title and is making contributions toward such assistance under section 3011(b) or 3012(c) of this title; or

“(F) is a member of the Armed Forces who is not entitled to basic educational assistance under chapter 30 of this title by reason of an election under section 3011(c)(1) or 3012(d)(1) of this title; and

“(2) as of the date of the individual's election under this paragraph, meets the requirements for entitlement to educational assistance under this chapter.

“(b) CESSATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD GI BILL.—Effective as of the first month beginning on or after the date of an election under subsection (a) of an individual described by paragraph (1)(E) of that subsection, the obligation of the individual to make contributions under section 3011(b) or 3012(c) of this title, as applicable, shall cease, and the requirements of such section shall be deemed to be no longer applicable to the individual.

“(c) REVOCATION OF REMAINING TRANSFERRED ENTITLEMENT.—

“(1) ELECTION TO REVOKE.—If, on the date an individual described in paragraph (1)(A) or (1)(C) of subsection (a) makes an election under that subsection, a transfer of the entitlement of the individual to basic educational assistance under section 3020 of this title is in effect and a number of months of the entitlement so transferred remain unutilized, the individual may elect to revoke all or a portion of the entitlement so transferred that remains unutilized.

“(2) AVAILABILITY OF REVOKED ENTITLEMENT.—Any entitlement revoked by an individual under this paragraph shall no longer be available to the dependent to whom transferred, but shall be available to the individual instead for educational assistance under chapter 33 of this title in accordance with the provisions of this section.

“(3) AVAILABILITY OF UNREVOKED ENTITLEMENT.—Any entitlement described in paragraph (1) that is not revoked by an individual in accordance with that paragraph shall remain available to the dependent or dependents concerned in accordance with the current transfer of such entitlement under section 3020 of this title.

“(d) POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2) and except as provided in subsection (e), an individual making an election under subsection (a) shall be entitled to educational assistance under this chapter in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, instead of basic educational assistance under chapter 30 of this title, or educational assistance under chapter 107, 1606, or 1607 of title 10, as applicable.

“(2) LIMITATION ON ENTITLEMENT FOR CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS.—In the case of an individual making an election under subsection (a) who is described by paragraph (1)(A) of that subsection, the number of months of entitlement of the individual to educational assistance under this chapter 33 shall be the number of months equal to—

“(A) the number of months of unused entitlement of the individual under chapter 30 of this title, as of the date of the election, plus

“(B) the number of months, if any, of entitlement revoked by the individual under subsection (c)(1).

“(e) CONTINUING ENTITLEMENT TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE NOT AVAILABLE UNDER 9/11 ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In the event educational assistance to which an individual making an election under subsection (a) would be entitled under chapter 30 of this title, or chapter 107, 1606, or 1607 of title 10, as applicable, is not authorized to be available to the individual under the provisions of this chapter the individual shall remain entitled to such educational assistance in accordance with the provisions of the applicable chapter.

“(2) CHARGE FOR USE OF ENTITLEMENT.—The utilization by an individual of entitlement under paragraph (1) shall be chargeable against the entitlement of the individual to educational assistance under this chapter at the rate of one month of entitlement under this chapter for each month of entitlement utilized by the individual under paragraph (1) (as determined as if such entitlement were utilized under the provisions of chapter 30 of this title, or chapter 107, 1606, or 1607 of title 10, as applicable).

“(f) ADDITIONAL POST-9/11 ASSISTANCE FOR MEMBERS HAVING MADE CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD GI BILL.—

“(1) ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE.—In the case of an individual making an election under subsection (a) who is described by subparagraph (A), (C), or (E) of paragraph (1) of that

subsection, the amount of educational assistance payable to the individual under this chapter 33 as a monthly stipend payable under paragraph (1)(B) of section 3313(c) of this title, or under paragraphs (2) through (7) of that section (as applicable), shall be the amount otherwise payable as a monthly stipend under the applicable paragraph increased by the amount equal to—

“(A) the total amount of contributions toward basic educational assistance made by the individual under section 3011(b) or 3012(c) of this title, as of the date of the election, multiplied by

“(B) the fraction—

“(i) the numerator of which is—

“(I) the number of months of entitlement to basic educational assistance under chapter 30 of this title remaining to the individual at the time of the election; plus

“(II) the number of months, if any, of entitlement under such chapter 30 revoked by the individual under subsection (c)(1); and

“(ii) the denominator of which is 36 months.

“(2) MONTHS OF REMAINING ENTITLEMENT FOR CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS.—In the case of an individual covered by paragraph (1) who is described by subsection (a)(1)(E), the number of months of entitlement to basic educational assistance remaining to the individual for purposes of paragraph (1)(B)(i)(II) shall be 36 months.

“(3) TIMING OF PAYMENT.—The amount payable with respect to an individual under paragraph (1) shall be paid to the individual together with the last payment of the monthly stipend payable to the individual under paragraph (1)(B) of section 3313(c) of this title, or under subsections (b) through (g) of that section (as applicable), before the exhaustion of the individual's entitlement to educational assistance under this chapter.

“(g) CONTINUING ENTITLEMENT TO ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR CRITICAL SKILLS OR SPECIALITY AND ADDITIONAL SERVICE.—An individual making an election under subsection (a)(1) who, at the time of the election, is entitled to increased educational assistance under section 3015(d) of this title, or section 16131(i) of title 10, or supplemental educational assistance under subchapter III of chapter 30 of this title, shall remain entitled to such increased educational assistance or supplemental educational assistance in the utilization of entitlement to educational assistance under this chapter, in an amount equal to the quarter, semester, or term, as applicable, equivalent of the monthly amount of such increased educational assistance or supplemental educational assistance payable with respect to the individual at the time of the election.

“(h) ALTERNATIVE ELECTION BY SECRETARY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an individual who, on or after January 1, 2016, submits to the Secretary an election under this section that the Secretary determines is clearly against the interests of the individual, or who fails to make an election under this section, the Secretary may make an alternative election on behalf of the individual that the Secretary determines is in the best interests of the individual.

“(2) NOTICE.—If the Secretary makes an election on behalf of an individual under this subsection, the Secretary shall notify the individual by not later than seven days after making such election and shall provide the individual with a 30-day period, beginning on the date of the individual's receipt of such notice, during which the individual may modify or revoke the election made by the

Secretary on the individual's behalf. The Secretary shall include, as part of such notice, a clear statement of why the alternative election made by the Secretary is in the best interests of the individual as compared to the election submitted by the individual. The Secretary shall provide the notice required under this paragraph by electronic means whenever possible.

“(i) IRREVOCABILITY OF ELECTIONS.—An election under subsection (a) or (c)(1) is irrevocable.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“3326. Election to receive educational assistance.”

(c) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Subsection (c) of section 5003 of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 38 U.S.C. 3301 note) is hereby repealed.

SEC. 306. CLARIFICATION OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED FOR CERTAIN FLIGHT TRAINING AND OTHER PROGRAMS OF EDUCATION.

(a) FLIGHT TRAINING.—Subsection (c)(1)(A) of section 3313 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in clause (i)—

(A) by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), respectively;

(B) by striking “In the case of a program of education pursued at a public institution of higher learning” and inserting “(I) Subject to subclause (II), in the case of a program of education pursued at a public institution of higher learning not described in clause (ii)(II)(bb)”;

(C) by adding at the end the following new subclause:

“(II) In determining the actual net cost for in-State tuition and fees pursuant to subclause (I), the Secretary may not pay for tuition and fees relating to flight training.”;

and

(2) in clause (ii)—

(A) in subclause (I), by redesignating items (aa) and (bb) as subitems (AA) and (BB), respectively;

(B) in subclause (II), by redesignating items (aa) and (bb) as subitems (AA) and (BB), respectively;

(C) by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), respectively;

(D) by striking “In the case of a program of education pursued at a non-public or foreign institution of higher learning” and inserting “(I) In the case of a program of education described in subclause (II)”;

(E) by adding at the end the following new subclause:

“(II) A program of education described in this subclause is any of the following:

“(aa) A program of education pursued at a non-public or foreign institution of higher learning.

“(bb) A program of education pursued at a public institution of higher learning in which flight training is required to earn the degree being pursued (including with respect to a dual major, concentration, or other element of such a degree).”

(b) CERTAIN PROGRAMS OF EDUCATION CARRIED OUT UNDER CONTRACT.—Section 3313(c)(1)(A)(ii)(II) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(2)(E), is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“(cc) A program of education pursued at a public institution of higher learning in which the public institution of higher learning enters into a contract or agreement with

an entity (other than another public institution of higher learning) to provide such program of education or a portion of such program of education.”.

(c) APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided by paragraph (2), the amendments made by subsection (a) and (b) shall apply with respect to a quarter, semester, or term, as applicable, commencing on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) SPECIAL RULE FOR CURRENT STUDENTS.—In the case of an individual who, as of the date of the enactment of this Act, is using educational assistance under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, to pursue a course of education that includes a program of education described in item (bb) or (cc) of section 3313(c)(1)(A)(ii)(II) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsections (a) and (b), respectively, the amendment made by such subsection shall apply with respect to a quarter, semester, or term, as applicable, commencing on or after the date that is two years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 307. CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN TIME SPENT RECEIVING MEDICAL CARE FROM SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AS ACTIVE DUTY FOR PURPOSES OF ELIGIBILITY FOR POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3301(1)(B) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting “12301(h),” after “12301(g),”.

(b) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to active duty service by a member of a reserve component covered by section 12301(h) of title 10, United States Code, beginning on or after the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 308. WORK-STUDY ALLOWANCE.

Section 3485(a)(4) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “June 30, 2013” each place it appears and inserting “June 30, 2013, or the period beginning on June 30, 2016, and ending on June 30, 2021”.

SEC. 309. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EDUCATION ACTION PLAN.

Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall develop and publish an action plan for improving the services and assistance provided under chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code. Such plan shall include each of the following:

(1) A comprehensive analysis of, and recommendations and a proposed implementation plan for remedying workload management challenges at regional offices of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including steps to reduce counselor caseloads of veterans participating in a rehabilitation program under such chapter, particularly for counselors who are assisting veterans with traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder and counselors with educational and vocational counseling workloads.

(2) A comprehensive analysis of the reasons for the disproportionately low percentage of veterans with service-connected disabilities who served in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001, who opt to participate in a rehabilitation program under such chapter relative to the percentage of such veterans who use their entitlement to educational assistance under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, including an analysis of barriers to timely enrollment in rehabilitation programs under chapter 31 of such title and of any barriers to a veteran enrolling in the program of that veteran’s choice.

(3) Recommendations and a proposed implementation plan for encouraging more veterans with service-connected disabilities who served in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001, to participate in rehabilitation programs under chapter 31 of such title.

(4) A national staff training program for vocational rehabilitation counselors of the Department that includes the provision of—

(A) training to assist counselors in understanding the very profound disorientation experienced by warriors whose lives and life-plans have been upended and out of their control because of their injury;

(B) training to assist counselors in working in partnership with veterans on individual rehabilitation plans; and

(C) training on post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health conditions and on moderate to severe traumatic brain injury that is designed to improve the ability of such counselors to assist veterans with these conditions, including by providing information on the broad spectrum of such conditions and the effect of such conditions on an individual’s abilities and functional limitations.

SEC. 310. REDUCTION IN REDUNDANCY AND INEFFICIENCIES IN VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CLAIMS PROCESSING.

(a) VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CLAIMS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall reduce redundancy and inefficiencies in the use of information technology to process claims for rehabilitation programs under chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code, by—

(1) ensuring that all payments for and on behalf of veterans participating in a rehabilitation program under such chapter are only processed and paid out of one corporate information technology system, in order to eliminate the redundancy of multiple information technology payment systems; and

(2) enhancing the information technology system supporting veterans participating in such a program to support more accurate accounting of services and outcomes for such veterans.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2016 \$10,000,000 to carry out this section.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the changes made pursuant to subsection (a).

TITLE IV—ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

SEC. 401. CENTRALIZED REPORTING OF VETERAN ENROLLMENT BY CERTAIN GROUPS, DISTRICTS, AND CONSORTIUMS OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3684(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “32, 33,” after “31,”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘educational institution’ may include a group, district, or consortium of separately accredited educational institutions located in the same State that are organized in a manner that facilitates the centralized reporting of the enrollments in such group, district, or consortium of institutions.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to reports submitted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 402. PROVISION OF INFORMATION REGARDING VETERAN ENTITLEMENT TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 36 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§3699. Provision of certain information to educational institutions

“For each veteran or other individual pursuing a course of education that has been approved under this chapter using educational assistance to which the veteran or other individual is entitled under chapter 30, 32, 33, or 35 of this title, the Secretary shall make available to the educational institution offering the course information about the amount of such educational assistance to which the veteran or other individual is entitled. Such information shall be provided to such educational institution through a secure information technology system accessible by the educational institution and shall be regularly updated to reflect any amounts used by the veteran or other individual.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3698 the following new item:

“3699. Provision of certain information to educational institutions.”.

SEC. 403. ROLE OF STATE APPROVING AGENCIES.

(a) APPROVAL OF CERTAIN COURSES.—Section 3672(b)(2)(A) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “the following” and all that follows through the colon and inserting the following: “a program of education is deemed to be approved for purposes of this chapter if a State approving agency determines that the program is one of the following programs:”.

(b) APPROVAL OF OTHER COURSES.—Section 3675 of such title is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) by striking “The Secretary or a State approving agency” and inserting “A State approving agency, or the Secretary when acting in the role of a State approving agency,”; and

(B) by striking “offered by proprietary for-profit educational institutions” and inserting “not covered by section 3672 of this title”; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking “the Secretary or the State approving agency” each place it appears and inserting “the State approving agency, or the Secretary when acting in the role of a State approving agency,”.

SEC. 404. CRITERIA USED TO APPROVE COURSES.

(a) NONACCREDITED COURSES.—Section 3676(c)(14) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting before the period the following: “if the Secretary, in consultation with the State approving agency and pursuant to regulations prescribed to carry out this paragraph, determines such criteria are necessary and treat public, private, and proprietary for-profit educational institutions equitably”.

(b) ACCREDITED COURSES.—Section 3675(b)(3) of such title is amended by striking “and (3)” and inserting “(3), and (14)”.

(c) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to—

(1) criteria developed pursuant to paragraph (14) of subsection (c) of section 3676 of title 38, United States Code, on or after January 1, 2013; and

(2) an investigation conducted under such subsection that is covered by a reimbursement of expenses paid by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to a State pursuant to section 3674 of such title on or after October 1, 2015.

SEC. 405. COMPLIANCE SURVEYS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3693 of such title is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following new subsection (a):

“(a)(1) Except as provided in subsection (b), the Secretary shall conduct an annual compliance survey of educational institutions and training establishments offering one or more courses approved for the enrollment of eligible veterans or persons if at least 20 such veterans or persons are enrolled in any such course. The Secretary shall—

“(A) design the compliance surveys to ensure that such institutions or establishments, as the case may be, and approved courses are in compliance with all applicable provisions of chapters 30 through 36 of this title;

“(B) survey each such educational institution and training establishment not less than once during every two-year period; and

“(C) assign not fewer than one education compliance specialist to work on compliance surveys in any year for each 40 compliance surveys required to be made under this section for such year.

“(2) The Secretary, in consultation with the State approving agencies, shall—

“(A) annually determine the parameters of the surveys required under paragraph (1); and

“(B) not later than September 1 of each year, make available to the State approving agencies a list of the educational institutions and training establishments that will be surveyed during the fiscal year following the date of making such list available.”;

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) In this section, the terms ‘educational institution’ and ‘training establishment’ have the meaning given such terms in section 3452 of this title.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended—

(1) by striking “subsection (a) of this section for an annual compliance survey” and inserting “subsection (a)(1) for a compliance survey”;

(2) by striking “institution” and inserting “educational institution or training establishment”;

(3) by striking “institution’s demonstrated record of compliance” and inserting “record of compliance of such institution or establishment”.

SEC. 406. SURVEY OF INDIVIDUALS USING THEIR ENTITLEMENT TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE UNDER THE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) SURVEY REQUIRED.—By not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall enter into a contract with a non-government entity for the conduct of a survey of a statistically valid sample of individuals who have used or are using their entitlement to educational assistance under chapters 30, 32, 33, and 35 of title 38, United States Code, to pursue a program of education or training. The contract shall provide that—

(1) not later than one month before the collection of data under the survey begins, the survey shall be submitted to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives;

(2) the non-government entity shall complete the survey and submit to the Secretary the results of the survey by not later than 180 days after entering into the contract; and

(3) the survey shall be conducted by electronic means and by any other means the

non-government entity determines appropriate.

(b) INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED.—The contract under subsection (a) shall provide that the survey shall be designed to collect the following types of information about each individual surveyed, where applicable:

(1) Demographic information, including the highest level of education completed by the individual, the military occupational specialty or specialties of the individual while serving on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces or as a member of the National Guard or of a Reserve Component of the Armed Forces, and whether the individual has a service-connected disability.

(2) The opinion of the individual regarding participation in the transition assistance program under section 1144 of title 10, United States Code, and the effectiveness of the program, including instruction on the use of the benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(3) The resources the individual used to help the individual—

(A) decide to use the individual’s entitlement to educational assistance to enroll in a program of education or training; and

(B) choose the program of education or training the individual pursued.

(4) The individual’s goal when the individual enrolled in the program of education or training.

(5) The nature of the individual’s experience with the education benefits processing system of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(6) The nature of the individual’s experience with the school certifying official of the educational institution where the individual pursued the program of education or training who processed the individual’s claim.

(7) Any services or benefits the educational institution or program of education or training provided to veterans while the individual pursued the program of education or training.

(8) The type of educational institution at which the individual pursued the program of education or training.

(9) Whether the individual completed the program of education or training or the number of credit hours completed by the individual as of the time of the survey, and, if applicable, any degree or certificate obtained by the individual for completing the program.

(10) The employment status of the individual and whether such employment status differs from the employment status of the individual prior to enrolling in the program of education or training.

(11) Whether the individual is or was enrolled in a program of education on a full-time or part-time basis.

(12) The opinion of the individual on the effectiveness of the educational assistance program of the Department of Veterans Affairs under which the individual was entitled to educational assistance.

(13) Whether the individual was ever entitled to a rehabilitation under chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code, and whether the individual participated in such a program.

(14) A description of any circumstances that prevented the individual from using the individual’s entitlement to educational assistance to pursue a desired career path or degree.

(15) Whether the individual is using the individual’s entitlement to educational assistance to pursue a program of education or training or has transferred such an entitlement to a dependent.

(16) Such other matters as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after receiving the results of the survey required under this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report on the results of the survey and any recommendations of the Secretary relating to such results. Such report shall also include an unedited version of the results of the survey submitted by the non-government entity that conducted the survey.

SEC. 407. IMPROVEMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY OF THE VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) PROCESSING OF CERTAIN EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE CLAIMS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, to the maximum extent possible, make such changes and improvements to the information technology system of the Veterans Benefits Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that—

(1) to the maximum extent possible, all original and supplemental claims for educational assistance under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, are adjudicated electronically; and

(2) rules-based processing is used to make decisions with respect to such claims with little human intervention.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a plan to implement the changes and improvements described in subsection (a).

(c) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of the changes and improvements described in subsection (a).

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs \$30,000,000 to carry out this section during fiscal years 2016 and 2017.

SEC. 408. TECHNICAL AMENDMENT RELATING TO IN-STATE TUITION RATE FOR INDIVIDUALS TO WHOM ENTITLEMENT IS TRANSFERRED UNDER ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 3679(c)(2)(B) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “or 3319 of this title” and all that follows and inserting “of this title or to whom educational assistance is transferred under section 3319 of this title.”.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to a course, semester, or term that begins after July 1, 2016.

TITLE V—OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 501. AMOUNT OF LOAN GUARANTEED UNDER HOME LOAN PROGRAM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) ADJUSTMENT OF LOAN LIMIT.—Section 3703(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)(i)(IV)—

(A) by striking “the lesser of”; and

(B) by striking “or 25 percent of the loan”; and

(2) in subparagraph (C), by striking “Freddie Mac” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “amount of the loan.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect

to a loan guaranteed under section 3710 of title 38, United States Code, on or after the date that is 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 502. LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF JOB COUNSELING, TRAINING, AND PLACEMENT SERVICE FOR VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 4115. Longitudinal study of job counseling, training, and placement service for veterans

“(a) STUDY REQUIRED.—(1) The Secretary shall enter into a contract with a non-government entity to conduct a longitudinal study of a statistically valid sample of each of the groups of individuals described in paragraph (2). The contract shall provide for the study of each such group over a period of at least five years.

“(2) The groups of individuals described in this paragraph are the following:

“(A) Veterans who have received intensive services.

“(B) Veterans who did not receive intensive services but who otherwise received services under this chapter.

“(C) Veterans who did not seek or receive services under this chapter.

“(3) The study required by this subsection shall include the collection of the following information for each individual who participates in the study:

“(A) The average number of months such individual served on active duty.

“(B) The distribution of disability ratings of such individual.

“(C) Any unemployment benefits received by such individual.

“(D) The average number of months such individual was employed during the year covered by the report.

“(E) The average annual starting and ending salaries of any such individual who was employed during the year covered by the report.

“(F) The average annual income of such individual.

“(G) The average total household income of such individual for the year covered by the report.

“(H) The percentage of such individuals who own their principal residences.

“(I) The employment status of such individual.

“(J) In the case of such an individual who received services under this chapter, whether the individual believes that any service provided by a disabled veterans' outreach specialist or local veterans' employment representative helped the individual to become employed.

“(K) In the case of such an individual who believes such a service helped the individual to become employed, whether—

“(i) the individual retained the position of employment for a period of one year or longer; and

“(ii) the individual believes such a service helped the individual to secure a higher wage or salary.

“(L) The conditions under which such individual was discharged or released from the Armed Forces.

“(M) Whether such individual has used any educational assistance to which the individual is entitled under this title.

“(N) Whether such individual has participated in a rehabilitation program under chapter 31 of this title.

“(O) Demographic information about such individual.

“(P) Such other information as the Secretary determines appropriate.

“(b) ANNUAL REPORTS.—(1) By not later than July 1 of each year covered by the study required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report on the outcomes of the study during the preceding year.

“(2) The Secretary shall include in each annual report submitted under paragraph (1) any information the Secretary determines is necessary to determine the long-term outcomes of the individuals in the groups described in subsection (a)(2).”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“4115. Longitudinal study of job counseling, training, and placement service for veterans.”

SEC. 503. LIMITATIONS ON SUBCONTRACTS UNDER CONTRACTS WITH SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8127 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (l) as subsection (m); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (k) the following new subsection (l):

“(l) LIMITATIONS ON SUBCONTRACTING.—

(1)(A) The requirements applicable to a covered small business concern under section 46 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657s) shall apply with respect to a small business concern owned and controlled by a veteran with a service-connected disability or a small business concern owned and controlled by a veteran that is awarded a contract that is counted for purposes of meeting the goals under subsection (a).

“(B) For purposes of applying the requirements of section 46 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657s) pursuant to subparagraph (A), the term ‘similarly situated entity’ used in such section 46 includes a subcontractor for a small business concern owned and controlled by a veteran with a service-connected disability or a small business concern owned and controlled by a veteran described in such subparagraph (A).

“(2) Before awarding a contract that is counted for purposes of meeting the goals under subsection (a), the Secretary shall obtain from an offeror a certification that the offeror will comply with the requirements described in paragraph (1)(A) if awarded the contract. Such certification shall—

“(A) specify the exact performance requirements applicable under such paragraph; and

“(B) explicitly acknowledge that the certification is subject to section 1001 of title 18.

“(3) If the Secretary determines that a small business concern that is awarded a contract that is counted for purposes of meeting the goals under subsection (a) did not act in good faith with respect to the requirements described in paragraph (1)(A), the small business concern shall be subject to the penalties specified in—

“(A) section 16(g)(1) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 645(g)(1)); and

“(B) section 1001 of title 18.

“(4)(A) The Director of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization for the Department, established pursuant to section 15(k) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(k)), and the Chief Acquisition Officer of the Department, established pursuant to section 1702 of title 41, shall jointly implement a process using the systems described in section 16(g)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 645(g)(2)), or any other systems avail-

able, to monitor compliance with this subsection. The Chief Acquisition Officer shall refer any violations of this subsection to the Inspector General of the Department.

“(B) Not later than November 30 of each year, the Inspector General shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year during which the report is submitted that includes, for the fiscal year covered by the report—

“(i) the number of referred violations received under subparagraph (A); and

“(ii) the disposition of such referred violations, including the number of small business concerns suspended or debarred from Federal contracting or referred to the Attorney General for prosecution.”

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (l) of section 8127 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to a contract entered into after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 504. PROCEDURES FOR PROVISION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION TO STATE VETERANS AGENCIES TO FACILITATE THE FURNISHING OF ASSISTANCE AND BENEFITS TO VETERANS.

(a) PROCEDURES REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall develop procedures to share the information described in subsection (b) regarding veterans with State veterans agencies in electronic data format as a means of facilitating the furnishing of assistance and benefits to veterans.

(b) COVERED INFORMATION.—The information shared with State veterans agencies under subsection (a) regarding a veteran shall include the following:

(1) Military service and separation data.

(2) A personal email address.

(3) A personal telephone number.

(4) A mailing address.

(c) OPT-OUT ELECTION.—A veteran may elect to prevent their information from being shared with State veterans agencies under subsection (a) pursuant to a process that the Secretary shall establish for purposes of this subsection.

(d) USE OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that the information shared with State veterans agencies in accordance with the procedures developed under subsection (a) is only shared by such agencies with county government veterans service offices for such purposes as the Secretary shall specify for the administration and delivery of assistance and benefits.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentleman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to add any extraneous materials on H.R. 3016, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 3016, as amended, the Veterans Employment,

Education, and Healthcare Improvement Act.

This bill, which was introduced by the chairman of our Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, Congressman WENSTRUP of Ohio, includes a number of provisions relating to veterans' health care, education, and employment benefits.

One provision of the bill would authorize the Department of Veterans Affairs to create a new fourth administration to streamline the oversight of the many VA programs and benefits that assist veterans with transition and that promote their economic welfare. These benefits include vocational rehabilitation and employment, GI Bill education benefits, the verification of veteran-owned small businesses, the VA's portion of the Transition Assistance Program, and the home loan guaranty program.

Another provision of the bill would make needed improvements to education and vocational rehabilitation and employment benefits by, among other things, closing a costly loophole that has allowed some contracted-out flight schools to charge the VA hundreds of thousands of dollars in excessive tuition and fee payments.

Still other provisions would improve the administration of benefits and expand opportunities for the use of the home loan benefit by eliminating the loan limit that caps the amount of money the VA will guarantee under the home loan program. This would help tens of thousands of veterans who are living in high-cost areas to realize the dream that many Americans strive for.

Health-related provisions of the bill would elevate the role of podiatrists in the VA medical facilities, improve care for the newborn children of female veterans, create a pilot program on service dog training for veterans with post-traumatic stress, and require the Government Accountability Office to conduct period audits of the VA's budget.

I am grateful to Dr. WENSTRUP, to Dr. ROE, and to the many other sponsors of these provisions for their hard work and leadership in crafting and in developing this legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 3016, as amended, the VA Provider Equity Act.

The provisions of title I directly affect the health of veterans by making podiatrists equal to other doctors in the VA, by making Medal of Honor recipients a top priority in receiving health care at the VA, and by making the newborn babies of servicemembers eligible for VA health care in the first 6 weeks of life, to follow their mothers' eligibility at the VA.

The legislation authorizes a GAO audit of the Veterans Health Adminis-

tration's budget. I feel that the Veterans Health Administration has been more responsive under the leadership of Dr. David Shulkin, but I agree that everyone would be better informed of how the VHA is working if we are all starting on the same page. I am also pleased that a successful dog training program will be expanded to other parts of the country to help veterans who are recovering from TBI and PTSD.

I am particularly pleased to support provisions in H.R. 3016 which improve the veterans' education and rehabilitation program and which increase limits on the veterans' home loan program while maintaining the VA's strict lending requirements.

H.R. 3016 also contains several important improvements in education and employment programs for veterans. Representative TAKANO will have more to say because he has taken the lead on these as the ranking member of the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee.

I also want to thank Chairman MILLER for compromising on the establishment of a new administration within the VA, called the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration.

While I appreciate the chairman's attempt to compromise on another key provision, I want to make it clear that I oppose the policy to cut in half the living stipend for the children of servicemembers who have received their parents' transferred GI Bill benefits. We promised the men and women who signed up to serve in our Nation's military that they would be able to transfer their entire GI Bill benefits to a dependent spouse or child. It is unfair that we are now breaking part of that promise. While I understand that this change pays for the other essential provisions in this bill, I would have preferred that we would have kept the promise we made to servicemembers while finding other ways to pay for this package.

As this legislation moves forward, I will continue to work with my colleagues to find a different way to pay for these provisions that does not violate the promise we made to our veterans.

I had hoped our Republican colleagues would have brought this bill to the floor under an open rule so as to have given us the opportunity to propose amendments and to debate ways to improve the more controversial provisions of this bill. I am disappointed that we are not able to offer amendments to improve the bill today. Yet I will support this bill overall due to the number of positive improvements.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from the Second District of Ohio (Mr. WENSTRUP), the chairman of the Eco-

nomic Opportunity Subcommittee and a combat veteran, himself.

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3016, the Veterans Employment, Education, and Healthcare Improvement Act, as amended.

I am proud to sponsor this bill and am glad to be joined by veteran service organizations in their support, like the VFW and the DAV. It will help ensure that the veterans receive the benefits they have earned.

This veterans' legislation contains over 30 provisions from over a dozen Members of Congress and is the result of countless hours of work amongst the members of the committee. I want to highlight three specific provisions in the bill that improve the benefits our veterans receive.

First is the VA Provider Equity Act, which would strengthen access to the comprehensive, first-class health care that veterans deserve. We all know wait times for health care at the VA remain somewhat unacceptable in many places. This is true, in part, because the VA struggles to employ enough healthcare specialists to meet the needs of veterans.

The VA Provider Equity Act responds to this issue by aligning outdated VA standards more closely with the private sector practices of today. When introduced, every doctor on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs joined as an original cosponsor, understanding that we need to make it easier for the VA to recruit and retain the specialists our veterans so desperately need.

The bill also includes H.R. 2344, the Veterans Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Improvement Act of 2015, which I introduced earlier this year. The VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program helps disabled veterans to prepare for employment or to live as independently as possible. If a veteran chooses to pursue education or training through this program, current law does not require the courses to be approved for GI benefits. My provision would tighten this requirement to provide additional oversight and protections for our veterans.

We also include the GI Bill Quality Enhancement Act. By giving State Approving Agencies the increased oversight of GI Bill programs, this provision would provide veterans with the information they need to make good choices about education and training programs that offer the best quality.

The Veterans Employment, Education, and Healthcare Improvement Act would make important progress in streamlining veterans' access to their earned benefits. It is one simple step we can take to ensure that our veterans receive the benefits they have earned.

I thank Representative TAKANO for his help in moving this forward, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. I thank Ranking Member CORRINE BROWN for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3016.

While there are parts of this bill that I hope to see changed as it moves forward, it includes numerous provisions that will have a positive impact on our Nation's veteran population, including several provisions I authored.

Section 307 of this bill is the language from my GI Bill Fairness Act, bipartisan legislation to close a gap faced by our National Guardsmen and Reservists who have been repeatedly called to war throughout operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Currently, members of the Guard and Reserve who are wounded in combat are sometimes placed on Active Duty for their recovery, treatment, and rehabilitation. Unfortunately, current Federal law does not recognize such Active Duty orders as eligible for post-9/11 GI Bill education assistance, meaning that, unlike other members of the military, those who serve in the Guard and Reserve may actually lose benefits for being injured in the line of duty. This provision in H.R. 3016 would end unequal treatment and ensure these guardsmen and reservists are able to accrue GI Bill benefits, when ordered to Active Duty, for the purposes of receiving medical care.

H.R. 3016 also includes my Work-Study for Student Veterans Act, which would reinstate certain VA work-study activities that expired on June 30, 2013. The VA's Student Work-Study Allowance Program allows qualifying student veterans who are in college degree programs or in vocational or professional programs to be paid for working in a variety of capacities on campus, at VA facilities, or at other veteran-centered organizations to assist fellow veterans. The work-study program achieves two important goals: offering student veterans a way to earn a little extra money and providing transitioning veterans with the guidance and assistance of fellow veterans who know firsthand what that transition is like.

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I also strongly support section 306 of the bill, which caps the amount of post-9/11 GI Bill funds available to flight schools—private flight schools—that contract with community colleges at the same amount that the GI Bill caps funds available to private universities.

Due to a current loophole in the GI Bill, student veterans have been able to take pilot training classes with questionable job placement prospects at exorbitant cost to the taxpayers. According to the Los Angeles Times, one flight company charged 12 student veterans over \$500,000 each in GI Bill funds.

While it is true that flight training can be more expensive than other vocational or academic programs, VA data shows that while the number of student veterans taking flight training increased by only 9 percent between fiscal years '13 and '14, the total cost to taxpayers for this program grew by 87 percent during this same period, costing \$37 million in taxpayer dollars.

The drafters of the GI Bill never intended to create this windfall for the flight school industry. What's more, VFW and the American Legion support the cap, agreeing that this loophole is a disservice to student veterans who would be better served by one of the many flight school programs that cost well under the cap.

I do have serious reservations about section 301 of this legislation, which would cut by half the monthly housing allowance provided to children of servicemembers who will have post-9/11 GI Bill benefits transferred to them. I don't believe that we should be paying for the great provisions in this bill by cutting benefits.

Furthermore, the bill on the House floor today does not include a grandfather clause. That means that some current servicemembers will see the terms that they agreed to when they signed up changed. As this bill advances, I strongly urge the chairman and ranking member to find another pay-for and eliminate section 301.

With that being said, I believe overall, with some tweaks, this legislation will provide valuable support for our veterans, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3016.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM), who is from the Fifth District of Louisiana and is a fine member of our Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman MILLER, Ranking Member BROWN, Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Ranking Member TITUS, and all Members who worked so hard to bring this bill to the floor.

There are many provisions in H.R. 677, as amended, that would help improve services for veterans and their families, but I want to focus my remarks on a section that I am proud to have authored.

First, the bill would authorize an automatic COLA for beneficiaries who receive the VA disability compensation. Although the Congress generally approves COLA legislation every year, veterans have to wait until Congress actually acts.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ).

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, as you have heard, I associate myself with the remarks of the positive nature of the provisions in this bill. It has been the

House Veterans' Affairs Committee that has been in the forefront of improving veterans care, from the post-9/11 GI Bill, to healthcare changes, to job placements. We have been at the forefront of VA improvements, accountability, and reform.

While this bill continues in that vein, as you have heard here, there is one provision in it that, for me personally, I cannot cross. To pay for these programs, an offset has to be found. That is a noble and correct principle; meaning, if we add anything, we need to find the pay-for somewhere else to not add to the debt.

In the case of this, to pay for these absolutely wonderful programs, many which I helped write, we went back and we took a benefit. I am not going to debate whether that benefit was overly generous. I am not going to debate how many are using it.

If one veteran signed up, served this Nation, went overseas and fought for our defense and they were promised a benefit, to pull it back at this time is an egregious breach of trust. At a time when the VA is hurting, at a time when the faith in government is hurting, the faith in the media, our soldiers need to know there are some things that will not be crossed.

So I want to be very clear on this. The motives of the people who worked on this should never be questioned. I have never seen people with more integrity and more care for our veterans. Thought goes into this. Improvements try to be made. And when the American people are frustrated and they see nothing gets done, this committee and the bipartisanship of the care of our veterans is absolutely paramount.

This is a devilish situation. How do we find the pay-for? My question is—and, yes, perhaps it is a chip on my shoulder of an enlisted soldier—why come to the soldiers first? There is nowhere else in the Federal Government that we can find this.

The chairman rightfully pointed out today another egregious waste of money in decorating and bonuses to VA officials who are not fulfilling their duty. My question is: can't we find some way to at least get the people through who were there and, if we want to make the changes, do so? I know every effort in good faith has been made to do that. Yes, it can be argued that this was overly generous and should not have been there in the first place, but it was. It was signed up for and people went. I have stood in front of troops who said: You promised it to me, and I am counting on using it.

It seems to me that as Representatives of the American people, I can go back and ask my constituents, and they will agree on almost nothing. If I ask them, "Should we do everything necessary to care for our veterans," the answer is "yes." If we can't find the offset, then let's have the courage

to go back and ask them what would they be willing to do.

I myself will be voting “no” on this piece of legislation, but I just urge my colleagues to have to weigh this. I hope over the years that I have proven I am not a person who would get in the way of having the perfect get in the way of the good or not trying to work for compromises. It is a line that I feel, if we cross, the trust gets breached, and it is very difficult to gain it back.

I thank all Members who worked on this.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers at this time.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, to my good friend from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ), who is a stalwart supporter of veterans on our committee and brings many, many good issues to the forefront for both sides of the aisle to be able to work on together, I do not question his motives in his negative vote against this bill.

I would say that any child who has already had their parents’ post-9/11 child benefits transferred to them will not be affected by this change. They would still receive 100 percent of their current living stipend.

It also gives 180 days after enactment before it begins to take effect. So any servicemembers who are eligible to transfer their benefits but have not done so would have 180 days to do so, so their child would still receive 100 percent of their monthly stipend.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from the 15th Congressional District of Ohio (Mr. STIVERS).

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and the folks on the committee for their great work on this bill. I stand today to support the bill and also to recognize one of the sections is the Veterans Dog Therapy Act, which was rolled into H.R. 3016.

We lose 22 of our former servicemembers every day to suicide. This legislation will create a pilot program at three to five of our VA facilities, which is modeled on the Warrior Canine Connection program for getting access to service dogs for our veterans.

Veterans enrolled in this program with service dogs have seen improvements in their PTSD and TBI-related symptoms. Additionally, it is shown that veterans who own service dogs have fewer symptoms of depression, better interpersonal skills, a lowered risk of substance abuse, and better overall mental health. While no one thing can help cure our suicide epidemic among veterans, this is a good start.

I want to thank TIM WALZ for being my cosponsor on this bill. I am glad it is rolled in.

I urge my colleagues to support this provision as well as the entire bill.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman

from the Ninth Congressional District of Georgia (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 3016, the Veterans Employment, Education, and Healthcare Improvement Act.

I want to thank the chairman for yielding and his leadership. As we have heard today, this is something that truly does bring us together. As someone who continues to serve in the Air Force and looking at my brothers and sisters in arms, this is something we should be about.

I want to thank my colleague from Ohio (Mr. WENSTRUP) for bringing this important legislation to the floor, including language from my legislation, H.R. 423, concerning VA post-delivery care services.

I also want to thank Dr. ROE from Tennessee for his amendment that would extend the coverage for a female veteran’s post-delivery care to 42 days.

Female veterans face unique challenges, especially when many of the services available to them are designed for males. One of the most significant problems female veterans face is access to health care.

Currently, the VA is authorized to provide up to 7 days of post-delivery care for a female veteran’s newborn baby. Mr. ROE’s amendment will expand coverage to 42 days, the length that the VA currently provides for mothers.

Females represent the fastest growing group of veterans who are enrolling in VA health care, and many of them are mothers or soon will be. It is past time for the VA to expand its care and services to meet the needs of the female veteran. These women have risked their lives to protect our Nation, and our responsibility to them doesn’t end when they are no longer serving on Active Duty. In fact, their service to our country may jeopardize the very lives of their future children, meaning our responsibility to them is even greater.

Research shows that having PTSD in the year before delivery increases a woman’s risk of premature delivery by 35 percent. Premature infants typically need longer hospitalizations after they are born. I know what it is like to be the parent of a little baby who needed intensive medical care for an extended period of time from the moment she was born. By the way, she is getting ready to turn 24 right now.

Any new mother who has given selflessly to her country shouldn’t have to worry about Congress standing in her way as she tries to give selflessly to her own child.

I thank my colleague and Chairman MILLER for their leadership on this issue, and I would urge the passage of this bill.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers at this time.

I would encourage all my colleagues to support H.R. 3016, as amended.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3016, “Veterans Employment, Education, and Healthcare Improvement.”

I support this bill because it will benefit our veterans who have suffered debilitating injuries to their lower extremities as a result of their service to the United States.

Specifically, this bill clarifies the role of podiatrists in the Department of Veteran Affairs and increases their pay grade to match other VA physician compensation.

There is a need in the Department of Veteran Affairs to classify podiatrists as physicians.

Our veterans continue to suffer from a variety of foot and lower leg conditions as a direct result of their honorable service which can result from both traumatic and progressive etiologies.

A growing number of our veterans have diabetes, which puts them at risk for other disorders and even amputation.

The VA Podiatry Program Office spends a great deal of its time collaborating with a number of other programs developing and implementing initiatives relative to the prevention and treatment of diabetes and disorders related to diabetes.

Houston, Texas is home to the Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center, in one of the nation’s greatest medical centers; the MEDMC has 837 medical providers, but no board certified podiatrists.

Our veterans need and deserve specialized treatment and assistance for foot injuries.

My congressional district is home to over 25,000 veterans and as an avid supporter of Veteran Affairs I strongly support this bill.

As a supporter and co-sponsor of numerous bills to assist veterans, such as H.R. 90, the Healthcare Improvement Act, I strongly believe it is our duty to give our veterans the best care when they return home.

It is important we recognize podiatrists, who change the lives of our veterans, to be defined as physicians by the Department of Veteran Affairs, and increase their pay grade to reflect other VA physician compensation.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to The Veterans Employment, Education, and Health Care Improvement Act (H.R. 3016).

H.R. 3016 includes important bipartisan legislation to improve the health and opportunities of veterans. This legislation will include podiatrists within the Department of Veterans Affairs definition of physician, extending the same promotions and leadership positions within the VA as other physicians. H.R. 3016 also includes numerous stand alone bills that will improve the quality of health care and economic opportunity for veterans, including establishing the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration. I wholeheartedly support these key provisions of H.R. 3016, but the pay is unacceptable for our brave service members and their families.

When our brave women and men signed up to serve, we made them a promise. We assured them clearly defined benefits that were guaranteed to them upon completion of their duties. H.R. 3016 as currently written breaks that promise. Not only does it harm the students who depend on these housing allowances to attend school, it says to our service

members that the terms of the deal they made with their government have been changed without their knowledge or consent. It is essential that Americans know exactly what their service to their country entitles them to. Passage of this legislation will severely undermine that agreement.

Title III of this legislation will reduce by fifty percent the housing allowance provided to children who have had Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits transferred to them. This cut will begin one hundred and eighty days after the enactment of H.R. 3016. Furthermore, the legislation provides no grandfather clause that will exempt the families of current service members from this harmful cut.

Again, I support the important provisions of this legislation that will improve the lives of our veterans, and I remain committed to working in a bipartisan fashion to see these enacted. However, I cannot support legislation that is paid for by breaking a promise to our veterans. When Americans sign up to serve, they must be certain that the benefits guaranteed to them will be waiting when they return home. As Members of Congress, upholding this commitment is one of our most important duties.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3016, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs relating to health care, educational assistance, and vocational rehabilitation, to establish the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CAREER-READY STUDENT VETERANS ACT

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2360) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the approval of certain programs of education for purposes of educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2360

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Career-Ready Student Veterans Act".

SEC. 2. APPROVAL OF COURSES FOR PURPOSES OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **APPROVAL OF NON-ACCREDITED COURSES.**—Subsection (c) of section 3676 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (14) as paragraph (16); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (13) the following new paragraphs:

"(14) In the case of a program designed to prepare an individual for licensure or certification in a State, the program meets any instructional curriculum licensure or certification requirements of such State.

"(15) In the case of a program designed to prepare an individual for employment pursuant to standards developed by a board or agency of a State in an occupation that requires approval or licensure, the program is approved or licensed by such board or agency of the State."

(b) **EXCEPTIONS.**—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(f)(1) The Secretary may waive the requirements of paragraph (14) or (15) of subsection (c) in the case of a program of education offered by an educational institution if the Secretary determines all of the following:

"(A) The educational institution is not accredited by an agency or association recognized by the Secretary of Education.

"(B) The program did not meet the requirements of such paragraph at any time during the two-year period preceding the date of the waiver.

"(C) The waiver furthers the purposes of the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary or would further the education interests of individuals eligible for assistance under such programs.

"(D) The educational institution does not provide any commission, bonus, or other incentive payment based directly or indirectly on success in securing enrollments or financial aid to any persons or entities engaged in any student recruiting or admission activities or in making decisions regarding the award of student financial assistance, except for the recruitment of foreign students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal student assistance.

"(2) Not later than 30 days after the Secretary issues a waiver under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to Congress notice of the waiver and the justification of the Secretary for issuing the waiver."

(c) **APPROVAL OF ACCREDITED PROGRAMS.**—Section 3675(b)(3) of such title is amended—

(1) by striking "and (3)" and inserting "(3), (14), and (15)"; and

(2) by inserting before the period at the end the following: "(or, with respect to such paragraphs (14) and (15), the requirements under such paragraphs are waived pursuant to subsection (f) of section 3676)".

(d) **DISAPPROVAL OF COURSES.**—Section 3679 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the Secretary shall disapprove a course of education described in section 3676(c)(14) or (15) unless the educational institution providing the course of education publicly discloses any conditions or additional requirements, including training, experience, or exams, required to obtain the license, certification, or approval for which the course of education is designed to provide preparation."

(e) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 3672(b)(2)(A)(i) of such title is amended by striking "An accredited" and inserting "Except as provided in paragraphs (14) and (15) of section 3676(c) of this title, an accredited".

(f) **APPLICABILITY.**—If after enrollment in a course of education that is subject to disapproval by reason of an amendment made by this Act, an individual pursues one or more courses of education at the same educational institution while remaining continuously enrolled

(other than during regularly scheduled breaks between courses, semesters or terms) at that institution, any course so pursued by the individual at that institution while so continuously enrolled shall not be subject to disapproval by reason of such amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentleman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material they may have on H.R. 2360, as amended, in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The post-9/11 GI Bill provides student veterans with a wonderful opportunity to educate themselves for a job in the new economy. Thousands of training programs and schools have been approved for use of this program, which has benefited millions of veterans.

Unfortunately, there are some schools that are not simply providing quality education or training that sufficiently prepares students for jobs in their field of study.

The committee has found that, in some cases, students have been caught in a situation where the school they attended is properly accredited, but the program they are using at the school is not. This has led to situations where students have completed a training or a degree program only to find out that this training does not qualify them to receive the necessary credentials or take the necessary tests to practice in the career field for which they used their benefits.

This was clearly not the intention of the GI Bill, and I am glad that this bill would ensure that in order to be eligible for GI Bill benefits, an accredited or nonaccredited program must meet State accreditation, licensure, or certification standards. This requirement would not only protect student veterans but would also protect the integrity of the GI Bill for future generations.

I want to thank Chairman WENSTRUP of our Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity and the author of the bill, Ranking Member TAKANO, for their work on this legislation, which has my full support.

I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 2360, as amended.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2360, the Career-Ready Student Veterans Act. Mr. Speaker, I do so for two important reasons.

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The first is that it protects veterans using their GI Bill benefits by requiring that all career education programs meet proper accreditation, licensure, and certification requirements in order to be eligible for the GI Bill.

The second reason I am so happy to support H.R. 2360 is that it represents the very best of the legislative process. It is the product of collaboration between the majority and the minority, but it is also a collaboration between Congress and the VSO and academic communities.

I want to give due credit to the bill's original author, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity Ranking Member MARK TAKANO, and Chairman WENSTRUP and his staff for working so hard to ensure that the bill meets its goal of preparing student veterans for their chosen fields of study.

The Career-Ready Student Veterans Act puts in place a protection for student veterans which already exists for servicemen who use the Department of Defense tuition assistance benefits.

I am pleased that the bill creates this basic fairness and ensures that the GI Bill benefits help veterans earn credit that will lead to meaningful employment.

In addition to ensuring that career-education programs meet proper accreditation requirements, the bill also requires that they publicly disclose any additional steps that the student veteran needs to take to prepare them for entry into their chosen profession.

I understand this legislation has passed out of committee in the Senate and enjoys bipartisan support there. Again, I want to congratulate the bill's original authors on this side and offer my strong support.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Phoenixville, Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO).

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 2360, the Career-Ready Student Veterans Act, a straightforward solution that will ensure that career education programs set our veterans on the proper path to their desired employment.

As a proud member of the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity and a cosponsor of this legislation, H.R. 2360 would ensure that GI Bill-eligible career education programs provide our veterans with the accreditation and credentials they need to build a career in the professional field or specialty of their choosing.

This bill requires that career-education programs that accept GI Bill

tuition payments must have programmatic accreditation if accreditation is required for employment in the career for which the program is designed to prepare its students.

The bill also requires that career-education programs designed to prepare an individual for licensure or certification in a State must meet the curriculum and instructional requirements set by the State for licensure or certification.

Mr. Speaker, if our veterans invest their time and effort to learn a skill set, they will have the peace of mind to know they are on the right career-education path and the confidence to know that, if they work hard, they will receive the appropriate certification they need to start their desired employment.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank Mr. TAKANO for his leadership on this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bipartisan legislation, H.R. 2360, the Career-Ready Student Veterans Act. This bill will ensure that our veterans are using their post-9/11 GI benefits at career-education programs that actually do what they say they do: prepare students for entry into a specific career field.

My legislation would require that, in order to be eligible to receive GI Bill benefits, programs have programmatic accreditation, if required by the State for employment in a specific field.

Programs also must prepare students for licensure or certification in a field, if required by the State, and they must meet any State-mandated curricular or instructional requirements.

This closely mirrors language included in the fiscal year 2014 National Defense Authorization Act in relation to military tuition assistance.

We all know the importance of a good job in helping veterans successfully transition out of service and into civilian life. Education and training is often a necessary part of finding that job.

Unfortunately, too many veterans waste their time and hard-earned education benefits at career-education programs that don't actually prepare them for that career field. For example, most States require prospective lawyers to have graduated from a law program accredited by the American Bar Association in order to sit for the bar exam.

As we all know, you must pass the bar to practice law. When veterans unwittingly spend their GI Bill benefits at law programs not accredited by the ABA, they graduate with no prospects of becoming a lawyer in most States. My legislation will make sure that this no longer happens.

I thank Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member BROWN as well as Chairman WENSTRUP and my friend from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO) for their support.

I urge all my colleagues to vote in favor of the Career-Ready Student Veterans Act.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2360.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers at this time. I, too, urge a "yea" vote on H.R. 2360, as amended.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the House Committee on Homeland Security and the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, I rise in support of H.R. 2360, the "Career-Ready Student Veterans Act of 2015."

This bill encourages new criteria for state approval of applications by educational institutions providing veterans with non-accredited courses.

H.R. 2360 respects the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) educational assistance, provides specific instructions for when the VA can waive requirements by the bill, and instructs the VA to submit to Congress notice of, and justification for, a waiver within 30 days of issuance.

The bill clarifies specific circumstances for when the VA shall disapprove a course of education and when a course shall not be subject to disapproval by reason of this Act.

Specifically, H.R. 2360 achieves these goals by:

1. Requiring programs designed to prepare individuals for state licensure or certification to fulfill any state instructional curriculum licensure or certification requirements

2. Providing conditions for the Department of Veterans Affairs to refer to when waiving requirements or disapproving a course of education

Finally, H.R. 2360 facilitates the approval of certain programs of education for the purposes of enhancing educational assistance provided by the Department of Veteran Affairs.

I am pleased that H.R. 2360 aligns with the significance of legislation I have introduced in the past.

I introduced H.R. 76, Helping to Encourage Real Opportunity for Veterans Transitioning from Battlespace to Workplace Act Of 2015. This bill also enhanced the educational options for veterans by focusing on the necessity to establish opportunities that facilitate the transition for veterans from the hostile armed force environment to school or workplace.

I introduced H.R. 78, New Chance for a New Start in Life Act of 2015. This bill addresses financial awareness pertaining to grants, and employment training programs to assist long-term unemployed persons to re-enter the workforce in areas projected to have the highest rates of demand.

Pertaining to educational institutions providing veterans with non-accredited courses, enforcement of the criteria for state approval

of applications allows veterans to benefit from the improvement of the approval process.

H.R. 2360 is the first step toward enforcing this implementation strategy and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the "Career-Ready Student Veterans Act of 2015."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2360, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LAKE BALDWIN VETERANS AFFAIRS OUTPATIENT CLINIC PROPERTY CONVEYANCE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4056) to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States to the property known as "The Community Living Center" at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4056

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS LAND CONVEYANCE, LAKE BALDWIN VETERANS AFFAIRS OUTPATIENT CLINIC, ORLANDO, FLORIDA.

(a) CONVEYANCE AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the property known as "The Community Living Center", including any improvements thereon, which is part of the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida, located at 5201 Raymond Street, Orlando, Florida.

(b) CONDITIONS OF CONVEYANCE.—The conveyance under subsection (a) shall be subject to the following conditions:

(1) The recipient shall agree to accept the conveyed real property in its condition at the time of the conveyance.

(2) The recipient shall agree not to apply the small house design model of the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Construction and Facilities Management Design Guide for Community Living Centers to the conveyed real property.

(c) USE OF PROPERTY.—The deed of conveyance for the parcels of real property conveyed under subsection (a) shall provide that all of the property be used and maintained for the sole purpose of providing nursing home, domiciliary, or adult day health care to veterans.

(d) DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.—The exact acreage and legal description of the parcels of real property conveyed under subsection (a) shall be determined by surveys satisfactory to the Secretary.

(e) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Secretary may require such additional

terms and conditions in connection with the conveyances under subsection (a) as the Secretary considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to add any extraneous material they may have on H.R. 4056, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4056, as amended, which was introduced by my colleague and fellow Floridian, Congressman MICA.

This bill would authorize the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs to convey The Community Living Center on the Lake Baldwin campus in Orlando to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs.

This conveyance is in line with the VA's plans to repurpose the Lake Baldwin campus and would save VA from expending money, maintaining the property that the Department has no further use for while allowing this parcel of land to continue to be used in the service of our veterans.

I am grateful to Congressman MICA for sponsoring this legislation.

I would urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation, H.R. 4056, introduced by my colleague from Florida, Mr. JOHN MICA, will authorize the VA to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs The Community Living Center at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic in Orlando, Florida.

When the Orlando VA center is fully completed, it will include 134 inpatient beds, an outpatient clinic, parking garage, chapel, and central energy plant.

One of the first buildings opened at the Orlando VA Medical Center was the 120-bed Community Living Center and the 60-bed domiciliary. Both are now open and accepting veterans. With the new facilities, it is not necessary for the VA to keep two facilities open in close proximity.

I am pleased that Mr. MICA was able to work with the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs to take over this facility and continue to serve the veterans of central Florida.

Let me just say one other thing. I am just very impressed with the opening of this facility, the domiciliary, and also the clinic. We were able to get that facility open before the hospital opened, and it was taking veterans.

In addition to that, the Department of Defense gave that facility to the Department of Veterans Affairs—institutional memory is very important—and I am just very pleased that we will continue to use this facility for veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. MICA for bringing this before the House.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from the Seventh District of Florida (Mr. MICA), who authored this piece of legislation.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank Chairman MILLER and also thank Ranking Member BROWN for their strong support in helping to expedite this legislation.

This is a simple measure. It does transfer a vacant 120-bed VA nursing care building in Orlando's VA veteran Baldwin Park facility to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, as the chairman described.

As the ranking member mentioned, we actually have opened a 120-bed new facility to the south of Orlando and a 60-bed domiciliary unit also open now for nearly 2 years. Adjacent to that is a new hospital at Lake Nona.

I think Ms. BROWN was with me back in 1999 when this 120-bed nursing care facility was dedicated. The facility is not that old. It was closed 2 years ago when we opened the new facility, and the VA used that building and some of the rooms for transition for training for employment.

Now the new hospital is open. The new 120-bed facility is open to the south and domiciliary unit. We have agreement from the State of Florida to take that facility. You might be interested to know why central Florida would want another veterans facility.

In some areas, there is a declining population. The chief financial officer of the State just announced that we had 1,000 new people come to Florida every day last year. We have now exceeded 20 million. Many of those are veterans, and they are settling in central Florida.

We do have an agreement with the State of Florida to assume this facility. They can open it quicker. They can do it in a cost-effective manner for VA. They can take some of the burden off of the Federal VA, which we know has a full set of challenges right now.

I want to thank VA Secretary McDonald. I also want to thank my colleagues in 2014, the ranking member, Ms. BROWN; Mr. WEBSTER; Mr. GRAYSON; and myself.

We all wrote to Secretary Shinseki, the Secretary at that time, and asked

that this be done. It has taken a little bit of time, but we are getting there.

Again, I ask concurrence in passing H.R. 4056. It will expedite and make available the needed nursing homes with our aging veterans population and many thousands of veterans moving to the State of Florida and, particularly, central Florida.

I thank you again for expediting this, and I ask for the House to concur in passing H.R. 4056.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I again thank Mr. MICA for his leadership in this area.

I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 4056.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I, too, urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4056, as amended.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4056, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States to the property known as 'The Community Living Center' at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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AMERICAN HEROES COLA ACT OF 2015

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 677) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for annual cost-of-living adjustments to be made automatically by law each year in the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain service-connected disabled veterans, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 677

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "American Heroes COLA Act of 2015".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Expansion of eligibility for medals.

Sec. 3. Definitions relating to claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 4. Quarterly reports on formal and informal claims for benefits under laws administered by Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 5. Expedited payment of survivor's benefits.

Sec. 6. Priority for processing claims of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 7. Treatment of medical evidence provided by non-Department of Veterans Affairs medical professionals in support of claims for disability compensation.

Sec. 8. Automatic annual increase in rates of disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation.

Sec. 9. Improvement of fiduciaries for veterans.

Sec. 10. Board of Veterans' Appeals video hearings.

Sec. 11. Improvements to authority for performance of medical disabilities examinations by contract physicians.

Sec. 12. Pilot program on fully developed appeals.

Sec. 13. Deadline for certification of appeals forms by regional offices of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 14. Evaluation of backlog of disability claims and appeals of claims of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 15. Methods for validating certain World War II Merchant Mariner service considered to be active service by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 16. Designation of American World War II Cities.

Sec. 17. Sense of Congress regarding American veterans disabled for life.

Sec. 18. Extension of pilot program on counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated from service in the Armed Forces.

SEC. 2. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR MEDALS.

Section 2306(d)(4) of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

"(4)(A) In lieu of furnishing a headstone or marker under this subsection to a deceased individual described in subparagraph (B), the Secretary may furnish, upon request, a medallion or other device of a design determined by the Secretary to signify the deceased individual's status as a veteran, to be attached to a headstone or marker furnished at private expense.

"(B) A deceased individual described in this subsection is an individual who—

"(i) served in the Armed Forces on or after April 6, 1917; and

"(ii) is eligible for a headstone or marker furnished under paragraph (1) (or would be so eligible but for the date of the death of the individual)."

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS RELATING TO CLAIMS FOR BENEFITS UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 5100 of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

"§ 5100. Definitions

"In this chapter:

"(1) The term 'claimant' means any individual applying for, or submitting a claim for, any benefit under the laws administered by the Secretary.

"(2) The term 'claim' means a communication in writing requesting a determination of entitlement or evidencing a belief in entitlement to a benefit under the laws administered by the Secretary.

"(3) The term 'formal claim' means a claim submitted on an application form prescribed by the Secretary."

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 51 of such title is further amended by striking the item relating to section 5100 and inserting the following new item:

"5100. Definitions."

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 5100 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to a claim submitted on or after such date.

SEC. 4. QUARTERLY REPORTS ON FORMAL AND INFORMAL CLAIMS FOR BENEFITS UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) QUARTERLY REPORTS.—During the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives quarterly reports on formal and informal claims submitted to the Secretary. Each such report shall include, for the three-month period covered by the report—

(1) the total number of claims submitted to the Secretary;

(2) the total number of informal claims submitted to the Secretary;

(3) the total number of formal claims submitted to the Secretary;

(4) the total number of forms indicating an intent to file a claim for benefits submitted to the Secretary;

(5) the total number of claims notification letters that included an invitation to the claimant to submit an additional formal claim that was reasonably raised during the adjudication of the claim for which the notification letter is sent;

(6) of the claimants who received notification letters described in paragraph (5), the total number who submitted a formal claim in response to the invitation included in the letter;

(7) the total number of electronically filed claims submitted to the Secretary; and

(8) the total number of fully-developed claims submitted to the Secretary.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs should develop a designated form for an increase or reopening of a claim that does not require the resubmission of information previously submitted on a formal claim form.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The terms "claim", "claimant", and "formal claim" have the meanings given such terms in section 5100 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by section 4.

(2) The term "informal claim" means a communication in writing requesting a determination of entitlement or evidencing a belief in entitlement, to a benefit under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs that—

(A) is submitted in a format other than on an application form prescribed by the Secretary;

(B) indicates an intent to apply for one or more benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary;

(C) identifies the benefit sought;

(D) is made or submitted by a claimant, his or her duly authorized representative, a Member of Congress, or another person acting on behalf of a claimant who meets the requirements established by the Secretary for such purpose; and

(E) may include a report of examination or hospitalization, if the report relates to a disability which may establish such an entitlement.

(3) The term “reasonably raised” with respect to a claim means that evidence of an entitlement to a benefit under the laws administered by the Secretary is inferred or logically placed at issue upon a sympathetic reading of another claim and the record developed with respect to that claim.

SEC. 5. EXPEDITED PAYMENT OF SURVIVOR'S BENEFITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5101(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “A specific” and inserting “(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), a specific”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(B)(i) The Secretary may pay benefits under chapters 13 and 15 and sections 2302, 2307, and 5121 of this title to a survivor of a veteran who has not filed a formal claim if the Secretary determines that the record contains sufficient evidence to establish the entitlement of the survivor to such benefits.

“(ii) For purposes of this subparagraph and section 5110 of this title, the earlier of the following dates shall be treated as the date of the receipt of the survivor's application for benefits described in clause (i):

“(I) The date on which the survivor of a veteran (or the representative of such a survivor) notifies the Secretary of the death of the veteran through a death certificate or other relevant medical evidence indicating that the death was due to a service-connected or compensable disability.

“(II) The head of any other department or agency of the Federal Government notifies the Secretary of the death of the veteran.

“(iii) In notifying the Secretary of the death of a veteran as described in clause (ii)(I), the survivor (or the representative of such a survivor) may submit to the Secretary additional documents relating to such death without being required to file a formal claim.”.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on benefits paid pursuant to covered claims.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of covered claims adjudicated during the one-year period preceding the date of the report, disaggregated by the following:

(i) Claims in which the claimant claimed entitlement to compensation on the basis of the claimant's status as the spouse of a deceased veteran.

(ii) Claims in which the claimant claimed entitlement to compensation on the basis of the claimant's status as the child of a deceased veteran.

(iii) Claims in which the claimant claimed entitlement to compensation on the basis of the claimant's status as the parent of a deceased veteran.

(B) The number of covered claims that were adjudicated during such period and for

which compensation was not awarded, disaggregated by clauses (i) through (iii) of subparagraph (A).

(C) A comparison of the accuracy and timeliness of covered claims adjudicated during such period with non-covered claims filed by survivors of a veteran.

(D) The findings of the Secretary with respect to adjudicating covered claims.

(E) Such recommendations as the Secretary may have for legislative or administrative action to improve the adjudication of claims submitted to the Secretary for benefits under chapters 13 and 15 and sections 2302, 2307, and 5121 of title 38, United States Code.

(3) COVERED CLAIM DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “covered claim” means a claim covered by section 5101(a)(1)(B) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to claims for benefits based on a death occurring on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 6. PRIORITY FOR PROCESSING CLAIMS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 51 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 5109C. Priority for processing claims

“(a) PRIORITY.—In processing claims for compensation under this chapter, the Secretary shall provide the following claimants with priority over other claimants:

“(1) Veterans who have attained the age of 70.

“(2) Veterans who are terminally ill.

“(3) Veterans with life-threatening illnesses.

“(4) Homeless veterans (as defined in section 2002 of this title).

“(5) Veterans who were awarded the Medal of Honor.

“(6) Veterans who are former prisoners of war.

“(7) Veterans whose claims are being reviewed again in relation to a previously denied claim relating to military sexual trauma.

“(8) Veterans whom the Secretary determines, on a case-by-case basis, are seriously or very seriously injured.

“(9) Veterans whom the Secretary determines, on a case-by-case basis, should be given priority under this section based on an application for good cause established by the Secretary.

“(b) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall prescribe regulations to carry out subsection (a).”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 5109B the following new item:

“5109C. Priority for processing claims.”.

SEC. 7. TREATMENT OF MEDICAL EVIDENCE PROVIDED BY NON-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS IN SUPPORT OF CLAIMS FOR DISABILITY COMPENSATION.

(a) ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS OF PRIVATE PHYSICIAN EXAMINATIONS.—Section 5125 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “For purposes” and inserting “(a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsections:

“(b) SUFFICIENCY OF EVIDENCE.—If a veteran has submitted a medical opinion or report of a medical examination administered

by a private physician in support of the veteran's claim, the Secretary may not order a medical examination to be administered by a Department physician unless the Secretary provides the veteran with a thorough explanation of why the medical opinion or report submitted by the veteran was not sufficiently complete and the reason why additional medical evidence is necessary.

“(c) SUFFICIENTLY COMPLETE DEFINED.—For purposes of a medical opinion or report described in subsection (a), the term ‘sufficiently complete’ means competent, credible, probative, and containing such information as may be required to make a decision on the claim for which the medical opinion or report is provided.”.

(b) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to medical evidence submitted after the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act by veterans who have not submitted any claim for disability compensation to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs before such date.

(c) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—During the three-year period beginning three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate an annual report on the implementation of section 5125(b) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(2) MATTERS INCLUDED.—Each report under paragraph (1) shall include, with respect to the year covered by the report, the following:

(A) The number of veterans who submitted a medical opinion or report of a medical examination administered by a private physician in support of the veteran's claim for disability compensation as described in section 5125(b) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(B) Of the number of veterans described in subparagraph (A), the number of veterans whose medical opinion or report of a medical examination administered by a private physician was determined by the Secretary to not be sufficiently complete pursuant to such section 5125(b), including the five most frequent reasons for such a determination.

(C) A comparison of the approval rate of claims for disability compensation with respect to—

(i) veterans who submitted medical opinions or reports of a medical examination administered by a private physician in support of the veteran's claim; and

(ii)(I) veterans who did submit such opinions or reports but such opinions or reports were determined by the Secretary to not be sufficiently complete pursuant to such section 5125(b); and

(II) veterans who did not submit such opinions or reports.

SEC. 8. AUTOMATIC ANNUAL INCREASE IN RATES OF DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION.

(a) INDEXING TO SOCIAL SECURITY INCREASES.—Section 5312 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d)(1) During the nine-year period beginning on December 1, 2016, whenever there is an increase in benefit amounts payable under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) as a result of a determination made under section 215(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)), the Secretary shall, effective on the date of such increase in benefit

amounts, increase the dollar amounts in effect for the payment of disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation by the Secretary, as specified in paragraph (2), as such amounts were in effect immediately before the date of such increase in benefit amounts payable under title II of the Social Security Act, by the same percentage as the percentage by which such benefit amounts are increased.

“(2) The dollar amounts to be increased pursuant to paragraph (1) are the following:

“(A) **WARTIME DISABILITY COMPENSATION.**—Each of the dollar amounts in effect under section 1114 of this title.

“(B) **ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR DEPENDENTS.**—Each of the dollar amounts in effect under section 1115(1) of this title.

“(C) **CLOTHING ALLOWANCE.**—The dollar amount in effect under section 1162 of this title.

“(D) **DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO SURVIVING SPOUSE.**—Each of the dollar amounts in effect under subsections (a) through (d) of section 1311 of such title.

“(E) **DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO CHILDREN.**—Each of the dollar amounts in effect under sections 1313(a) and 1314 of such title.

“(3) Whenever there is an increase under paragraph (1) in amounts in effect for the payment of disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation, the Secretary shall publish such amounts, as increased pursuant to such paragraph, in the Federal Register at the same time as the material required by section 215(i)(2)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)(2)(D)) is published by reason of a determination under section 215(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)).

“(4) Each dollar amount increased under paragraph (1), if not a whole dollar amount, shall be rounded to the next lower whole dollar amount.

“(5) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may adjust administratively, consistent with the increases made under subsection (a), the rates of disability compensation payable to persons under section 10 of Public Law 85-857 (72 Stat. 1263) who have not received compensation under chapter 11 of this title.”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Subsection (d) of section 5312 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a) of this section, shall take effect on December 1, 2016.

SEC. 9. IMPROVEMENT OF FIDUCIARIES FOR VETERANS.

(a) **APPOINTMENT AND SUPERVISION.**—

(1) Section 5502 of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 5502. Appointment of fiduciaries

“(a) **APPOINTMENT.**—Where it appears to the Secretary that the interest of the beneficiary would be served thereby, payment of benefits under any law administered by the Secretary may be made directly to the beneficiary or to a relative or some other fiduciary for the use and benefit of the beneficiary, regardless of any legal disability on the part of the beneficiary.

“(b) **APPEALS.**—(1) If the Secretary determines a beneficiary to be mentally incompetent for purposes of appointing a fiduciary under this chapter, the Secretary shall provide such beneficiary with a written statement detailing the reasons for such determination.

“(2) A beneficiary whom the Secretary has determined to be mentally incompetent for purposes of appointing a fiduciary under this chapter may appeal such determination.

“(c) **MODIFICATION.**—(1) A beneficiary for whom the Secretary appoints a fiduciary

under this chapter may, at any time, request the Secretary to—

“(A) remove the fiduciary so appointed; and

“(B) have a new fiduciary appointed.

“(2) The Secretary shall comply with a request under paragraph (1) if the Secretary determines that the request is made in good faith and—

“(A) the fiduciary requested to be removed receives a fee from the beneficiary and a suitable volunteer fiduciary is available to assist the beneficiary; or

“(B) the beneficiary provides credible information that the fiduciary requested to be removed is—

“(i) not acting in the interest of the beneficiary; or

“(ii) unable to effectively serve the beneficiary because of an irreconcilable personality conflict or disagreement.

“(3) The Secretary shall ensure that any removal or new appointment of a fiduciary under paragraph (1) does not delay or interrupt the beneficiary's receipt of benefits administered by the Secretary.

“(d) **INDEPENDENCE.**—A fiduciary appointed by the Secretary shall operate independently of the Department to determine the actions that are in the interest of the beneficiary.

“(e) **PREDESIGNATION.**—A veteran may pre-designate a fiduciary by—

“(1) submitting written notice to the Secretary of the pre-designated fiduciary; or

“(2) submitting a form provided by the Secretary for such purpose.

“(f) **APPOINTMENT OF NON-PREDESIGNATED FIDUCIARY.**—If a beneficiary designates an individual to serve as a fiduciary under subsection (e) and the Secretary appoints an individual not so designated as the fiduciary for such beneficiary, the Secretary shall notify such beneficiary of—

“(1) the reason why such designated individual was not appointed; and

“(2) the ability of the beneficiary to modify the appointed fiduciary under subsection (c).

“(g) **PRIORITY OF APPOINTMENT.**—In appointing a fiduciary under this chapter, if a beneficiary does not designate a fiduciary pursuant to subsection (e), to the extent possible the Secretary shall appoint a person who is—

“(1) a relative of the beneficiary;

“(2) appointed as guardian of the beneficiary by a court of competent jurisdiction; or

“(3) authorized to act on behalf of the beneficiary under a durable power of attorney.”.

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 55 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 5502 and inserting the following:

“5502. Appointment of fiduciaries.”.

(b) **SUPERVISION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 55 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 5502, as amended by subsection (a)(1), the following new section:

“§ 5502A. Supervision of fiduciaries

“(a) **COMMISSION.**—(1)(A) In a case in which the Secretary determines that a commission is necessary in order to obtain the services of a fiduciary in the best interests of a beneficiary, the Secretary may authorize a fiduciary appointed by the Secretary to obtain from the monthly benefits provided to the beneficiary a reasonable commission for fiduciary services rendered, but the commission for any month may not exceed the lesser of the following amounts:

“(i) The amount that equals three percent of the monthly monetary benefits under laws administered by the Secretary paid on behalf of the beneficiary to the fiduciary.

“(ii) \$35.

“(B) A commission paid under this paragraph may not be derived from any award to a beneficiary regarding back pay or retroactive benefits payments.

“(C) A commission may not be authorized for a fiduciary who receives any other form of remuneration or payment in connection with rendering fiduciary services for benefits under this title on behalf of the beneficiary.

“(D) In accordance with section 6106 of this title, a commission may not be paid to a fiduciary if the Secretary determines that the fiduciary misused any benefit payments of a beneficiary.

“(E) If the Secretary determines that the fiduciary has misused any benefit or payments of a beneficiary, the Secretary may revoke the fiduciary status of the fiduciary.

“(2) Where, in the opinion of the Secretary, any fiduciary receiving funds on behalf of a Department beneficiary is acting in such a number of cases as to make it impracticable to conserve properly the estates or to supervise the persons of the beneficiaries, the Secretary may refuse to make future payments in such cases as the Secretary may deem proper.

“(b) **COURT.**—Whenever it appears that any fiduciary, in the opinion of the Secretary, is not properly executing or has not properly executed the duties of the trust of such fiduciary or has collected or paid, or is attempting to collect or pay, fees, commissions, or allowances that are inequitable or in excess of those allowed by law for the duties performed or expenses incurred, or has failed to make such payments as may be necessary for the benefit of the ward or the dependents of the ward, then the Secretary may appear, by the Secretary's authorized attorney, in the court which has appointed such fiduciary, or in any court having original, concurrent, or appellate jurisdiction over said cause, and make proper presentation of such matters. The Secretary, in the Secretary's discretion, may suspend payments to any such fiduciary who shall neglect or refuse, after reasonable notice, to render an account to the Secretary from time to time showing the application of such payments for the benefit of such incompetent or minor beneficiary, or who shall neglect or refuse to administer the estate according to law. The Secretary may require the fiduciary, as part of such account, to disclose any additional financial information concerning the beneficiary (except for information that is not available to the fiduciary). The Secretary may appear or intervene by the Secretary's duly authorized attorney in any court as an interested party in any litigation instituted by the Secretary or otherwise, directly affecting money paid to such fiduciary under this section.

“(c) **PAYMENT OF CERTAIN EXPENSES.**—Authority is hereby granted for the payment of any court or other expenses incident to any investigation or court proceeding for the appointment of any fiduciary or other person for the purpose of payment of benefits payable under laws administered by the Secretary or the removal of such fiduciary and appointment of another, and of expenses in connection with the administration of such benefits by such fiduciaries, or in connection with any other court proceeding hereby authorized, when such payment is authorized by the Secretary.

“(d) **TEMPORARY PAYMENT OF BENEFITS.**—All or any part of any benefits the payment

of which is suspended or withheld under this section may, in the discretion of the Secretary, be paid temporarily to the person having custody and control of the incompetent or minor beneficiary, to be used solely for the benefit of such beneficiary, or, in the case of an incompetent veteran, may be apportioned to the dependent or dependents, if any, of such veteran. Any part not so paid and any funds of a mentally incompetent or insane veteran not paid to the chief officer of the institution in which such veteran is a patient nor apportioned to the veteran's dependent or dependents may be ordered held in the Treasury to the credit of such beneficiary. All funds so held shall be disbursed under the order and in the discretion of the Secretary for the benefit of such beneficiary or the beneficiary's dependents. Any balance remaining in such fund to the credit of any beneficiary may be paid to the beneficiary if the beneficiary recovers and is found competent, or if a minor, attains majority, or otherwise to the beneficiary's fiduciary, or, in the event of the beneficiary's death, to the beneficiary's personal representative, except as otherwise provided by law; however, payment will not be made to the beneficiary's personal representative if, under the law of the beneficiary's last legal residence, the beneficiary's estate would escheat to the State. In the event of the death of a mentally incompetent or insane veteran, all gratuitous benefits under laws administered by the Secretary deposited before or after August 7, 1959, in the personal funds of patient's trust fund on account of such veteran shall not be paid to the personal representative of such veteran, but shall be paid to the following persons living at the time of settlement, and in the order named: The surviving spouse, the children (without regard to age or marital status) in equal parts, and the dependent parents of such veteran, in equal parts. If any balance remains, such balance shall be deposited to the credit of the applicable current appropriation; except that there may be paid only so much of such balance as may be necessary to reimburse a person (other than a political subdivision of the United States) who bore the expenses of last sickness or burial of the veteran for such expenses. No payment shall be made under the two preceding sentences of this subsection unless claim therefor is filed with the Secretary within five years after the death of the veteran, except that, if any person so entitled under said two sentences is under legal disability at the time of death of the veteran, such five-year period of limitation shall run from the termination or removal of the legal disability.

“(e) ESCHEATMENT.—Any funds in the hands of a fiduciary appointed by a State court or the Secretary derived from benefits payable under laws administered by the Secretary, which under the law of the State wherein the beneficiary had last legal residence would escheat to the State, shall escheat to the United States and shall be returned by such fiduciary, or by the personal representative of the deceased beneficiary, less legal expenses of any administration necessary to determine that an escheat is in order, to the Department, and shall be deposited to the credit of the applicable revolving fund, trust fund, or appropriation.

“(f) ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall provide to a fiduciary appointed under section 5502 of this title materials and tools to assist the fiduciary in carrying out the responsibilities of the fiduciary under this chapter, including—

“(1) handbooks, brochures, or other written material that explain the responsibilities of a fiduciary under this chapter;

“(2) tools located on an Internet website, including forms to submit to the Secretary required information; and

“(3) assistance provided by telephone.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 55 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 5502 the following new item:

“5502A. Supervision of fiduciaries.”.

(c) DEFINITION OF FIDUCIARY.—Section 5506 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “For purposes” and inserting “(a) For purposes”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(b)(1) For purposes of subsection (a), the term ‘person’ includes any—

“(A) State or local government agency whose mission is to carry out income maintenance, social service, or health care-related activities;

“(B) any State or local government agency with fiduciary responsibilities; or

“(C) any nonprofit social service agency that the Secretary determines—

“(i) regularly provides services as a fiduciary concurrently to five or more individuals; and

“(ii) is not a creditor of any such individual.

“(2) The Secretary shall maintain a list of State or local agencies and nonprofit social service agencies under paragraph (1) that are qualified to act as a fiduciary under this chapter. In maintaining such list, the Secretary may consult the lists maintained under section 807(h) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1007(h)).”.

(d) QUALIFICATIONS.—Section 5507 of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 5507. Inquiry, investigations, and qualifications of fiduciaries

“(a) INVESTIGATION.—Any certification of a person for payment of benefits of a beneficiary to that person as such beneficiary's fiduciary under section 5502 of this title shall be made on the basis of—

“(1) an inquiry or investigation by the Secretary of the fitness of that person to serve as fiduciary for that beneficiary to be conducted in advance of such certification and in accordance with subsection (b);

“(2) adequate evidence that certification of that person as fiduciary for that beneficiary is in the interest of such beneficiary (as determined by the Secretary under regulations);

“(3) adequate evidence that the person to serve as fiduciary protects the private information of a beneficiary in accordance with subsection (d)(1); and

“(4) the furnishing of any bond that may be required by the Secretary in accordance with subsection (f).

“(b) ELEMENTS OF INVESTIGATION.—(1) In conducting an inquiry or investigation of a proposed fiduciary under subsection (a)(1), the Secretary shall conduct—

“(A) a face-to-face interview with the proposed fiduciary by not later than 30 days after the date on which such inquiry or investigation begins; and

“(B) a background check of the proposed fiduciary to—

“(i) in accordance with paragraph (2), determine whether the proposed fiduciary has been convicted of a crime; and

“(ii) determine whether the proposed fiduciary will serve the best interest of the beneficiary, including by conducting a credit check of the proposed fiduciary and checking the records under paragraph (5).

“(2) The Secretary shall request information concerning whether that person has been convicted of any offense under Federal or State law. If that person has been convicted of such an offense, the Secretary may certify the person as a fiduciary only if the Secretary finds that the person is an appropriate person to act as fiduciary for the beneficiary concerned under the circumstances.

“(3) The Secretary shall conduct the background check described in paragraph (1)(B)—

“(A) each time a person is proposed to be a fiduciary, regardless of whether the person is serving or has served as a fiduciary; and

“(B) at no expense to the beneficiary.

“(4) Each proposed fiduciary shall disclose to the Secretary the number of beneficiaries that the fiduciary acts on behalf of.

“(5) The Secretary shall maintain records of any person who has—

“(A) previously served as a fiduciary; and

“(B) had such fiduciary status revoked by the Secretary.

“(6)(A) If a fiduciary appointed by the Secretary is convicted of a crime described in subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall notify the beneficiary of such conviction by not later than 14 days after the date on which the Secretary learns of such conviction.

“(B) A crime described in this subparagraph is a crime—

“(i) for which the fiduciary is convicted while serving as a fiduciary for any person;

“(ii) that is not included in a report submitted by the fiduciary under section 5509(a) of this title; and

“(iii) that the Secretary determines could affect the ability of the fiduciary to act on behalf of the beneficiary.

“(c) INVESTIGATION OF CERTAIN PERSONS.—

(1) In the case of a proposed fiduciary described in paragraph (2), the Secretary, in conducting an inquiry or investigation under subsection (a)(1), may carry out such inquiry or investigation on an expedited basis that may include giving priority to conducting such inquiry or investigation. Any such inquiry or investigation carried out on such an expedited basis shall be carried out under regulations prescribed for purposes of this section.

“(2) Paragraph (1) applies with respect to a proposed fiduciary who is—

“(A) the parent (natural, adopted, or step-parent) of a beneficiary who is a minor;

“(B) the spouse or parent of an incompetent beneficiary;

“(C) a person who has been appointed a fiduciary of the beneficiary by a court of competent jurisdiction;

“(D) being appointed to manage an estate where the annual amount of veterans benefits to be managed by the proposed fiduciary does not exceed \$3,600, as adjusted pursuant to section 5312 of this title; or

“(E) a person who is authorized to act on behalf of the beneficiary under a durable power of attorney.

“(d) PROTECTION OF PRIVATE INFORMATION.—(1) A fiduciary shall take all reasonable precautions to—

“(A) protect the private information of a beneficiary, including personally identifiable information; and

“(B) securely conducts financial transactions.

“(2) A fiduciary shall notify the Secretary of any action of the fiduciary that compromises or potentially compromises the private information of a beneficiary.

“(e) POTENTIAL MISUSE OF FUNDS.—(1) If the Secretary has reason to believe that a fiduciary may be misusing all or part of the benefit of a beneficiary, the Secretary shall—

“(A) conduct a thorough investigation to determine the veracity of such belief; and

“(B) if such veracity is established, transmit to the officials described in paragraph (2) a report of such investigation.

“(2) The officials described in this paragraph are the following:

“(A) The Attorney General.

“(B) Each head of a Federal department or agency that pays to a fiduciary or other person benefits under any law administered by such department of agency for the use and benefit of a minor, incompetent, or other beneficiary.

“(f) BOND.—In determining whether a proposed fiduciary is required to furnish a bond under subsection (a)(4), the Secretary shall consider—

“(1) the existence of any familial or other personal relationship between the proposed fiduciary and the beneficiary; and

“(2) the care the proposed fiduciary has taken to protect the interests of the beneficiary.

“(g) LIST OF FIDUCIARIES.—Each regional office of the Veterans Benefits Administration shall maintain a list of the following:

“(1) The name and contact information of each fiduciary, including address, telephone number, and email address.

“(2) With respect to each fiduciary described in paragraph (1)—

“(A) the date of the most recent background check and credit check performed by the Secretary under this section;

“(B) the date that any bond was paid under this section;

“(C) the name, address, and telephone number of each beneficiary the fiduciary acts on behalf of; and

“(D) the amount that the fiduciary controls with respect to each beneficiary described in subparagraph (C).”

(e) ANNUAL RECEIPT OF PAYMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 5509 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by striking “may require a fiduciary to file a” and inserting “shall require a fiduciary to file an annual”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following new sentence: “The Secretary shall transmit such annual report or accounting to the beneficiary and any legal guardian of such beneficiary.”;

(B) by adding at the end the following new subsections:

“(c) MATTERS INCLUDED.—Except as provided by subsection (f), an annual report or accounting under subsection (a) shall include the following:

“(1) For each beneficiary that a fiduciary acts on behalf of—

“(A) the amount of the benefits of the beneficiary provided under any law administered by the Secretary accrued during the year, the amount spent, and the amount remaining; and

“(B) if the fiduciary serves the beneficiary with respect to benefits not administered by the Secretary, an accounting of all sources of benefits or other income the fiduciary oversees for the beneficiary.

“(2) A list of events that occurred during the year covered by the report that could affect the ability of the fiduciary to act on behalf of the beneficiary, including—

“(A) the fiduciary being convicted of any crime;

“(B) the fiduciary declaring bankruptcy; and

“(C) any judgments entered against the fiduciary.

“(d) RANDOM AUDITS.—The Secretary shall annually conduct random audits of fidu-

ciaries who receive a commission pursuant to subsection 5502A(a)(1) of this title.

“(e) STATUS OF FIDUCIARY.—If a fiduciary includes in the annual report events described in subsection (c)(2), the Secretary may take appropriate action to adjust the status of the fiduciary as the Secretary determines appropriate, including by revoking the fiduciary status of the fiduciary.

“(f) CAREGIVERS AND CERTAIN OTHER FIDUCIARIES.—(1)(A) In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall ensure that a caregiver fiduciary is required only to file an annual report or accounting under subsection (a) with respect to the amount of the benefits of the beneficiary provided under any law administered by the Secretary—

“(i) spent on—

“(I) food and housing for the beneficiary; and

“(II) clothing, health-related expenses, recreation, and other personal items for the beneficiary; and

“(ii) saved for the beneficiary.

“(B) The Secretary shall coordinate with the Under Secretary for Benefits and the Under Secretary for Health to—

“(i) minimize the frequency with which employees of the Department visit the home of a caregiver fiduciary and beneficiary; and

“(ii) limit the extent of supervision by such Under Secretaries with respect to such a fiduciary and beneficiary.

“(C) In this paragraph, the term ‘caregiver fiduciary’ means a fiduciary who—

“(i) in addition to acting as a fiduciary for a beneficiary, is approved by the Secretary to be a provider of personal care services for the beneficiary under paragraph (3)(A)(i) of section 1720G(a) of this title;

“(ii) in carrying out such care services to such beneficiary, has undergone not less than four home visits under paragraph (9)(A) of such section; and

“(iii) has not been required by the Secretary to take corrective action pursuant to paragraph (9)(C) of such section.

“(2) In carrying out this section, the Secretary may adjust the matters required under an annual report or accounting under subsection (a) with respect to a fiduciary whom the Secretary determines to have effectively protected the interests of the beneficiary over a sustained period.”; and

(C) by striking the section heading and inserting the following: “Annual reports and accountings of fiduciaries”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 55 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 5509 and inserting the following new item:

“5509. Annual reports and accountings of fiduciaries.”.

(f) REPAYMENT OF MISUSED BENEFITS.—Section 6107(a)(2)(C) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting before the period the following: “, including by the Secretary not acting in accordance with section 5507 of this title”.

(g) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Section 5510 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “The Secretary shall include in the Annual Benefits Report of the Veterans Benefits Administration or the Secretary’s Annual Performance and Accountability Report” and inserting “Not later than July 1 of each year, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a separate report containing”.

(h) REPORT.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall sub-

mit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a comprehensive report on the implementation of the amendments made by this Act, including—

(1) detailed information on the establishment of new policies and procedures pursuant to such amendments and training provided on such policies and procedures; and

(2) a discussion of whether the Secretary should provide fiduciaries with standardized financial software to simplify reporting requirements.

(i) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 10. BOARD OF VETERANS’ APPEALS VIDEO HEARINGS.

Section 7107 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (d), by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

“(1)(A) Upon request for a hearing, the Board shall determine, for purposes of scheduling the hearing for the earliest possible date, whether a hearing before the Board will be held at its principal location or at a facility of the Department or other appropriate Federal facility located within the area served by a regional office of the Department. The Board shall also determine whether to provide a hearing through the use of the facilities and equipment described in subsection (e)(1) or by the appellant personally appearing before a Board member or panel.

“(B) The Board shall notify the appellant of the determinations of the location and type of hearing made under subparagraph (A). Upon notification, the appellant may request a different location or type of hearing as described in such subparagraph. If so requested, the Board shall grant such request and ensure that the hearing is scheduled at the earliest possible date without any undue delay or other prejudice to the appellant.”; and

(2) in subsection (e), by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

“(2) Any hearing provided through the use of the facilities and equipment described in paragraph (1) shall be conducted in the same manner as, and shall be considered the equivalent of, a personal hearing.”.

SEC. 11. IMPROVEMENTS TO AUTHORITY FOR PERFORMANCE OF MEDICAL DISABILITIES EXAMINATIONS BY CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.

(a) EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY AUTHORITY.—Subsection (c) of section 704 of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 (38 U.S.C. 5101 note) is amended by striking “December 31, 2015” and inserting “December 31, 2017”.

(b) LICENSURE OF CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.—

(1) TEMPORARY AUTHORITY.—Such section 704 is further amended—

(A) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e); and

(B) by inserting after subsection (c) the following new subsection (d):

“(d) LICENSURE OF CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any law regarding the licensure of physicians, a physician described in paragraph (2) may conduct an examination pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (b) at any location in any State, the District of Columbia, or a Commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States, so long as the examination is within the scope of the authorized duties under such contract.

“(2) PHYSICIAN DESCRIBED.—A physician described in this paragraph is a physician who—

“(A) has a current unrestricted license to practice the health care profession of the physician;

“(B) is not barred from practicing such health care profession in any State, the District of Columbia, or a Commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States; and

“(C) is performing authorized duties for the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (b).”.

(2) **PILOT PROGRAM.**—Section 504 of the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 1996 (38 U.S.C. 5101 note) is amended—

(A) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection (c):

“(c) **LICENSURE OF CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any law regarding the licensure of physicians, a physician described in paragraph (2) may conduct an examination pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (a) at any location in any State, the District of Columbia, or a Commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States, so long as the examination is within the scope of the authorized duties under such contract.

“(2) **PHYSICIAN DESCRIBED.**—A physician described in this paragraph is a physician who—

“(A) has a current unrestricted license to practice the health care profession of the physician;

“(B) is not barred from practicing such health care profession in any State, the District of Columbia, or a Commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States; and

“(C) is performing authorized duties for the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (a).”.

SEC. 12. PILOT PROGRAM ON FULLY DEVELOPED APPEALS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot program to provide the option of an alternative appeals process that shall more quickly determine such appeals in accordance with this section.

(b) **ELECTION.**—

(1) **FILING.**—In accordance with paragraph (2), a claimant may elect to file a fully developed appeal under the pilot program under subsection (a) by filing with the Secretary the following:

(A) The notice of disagreement under chapter 71 of title 38, United States Code, along with the written election of the claimant to have the appeal determined under the pilot program.

(B) All evidence that the claimant believes is needed for the appeal as of the date of the filing.

(C) A statement of the argument in support of the claim, if any.

(2) **TIMING.**—A claimant shall make an election under paragraph (1) as part of the notice of disagreement filed by the claimant in accordance with paragraph (1)(A).

(3) **REVERSION.**—

(A) At any time, a claimant who makes an election under paragraph (1) may elect to revert to the standard appeals process. Such a reversion shall be final.

(B) A claimant described in subparagraph (A), or a claimant who makes an election under paragraph (1) but is later determined to be ineligible for the pilot program under subsection (a), shall revert to the standard appeals process without any penalty to the claimant other than the loss of the docket number associated with the fully developed appeal.

(4) **OUTREACH.**—In providing claimants with notices of the determination of a claim during the period in which the pilot program under subsection (a) is carried out, the Secretary shall conduct outreach as follows:

(A) The Secretary shall provide to the claimant (and to the representative of record of the claimant, if any) information regarding—

(i) the pilot program, including the advantages and disadvantages of the program;

(ii) how to make an election under paragraph (1);

(iii) the limitation on the use of new evidence described in paragraph (3) of subsection (c) and the development of information under paragraph (4) of such subsection; and

(iv) the ability of the claimant to seek advice and education regarding such process from veterans service organizations, attorneys, and claims agents recognized under chapter 59 of title 38, United States Code.

(B) The Secretary shall collaborate, partner with, and give weight to the advice of the three veterans service organizations with the most members to publish on the Internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs an online tutorial explaining the advantages and disadvantages of the pilot program.

(c) **TREATMENT BY DEPARTMENT AND BOARD.**—

(1) **PROCESS.**—Upon the election of a claimant to file a fully developed appeal pursuant to subsection (b)(1), the Secretary shall—

(A) not provide the claimant with a statement of the case nor require the claimant to file a substantive appeal; and

(B) transfer jurisdiction over the fully developed appeal directly to the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

(2) **DOCKET.**—

(A) The Board of Veterans' Appeals shall—

(i) maintain fully developed appeals on a separate docket than standard appeals;

(ii) decide fully developed appeals in the order that the fully developed appeals are received on the fully developed appeal docket;

(iii) except as provided by subparagraph (B), decide not more than one fully developed appeal for each four standard appeals decided; and

(iv) to the extent practicable, decide each fully developed appeal by the date that is one year following the date on which the claimant files the notice of disagreement.

(B) Beginning one year after the date on which the pilot program under subsection (a) commences, the Board may adjust the number of standard appeals decided for each fully developed appeal under subparagraph (A)(iii) if the Board determines that such adjustment is fair for both standard appeals and fully developed appeals.

(3) **LIMITATION ON USE OF NEW EVIDENCE.**—

(A) Except as provided by subparagraphs (B) and (C)—

(i) a claimant may not submit or identify to the Board of Veterans' Appeals any new evidence relating to a fully developed appeal after filing such appeal unless the claimant reverts to the standard appeals process pursuant to subsection (b)(3); and

(ii) if a claimant submits or identifies any such new evidence, such submission or identification shall be deemed to be an election to make such a reversion pursuant to subsection (b)(3).

(B) Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to evidence developed pursuant to paragraphs (4) and (5). The Board shall consider such evidence in the first instance without consideration by the Veterans Benefits Administration.

(C) The representative of record of a claimant for appeals purposes, if any, shall be provided an opportunity to review the fully developed appeal of the claimant and submit any additional arguments or evidence that the representative determines necessary during a period specified by the Board for purposes of this subparagraph.

(4) **PROHIBITION ON REMAND FOR ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT.**—If the Board of Veterans' Appeals determines that a fully developed appeal requires Federal records, independent medical opinions, or new medical examinations, the Board shall—

(A) in accordance with paragraph (5), take such actions as may be necessary to develop such records, opinions, or examinations in accordance with section 5103A of title 38, United States Code;

(B) retain jurisdiction of the fully developed appeal without requiring a determination by the Veterans Benefits Administration based on such records, opinions, or examinations;

(C) ensure the claimant, and the representative of record of a claimant, if any, receives a copy of such records, opinions, or examinations; and

(D) provide the claimant a period of 90 days after the date of mailing such records, opinions, or examinations during which the claimant may provide the Board any additional evidence without requiring the claimant to make a reversion pursuant to subsection (b)(3).

(5) **DEVELOPMENT UNIT.**—

(A) The Board of Veterans' Appeals shall establish an office to develop Federal records, independent medical opinions, and new medical examinations pursuant to paragraph (4)(A) that the Board determines necessary to decide a fully developed appeal.

(B) The Secretary shall—

(i) ensure that the Veterans Benefits Administration cooperates with the Board of Veterans' Appeals in carrying out subparagraph (A); and

(ii) transfer employees of the Veterans Benefits Administration who, prior to the enactment of this Act, were responsible for processing claims remanded by the Board of Veterans' Appeals to positions within the office of the Board established under subparagraph (A) in a number the Secretary determines sufficient to carry out such subparagraph.

(6) **HEARINGS.**—Notwithstanding section 7107 of title 38, United States Code, the Secretary may not provide hearings with respect to fully developed appeals. If a claimant requests to hold a hearing pursuant to such section 7107, such request shall be deemed to be an election to revert to the standard appeals process pursuant to subsection (b)(3).

(d) **DURATION; APPLICATION.**—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program under subsection (a) for a five-year period beginning one year after the date of the enactment of this Act. This section shall apply only to fully developed appeals that are filed during such period.

(e) **REPORTS.**—During each year in which the pilot program under subsection (a) is carried out, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on the pilot program. The first such report shall be submitted by not later than 180 days after the date on which the pilot program commences. Each report shall include the following:

(1) For the period covered by the report—

(A) the number of claimants who filed a fully developed appeal under the pilot program;

(B) the average processing time for each such appeal, measured by each phase of the appeal, and, if the processing time for appeals exceed one year, the reasons for such processing time;

(C) a summary of reasons for which the development of evidence was required under subsection (c)(5);

(D) the number of issues decided, listed by the disposition of the issue;

(E) of the number identified in subparagraph (D), the number of issues for which evidence was not so developed, listed by the disposition of the issue;

(F) of the number of fully developed appeals decided by the Board of Veterans' Appeals, the number of cases from each agency of original jurisdiction, listed by the disposition of the issue;

(G) the number of fully developed appeals appealed to the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, listed by the disposition of the case;

(H) the number of reversions made under subsection (b)(3); and

(I) any reasons for why a claimant was determined to be ineligible to participate in the pilot program.

(2) A review, made in conjunction with veterans service organizations, of the efforts of the Secretary to provide clear rating decisions and improve disability rating notification letters, including with respect to—

(A) the opinions of veterans service organizations regarding such efforts; and

(B) how the pilot program improves such efforts.

(3) A recommendation for any changes to improve the pilot program.

(4) An assessment of the feasibility and advisability of expanding the pilot program.

(f) **REGULATIONS.**—Not later than one day after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall publish interim guidance on the pilot program under subsection (a). Not later than 90 days after such date of enactment, the Secretary shall prescribe regulations to carry out such pilot program.

(g) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) The term “claimant” has the meaning given that term in section 5100 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) The term “compensation” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(3) The term “fully developed appeal” means an appeal of a claim for disability compensation that is—

(A) filed by a claimant in accordance with subsection (b)(1); and

(B) considered in accordance with this section.

(4) The term “standard appeal” means an appeal of a claim for disability compensation that is not a fully developed appeal.

SEC. 13. DEADLINE FOR CERTIFICATION OF APPEALS FORMS BY REGIONAL OFFICES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall take such steps as may be necessary to ensure that when a regional office of the Department of Veterans Affairs receives a form known as “VA Form 9, Appeal to Board of Veterans' Appeals”, or any successor form, submitted by a veteran to appeal a decision relating to a claim, the regional office certifies such form by not later than one year after the date of the receipt of the form.

SEC. 14. EVALUATION OF BACKLOG OF DISABILITY CLAIMS AND APPEALS OF CLAIMS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is established a commission or task force to evaluate the backlog of claims within the Department of Veterans Affairs and the appeals process of claims.

(b) **STUDIES.**—

(1) **BACKLOG STUDY.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commission or Task Force, acting through the subcommittee described in subsection (d)(2)(A), shall carry out a study on the backlog of claims, including the current process the Secretary of Veterans Affairs uses to evaluate claims and appeals and the laws and regulations applicable to such claims and appeals. Such study shall be a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of the backlog of claims, an analysis of possible improvements to the procedures used to process such claims, and any related issues that the Commission or Task Force considers relevant.

(B) **MATTERS INCLUDED.**—In carrying out the study under subparagraph (A), the Commission or Task Force shall examine the following:

(i) The backlog of claims, including an analysis of—

(I) the most effective means to quickly and accurately resolve all claims pending as of the date of the study; and

(II) with respect to the Department, the annual funding, number of full-time employees, workload management practices, and the progress, as of the date of the study, of the strategic plan.

(ii) Possible improvements to the claims process, including an evaluation and recommendations with respect to whether substantive and structural changes to the overall claims process are required.

(iii) In carrying out the evaluation and recommendations under subparagraph (B), an examination of—

(I) options that make no major substantive changes to the claims process;

(II) options that maintain the process but make minor changes; and

(III) options that make broad changes to the process.

(2) **APPEALS PROCESS STUDY.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commission or Task Force, acting through the subcommittee described in subsection (d)(2)(B), shall carry out a study on the anticipated increase of appeals of claims, including the current appeals process and the laws and regulations applicable to such appeals. Such study shall be a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of such anticipated increase of appeals claims, an analysis of possible improvements to the procedures used to process such appeals, and any related issues that the Commission or Task Force considers relevant.

(B) **MATTERS INCLUDED.**—In carrying out the study under subparagraph (A), the Commission or Task Force shall examine the following:

(i) The anticipated surge in appeals of claims, including an analysis of—

(I) the most effective means to quickly and accurately resolve pending appeals and future appeals;

(II) with respect to both the Board and the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, the annual funding, number of full-time employees, workload management practices, and the progress, as of the date of the study, of the strategic plan; and

(III) the efficiency, effectiveness, and utility of the Veterans Benefits Management System with respect to appeals operations,

including an identification of key changes that may need to be implemented to such system.

(ii) Possible improvements to the appeals process, including an evaluation and recommendations with respect to whether substantive and structural changes to the overall appeals process are required.

(iii) In carrying out the evaluation and recommendations under clause (ii), an examination of—

(I) options that make no major substantive changes to the appeals process;

(II) options that maintain the process but make minor changes;

(III) options that make broad changes to the process;

(IV) the necessity of the multi-tiered levels of appeals at the regional office level, including filing a notice of disagreement, receipt of a statement of the case, supplemental statement of the case (if applicable), and substantive appeal (VA Form 9);

(V) the role of the Board and the Appeals Management Center, including—

(aa) the effectiveness of the workload management of the Board and the Center;

(bb) whether the Board and Center should be regionalized or maintain the centralized structure in the District of Columbia;

(cc) whether Board members should be required to pass the administrative law judges certification examination; and

(dd) whether the Board should continue to require de novo review of appeals; and

(VI) the role of the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims and the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, including—

(aa) the continued effectiveness and necessity of a multi-tiered structure of judicial review;

(bb) whether the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims should have Article I or Article III status;

(cc) expansion of either the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims or the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit jurisdiction, including by allowing such courts to hear class action lawsuits with respect to claims; and

(dd) the possibility of expanding judicial review of claims to all Federal circuit courts of appeals or allowing judicial review beyond the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims only by the Supreme Court.

(3) **CONSIDERATION.**—In carrying out the studies under paragraph (1)(A) and (2)(A) and making any recommendations under this section, the Commission or Task Force shall consider the following:

(A) The interests of veterans, including with respect to accuracy, fairness, and transparency in the claims process of the Department.

(B) The values and requirements of the Constitution, including with respect to compliance with procedural and substantive due process.

(C) The public interest, including with respect to the responsible use of available resources.

(D) With respect to the study conducted under paragraph (1)(A), the importance of the claimant friendly, nonadversarial nature of the claims process.

(E) With respect to the study conducted under paragraph (2)(A), the importance of an appeals process that is efficient and easily understandable by a claimant.

(4) **ROLE OF SECRETARY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, AND CHIEF JUDGE.**—

(A) **INFORMATION.**—In carrying out each study under paragraph (1)(A) and (2)(A), at

times that the Commission or Task Force determines appropriate, the Commission or Task Force shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Chairman of the Board, and the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, as the case may be, information with respect to remedies and solutions that the Commission or Task Force identifies pursuant to such a study.

(B) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary, the Chairman of the Board, and the Chief Judge shall each—

(i) fully consider the remedies and solutions submitted to the Secretary, the Chairman, or the Chief Judge, as the case may be, under subparagraph (A);

(ii) implement such remedies and solutions as the Secretary, the Chairman, or the Chief Judge, respectively, determines appropriate; and

(iii) submit to Congress justification for failing to implement any such remedy or solution.

(C) PLAN.—The Commission or Task Force shall submit to the Secretary, the Chairman of the Board, and the Chief Judge a feasible, timely, and cost-effective plan to eliminate the backlog of appeals of claims based on the remedies and solutions identified pursuant to the study under paragraph (2)(A) and the information submitted under subparagraph (A).

(c) COMPREHENSIVE REPORTS.—

(1) INITIAL COMPREHENSIVE REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which the Commission or Task Force first meets, the Commission or Task Force shall submit to the President and Congress an initial comprehensive report on the studies conducted under paragraphs (1)(A) and (2)(A) of subsection (b), including—

(A) the findings of the causes of the backlog of claims;

(B) a proposed plan to handle the anticipated surge in appeals of claims; and

(C) the level of cooperation the Commission or Task Force has received from the Secretary and the heads of other departments or agencies of the Federal Government.

(2) INTERIM COMPREHENSIVE REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Commission or Task Force first meets, and each 30-day period thereafter ending on the date on which the Commission or Task Force submits the final comprehensive report under paragraph (3), the Commission or Task Force shall submit to the President and Congress a comprehensive report on—

(A) the progress of the Secretary with respect to implementing solutions to expedite the elimination of the backlog of claims pursuant to subsection (b)(4)(B)(ii);

(B) the progress of the Secretary, the Chairman of the Board, and the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims with respect to implementing solutions to complete appeals of claims in a timely manner in a timely manner pursuant to such subsection; and

(C) the level of cooperation the Commission or Task Force has received from the Secretary and the heads of other departments or agencies of the Federal Government.

(3) FINAL COMPREHENSIVE REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the Commission or Task Force first meets, the Commission or Task Force shall submit to the President and Congress a comprehensive report on the following:

(A) With respect to the study conducted under subsection (b)(1)(A)—

(i) The findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Commission or Task

Force with respect to the matters referred to in such subsection.

(ii) The recommendations of the Commission or Task Force for revising and improving the backlog of claims and the procedures used to process claims.

(iii) The progress of the Secretary with respect to implementing solutions to expedite the elimination of the backlog of claims pursuant to subsection (b)(4)(B)(ii).

(iv) Other information and recommendations with respect to claims as the Commission or Task Force considers appropriate.

(B) With respect to the study conducted under subsection (b)(2)(A)—

(i) The findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Commission or Task Force with respect to the matters referred to in such subsection.

(ii) The recommendations of the Commission or Task Force for revising and improving the appeals process;

(iii) The information described in subsection (b)(4)(A).

(iv) The feasible, timely, and cost effective plan described in subsection (b)(4)(C).

(v) The progress of the Secretary, the Chairman of the Board, and the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims with respect to implementing solutions to provide timely appeals of claims.

(vi) Other information and recommendations with respect to the appeals process as the Commission or Task Force considers appropriate.

(d) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission or Task Force shall be composed of 15 members, appointed as follows:

(A) Two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on the Backlog of Claims and one of whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on Appeals.

(B) Two members appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on the Backlog of Claims and one of whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on Appeals.

(C) Two members appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on the Backlog of Claims and one of whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on Appeals.

(D) Two members appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, one of whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on the Backlog of Claims and one of whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on Appeals.

(E) Three members appointed by the President, two of whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on the Backlog of Claims and one of whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on Appeals.

(F) One member appointed by the Secretary of Defense, whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on the Backlog of Claims.

(G) Two members appointed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, one of whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on the Backlog of Claims and one of whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on Appeals.

(H) One member appointed by the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, whom shall be designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on Appeals.

(2) SUBCOMMITTEES.—The Commission or Task Force shall have two subcommittees as follows:

(A) A Subcommittee on the Backlog of Claims consisting of the eight members designated in accordance with paragraph (1).

(B) A Subcommittee on Appeals consisting of the seven members designated in accordance with paragraph (1).

(3) QUALIFICATIONS.—Each member appointed under paragraph (1) shall be appointed based on the experience of the member as a veteran or on the subject matter expertise or other relevant experience of the member.

(4) ADVISORS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the 15 members appointed under paragraph (1), the Commission or Task Force shall—

(i) have five nonvoting, nonmember advisors, appointed by a majority of the Commission or Task Force, each from a different organization that represents the interests of veterans; and

(ii) seek advice from experts from non-governmental organizations (including veterans service organizations and military organizations), the Internet technology industry, and the insurance industry.

(B) ADVICE.—Individuals described in clause (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (A) shall provide advice to both subcommittees described in paragraph (2).

(5) CHAIRMAN.—The President shall designate a member of the Commission or Task Force who is appointed by the President and designated to serve upon the Subcommittee on the Backlog of Claims to serve as the chairman of the Commission or Task Force. The chairman may designate a member to serve as the chairman of the Subcommittee on the Backlog of Claims and a member to serve as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Appeals to chair such subcommittees as the designee of the chairman of the Commission or Task Force.

(6) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT.—Members of the Commission or Task Force shall be appointed for the life of the Commission or Task Force. A vacancy shall not affect its powers.

(7) VACANCY.—A vacancy on the Commission or Task Force shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(8) APPOINTMENT DEADLINE.—The appointment of members of the Commission or Task Force established in this section shall be made not later than 15 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) MEETINGS.—

(1) INITIAL MEETING.—The Commission or Task Force shall hold its first meeting not later than 15 days after the date on which a majority of the members are appointed.

(2) MEETINGS.—The Commission or Task Force shall meet at the call of the chairman.

(3) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission or Task Force shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number may hold hearings.

(f) POWERS OF THE COMMISSION OR TASK FORCE.—

(1) HEARINGS.—The Commission or Task Force may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission or Task Force considers advisable to carry out the purposes of this section.

(2) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The Commission or Task Force may secure directly from any department or agency of the Federal Government such information as

the Commission or Task Force considers necessary to carry out the provisions of this section. Upon request of the chairman, the head of such department or agency shall furnish such information to the Commission or Task Force.

(3) **POSTAL SERVICES.**—The Commission or Task Force may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

(4) **GIFTS.**—The Commission or Task Force may accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations of service or property.

(g) **PERSONNEL MATTERS.**—

(1) **COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.**—Each member of the Commission or Task Force who is not an officer or employee of the United States shall be compensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which the member is engaged in the performance of the duties of the Commission or Task Force. All members of the Commission or Task Force who are officers or employees of the United States shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for their services as officers or employees of the United States.

(2) **TRAVEL EXPENSES.**—The members of the Commission or Task Force shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of service of the Commission or Task Force.

(3) **STAFF.**—

(A) **APPOINTMENT.**—The chairman of the Commission or Task Force may, without regard to the civil service laws and regulations, appoint an executive director and such other personnel as may be necessary to enable the Commission or Task Force to perform its duties. The appointment of an executive director shall be subject to the approval of the Commission or Task Force.

(B) **COMPENSATION.**—The chairman of the Commission or Task Force may fix the compensation of the executive director and other personnel without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the executive director and other personnel may not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(4) **DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.**—Upon request of the chairman of the Commission or Task Force, the head of any department or agency of the Federal Government may detail, on a nonreimbursable basis, any personnel of that department or agency to the Commission or Task Force to assist it in carrying out its duties.

(5) **PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT SERVICES.**—The chairman of the Commission or Task Force may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(h) **TERMINATION OF COMMISSION OR TASK FORCE.**—The Commission or Task Force shall terminate 60 days after the date on which the Commission or Task Force submits the final comprehensive report under subsection (c)(3).

(i) **FUNDING.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall, upon the request of the chairman of the Commission or Task Force, make available to the Commission or Task Force such amounts as the Commission or Task Force may require to carry out the duties of the Commission or Task Force under this section.

(2) **AVAILABILITY.**—Any sums made available to the Commission or Task Force shall remain available, without fiscal year limitation, until the termination of the Commission or Task Force.

(j) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) The term “appeals process” means the process to appeal the determination by the Secretary of a claim beginning with the notice of disagreement filed pursuant to section 7105 of title 38, United States Code, and ending with the review of a decision by the Supreme Court pursuant to section 7292(c) of such title.

(2) The term “Board” means the Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

(3) The term “strategic plan” means the Strategic Plan to Eliminate the Compensation Claims Backlog, published by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on January 25, 2013.

(k) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 15. METHODS FOR VALIDATING CERTAIN WORLD WAR II MERCHANT MARINER SERVICE CONSIDERED TO BE ACTIVE SERVICE BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—For the purposes of verifying that an individual performed service under honorable conditions that satisfies the requirements of a coastwise merchant seaman who is recognized pursuant to section 401 of the GI Bill Improvement Act of 1977 (Public Law 95-202; 38 U.S.C. 106 note) as having performed active duty service for the purposes described in subsection (c)(1), the Secretary of Defense shall accept the following:

(1) In the case of an individual who served on a coastwise merchant vessel seeking such recognition for whom no applicable Coast Guard shipping or discharge form, ship logbook, merchant mariner’s document or Z-card, or other official employment record is available, the Secretary shall provide such recognition on the basis of applicable Social Security Administration records submitted for or by the individual, together with validated testimony given by the individual or the primary next of kin of the individual that the individual performed such service during the period beginning on December 7, 1941, and ending on December 31, 1946.

(2) In the case of an individual who served on a coastwise merchant vessel seeking such recognition for whom the applicable Coast Guard shipping or discharge form, ship logbook, merchant mariner’s document or Z-card, or other official employment record has been destroyed or otherwise become unavailable by reason of any action committed by a person responsible for the control and maintenance of such form, logbook, or record, the Secretary shall accept other official documentation demonstrating that the individual performed such service during period beginning on December 7, 1941, and ending on December 31, 1946.

(3) For the purpose of determining whether to recognize service allegedly performed during the period beginning on December 7, 1941, and ending on December 31, 1946, the Secretary shall recognize masters of seagoing vessels or other officers in command of similarly organized groups as agents of the

United States who were authorized to document any individual for purposes of hiring the individual to perform service in the merchant marine or discharging an individual from such service.

(b) **TREATMENT OF OTHER DOCUMENTATION.**—Other documentation accepted by the Secretary of Defense pursuant to subsection (a)(2) shall satisfy all requirements for eligibility of service during the period beginning on December 7, 1941, and ending on December 31, 1946.

(c) **BENEFITS ALLOWED.**—

(1) **BURIAL BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY.**—Service of an individual that is considered active duty pursuant to subsection (a) shall be considered as active duty service with respect to providing burial benefits under chapters 23 and 24 of title 38, United States Code, to the individual.

(2) **MEDALS, RIBBONS, AND DECORATIONS.**—An individual whose service is recognized as active duty pursuant to subsection (a) may be awarded an appropriate medal, ribbon, or other military decoration based on such service.

(3) **STATUS OF VETERAN.**—An individual whose service is recognized as active duty pursuant to subsection (a) shall be honored as a veteran but shall not be entitled by reason of such recognized service to any benefit that is not described in this subsection.

(d) **DETERMINATION OF COASTWISE MERCHANT SEAMAN.**—The Secretary of Defense shall verify that an individual performed service under honorable conditions that satisfies the requirements of a coastwise merchant seaman pursuant to this section without regard to the sex, age, or disability of the individual during the period in which the individual served as such a coastwise merchant seaman.

(e) **DEFINITION OF PRIMARY NEXT OF KIN.**—In this section, the term “primary next of kin” with respect to an individual seeking recognition for service under this section means the closest living relative of the individual who was alive during the period of such service.

(f) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 16. DESIGNATION OF AMERICAN WORLD WAR II CITIES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall designate at least one city in the United States each year as an “American World War II City”.

(b) **CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION.**—After the designation made under subsection (c), the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall make each designation under subsection (a) based on the following criteria:

(1) Contributions by a city to the war effort during World War II, including those related to defense manufacturing, bond drives, service in the Armed Forces, and the presence of military facilities within the city.

(2) Efforts by a city to preserve the history of the city’s contributions during World War II, including through the establishment of preservation organizations or museums, restoration of World War II facilities, and recognition of World War II veterans.

(c) **FIRST AMERICAN WORLD WAR II CITY.**—The city of Wilmington, North Carolina, is designated as an “American World War II City”.

SEC. 17. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING AMERICAN VETERANS DISABLED FOR LIFE.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) There are at least 3,600,000 veterans currently living with service-connected disabilities.

(2) As a result of their service, many veterans are permanently disabled throughout their lives and in many cases must rely on the support of their families and friends when these visible and invisible burdens become too much to bear alone.

(3) October 5, which is the anniversary of the dedication of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, has been recognized as an appropriate day on which to honor American veterans disabled for life each year.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—Congress—

(1) expresses its appreciation to the men and women left permanently wounded, ill, or injured as a result of their service in the Armed Forces;

(2) supports the annual recognition of American veterans disabled for life each year; and

(3) encourages the American people to honor American veterans disabled for life each year with appropriate programs and activities.

SEC. 18. EXTENSION OF PILOT PROGRAM ON COUNSELING IN RETREAT SETTINGS FOR WOMEN VETERANS NEWLY SEPARATED FROM SERVICE IN THE ARMED FORCES.

Section 203(d) of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-163; 38 U.S.C. 1712A note) is amended by striking “December 31, 2016” and inserting “December 31, 2021”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and add extraneous materials to H.R. 677, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 677, as amended.

H.R. 677, as amended, contains many important provisions that would help our Nation's veterans, including provisions to provide an automatic annual COLA, cost-of-living adjustment, for veterans' benefits; expedite the processing of veterans' claims and appeals; improve VA's fiduciary program; expand the official documentation accepted by the Secretary of Defense to grant veteran status with limited benefits to World War II Merchant Marine and Coastwise Merchant Seamen; designate certain cities as American World War II cities; and express the sense of Congress honoring American veterans disabled for life.

I want to recognize the hard work of the Members whose proposals have been incorporated into H.R. 677, as

amended. I particularly want to thank my colleagues on the Veterans' Affairs Committee: Chairman MILLER, Ranking Member BROWN, Ms. TITUS, Dr. RUIZ, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. O'ROURKE. In addition, I want to acknowledge the contributions of Representatives JOHNSON, BUTTERFIELD, LATTA, ROUZER, and FRANKEL.

H.R. 677, as amended, incorporates legislation that Chairman MILLER introduced that would expand the eligibility for a medallion provided by VA for private headstones that identify the deceased as a veteran.

These medallions may be attached to privately purchased headstones of veterans who are buried in private cemeteries. They are inscribed with the word “veteran” across the top, and the branch of service is inscribed along the bottom. The medallions have proven to be very popular, with many families choosing to use it to honor the service of their loved one.

Unfortunately, current law only authorizes medallions for veterans who died before November 1, 1990. During a Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee hearing, the VA testified that it has been forced to deny 91 percent of applications for medallions because the requests were made by families of veterans who died before November 1, 1990.

H.R. 677, as amended, would allow the VA to provide these medallions to individuals who served in the Armed Forces after April 6, 1917, which is the date the United States entered World War I.

The reason that this proposal limits eligibility to those who served after April 6, 1917, is due to the possibility that attaching a medallion to an older headstone may cause damage. There are also concerns that placing medallions on antique headstones in older cemeteries may alter the appearance of historic cemeteries.

H.R. 677, as amended, would protect historic gravestones and cemeteries, but also recognizes the importance in honoring the service and sacrifice of those who have served our Nation in the Armed Forces.

These medallions ensure that veterans who are buried in private cemeteries and whose graves are marked by privately purchased headstones can easily be distinguished. I hope that when people visit these cemeteries and see these medallions they take a few moments to remember that we all owe our freedom to our Nation's veterans. These patriotic heroes deserve nothing less.

This bill also includes the text of H.R. 1575, a bill that was introduced by Ranking Member BROWN to extend a pilot program on counseling in retreat settings for women veterans who are newly separated from service. This pilot was originally authorized in 2010, and pilot participants have reported

unanimously positive experiences and a significant improvement in well-being, stress, and positive coping skills following their participation in the retreats.

I am grateful to the ranking member for sponsoring this provision in recognition of the good work being done in this pilot program and the need to ensure that women veterans continue to have access to it.

There are many provisions in H.R. 677, as amended, that would help improve services for veterans and their families, but I want to focus my remarks on the section that I am proud to have authored.

First, the bill would authorize an automatic annual COLA for beneficiaries who receive VA disability compensation. Although Congress generally approves COLA legislation every year, veterans have to wait until Congress actually acts. This can be very stressful for our veterans and their families who depend on their payments to make ends meet. Our Nation's heroes should not have to wait to know whether they are going to be able to pay their bills or not.

H.R. 677, as amended, would ensure that our Nation's veterans automatically receive the same annual COLA as Social Security recipients. This critical provision will help our Nation's veterans better plan for their financial future, and I urge all Members to support it.

Second, this legislation would help make it more convenient for veterans to schedule disability examinations by extending the temporary authorization that allows the VA to use contract physicians to conduct disability examinations through 2017.

Veterans in rural areas, like the Fifth District which I represent, may have to travel long distances to see a VA examiner for a disability examination. My proposal would make it easier to schedule disability examinations by permitting the VA to contract with any physician with a current, unrestricted license to conduct these examinations in the United States.

Additionally, H.R. 677, as amended, would require the VA to provide Congress with regular types of claims veterans file. This information will help better inform our efforts to reform the VA and ensure veterans receive timely, accurate claims decisions.

Section 4 of H.R. 677, as amended, would also express the sense of Congress that the VA should develop a designated form for an increased rating claim or reopening of a claim that does not require the resubmittal of information previously submitted to the Department.

I am grateful for the ranking member's response in this provision in recognition of the good work being done in this pilot program, and we need to ensure that it is passed. I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to express my appreciation to all the members of our committee who have worked to address these issues in a bipartisan manner, and I truly hope we can stay focused on what is important here, which is helping veterans.

This bill extends a pilot counseling program for women veterans separating from the military and coping with PTSD and other combat-related stress issues. These specialized programs are helping women transition from the military and start the next phase of their lives.

I would also like to highlight an important piece of this legislation that was originally introduced by my friend and colleague, Mr. O'ROURKE, the Express Appeals Act.

As highlighted by my friend and colleague, Representative TITUS, other members of the committee, and even the VA Secretary just 2 weeks ago, the appeals process is in crisis. We in the House have heard the cry for help and have responded.

After passing this bill, we will wait for our friends in the Senate to take action. We encourage them to remember our veterans suffer for our inaction. This action provides a critical and widely supported alternative appeals process.

I applaud Representatives O'ROURKE and COOK, Chairman MILLER, the VA, the Board of Appeals, the DAV, the VFW, PVA, AMVETS, IAVA, and MOAA in working together for almost 2 years to reach broad consensus on an alternative path forward.

The Express Appeals Act, similar to the VA's Fully Developed Claim program, offers veterans an alternative option to do more of the work on their own, with the promise of an expedited decision from the Board of Veterans Appeals.

My friend and colleague, Representative RUIZ's bill, H.R. 2691, the Veterans' Survivors Claims Processing and Automation Act of 2015, is also included in this legislation. This provision would automate claims for the surviving family members of veterans.

I truly believe how we treat our veterans plays a major role in who is willing to fight our wars and defend our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO).

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 677, the American Heroes COLA Act.

There are a lot of very excellent provisions to this bill, not the least of which is the automatic COLA, but I actually want to speak to part of this bill that deals with the claims processing.

The legislation offered by my colleague from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) would set out to improve the claims processing through several steps. I want to highlight them.

First, it would require the VA to accept medical evidence from medical professionals in the community to support veterans' disability claims. Second, it would establish a commission to independently evaluate the VA's disability claims and appealed claims backlog. Last, it would develop an alternative program to determine appeals for disability claims more quickly.

Each of these steps offers solutions to the current backlog. This bill is a smart, proactive, bipartisan bill that will help reduce the daunting piles of paperwork and delays that many veterans continue to face.

I am very proud to be in support of this bill. It is another step in doing our best to reduce the claims backlog, and I thank Mr. ABRAHAM for his leadership on this.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support H.R. 677, as amended.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD).

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Let me first thank Mr. TAKANO for yielding, and I thank all of you for your advocacy on this bill. This is a very, very important piece of legislation for our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, we are running out of time to finally recognize the critical contributions of a forgotten but critical segment of brave men and women who served our country during World War II. Because we are running out of time, I urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 677, which contains provisions from my bill, H.R. 1288, that would create a pathway for these forgotten individuals to finally be recognized for their service to our country.

I am referring to an overlooked segment of the World War II Merchant Marine, known as Coastwise Merchant Seamen. These men and women, Mr. Speaker, served the vital role of transporting raw materials and supplies between our domestic military installations and production facilities during the war. Their jobs were absolutely essential to the war effort.

To this day, many of these mariners have never been recognized for their service, largely at no fault of their own, but rather because of decisions made by the Federal Government. It has been virtually impossible for many of these mariners to obtain the required documents needed to prove their World War II service due to government orders that either had these documents destroyed or never kept at all.

Even today, government inaction and delay on transferring the surviving documents to the National Archives

and Records Administration makes searching for and obtaining the required documents practically impossible. As each day passes, this issue grows more acute due to the advanced age of these mariners.

We must make it possible for these great Americans to receive their due recognition while we still have the chance.

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More importantly, we have to do this now, while these mariners still have the chance to know that their sacrifices were not in vain, and their Nation and government are appreciative of their service.

Mr. Speaker, these mariners are national treasures, and we are here today because of their sacrifices. They deserve, each of them, to be recognized for their service, and I ask my colleagues to join me in this effort by voting "yes" on this bill.

I want to thank Chairman MILLER, Ranking Member BROWN, subcommittee Chairman ABRAHAM, and Ranking Member TITUS for working with me and my staff on this issue, and including provisions of my bill in the base text.

I want to thank the committee staff for all of their hard work. I am appreciative of their efforts. This has been a true team effort, and we are now one step closer to finally doing the right thing.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL).

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. I thank Mr. TAKANO for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 677, a bill that honors American veterans disabled for life. I thank my friend from Florida, Chairman JEFF MILLER, for cosponsoring this bill with me and shepherding its passage.

As the mother of a United States Marine veteran, I want to first start by thanking all our veterans who have served us. Thankfully for my family, my son returned safely from two wars.

But, sadly, there are many for whom leaving the battlefield does not mark the end of a conflict, for them or their family. Jeff Colaiacovo is one of those people. I am proud to say he is a constituent and one of my heroes.

On his 18th birthday, unlike many young men of his generation, he volunteered for the Army to go to the Vietnam War, and it would be brutal.

A few months into his tour, in 1967, Jeff's tank hit a mine, and shrapnel exploded into his eyes, blinding him. Miraculously, the doctors were able to recover his vision, and soon after, he was back on the battlefield.

Then, on August 30, 1967, Jeff's tank was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade, trapping him inside, his body engulfed in flames. He spent 5 months in burn units around the world.

He left the Army with an honorable discharge. And, again, he was not to be deterred. He got married. He raised children. He started a small business.

The thing is, Mr. Speaker, the injuries he sustained during his service left him disabled for life. And to this day, Jeff is under heavy medication for PTSD. He bears the scars of duty that remind us all of what he and many others gave in serving us.

Now, this bill recognizes that October 5 is the anniversary of the dedication of the Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, a magnificent memorial that sits just steps away from the Capitol.

On one of its walls reads a quote from Dwight D. Eisenhower: "Each of you bears upon his body the permanent, honorable scars of dangerous service: service rendered in order that our great nation might continue to live according to the expressed will of its own citizens."

In honor of Jeff, and so many others, let's pass this bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As I conclude, I would like to speak about a provision in this bill. Included here is language extending the very successful pilot program run by the Department of Veterans Affairs which provides psychiatric and psychological counseling and support in retreat settings for newly returned women veterans.

A Veterans Health Administration report showed that this limited, 2-year pilot program, run by the Readjustment Counseling Service, produced positive, measurable results helping returning women veterans experiencing post-traumatic stress, depression, sleep disturbances and isolation, many having been evaluated as service-connected for severe PTSD.

In surveys, participants have consistently reported experiencing a marked decrease in stress symptoms and an increase in coping skills, including understanding better how to develop support systems and to access available resources at the VA and in their communities as they reenter civilian life.

Post-9/11 women veterans, often combat veterans, are brought together in groups of about 20, in outdoor settings. These veterans, most of whom are coping with the effects of severe PTSD, some as a result of sexual trauma while in the military, participated in trust-building exercises and worked with counselors and psychological educators to build peer support.

Financial and occupational counseling and conflict resolution training were also offered on an as-needed basis.

I urge support of this provision and the underlying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I continue to urge support of H.R. 677.

I yield back the balance of my time. Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 677, the "American Heroes COLA Act."

This bill requires that, whenever there is an increase in benefit amounts payable under title II (Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance) of the Social Security Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall increase by the same percentage the amounts payable as veterans' disability compensation.

H.R. 677 does the following:

1. compensates for dependents
2. a clothing allowance for certain disabled adults
3. compensation for surviving spouses and children

This bill requires that veterans are given the correct percentage and benefit amounts from the Social Security Act.

Retired military veterans, VA rates for compensation and pension for disabled veterans and surviving families will be effective December 1, 2015 and will be reflected on the first check to be paid on December 31, 2015.

Congress enacted the COLA provision as part of the 1972 Social Security Amendments, and automatic annual COLAs began in 1975. Before that, benefits were increased only when Congress enacted special legislation.

COLA impacts benefits to about 59 social security recipients, 1.96 million military retirees and 4 million disabled veterans.

This increase in benefit amounts will help alleviate financial stress that millions of our disabled veterans have.

As the sponsor of H.R. 76 "the HERO Transition from Battlespace to Workplace Act," I strongly support our veterans and any bill that helps mitigate soldier to citizen transition.

As Abraham Lincoln stated, "Honor to the soldier and sailor everywhere, who bravely bears his country's cause. Honor, also, to the citizen who cares for his brother in the field and serves, as he best can, the same cause."

H.R. 677 is a positive step forward in increasing in benefit amounts payable as veteran's disability compensation.

I strongly support this bill and urge my colleagues to join me and do the same.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 677, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for annual cost-of-living adjustments to be made automatically by law each year in the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain service-connected disabled veterans, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VA MEDICAL CENTER RECOVERY ACT

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3234) to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish within the Department of Veterans Affairs an Office of Failing Medical Center Recovery, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3234

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "VA Medical Center Recovery Act".

SEC. 2. EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF MEDICAL CENTERS.

(a) UNDERPERFORMING MEDICAL CENTERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 73 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 7311A the following new section:

"§ 7311B. Evaluation and improvement of medical centers

"(a) IDENTIFICATION OF UNDERPERFORMING MEDICAL CENTERS.—(1) Not later than 15 days after the end of each fiscal quarter, the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register and on a publicly available, searchable Internet website of the Department a compilation of key health metrics for each medical center of the Department.

"(2) On a semiannual basis, the Secretary shall determine, under the key health metrics, whether each medical center of the Department is satisfactory or underperforming.

"(b) RAPID DEPLOYMENT TEAMS.—(1) Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Secretary identifies a medical center as an underperforming medical center under subsection (a)(2), the Secretary shall deploy a rapid deployment team to the medical center to ensure that the medical center achieves satisfactory performance as quickly as practicable.

"(2) Each rapid deployment team deployed to an underperforming medical center under paragraph (1) shall—

"(A) identify the areas of the medical center that require improvement, including with respect to the procedures of the medical center, inefficiencies of the medical center, and whether the medical center follows directives and best practices;

"(B) establish a remediation plan to improve the performance of the medical center;

"(C) review and assesses the status of any—

"(i) disciplinary actions taken at the medical center;

"(ii) recommendations made by the Inspector General of the Department applicable to the medical center; and

"(iii) findings made by the Comptroller General of the United States applicable to the medical center; and

"(D) provide training to the director and staff of the medical center with respect to carrying out such improvements.

"(3) The Secretary shall ensure that—

"(A) the director of each underperforming medical center carries out the remediation plan under paragraph (2)(B); and

"(B) the rapid deployment team has access to all facilities and all electronic systems, records, reports, audits, reviews, documents,

papers, or other materials the rapid deployment team determines necessary to carry out this subsection.

“(4) Each rapid deployment team deployed to an underperforming medical center under paragraph (1) shall consist of—

“(A) subject matter experts with experience in—

“(i) customer service training;

“(ii) increasing the efficiency of organizations;

“(iii) clinical care specific to the areas in which the underperforming medical center requires improvement; and

“(iv) any other areas that the Secretary determines appropriate to improve the underperforming medical center; and

“(B) an employee of the Office of the Inspector General of the Department.

“(5) To the extent practicable, each rapid deployment team shall include process improvement subject matter experts from the Veterans Experience Office of the Department.

“(6) The Secretary shall determine the duration of the deployment of a rapid deployment team under paragraph (1).

“(c) INVESTIGATIONS AND WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS.—(1) The Inspector General of the Department shall prioritize investigations relating to underperforming medical centers.

“(2) The Office of Accountability Review shall prioritize investigations of whistleblower retaliation relating to underperforming medical centers.

“(d) QUARTERLY REPORTS.—On a quarterly basis, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that includes, with respect to the quarter covered by the report—

“(1) each identification of an underperforming medical center made by the Secretary;

“(2) the actions taken by the Secretary and rapid deployment teams with respect to improving underperforming medical centers; and

“(3) an update on any progress made by each underperforming medical center, including whether the underperforming medical center is carrying out the remediation plan pursuant to subsection (b)(3)(A).

“(e) RELATIONSHIP TO QUALITY ASSURANCE AND NATIONAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT OFFICER.—The requirements of this section are in addition to any requirements under sections 7311 and 7311A of this title.

“(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘underperforming medical center’ means a medical center of the Department that the Secretary determines is underperforming under subsection (a)(2).

“(2) The term ‘key health metrics’ means the following:

“(A) The Strategic Analytics Improvement and Learning (commonly referred to as ‘SAIL’) data used by the Department (or such successor data metric).

“(B) An evaluation system established by the Secretary based on the total data described in subparagraph (A) to determine whether the performance of a medical center is satisfactory or underperforming and requires remediation pursuant to this section.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 73 of such title is amended by adding after the item relating to section 7311A the following new item:

“7311B. Evaluation and improvement of medical centers”.

(b) INITIAL KEY HEALTH METRICS PUBLICATION.—The Secretary shall publish the initial

key health metrics under section 7311B(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(1), by not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) INITIAL IDENTIFICATION OF AN UNDERPERFORMING MEDICAL CENTER.—The Secretary shall make the initial identifications under section 7311B(a)(2) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(1), by not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. STANDARDIZED TRAINING FOR NURSES.

(a) TRAINING.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall seek to enter into partnerships with recognized schools of nursing to provide undergraduate nursing students enrolled in such schools with standardized training with respect to the following:

(1) The culture of the military and veterans.

(2) Post-traumatic stress disorder.

(3) Traumatic brain injury.

(4) Amputation and assistive devices.

(5) Environmental, chemical, and toxic exposure.

(6) Substance use disorders.

(7) Military sexual trauma.

(8) Suicide.

(9) Homelessness.

(10) Serious illness at the end of life.

(11) Benefits, services, and resources for veterans that are administered by the Federal Government.

(b) DEVELOPMENT.—In developing the training under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with appropriate accrediting bodies, schools of nursing, and industry leaders.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and add extraneous material on H.R. 3234, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3234, as amended, the Department of Veterans Affairs VA Medical Center Recovery Act.

This bill would require the VA to publish key health metrics and use these metrics to determine semiannually which VA medical centers are performing satisfactorily and which are underperforming.

If a VA medical center is determined to be underperforming, VA would be required to send a rapid deployment team to the facility within 30 days to establish a remediation plan and provide needed help in problem areas.

The VA would also be required to send regular reports to Congress on which facilities are underperforming and what actions have been taken to improve their performance.

In addition, the bill would require the VA inspector general to prioritize investigations related to underperforming medical centers and the Office of Accountability Review to prioritize investigations of whistleblower retaliation relating to underperforming medical centers.

This bill would also include a provision to strengthen training for undergraduate nurses on veterans unique issues, needs, and benefits.

H.R. 3234, as amended, is sponsored by Congresswoman MARTHA ROBY from Alabama, and I am grateful for her leadership in introducing this legislation.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY).

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask my colleagues to support H.R. 3234, the VA Medical Center Recovery Act.

This bill puts the responsibility for identifying and improving the worst performing VA medical centers squarely on the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, requiring him to deploy teams of experts to turn around failing facilities.

The bill would, for the first time, require the VA to publish key metrics known as SAIL data on the Federal Register and would require the Secretary to report to Congress any medical centers determined to be failing.

Some of my colleagues might wonder why such a bill is necessary, given the VA reform law that we passed more than a year ago. That was a good bill, but it wasn't a silver bullet. Many problems still exist in the VA, and it is our responsibility to address them.

Mr. Speaker, the Central Alabama VA in my district became known as one of the worst in the country. My staff and I worked with whistleblowers and the press to uncover major instances of misconduct, negligence, and mismanagement inside the Central Alabama VA, including:

Widespread manipulation of scheduling data. A nation-leading 57 percent of employees reported that managers instructed them to change appointment times to hide long waits.

More than 1,000 patient X-rays, some showing malignancies, went missing for months and even years.

A pulmonologist was caught twice falsifying more than 1,200 patient records but somehow given a satisfactory review.

An employee took a recovering veteran to a crackhouse, bought him drugs, and paid for prostitutes, all to extort his benefits. When caught, the employee wasn't fired, not until a year later, after our office exposed it publicly.

In the wake of these exposures, the Central Alabama VA Director became the first senior VA manager fired under the new law.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. ABRAHAM. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 3 minutes.

Mrs. ROBY. But even after leadership changes, data showed that the Central Alabama VA's two medical centers in Montgomery and Tuskegee were ranked the worst and the second worst in the Nation for delays in patient care.

By any measure, the Central Alabama VA was the definition of a failing VA system. We had a severe problem, and it required immediate attention.

But, Mr. Speaker, getting the attention of the top VA leaders proved difficult. Once our problems left the front page, there wasn't a whole lot of followup.

My veterans in Alabama were subject to some of the worst healthcare service in the country, and no one wanted to take responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, I began to think maybe it was because we were depending on a broken bureaucracy to fix itself, that maybe it was because we were asking VA leaders, rather than requiring them, to intervene.

Mr. Speaker, I decided that it was time that we changed that. So, in July, I filed that legislation and began working with the Veterans' Affairs Committee to get a hearing and a vote.

I don't sit on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, so I want to thank the chairman, JEFF MILLER; the subcommittee chairman, DAN BENISHEK; and all the members of the committee for being receptive and working with me on this bill.

I also want to thank all the committee staff for their hard work.

There is no question this bill represents a major step forward and a foundation to build upon.

It should be noted that almost 2 years after the scandal first broke, we are making progress in central Alabama at the VA. Staffing is up, wait times are down. We are building a Community Veterans Health Network that I believe one day can be an example for the entire Nation. We have a long way to go, and I am truly optimistic about the future.

But, Mr. Speaker, it shouldn't have taken this long and it shouldn't have taken a Member of Congress breathing down the necks of top VA officials to get the attention that our veterans deserve.

You know, sometimes I wonder what would have happened if our courageous whistleblowers hadn't stepped up or if the reporters we worked with didn't think it was a story?

What if the truth about the missing X-rays, the manipulated pulmonology records, and the crackhouse never came out? What if we want exposed all of that?

Would our veterans in central Alabama still be subject to the worst health care in the country? Would we even know?

I don't want what happened in central Alabama to ever happen again

anywhere. This bill helps to ensure that by requiring key VA health metrics to be published for everyone to see and making sure that the VA officials at the very top cannot hide behind the layers of bureaucracy when it comes to severely failing centers.

Again, I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

□ 1630

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation, H.R. 3234, as amended, is designed to establish criteria for the evaluation and improvement of VA medical centers. The bill requires the VA to create key health metrics to measure whether each medical center is satisfactory or underperforming.

The metrics will be published on the VA Web site, and an underperforming medical center will be subject to a rapid deployment team being sent to the facility to create a remediation plan and bring them up to standards. The VA will issue quarterly reports on the underperforming facilities and their progress in the following remediation plan.

Additionally, the bill seeks to require the VA to enter into partnerships with recognized schools of nursing to provide undergraduate nursing students enrolled in such schools with standardized training. The bill lists the 11 areas the training should involve, including PTSD, TBI, and military sexual trauma.

Mr. Speaker, this bill addresses issues the committee has expressed concerns about in the past. I support its passage.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of H.R. 3234, as amended.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I also once again encourage all Members to support H.R. 3234, as amended.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3234, the Failing VA Medical Center Recovery Act.

I support this legislation because it would establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs an Office of Failing Medical Center Recovery, and the position of Under Secretary for Failing Medical Center Recovery to head the Office.

The Office shall carry out the managerial and day-to-day operational control of each VA failing medical center.

The bill directs that the VA shall: publish in the Federal Register and on a publicly available VA website a compilation of key health metrics for each VA medical center; certify semiannually that each VA medical center ranked as "failing" is subject to managerial and day-to-day operational control by the Office; revoke the certification of a VA medical center as a failing medical center if it achieves a ranking of "satisfactory" or better for three consecutive fiscal quarters; submit to Con-

gress a quarterly report on the Office, including actions taken by the Under Secretary regarding covered failing medical centers; and transfer each covered failing medical center from the direct control of the relevant Veterans Integrated Service Network to the direct control of the Under Secretary.

The bill also ensures that the Inspector General of the VA will prioritize investigations relating to covered failing medical centers, and the Office of Accountability Review will prioritize investigations of whistle blower retaliation relating to such centers.

Mr. Speaker, the reason this important legislation is needed is illustrated by the tragic and heart breaking cases of thousands of veterans who were left waiting for care for serious medical conditions.

In the State of Texas we have 1,099,141 Veterans under the age of 65 and 590,618 who are over the age of 65. There are over 1,689,759 veterans living in our state.

The 18th Congressional District has 20,607 under age 65 and 9,844 Veterans over the age of 65.

The Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Hospital Center, located in Houston Texas serves the health care needs of thousands of veterans and their families.

The DeBakey Veterans Hospital Center provides support to veterans and their families who are amputees, cancer, spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injury, and have visual impairments.

The Medical center provides family support services through its Fisher House that provides living suites at no cost to family members of hospitalized Veterans and military members.

Today, with our vote on H.R. 3234, we can renew our commitment to our nation's more than 2 million troops and reservists, their families, and the 22 million veterans who served our nation.

I urge all Members to join me in voting to pass H.R. 3234.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3234, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to evaluate the ability of each medical center of the Department to provide quality health care to veterans, to ensure that the Secretary improves such medical centers that are underperforming, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEMALE VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION ACT

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2915) to amend title 38, United

States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2915

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act”.

SEC. 2. SPECIFIC CONSIDERATION OF WOMEN VETERANS IN EVALUATION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MENTAL HEALTH CARE AND SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS.

Section 1709B(a)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by inserting before the semicolon the following: “, including specific metrics applicable to women”;

(2) in subparagraph (D), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(4) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(F) identify the mental health care and suicide prevention programs conducted by the Secretary that are most effective for women veterans and such programs with the highest satisfaction rates among women veterans.”.

SEC. 3. MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT FOR VETERANS WHO SERVED IN CLASSIFIED MISSIONS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that veterans who experience combat-related mental health wounds should have immediate, appropriate, and consistent access to comprehensive mental health care.

(b) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following section:

“§1720H. Mental health treatment for veterans who served in classified missions

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARDS.—(1) The Secretary shall establish standards and procedures to ensure that each covered veteran may access mental health care provided by the Secretary in a manner that fully accommodates the obligation of the veteran to not improperly disclose classified information.

“(2) The Secretary shall disseminate guidance to employees of the Veterans Health Administration, including mental health professionals, on the standards and procedures established under paragraph (1) and how to best engage covered veterans during the course of mental health treatment with respect to classified information.

“(b) IDENTIFICATION.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall ensure that a veteran may elect to identify as a covered veteran on an appropriate form.

“(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘classified information’ means any information or material that has been determined by an official of the United States pursuant to law, an Executive order, or regulation to require protection against unauthorized disclosure for reasons of national security.

“(2) The term ‘covered veteran’ means a veteran who—

“(A) is enrolled in the health care system established under section 1705(a) of this title;

“(B) is seeking mental health treatment; and

“(C) in the course of serving in the Armed Forces, participated in a sensitive mission or served in a sensitive unit.

“(3) The term ‘sensitive mission’ means a mission of the Armed Forces that, at the time at which a covered veteran seeks treatment, is classified.

“(4) The term ‘sensitive unit’ has the meaning given that term in section 130b(c)(4) of title 10.”.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding after the item relating to section 1720G the following new item:

“1720H. Mental health treatment for veterans who served in classified missions.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and add extraneous material on H.R. 2915, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 2915, as amended, the Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act. This bill would amend the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans, or the SAV Act, by directing the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that the independent third-party evaluation of mental health and suicide prevention programs required in the act identifies programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans.

Women are an important and an increasing segment of our Active Duty and veteran populations, and, moving forward, we must ensure that VA takes the unique needs of women veterans into account when conducting program reviews and evaluations.

This is particularly important for mental health and suicide prevention programs, given that recent research has shown that female veterans commit suicide at nearly six times the rate of other women and are five times more likely to commit suicide than male veterans.

H.R. 2915, as amended, would also require the VA to establish and disseminate standards and procedures to ensure that a veteran who has participated in a classified mission or served in a sensitive unit while in the Armed Forces may access VA mental health care in a manner that fully accommodates his or her obligation to not improperly disclose classified information.

Serious concerns have been raised about the mental health care that VA provides to veterans following the suicide death of Sergeant Daniel Somers in 2013. Sergeant Somers served on a

number of classified missions during his time in the military.

When he separated from service and sought VA care, he was enrolled in group therapy sessions despite his fear of being unable to participate comfortably in group sessions due to his fear that he may inadvertently share classified information.

Had VA been more responsive to Sergeant Somers' concerns and provided him treatment that was sensitive to his concerns, he may be with us today.

H.R. 2915, as amended, is sponsored by Congresswoman JULIA BROWNLEY of California, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Health, and incorporates provisions sponsored by Congresswoman KYRSTEN SINEMA of Arizona.

I am grateful to both of them for their work.

I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 2915, as amended.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2915, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs that are effective in treating women veterans as a part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary.

My friend, the ranking member of the Health Subcommittee, Ms. JULIA BROWNLEY, was integral to identifying the issues affecting women suicides. I commend her leadership in bringing this issue to our attention.

Congress has long recognized the unacceptable rates of suicide among our Nation's veterans. Most recently, Congress passed the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, Public Law 114-2, which requires an independent third party to evaluate VA mental health care and suicide prevention programs.

VA's most recent suicide data report was released in February of 2013. That report found that 18 to 22 veterans per day commit suicide. In a follow-up report, the VA found an increase in the suicide rate among female veterans who use the VA healthcare system.

This finding echoes recent research that found that female veterans commit suicide nearly six times the rate of other women and that women veterans are five times more likely to be successful in committing suicide than male veterans.

This bill would amend the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act to include within the independent third-party evaluation specific metrics applicable to women and to identify the VA mental health care and suicide prevention programs that are most effective and have the highest satisfaction rates among with women veterans.

Additionally, this legislation includes a provision that my friend, Representative KYRSTEN SINEMA of Arizona, has been working on for years.

This section requires the VA to establish and publish standards and procedures to ensure that a woman who participated in a classified mission or served in a sensitive unit while in the Armed Forces may access VA mental health care without improperly disclosing classified information.

This provision would also require the VA to find alternative methods of mental health treatment for veterans who need to access care without being put in a position where they may reveal information that should not be disclosed.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers. Once again, I encourage all Members to support H.R. 2915, as amended.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY).

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, first I would like to thank Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member BROWN for their help in moving the Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act forward.

I would also like to recognize my colleague from Arizona whose bill honoring the memory of her constituent, Army veteran Sergeant Daniel Somers, has been included.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the women veteran population is more than 2 million and growing quickly. But our understanding of the experience of women in the military and women veterans is not keeping pace with this rapidly changing demographic.

We agree that one of the most pressing and immediate issues we must address, as Members of Congress, is the tragic epidemic of suicide among all of our veterans. Last year Congress passed the Clay Hunt SAV Act, which required the VA to conduct annual evaluations of its suicide prevention and mental health programs.

I am confident that the Clay Hunt bill will save lives. But recently researchers analyzed data from 23 States and the Suicide Repository on more than 170,000 suicides over a 10-year period.

These researchers found data suggesting that female veteran suicide follows very different patterns than male veteran suicide. The statistics are extremely startling. Suicide among women veterans increased by an astounding 40 percent from 2000 to 2010.

The suicide rate among veteran women is nearly six times higher than among nonveteran women. For women ages 18 to 29, the risk of suicide is even higher, at nearly 12 times the rate of nonveteran women.

We don't know whether the reasons are related to the high rate of military sexual assault, gender-specific experiences on the battlefield, or factors that

distinguish differing personal backgrounds, which is exactly the point. Without looking more closely at the root causes, we cannot hope to find better solutions.

Last year the Los Angeles Times wrote about this issue describing the heartbreaking case of Army medic Sara Leatherman. Even before her deployment, Sara had experienced depression and attempted suicide.

She was discharged early from her deployment because of a back injury sustained in Iraq. Suffering from post-traumatic stress and experiencing physical pain from her injury, Sara was not able to live by herself and moved in with her grandmother.

Sara was trying to get her life back on track and was attending community college. Although Sara was receiving VA treatment for PTSD, at the very young age of 24, she tragically took her life. Her family has been utterly destroyed by their loss.

While so very distressing, the VA was unable to help Sara. So we must honor Sara's memory and the memory of other women veterans whom we so tragically lost to suicide by doing our very best to better understand the underlying and unique causes that lead women veterans to take their lives over wanting to live their lives.

I introduced the Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act to do just that by building upon and improving the Clay Hunt SAV Act. My bill will help identify the different mental health and suicide prevention programs that are most effective for either male or female veterans.

My bill will also require the VA to report to Congress annually on the results of this analysis. Finally, my bill will require that VA's evaluation of its suicide prevention programs include specific performance metrics for women veterans.

The Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act passed the House Veterans' Affairs Committee proudly with bipartisan support. It is also supported by the Service Women's Action Network, The American Legion, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Disabled American Veterans, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and the Vietnam Veterans of America.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will give us more tools in the toolbox to help save the lives of men and women who have bravely served our country with great honor and distinction. One human life unnecessarily lost is one life too many.

I thank my colleagues on the committee for making the Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act a priority. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in voting "yes" on this important legislation.

THE AMERICAN LEGION,

Washington, DC, September 11, 2015.

Hon. JULIA BROWNLEY,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE BROWNLEY: On behalf of the over 2 million members of The American Legion, I would like to express our support for H.R. 2915, the Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act. This bill, as written, would improve female veteran suicide prevention programs within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) by amending Title 38 directing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans. This bill also strives to improve suicide prevention programs for female veterans enrolled in the VA healthcare system.

In 2014, The American Legion passed a resolution urging the President and Congress to sign into law the Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act or similar acts that will expand and improve the care provided to veterans and servicemembers who have mental health issues or are at risk of suicide. Under this Act, the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs would be required to review their mental health care programs on an annual basis to ensure their effectiveness, offer special training on identifying those high risk veterans who are suicidal to their mental health providers, and to improve the process regarding medical records and prescriptions for the purpose of ensuring that there is a seamless health care process for those servicemembers who are transitioning out of the service.

Again, The American Legion supports H.R. 2915, the Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act and applauds your leadership in addressing this critical issue facing our nation's veterans and their families.

Sincerely,

DALE BARNETT,
National Commander.

MILITARY ORDER OF
THE PURPLE HEART,

Springfield, VA, December 15, 2015.

Hon. JEFF MILLER,
Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MILLER: On behalf of the Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH), I am pleased to offer support for H.R. 2915, the "Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act". This legislation, if enacted, would help to identify mental health and suicide prevention programs that are the most effective and have the best outcomes among women veterans and would require that the results be reported to both the Senate and House Veterans Committees.

The recent data that has been published is deeply troubling. The data suggests that the suicide rate among women veterans is approximately six times higher than that of women who did not serve in the military.

While the Department of Veterans Affairs is examining why the suicide rate among women veterans is so much higher and how a history of Military Sexual Trauma may be one of the contributing factors, we as a nation must devote the time and resources to support these women who served our country in uniform.

MOPH requests that you bring this legislation before your committee as soon as possible so that America's women veterans understand that this issue will be given a high

priority and that their service is appreciated.

Respectfully,

ROBERT PUSKAR,
National Commander.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, again, I wish to thank my colleagues, Ms. BROWNLEY and Ms. SINEMA, for bringing the issues surrounding the prevention of female suicides in the military to our attention.

I urge passage of this very important bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act (H.R. 2915).

The VA estimates that 22 veterans take their own lives each day, or over 8,000 per year—more than have been killed in action since 9/11. The incidence of suicide among our veteran population is stunning, tragic beyond words, and simply unacceptable.

Too many veterans have returned from fighting our enemies overseas to fighting for their lives at home. As the son of a WW2 combat veteran, I have witnessed the residual wounds of war, the struggle to cope with the post-traumatic stress that can continue for decades and the pain that a lack of access to services can cause for veterans and their families.

Recognizing this great, unmet need, Congress recently enacted the bipartisan “Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans (SAV) Act,” legislation targeting the gaps in the VA’s mental health and suicide prevention efforts. Among other provisions, the law requires annual, independent third party evaluations of the effectiveness of the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) programs and establishes best practices for caring for at-risk veterans.

While the Clay Hunt Act is a comprehensive and well-designed law—I cosponsored and voted for it twice—there is one area where improvements could be made to maximize its impact and better assist one group of veterans: female veterans.

As the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee report states: In 2014, the VA released an update to the survey and found increases in the suicide rate in female users of the VA health care system. Female veterans commit suicide at nearly six times the rate of other women and that women veterans are five times more likely to commit suicide than male veterans. Yet the VA’s research focuses primarily on men and little is known about the complex causes and factors that are driving the suicide rate among females who have served.

The bill we are voting on today offers a modest but important step to enhance our understanding of, and hopefully help remedy, these staggering numbers. Specifically, H.R. 2915 directs the VA to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs that are most effective and have the highest satisfaction rates among women veterans.

We as a nation have a duty and obligation to repay the debt we owe to those who have fought in defense of our nation and our ideals. This bill helps ensure we better address the physical and emotional wounds of all veterans and I urge all members to support it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a proud cosponsor I rise in strong support of H.R. 2915, the “Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act,” which directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to implement mental health care and suicide prevention programs and identify metrics that are effective in reducing the incidence of suicide among female veterans.

Over the last decade suicide has become a major issue for the military, but the research has been predominantly focused on men and too much remains unknown about the cause and frequency of suicide among female veterans.

Mr. Speaker, several recent studies show that, unfortunately, female military veterans commit suicide at nearly 6 times the rate of other women.

The suicide rate among female veterans is so high that it approaches that of their male counterparts, a finding that surprises researchers because men generally are far more likely than women to commit suicide.

The highest rates of suicide are found among young female veterans, ages 18–29, who are 12 times more likely to commit suicide as their civilian counterparts.

This is heart breaking, but perhaps not unexpected, since reports indicate that 10% of women serving on active duty are victims of rape and another 13% were subjected to other unwanted sexual contact.

Mr. Speaker, in every other age group, including women who served as far back as the 1950s, suicide rates for female veterans are between 4 and 8 times higher than that of their civilian counterparts.

These trends are so disturbing that it has earned the sobriquet from the Houston Chronicle as “The Silent National Epidemic.”

The Texas Department of State Health Services lists a decedent’s military experience in his or her death record, regardless of whether the deceased was serving in the armed forces at time of death.

While it is not clear what is driving the rates of female veteran suicides, the consistency across age groups suggests that a statistically significant correlation exists between gender and military service but the sad truth is that we lack sufficient data to generate externally valid inferences about causation.

In the general population, women attempt suicide more often than men but succeed less because women usually use pills or other methods that are less lethal than firearms.

Female veterans, however, are more likely than other women to possess firearms, and more likely to use a firearm to commit suicide (40% compared to 34% of civilian women).

H.R. 2915 is intended to make progress in identifying the causes and reducing the incidences of suicide by female veterans.

The bravery and devotion of female veterans, who have provided heroic service to our nation, often at great personal costs, is unquestioned.

We owe it to them to be there when they need our help just as they were there to answer the call when their country needed them.

I urge all Members to join me in voting to pass H.R. 2915, the “Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2915, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: “A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes.”

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ILLIANA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM PROPERTY CONVEYANCE

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3262) to provide for the conveyance of land of the Illiana Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Danville, Illinois.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3262

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. LAND CONVEYANCE, DANVILLE, ILLINOIS.

(a) CONVEYANCE AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may convey to the Danville Area Community College of Danville, Illinois, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to certain real property, including any improvements thereon, consisting of approximately .6 acres known as “Building Number 48”, which is part of the Illiana Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) CONSIDERATION.—As consideration for the conveyance under subsection (a), the Danville Area Community College shall convey to the United States all right, title, and interest of Danville Area Community College in and to certain real property, including any improvements thereon, consisting of approximately 1.06 acres with a gazebo located approximately 293 feet south of the Danville Area Community College Library Building, which is part of the Danville Area Community College.

(c) CONDITION OF CONVEYANCE.—The conveyance under subsection (a) shall be subject to the condition that the recipient accept the conveyed real property in its condition at the time of the conveyance.

(d) DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.—The exact acreage and legal description of the parcels of real property conveyed under subsections (a) and (b) shall be determined by surveys satisfactory to the Secretary.

(e) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Secretary may require such additional terms and conditions in connection with the conveyances under subsections (a) and (b) as the Secretary considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

□ 1645

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to add extraneous material on H.R. 3262.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3262.

This bill authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs to convey property on the VA Illiana Health Care System campus in Danville, Illinois, to the Danville Area Community College.

Authorizing this conveyance would allow the VA to dispose of a vacant building for which it has no intended future use and is costly to maintain.

It would also allow the Department to straighten their property line, subsequently shortening the amount of fencing that is required to secure the safety of the medical center campus.

H.R. 3262 is sponsored by my friend and colleague from Illinois, Congressman JOHN SHIMKUS, and I thank him for his leadership in sponsoring and advancing this legislation.

I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 3262.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3262 authorizes the VA to convey to the Danville Area Community College of Danville, Illinois, what is known as Building Number 48, which is part of the VA Illiana Health Care System.

In return, the college will convey back to the VA certain lands near the college library building.

We do not have any issues with the legislation, and I urge its passage.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS).

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, it does take an act of Congress to transfer lands and buildings, and that is kind of what we are doing here today, so I rise in support of this bill.

It is a very simple bill that is going to benefit the VA there in Danville, but also the local community with the Danville Area Community College.

Danville, Illinois, is a small town that has been home to some big names. Dick Van Dyke called Danville home in his childhood. Speaker Joe Cannon, a name we all know in Congress, was

from Danville. Today, Danville is home to the VA Illiana Health Care System and the Danville Area Community College, commonly known as DACC.

DACC's president, Dr. Alice Jacobs, is an exceptional leader who has dedicated 45 years to higher education, including the last 16 years leading DACC. She has recently announced her retirement in the coming year, and I thank her for her dedicated service to the students and the community of Danville and wish her the best in the future.

The VA and DACC are an excellent example of how two institutions can work in cooperation to serve our veterans. The location of the VA hospital adjacent to the community college campus allows our veterans returning home to seek their medical care and help with benefits, while the college provides the opportunity for educational and training experiences that can help them transition into civilian life.

However, when the property lines were drawn between these two fine institutions, it wasn't in a straight line. Today, that has created a challenge as the VA explores the option of building a security fence along its boundary. Building that fence along the existing property lines will be more expensive. My bill, H.R. 3262, solves this problem by swapping two small parcels of land that both the VA and DACC have agreed to, creating a straight fence line.

Swapping these parcels is beneficial for the local community as well. In exchange for the land it gives up, DACC will receive a parcel of land with a historic, century-old Carnegie Library. This building has become so deteriorated and expensive to maintain that the VA has stopped using it. Now the building sits vacant while the VA still pays for basic maintenance and utilities. In its testimony to the House Veterans' Affairs Committee's Health Subcommittee, the VA stated that disposing of this building would save an estimated \$98,000 over the next 10 years.

Danville and DACC see great potential for the building. Through the generosity of a private donor, DACC plans to transform the old library into a cultural center, providing the local treasure. Swapping these parcels of land is a win for the VA, saving money on the construction of the fence and maintenance of an unused building, and a win for Danville, providing the community with a historically significant location to host a valuable cultural attraction.

H.R. 3262 is a simple, win-win bill for all parties involved.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member BROWN for their support in moving this bill, along with the Veterans' Affairs Committee staff for their work in getting the bill to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3262.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3262.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Once again, I encourage all Members to support H.R. 3262.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3262.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

9/11 MEMORIAL ACT

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3036) to designate the National September 11 Memorial located at the World Trade Center site in New York City, New York, as a national memorial, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3036

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "9/11 Memorial Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this Act:

(1) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—The term "eligible entity" means a nonprofit organization as defined in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3)) in existence on the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) **MAP.**—The term "map" means the map titled "National September 11 Memorial Proposed Boundary", numbered 903/128928, and dated June 2015.

(3) **NATIONAL SEPTEMBER 11 MEMORIAL.**—The term "National September 11 Memorial" means the area approximately bounded by Fulton, Greenwich, Liberty and West Streets as generally depicted on the map.

(4) **SECRETARY.**—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF MEMORIAL.

(a) **DESIGNATION.**—The National September 11 Memorial is hereby designated as a national memorial.

(b) **MAP.**—The map shall be available for public inspection and kept on file at the appropriate office of the Secretary.

(c) **EFFECT OF DESIGNATION.**—The national memorial designated under this section shall not be a unit of the National Park System and the designation of the national memorial shall not be construed to require or authorize Federal funds to be expended for any purpose related to the national memorial except as provided under section 4.

SEC. 4. COMPETITIVE GRANTS FOR CERTAIN MEMORIALS.

(a) **COMPETITIVE GRANTS.**—Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary may award a single grant per year through a competitive process to an eligible entity for the operation and maintenance of any memorial located within the United States established to commemorate the events of and honor—

(1) the victims of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and United Airlines Flight 93 on September 11, 2001; and

(2) the victims of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on February 26, 1993.

(b) *AVAILABILITY.*—Funds made available under this section shall remain available until expended.

(c) *CRITERIA.*—In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary shall give greatest weight in the selection of eligible entities using the following criteria:

(1) Experience in managing a public memorial that will benefit the largest number of visitors each calendar year.

(2) Experience in managing a memorial of significant size (4 acres or more).

(3) Successful coordination and cooperation with Federal, State, and local governments in operating and managing the memorial.

(4) Ability and commitment to use grant funds to enhance security at the memorial.

(5) Ability to use grant funds to increase the numbers of economically disadvantaged visitors to the memorial and surrounding areas.

(d) *SUMMARIES.*—Not later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal year in which an eligible entity obligates or expends any part of a grant under this section, the eligible entity shall prepare and submit to the Secretary and Congress a summary that—

(1) specifies the amount of grant funds obligated or expended in the preceding fiscal year;

(2) specifies the purpose for which the funds were obligated or expended; and

(3) includes any other information the Secretary may require to more effectively administer the grant program.

(e) *SUNSET.*—The authority to award grants under this section shall expire on the date that is 7 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PITTS). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I was working in New York City in the fall of 2001 when terrorists tore a hole in our skyline and nearly 3,000 Americans lost their lives. Like many others, I lost people that I knew. For many, they lost their dearest loved ones—their soulmate, mother, father, brother, sister, children, child, friend.

All of us were moved by stories of heroism that followed that event—hundreds of firefighters and police and other first responders who gave their own lives to save others.

In the months that followed, I remember coming around that site every

morning as I went to work because I couldn't take the tunnel anymore. It was closed. I would take the ferry from New York to New Jersey. We would come around the tip of Manhattan. Every morning as we passed the World Trade Center site, a hush would fall on that ferry boat, and people would ponder what happened there. That went on as autumn turned into winter and winter turned into spring, month after month, as we watched the seemingly endless restoration of that tragic site.

Mr. Speaker, on September 11, 2011—10 years later—the National September 11 Memorial opened. It was erected to remember those who fell, to recognize the endurance of the survivors, to honor the bravery of those who risked their lives, and often lost their lives, to save others, and, above all, to remember the power of our free Nation to overcome evil with good. It stands as a reminder to every generation that we must never forget and we must never falter.

Mr. Speaker, private citizens with deep concern erected that memorial. I applaud them for their good work. But now it is our part to preserve and protect this hallowed ground and to answer this national tragedy with national support. The National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act recognizes this site as a national memorial. It provides for funding for security and operations.

I want to thank the many who have endorsed this bill. Eighty-two Members of this Chamber have cosponsored it. Police organizations have gotten behind it, including the National Association of Police Organizations and the Fraternal Order of Police, veterans organizations, including the Iraq and Afghanistan Vets of America, Governor Chris Christie of New Jersey, Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York, and, most importantly, nearly a dozen family and friend support groups of those that were most deeply impacted by 9/11.

Private donors and concerned citizens have done their part at this site, and they continue to. But now it is our solemn duty, I believe, to honor the fallen and to protect the living.

I urge my colleagues to pass the National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill, as we know, designates the 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center as the National September 11 Memorial and authorizes a grant program of up to \$25 million per year for the next 7 years to support the operation and the maintenance of the memorial.

The bill was amended at markup to make the grant program available to other September 11 memorials located in the United States. Money for the grant program will be subject to appropriation and come out of the overall budget of the Department of Interior.

I want to thank and congratulate my colleague from New York, Representative NADLER, as the lead Democratic cosponsor. He has diligently guided this bill through the legislative process. It is because of his hard work and advocacy that it has come this far.

September 11 both rattled and united this country like few other events in our history. We still live with the repercussions, and the memorial is a fitting tribute and a solemn reminder.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT).

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act.

The events of September 11 continue to stir emotions for Americans when we think about that day's tragic losses, remarkable acts of bravery, and the stark reminders that life is precious and evil is real.

As a Nation, we have pledged to "Never Forget" what happened on September 11, and today, by passing this legislation, we can put our actions behind that sentiment.

2016 marks the 75th anniversary of Pearl Harbor and the 15th anniversary of 9/11. Just as the USS *Arizona* provides a place for future generations to understand where—and more importantly how and why—we were attacked in 1941, the National September 11 Memorial gives Americans a place to understand the tragedy of that day and ongoing sacrifices of the United States Armed Forces. Indeed, December 7 and September 11 are now two dates that will live in infamy.

□ 1700

I thank my colleague, TOM MACARTHUR, for introducing this legislation, and I thank everyone from the National September 11th Memorial and Museum for all of their hard work.

I have been to the Memorial and have felt the incredibly emotional effect it has had on each visitor. Unfortunately, many of our enemies see this symbol of our Nation's strength and resolve as a target, and, as such, the Memorial requires a high level of security in order to keep its over 6 million annual visitors safe. This legislation ensures the Memorial will receive the support it needs to provide a safe experience for every visitor who passes through, whether he be His Holiness, Pope Francis, or whether he be the young schoolchild who was not yet born on September 11, 2001.

I would like to take a moment to recognize a very special person, Rob O'Neill, a former member of SEAL Team 6, who is best known for his actions in the raid that killed Osama bin Laden. The 9/11 Memorial has a special place in his heart, and he has been a

strong advocate for this bill. He has told me and others that the site is important to him and to his fellow special operators. It helps signify the cause for which they were fighting. In fact, the shirt he wore on the mission is on display at the museum, along with other artifacts from 9/11 and from the many years since, chronicling how Americans have pulled together to support each other, to secure our Nation, and to rededicate ourselves to liberty and justice. So I thank Mr. O'Neill for his service and for his sacrifice.

Once again, I convey my support for this bill, and I encourage all of my colleagues to pass the 9/11 Memorial Act.

I thank Tricia Evans and Ian Foley, who are on my staff, for their hard work on this bill.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not extend to Representative MACARTHUR my appreciation for his leadership and for bringing the bill to this point as well.

I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), whom I thank for his leadership and hard work in getting this bill to this point.

Mr. NADLER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, more than 14 years ago, two jet planes were deliberately crashed into the World Trade Center—killing thousands of innocent people. A third plane slammed into the Pentagon, and a fourth plane, likely destined for this very Capitol complex in which we now stand, was brought down by a group of courageous passengers in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

As I do today, I represented Ground Zero—the World Trade Center area—on September 11, 2001. In the hours immediately after the attack, I left Washington and took the last train back to my home in New York. I will never forget the moment I first saw the ravaged skyline of Lower Manhattan from the train windows. Normally, on the train, while going between Philadelphia and New York, I would look to see the first glimpse I could catch of the Twin Towers. Now what you could see were not the Twin Towers but long, tall, billowing clouds of smoke that were going straight up and then were stretching down the Jersey Shore. The Twin Towers had been replaced by the brutal glow of raging fires and of black, billowing smoke.

The train that left at 10 o'clock arrived at 6 p.m. We had been held up in Baltimore while they walked the tracks, looking for bombs. Coming out of Penn Station at 6 o'clock was like a scene from the movie "On the Beach" for those who remember that movie. Nothing was moving. The city at 33rd Street and Eighth Avenue seemed completely empty—no people, no cars, no buses. There was nothing moving as if it were completely depopulated. To get home, I had to call a friend to come pick me up.

When I went down to the World Trade Center the next morning, the scene was absolutely horrible. There was fire, smoke, debris, twisted metal, human remains—total devastation. Yet, even then, there were signs of hope. Firefighters, police, Emergency Medical Technicians, ironworkers, and construction workers of all types rushed to Ground Zero from around the country to offer their help. Messages of support and comfort flooded in from all 50 States. The American people were united and determined to help New York get back on its feet. The attack may have occurred in my district, but it was an attack on our Nation as a whole, and we all recognized that.

In the years since the attacks, America has acted as a Nation to help rebuild New York and to support the responders, survivors, and families of the victims. Last year, Congress reauthorized the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act so as to provide health care and support the 33,000 responders and survivors who now live in all 50 States and in 429 congressional districts. By passing a permanent health program and reauthorizing the Victim Compensation Fund, Congress provided peace of mind for tens of thousands of brave Americans.

In addition to making our responders and survivors whole, Congress invested billions of dollars to help rebuild Lower Manhattan. One World Trade Center now fills the hole that was left in our skyline when the towers fell, and businesses that were shuttered after the attack are reopened and are thriving. In what was once the shadow of the towers, there now stands a comprehensive museum that is dedicated to sharing the stories of September 11th and the bravery of those who risked everything to protect their fellow Americans on that day and on the days following.

In place of the smoking hole that Congressman MACARTHUR and I saw day after day in Lower Manhattan, there now exists a somber and inspiring memorial. It is a site of remembrance and hope—a place for every American to come and reflect as to what happened on that September morning and to renew our promise to never forget the events of that day. It is a national memorial for a national tragedy.

That is why I am pleased to cosponsor the legislation, introduced by my colleague from New Jersey, to provide Federal recognition and support for the memorial. This legislation will help ensure the memorial continues to provide a sacred and inspiring spot for generations to come.

I appreciate the bipartisan support from the members of the Natural Resources Committee and from the House leadership in bringing this bill to the floor today. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the House Appropriations Committee every year to

ensure that the National 9/11 Memorial and Museum receives appropriate levels of funding. I will also work with my colleagues to maintain open communications with the Department of the Interior to ensure the money is spent wisely and achieves our shared goal of ensuring the memorial remains a spot of reflection and peace and is accessible to millions of visitors every day.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and provide the recognition and support this memorial deserves.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge Representative NADLER, and I thank him for his support in this process.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN).

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, 15 years ago this September 11th, our country suffered the most deadly and devastating attack since its birth. Terrorists chose the Twin Towers because they stood proud and they stood tall. They stood as symbols of the raw power of people free to pursue their dreams, to live their values, and to practice their faiths.

When the towers fell, they took Americans from every corner of our Nation; and when the President stood atop a fire engine and spoke through a bullhorn to console a broken Nation, he spoke to every man, woman, and child in our United States who was suffering and was saddened by an unimaginable act of hate. Heroes from all over the country came to Lower Manhattan to sift through the rubble and pick up the pieces. It was a site of national tragedy, a site of national heroism, and it must also be the site of a national memorial. It is only fitting that the 9/11 Memorial receives proper funding just like every other national memorial. It is sacred ground, and it must be maintained accordingly. Also, annual security costs run into the millions of dollars as the site remains a top terrorist target.

Mr. Speaker, terrorists may have attacked our country at three locations that day, but they also attacked the spirit inside all of us. I encourage every Member of this body to vote for this legislation and to visit the 9/11 Memorial and Museum to see what I and Representative NADLER see every day.

I thank Representative MACARTHUR for introducing this legislation, and I again thank—always—the heroes of that fateful day.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. I thank the ranking member.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3036, the National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act, which was introduced by my friends Congressmen TOM MACARTHUR and JERRY NADLER—two sentinels of Americans' liberty and freedom.

President Bush traveled to the site with Democrats and Republicans. I have never seen in my experience here no other effort close to it of how we were united. We accomplished so much when we were united, and we learned to respect each other even more. On that day, our lives, our country, and the world changed forever. In the aftermath, Americans came together for a common purpose—to rescue, to rebuild, and to remember those we had lost—friends and neighbors, many of them. They were from all faiths, all persuasions.

This memorial and the museum at the World Trade Center were constructed so that we would never forget those brothers and sisters, children and parents, cousins and colleagues. We called them that at the time; yet the further we get from 9/11 we very seldom refer to “sisters” and “brothers” except for our relatives and our brave first responders who perished during one of the darkest moments in our Nation’s history.

Ensuring this Memorial site will be here for years to come will give millions of people around the world the opportunity to pay tribute to those who were lost and to find inspiration in how our Nation has recovered. As a proud supporter of our National Park Service, I know it will make sure the site remains a sacred place of healing and of hope as a national memorial.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, I urge the swift passage of H.R. 3036 in order to solidify the memorial’s standing, to honor the memories of those we lost, and to ensure future generations can learn about that tragic day.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining?

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Jersey has 11½ minutes remaining.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. STEFANIK).

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3036, the 9/11 Memorial Act.

I thank my colleague, Mr. MACARTHUR, for his leadership on this incredibly important issue.

Fifteen years ago on September 11th, every American will remember where he was when the horrifying news broke of these terrorist attacks. Mr. Speaker, as the youngest Member currently serving in Congress, I was in my high school English class when the horrible news was shared with my classmates from our teacher. I remember my schoolmates, crying, who couldn’t get ahold of their older siblings, of their aunts and uncles, of their cousins who worked in the World Trade Center.

On that horrifying day when terrorists attacked our Nation, we also saw true acts of heroism. As the workers of the World Trade Center were running

out to escape, our first responders were running up the stairs to save their fellow Americans. Strangers helped fellow strangers escape the buildings. New Yorkers helped others walk miles home to get to their families.

□ 1715

New Yorkers will never forget the horrifying attacks. This Nation will never forget these horrifying attacks. The 9/11 memorial is truly hallowed ground.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote “yes” on this legislation.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I urge passage of this legislation.

This legislation, this 9/11 National Memorial, no matter what corner of this great Nation of ours we are from, we have a shared legacy here. That shared legacy is about sacrifice, heroism, and indeed loss as well.

We have a shared future from this memorial about determination, resilience, and the very nature of this Nation to be hopeful and to look forward. To one another, we have a shared responsibility. This memorial will remind us of that and keep that thought very much alive in all of us.

Again, let me congratulate and thank the sponsors of the legislation, Mr. NADLER and Mr. MACARTHUR, for their fine work and for bringing this before us today.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the remarks of my colleagues. Events like 9/11—and the world that it has brought us into—demand that we come together, and I am glad that we have done that on this bill. We have come together to honor the fallen and to protect the living.

I urge my colleagues to join in making this the voice of this Chamber as we vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3036, The National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act, and thank my colleagues Reps. MACARTHUR and NADLER for their leadership to bring this bill to the House floor.

In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks, Congress has come together to rebuild New York and the Pentagon and support the responders, survivors, and families of the victims. Last year, we reauthorized the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, making the health care program essential permanent and extending the Victims Compensation Fund for an additional five years, with full funding.

As a New Yorker, the memory of 9/11 continues to evoke pain and sorrow—and the Memorial at Ground Zero stirs these emotions like no other place. The dramatic reflecting pools are a sanctuary of calm within the bustle of lower Manhattan and a moving tribute to the thousands of innocent Americans lost in the attacks.

This bill affirms our commitment to remember those lost on 9/11 by designating the site

a national memorial and enabling the memorial to access the federal support it needs for security and maintenance. The 9/11 Memorial is now among New York’s most popular sites, with over 23 million visitors since it opened in 2011. This designation will ensure that the site continues to welcome everyone who comes to remember those we have lost.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the House Committee on Homeland Security and the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee’s Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, I rise in support of H.R. 3036, the “National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act.”

This bill will designate the National September 11 Memorial located at the World Trade Center site in New York City, New York, as a national memorial.

H.R. 3036 authorizes the Secretary of Interior to award a grant in an amount not to exceed \$25 million each fiscal year to the National September 11 Memorial and Museum at the World Trade Center Foundation for the operation and maintenance of the memorial.

Finally, the bill requires the National September 11 Memorial and Museum to report annually to the Interior Secretary and Congress on (1) the amount of grant funds expended; (2) the purpose for which the funds were used; and (3) any other information the Secretary may require.

As a member of the House Committee on Homeland Security since its creation, and Ranking Member of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security, I strongly support this resolution.

I will never forget September 11, 2001, a day on which I stood on the East Front steps of the Capitol on September 11, along with 150 Members of the House of Representatives, singing “God Bless America.”

September 11, 2001 remains a tragedy that defines our Nation’s history since that fateful day for many reasons.

This year marks the 15th anniversary of the September 11 attacks that killed 2,977 men, women, and children.

At the World Trade Center site in Lower Manhattan, 2,753 people were killed when hijacked American Airlines Flight 11 and United Airlines Flight 175 were intentionally crashed in the North and South towers.

Of those who perished during the initial attacks and the subsequent collapses of the towers, 343 were New York City firefighters, another 23 were New York City police officers and 37 others were officers at the Port Authority.

The victims ranged in age from two to 85 years.

At the Pentagon in Washington, 184 people were killed when hijacked American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the building.

Near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, 40 passengers and crew members aboard United Airlines Flight 93 died when the plane crashed into a field.

It is believed that the hijackers crashed the plane in that location, rather than their unknown target, after the passengers and crew attempted to retake control of the flight.

The act of those passengers to stop the hijackers likely saved the lives of thousands of their fellow Americans that day.

The heroic work done by the first responders who rushed into the burning Twin Towers and the Pentagon saved lives.

We will forever remember the first responders who lost their lives in the line of duty on September 11.

This Nation shall forever be grateful for the selfless sacrifice shown that day.

That is why the National September 11 Memorial and Museum is so important.

The National September 11 Memorial at the World Trade Center remembers and honors the thousands of innocent lives lost during the September 11th attacks, and the attacks of February 26, 1993.

This Memorial is a testament to the triumph of human dignity over human depravity and affirms an unwavering commitment to the fundamental value of human life.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of The National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act. This legislation would designate the site of the 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center as a national memorial—providing it the national recognition and support it deserves as a lasting symbol of the lives we lost and the resilience with which our nation came together and pledged to emerge stronger in search of a more peaceful world.

Like many New Yorkers, I know and have felt firsthand the lasting impacts of September 11, 2001. Among the almost 3,000 lives we lost that day was that of my cousin, John Moran, a second-generation firefighter and FDNY Battalion Chief. Not a day goes by that I don't think of my cousin and of the thousands of family members and loved ones we lost that day. But I also bear in mind each day the vow we made as a nation to never forget what happened and to protect the spirit of camaraderie that emerged from the attacks.

The 9/11 Memorial serves as a place where we can remember and honor the brave lives we lost, as well as that spirit of unity and overcoming with which we moved forward as a nation. Because of the place the events of September 11, 2001 hold in our collective national history, the federal government should play a role in preserving this space and keeping what it represents at the forefront of our collective memory. By recognizing the 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center as a national memorial, federal resources will be available to ensure the maintenance, security and accessibility of this site so that all people will have the opportunity to remember and honor our heroes. It is our duty to ensure that this sacred site and tribute receives the national upkeep and recognition it deserves.

September 11th changed our lives as individuals and as Americans. We must actively seek to remind our nation of the resolution and sacrifice of the survivors, the victims, their families, and of our first responders. And we must also enshrine the courage and strength with which we stood up to hatred. Acting in a bipartisan manner to designate the 9/11 Memorial as a national memorial is an important step in this direction.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3036, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

JOHN H. CHAFEE COASTAL BARRIER RESOURCES BOUNDARIES SYSTEM MAP REVISIONS

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 890) to correct the boundaries of the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Unit P16, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 890

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REPLACEMENT OF JOHN H. CHAFEE COASTAL BARRIER RESOURCES SYSTEM MAP.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—The maps subtitled “Cape Romano Unit P15, Tigertail Unit FL-63P” and “Keewaydin Island Unit P16” included in the set of maps entitled “Coastal Barrier Resources System” referred to in section 4(a) of the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (16 U.S.C. 3503(a)) and relating to certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida are hereby replaced by other maps relating to the units subtitled “Cape Romano Unit P15/P15P”, “Keewaydin Island Unit P16/P16P, Tigertail Unit FL-63P”, and “Keewaydin Island Unit P16/P16P”, respectively, and dated April 10, 2015.

(b) *AVAILABILITY.*—The Secretary of the Interior shall keep the replacement maps referred to in subsection (a) on file and available for inspection in accordance with section 4(b) of the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (16 U.S.C. 3503(b)).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR) and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. GRIJALVA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bipartisan bill corrects Coastal Barrier Resources System boundary errors in Collier County, Florida. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers the coastal barriers sys-

tem program, has acknowledged the need to correct these errors and has since remapped the area.

The agency sent the new maps to the Congress, which has the sole authority to change the boundaries and codify the correct maps in this case. This is what the bill, as amended, achieves. I urge its adoption.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Coastal Barrier Resources Act, or CBRA, requires the identification of hazardous areas on the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts and makes Federal subsidies off limits to people who choose to develop these lands.

Particularly in this time of rising sea levels and increased storm surge brought on by global warming, CBRA is critical to protecting American taxpayers and sensitive coastal ecosystems.

H.R. 890 would adjust the boundaries of several Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida. These changes have been carefully mapped by the Fish and Wildlife Service and reflect improvements in technology that have allowed us to show with great accuracy which parcels of land do and do not constitute coastal barrier resources under the law.

As a result, numerous properties that were originally included by mistake will be removed, and other properties that have been identified as at risk will be included. These changes to the CBRS are protective of private property rights, the environment, and the taxpayers.

I urge support of this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. Speaker, having no other Members to address this legislation on my side, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CLAWSON).

Mr. CLAWSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to present H.R. 890, which adopts new Coastal Barrier Resources System maps for the southern part of my district, Florida 19, in southwest Collier County, Florida.

A special thanks to my fellow Members—DON BEYER, MARIO DIAZ-BALART, and Chairman ROB BISHOP—for their support and helping me push this through. I urge support of the passage.

On a personal note, it has been my lifelong concern for the environment and involvement in water quality issues in my hometown of Bonita Springs, Florida, that led me to Congress on an unknowing path really. So introducing this bill, to me, today is really special and personal.

A special note of thanks to those who helped—so many folks—particularly Bob and Jack for their perseverance.

Perseverance paid off. Also, I thank Cherie for her abiding inspiration and to Yodi.

The CBRS was created by Congress with the 1982 Coastal Barrier Resources Act. This initiative preserves the ecological integrity of coastal areas while still protecting private property rights. This initiative preserves the ecological integrity of coastal areas that serve as important barriers against wind and tidal forces caused by coastal storms, and reduces further development in these sensitive areas. In other words, it creates a perpetual protected area for our wonderful Gulf wildlife.

These new maps have passed public review, OMB review, and have been released by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

This is the southern part of my district. The new maps correct errors from 40 years ago, which seriously hurt some 1,600 of our constituents and hurt their access to flood insurance, home mortgages, and refinancing.

These new maps also add 17,000 acres in perpetuity to CBRS, 17,000 acres principally in this zone right here, between Naples and Marco Island and also a little bit south. Keewaydin Island—that you see right here, just south of Naples—and Cape Romano are part of the pristine, picturesque Ten Thousand Islands chain that begins 20 miles of Naples. These newly preserved areas highlighted on these charts cover five geographical units, part of now over 40,000 continuous acres that will be permanently protected.

This is government doing something right for all stakeholders and for all the generations that will follow us.

H.R. 890, protecting 15 miles of natural coastal barriers, is sound economics. It is a piece of what needs to be done toward growing southwest Florida's multibillion dollar private and commercial real estate values and south Florida's tourism industry, which brings in over 5 million visitors to my district. It also employs one out of every five people in the local workforce.

I am proud to report that this bill will create the largest grouping of CBRS units nationwide, protecting our unique Florida Everglades and ecosystem, aquatic plants and animals, other wildlife, and also protecting private properties from storms and floods.

Keewaydin Island right here, just south of Naples, is one of the largest, if not the largest, sea turtle nesting areas in Florida and in the United States. Depending on the time of year, these are the nests that we see throughout our district on the beach. Also in this area, we see lots of the beautiful spoonbill that you can't find in too many different places.

The Florida Everglades are a natural treasure. It is home to wildlife and plants that are unique in our Nation: fish, tortoises, reptiles, and insects. It

is our duty to protect these species. This bill will have a permanent, positive impact on preserving this fragile ecological area and quality of life.

Three years ago, I waded into the Gulf of Mexico with my folks. They urged me to get involved in local politics, hoping that I could have just a small impact and make a small, positive difference in the health of the waters of southwest Florida. My mom is gone now, but she always hoped that a moment like this would come.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. CLAWSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this is a moment that we can accomplish something positive for our constituents, positive for our economy, and positive for our waters of south Florida. I am very appreciative to have a small role, and I acknowledge that we have so much more to do to conserve the beauty of southwest Florida for generations to come.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 890, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPEDITED REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT TO STATE CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3894) to amend title 10, United States Code, to require the prompt notification of State Child Protective Services by military and civilian personnel of the Department of Defense required by law to report suspected instances of child abuse and neglect.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3894

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXPEDITED REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT TO STATE CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES.

(a) REPORTING BY MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Section 1787 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (a) and (b) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively; and

(2) by inserting before subsection (c), as so redesignated, the following new subsections:

"(a) REPORTING BY MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL.—A member of the armed forces, civilian employee of the Department of Defense, or contractor employee working on a military installation who is mandated by Federal regulation or State law to report known or suspected instances of child abuse and neglect shall provide the report directly to State Child Protective Services or another appropriate State agency in addition to the member's or employee's chain of command or any designated Department point of contact.

"(b) TRAINING FOR MANDATED REPORTERS.—The Secretary of Defense shall ensure that individuals referred to in subsection (a) who are mandated by State law to report known or suspected instances of child abuse and neglect receive appropriate training, in accordance with State guidelines, intended to improve their—

"(1) ability to recognize evidence of child abuse and neglect; and

"(2) understanding of the mandatory reporting requirements imposed by law."

(b) CONFORMING AND CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—Section 1787 of title 10, United States Code, is further amended—

(1) in subsection (c), as redesignated by subsection (a)(1), by striking "IN GENERAL.—" and inserting "REPORTING BY STATES.—"; and

(2) in subsection (d), as redesignated by subsection (a)(1)—

(A) by striking "(d) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term" and inserting the following:

"(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) The term"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(2) The term 'State' includes the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. STEFANIK) and the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 3894, Talia's law, which would require military and Department of Defense civilian personnel working on a military installation to report instances of child abuse and neglect to State Child Protective Services in addition to their designated Department of Defense point of contact.

□ 1730

Our Nation is extremely proud of our military servicemembers and the sacrifices they endure to protect our national security. Members of our military's Active Duty Reserve component and the National Guard knit the blanket of freedom to keep us safe from those who wish to do us harm.

Standing beside our Nation's brave servicemembers are the spouses and children who bear constant challenges and maintain resiliency throughout the continuous moves and the strain deployments incur on families.

There are approximately 2 million children with one or both parents who serve in the U.S. military, and the support role these children fulfill is beyond significant and should be commended. Our Nation's military dependents face greater academic challenges and emotional stress due to relocation and attending multiple schools.

It is difficult enough growing up and enduring adolescence without having to move every couple of years, face new surroundings, make new friends, and all the while having a mother or father serving our Nation in harm's way.

Military children must rely on their loved ones, family, friends, and their parents to get through the struggles that only a military household can understand.

However, it is when those individuals, those adults who these children trust the most, hurt them in any way. It is inexcusable. Our children are truly our Nation's future, and anyone who abuses or neglects a child is appalling and must be held accountable.

That is why I stand here today in support of H.R. 3894, an imperative piece of legislation which would require a childcare provider located on a DOD installation to report any signs of child abuse or neglect directly to Child Protective Services and the provider's chain of command.

Not only does this bill enforce the reporting procedure, but it also requires those individuals who work with children on an installation receive the necessary training to recognize child abuse as well as fully understand the reporting requirements.

I applaud my Committee on Armed Services colleague and friend, Ms. GABBARD, for her leadership on this issue and encourage the rest of my House colleagues to support this important bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In 2005, 5-year-old Talia Williams was beaten to death by her own father, who was stationed at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii at the time. Talia suffered through months and months of abuse from her father and her stepmother, which ultimately led to her death.

Why didn't someone do something? Why was this allowed to occur? Why

didn't someone take action to stop this horrific abuse that was visible to so many who knew Talia? There were multiple reports that were made to military officials, but when it came right down to it, nothing was done to take Talia out of harm's way.

I am rising today to ask my colleagues to support my bill, H.R. 3894, Talia's Law, because more than 10 years after Talia's tragic death, the same gaps in the military's reporting requirements that failed to protect Talia remain unchanged. In fact, over the last decade, there have been 29,000 cases of child abuse and neglect in military homes.

Now, outside of the military, in the civilian world, doctors, psychologists, social workers, teachers, or other professionals who work closely with children are required to report any suspected cases of child abuse and neglect directly to that State's Child Protective Services.

But the military's reporting requirements do not require that direct reporting to State authorities. So reports of Talia's suspected abuse never reached the Hawaii Child Protective Services. Instead, they stayed within the Army's chain of command.

Now, I know there were a lot of people around Talia who had good intentions and who were gravely concerned about the abuse that they were seeing, but the fact remains that Talia was never removed from this abusive environment.

To close this gap and fix this problem, Talia's Law requires the same protections that exist for any other child, whether they are in a military household or not. This bill requires immediate and direct reporting to State Child Protective Services in cases of suspected abuse and neglect.

I recently spoke to Talia's mother, Tarshia, who knows that this bill will not bring Talia back, it cannot right the wrongs that failed to protect Talia.

But what she does know and what she does hope is that the passage of this bill will take an important step forward in helping to better protect the thousands of other children in military families who may be facing this same situation and get them the care and services that they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to honor Talia and all of our children in military families and support H.R. 3894.

I would also like to thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. STEFANIK) for her very thoughtful remarks on this and for championing Talia's Law to be able to help these children who are facing numerous challenges and who deserve better than to have this kind of abuse.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. TAKAI), my friend and colleague, the distinguished gentleman representing Hawaii's First Congressional District.

Mr. TAKAI. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in favor of a bill my friend and colleague TULSI GABBARD and I have introduced.

H.R. 3894, Talia's Law, gets its name from a 5-year-old girl named Talia Williams who was beaten to death at the hands of her father, an Army soldier stationed at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii.

We in Hawaii and all across the country are so thankful for the sacrifices our servicemen and servicewomen make to protect our freedoms, but we also have a duty to protect the most vulnerable among us, our children. In Hawaii, we call them our keiki.

As a father myself, I am proud to stand up for Talia's Law, which would require prompt reporting of possible abuses not only to a military supervisor, but also prompt reporting of possible abuse and neglect to the State's Child Protective Services. It would strengthen reporting requirements for these allegations and make sure that they are properly investigated.

I hope that, as we deliberate this bill, we also draw attention to the fact that Congress can come together and should come together to provide better access to resources for those in uniform suffering from wounds that may not be visible to the eyes.

I ask for the consideration of this bill and its urgent passage. These children, our keiki, and all the victims of abuse and neglect cannot wait.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3894, legislation requiring military and civilian personnel of the Department of Defense required by law to report suspected instances of child abuse and neglect to do so promptly and directly to State child protective service agencies.

I support this legislation sponsored by Congresswoman TULSI GABBARD of Hawaii, a good friend and veterans of the Armed Services, because no child should have to bear the pain and suffering of abuse or neglect alone.

Mr. Speaker, the reason this important legislation is needed is illustrated by the tragic and heart breaking case of Talia Williams, an innocent and loving 5-year old girl who was beaten to death by her father, an active-duty infantryman stationed in Hawaii.

After investigation and through subsequent legal proceedings, it came to light that before being murdered, precious Talia had suffered through months of torture and abuse by both her father and stepmother.

Even worse, Mr. Speaker, it was revealed that multiple federal employees, including military police and workers at her on-base child care facility, failed to report suspected signs of Talia's abuse.

But the shocking case of Talia Williams is not isolated; it is estimated that more than 29,000 children have been abused in military homes over the past decade.

The system failed Talia Williams but it is not too late to save other children at risk by passing H.R. 3894.

Under current law, Family Advocacy Programs operated by the Armed Forces are to identify individuals who are mandated to report known or suspected cases of child abuse to designated "points of contact," who then are to conduct an assessment investigation into the reported abuse and to communicate with State child protective services agencies.

H.R. 3894 amends current law and requires DoD professionals who come into contact with children such as physicians, psychologists, social workers, and teachers to report suspected instances of abuse or neglect directly to the State child protective services agencies in addition to Defense Department points of contact or chain of command.

H.R. 3894 also requires these "mandated reporters" to receive training in accordance with state guidelines in order to improve their ability to recognize evidence of child abuse and neglect and understand mandatory reporting requirements imposed by law.

Mr. Speaker, it is too late to save Talia Williams but out of the horrific tragedy that claimed her life, it is possible to identify and save other children from a similar fate.

H.R. 3894 will help ensure that instances of child abuse and neglect are recognized and reported immediately by empowering appropriate military and civilian personnel in the Department of Defense with the skills and training need to recognize evidence of child abuse and neglect and to place on them an affirmative duty to report instances of suspected abuse or neglect promptly and directly to child protective agencies.

I urge all Members to join me in voting to pass H.R. 3894.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. STEFANIK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3894.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 38 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

9/11 MEMORIAL ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on the motion to suspend the rules previously postponed.

The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3036), as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 387, nays 12, not voting 34, as follows:

[Roll No. 64]

YEAS—387

Abraham	Courtney	Hardy
Adams	Crawford	Harper
Aderholt	Crenshaw	Harris
Aguilar	Cuellar	Hartzler
Allen	Culberson	Hastings
Amodei	Cummings	Heck (NV)
Ashford	Curbelo (FL)	Heck (WA)
Babin	Davis (CA)	Hensarling
Barletta	Davis, Danny	Hice, Jody B.
Barr	Davis, Rodney	Higgins
Barton	DeFazio	Hill
Bass	DeGette	Hinojosa
Beatty	Delaney	Holding
Becerra	DeLauro	Honda
Benishek	DeBene	Hoyer
Bera	Denham	Huelskamp
Bilirakis	Dent	Huffman
Bishop (GA)	DeSantis	Hultgren
Bishop (MI)	DeSaulnier	Hunter
Bishop (UT)	DesJarlais	Hurd (TX)
Black	Deutch	Hurt (VA)
Blackburn	Diaz-Balart	Israel
Blum	Dingell	Issa
Blumenauer	Doggett	Jackson Lee
Bonamici	Dold	Jeffries
Bost	Donovan	Jenkins (KS)
Boustany	Doyle, Michael	Jenkins (WV)
Boyle, Brendan	F.	Johnson (GA)
F.	Duckworth	Johnson (OH)
Brady (PA)	Duffy	Johnson, E. B.
Brady (TX)	Duncan (TN)	Johnson, Sam
Bridenstine	Edwards	Jolly
Brooks (IN)	Ellison	Jones
Brown (FL)	Ellmers (NC)	Jordan
Brownley (CA)	Emmer (MN)	Joyce
Buchanan	Engel	Kaptur
Bucshon	Eshoo	Katko
Bustos	Esty	Keating
Butterfield	Farenthold	Kelly (IL)
Calvert	Farr	Kelly (MS)
Capps	Fattah	Kelly (PA)
Cárdenas	Fitzpatrick	Kennedy
Carney	Fleischmann	Kildee
Carson (IN)	Fleming	Kilmer
Carter (GA)	Forbes	Kind
Carter (TX)	Fortenberry	King (IA)
Cartwright	Foster	King (NY)
Castor (FL)	Frankel (FL)	Kinzinger (IL)
Chabot	Franks (AZ)	Kirkpatrick
Chaffetz	Fudge	Kline
Chu, Judy	Gabbard	Knight
Cicilline	Garamendi	Kuster
Clark (MA)	Garrett	Labrador
Clarke (NY)	Gibbs	LaHood
Clawson (FL)	Gibson	LaMalfa
Cleaver	Goodlatte	Lamborn
Clyburn	Graham	Lance
Coffman	Granger	Langevin
Cohen	Graves (LA)	Larsen (WA)
Cole	Graves (MO)	Larson (CT)
Collins (GA)	Grayson	Latta
Collins (NY)	Green, Al	Lawrence
Comstock	Griffith	Lee
Conaway	Grijalva	Levin
Connolly	Grothman	Lewis
Conyers	Guinta	Lieu, Ted
Cook	Guthrie	Lipinski
Cooper	Gutiérrez	LoBiondo
Costello (PA)	Hahn	Loeback

Lofgren	Pearce	Simpson
Long	Pelosi	Sinema
Loudermilk	Perlmuter	Slaughter
Love	Perry	Smith (MO)
Lowenthal	Peters	Smith (NE)
Lowe	Peterson	Smith (NJ)
Lucas	Pingree	Smith (TX)
Luetkemeyer	Pittenger	Speier
Lujan Grisham	Pitts	Stefanik
(NM)	Pocan	Stewart
Lujan, Ben Ray	Poe (TX)	Stivers
(NM)	Poliquin	Swalwell (CA)
Lummis	Polis	Takai
Lynch	Pompeo	Takano
MacArthur	Posey	Thompson (CA)
Maloney,	Price (NC)	Thompson (MS)
Carolyn	Price, Tom	Thompson (PA)
Marchant	Quigley	Thornberry
Matsui	Rangel	Tiberi
McCarthy	Ratcliffe	Tipton
McCaul	Reed	Titus
McClintock	Reichert	Tonko
McCollum	Renacci	Torres
McDermott	Ribble	Trott
McGovern	Rice (NY)	Tsongas
McHenry	Rice (SC)	Turner
McKinley	Rigell	Upton
McMorris	Roby	Valadao
Rodgers	Roe (TN)	Van Hollen
McNerney	Rogers (AL)	Vargas
McSally	Rogers (KY)	Veasey
Meadows	Rohrabacher	Velázquez
Meehan	Rokita	Visclosky
Meeks	Rooney (FL)	Wagner
Meng	Ros-Lehtinen	Walberg
Messer	Roskam	Walden
Mica	Ross	Walker
Miller (FL)	Rothfus	Walorski
Miller (MI)	Rouzer	Walters, Mimi
Moolenaar	Roybal-Allard	Walz
Mooney (WV)	Royce	Wasserman
Moore	Ruiz	Schultz
Moulton	Ruppersberger	Waters, Maxine
Mulvaney	Russell	Watson Coleman
Murphy (FL)	Ryan (OH)	Weber (TX)
Murphy (PA)	Salmon	Webster (FL)
Nadler	Sánchez, Linda	Welch
Napolitano	T.	Wenstrup
Neal	Sarbanes	Westerman
Neugebauer	Scalise	Whitfield
Newhouse	Schakowsky	Williams
Noem	Schiff	Wilson (FL)
Nolan	Schrader	Wilson (SC)
Norcross	Schweikert	Wittman
Nugent	Scott (VA)	Womack
Nunes	Scott, Austin	Woodall
O'Rourke	Scott, David	Yoder
Olson	Serrano	Young (AK)
Palazzo	Sessions	Young (IA)
Pallone	Sewell (AL)	Young (IN)
Pascrell	Sherman	Zeldin
Paulsen	Shimkus	Zinke
Payne	Shuster	

NAYS—12

Amash	Burgess	Massie
Brat	Duncan (SC)	Palmer
Brooks (AL)	Fox	Sanford
Buck	Gosar	Sensenbrenner

NOT VOTING—34

Beyer	Gohmert	Richmond
Byrne	Gowdy	Rush
Capuano	Graves (GA)	Sanchez, Loretta
Castro (TX)	Green, Gene	Sires
Clay	Hanna	Smith (WA)
Costa	Herrera Beutler	Stutzman
Cramer	Himes	Vela
Crowley	Hudson	Westmoreland
Fincher	Huizenga (MI)	Yarmuth
Flores	Maloney, Sean	Yoho
Frelinghuysen	Marino	
Gallego	Mullin	

□ 1850

Ms. CLARKE of New York and Mr. HINOJOSA changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 64, had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I was absent today to attend the funeral of a family member. Had I been present, on rollcall No. 64, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 64 on H.R. 3036—9/11 Memorial Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

COMBATTING THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE SPECIES

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last week, I visited Penn State University, which is located in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, for a discussion on the effect that invasive species are having on forests across our Commonwealth. I was joined by several experts in the field of entomology—from the university and from Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Among the insects discussed were the spotted lanternfly, the gypsy moth, and the emerald ash borer. These experts discussed at length the challenges each species presents as well as the ongoing efforts to combat the devastating impact and spread.

As chairman of the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry, I know that my State is not alone and that the effects of these pests are being felt all across the Nation.

I applaud the research being done at Penn State University and by foresters and entomologists around the Nation. Research and applying that science will go a long way in preventing these species from spreading further and causing more destruction on our forests.

I remain hopeful that we can all work together to ensure that our forests remain healthy, both ecologically and economically.

AMERICAN HEROES COLA ACT

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, the House passed H.R. 677, the American Heroes COLA Act, legislation I introduced with Dr. ABRAHAM from Louisiana. This legislation will ensure that veterans receive automatic cost-of-living increases annually based on the consumer price index.

Unlike with Social Security, Congress must act each year to provide

veterans with the COLA increases they need and deserve. Now, by permanently adjusting benefits to include cost-of-living increases, we are providing critical peace of mind to those who have so heroically served our country.

Furthermore, this legislation includes two provisions to address the VA appeals problem, which currently has 440,000 claims backlogged. The first, authored by Congressman O'Rourke, creates a fully developed appeals pilot program. The second I introduced with Chairman MILLER to create a task force to examine the appeals process and make recommendations for improvements before the situation gets worse.

H.R. 677 and some of the other bills that we passed today take important steps towards ensuring that our veterans are able to get the benefits they have earned and deserve.

MARIA KELLER AND ZAKRIA GHANI RECEIVE YOUTH VOLUNTEER AWARDS

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Maria Keller of Plymouth and Zakria Ghani of Maple Grove for being recognized as Minnesota's top youth volunteers by the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards.

Maria, a sophomore at Orono High School, was awarded the top prize after setting up a program called "Read Indeed," which has collected more than 1.7 million books and has provided them to underprivileged children. It is estimated that 800,000 students have received books from the organization.

Zakria, a senior at Al-Amal School, was a finalist for raising critical money for the victims of a devastating fire in Minneapolis. His efforts resulted in raising \$8,500 within one week after the fire in order to help the affected victims and residents.

Mr. Speaker, the work and service by these young people to serve and assist others should be inspiring to us all, and thanks to their actions, countless people have been helped. Their selflessness will serve them and their communities well in the future, and these accolades are well deserved.

Congratulations to Maria and Zakria.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Mr. FOSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor St. Elmo Brady. He was the first African American to obtain a Ph.D. degree in chemistry in the United States. He received a Ph.D. in chemistry at the University of Illinois in 1916 for work done at the Noyes Laboratory. Dr.

Brady was a pioneer in the teaching of science at both Tuskegee University and at Howard University in Washington, D.C.

His research included work on determining the structure of organic acids, methods of determining properties of alkaloids and infrared spectroscopy. This later research resulted in the formation of the Fisk Infrared Spectroscopy Research Laboratory and the Fisk Infrared Institute. In conjunction with faculty from the University of Illinois, Dr. Brady also established a summer program in infrared spectroscopy, which was open to faculty from all colleges and universities.

Dr. Brady is just one of the many African American pioneering scientists whose work should be lifted up as the role model that it is, not just during Black History Month, but all year round.

□ 1900

IMPORTANCE OF THE MOX FACILITY

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today in the President's budget proposal, sadly, the President terminated funding to the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility (MOX) at the Savannah River site. I am disappointed the President has not acknowledged how crucial MOX is to environmental cleanup and promoting nonproliferation.

Support for MOX is bipartisan, as shown by former New Mexico Governor and Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson, along with former Senator Richard Lugar. Both are experts who advocate the completion of the facility. Today, MOX is 70 percent completed, and there is no viable alternative for eliminating plutonium. What is more, closing MOX would make South Carolina and Georgia a permanent repository for nuclear waste.

MOX is also critical to upholding our nonproliferation agreement with the Russian Federation.

I am grateful for the leadership of Governor Nikki Haley along with Attorney General Alan Wilson, who have already filed a lawsuit against the Department of Energy to enforce the law for South Carolina's agreement with the Federal Government.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Thank you, Navy SEAL Rob O'Neill, for eliminating Osama bin Laden.

REHABILITATION RESEARCH IMPROVEMENT BILL

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, earlier today, the Senate HELP Committee passed by voice vote S. 800, the Enhancing the Stature and Visibility of Medical Rehabilitation Research at NIH Act.

As the lead sponsor of this legislation in the House of Representatives, with my good friend and colleague Congressman GREGG HARPER, I am very encouraged to see progress on efforts to advance the state of rehabilitation science at the National Institutes of Health and improve the care provided to people with disabling injuries, illnesses, and conditions.

Millions of people across the country require medical rehabilitation to restore, maintain, or prevent deterioration of function. And this legislation will play an important role in the provision of that care.

I commend Senator KIRK for championing this important bill, and I look forward to its swift passage in the Senate and urge its subsequent consideration in the House.

NORTH KOREA IS A ROGUE STATE LUSTING FOR INTERNATIONAL MISCHIEF

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as Peyton Manning and the Denver Broncos celebrated their Super Bowl win, around 8:27 California time, a North Korean satellite passed in space over the stadium.

What is next? Before long, it could be an intercontinental ballistic missile with a nuclear warhead headed for some American city.

Mr. Speaker, this is not some wacky idea out of a Hollywood movie. On January 6, the North Koreans tested a more advanced nuclear bomb that could kill even more people than the nuclear bomb they already have. Last Saturday, North Korea conducted a rocket launch to try to develop a ballistic missile that could hit the United States.

The North Koreans also support Hezbollah, work with Iran on missile development, hacked Sony Entertainment, kidnapped an American college student and put him in jail, and there is much more.

Mr. Speaker, North Korea is a rogue state lusting for international mischief. It is time to put them back on the State Sponsors of Terrorism list before Super Bowl LI takes place in my hometown of Houston, Texas.

And that is just the way it is.

BOKO HARAM

(Ms. WILSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is Wear Something Red Wednesday to bring back our girls.

Boko Haram is burning children alive. This heartbreaking and, yes, unsettling picture is of Sani, a victim of Boko Haram's terror.

Sani's home was destroyed when Boko Haram set his village on fire, killing his parents. The rest of Sani's family survived only to be viciously gunned down in front of him. Sani represents the millions of children and women who are being raped, kidnapped, mutilated, and killed by the world's deadliest terrorist organization, Boko Haram. If you are not outraged, then you are not paying attention.

Africans killing Africans: the world has ignored this unparalleled level of violence.

I pray that our country and this Congress awaken to these unquestionably horrific acts and take up efforts to defeat Boko Haram.

Please continue to tweet, tweet, tweet #bringbackourgirls. Please wear red tomorrow and every Wednesday. Tweet, tweet, tweet #bringbackourgirls, #joinRepWilson.

CONGRATULATING OKEECHOBEE HIGH SCHOOL

(Mr. ROONEY of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Okeechobee High School, home of the Fighting Brahms of Okeechobee, Florida, for receiving a Wilson Golden Football from the National Football League to commemorate the 50th year of the Super Bowl.

As part of the nationwide Super Bowl 50 celebration, the NFL started the Super Bowl High School honor roll program to acknowledge high schools and communities that have directly influenced Super Bowl history and impacted the game of football for the better. High schools across the country were chosen to honor each player or head coach who graduated from the school and was on an active Super Bowl roster.

Okeechobee High School was chosen because of its esteemed alumni, Jimmie Jones, who played in both Super Bowls XXVII and XXVIII with the Dallas Cowboys. Interestingly, after the victory of Super Bowl XXVII, Jimmie chose to be in Okeechobee for a parade rather than a parade through Dallas with his team. We are all proud to call him one of our own.

It is my honor to represent Okeechobee in the House of Representatives.

WATER CRISIS IN FLINT, MICHIGAN

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend I had the opportunity to travel with Congressman DAN KILDEE, Congresswoman BRENDA LAWRENCE, Congressman SANDER LEVIN, and Congresswoman DEBBIE DINGELL—we were joined by other Members of Congress, SHEILA JACKSON LEE, for example—to see firsthand the water crisis in Flint, Michigan.

I just want to report to Members of the House and the people of this country that what I saw was appalling. At this point, so many weeks after the lead crisis was identified, to have no central medical team examining those children is a sacrilege. To have no water buffalo supplied by the National Guard with pressurized PVC tubing taking water to people's homes, rather than just this bottle delivery; to have no hot showers that are portable, which the military has, that they could put in the schools in that community, to me, was absolutely appalling.

I was told that the Governor of that State had not even met with the people of the community. He had come in for a press conference. Is that what this is about?

I met children who had hemorrhages and ulcers from drinking that water, who had black rashes all over their bodies with pus.

Our country has a responsibility to the citizens of this country. There ought to be a central coordinator. If that Governor can't appoint one, the President of the United States should. Those children and the citizens of that city ought to be taken care of.

CURTIS FOLTZ' RETIREMENT AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF GEORGIA PORTS AUTHORITY

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Curtis Foltz and his retirement as executive director from the Georgia Ports Authority.

Over the past 5 years, Mr. Foltz has done an exceptional job overseeing all Georgia Ports Authority activity, including the expansion and maintenance of the deepwater ports of Savannah and Brunswick.

Since his promotion to executive director in 2010, Mr. Foltz led Georgia Ports Authority to achieve record cargo growth, modernize its terminals, increase efficiency, improve safety, and promote environmental stewardship.

I am honored and grateful for Mr. Foltz' leadership as Georgia Ports Authority's executive director and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

I would also like to wish the incoming executive director, Griff Lynch, and the Georgia Ports Authority continued growth and success for years to come.

SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HURD of Texas). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I want to share a story with everyone tonight. Although I live in Nebraska, I keep an old family van here in Washington, D.C., which is particularly helpful when our children are visiting.

On one particular occasion, the van was very messy. My children were smaller then, and I had not had the time to clean it. I was actually parking the van in a downtown garage here in the city, and somewhat embarrassingly, I handed the keys to the attendant and said to him: Sorry, I have five children.

He looked at me and smiled. He says: Oh, don't worry. I have seven children, and they are going to take care of me when I am old.

I looked back at him, and I also smiled. I said: You know what that is called? That is called social security.

He then said: I like that. Could I say that?

I said: You can say it all that you like.

Mr. Speaker, while we think of Social Security as that important retirement security program, which is so essential to so many people, I want to take a moment to just explore a broader understanding of how we find our security together as a people, as a Nation.

I want to re-imagine this term "Social Security" in a wider sense of the phrase, what it means to find belonging, protection, and mutual support. Ultimately, society depends upon a binding set of narratives and an agreement with one another about one fundamental fact: the agreement that we should care about each other, that we are committed to one another, and that we have a common vision.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Americans are continuing to confront a number of longstanding challenges to our country's well-being. Let's be honest. There is widespread distrust of government, and the economy's capacity is sadly deepening a sense of division and further fracturing our society as more and more people seem to feel left out.

Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, our Nation still does have great character and great strength, found first and foremost in durable values that keep us resilient with the ability to adapt and change, even in the most turbulent of times. So although there is justifiable anxiety and anger at the present moment—in fact, they are a hallmark of the present moment—Americans do desire a new settlement of both security and opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, here is the dilemma: a constant focus on a Washington-based

solution offers a false sense of solidarity and is no substitute for community. Technocratic management through centralized government cannot rekindle the vibrancy of our society. And far from healing our wounded culture, the government simply cannot fix everything that is wrong. Doing so, attempting to do so will simply recalculate winners and losers. This is especially true when America's political system suffers from so much discord and dysfunction.

So here is the answer: a hopeful politics and a truly good society are ultimately relational. For instance, although we are not immune from harsher downward trends where I live, we have, in my State of Nebraska, to some degree, I believe, safeguarded the importance of community, the necessity and integrity of the family, and the quality of care for ourselves as well as those around us.

□ 1915

I am proud of this fact, Mr. Speaker. I often refer to it as the Nebraska model. Such social vibrancy reduces the necessity for government intervention and actually creates happier outcomes.

Mr. Speaker, the Social Security program itself is so critical to protecting the well-being of America's seniors. I believe strongly in this program, as so many others do.

In fact, when I was a child, I received Social Security myself due to the premature death of my father when I was 12 years old. It helped get the family through. This is an important program for America's security and for peace of mind of so many of our elder citizens.

But I think a broader view of this concept, this ideal, of Social Security demands that we regasp the ideals of community and interdependency with one another. Proper progress in our Nation recognizes that our individual liberty is not merely a license to do whatever we want.

A hyper sense of individualism can obscure the foundational truth of our shared humanity, which longs for community. It inhibits the common endeavors necessary for advancing a brighter future together as a nation, as one people.

Liberty and, therefore, human happiness are inextricably intertwined with our society, with our responsibility to one another, and that is what gives fullness to the meaning of Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

CONTAMINATED WATER IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized

for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the cities of America—at least many of the cities of America.

While I was waiting for the opportunity to speak to the House and people of America, I went into the cloakroom and pulled out today's Roll Call, one of what we call the Hill rags. These are one of the newspapers around the Hill.

It says "Lead in the Water, Way Beyond Flint," and it talks about the issue of contamination in our water supplies. Indeed, they are quite correct.

This would be one of maybe 20 different slides I could put up here. What do these cities of America have in common: Flint, Michigan; Toledo, Ohio; Sebring, Ohio; Baltimore, Maryland; Brick Township, New Jersey; Washington, D.C.; Wayne County, North Carolina; Greenville, North Carolina; Lakehurst Acres, Maine; Chicago, Illinois; Porterville, California? The list goes on and on and on. These are cities that have or have had contaminated water in the last couple of years. Some of these are ongoing.

We hear a lot of discussion about Flint, Michigan, and the tragedy of the water supply in Flint, Michigan, the lead contamination, the 8,000 or 9,000 children who have been inflicted with lead poisoning, and the incredible, awful effect that that will have on the development of their brain and of their future.

This issue is one that we are becoming aware of. Actually, we have been aware of it for a long, long time. The problem is that we haven't done anything about it or we have done very, very little about it.

Tonight we are going to talk about contaminated water in America, America's cities and towns that are providing water that is not fit to drink.

So what to do? Well, we are going to have to deal with the realities of 8,000 to 9,000 children, their development, the potential problems that they face in their lives ahead. That will be basically dealing with the fact that we had contaminated water in Flint, Michigan, and in a host of other cities.

We can't live without water. The human body requires it. If you don't get it, you are going to die very, very quickly. The fact of the matter is I am not at all sure you can live with contaminated water.

That is the actual water that was available to residents of Flint, Michigan: yucky, yellow, contaminated, polluted water. Not just lead, but yuck. Why would you want to drink that? Well, it is all you have. So you don't want to, but you really don't have any choice. Contaminated water, what to do?

Tonight we are going to discuss this issue. I guess one thing you can do is

what California did. In Porterville, California, when the wells went dry, they brought a cattle water trough similar to what I have on my ranch to provide water for my cattle. This water trough provided water for the children of Porterville, California.

Now, there is a solution to the water crisis in California. Porterville isn't the only city or town in the San Joaquin Valley. In fact, there are dozens of towns in the San Joaquin Valley of California, the largest State, the richest State.

We like to think of California, my home State, as being ahead of everything. I guess we are ahead in providing cattle water troughs to provide water for children in California. We ought to be ashamed.

What are we going to do about it? There are 435 people here in the House of Representatives, and I guess there is another 100 Senators across the way, a President, and all the administration. What are we going to do about it? I guess we can look at our report card.

This is from the American Society of Civil Engineers. Let's see. The 2013 report card for America's infrastructure: Aviation, D; bridges, C plus; dams, D; down here, schools, D; roads, railroads, Cs; water—oh, here we are—water, a D.

We asked them about this. We said: Why a D?

They said: We would give them an F, but it is too much trouble to try to figure out how to do an F. So we just go to the lowest, which is D.

You don't get any lower than a D from the American Society of Civil Engineers. That is our report card in America, folks. It is not just water. It is the entire infrastructure system.

You are wondering why. Why does that happen? Take a look at this little chart. A sharp drop in government infrastructure spending. Let's see. That is 2002.

In 2002, \$330 billion spent on all infrastructure: roads, bridges, airports, water systems, sanitation systems. \$325 billion in 2002.

And in real 2014 dollars, nondefense spending on infrastructure, here we are in 2012, 2013. We are down to about \$200 billion, about \$125 billion less spent on infrastructure of all kinds.

Oh. Back to water. What about water? Where did we go with water? Spending on clean water and drinking water infrastructure in 2014 deflated dollars, go back to 1973.

In 1973, the Vietnam war was still going on. Let's see. That would be somewhere around \$10 billion in 2014 dollars in 1973. In 2016, we are down to \$2 billion.

Don't be surprised when you see a list such as I put up a moment ago of cities in the United States that have water problems. Aging infrastructure, lead pipes.

Here is a picture of a lead pipe. Corroded. You wonder why kids get lead

poisoning. If you don't spend money on infrastructure, you are going to wind up with sick kids, you are going to wind up with bridges that collapse, you are going to wind up with a second-rate economy and a third-world water situation.

By the way, that is the bridge on Interstate 5, the road from Canada to Mexico down the Pacific coast. The bridge collapsed.

What happens when you don't spend money on infrastructure? Your economy fails, your kids get sick, and they are forced to drink water out of a water trough. This is not the America we want to live in. This is not the America the public sent us here to provide for them.

We like to think of ourselves as the strongest, biggest, best country in the world, and we are in many respects, but when it comes to providing for the fundamentals of life—water—we get a D rating.

We get kids getting their water supply out of a water trough. We get kids in Flint, Michigan, who are poisoned with lead. That is not the only city. It is across the United States, city after city.

In the Central Valley of California, it is arsenic, it is lead, it is other contaminants. Huh-uh. We have got work to do here in the House of Representatives. It is our responsibility. It is our task. We can't toss it off to somebody else.

So, yeah, Roll Call, you are correct: "Lead in the Water, Way Beyond Flint." Arsenic in the water. Fecal contamination in the water. You name it. City after city, ancient systems, more than 100 years old, lead pipes which were put in the ground a century ago, leaching lead into the food supply. That is America.

What would it cost? About \$348 billion just for the water systems. How can we pay for it? Well, there is a way.

Oh, America, are you aware that we are into a new nuclear arms race? We are. In the next 25 years, a trillion dollars of your tax money is going to be spent on a total rearmament of our nuclear weapons systems: intercontinental ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, submarines, stealth aircraft. A trillion dollars.

City after city in America limps along, poisoning its children with 100-year-old water systems. We have got some choices to make here. What are we going to spend your tax money on? New nuclear bombs or new water pipes? Choices.

Joining me tonight to discuss these sets of issues are some of my dear friends. PAUL TONKO and I have been working on this infrastructure issue for 5 years now, what we call the East Coast-West Coast. I am going to ask Paul if he would wait just a few moments.

SHEILA JACKSON LEE, you were in Flint, Michigan, last week—I guess

yesterday, actually, for a discussion in Flint, Michigan. Share with us briefly, if you would, your reflections on what you saw there.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Thank you very much. And I thank the gentleman from New York for his kindness in my brief support of all of you on the floor.

Let me first of all acknowledge, as I indicated, your potent and powerful question to America of \$348 billion to solve our problem and are our children that valuable or are our children worth it. My answer is yes.

Let me add my appreciation, though I know that he would not want to be in this predicament, to Congressman KILDEE and the entire Michigan delegation who were there on Saturday.

They stood arm in arm listening to Flint residents just to see how painful it is to hear a mother talk about a child with spots all over his body and to have her point to other children and say, "They are getting sick, and I have lost my hair" or a teacher say, "I have children coming to school with pus sores."

□ 1930

So, let me say a few points. I sit on the Judiciary Committee. And also have the privilege of sitting on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee as a guest. I just want to say that we need to hold someone accountable, which will then generate into what the solution is.

April 2014, a nonscientist—I just came out of the Rules Committee on science legislation—made a decision to go to Flint River. He had no anti-corrosion plan. Really, there lies the source of problems throughout a number of these cities that you have indicated. You had one with non-toxins. They were just breaking the law and suffering because of lack of money. Saving \$5 million has resulted in spending multiple millions of dollars—maybe \$1 billion-plus—to try and salvage this great city.

With Governor Snyder, of course, there is no accountability. Just to show you an example, it is very difficult to read these emails that were released. The Governor indicates that this was not relevant to the issue.

The main point is that while we are talking about the infrastructure—and I do support Mr. KILDEE's effort as well as our colleagues in the Senate to help this city of 765 million, we must also hold ourselves accountable—this body of Republicans and Democrats who know that we must invest in infrastructure.

As a member of the Judiciary Committee, I sent a letter early in January asking for an investigation by the Department of Justice. The FBI is now investigating. We want to make sure there is a review of whether there is malfeasance.

So, I come to the floor today to say there are many questions and there

must be many answers. I want to make sure there is an accountable standard. I want to say to the American people that we can't have a city like Flint, where decisions are made—General Motors, by the way, stopped using the water—that we have no anticorrosion plan. This is happening across America, partly, because cities are broke and because we have not invested in the overall infrastructure of America, as you, Mr. GARAMENDI have said on the floor over and over again.

So, I wanted to come to the floor to thank my colleagues. Knowing how painful it is to represent that area, I thank Congressman KILDEE for his leadership. Congresswoman LAWRENCE, who is a neighbor, is working with him. Congressman CONYERS, Congresswoman DINGELL, SANDY LEVIN, and some Senators have all been working so hard on this issue.

Count me in as a collaborator as we stand before the American people and say: Send me. We are prepared to fight for more infrastructure to help cities across America.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I thank the gentlewoman from Texas. I know that your concerns are very real. You traveled to Flint, and you have been working on these issues for many, many years. Thank you for your participation.

Tomorrow, the Democrats are holding their own committee hearing on this issue. I am certain that we will go through the issues that you talked about: what actually happened and who is actually responsible. So, that will be a discussion for tomorrow. Perhaps we will cover it on the floor tonight.

Let me now turn to my colleague from New York, Mr. PAUL TONKO, for the continuation of the East-West show.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Representative GARAMENDI, for leading us in what is a very important bit of discussion.

In a broad term, infrastructure is something that needs our immediate attention because of years of neglect, but it comes to that water infrastructure that has been highlighted of late. I like to call it the hidden infrastructure. It can't be out of sight, out of mind. That would be a very painful outcome if that is the approach that is taken by certainly us as legislators or by society at large.

You are right: for a number of years, we have been discussing infrastructure. I have made it my goal to invest in water infrastructure for a number of reasons, but also because of my assignment on the Energy and Commerce Committee as ranking—the lead Democrat—on the Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy, which reports to the Energy and Commerce Committee. It is through that subcommittee that the assignment of the Safe Drinking Water Act is housed. So it is important for us to maintain a

vigilance, if you will, for the outcomes that are deemed acceptable—and that is that we do not receive a D on our report card for water infrastructure.

When you shared that information, Representative GARAMENDI, I thought to myself that if any of us brought home a D on a report card, there would be a little bit of a challenge offered our way to improve that report card with the next semester. So, I believe that we have failed in this effort to maintain a strong Federal partnership.

There has been a lot of finger pointing going on since the Flint, Michigan, issue arose in the public's awareness as a national issue. That finger pointing won't solve anything. But if we are going to finger point, we need to also internalize that. We need to look at Congress and what it has done.

When you talked about the levels of funding, in the early seventies, I came onto my county board in 1976, in Montgomery County in upstate New York. I can vividly recall that we had a very lucrative revenue flow from the Federal Government for our water systems.

Today, what we look at is something like a 4 percent investment coming from the Federal Government on the total bill. That is grossly inadequate. The fact that we can turn our backs on this infrastructure and allow situations like Flint, Michigan; Sebring, Ohio; Troy, New York; or Los Angeles, California, to grip us, to shock our senses and not respond, leaves us in a very pitiful state, I believe.

We need to do better than that. We need to form a plan of action. That plan of action must include a stronger investment in the water infrastructure of this country.

Now, some of that also requires, I think, an enhancement of the investment made in the drinking water SRF, or the State Revolving Fund. That fund has not been reauthorized since 2003. So we need to go forward and reauthorize and enhance the SRF so that our States, as partners with the Federal Government, can then go forward and have some relief in responding to the strapped cities that are really impacted by a declining tax base, in many cases, and the very small bit of population in some of our rural communities that are trying to maintain systems that want to speak to public health and public safety and to offer a commodity that is not only important, but essential.

It is essential for the quality of life in our homes, it is essential for small businesses, it is essential for our manufacturing base, it is essential for our farming community. All of this requires water. Many suggest that we are transitioning from an oil-based economy to a water-based economy.

So, if we are anticipating greater use and reliance on water as a commodity, let's put our act into working order.

That means that you invest not like we did last year, where the outcome was at some \$843 million, which was some \$43 million worth of a cut. That is completely going in the wrong direction. That is not listening to the needs of local government or to the basic, core essential need of sound drinking water, clean drinking water.

It is blue infrastructure. That is what we need to invest in—making certain that we have an abundance and an essential supply of clean drinking water. It is absolutely mandatory in a modern economy. If we are going to compete effectively in an innovation economy, we need to provide the essentials, including water, to the business, residential, and ag community.

When I look at some of the neglect, it is so interesting to see that we wait for crises like that of Flint. Does Flint require Federal investment? Absolutely. I stand ready and willing to assist Flint. I would rank what happened there as immoral.

So, we need to move forward and assist Flint, but the saga shouldn't begin and end there. We need to create a national response that empowers our communities across the country. We need to have interaction and dialogue at the table to best understand where we have fallen down, where we have failed.

We need to have officials from Flint, Michigan, and from the State of Michigan here to testify. I don't think it is appropriate for Governor Snyder of that State to walk away from that invitation.

It is important for us to go forward with the sort of communication, the dialogue, that will build the soundest response. And if we do not respond out of necessity to Flint, Michigan; Troy, New York, Sebring, Ohio; and Los Angeles, and the list continues to grow, we will then just see these issues keep rising in our communities.

When I last saw Troy, New York's dilemma, they were repairing things in the worst weather—conditions that were near zero, where they needed to heat the site in order to weld the materials that were completing the project. A major line, Representative GARAMENDI, broke. It was their main line. A 33-inch pipe was shooting water 100 feet into the air. Ten million gallons of water went into the street.

Are we going to sit back and say that is acceptable in a Nation like this—a Nation of abundance—that considers itself a world leader? No world-leading nation can ignore its infrastructure like we have ignored the water infrastructure.

Blue infrastructure is what we should be about: providing that clean drinking water. We have nearly a quarter of a million breaks annually in the systems from coast-to-coast. A quarter of a million. There are 700-some breaks per day.

Think about it. That wouldn't be acceptable to an ordinary business plan of any type. It should not be acceptable to the Federal Government plan in assisting communities with the sound commodity of drinking water.

So, Representative GARAMENDI, I am just thrilled to join you this evening to continue to carry the message forward that we need action, we need a plan of action, we need commitment, and we need resources. It begins now. Every missed opportunity here will perhaps cause the opportunity for yet another tragedy in a community that just should not happen.

Again, it is about investing soundly, effectively, and appropriately, in what it is an essential commodity: water for our communities.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. TONKO, thank you so very, very much. You brought to this issue enormous facts and passion. Your work as the ranking member on the subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee positions you in a very, very important place. Your passion and knowledge should help carry the day on this.

Mr. TONKO, if you can stick around, we will come back to this one more time.

I would like now to call on my colleague from California, Mr. TED LIEU from Los Angeles.

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Thank you, Representative GARAMENDI, for your work on clean water and for highlighting this issue in Flint, as well as in communities across America.

I sit on the Oversight Committee. On February 3, we held a hearing on the Flint water crisis. Based on the information presented, it is clear to me that what happened in Flint was a crime of epic proportions. Tens of thousands of women, children, and men were poisoned when lead leached from lead pipes into the drinking water. Those who were most responsible know who they are. They should resign. Some of them should be prosecuted.

We need to make sure that we do what is right for the residents of Flint, as well as other communities across America, and make sure this never happens again. It is clear that this is not an issue just in Flint, but the problem with toxic water is an issue across our Nation.

□ 1945

Washington, D.C., had elevated levels of lead in 2000. Sebring, Ohio, now has elevated levels of lead. And there was a report by the Natural Resources Defense Council in 2011 that showed 19 cities had toxic issues with their drinking water.

There are a variety of solutions. First of all, we need to fund the CDC lead abatement program that had been cut by the Republican legislature in 2002. We need to restore funding and fully fund that program.

We need to also make a strong investment in improving our water infrastructure. I sit on the Budget Committee. I will be putting in amendments to make sure that we increase funding to water infrastructure across America.

And we need to look at alternatives to lead pipes. An article in *Salon* noted that we have many cities across America now using PVC pipes, also known as plastic pipes, as an eco-friendly alternative.

Canadian and American cities have had success with these pipes. They last longer than metal pipes, over 100 years. They do not corrode. They do not leach, and they do not contain lead.

What is happening in Flint, they are looking at a short-term solution, which is to recoat their lead pipes. I believe that is not acceptable. I believe the Governor needs to come in and replace all the lead pipes with a nonlead alternative.

The mayor of Flint has called for full replacement. I support that. I know Representative GARAMENDI and others support that.

I want to give great credit to the great work by Representative KILDEE for his constituents in Flint.

I also want to note that if we don't do something now, who knows whether your children or your grandchildren will be poisoned by lead in your drinking water.

It is very important that we make enormous infrastructure investments, and the time to do that is now.

Thank you again, Representative GARAMENDI, for highlighting this issue.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. LIEU, you said you are on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. You had the hearing last week and began the process of developing an understanding of what happened and who was responsible. Critically important.

You also said you are on the Budget Committee. So if I might just lobby you for a moment—

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Absolutely.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Let me just lobby you. You are going to be taking up the budget—I think tomorrow, actually.

Mr. TED LIEU of California. We have various markups coming up. That is correct.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Okay. So the budget is going to be coming up, and that is the allocation of the \$4 trillion that the Federal Government will spend. We will be spending it on education. We will be spending it on roads, on the military and the like.

Let me just toss you some numbers for your consideration. Now, these are adjusted 2015 dollars, so we are keeping equal-value dollars.

In 2007, the State Revolving Fund for Drinking Water, which Mr. TONKO talked about, had \$957 million for that program. That goes to the States to re-

pair their water systems. And it stayed around \$900 million the next year.

And then we had the stimulus bill in 2009, and we spent \$3 billion. Then we went back down, \$1.5 billion, \$1 billion, \$947 million, and we stayed somewhere in the range of \$900 million through 2016. So that is the current year. And that is \$863 million that we are spending this year on the State Revolving Fund.

Keep in mind that it is estimated that we need \$328 billion to repair all the pipes.

Now, the President's budget has \$1.2 billion for the coming year. He just introduced that today.

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Right.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Okay. Also, in the President's budget, he has \$1.36 billion for the new Long Range Strike Bomber; \$113 million for a ground-based strategic deterrence; \$1.4 billion for the Ohio class submarine—those are nuclear submarines; the new long-range cruise missile, \$995 million; to rebuild the B61 bomb, \$137 million; and the total amount that the National Nuclear Security Administration is spending this new year, 2017, \$9.24 billion.

Now, it would seem to me that this is just in the nuclear enterprise. These are our nuclear weapons.

So my lobbying is this: When you put together the budget, could you somehow squeeze out of the nuclear arms race that we are engaged in about a billion dollars so that we can stop poisoning our children?

Mr. TED LIEU of California. You made some very good points. And, as you know, America is the leading economy in the world. Our GDP is greater than the next two countries combined. We certainly have the resources to make sure we don't poison our kids with lead in their water or other toxic material.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Just double, if you would, just double the amount we are spending for the clean drinking water programs at the Federal level from about \$1 billion to, let's say, \$2 billion, or maybe even \$3 billion, by squeezing some of the expenditures that we find in other accounts.

My particular target is the nuclear weapons account, which will in the next 25 years cost the American taxpayers \$1 trillion. So when you go to the hearing, keep that in mind.

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Thank you for raising that issue. I will absolutely look into it. I am glad you brought it up. So let me look into that issue.

I do want to say something about what Representative TONKO mentioned, which is the hundreds of water main breaks we have daily. That just shows a crumbling infrastructure. In America, in the 21st century, that should not be happening.

What we saw in Flint and we are seeing in other cities across America is a

result of disinvestment in our government, in cities and municipalities. You get what you pay for, and right now, we are getting children that are being poisoned with lead. So we need to increase investment.

I will look into the issues you raised, Representative GARAMENDI. Thank you for highlighting these issues.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I appreciate the opportunity to lobby you. You are in a very important position, as are all of us; 435 of us are going to make choices about what is important and how we spend our constituents' tax money. And these are choices we are going to make.

We often don't really look at it, but the budget that will be forthcoming, the President's budget, and then the response of this House to that budget, will allocate that \$4 trillion across a whole variety of programs.

We really do have the opportunity here, as we put together the budget and then the appropriations following, to take up the challenge that Mr. TONKO put before us in the State Revolving Fund.

Mr. LIEU, thank you so very much for joining us.

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Thank you. I look forward to working with you and Representative TONKO and others to make sure we invest in America.

Mr. GARAMENDI. We appreciate you being here. Thank you so very much.

Well, Mr. TONKO, lead pipes.

Mr. TONKO. Lead pipes. The \$863 million in the Drinking Water SRF of which I spoke is a lot of money. But when you put it into context of maybe 10 million lead service lines in the country, when you think of infrastructure that is beyond 100 years old—when I did tours—I have been doing tours in my district of the water systems, and I have found systems as old as 145 years. That is when Rutherford B. Hayes was in the White House.

And I saw pipes that were 8-inch in diameter reduced to 4-inch flow because of calcification. I saw pipes removed because of corrosion by the acidity of soils that has taken its toll.

You think of new technology, invention, innovation, gauges that can be utilized, liners that can be put in certain pipes for extending the useful life, things that we can be doing that provide for preventative maintenance and speak to public health and public safety.

You know, it is a bit of wonderment, isn't it, that we will trade our cell phones every other year, or perhaps every year, because they have got a new product on the shelf; or will trade in our screens, our TV screens, because they are simply not big enough; or the car has got too many miles or we just came to dislike the color, and so we trade in the automobile every three, 4 years. But we are content to live with water pipes for 145 years. It defies human logic. Why do we accept that?

Why don't we dig into this hidden infrastructure and invest in a way that will avoid thousands of families being impacted by contamination of lead?

Children, innocent children impacted by societal neglect. Investment that ought to be highest priority, not put on the back burner.

Well, the response, as we know, is: How are you going to pay for it? What is the cost?

What is the cost of doing something? Let's contrast that with the cost of not doing something.

What are the bills going to be?

For Flint, Michigan, alone, we don't think people are going to stay silent with this tragedy in their lives. What is the impact to industry?

When I saw these lines burst in the city of Troy, New York, this winter, businesses were shut down. Schools were shut. They were closed for days. Families didn't have water in their homes.

What is the cost? What is the price tag?

So it needs to be a framework that is large enough to calculate the human impact, the financial impact, societal impact, the economic consequences. These are real.

Again, we are a country, a people that can claim the pioneer spirit within our DNA. How do we dare say "no" to what ought to be a sound investment, to grow jobs, maintain jobs, to compete effectively on a global scale in an innovation economy?

We can do better. We must do better.

And when we look at the situations out there where we have convinced ourselves that we are not worthy of investment, that is not leadership. We are trying to stall and pass it on to the next generation.

Well, this generation that will be that next generation of leaders is being impacted healthwise as we speak. Unacceptable. Immoral. We can do better.

Representative GARAMENDI, I know there are voices that really want to produce here and do this progressive bit of investment that will strengthen our communities.

Mr. GARAMENDI. As you were talking, I think back when I was growing up, and we used to call this, not infrastructure, we used to call this "public works." Public works.

This is for the public. It is infrastructure, but this is the public investment in the things that an individual, even a private company, cannot do. This is something that we do as a community in the public domain.

It is work. We are talking, if we were to invest \$2 billion this coming year in these community water systems, we would actually generate thousands of jobs, and we would increase the economic growth immediately.

It has been estimated that for every dollar you put into public works, infrastructure, you immediately increase

the economy by \$1.3, \$1.4. So this is a way of investing immediately, putting people to work in good, middle class jobs, and laying in the public works for future economic growth and, as you just said so eloquently, protecting our health, our children's health. So this is absolutely essential.

We are at a very propitious moment. The President proposed today the budget for the United States of America's next fiscal year, beginning October 1, 2016.

□ 2000

It is his proposal on how to spend about \$4 trillion of taxpayer money and debt. We, as the representatives of the people of the United States, will take that and modify it.

What if we just made one modification in that \$4 trillion and said: We are going to spend an additional billion dollars or an additional \$2 billion on public works water systems? What would it mean?

The 140-year-old pipes that you talked about, could they be replaced? Could the 250,000 water main breaks across the United States be reduced to maybe just 200,000?

People going to work, engineers designing the system, financiers figuring out how to put together the local money, the State money, and the Federal money, generating jobs, growing our economy, and stopping the poisoning of our children.

The President proposed his budget today. Tomorrow our colleagues take up the budget and begin to decide how to move that money to things that are a priority. Here we are.

Mr. TONKO. Representative GARAMENDI, when we talk about the infrastructure hidden beneath the surface of the streets and scape of our communities, it is hard to imagine wooden pipes along with those decrepit 145-year-old pipes in calcification galore.

The enormity of the situation needs to be perhaps graphically shared. Under the city of Albany, the capital of New York, which is part of the 20th Congressional District that I represent, happens to lie 317 miles of pipe, drinking water infrastructure.

You could travel from Albany, New York, to Baltimore, Maryland. That is the sort of linear responsibility associated with that system. Should we anticipate rightfully that there may be some bumps along the road of that 317-mile stretch in any given year?

Mr. GARAMENDI. A pothole, maybe?

Mr. TONKO. Absolutely. So let's think of it in those sorts of terms so that we can have a better understanding and awareness of an aged infrastructure, which, by the way, is also accompanied by a discontinued inventory in many cases.

Valves that are required are no longer manufactured. So we have to

come up with some innovative response when there is a break.

While we have talked a lot about capital improvements, capital infrastructure, and physical infrastructure that is required to pay for and build back these systems, there is also that third leg of the stool: human infrastructure.

When I tour these water systems in my district, one of the learning curves is the declining effort of professionals—not their effort—the declining numbers of professionals who have the awesome responsibility of operating and maintaining these systems.

So the education, the training, the retraining, the higher education, and the certification of individuals who make these systems work and provide for that water when you turn on the tap, they are there.

But there is an aging out because I think we have ignored this. So career paths have not been developed in the minds of students to go into this sort of science. And it is an important, awesome responsibility.

Will that institutional knowledge be passed on or will we just go without? So the human infrastructure is an important piece of this puzzle, also, to have the qualified women and men conducting their professionalism to serve the community.

So when you turn that tap on and anticipate—rightfully again—that clean drinking water is the result, think of all the decisionmaking, think of all the investment, think of the stewardship, and the operating know-how that is required. It is awesome.

It is also a system, as we have been shown, that, when there is failure, you can have a large number of people impacted and in severe measure.

So I believe that this Nation cares about its drinking water capacity and state of purity and sound condition. They want that abundant supply of clean water, and we need stronger partnership from the Federal level being more committed, more lucrative funding streams to the States, and then the States incorporating with their local communities to come up with innovative concepts.

My gosh, we are producing new materials that perhaps won't corrode as easily or that can retrofit the given systems. We have gauges that can tell us where the next break may come. So you are dealing with the know-how that provides for the most effective and efficient outcome from a taxpayer perspective.

All of this technology with software to accompany it is available. But, again, the technical assistance, the grants, the loans—affordable loans—that we can advance to the communities are important steps in the process of providing for a 21st-century infrastructure.

We shouldn't be content with a D on our report card. D means devastating.

D means dangerous. D means in decline. Let's move forward and advance for that A on the report card.

I know you wanted those As on your report card, Mr. GARAMENDI. I wanted them on mine.

Mr. GARAMENDI. The art of the possible. The art of the possible is what we have here.

Mr. TONKO, I don't know where you were when I brought this up. This is the drinking water in Flint, Michigan. That is a recent photo from a water tap in Flint, Michigan. Unacceptable. The bottom line is it is unacceptable. Not only is it dirty, it is poisonous.

Mr. TONKO. And frightening.

Mr. GARAMENDI. It is poisonous.

So we are going to make some choices. My plea to my colleagues here—and it echoes what you said—you can talk about it in terms of jobs. Thousands and thousands of jobs would be created if we invested in our infrastructure, our public works, and the water systems.

Is the money available to do it? If we make the right choice, it is. If we make the right choice to invest in ending the poisoning of our children, it is there. We can move \$4 trillion around in one way or another and build modern infrastructure. We could do that.

We are going to do it now. We are going to do it now. The issue of the budget begins today. In the United States Congress, 535 American citizens are brought to this Capitol to make decisions about the health and the safety of their children. We have been given that responsibility.

God knows there is enough money around \$4 trillion to find a way to spend the money to build the water systems to stop the poisoning of our children. It is just a matter of choices.

What do we choose to do? Refurbish a nuclear bomb that, God willing, we would never ever even think about using? That is our choice. It is our choice.

As your representatives, we can move money into providing the public works to meet the fundamental human need, in this case, drinkable, potable, safe water. It is fundamental.

You cannot live but 3 days without water, and the last 2 days aren't worth living anyway because you are comatose. Water. Choices. Public works. Investment in the future. Jobs today. Engineers, as you talked about. Financial. All of that.

It is disheartening. I hear my colleagues like SHEILA JACKSON LEE come in and talk about going to Flint, Michigan. I will never forget Mr. KILDEE on the floor last Thursday.

I asked him to talk to me about that young child that you saw in your community that you represent. He said the kid turned to him and said: I am not going to be smart enough. We make choices.

Mr. TONKO. Think of the reduction in the quality of life there. We com-

mend Representative KILDEE, Representative LAWRENCE, and all of the members of the Michigan delegation for the work that they have done.

Again, to the price tag, the cost, let's look at the other side. Earlier I talked about 7 billion—7 billion—gallons of water lost with these main breaks, with these breaks of any kind. 7 billion gallons.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Can we talk about the California drought in this context?

Mr. TONKO. Exactly. Can you ill afford any waste of water? But it is not just water coming through those pipes. It is tax dollars flowing with that water. It is treated water.

So it is foolish for us to continue along this path of hidden infrastructure mentality because, when it is not addressed, water and tax dollars—hard-earned constituent money—are flowing out of those pipes.

Before I came here, Representative GARAMENDI, you know that I worked at NYSEERDA, the New York State Energy, Research, and Development Authority.

We got national awards for energy efficiency incorporated at water treatment facilities. So we took that effort to reduce the price tag of day-to-day operational costs.

There are ways to save money. A broken pipe is pouring money down the drain. So let's stop that foolish expenditure and go wisely to the investment that enables us with our intellect, our passion, and our sense of virtue to get things done correctly.

Generations before us had that vision. Pioneers built this country. People came here as immigrants and tethered their American Dream.

They climbed the ladder of opportunity and built strong communities based on that American Dream, and we in our present moment can't find it within ourselves to address those basic core needs?

We pride ourselves on being a modern society and having the luxury of clean water. The blue infrastructure moment is now. Let's invest in that clean water infrastructure. Let's not torture our communities. Let's not disrespect our children. We are better than that.

We have the engineering savvy. We have the academic prowess. We have the intellectual capacity. Now do we have the will? I believe we do.

I believe this country, if asked: "Do you want to invest in America's drinking water systems?" would say a resounding yes. Flint, Michigan; Sebring, Ohio; Los Angeles, California; Troy, New York—the list goes on and on.

If we do nothing, we should anticipate that this list will continue to make a growing, passionate statement that we are dragging our feet. We are allowing a hidden infrastructure to be truly that, hidden, out of sight and out of mind.

Don't burden us with the responsibility. Don't share the facts. It is too

painful. I don't want to hear that it is going to cost us something.

We see what the cost is. Representative GARAMENDI held up the photo of that polluted water, that poisonous water. That is unacceptable in a country as great as America. Unacceptable.

We have invested in the soundness of education, research, and innovation, and to not utilize the byproducts of those investments is sheer foolishness. It is not exercising the love of country that needs to be engaged in this Chamber and across the country.

We can get this done. I am a firm believer—firm believer—that, with voices resonating in chorus about this issue and the connected tragedies of disinvestment, we will get it done. We will get it done.

Representative GARAMENDI, I appreciate the efforts you make to bring these issues to the attention of the American public.

For those who listen at home and watch at home, encourage your representatives to get on board with the investment in our clean drinking water infrastructure. It is so critical.

This moment can bring us together. This isn't about a partisan issue. We didn't ask those children what party their families may be assigned, have chosen. This serves us all.

Let's go forward united in the voice and the passion to get it done, the determination and the integrity to say that we had a challenge and, in the old American way, we responded to it and succeeded.

Again, thank you for bringing us together.

□ 2015

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. TONKO, I wasn't in Flint, Michigan when Representative KILDEE spoke to that young child—I think he was probably 4 or 5—who had been drinking this lead contaminated water, and was aware that he had been drinking the water. When that young kid turned to Mr. KILDEE and said: I am afraid I won't be smart enough, I visualize it.

My question to you, to myself, and to my colleagues here in the House of Representatives and across the way in the Senate is: Will we be smart enough to protect our children? I think we must be smart enough to do that.

Mr. TONKO. When it comes to smart, incorporating this work with the appropriate agencies—the EPA and the DEC in my home State of New York—there is a situation very close to my district in Hoosick Falls that is going through a similar contaminated water situation critical to their quality of life and their public health.

We need to advance that partnership, that soundness of checks and balances, that will make certain that every bit of the way it is based on responsibility and professionalism and good faith efforts.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I was just thinking about your community that you mentioned, Albany and the like. I represent the University of California, Davis, in Davis, California. I think they have got maybe 12 wells that provide most of the water. About half of those wells are contaminated. They are building a new water system, and it should go online in the next few months, or maybe a year, or maybe sooner. They are investing. Perhaps they got some of this money from the State revolving fund.

It is an example of a community that wrestled with this for about a decade. They turned out to be smart enough to address it. They did it with their neighboring community of Woodland. A new water system is going into place. They will have safe drinking water.

There are other communities spread throughout California that don't have the same opportunity. It is our task to address this. I think we are smart enough to do so. I think there is enough money in the system to do it.

Mr. TONKO, would you like to do a quick 15 second wrap?

Mr. TONKO. I thank the speaker for the opportunity to share thoughts on the floor here this evening.

Blue infrastructure, let's get it done. Let's provide America one of her core basic needs.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3442, DEBT MANAGEMENT AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3293, SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST ACT

Mr. SESSIONS (during the Special Order of Mr. GARAMENDI), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-420) on the resolution (H. Res. 609) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3442) to provide further means of accountability of the United States debt and promote fiscal responsibility, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3293) to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HUDSON (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of illness.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill

of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 3033. An act to require the President's annual budget request to Congress each year to include a line item for the Research in Disabilities Education program of the National Science Foundation and to require the National Science Foundation to conduct research on dyslexia.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, February 10, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4281. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's Annual Report of Interdiction of Aircraft Engaged in Illicit Drug Trafficking, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2291-4(c); Public Law 103-337, Sec. 1012 (as amended by Public Law 107-108, Sec. 503); (115 Stat. 1405); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4282. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-129, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4283. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Ukraine that was declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4284. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe that was declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4285. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Annual Operating Plan for Colorado River System Reservoirs for 2016, pursuant to 43 U.S.C. 1552(b); Public Law 90-537, 602(b); (82 Stat. 900) and Public Law 102-575, Sec. 1804(c)(2); (106 Stat. 4671); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4286. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Permitted disparity in employer-provided contributions or benefits (Rev. Rul. 2016-05) received February 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law

104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4287. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final and temporary regulations — Allocation of Creditable Foreign Taxes [TD 9748] (RIN: 1545-BM57) received February 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4288. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Expatriate Health Plans Under the Affordable Care Act, Sec. 9010 (Notice 2016-14) received February 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce, and Education and the Workforce.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 3036. A bill to designate the National September 11 Memorial located at the World Trade Center site in New York City, New York, as a national memorial, and for other purposes, with an amendment (Rept. 114-416). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 890. A bill to correct the boundaries of the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Unit P16; with an amendment (Rept. 114-417). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. S. 1698. An act to exclude payments from State eugenics compensation programs from consideration in determining eligibility for, or the amount of, Federal public benefits (Rept. 114-1418). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 4180. A bill to improve Federal agency financial and administrative controls and procedures to assess and mitigate fraud risks, and to improve Federal agencies' development and use of data analytics for the purpose of identifying, preventing, and responding to fraud, including improper payments (Rept. 114-419). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SESSIONS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 609. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3442) to provide further means of accountability of the United States debt and promote fiscal responsibility, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3293) to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest (Rept. 114-420). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. CHABOT (for himself, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. HURT of Virginia, and Mr. TAKAI):

H.R. 4498. A bill to clarify the definition of general solicitation under Federal securities law; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia (for himself, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Ms. KUSTER, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. GUINTA, and Mr. LYNCH):

H.R. 4499. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove consideration of certain pain-related issues from calculations under the Medicare hospital value-based purchasing program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HULTGREN (for himself, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER):

H.R. 4500. A bill to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to permit certain depository institutions to use a short form call report, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. SALMON (for himself, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 4501. A bill to amend the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 to authorize further actions to promote freedom of information and democracy in North Korea, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mrs. BLACK (for herself and Mr. BISHOP of Utah):

H.R. 4502. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to allow for a stay of Federal district court actions pending resolution of unsettled and ambiguous questions of State law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 4503. A bill to allow for additional markings, including the word "Israel", to be used for country of origin marking requirements for goods made in the geographical areas known as the West Bank and Gaza Strip; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 4504. A bill to repeal Federal energy conservation standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself, Mr. REED, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. HANNA, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. KATKO, Mrs. BUSTOS, and Mr. GARAMENDI):

H.R. 4505. A bill to improve the competitiveness of United States manufacturing by designating and supporting manufacturing communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. FORTENBERRY:

H.R. 4506. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to help health care consumers comparison shop for medical services based on quality and cost; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL (for himself and Ms. MCCOLLUM):

H.R. 4507. A bill to establish the Bureau of Land Management Foundation as a charitable, nonprofit corporation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. NORCROSS (for himself, Mr. PALLONE, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN):

H.R. 4508. A bill to provide for increases in the Federal minimum wage and to provide a credit against the employment taxes of cer-

tain employers who pay more than the Federal minimum wage; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PAYNE:

H.R. 4509. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to clarify membership of State planning committees or urban area working groups for the Homeland Security Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. POLIS (for himself, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. TIPTON):

H.R. 4510. A bill to insure adequate use and access to the existing Bolts Ditch headgate and ditch segment within the Holy Cross Wilderness in Eagle County, Colorado, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, and Mr. MACARTHUR):

H.R. 4511. A bill to amend the Veterans' Oral History Project Act to allow the collection of video and audio recordings of biographical histories by immediate family members of members of the Armed Forces who died as a result of their service during a period of war; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. SMITH of Washington:

H.R. 4512. A bill to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to eliminate the section 251A sequestrations; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. ZELDIN (for himself and Miss RICE of New York):

H.R. 4513. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make grants to State and local entities to carry out peer-to-peer mental health programs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BOUSTANY:

H. Con. Res. 112. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress opposing the President's proposed \$10 tax on every barrel of oil; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. POSEY (for himself and Mr. PIERLUISI):

H. Con. Res. 113. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal collectively to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the "Borinqueneers"; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mrs. BEATTY (for herself, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. CLAY, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. NORTON, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. LEE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. MOORE, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. RUSH, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ASHFORD, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. COHEN, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. HONDA, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. STIVERS):

H. Res. 610. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Black History Month and honoring the outstanding contributions of African-American Medal of Honor recipients; to the Committee on Armed Services.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. CHABOT:

H.R. 4498.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia:

H.R. 4499.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article One, Section 8, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution: The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying in Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Office thereof.

By Mr. HULTGREN:

H.R. 4500.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Sec 8, Clause 3

Article 1, Sec 8, Clause 18

This legislation proposes a necessary and proper reporting requirement for the FDIC to regulate such entities under the Federal Deposit Insurance Act

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4501.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

Mrs. BLACK:

H.R. 4502.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 4503.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clauses 3

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 4504.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This legislation would repeal existing federal law, which was passed under the claimed constitutional authority of Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, often referred to as the "Commerce Clause."

By Mr. CICILLINE:

H.R. 4505.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. FORTENBERRY:

H.R. 4506.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL:

H.R. 4507.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2—"The Property Clause"

Article 1, Section 8 Clause 18—"The Necessary and Proper Clause"

By Mr. NORCROSS:

H.R. 4508.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. PAYNE:

H.R. 4509.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. POLIS:

H.R. 4510.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 relating to the power of Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, section 3, clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 4511.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. SMITH of Washington:

H.R. 4512.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1, 2, 14, 18

By Mr. ZELDIN:

H.R. 4513.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills—and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 24: Mrs. HARTZLER, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, and Mr. MICA.

H.R. 27: Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. MASSIE, and Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.

H.R. 135: Mr. WEBER of Texas and Mr. HARIS.

H.R. 178: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 241: Mr. HARRIS and Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 244: Mr. VELA.

H.R. 472: Mr. VELA.

H.R. 494: Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BUCK, and Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 541: Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 581: Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 583: Mr. FLORES.

H.R. 662: Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 664: Mr. MOULTON.

H.R. 703: Mr. BARR.

H.R. 775: Mr. GIBSON, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. DEGETTE, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 842: Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 942: Mr. MULVANEY.

H.R. 969: Ms. SPEIER and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 1000: Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. JEFFRIES

H.R. 1062: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 1089: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 1095: Mr. DEUTCH and Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 1111: Ms. CLARKE of New York.

H.R. 1116: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 1150: Mr. TIPTON.

H.R. 1258: Mr. MEEKS and Mr. JEFFRIES.

H.R. 1274: Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 1292: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 1309: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.

H.R. 1391: Ms. PINGREE and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 1431: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 1432: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 1453: Mr. BERA.

H.R. 1457: Mr. DEUTCH.

H.R. 1475: Mr. BECERRA and Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 1486: Mr. LUCAS and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 1548: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 1752: Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 1769: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 1818: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 1887: Mr. BEYER.

H.R. 1942: Mr. CLYBURN and Mr. JEFFRIES.

H.R. 1944: Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 1945: Ms. EDWARDS and Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 1995: Mr. ROHRABACHER.

H.R. 2016: Mr. LANGEVIN and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 2114: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 2132: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 2167: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.

H.R. 2236: Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. LEE, and Ms. SPIER.

H.R. 2264: Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 2278: Mr. FLORES and Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 2342: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. BORDALLO, and Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 2355: Mr. NORCROSS.

H.R. 2411: Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 2540: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN and Mr. ABRAHAM.

H.R. 2613: Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 2656: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 2715: Mr. MURPHY of Florida and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 2752: Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 2858: Mr. MEEKS and Mr. JEFFRIES.

H.R. 2957: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H.R. 2962: Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 3036: Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. ROYCE, and Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 3068: Mr. GALLEGO.

H.R. 3070: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 3071: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. TAKAI, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Mr. PALLONE.

H.R. 3074: Mr. FLEISCHMANN and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H.R. 3135: Mr. GUTHRIE and Mr. MULVANEY.

H.R. 3209: Mrs. NOEM and Mr. REED.

H.R. 3222: Mr. WENSTRUP.

H.R. 3225: Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 3299: Mr. STEWART, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. BUCHON.

H.R. 3323: Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 3390: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3515: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 3520: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 3535: Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 3541: Mr. CLAY.

H.R. 3546: Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. SIRES, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. SPEIER, and Mrs. CAPPS.

H.R. 3582: Mr. HONDA and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 3643: Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 3687: Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 3691: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 3706: Ms. WILSON of Florida and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 3713: Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 3720: Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 3779: Mr. JEFFRIES and Mr. GARRETT.

H.R. 3804: Mr. RIGELL.
 H.R. 3808: Mr. ROTHFUS and Mr. WALKER.
 H.R. 3870: Mr. COFFMAN.
 H.R. 3929: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. ROYCE, and Mr. COFFMAN.
 H.R. 3948: Ms. BORDALLO.
 H.R. 3952: Mr. ABRAHAM.
 H.R. 3981: Ms. SPEIER.
 H.R. 3990: Ms. LOFGREN.
 H.R. 3998: Mr. PAYNE.
 H.R. 4007: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
 H.R. 4013: Mr. LEVIN and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 4029: Mr. GRIFFITH and Mr. COHEN.
 H.R. 4043: Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. POLIS.
 H.R. 4061: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 4062: Ms. MENG.
 H.R. 4063: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
 H.R. 4065: Mr. DEUTCH and Mr. HASTINGS.
 H.R. 4073: Ms. BORDALLO and Mr. ASHFORD.
 H.R. 4083: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
 H.R. 4087: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
 H.R. 4144: Mr. JEFFRIES and Mr. TONKO.
 H.R. 4177: Mr. CALVERT, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. CRAMER.
 H.R. 4185: Mr. COURTNEY and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
 H.R. 4211: Mr. MEEKS.
 H.R. 4229: Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. KUSTER, and Mr. MEEHAN.
 H.R. 4249: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 4262: Mr. ROUZER.
 H.R. 4305: Mr. SCHIFF and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
 H.R. 4333: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
 H.R. 4334: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
 H.R. 4336: Mrs. ROBY, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. GARRETT, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. YOHIO, and Mr. SESSIONS.
 H.R. 4342: Mr. BUCSHON.
 H.R. 4348: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
 H.R. 4362: Mr. TROTT.
 H.R. 4371: Mr. BRAT, Mr. MULVANEY, and Mr. WESTMORELAND.
 H.R. 4376: Ms. BONAMICI.
 H.R. 4381: Mr. TAKAI and Mr. COLE.

H.R. 4386: Ms. MENG, Mr. SARBANES, and Mr. POLLS.
 H.R. 4396: Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. TONKO, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. ASHFORD, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. KENNEDY.
 H.R. 4400: Mr. ROSS, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. PAYNE.
 H.R. 4404: Mr. LANCE.
 H.R. 4406: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
 H.R. 4410: Mr. HASTINGS.
 H.R. 4420: Mr. ROKITA, Mr. RUSSELL, and Mr. MICA.
 H.R. 4428: Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.
 H.R. 4438: Mr. RUSH and Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 4442: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. GABBARD, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
 H.R. 4443: Mr. RIBBLE.
 H.R. 4461: Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, and Mr. GOODLATTE.
 H.R. 4462: Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
 H.R. 4470: Ms. KAPTUR, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. NORTON, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. RANGEL, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. LEE, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. GRIFFITH, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. HAHN, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. PETERS, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. COHEN, Ms. BASS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. DOLD, Mr. WELCH, Ms. ESTY, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. GIBSON, Ms. MENG, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. POCAN, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. HONDA, and Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 4474: Mr. CRAMER.
 H.R. 4476: Mr. DESANTIS.
 H.R. 4479: Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. LEVIN, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. LEE, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. HAHN, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. BASS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CÁRDENAS, and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
 H.R. 4482: Mr. CULBERSON.
 H.R. 4490: Ms. HAHN and Ms. JACKSON LEE.
 H. J. Res. 55: Mr. ROKITA.
 H. J. Res. 74: Mr. BUCSHON.
 H. Con. Res. 75: Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. MARCHANT, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. HURT of Virginia, and Mr. CHAFFETZ.
 H. Res. 12: Mr. CALVERT and Mr. SHIMKUS.
 H. Res. 14: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
 H. Res. 148: Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Ms. MENG, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. MICA, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. SIRES, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. TROTT, and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
 H. Res. 266: Mr. CRAMER.
 H. Res. 509: Mr. CHABOT and Mr. HASTINGS.
 H. Res. 540: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BEYER, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
 H. Res. 552: Mr. PETERS.
 H. Res. 567: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan and Mr. DONOVAN.
 H. Res. 591: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. KEATING, Mr. NUNES, Mr. BENISHEK, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. MESSER, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. WALZ, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. BARR, Mr. WELCH, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Mr. LOBIONDO.

SENATE—Tuesday, February 9, 2016

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, thank You for our Nation and for the freedoms we enjoy. Lord, thank You also for the men and women who gave their lives that we might be free.

Forgive us when our preoccupation with selfish dreams keeps us from surrendering to Your will. Help us to strive each day to give You our best.

Guide our Senators. May nothing deter them from doing Your will. Lord, give them faith to meet each challenge with Your wisdom. Help them to give themselves completely to You, permitting Your peace to guard their hearts.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The majority leader is recognized.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the President released a budget today. Congress will review his final set of proposals and priorities—his call for new taxes, new spending, and more debt.

ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, just this morning, local health departments confirmed two cases of the Zika virus in two States bordering Kentucky—Indiana and Ohio.

Americans want a better understanding of the administration's efforts to fight this virus and its spread. Americans want to know what the administration's funding priorities are for combatting Zika in a time of limited Federal resources. We appreciate Secretary Burwell coming today to help explain all of this. She and her

team will provide a briefing to Senate leaders, committee chairs, and ranking members about a virus Americans are rightly concerned about. Keeping Americans safe and healthy is a top priority for all of us. I am looking forward to hearing what she has to say.

THANKING AMBASSADOR DEREK MITCHELL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, turning to the nomination we will consider today, our Ambassador to Burma, Derek Mitchell, has staunchly pursued America's interests in an important post. He helped guide our relationship with Burma through a historic transition to elected government. He also served as a trusted and valuable partner in understanding how best to measure the pace and viability of reform within Burma.

I have gotten to know Derek pretty well over the last few years. I offer to him sincere gratitude for all of his advice and counsel. He will be missed. He is a genuine expert on that country. And while he leaves big shoes to fill, I intend to support the man nominated to succeed him.

NOMINATION OF SCOT MARCIEL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, Scot Marciel has served as the Principal Deputy Executive Secretary since August 2013, following time in Jakarta as our Ambassador to Indonesia for 3 years. He served as Ambassador for ASEAN Affairs and as Deputy Assistant Secretary for the East Asia and Pacific bureau, responsible for relations with Southeast Asia. Earlier in his career, he served in Vietnam, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Brazil, and Turkey, as well as in the Economic Bureau's Office of Monetary Affairs.

Ambassador Marciel will represent us as a new government is formed in Burma and as America's policies adjust to those changes on the ground. He obviously has a lot of experience. I think it will prove valuable as he works to represent our Nation at a time of truly consequential change in Burma.

Burma's transition to a democratically elected government is an important mark of reform in a country with a long and very troubled history. We know there is more to be done, but the administration can take credit for its efforts, and so can Members of Congress in both parties. Hopefully we can build on that momentum working together.

NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS AND POLICY ENHANCEMENT BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on one final matter, the regime in North Korea presents serious threats to regional stability, to the security of Americans, to the safety of our allies, and to the well-being of North Koreans themselves.

Pyongyang regularly threatens neighbors, such as South Korea and Japan. It routinely engages in cyber warfare. It repeatedly commits gross human rights violations against its own people and continues to develop a nuclear program that threatens peace in the region and throughout the world. The regime's most recent display of belligerent behavior only underlines that the administration's approach has certainly not worked. Let's work together to change that. Let's vote to move America's policy in a better and more successful direction.

Last month the House of Representatives voted to pass comprehensive sanctions legislation on a bipartisan basis. Tomorrow the Senate will turn to comprehensive sanctions legislation that builds on what the House passed, and we should pass that measure on a bipartisan basis as well.

The North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act was written by a Republican from Colorado, Senator CORY GARDNER, and a Democrat from New Jersey, Senator BOB MENENDEZ, and reported from the Foreign Relations Committee. It would strengthen congressional oversight. It would give the President more tools to take action against North Korea's growing aggression and require him to do so. It would also reassure our regional allies that we have not despaired in taking any action against North Korea—with or without help from China.

The kind of belligerence we have seen from Pyongyang must not be ignored. Let's work together to make our country and our world safer by passing this bipartisan bill.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I said yesterday and I say again today that I appreciate very much the Republican leader scheduling the meeting to talk about the Zika virus today. As I indicated yesterday, things crop up. I have

been called to the White House at that same time, so I personally won't be at the meeting, but I will have people there to make sure that if there is anything I missed, I will be brought up to date on that. Again, I appreciate the Republican leader scheduling that meeting.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am pleased that we are going to be considering the Ambassador to Burma. Everyone knows the personal attention Senator MCCONNELL has shown to the country of Burma for many years. I am pleased we are going to get an Ambassador to Burma.

I hope everyone understands we are really shortchanging the State Department. We have numerous people held up. The Secretary of State has called me on several occasions lamenting the fact that he is having trouble getting the work done because we don't have the people to do the work.

Fifteen foreign policy nominations are being held up by Republicans, and we have a number of Ambassadors who are being held up: Sweden, Norway, Luxembourg, and Trinidad—a number of countries that are extremely important to what we are doing here. It is a shame that they are being held by Republicans. It is very unfortunate.

FLINT, MICHIGAN, WATER CRISIS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the people in Flint, MI, continue to suffer through a catastrophic series of problems. Basically, it is their water. It is heavily contaminated. Their nightmare, which began almost 2 years ago, is an emergency that requires a Federal response, and that is what we have been trying to do. In the case of emergencies like this, we must act to help Americans dealing with a public health crisis.

For weeks now, we have called on Republicans to work with us to provide assistance for the people of Flint—100,000 people. Nine thousand children under the age of 6 have been poisoned in that little city in Michigan. It is very large by Nevada standards, but by Michigan standards, that city is not one of the bigger ones, but they need help. We need help from the Republicans. Nothing is happening because we haven't had enough Republican support. In the meantime, the people of Flint, MI, are using bottled water to bathe, to drink, to brush their teeth, and to cook with. That is really too bad.

This should not be a partisan issue. This is drinking water we are talking about. Everyone is entitled to pure, clean drinking water, and access to safe water is a right every American deserves. Whether you live in Michigan, Texas, Florida, Arizona, Nevada, Illinois—it doesn't matter where you

live, you shouldn't be afraid to drink the water that comes out of your faucet. No one should have to suffer, but the people of Flint, MI have suffered.

Yesterday the American Academy of Pediatrics wrote a long letter to me and to Senator MCCONNELL. In this letter they said that this organization representing 65,000 pediatricians and other pediatric specialists believes something needs to be done with the water in Flint.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS,
Elk Grove Village, IL, February 8, 2016.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR LEADERS MCCONNELL AND REID: On behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a non-profit professional organization of 64,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical sub-specialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults, I write regarding Congressional efforts to respond to the tragedy in Flint, Michigan and the exposure of its citizens to lead, a potent neurotoxin, through their drinking water.

The AAP supports federal efforts to provide immediate funding and other assistance to the people of Flint, including the amendment offered by Senators Stabenow and Peters. While their proposal is a vitally important first step, we would urge the Senate to provide additional funding for long-term educational, early literacy, nutrition, medical, behavioral, and other assistance to this community. This includes, but should not be limited to: support for Head Start and Early Head Start; quality child care; literacy programs; Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program enrollment; the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children; school meals and after-school feeding programs; and mental health screening and treatment.

There is no safe level of lead exposure for children. Lead damage can be permanent and irreversible. Lasting decreases in cognition have been documented in children with blood levels as low as 5 micrograms per deciliter of lead in blood. It is therefore clear that the children and families of Flint will need comprehensive assistance in both the short- and long-term.

The AAP is eager to assist this community, and federal policymakers, in both immediate and longer-term solutions to this public health tragedy. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ami Gadhia in our Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

BENARD P. DREYER, MD, FAAP,
President.

Mr. REID. I will only read a short phrase or two out of the letter, which says it all:

The AAP supports federal efforts to provide immediate funding and other assistance

to the people of Flint, including the amendment offered by Senators Stabenow and Peters.

The letter goes on to say:

There is no safe level of lead exposure for children. Lead damage can be permanent and irreversible. Lasting decreases in cognition have been documented in children with blood levels as low as 5 micrograms per deciliter of lead in blood. It is therefore clear that the children and families of Flint will need comprehensive assistance in both the short- and long-term.

This is a letter from the American Academy of Pediatrics. These are people who deal with children. They are not politicians. They are willing to tell us that these children have been poisoned.

In order to do something for the children of Flint and other families, we need help from my Republican colleagues. Despite harsh words from several Members of the Republican caucus who have no interest in resolving the crisis in Flint, some Republicans are willing to help. For example, the senior Senator from Oklahoma has been working with Senator STABENOW all weekend to put together an aid package that includes immediate funding for the people of Flint. Now we are once again waiting on Republicans to step forward and to support the chair of the Environment and Public Works Committee. It is incumbent upon the Republican majority to get to "yes" to help the people of Flint end this man-made emergency that is simply beyond their control.

All Americans deserve safe, clean drinking water, not just some of them. I hope my Republican colleagues will choose to help us to pass legislation to resolve this crisis, sending emergency funds to the people of Flint now.

Mr. President, would the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The assistant Democratic leader.

NATIONAL SECURITY SATELLITE LAUNCHES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to address an issue of vital importance to America's national security. It is the issue of reliable rocket launches—launches which the Department of Defense and the national intelligence agencies count on on a regular basis to launch satellites to keep America safe.

There is a separate area of launches with NASA involving the civilian side, but this morning I want to focus primarily on the Department of Defense rocket launches.

We made a decision about 10 years ago that was wrong. Two companies that were competing at that time, Boeing and Lockheed, came forward to the Federal Government and said: We have a plan. Instead of our companies competing, we will join together. We will become one company—Boeing and Lockheed—for this purpose, under the term United Launch Alliance. They argued, convincingly at the time, that this was the best way to come up with affordable, reliable launches. Well, that was true for half of the projection. They were reliable.

In the last 10 years, the United Launch Alliance has been a reliable partner with the Department of Defense in launching satellites and other things into space which are critical for our national security. But, unfortunately, because they became a monopoly, with no competition, they became increasingly more expensive and we had no place to turn.

Recently, there have been new entries in this market in terms of launching satellites. One of the most promising is SpaceX. SpaceX, from its infancy, has matured into a company that could play an important role in the future of satellite launches in the United States. I noted this fact, and as chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, I did something that doesn't happen around here very often. I had a hearing scheduled and brought together the CEOs of United Launch Alliance, the traditional partner of the Department of Defense in launching satellites, and this new company, SpaceX. I invited the CEOs from both companies to sit at the same table and to answer questions from the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. Then, at the end of the hearing, I did something that I thought might be positive and constructive. I said to each CEO: I would like each of you to write 10 questions that should be in the record answered by your partner at the table there. If we haven't covered everything to give a fair exposition of where this issue stands today, now is your chance.

That was in January 2014. It was the first time anybody had brought together two potentially competing companies and let them plead their case before the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. But I felt this was the best way to give SpaceX a chance to tell its story as a new entrant into this competition and for ULA to defend its position.

We then decided there was another element that was important. United Launch Alliance has several engines that can take a satellite into space. The most economical one is built by

the Russians, the RD-180. I happen to believe that it is not in our best security interest to be dependent on the Russians to supply us with a rocket engine for vital satellites to be launched into space. So I started pushing in the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense to put money into a competition for an American-made, American-built rocket engine to replace the Russian RD-180. For 2 successive years we have appropriated more money for this competition than the defense authorizing committee.

It turns out that we are on the right track, but the timing is challenging. What we have been told is that replacing the Russian engine with an American-made engine will take up to 5 years. Who is the source of that statement? The Secretary of the Air Force. So the obvious question is, If we can't cut off the Russian engine today without jeopardizing our national security, what should we do? We decided in the current appropriations bill to extend the authority to the Department of Defense to take bids on rockets launched by the Russian engine from ULA through this fiscal year. I thought this was a prudent thing to do—to wean ourselves from dependence on Russian-made engines—but to do it in a thoughtful, sensible way that gave the Department of Defense some options. This request, incidentally, for options and flexibility came not just from the Secretary of the Air Force, but it came from the Director of National Intelligence as well as the Secretary of Defense. They said they needed these options to keep America safe.

That was the state of play until the senior Senator from Arizona decided he was going to come to the floor repeatedly and challenge this conclusion by the Appropriations subcommittee, then leading to an op-ed which he published yesterday in the Wall Street Journal. I come to the floor this morning to address that op-ed by the senior Senator from Arizona. It is titled: "Congress's Cynical Crony-Capital Gift to Putin."

The senior Senator from Arizona referenced me by name in this article, as he has repeatedly on the floor of the Senate, though many would argue that violates the Senate rules. Notwithstanding that personal aspect of this, I want to address the issue that is before us.

Why does the senior Senator from Arizona continue to single me out personally? It is because I happen to agree with the Secretary of Defense, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Secretary of the Air Force about a vital, important national security issue. The senior Senator from Arizona disagrees with them.

The issue is deadly serious, despite the name-calling by my colleague. It is about competition for launching defense satellites into space. Here are the facts. One company, United Launch Al-

liance, or ULA, held a monopoly for nearly 10 years. The cost of launches rose out of control. Today, there is finally an opportunity for competition. A new company I mentioned earlier, SpaceX, has entered space launch. They are challenging ULA. As I said earlier, in January 2014, I recognized this option—this possibility, this opportunity—and held a hearing with the CEOs of both companies testifying under oath. The result of this competition is that costs are dropping, exactly what we wanted to achieve, and the taxpayer is beginning to see savings. However, as I mentioned earlier, the ULA rocket most often uses a Russian-built rocket engine, the RD-180. After the Russian invasion of Crimea and eastern Ukraine, the Department of Defense and Congress agreed it was time for us to phase out any dependence on this Russian-made engine and to make an American product as soon as possible. I couldn't agree with that more.

Developing and testing a new, American-made rocket takes time—more time than I imagined. The Secretary of the Air Force, testifying before the committee of the senior Senator from Arizona, estimated that it would take to at least 2021 or 2022 until there was an American-made rocket engine that can replace the Russian engine that is being used today. However, the senior Senator from Arizona doesn't want to wait that long to replace the Russian engine. In his Wall Street Journal diatribe, he writes that "we don't need to buy any more." And he is apparently considering a total ban on the Department of Defense using these Russian engines, despite the fact that we have received, in writing, from the Secretary of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence a warning that doing this would in fact create a gap which could endanger our national security.

In May 2015, the Secretary of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence wrote to the chairman of the defense authorization committee, and they shared his goal of replacing this Russian engine. But they warned the senior Senator from Arizona that if he followed his own plan, it could harm U.S. national security. They were alarmed, in this letter, of the proposed cutoff of access to Russian engines before an American replacement was ready. Secretary Carter and Director Clapper do not want to trade one launch monopoly, ULA, for another launch monopoly, SpaceX. They are encouraging and standing for competition. They want to keep them competing so they can have lower costs and options if one of the companies, for whatever reason, is unable to meet its obligations.

Also, our defense and intelligence satellites must not be dependent on one type of rocket. A SpaceX launch

failed last summer, and it took 6 months before they could return to launches. With only one supplier of rockets, a crash could stop vital satellite launches for months, endangering America's national security.

The senior Senator from Arizona ignored the arguments being made by the Secretary of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence. After all, it is hard for a Senator to argue with the senior national security leader, Secretary Carter, whose doctorate is in theoretical physics, and it would be unconscionable to call our Nation's highest intelligence official—a former Air Force pilot and career civil servant—a “Putin crony.”

But I take warnings from our top national security experts seriously. My Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense has been working to address these issues the right way, the safe way. Rather than attack fellow Senators in the press, the senior Senator from Arizona should face the facts.

When the Defense appropriations bill was marked up in June of 2015, the bill included a bipartisan provision to allow the Department of Defense to conduct full and open competitions for rocket launches for 1 year. An amendment was offered by the Republican senior Senator from the State of South Carolina to strike that provision. But after a full debate, he withdrew his amendment when it was clear there was bipartisan support for the bill. The provision was modified in conference, but the effect of the provision remains the same—to make sure that the Department of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence have some answer to their concerns about a launch monopoly.

The senior Senator from Arizona has proposed another solution—that ULA offer another rocket called the Delta IV, which, of course, is not a Russian engine. According to the Pentagon's top weapons buyer and ULA, each of those rockets endorsed by the senior Senator from Arizona costs about 30 percent more than the Atlas rockets with Russian engines. So if that figure is correct, the plan of the senior Senator from Arizona requires American taxpayers to pay approximately \$1 billion more in launch costs over the next 6 years. This Senator, who comes to the floor frequently telling us that he is such a budget hawk, is proposing a plan that will cost us at least \$1 billion more over the next 6 years. That figure could be higher. His plan could triple the cost of launches for some satellites that are too heavy to be launched on a single rocket.

Under the plan of the senior Senator from Arizona, the taxpayers would foot the bill for a new government-created monopoly. It is in fact a \$1 billion windfall and gift to one defense contractor in California if we follow the plan of the senior Senator from Ari-

zona, and it would also put our national security at risk if there is a technical failure.

If spending \$1 billion of taxpayers' money to increase the risk that the United States won't be able to launch a satellite to keep track of Russia sounds like a counterproductive and questionable idea, you would be right. Last year, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee said many times that the Defense authorization bill isn't a budget bill. Now, as vice chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense—the subcommittee that has to make the math work—I can say that spending an extra \$1 billion at this moment in the history of the Department of Defense doesn't make sense.

There is another aspect to this. I don't know if the senior Senator from Arizona is going to look into it or attack it as well. When it comes to supplying the space station, we are reliant on Russian-made engines. If the senior Senator from Arizona wants to cut off access of NASA to these Russian-made engines, it will be a dangerous proposal. There are a variety of NASA missions ahead that rely on this Atlas rocket. These include multiple resupply missions to the International Space Station, a mission to take samples from a nearby asteroid, a new Mars lander, a probe to study the sun, and several weather satellites.

If there is the will to ignore the national security concerns of the Secretary of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence about access to space for national security, we had best take care. The senior Senator from Arizona will now say that supplying the space station is somehow a sellout to Vladimir Putin.

We have appropriated \$448 million to develop all-American engines, which is more than the Armed Services Committee has authorized. In a few years, we will have real competition for space launches that will help lower costs for a long time to come—but only if we listen to our top defense and intelligence leaders, who favor a responsible transition to the next rocket in the interest of national security and oppose the plans put forward by the senior Senator from Arizona.

One aspect of this article in the Wall Street Journal that troubles me the most is the suggestion that I take lightly the adventurism of Vladimir Putin and his bloody invasion of Ukraine. I am proud to be the cochair of the Ukrainian Caucus with Senator PORTMAN of Ohio. We have a large Ukrainian population in my State. I have spoken to them many times, and I have visited Ukraine many times to make it clear that I detest what Putin has done in invading their country and threatening their sovereignty. The irony is the senior Senator from Arizona personally invited me to accompany him to Ukraine, where we both

protested Putin's actions. To suggest my position on these rocket engines is somehow a give-in to Putin is shameful and wrong. I think my statements—public and otherwise—have made it clear.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this morning at 11 a.m., the President released the budget, his final budget for his Presidency. Unfortunately, rather than something that sends a signal that he wants to work with Congress, it is basically more of the same—a \$4 trillion budget that is unserious, partisan, and contains reckless spending. In it, he does include several new proposals, proposals he knows will be dead on arrival here in the U.S. Congress.

From my perspective, coming from an energy State, one pretty astounding measure he suggested was putting a \$10 tax on each barrel of oil. What that would do is translate into 25 cents a gallon more for consumers at the pump. How in the world would that help American families who are suffering as a result of stagnant wages due to slow economic growth in this country as well as additional costs, such as ObamaCare, that have been imposed upon them by the administration? The simple fact is that it doesn't help the average American family get by. It is the opposite.

At a time when our country is producing more energy domestically than it ever has and just beginning to export that energy to our friends and allies around the world, the President's budget reveals that he has little interest in growing our energy independence and little interest in jump-starting our economy.

All he has to do is look at Texas, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, and other places to see how our domestic energy production has helped create thousands of jobs and helped grow the economy. Instead, the President makes these job-killing proposals, which will further burden hard-working American families, along with the tepid growth that we have seen here in our own economy—0.7 percent just this last quarter. The President's budget adds further insult to injury by adding to our national debt, which is already \$19 trillion.

Somebody is going to have to pay that back. In the meantime, what we will have to do is pay interest on that debt, which will continue to crowd out spending in other areas like national security where there is a national consensus. This is the number one priority for the American people.

Strangely, but unfortunately predictably, rather than deciding to work with Congress and to listen to the concerns that are raised by those hard-

working American families, President Obama went ahead and submitted a budget with no apparent interest in finding any kind of common ground. It is a sad testament to his go-it-alone legacy, which has been more ideological than actually solution oriented.

We are here to try to solve problems, and the only way we do that is by working together to find consensus where we can. Understanding that there are people who serve in the Senate and the House from different points of view all across the ideological spectrum, it is only by working together—and that includes not just Congress but the President, too—that we can actually begin to help grow the economy to help create jobs, to help make America more secure.

Given the fact that the President has decided to take the tack he has, I hope that Congress will lead the charge against this request for irresponsible spending and try to help get our economy back on track, to begin the process of reducing our debt and strengthening the hand of the American family.

MENTAL HEALTH REFORM

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, on another note, I wish to spend a few minutes talking about a very important hearing that we will be having tomorrow in the Senate Judiciary Committee, something that I feel very passionately about, and that is finding a way forward on mental health reform. As shocking as it is, our jails and our streets have become places where people suffering from mental illness basically are left without treatment and without recourse.

Tomorrow I will have the honor of chairing that hearing where we will discuss the intersection of our mental health system such as it is and our criminal justice system, and hopefully we will be able to find a way forward to push toward real reform. The goal of the hearing is to better understand how to bring help and support for those who struggle with mental illness.

This is an area where we can and we must do better. Too often, after the fact, we find out that families faced with the choice of allowing their loved ones' mental health to continue deteriorating, letting their illness spiral out of control until they become a danger to themselves or others—there are very few choices available to families whose loved ones are becoming more and more ill. True, they could go to court and seek a court order, seeking a temporary commitment to a mental institution, but that frequently exacerbates frayed relations among family members, and it stigmatizes the individual who is suffering from mental illness issues.

We need to give those families more and better choices on how to deal with their loved ones, hopefully to keep

them from becoming a danger to themselves and to the community. Thanks to the marvels of modern medicine, for many people suffering from mental illness, if they will just follow doctors' orders and take the medication that has been prescribed for them—frequently under some doctor's supervision—many of them can get much better and become more productive in society.

One of our witnesses tomorrow will be Pete Earley who wrote a book called "Crazy." He is not talking about a person. He is talking about our so-called system of mental health treatment. Pete Earley wrote this book because, as an accomplished journalist and writer, he knew of no other way than to write about the issue to help his very own son who had encounter after encounter with the criminal justice system because he had untreated mental illness.

Sadly, the failure to adequately address mental health in the United States has led to a drastic increase in the number of mentally ill individuals being locked up in prisons and jails, still without adequate treatment. I don't think anyone would support the idea of turning our prisons and our jails into warehouses for the mentally ill, but that is what has happened by default.

We need to provide better choices to law enforcement officials, to families, and to the individuals who suffer from mental illness. So often many of them will self-medicate with drugs and alcohol, compounding their problems, creating more and more of this turnstile effect within the criminal justice system where no one ever gets better and the illness never gets treated.

As criminologists and mental health experts will tell you, locking up people with mental illness without treatment will make them only more dangerous and increase the risk of crisis, but unfortunately this is an all-too-common practice across our country.

This is a shocking number to me when I read it, but one estimate suggests there are as many as 400,000 current inmates in our prisons across America who suffer from some form of mental illness. That is because, at least in part, the United States has witnessed a rapid decline in psychiatric and mental health hospitals over the past decades. The idea was that you couldn't institutionalize people so you had to let them out. Unfortunately, just letting them out without finding a way forward to help them deal with their mental illness resulted in many of them becoming homeless, living on our streets or in our jails and our prisons when they commit petty crimes such as trespassing and the like.

Since 1960, more than 90 percent of State psychiatric beds have been eliminated—90 percent. But prison is a poor and often very harmful replacement for

a treatment facility. Our goal in the hearing tomorrow is to work toward another solution, one that would give families greater flexibility, including actual treatment options for the people they love.

A bill I introduced, the Mental Health and Safe Communities Act, offers one proven approach to treating mental illness. It borrows from a successful model of reform, put into place in my hometown in Bexar County, TX, more than a decade ago.

Let me say a word about borrowing from these successful local and State models as opposed to imposing a one-size-fits-all approach at the national level, not knowing whether it would actually work in this big and diverse country we live in. I believe that taking successful examples of best practices at the local and State level—those are the best subject matter for us to look at in terms of scaling these up on a national level where appropriate.

The Bexar County sheriff, Susan Pamerleau, a champion of mental health reform in San Antonio, will testify tomorrow about the San Antonio story. Bexar County's mental health program focuses on treatment of the mentally ill instead of just putting them behind bars and leaving them untreated. The results have been very impressive.

These reforms have reduced the size of our overcrowded jails, which has been a perennial problem. It has saved tax dollars, and it has improved the lives of people who otherwise would be put behind bars and left to their own devices.

I look forward to hearing from Sheriff Pamerleau tomorrow. I bet other members of the Senate Judiciary Committee and anyone else who cares to listen will learn a lot about how we can bring these reforms to the rest of the country.

Another part of this is to help equip law enforcement, teachers, judges, and people who work in the courts with the knowledge and skill set they need to spot mental illness early on. Wouldn't it be more helpful if teachers, parents, and counselors were empowered to help identify people who need help early on in school? Doesn't it make sense to train our law enforcement officials how to deal with a person suffering from a mental health crisis? Do you slap the cuffs on them? Do you get engaged in a violent confrontation? Or do you try to deescalate the incident in a way that is safer for the law enforcement official as well as the person being confronted?

There are better ways for us to respond effectively at the early signs and help to train the people who are in the best position to identify people who need help early on. This legislation includes specialized training for those on the frontlines, such as law enforcement and judicial officials, so they are ready to respond and can react swiftly and

safely should a mental health crisis erupt.

The truth is that this is a difficult issue and one that raises hard questions. But I am grateful to Chairman GRASSLEY of the Senate Judiciary Committee for not shying away from this topic but embracing it and having witnesses such as those we will have tomorrow who I think will open the eyes of many people to something they perhaps don't encounter in their daily lives because they don't go to our jails or our prisons or they don't have a loved one who suffers from mental illness. I think this will open a lot of eyes, and it will help us continue the conversation so we can find some common ground and work toward real solutions.

Reform is long overdue. All you need to do is visit our jails, as I have done in Harris County, Bexar County, and Dallas County, to see that too often our jails are occupied by people who—yes, they may have committed petty crimes, nonviolent crimes, but they really need some help. If we give them the help, they can turn their lives around and become more productive.

It will save taxpayers money, and I think it will be a much more humane and efficient system of dealing with people suffering with a mental health crisis. I am hopeful we can advance substantive legislation to help those struggling with mental illness and their families and, as a result, make our communities safer.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS ENFORCEMENT BILL

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the bill that will be coming before the Senate this week, the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act, which seeks to curb North Korea's unacceptable behavior through the implementation of targeted sanctions.

On January 6 of this year, North Korea tested a nuclear weapon in open violation of numerous U.N. resolutions. This is the fourth time North Korea has conducted a nuclear weapons test, and it is estimated the country may have as many as 20 nuclear warheads in its arsenal.

Just this past weekend, while many Americans were getting ready to watch the Super Bowl, North Korea conducted a missile test, putting a satellite into orbit. This missile test, which has already been condemned by

the U.N. Security Council, served as a demonstration of the threat posed by North Korea's long-range missile program. In fact, just a few hours later, the satellite launched by the North Korean missile passed over the site of the Super Bowl in Santa Clara, CA.

If equipped with a nuclear warhead, a missile similar to the one launched this weekend could potentially threaten the United States and our allies, and North Korea is actively seeking to market this same missile technology, as well as its nuclear weapons technology, to other rogue regimes.

North Korea's history of aggressive behavior is already well known and well documented. In March of 2010, a North Korean torpedo sank the South Korean naval vessel *Cheonan*, killing 46 sailors. In November of 2010, North Korea fired artillery on the island of Yeonpyeong, killing two soldiers and injuring an additional 15 soldiers and 2 civilians.

North Korea's dictator Kim Jong Un continues to spout threats against the United States and our allies. This past year, when South Korean citizens sent leaflets with unfiltered information into North Korea, the regime responded with threats to turn the whole of South Korea into a "sea of fire." After the January nuclear test, a North Korean spokesman said: "North Korean scientists are in high spirits." The statement went on to claim that North Korea detonated an H-bomb, which we now know to be untrue, and added that the bomb was "capable of wiping out the whole territory of the U.S. all at once." These threats are so common now that they barely make the news.

North Korea is not only a threat to the United States, it is also a threat to its own people. It is estimated that 150,000 to 200,000 North Koreans are imprisoned in concentration camps. We can confirm the existence of these camps from satellite photographs and firsthand accounts. These are not camps for what we would consider criminals but for individuals deemed disloyal to the regime. The "crime" of a single family member—which can be something as simple as accidentally tarnishing the photo of a member of North Korea's hereditary dictatorship—can lead to an entire North Korean family being sent away to a labor camp.

The brutality of these camps has been confirmed by those who have made it out. To date, more than 28,000 North Korean defectors have escaped and made it to South Korea. Tens of thousands more are still in China, often working as cheap laborers who become victims of human trafficking.

The stories of those who have escaped Kim Jong Un's regime carry a common theme: starvation, imprisonment, torture, and the execution of family members. And this is everyday life for the people of North Korea.

The bill we are considering this week seeks to curb North Korea's aggressive behavior through the use of targeted sanctions. The bill restricts access to financial resources and raw materials that North Korea uses to support its nuclear weapons program and operate its political prison and forced labor camps. It levels mandatory sanctions against individuals who contribute to North Korea's ballistic missile development and targets luxury goods the regime uses to maintain the loyalty of party elites. It also puts in place sanctions against any entity determined to be enabling North Korea's ability to censor information, as well as those engaged in money laundering, narcotics trafficking, and counterfeiting. The bill also includes discretionary sanctions that the U.S. President could use to target entities assisting North Korea in misappropriating funds for the benefit of North Korean officials. The President would have to justify any waivers of these sanctions on a case-by-case basis. The bill also codifies into law the Presidential Executive orders issued in 2015 following the cyber attack on Sony Pictures.

This is a multifaceted bill designed to target North Korea's weapons programs, human rights abuses, and the finances of government elites. And it will do so with minimal impact on the lives of everyday North Koreans who continue to suffer at the hands of their own government.

Last week I introduced legislation addressing another threat posed by North Korea. As I stated before, North Korea is actively seeking to market its nuclear weapons technology to other rogue regimes. In fact, the Syrian nuclear reactor destroyed in 2007 is based on a North Korean design. My bill would ensure that North Korea can't sell its technology to another rogue regime—Iran.

Although President Obama's nuclear deal seeks to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, many of us remain skeptical. And with the North Korean regime strapped for cash, its nuclear weapons and missile technology are some of the few commodities it can offer, and it actively tries to market them to other rogue regimes.

My bill seeks to prevent Iran from becoming a potential customer for North Korea's nuclear weapons technology. Under my legislation, if Iran attempts to acquire nuclear weapons technology from North Korea, all sanctions waived or suspended as a result of the President's nuclear deal would be reinstated immediately. A nuclear armed Iran is unacceptable.

Regardless of what the President claims his Iran nuclear deal has achieved, we must remain vigilant and ensure that Iran keeps its end of the agreement and does not go after a nuclear weapon.

I am glad the Senate is addressing the threat posed by North Korea. A similar version of the North Korea sanctions bill that we are addressing this week recently passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 418 to 2. I hope we will see similar bipartisan support for the bill here in the Senate. We should not compromise the national security of the United States with disputes between our political parties. I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle feel the same and will join me in moving this bill forward.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BUDGET REFORM

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, today the President of the United States unveiled the last budget of his Presidency: \$4.1 trillion. Of that, \$1.1 trillion is discretionary spending, which is the amount Congress will discuss over the next few months.

It is no big secret that Presidential budgets typically are dead on arrival—this one especially so, obviously, as it is the last one of the President's term. It is a requirement of the 1974 Budget Act. The President turns in his budget by the first Monday of February. It is actually now into the second week. It is a week late, but it is closer to on time than the budgets of other Presidents have been in the last few years.

There are a lot of wish list items in the President's budget. It also includes about \$3.4 trillion in new taxes over the next 10 years. It increases spending by \$2.5 trillion over the next 10 years, including next year. The challenge in the President's spending plan is that he increases spending so much that we also continue to increase the deficit, the debt, and our interest payments.

This body should realize that on the current track, the Congressional Budget Office and the President's budget that he released today forecast that within the next 10 years, the United States of America will spend more on interest on our debt than we spend on national defense. I want everyone to soak that in. Within 10 years, the Federal taxpayer will spend more on interest on our debt—our debt payments—than we spend on national defense.

When the President came into office, there was \$10.6 trillion in total debt. The President's budget lays out a plan that by the end of his budget, there will be \$27.4 trillion in total debt. This is an issue for us, and it continues to accelerate. And until this body and

until the House and until the White House agree this is a problem, it will not be solved.

I don't want to say this flippantly; the President and I have had this conversation. He does not believe that increasing deficits—that is, overspending what we bring in—is a problem. He believes, as he has shared with me and with the American people publicly, that if the government overspends a little bit, that stimulates the economy. Well, that might be true in some economic formula, but when our interest payments are larger than total what we spend for defense, we are in a spiral that we cannot sustain.

We cannot keep saying we will add more debt every year and there is no reckoning for that. Our total debt right now exceeds our gross domestic product. Literally, if we took from every single American in the entire country all of their income for the entire year we could not pay off our debt.

We are very much at a tipping point. The problem Congress faces is Congress never seems to act until we have to, and, in this time, in an economic crisis, when we have to, it is too late. How do we get on top of that? How do we stop bragging about how much the deficit has been cut and actually start reducing our debt? Many Americans don't hear the difference between the debt and the deficit because they don't live in this world of all of these different terms. Deficit is how much we overspend in any one year; debt is the accumulation of all of those deficits.

Washington continues to talk about how in the last 6 years we have cut the deficit by \$1 trillion. And that is a good thing, but the problem is that in the last 10 years, the debt has also doubled as deficits are still so large every single year, and that is a problem.

So what do we do with this? I would say there are multiple things. No. 1, we are not going to get out of this in any one time period. This body needs to understand that this is not a car payment we are paying off. This is a really big jumbo mortgage. We are not going to pay this off in 1 year, and we are not going to fix it in one stroke. This is going to take multiple years of picking away at this.

I have reminded several of my colleagues of one sobering fact: If we were to balance our budget and set this 10-year time period to actually balance the budget, if the next year after the balanced budget we had a \$50 billion surplus as a nation, it would take 460 years in a row of \$50 billion surpluses to pay off our debt. For twice as long as we have been a country, if we had a \$50 billion surplus every year, we could pay off our debt. At some point we have to admit this is a really big issue.

CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, as all of us know in this room, continues to rattle us and remind us that this debt is continuing to grow

and we do not have the resources to do it. For the first time since 2009, our deficit will rise again next year to \$544 billion. That is up 24 percent from just this last fiscal year. As we continue to have more individuals who retire and use Medicare and Social Security, which they have set aside their entire life to go into, and as that number continues to rise and as discretionary spending continues to stay fairly capped, we are not getting on top of the big issues that we face.

Where do we go from here? In 1974 this Congress created the Congressional Budget Act, which set up the process of how we would actually do our budget every year. It is a very interesting process with the House and Senate passing budgets, putting them together, going through the process and getting everything to the President. All the timing and everything was set up with appropriations bills and how they would be done with all the deadlines. Interestingly, since 1979, the Congressional Budget Act, in the way that it was set up, has only worked two times—twice since 1979. Would anyone else admit that there is a problem with that setup? Coming out of Watergate in 1974, they wanted more transparency and an open process doing the budget. So they created this process that is so cumbersome that since 1979 it has only worked twice.

To give more up-to-date details, in the last 10 years we should have passed 118 appropriations bills. Of the 118 appropriations bills, only 7 of those individual bills were passed on time. We have a problem just in basic process.

So allow this Senator to just throw out a few ideas to recommend to this body that we consider. If we are going to fix our debt and deficit, we have to look at the process of executing our budget to fix it.

Here are a few thoughts. A biennial budget—if we don't do a budget every year, we should do a budget every 2 years. We are dealing with trillions of dollars. We should do a little bit of advanced planning. We should be able to do that at least 2 years in advance to be able to lay out how we are actually going to do the spending. We could do appropriations every single year to be able to provide the accountability, but at least the major budget process we should do every 2 years.

We should get rid of the budget gimmicks that dominate this body in how we "balance our budget." Budget gimmicks such as pension smoothing, corporate timing shifts, and all of our favorites—CHIMPS, or changes in mandatory programs, which everyone outside of this city thinks is a monkey, and everyone inside this city knows it is a great budgeting technique.

Here is how some of these work. Here is an example from October's budget agreement. A pension payment acceleration in section 502 changed the due

date for pension premiums from October 15, 2025, to September 15, 2025, in order to get \$2.3 billion into the ten-year window. Now what just changed there? They moved the payment time 30 days forward and so that is when it is due. Since they moved it 30 days forward 10 years from now, suddenly that is another \$2 billion into the Federal budget. If our Federal budget was not 10 years, but 10 years and 2 weeks, it would have been \$2 billion short. Because they moved the payment over a month and made it earlier, suddenly the budget picked up \$2 billion. It is not real. It is a gimmick.

There are the changes in mandatory programs that go out, such as the Crime Victims Fund. That is a fund of money that is expected to be spent, but should we actually not spend part of it, they will say: Great, we can take that part we were "expected to spend" and actually spend it this year. Then guess what; next year you spend it again, and next year you spend it again. It is a gimmick. That should be struck. We shouldn't have gimmicks like that. Those things make Congress look good but don't actually deal with our deficit and debt. There are rules that are internal that need to be fixed. We need to get real numbers and be able to have agreeable real numbers.

Right now there is a big argument all the time saying: How does the budget balance against the President's budget—this particular baseline and that particular baseline? How about this: We have a lot of programs that have not been authorized—some of them for more than a decade—though we continue to allocate money for them every single year. Authorizing programs as we do for national defense every single year is important, and we should actually do the work with that to be able to bring bills to the floor and to be able to get it done.

We have reports from the GAO and from the IG that come out every year showing waste, yet many of those no one ever acts on. Three folks I see on the floor right now—Senator FLAKE and Senator MCCAIN from Arizona and my office—have all put out waste reports in the past 5 months detailing billions of dollars in waste. We can identify these areas, and the inspector general's office and the GAO can identify these areas. We need to set a process in place to actually solve those issues. Then we can do more than talk about it. We can move it from just a messaging moment to solutions on our debt and our deficit.

I recommend a measure such as the Government Shutdown Prevention Act that says we don't have a government shutdown. I understand some are very romantic about government shutdowns and what they would accomplish. Government shutdowns always cost more money for the taxpayer than they save. They cost a tremendous amount of tur-

moil in the Federal workforce and multiple places.

There is an easier way for us to handle this. Congress only acts when we have to. When we have a government shutdown, we suddenly have to act. How about if we do something simple and straightforward, and we put in place something that at the end of the budget year, if we do not have a budget in place and do not have proper appropriations done, we have a short-term continuing resolution for 30 days that automatically puts into place in all legislative offices and the Executive Office of the White House a funding haircut to create the incentive that we need to act? If 30 days later we still don't have the appropriations done, the Executive Office of the White House, the House, and the Senate get another haircut, and we continue to press. There are ways that we can add pressure to ourselves that won't actually damage what is happening in the rest of the Nation.

Why don't we pass a balanced budget amendment, which we have talked about forever and which we voted on in 2011 and has not come up again? We will never get to some of these measures until Congress is compelled to do the right thing. Let's put some processes in place beginning with our budget process, with real reform in how we do the budget and real structural changes to actually push this body to do what everyone outside of this body says needs to be done.

In the days ahead when we are spending more on interest than we are on national defense, this body should hang its head in shame. But before that occurs, we should fix it so that never happens and we get on top of our debt and deficit with a straightforward process that actually gets us back to work.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate in morning business and be allowed to complete my remarks, which won't be too long.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WATERBOARDING

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today is the 100th New Hampshire Presidential primary. Regardless of who wins, this is a celebration of our vibrant democracy of engaged citizens putting candidates to the test and demanding answers on the tough issues the next President will confront.

It is also another important step in choosing our next Commander in Chief, and the stakes couldn't be higher. As we heard from the Director of National Intelligence this morning, the threats to our Nation are growing more diverse, more complex, and more dan-

gerous. More than ever we need a Commander in Chief with a clear vision, a steady hand, sound judgment and confidence—not only in our Nation's power but in the values and ideals that generations of American heroes have fought for and died defending.

That is why it has been so disappointing to see some Presidential candidates engaged in loose talk on the campaign trail about reviving waterboarding and other inhumane interrogation techniques. It might be easy to dismiss this bluster as cheap campaign rhetoric, but these statements must not go unanswered because they mislead the American people about the realities of interrogation, how to gather intelligence, what it takes to defend our security, and at the most fundamental level, what we are fighting for as a nation and what kind of a nation we are.

It is important to remember the fact that these forms of torture not only failed their purpose to secure actionable intelligence to prevent further attacks on the United States and our allies, but they compromised our values, stained our national honor, and did little practical good. While some have shamefully sought to minimize the practice of waterboarding, it is clear to me that this practice, which is a simulated execution by drowning, amounts to torture as any reasonable person would define it and how the Geneva Conventions on the treatment of prisoners of war, of which we are signatories, define it.

The use of these methods by the United States was shameful and unnecessary because the United States has tried, convicted, and executed foreign combatants who employed methods of torture, including waterboarding, against American prisoners of war. Following World War II, Japanese generals were tried, convicted, and hung. One of the charges against them was that they practiced waterboarding. Contrary to assertions made by some of the defenders, it provided little useful intelligence to help us track down the perpetrators of the September 11 attacks or to prevent new attacks and atrocities.

This Senator knows from personal experience that the abuse of prisoners will produce more bad than good intelligence. I know that victims of torture will offer intentionally misleading information if they think their captors will believe it. I know they will say whatever they think their torturers will want them to say if they believe it will stop their suffering. Most of all, I know that the use of torture compromises that which most distinguishes us from our enemies—our belief that all people, even captured enemies, possess basic human rights that are protected by international conventions the United States not only joined but for the most part authored.

I understand that in the aftermath of the worst terrorist attacks on our homeland, those who approved harsh interrogation methods and those who used them were sincerely dedicated to securing justice for the victims of terrorist attacks and protecting Americans from further harm. I know that in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in Paris and San Bernardino, many Americans feel again the grave urgency that we felt 15 years ago. But I dispute wholeheartedly that it was right for our Nation to use these interrogation methods then or that it is right for our Nation to use them now.

Waterboarding, as well as any other form of torture, is not in the best interest of justice, security or the ideals we have sacrificed so much blood and treasure to defend.

It is the knowledge of torture's dubious efficacy and the strong moral objections to the abuse of prisoners that have forged broad bipartisan agreement on this issue. Last year, the Senate passed in an overwhelming vote of 91 to 3 the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, legislation that took a historic step forward to ban torture once and for all by limiting U.S. Government interrogation techniques to those in the Army Field Manual. That vote was 91 to 3. There was debate and discussion about it in the Armed Services Committee and on the floor of this Senate. The vote was 91 to 3.

Now candidates are saying they will disregard the law. I thought that was our complaint—Republicans' complaint—with the present President of the United States.

The U.S. military has successfully interrogated more foreign terrorist detainees than any other agency of our government. The Army Field Manual, in its current form, has worked for the U.S. military—including on high-value terrorist detainees in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere—and it reflects current best thinking and practices on interrogation.

Moreover, the Army Field Manual embodies the values Americans have embraced for generations, preserving the ability of our interrogators to extract critical intelligence from our adversaries while recognizing that torture and cruel treatment are ineffective interrogation methods.

Some of the Nation's most respected leaders from the U.S. military, CIA, and FBI supported this legislation, as well as numerous human rights organizations and faith groups, including the National Association of Evangelicals and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

GEN David Petraeus, a military leader whom I admire more than literally any living military leader, said he supported the use of the Army Field Manual because "our Nation has paid a high price in recent decades for the in-

formation gained by the use of techniques beyond those in the field manual—and, in my view, that price far outweighed the value of the information gained through the use of techniques beyond those in the manual." Obviously, that includes waterboarding.

Why don't we listen to people like GEN David Petraeus, who has had vast experience in Iraq and Afghanistan with detainees, the information we have gotten from them, and our practices. If General Petraeus were here, he would tell you the most effective method of gaining information is establishing a friendly relationship with the detainee.

Obviously, we need intelligence to defeat our enemies, but we need reliable intelligence. Torture produces more misleading information than actionable intelligence. What the advocates of harsh and cruel interrogation methods have never established is that we couldn't have gathered as good or more reliable intelligence from using humane methods. The most important lead we got in the search for bin Laden came from using conventional interrogation methods. I think it is an insult to many of the intelligence officers who have acquired good intelligence without hurting or degrading prisoners to assert that we cannot win this war on terrorism without such methods. Yes, we can and we will.

In the end, torture's failure to serve its intended purpose isn't the main reason to oppose its use. I have often said and will always maintain that this question isn't about our enemies, it is about us. It is about who we were, who we are, and whom we aspire to be. It is about how we represent ourselves to the world.

We have made our way in this often dangerous and cruel world, not by just strictly pursuing our geopolitical interests but by exemplifying our political values and influencing other nations to embrace them. When we fight to defend our security, we fight also for an idea that all men are endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights; that is, all men and women. How much safer the world would be if all nations believed the same. How much more dangerous it can become when we forget it ourselves, even momentarily, as we learned from Abu Ghraib. Our enemies act without conscience. We must not. It isn't necessary, and it isn't even helpful in winning this strange and long war we are fighting.

Our Nation needs a Commander in Chief who understands and affirms this basic truth. Our Nation needs a Commander in Chief who will make clear to those who fight on our behalf that they are defending this sacred ideal and that sacrificing our national honor and our respect for human dignity will make it harder, not easier, to prevail in this war. Our Nation needs a Commander in

Chief who reminds us that in the worst of times, through the chaos and terror of war, when facing cruelty, suffering, and loss, that we are always Americans—different, stronger, and better than those who would destroy us.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:36 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Scot Alan Marciel, of California, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Union of Burma.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Maryland

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 2 minutes also.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator so modify his request?

Mr. COTTON. I do modify my request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I rise today in support not only of the nomination of Scot Marciel to be our Ambassador to Burma but to celebrate the remarkable change Burma is undergoing.

I recently traveled to Burma, leading a congressional delegation hosted by our Embassy there, Ambassador Derek Mitchell, and Deputy Chief of Mission Kristen Bauer.

Burma has undergone a remarkable transition. After 50 years of a brutal military dictatorship, Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi and her party won a landslide election in November. The

military is still entrenched in power, but gradual change is occurring, in part thanks to U.S. policies. It is change we should continue to support.

Sitting at the intersection of China and India, Burma is a geostrategically critical country. Sitting, as it does, between the crossroads of Southeast Asia and the Middle East, it is critical to the War on Terror. Burma can be a potent trading partner because of its largely untapped natural resources and is a shining example of the strategic impact of U.S. moral leadership in the world.

Those elections were not the end of the work, though; they are only the beginning of the work. The military still has a deep role in the Constitution. The National League for Democracy needs to transition from an opposition party to a governing party. Burma must address its internal ethnic conflicts, and, like most countries, it needs to address corruption and economic reforms as well. Our mission team in Rangoon is working on all these matters and more. I know that Ambassador Marciel looks forward to leading that team and continuing to strengthen the U.S.-Burma relationship.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise to join Senator COTTON in urging our colleagues to vote for the confirmation of Scot Marciel to be Ambassador to Burma for the reasons Senator COTTON pointed out.

There are exciting things happening in Burma. It is a country in transition. We have seen some promise. There are still major challenges in that country. We clearly need a confirmed ambassador. It is important that the Senate act, and I am glad to see we will be acting in a few moments.

We couldn't have a more qualified person to take on the ambassadorship of Burma than Scot Marciel. He currently serves as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs. I got to know him very well in that capacity in the last Congress when I chaired the subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations on East Asia and the Pacific. He is a career diplomat who has taken on some of the most challenging positions in Foreign Service, including being the Chief of Mission in Indonesia. He has devoted his life to these challenges. I know he will do an excellent job representing U.S. interests in Burma.

I urge our colleagues to support the nomination.

Mr. President, I yield back the time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Marciel nomination?

Mr. MENENDEZ. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 90, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 19 Ex.]

YEAS—90

Alexander	Ernst	Merkley
Ayotte	Feinstein	Moran
Baldwin	Fischer	Murkowski
Barrasso	Flake	Murphy
Bennet	Franken	Murray
Blumenthal	Gardner	Nelson
Blunt	Gillibrand	Paul
Booker	Grassley	Perdue
Boozman	Hatch	Peters
Boxer	Heinrich	Portman
Brown	Heitkamp	Reed
Burr	Heller	Reid
Cantwell	Hirono	Roberts
Capito	Hoeven	Rounds
Cardin	Inhofe	Schatz
Carper	Isakson	Schumer
Casey	Johnson	Scott
Cassidy	Kaine	Sessions
Coats	King	Shelby
Cochran	Kirk	Stabenow
Collins	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Coons	Lankford	Tester
Corker	Leahy	Thune
Cornyn	Lee	Tillis
Cotton	Manchin	Udall
Crapo	Markey	Warner
Daines	McCain	Warren
Donnelly	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Durbin	McConnell	Wicker
Enzi	Menendez	Wyden

NOT VOTING—10

Cruz	Rubio	Toomey
Graham	Sanders	Vitter
Mikulski	Sasse	
Risch	Shaheen	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from South Dakota.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. MCCAIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 2519 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to simply say to Chairman GRASSLEY and the Judiciary Committee: Thank you for being willing this week to have a markup and to legislate and report out a bill with regard to the prescription drug and heroin epidemic we now face around our country. The legislation is called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA. It focuses on several areas. One is prevention and education to try to keep people from making the wrong decision and going down the road to addiction, but another is to encourage States and provide incentives to local governments and nonprofits to use evidence-based treatment and recovery that has been proven to work to try to deal with this epidemic.

Today we have unfortunately higher levels of death from drug overdoses than we do any other accidental cause of death—more than car accidents, for instance. In my own home State of Ohio, this has been true for the last couple of years. We lost over 2,400 Ohioans last year to drug overdoses. Part of

the legislation also addresses this issue directly by providing our law enforcement and other first responders—firefighters, EMS—with Narcan, also known as naloxone, which is a miracle drug to bring people back if they overdose.

Finally, the legislation helps to get prescription drugs out of the hands of the wrong people. There has been overprescribing over the years, and so our legislation encourages getting these drugs off the bathroom shelves so they can't be used and having a drug-monitoring program to tell if someone has been prescribing these drugs. It would be national in scope, so if someone can't get prescription drugs in one location, they don't go across the State line to get them somewhere else. Sadly, these narcotic painkillers have caused a lot of the concern out there because sometimes they are given appropriately—maybe for pain—but they are overprescribed, and then someone uses them to the point that they become addicted and later turn to heroin because heroin is so much less expensive.

This is an issue that affects the whole country. In my own State, it looks as if the per capita use in the rural areas is higher than it is anywhere else, including the inner city or our suburban areas. But no ZIP Code is immune from this; we are all affected by it. In Ohio, over the last week, there have been two incidents where people have overdosed while behind the wheel. In one just a couple of days ago, someone overdosed on heroin while his kids were in the backseat, and he had a bad crash. Luckily, the children were not injured badly. This continues to happen again and again. And of course much crime is being committed to pay for the habit.

This is an effort at the Federal Government level to work with State and local governments and with nonprofits to address this growing problem, the epidemic of prescription drugs and heroin abuse.

I encourage the Judiciary Committee to move swiftly with this legislation. There is a markup scheduled on Thursday so we can move this legislation to the floor of the Senate, get it to the House, and get it to the President for his signature.

There seems to be not only bipartisan but nonpartisan support for this legislation. In other words, this is not a political issue but something that affects us as fathers, mothers, brothers, and sons. I hope the Senate will take on this issue.

I was in Ohio yesterday meeting with some women who are recovering addicts, and they told me their stories. Many of them started on prescription drugs sometimes because of an accident. They talked to me about how the grip of addiction is so great that it requires real courage and real resilience

to be able to come through it. We want those women and others to be able to live out their God-given abilities and not to be afflicted by this addiction, which is really a disease. This legislation we have before us is a step in the right direction.

I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it and to move it to the President so we can begin to help local communities, neighborhoods, and our States be able to address this growing problem.

I yield back my time, Mr. President.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG ADDICTION

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, first, I say to my colleague from Ohio—Senator PORTMAN, who is a dear friend—that we all have it; you are right, it is nonpartisan. This has no home. This has affected every American family one way or another. There is not a person I know in my State or in the good State of Ohio that doesn't have a family member—immediate family, extended family—or close friend who hasn't been affected by legal prescription drug abuse. We are looking at a whole cultural change that needs to go on, and I am on the floor to share letters with you.

Senator PORTMAN, I am sure you are getting the same letters. I would encourage all our colleagues to read just one letter a week from a family whose lives have been changed. They have lost a husband, they have lost their childhood, or they have lost a dear family member. It has destroyed their family life as they knew it. They can't get a job—a first-time felony offense, and they are out of the workforce now.

If you talk to law enforcement, there is not a law enforcement agency in America today that will not tell you that 80 percent of their crimes are drug related. Theft, arson, robbery—whatever it may be, it is around drug abuse.

So I come to the floor to continue to share the story of millions of Americans—most importantly, of some of my very dear West Virginia family members—who have had this.

I applaud the good Senator from Ohio. All of us are working. This will go through a normal process, I hope. It will be an open amendment process, and we are all going to make a piece of legislation and maybe for the first time start changing the culture in America, starting right here in Washington, DC, with the Food and Drug Administration. I will talk about that too.

West Virginia has been hit the hardest per capita. Just this past year, 600 West Virginians have died—in a State with less than 2 million people. The American people are drowning under the weight of prescription opioid abuse. Nationally, more than 51 people die every day—in my State, Oklahoma, Ohio, all across this great Nation.

The FDA must get serious about the dangers—we have been speaking about this—of prescription drugs, and this will not be accomplished without a significant change in the culture. It starts with them.

Although the FDA announced that the agency will be taking steps in the right direction to address these problems, it is not enough and more needs to be done. Let me explain why. The FDA's No. 1 priority must be public health and well-being—nothing else. Yet time and again the FDA has stood in the way of efforts to address the opioid abuse epidemic and improve public health.

The FDA plays a critical role in the epidemic as the agency overseeing the approval. Let me make sure we understand. This starts with a prescription. A legally licensed company makes medicine for pain reduction, if you will, pain suppressant, an opiate, and then they bring that to the FDA, and the FDA goes through a process of evaluating it to see if it should go on the market. They go through an evaluation—or their committee, basically an oversight committee—and then they say this is a product that should be on the market or should not. Many times the FDA has gone against the advice of their own advisory committee.

These are things we have to protect the American public from. Why?

So last week they decided to slightly improve the agency's response to the opioid epidemic. I am pleased at this small step, but let me tell you about this small step. They said that now they are going to be serious about the dangers of prescription drugs, and they said they are going to finally start listening—mind you, listening—to the advice of their advisory committee. Oh, that is wonderful; they are going to listen to them now. That means they haven't really been listening to them up until now, but they are going to start now.

What they don't tell you is they are not going to be required to take the recommendation of their experts. A perfect example is Zohydro. It took us 3 years to get all opiates—Vicodin and Lortab, which are the most prescribed pain relievers and pain pills in the country—3 years to get the FDA to change that from a schedule III to a schedule II, even after I went personally, when I was first in the Senate 5 years ago, to the advisory committee and they voted overwhelmingly that, yes, this should be a schedule II. Within the bureaucracy, the FDA took 3 years. The day they did that and made that piece of legislation or that rule saying that now it will be schedule II, we saw the immediate effect. It took 1.1 billion—billion with a “b”—pills off the market. Twenty-two percent of the amount of opioids on the market were reduced immediately within the first year. Within a week of their finally

agreeing to go from a schedule III to a schedule II, which controlled the prescriptions, they came out and approved Zohydro against the wishes of their advisory committee, 11 to 2. Now you tell me why that product came to market.

So I have legislation that says: Listen, when you are not going to take their advice and you don't recommend or you don't basically agree with your advisory committee, you have to come to the people's representatives—that is us—and tell us why you think this addictive drug needs to be on the market.

I believe we have to do things and take important steps. What we have basically turned a blind eye to is unbelievable.

Let me explain what I think goes on and what goes on. This is of such an epidemic proportion that we are afraid to talk about it. If you have a child in your family who is addicted, if your mother or father or maybe you or your wife is addicted, you are afraid to talk about it. It is kind of a shame, so we kind of try to take care of it. Guess what. We can't even find treatment centers to help people. And then you can't afford it if you can find it—most people in America—and most of the times you can't.

So there are two things that have to be done. First, and I am as guilty as anybody here—the last 20 years I thought: Boy, if you are going to use these drugs and abuse them, that is a crime. I am going to put you in jail. You are going to pay the fine for that, a penalty.

Well, guess what. It hasn't worked. They go in addicted and come out addicted. All we did by convicting them and putting them in jail is give them a felony. Now they can't get a job. Now they are out of the workforce. Next, they come out more addicted than when they went in.

As Americans, we must say: Listen, this is an illness, and an illness must be treated. You can't just throw them in the jail and say out of sight, out of mind; it will take care of itself. So once we change that—and we have enough courage here politically to do that—then we will start moving in a cultural change that will basically be able to take on this epidemic.

We are fighting on that. I continue to go into all of this, but I have always come here and I have said: Listen, all of you in the State of West Virginia, please get on my Web site, manchin.senate.gov. It is very simple. And all of us have our Senate Web sites. Share with me your life-altering letter. Tell me what happened.

We have been getting them by the hundreds. They are coming from all over my State, and they are in every State. I am sure Oklahomans will send the Presiding Officer theirs too.

I am going to read two stories. This brings to light everything we are talking about and why we must be successful in fighting this horrific epidemic.

This is Kylie's story:

In 1994 my dad broke his shoulder.

We all have accidents in our families.

He had to have surgery. He was on prescription narcotics from 1994–1996—

Now you tell me why he was allowed to be on them and why the doctor kept prescribing them for 2 years. That is the biggest problem—

he became addicted in those 2 years. After the doctor would no longer prescribe—

Finally, maybe the doctor came to his senses—

him pain medication, he'd illegally purchase them off of the street. His life literally revolved around his pain medication. His pain medication money came before our bills.

There were a few times we could not have Christmas or Easter because he used all of our money to purchase these drugs. I have 2 sisters. Eventually, he started buying more potent drugs when he couldn't find anyone to buy prescription pain pills off of. Heroin, Cocaine, you name it, he'd buy it. My mother eventually filed for a divorce and that made him so much worse. He started using more and more.

He used more because of depression on top of that addiction.

On February 23, 2007, I stayed home from school. I was a junior in High school in Clarksburg. I woke up at 10am, went to check on my dad who had been having drug withdrawals. I found him dead. He'd found drugs and overdosed while I was asleep, leaving me there to find him. It's something I carry with me everyday. I don't have many memories of my father interacting with us kids as a father should. I only have the bad memories of him going above and beyond for drugs. Even back then, if the prescription drug problem wouldn't have been so bad, I feel like he'd still be here today.

I remember exactly how he was laying when I found him. I remember everything. It's my first thought in the mornings and my last thought at night. It changed my life, taught me a lot of life lessons but it also left me with a lot of heartache.

And unanswered questions—as I told you, the rescheduling took 2 years. Basically, you could get Vicodin and Lortab that were schedule III at this time, and all you had to do was keep calling in. You never had to see the doctor after the first visit. They can give them to you 90 days at a time or even longer. They were like M&M's. So when we went from schedule III to schedule II, that knocked it down. It took at least a billion that we know of off the market, and we are hoping maybe even more. So that is what happened.

This is Helen's story:

My husband and I were married for over 21 years. We had two daughters together and I expected to grow old with him and enjoy our grandchildren. He worked in a factory for over 18 years. Part of his job was moving 55 gallon drums of different types of fluids. He worked full time. Sometimes 6 days a week.

He sprained his back and was prescribed pain medicine. The doctor he was going to gave him the maximum amount—

At that time it would have been more than 90 days probably, and he didn't have to go back because it felt so good—

allowed by law for about six years.

As time went on, he needed a higher dose for it to be effective. Taking more caused him to run out before the next refill. He started going through withdrawals. Instead of going to the emergency room to get help, he took his life. Now I have no husband, my children have no father and my grandchildren do not have a grandpap.

The stigma surrounding all of this is what kept him from getting the help he needed to get off those pills.

We have said it is a silent killer. They were afraid to talk about it. They couldn't go to anybody, didn't know where to turn, and didn't have any types of treatment centers that would bring him off of that.

The Friday before he ended his life, I spoke with a doctor and told him he needed to get off those pills and get dried out. He didn't want to be admitted and they let him go.

They knew he was desperately hooked.

Why do pharmaceutical companies market drugs that cause normal people to give up on their families and life? Why do doctors allow their patients to take something so long and build up such a tolerance for it? I will never find the answers to these questions and it is too late for him now.

It sickens me to read of others going through this and there just doesn't seem to be an end to it.

This is why I am standing here. I face it every day. I go home. There is not a person who doesn't come up to me knowing that basically their lives have been changed and knowing now that they can speak to somebody. I am making it a point to give them the comfort of speaking to me. I protect their identity. I try to get them help.

There has to be a way. As my good friend from Ohio and the Presiding Officer, my good friend from Oklahoma—this is not partisan. This should not be bogged down because of who gets credit, who doesn't get credit, or whose fault it is. We are all to blame, and we all can share in changing the culture of drugs in America—legal drugs.

Most drug addicts today—people who are addicted—will tell you if they are on heroin or illicit, harder drugs, they started with legal drugs that were in their prescription cabinet, in the medicine cabinet that their mom had or that they had. This is what has to change. This is why—Dr. Robert Califf is being recommended by the President; he is a good man with a stellar resume, a stellar performance, very honorable. But the culture that he comes from is basically from a research institution and a research university that has been funded by the pharmaceutical industry. That is just the way they say it is done. So they are funding the clinical research, and then we are expecting Mr. Califf to come into this industry, into the FDA, and make the wholesale changes.

I need—and I think we all need—for America to find somebody who has gone through a life-changing event and who has all of the experience and all of

the education to be able to go into that agency and say: Listen, we are not going to give you a prescription just as a frontline in the first line of defense because I know the chances of it changing your life are greater than my helping you and giving you relief.

Until we have that and until that permeates clear down through, it will not change. Tell me how the CDC—the Centers for Disease Control within the agency of DHHS—is able to start responsibly recommending guideline changes for how we are going to prescribe and how doctors should be trained before they prescribe these life-altering drugs. Then, within the FDA they are fighting against it, and they are within the same agency of the HHS. So it is deep-rooted, and it has to be culturally changed from the top. It doesn't change from the bottom within.

So if this good man would withdraw his name and let us move on, I would be tickled to death, because he is a good person and he can be very helpful in his knowledge. But I don't think he can drive the change that needs to be done for us to save the families and children and moms and dads across America.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business, and will the Presiding Officer advise me when 20 minutes has expired.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be so notified.

INNOVATION PROJECT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, today I would like to report some good news about the work of the Senate that should be of interest to every single American family; that is, that we are moving ahead in the Senate on a package of 50 bipartisan proposals that will help move medical devices, medical cures, and medical drugs through the long, expensive, regulatory process and into medicine cabinets and doctors' offices, where they can help patients. We call this our Innovation Project. It is a companion to work that has been done in the House of Representatives already that they call their 21st Century Cures Act. It is also work that President Obama has talked about in important ways. The reason that the House has already done its work, that the President has talked about this in his State of the Union Address, and that

we in our HELP Committee in the Senate have been working for a year to develop 50 bipartisan proposals that we hope to bring to the floor of the Senate is because we have never had a more exciting time in biomedical research in America than today. We are talking about actually curing some cancers, not just treating cancers. We are talking about using 3-D printing to actually help replace knees.

I was in a medical device office in Memphis a few weeks ago, and that company told me that in one-third of the cases where it sells knee replacement equipment, it also sells a tool to the doctor made with 3-D printing so that if he or she—the doctor—is replacing the knee of the Senator from Oklahoma, the doctor uses this tool that is just made especially for the knee of the Senator from Oklahoma and virtually eliminates the possibility of a mistake by the doctor in that surgery. The company told me it not only uses 3-D printing in one-third of the cases but that it could easily do it in all of the cases and expects it will soon.

At our hearing about 3 weeks ago, I asked Janet Woodcock, the head of the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research at the Food and Drug Administration, if there had ever been a case of a 3-D of printing of a drug, and she said, yes, there had been one. They have used 3-D printing to manufacture a medicine for epilepsy.

That is not all. Last year when the President announced his Precision Medicine Initiative, he introduced a young man whose cystic fibrosis had been cured by a new medicine, which he takes every day. While that only benefits some cystic fibrosis patients, the drugs that are used to cure that number of patients are the same kind of drugs they believe eventually will cure every patient with cystic fibrosis.

On that day, the President announced what he calls his Precision Medicine Initiative and that he wanted to assemble 1 million human genomes so that if my doctor is prescribing for me a medicine by knowing what my genome is and what that medicine has done in other genomes, he can make a very specific sort of prescription, one that is more likely to help me and less likely ever to hurt me.

I attended the President's ceremony. I told him afterward that we would do our best to incorporate his Precision Medicine Initiative into our work in the Senate on our Biomedical Innovation Project.

The House was making good progress on its 21st Century Cures project. So I told the President: Mr. President, I can't imagine why we can't get a result in this Congress.

Since that time, the President has announced a cancer task force that Vice President BIDEN is leading to work to speed up treatments and cures for cancer. The House has passed its

21st Century Cures Act. In our committee in the Senate during the past year we have held 10 bipartisan hearings, including 6 on how to improve the electronic medical records systems that hospitals and doctors are using. We have had five bipartisan staff working groups that have met or held briefings more than 100 times in the last year, and the result of their work has been 50 bipartisan legislative proposals. As I said, every single one of those has support from Democrats as well as Republicans on the committee.

Today in our committee we debated and approved the first 7 of these bills, which included 12 of the 50 bipartisan proposals I just mentioned. We had an open process. Any Senator who wished to could have offered an amendment. The bills have had so much work on them that there weren't any amendments, but they were important pieces of work.

Our committee probably is the most diverse in the Senate. I know that is saying a lot, but if you look up and down the Democratic and Republican aisle, we span the whole spectrum. Last year we worked together, despite our differences of opinion, and produced a bill to fix No Child Left Behind. A lot of people thought we couldn't do that. I expect the same sort of bipartisan effort led by Senator MURRAY, the senior Democrat on her side, and me as chairman, to work well for us again.

We have a second markup of legislation scheduled for March 9 and a third for April 6. My expectation is that after we meet these 3 times and consider 50 legislative proposals, when we are finished it will all add up to bipartisan companion legislation to the House's 21st Century Cures legislation, and our legislation will include important elements of the President's Precision Medicine Initiative in his Cancer Moonshot.

The 21st Century Cures Act, the House bill, includes \$9.3 billion in so-called mandatory funding over 5 years, mostly for the National Institutes of Health. Several of President Obama's other proposals in his new budget involve mandatory funding, and several Members of our committee have talked to me about mandatory funding for some of the work we need to do.

Here is my view about mandatory funding: I don't want to get the cart before the horse. When I was Governor of Tennessee and we needed a new road system, people would say to me: Are you going to raise the gas tax? I said we are not going to talk about the gas tax. There are lots of different ways to pay for the road. You can borrow the money. You can use discretionary money. You can raise the fuel tax. You can build a toll road. We are not going to talk about any of that. First, we are going to decide on what we want to do. What we decided to do was to have

three big road programs to attract the auto industry suppliers to Tennessee, and it worked.

The decision we made after we decided what we wanted to do was in that case to raise the fuel tax three times because we didn't want any road debt. We have among the best roads in the country and zero road debt, and we have the auto industry. That worked out pretty well for us 30 years ago. I would like to apply the same sort of thinking here.

I don't want to talk about how we pay for something before I decide what the something is. Here is the something I am thinking about. I am thinking about something called the NIH—National Institutes of Health—Innovation Projects Fund; five areas, in addition to the things we normally fund and do that require extraordinary support, one-time support for ideas that have a start and a finish. In other words, they are not built into the budget for a long period of time.

The National Institutes of Health Director would have the authority to direct allocations of this fund to specific areas of importance. The five areas of importance I have in mind are helping the President launch his Precision Medicine Initiative and an American Young Investigators Corps.

We have heard from Dr. Collins, the head of NIH, and many others how important it is to have young investigators have enough money to give them the money to do their research. The BRAIN Initiative, all of us are staggered by the prospect of the personal anguish that Alzheimer's and other brain diseases will cause individuals and their families, and we are excited about the prospect of relieving that anguish. We know how much this is going to cost us—in the tens and tens of billions of dollars. If we can find a way to develop new understandings of neurological disorders, which help discourage Alzheimer's disease or prevent it or deal with it, it saves money as well as saving anguish. A Big Biothink Award—Dr. Collins had suggested this in some of his testimony. During this exciting time, let's let each of the 24 Institutes that fund grant awards at the National Institutes of Health issue a challenge and let them identify the most promising big ideas in the country in their areas and fund it; for example, cancer, mental health. Let's see what comes out of this remarkable country of ours when we challenge them in that way. Then the Cancer Moonshot—now that the President and the Vice President are involved in this way, we want to make sure we do all we can to take advantage of curing some cancers as well as treating some cancers. There may be some aspects of that effort that have a start and a finish that could be part of what I call NIH Innovation Projects Fund.

I go into some detail about my Innovation Projects Fund proposal because

we may be able to fund these needs in the regular appropriations process, but I am willing to consider using mandatory funding for these five areas because, No. 1, they have a start and a finish. They help jump-start. They are limited. In that sense, they are not subject to being appropriated forever, as appropriations often are. No. 2, I believe we should reduce other mandatory funding in order to use this mandatory funding. We should be about setting priorities in the Senate. I cannot think of a more important priority than biomedical research.

I mentioned we have 50 legislative proposals for which we have bipartisan support, but we do not have bipartisan agreement in the Senate committee on how to deal with any of these items that are paid for by mandatory funding, and neither do we have enough money within the jurisdiction of our committee to deal with it. So we will deal with both the Innovation Projects Fund and the mandatory funding—if that is what it turns out to be to pay for it—once the bill comes to the floor.

We have to decide first what programs we want and then how to pay for them. We should do that on the floor. We know we will have to have 60 votes to do it in that way that includes mandatory funding. We had some experience with that.

Last year we had some very difficult issues with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. I had one of them that had to do with vouchers. That drives some people on the other side of the aisle up the wall. If I insisted on putting the scholarships for kids proposal that I had on the bill in the committee, the bill may never have gotten to the floor. Senator FRANKEN, on the other hand, had an important piece of legislation to him on discrimination, but if he had gotten that on the bill in the committee, it would never have gotten to the floor. We agreed, since we needed 60 votes to get a result—and a result is what we want and the American people expect us to get—that we would withhold our controversial amendments until the floor and see if we could develop bipartisan support on the floor to have at least 60 votes and get a result.

We followed, in our Education bill, the rule that the late Senator Kennedy and Senator ENZI followed when they were the ranking members of this committee, and that was let's find the 80 percent we agree on and work on that first, and let's take the things we disagree on and do those later, but most important, just as Senator Kennedy did with Senator ENZI, just as the full Senate did last year on fixing No Child Left Behind, we kept in our mind getting a result.

I said on the floor many times last year that if all you want to do is make a speech or assert your point of view, you can stay home. You can get your

own radio program. You don't have to travel as much. There is no need for you to come to the U.S. Senate. You can have your say here, but if you really want to do your job here, you can work with other people and see if we can get a result, especially when we are talking about issues that affect every American family in such an important way.

I am determined to get a result. I am delighted I have the opportunity on this committee to work with the Senator from Washington, Mrs. PATTY MURRAY. She is a strong Democrat. She is the leader of the Democratic caucus, but because of her leadership and her interest in getting a result, we were able to succeed last year. I believe, working with her and the other Members of our committee, we will be able to succeed this year.

The House of Representatives has done its work. It has passed the 21st Century Cures legislation. The President has made his proposals for precision medicine and for a cancer moonshot. He talked to all of us during his State of the Union Address in the last two sessions. We have worked for a year in our committee to produce 50 bipartisan legislative proposals that should go through the committee and be ready in early April to come to the floor.

The majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, has said to me, and he has said to all of us, that even though this is a Presidential year and we have less time here, he is still looking for important ideas that benefit a large number of Americans that have bipartisan support and that the President will sign into law. I can't think of a single piece of legislation that the Senate could consider this year that fits that definition better than our companion legislation to the House of Representatives' 21st-Century Cures legislation.

I wish to say a word about the legislation we passed today. As I mentioned, these were all bipartisan pieces of legislation. The first one was introduced by Senator BENNET, Senator WARREN, Senator BURR, and Senator HATCH. It had to do with rare diseases such as cystic fibrosis.

This is what Senator SUSAN COLLINS of Maine said about that piece of legislation during the debate in our committee:

If you ask the parents of sons or daughters—primarily sons—with muscular dystrophy who suffer from Duchenne's, a very rare kind of muscular dystrophy, whether the bill we just approved is important, believe me they will tell you that it is.

We approved it unanimously, and it is ready for the Senate to consider.

Senator BURR, a Republican, and Senator FRANKEN, a Democrat, offered the FDA Device Accountability Act of 2015. This legislation would help move innovative medical devices ahead—such as artificial knees, insulin pumps

for people with diabetes, stents for people who have suffered a heart attack—and new surgical tools that can get bogged down in the FDA. In other words, we want to keep the safe and effective gold standard, but we want to get these devices through the system as rapidly as we can, at the lowest cost we can, so people can afford and use them.

Senator BALDWIN and Senator COLLINS—Democrat and Republican—offered a bill called the Next Generation Researchers Act. We know that biomedical research is our best weapon against diseases, illness, and death, and we can't afford to lose young scientists to other countries, so this bill helped to attract young scientists by promoting opportunities at the National Institutes of Health.

This is what Senator COLLINS had to say about that:

If you asked Dr. Francis Collins—the head of NIH—whether the bill that Senator BALDWIN and I have sponsored is important to attracting and keeping young researchers, believe me he would say yes.

Senator KIRK, a Republican, Senator BENNET, a Democrat, along with Senator HATCH, Senator MURKOWSKI, Senator ISAKSON, and Senator COLLINS, introduced another piece of legislation, S. 800. This bill will help millions of Americans with disabilities, illnesses, and chronic conditions that require them to go to medical rehabilitation. Senator KIRK, a stroke victim, spoke movingly about the importance of that bill.

This morning, Senator COLLINS said:

If you ask stroke victims whether the rehabilitation bill that we passed is important, they would say yes.

There were four other bills we enacted. The one by Senator ISAKSON—we didn't enact it—we approved it by committee. Senator ISAKSON and Senator MURPHY had legislation on advancing research for neurological diseases.

This is what Senator COLLINS said about that one:

If you asked families that are struggling with neurological diseases such as Parkinson's, MS, or Alzheimer's, whether the bill that is on the agenda today is important, they would say yes.

Senator MURRAY offered the Preventing Superbugs and Protecting Patients Act, which is based on incidents that happened in her home State of Washington.

Finally, Senator MURRAY and I offered legislation to improve electronic medical records. Our committee did not set out to deal with electronic medical records, but the more we got into our discussion—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used 20 minutes of his time.

Mr. ALEXANDER. We have used 20 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes, sir. The Senator asked to be notified when he reached 20 minutes, and he has

reached 20 minutes. The Senator still has the floor.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I thank the Presiding Officer very much. I will complete my remarks. I see the Senator from Florida is here.

Before I yield the floor, I wish to make a brief statement about the legislation Senator MURRAY and I introduced. The electronic medical record system in this country is in a ditch. Doctors and hospitals that use it have come to dread it.

The administration recognizes that there are problems. They haven't taken all of my advice about what to do about it, but I do give them credit. I thank Secretary Burwell, Dr. Karen DeSalvo, the National Coordinator for Health Information and Technology, and the head of CMS, Andy Slavitt, for working with our committee, Senator MURRAY and me, to try to find ways to make the electronic medical record system something that genuinely helps patients and that doctors look forward to instead of dreading. We have to do this because almost every advance we need to make in biomedical innovation depends upon this. Certainly the President's Precision Medicine Initiative absolutely depends upon our getting electronic medical records right. Perhaps the most important piece of legislation we approved today, among those seven pieces of legislation, was doing what we could do in legislation to get the electronic medical record system out of the ditch and onto a better track so that doctors use it rather than dread it. We are counting on the administration to continue to work with us to finish that job.

I believe this is good news for the American people. It means we are on a path, step by step, to do our part of the job.

There was some debate in our committee about whether the bills we were passing were important.

I ask unanimous consent that following my remarks, Senator COLLINS' comments, which remind us why each of the seven pieces of legislation is important, be printed in the RECORD.

There was some talk about the fact that we disagreed about the level of mandatory funding or whether to do it at all. We disagreed about that. We don't have bipartisan consensus on it, but we do have bipartisan consensus on 50 legislative proposals that we need to move ahead, and we will move ahead with them. Twelve of the 50 were done today, and the rest will be done in early March and early April.

My hope is that by early April, the Senate will be able to join the House of Representatives and President Obama and say: Here is our contribution to the most important step we can take to make the quality of health better for virtually every American family by passing our companion legislation to 21st-century cures.

Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD, following my remarks, the summary of each of the seven bills our committee approved today.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SENATOR COLLINS REMARKS AT INNOVATION MARK-UP

Before I turn to the bill that I am honored to cosponsor with Senator Baldwin, which addresses a real problem of keeping our young researchers at NIH, I do want to respond to some of the earlier comments that have been made about the approach we are taking today.

First—I want to commend the Chairman and the Ranking Member for scheduling these important bills for markup by this committee.

If you ask the parents of sons and daughters—primarily sons—with muscular dystrophy who suffer from Duchenne's, a very rare kind of muscular dystrophy, whether the bill that we just approved is important, believe me they will tell you that it is.

If you ask stroke victims whether the rehabilitation bill that we passed is important, they would say yes. If you asked families that are struggling with neurological diseases such as Parkinson's, MS, or Alzheimer's, whether the bill that is on the agenda today is important, they would say yes.

If you asked Dr. Francis Collins—the head of NIH—whether the bill that Senator Baldwin and I have sponsored is important to attracting and keeping young researchers, believe me he would say yes.

And the fact is that this congress has come together and approved a much needed \$2 billion dollar funding increase for NIH—that is the largest increase for NIH's budget since 2003 we also approved, and I know this well because I was Chairman of it as part of the bipartisan Alzheimer's task force—nearly a 60% increase in Alzheimer's funding bringing us to \$936 million. Is it enough? Given that we spend billions caring for people with Alzheimer's—no.

The National Advisory Council on Alzheimer's says we need to spend \$2 billion per year. But to imply that a 60% increase in funding for Alzheimer's research is nothing; is just not accurate. There is widespread bipartisan support for biomedical research because there simply is no investment that promises greater returns for Americans than that investment.

It not only leads to discoveries and the developments of effective new treatments for families who are coping with these diseases but it also can have a dramatic impact on the budgets of families, states and the federal government. I am pleased with the progress we are making, I support the approach that the chairman has taken and I believe that the bills that we are considering at this markup and at the upcoming March 9 markup are important bills that will make a real difference to American families.

INNOVATION BILLS APPROVED TODAY BY THE SENATE HEALTH COMMITTEE

SENS. BENNET (D-COLO.), WARREN (D-MASS.), BURR (R-N.C.), AND HATCH (R-UTAH)—THE ADVANCING TARGETED THERAPIES FOR RARE DISEASES ACT OF 2015 (S. 2030)

Many rare diseases, like Cystic Fibrosis, have multiple genetic mutations, making it

difficult for researchers to find enough patients with the same mutation for a clinical trial. This bill will help expand the successful treatment of people suffering from rare diseases like this.

SENS. BURR (R-N.C.) AND FRANKEN (D-MINN.)—THE FDA DEVICE ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015 (S. 1622)

These innovative medical devices, items like artificial knees, insulin pumps for people with diabetes, or stents for people who have suffered a heart attack, or new surgical tools to minimize scarring and reduce post-surgery complications, can get bogged down at the FDA. This bill reduces unnecessary regulations while maintaining the gold standard of safety and efficacy to keep us safe.

SENS. BALDWIN (D-WISC.) AND COLLINS (R-MAINE)—THE NEXT GENERATION RESEARCHERS ACT (S. 1014)

Biomedical research is our best weapon against disease, illness and death and we can't afford to lose young scientists to other countries or professions because they're frustrated by the lack of opportunity or funding—so this bill helps attract talented young scientists by promoting opportunities at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

SENS. KIRK (R-ILL.), BENNET (D-COLO.), HATCH (R-UTAH), MURKOWSKI (R-ALASKA), ISAKSON (R-GA.), AND COLLINS (R-MAINE)—THE ENHANCING THE STATURE AND VISIBILITY OF MEDICAL REHABILITATION RESEARCH AT NIH ACT (S. 800)

This bill will help millions of Americans with disabilities, illnesses and chronic conditions that require them to go to medical rehabilitation. For example, this is important to people who have suffered from strokes, 800,000 happen every year in the U.S. according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This bill ensures that the NIH is focusing on research into helping these people, and others who suffer from debilitating illnesses each year.

SENS. ISAKSON (R-GA.) AND MURPHY (D-CONN.)—THE ADVANCING RESEARCH FOR NEUROLOGICAL DISEASES ACT OF 2015 (S. 849)

This bill will help people with neurological diseases like Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis, and Alzheimer's by helping to advance our understanding of these diseases and helping researchers access data on these diseases in order to discover new therapies and cures.

SEN. MURRAY (D-WASH.)—THE PREVENTING SUPERBUGS AND PROTECTING PATIENTS ACT (S. 2503)

If you would ask patients and families or anyone who has undergone a procedure in a hospital or outpatient facility that involve reusable medical devices—and if you asked the people of the states of Washington and Illinois—whether they thought this legislation was important, they would say yes.

There was a tragic outbreak of antibiotic-resistant infections linked to contaminated scope devices in Sen. Murray's home state of Washington, where the devices were not being properly disinfected between operations, and this bill helps FDA in its work to ensure that reusable devices like these are safe for patients.

SENS. ALEXANDER (R-TENN.) AND MURRAY (D-WASH.)—THE IMPROVING HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACT (S. 2511)

If you asked doctors, hospitals, or patients who want access to complete and useful patient records to both deliver care and understand more about their own health—and I think that's most Americans—whether they

think this bill is important, they would say yes.

This bill takes several steps to get health records flowing between doctors, hospitals, and patients to help realize the promise of health information technology by turning these systems from something that doctors and hospitals dread into something that actually helps patients.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE PRESIDENT'S SPACE PROGRAM BUDGET

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak about the President's proposal with regard to our space budget, the civilian space program, and NASA. Of course we have many other space programs, primarily national security, but now there is a commercial space program. We are seeing the burgeoning commercial space industry in the NASA budget. We are amazed by the rockets which can take the first stage—instead of throwing it away when it lands in the Atlantic Ocean after a launch from Cape Canaveral—under powered flight, even without parachutes, can come back and land on a specific spot, just as SpaceX did in its first stage in a launch about 2 months ago. We are seeing commercial space.

The fact that these things we carry around in our pockets that we loosely refer to as phones that know exactly where we are at any time is as a result of a constellation of satellites up there called GPS that triangulate and calculate exactly where we are. It is absolutely amazing to me that my latest gadgetry acquisition—a Fitbit—can so sensitively understand what my heart rate is at any moment, can measure distance, and gives me all kinds of information about the functioning of the human body.

Well, this didn't just accidentally appear. Where in the world did a lot of this come from? It came from the space program. I wish to talk about that, but first I want to underscore something. Other than its pioneering, for example, of increased investments in aeronautics, which is the first "A" in "NASA"—the National Aeronautics and Space Administration—there are other parts of the President's proposal that have been left behind in the visionary appropriations bill we passed back in the middle of December which has sent us on a course that we are going to Mars. We are preparing to go to Mars, and that is a long way. In order to sustain human life and go all the way there—land, survive, reignite off the surface of Mars—and, by the way, I commend the Matt Damon movie "The Martian." The author of

the book which the movie came from actually consulted with a number of folks, including one of my crewmates, on the propulsion, how to get to Mars a lot quicker. That propulsion uses magnets and plasma as its fuel and thrust to get us to Mars, and instead of the conventional 8 to 10 months, we could get there in as little as 39 days. But those are to-be-developed technologies.

Let me mention a couple of things we are developing. Folks often argue about the NASA budget, which back in the lunar days the Apollo Program was as much as 4 percent of the entire Federal budget. Now it is about one-half of 1 percent. In the process of divvying up the dollars out here, we pull and tug because people will ask: Why do we need to go to Mars? Why do we need to go to an asteroid in preparation to go to Mars? Why do we need a space program when we have so many needs here on Earth? That is a legitimate question. What is the legitimate answer? Do you appreciate the fact that we have MRIs and CT scans? MRIs—magnetic resonance imaging—and CT scans—computer-aided tomography—technologies that are used routinely today to help us so much in a diagnosis of what is wrong or what is right in our own human bodies and is part of this medical miracle that we know as modern medicine—they came straight out of the space program.

In the 1960s, NASA had to find a safe landing spot for the Apollo lunar lander amid all of that Moon surface and all of that dust. So what happened was the engineers at JPL out in California developed a digital scanning process using high-frequency sound waves, magnets, and computers. In addition to making six successful Moon landings, this technology was tweaked, adapted, improved, and it led to CT scans and MRIs.

How about robots in the use of modern medicine? How about robots in the use of the manufacturing process? Well, my colleagues will remember the one thing on the space shuttle that had the name of another country; it was the Canadarm. It was the robotic arm that was birthed in the cargo bay of the space shuttle. It was used to deploy, maneuver, and capture payloads. It has now been the forerunner of the neuroArm, a surgical device that has successfully performed dozens of tumor removals by robotic surgery.

Now, any of the males around here over the age of 50 ought to be concerned about prostate cancer. They have a robot named DA Vinci that is built in California, even though it is named after Leonardo da Vinci, and this robotic device, with a small incision—six times—can go in and, with some of this precise photography that was developed for these cameras, robotically remove, in this case, the prostate cancer by removing the prostate without damaging the nerves and

without cutting the human body open, which takes so much more time to heal, instead of just sticking six holes in. That came directly out of the space program. It is being used to develop an image-guided autonomous robot for use in the early detection of breast cancer.

Let me give my colleagues another idea. When we get on a modern airliner today and we look out the window and we look at that swept-back wing, what do we see out there on the tip of the wing? The wing doesn't just stop as it normally does; it curves up. This is called a winglet. The winglets have these upturned features. They save billions of dollars in fuel costs.

Now, with NASA technology at the Langley Research Center and now the tests conducted at the Dryden Flight Center—now named, after the first astronaut on the moon, the Armstrong Flight Center—this winglet technology was released to Boeing, and it has saved the airline industry more than 2 billion gallons of jet fuel, and it has saved more than \$4 billion in jet fuel costs and a reduction of almost 21.5 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions, just by the design of the wing. That technology came directly out of NASA.

Here is another example. All of this is coming back to this: Why go to space? Well, we go to space because our nature is that we are explorers and adventurers. We go there because we haven't been there. We go there to explore. Our nature is one of pioneers. The frontier is now not westward, as it was in the beginning of this country, but upward. So that is certainly a reason to have the space program, but let me tell my colleagues more of how it applies to our daily lives.

How about fortified baby formula? Early 1980s research on regenerative ecosystems led to a method of algae-based food supplements that provide the long-chain polysaturated fatty acids that support brain and eye development and function. So this led to a spinoff product called Formulaid, which was patented in 1996. It can now be found in over 90 percent of infant formula sold in the United States as well as those sold around the world.

I will give another example: image sensors—image sensors to enhance cell phone cameras. In the 1990s, a NASA team had been improving digital image sensors in order to miniaturize cameras on spacecraft while maintaining the scientific image quality. So this was spun off into commerce, and the company that commercialized the technology has shipped over 1 billion sensors for use in applications such as—now, does this sound familiar—digital cameras, camera phones, web cameras, automotive cameras. They are even developing something where you will swallow a pill; only it is not a pill. It is an ingestible camera for imaging the patient's gastrointestinal tract.

Let me tell my colleagues about another one. I had a visit from Tallahassee Community College today. They showed me what they could do with a 3-D printer. I ask unanimous consent to show this in front of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. AYOTTE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON. We are doing this on the space station right now. We are putting together tools so that if we don't have a tool in space or if we were on the long journey to Mars and we did not have a tool that we needed to repair something, we could send the messages up to the spacecraft and 3-D print the tools that we need. So long-term space missions like the one to Mars are going to benefit from this on-board manufacturing capability.

Spare parts—what happens if we get up there and we don't have enough? Well, we can print it. Engineers are even experimenting with creating a completely 3-D printed high-performance rocket engine. Can my colleagues believe that? So that would advance manufacturing technologies that could benefit a number of us right here on the face of the Earth.

So the excitement of this—even though some would look at the President's request for NASA and see that it is \$600 million over what he requested last year, but it is actually almost flat-line to what we actually appropriated. Don't be discouraged by that because in this sense the excitement is gathering as we are about to launch humans—Americans on American rockets. That is going to occur next year, as we send crews to and from the International Space Station. As a result, we therefore do not have to rely on the proven Russian Soyuz that gets our crews to and from today. Now we will have the capability of not only transporting cargo to and from but our American astronauts.

Even though the President's request falls short in some areas, I think the President's request has been overcome with what we have done here in the Congress, with a substantial increase in this current fiscal year over and above last year and with the excitement of human space flight again within our grasp on American rockets, as well as this excitement of defining, creating, and manufacturing new technologies for space flight that will benefit us here on the face of the Earth.

If it sounds like I am a cheerleader, indeed I am a cheerleader. When I see the miracles of modern medicine, when I see the increased capabilities of exploring the heavens and now almost back to the original light emitted from the big bang, and when we start to uncover the new discoveries that expand our horizons, indeed, I am a cheerleader. For that, I am grateful.

I commend the Senate to keep this space program going at a fast pace as

we increasingly get back into the total business, both manned and unmanned, of space exploration.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

(The remarks of Mr. COTTON pertaining to the introduction of S. 2123 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, over the course of the last year and a half, I have come down to the floor fairly regularly to tell some simple stories about victims of gun violence all across the country. The idea is that if the overwhelming data of those killed through gun violence—31,000 a year; 2,600 a month; 86 a day—if these mind-numbing numbers don't move this body to action, then maybe the voices of the victims, the stories of the victims of gun violence may eventually thaw the ice of this Congress and cause us to act in some way, shape or form to reduce this scourge of gun violence—whether it be tightening the Nation's gun laws, which are the loosest in the world, whether it be to pass mental health legislation that will address those who are wrestling with demons manifested eventually in gun homicides or whether it be giving more resources to gun enforcement to simply enforce the laws on the books. We have done nothing. We have done nothing since the murders of Sandy Hook, CT, to address this epidemic of gun violence. It is about time that we do.

On New Year's Eve, I spent most of that day tweeting out the 370-plus instances of mass shootings over the course of 2015. Think about that for a second. There were more mass shootings in 2015 than there were days in the year. Just to be honest, I will tell you what I believe to be a mass shooting. I am talking about a shooting in which there were more than four people shot. If there were more than four people shot in your neighborhood, that would probably be something you would be talking about, that would probably rise to the level of being something serious enough to change behavior or to call for a change in policy. There were 370 instances in 2015 where more than 4 people were shot at one given time—more than one per day. So I tweeted out to every single one of them on the day before the year turned to 2016 just to give people a sense all in one place of how big this problem of mass shootings is. Of course, that is only the tip of the iceberg.

If on the average day there are 4, 5, 6 or 7 people being shot in episodes of mass violence, there are another 80 that are killed through other episodes

of gun violence. Many of those are suicides, but many of those are just the day-to-day gun violence incidents that happen across this country, most of which happen in our cities.

So I want to share a few of those stories here with you today.

A lot of attention gets paid to those who die in episodes of mass violence. This is a binder that is basically full of the stories of the individuals who were killed in mass shootings over the past couple of years. This doesn't even begin to account for the individuals who are killed every day on the streets of Chicago and New Haven and Los Angeles and New Orleans, people such as Jonathan Aranda, who was 19 years old when he was killed just before Christmas of 2015. He was killed in the morning hours of December 8. He had just graduated from Eli Whitney Technical High School, which is located in Hamden, CT.

His cousin said:

He was getting out of work, stopped at a friend's house to talk about cars and this senseless act of violence happened. He was quick to lend a hand when you needed help without asking for anything in return. He worked a third shift job to come home, rest and help at home.

His younger sister, Genisis, said that her brother was "a humble and loving person, he was a person who never picked fights. He was quick to lend a hand when you needed help without asking for anything in return."

Jonathan's cousin Edgar said he was a "very, very likeable kid. . . . He didn't have a problem with anybody."

The community has been devastated by this loss. He was liked by everybody. He cared deeply for his family. Jonathan was 19 years old when he was killed after stopping at a friend's house—after getting off of work—to talk about cars.

Treesa Wiley was killed just a few days ago in Rockford, IL. She was fatally shot while she was visiting a friend in her home. An unknown person forced entry into the home and shot Wiley and her friend. She lived paycheck to paycheck, but she was still immensely generous with her friends and family, showering them with love, attention, and gifts.

Her uncle said of Treesa:

She didn't have children herself, but every child that she met was her child. That's why she enjoyed that work so much. She enjoyed giving back to the community because it had given her so much."

Her friends described her as "bubbly," "angelic," and "lovable." Her favorite color was purple. Her favorite team was the Green Bay Packers. She loved red lipstick. She had overcome a learning disability to get a 2-year degree. She was killed while she was studying to get her bachelor's degree.

A friend said:

She was the most loving and honest friend you could hope for. . . . I can't think of one person who didn't like Treesa.

Raven White was 16 years old when about a month ago she was killed in Birmingham, AL. She was fatally shot in her car in the early morning hours of January 8. It looks as if it was a robbery. She was a junior in high school, and she was 6 months pregnant.

Her mother said Raven was very outgoing.

I know she loved school. Even after getting pregnant, she made good grades and didn't miss a day of school.

She was planning to go back to the volleyball team that she played on after giving birth. She had just gotten off work at Walmart hours before the shooting. "All I want is to hold my grandbaby once, but I can't," said Raven's mother, Tangee Dixon.

Miguel Arguelles was 22 when he was killed in Bridgeport, CT. He was shot in the neck and the shoulder during a shooting at the Charles F. Greene Homes housing complex. Police say he wasn't a target, but he was hit by stray bullets. He was 22 years old. At the hospital, Miguel's mother pounded his chest, urging him to come back to life, saying: "Mommy's here. C'mon, baby, c'mon, baby. Mommy's here."

A veteran officer said the nurses were crying, the priest was crying, and even the police were crying while watching this.

It was one of the saddest things I've seen. You feel so helpless.

His mother said he lit up the room when he walked in.

You saw his teeth every time he smiled—he brought a smile to your face. . . . I just want to hug him. I just want to tell him I love him.

"He was my protector," said his sister. "He loved to make people laugh."

Jabari Saunders was 30 when he was killed in December of 2015 in Wilmington. He was shot on the very same street on which he used to walk his children to school every morning. He was a devoted father of four. His life revolved around his kids. The neighbors said the only time they would see him is with his kids. He was always smiling. It is sad. You can't even let your kids walk to school—walk to after-school stuff now.

When a neighbor's son was shot, irony of all ironies, the victim's mother recalls that Jabari visited her home every single day the week after the shooting.

He just came to pay respect. . . . I know the love he showed me when my son was killed.

Another neighbor said:

I can't say anything bad about him. He was just a nice guy.

That is 5 stories out of 2,600 a month. There is no antidote to this epidemic. There is no one law that we can pass that makes it all better, that makes this all go away. But that can't be the excuse. The excuse cannot be that because there is no panacea legislatively,

we shouldn't even try. The excuse can't be that because it is impossible to erase gun violence, we shouldn't take some commonsense steps to make it all better. The excuse also can't be that laws don't make a difference, because they do.

I will leave you with this because my point really is to tell the stories of these victims, not to expound on the data, but the data is pretty irrefutable. Here are all the States where background checks are required in order to buy a gun through a private gun sale. That is a purchase at a gun store or a purchase at a gun show. Here are all the States with no additional background check laws besides the Federal floor. The data is pretty irrefutable. On average, there is 1 additional death per 100,000 in the States with no additional background check laws than there are in the States that have additional background check laws. It is a 30-some-odd percent increase for the States that don't take extra steps to make sure criminals don't get guns.

So when people say that we shouldn't pass a background check law that 90 percent of the American public support because it won't make a difference, the data doesn't tell us that. The data actually tells us that if we take steps to make sure criminals don't get guns, fewer criminals will get guns and fewer people will be killed, because I will assure you that one of these five people whom I just listed was killed with a gun that was purchased legally. It might have been purchased in a gun show, put in the back of a van, and sold on the streets of Wilmington, Bridgeport, or New Haven.

Laws won't save all 31,000 of these lives, but they certainly will save a handful. And for the individuals, the nurses, the clergy, and the police officers who witnessed Miguel Arguelles's mother pressing on his heart trying to get him to come back to life—simply one less death would make a debate on the Senate floor worth it.

I hope that we take some steps this year, perhaps, to pass a mental health reform bill. I hope we get to where 9 out of 10 of our constituents are and pass legislation that keeps guns out of the hands of criminals. If we don't do it because of the statistics, maybe we will do it because we will start to hear the real voices of these victims.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for up to 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, investigative author Jane Mayer

has written an important piece of journalism—her new book, “Dark Money”—about the secret but massive influence-buying rightwing billionaires led by the infamous Koch brothers. Jane Mayer’s book catalogs the rise and the expansion into a vast array of front groups of this operation and the role in it of two of America’s more shameless villains: Charles and David Koch. Some have called this beast they have created the Kochtopus because it has so many tentacles.

The Presiding Officer may be wondering why I am talking about secret influence-buying in my climate speech. The reason is that the story of dark money and the story of climate change denial are the same story—two sides of the same coin, as it were.

Two strategies of that Koch-led, influence-buying operation particularly bear on climate change. Indeed, they are probably the major reason we don’t have a comprehensive climate bill in Congress and instead have this present little mouse of a bipartisan energy efficiency bill. “Oh, there goes WHITEHOUSE,” I am sure some listeners are saying, “off his rocker, trying to connect the Koch brothers to this climate change.” Well, it is not just something I am saying; it is what the Koch brothers’ own operatives say when they are crowing about their influence-buying success.

I will get to that later, but first the two strategies. One strategy is to mimic real science with phony science. Real science wants to find the truth. This phony science has no interest whatsoever in the truth. It wants to look like science, sure, but it is perfectly content to be wrong. There is an apparatus, a whole array of front groups through which this phony science is perpetrated. This machinery of phony science has been wrong over and over. It was wrong about tobacco, wrong about lead paint, wrong about ozone, wrong about mercury, and now it is wrong about climate change. They are the same organizations, the same strategies, the same funding sources, even in some cases the same people—always wrong. You would think that if they cared a hoot about right from wrong, they would change their methodology after such an unblemished record of being wrong every time. But they don’t care. Truth is not their object; truth is actually their adversary.

This isn’t science; it is public relations dressed up in a lab coat. It masquerades as science. But, as a visiting university president from Rhode Island recently said to me, “it uses the language of science, but its purpose is to undermine actual science.” To pull off this masquerade, you have to trick people. You have to do what Ms. Mayer describes a Koch brothers associate saying as this whole scheme was being developed. It is perhaps the most telling quote in her book. Here is what the

man said. “It would be necessary,” he said, to “use ambiguous and misleading names, obscure the true agenda, and conceal the means of control.”

The next quote in her book is this: “This is the method that Charles Koch would soon practice in his charitable giving, and later in his political actions.”

Did he ever. Misleading names. How about the John Locke Foundation, the Ethan Allen Institute. The pages listening will know these names from history: the James Madison Institute for Public Policy; the Thomas Jefferson Institute; the Franklin Center for Government & Public Integrity, with a little profile of old Ben Franklin on its letterhead; the George C. Marshall Institute, named after the hero of World War II and the European recovery that followed. None of them have a thing to do with their illustrious namesakes; they just took the famous names to put on a veneer of legitimacy.

The George C. Marshall Institute—it sounds impressive. You might fool the occasional editorial page editor. Who does that? Maybe someone trying to hide something, “obscure the true agenda.”

Take the Mercatus Center, which the Washington Post described as a “staunchly anti-regulatory center funded largely by Koch Industries Inc.” In “Dark Money,” journalist Jane Mayer wrote that Clayton Coppin, a professor at George Mason who reviewed Bill Koch’s political activities, concluded Mercatus to be “a lobbying group disguised as a disinterested academic program.” And conceal the means of control—a large portion of the funding behind this special interest apparatus is simply not traceable. Why? Because money is funneled through organizations that exist to conceal donor identity. That is their purpose. The biggest identity-laundering shops are Donors Trust and Donors Capital Fund. Indeed, they are by far the biggest sources of funding in the web of climate-change front groups that have been stood up.

Dr. Robert Brulle of Drexel University, who studies the network of fossil fuel-backed climate denial, reports the Donors Trust and Donors Capital Fund operations are the “central component” and “predominant funder” of the denier apparatus; and at the same time he continues it is the “black box that conceals the identity of contributors.”

Jane Mayer reports in her book: “Between 1999 and 2015, Donors Trust redistributed some \$750 million from the pooled contributions to myriad conservative causes under its own name.” There were \$750 million laundered into anonymity with no telltale fossil fuel fingerprints.

This is no small operation. There are over 100 groups involved, all beholden to the same master: the fossil fuel industry. Setting up or supporting over

100 front groups may seem unduly complicated, but remember, an internal combustion engine has more than 500 parts, and we are totally comfortable with that mechanism.

According to the International Monetary Fund, this apparatus is defending a \$700 billion—billion with a “b”—effective subsidy, just in the United States of America, every year. How much work would you do—how much complication would you be willing to create—to defend \$700 billion per year? To use Jane Mayer’s telling phrase, this is a new device. Put it all together and what do you have? “The think tank as disguised political weapon.” Who is behind this elaborate scheme? I will quote from “Dark Money.”

[T]he director of research at Greenpeace . . . spent months trying to trace the funds flowing into a web of nonprofit organizations and talking heads, all denying the reality of global warming as if working from the same script. What he discovered was that from 2005 to 2008, a single source, the Koch [brother]s, poured almost \$25 million into dozens of different organizations fighting climate reform. The sum was staggering. His research showed that Charles and David [Koch] had outspent what was then the world’s largest public oil company, ExxonMobil, by a factor of three. In a 2010 report, Greenpeace crowned Koch Industries, a company few had ever heard of at the time, the “kingpin of climate science denial.”

By the way, I should say that ExxonMobil has been actively involved in this as well, as a lot of very good recent reporting has showed. But they were outshone and outdone by the Koch brothers.

I will quote again from “Dark Money.”

The first peer-reviewed academic study on the topic added further detail. Robert Brulle, a Drexel University professor of sociology and environmental science, discovered that between 2003 and 2010 over half a billion dollars was spent on what he described as a massive “campaign to manipulate and mislead the public about the threat posed by climate change.” The study examined the tax records of more than a hundred nonprofit organizations engaged in challenging the prevailing science on global warming. What it found was, in essence, a corporate lobbying campaign disguised as a tax-exempt, philanthropic endeavor. Some 140 conservative foundations funded the campaign, Brulle found. During the seven-year period he studied, these foundations distributed \$558 million in the form of 5,299 grants to ninety-one different nonprofit organizations.

It is quite a “Kochtopus.”

The money went to think tanks, advocacy groups, trade associations, other foundations, and academic and legal programs. Cumulatively, this private network waged a permanent campaign to undermine Americans’ faith in climate science to defeat any effort to regulate carbon emissions.

The bottom line is if your faith in climate science is undermined, you have been had by a well-funded, complex, sophisticated scheme of disinformation.

Back to “Dark Money” again.

The cast of conservative organizations identified by Brulle was familiar to anyone

who had followed the funding of the conservative movement. Among those he pinpointed as the largest bankrollers of climate change denial were foundations affiliated with the Koch and Scaife families, both of whose fortunes derived partly from oil. Also heavily involved were the Bradley Foundation and several others associated with hugely wealthy families participating in the Koch donor summits, such as the foundations run by the DeVos Family, Art Pope, the retail magnate from North Carolina, and John Templeton, Jr., a doctor and heir to the fortune of his father John Templeton, Sr., an American mutual fund pioneer who eventually renounced his U.S. citizenship in favor of living in the Bahamas, reportedly saving \$100 million on taxes. Brulle found that as the money was dispersed, three-quarters of the funds from these and other sources financing what he called the "climate change counter-movement" were untraceable.

Brulle's conclusion, as reported by Ms. Mayer, is this:

Powerful funders are supporting the campaign to deny scientific findings about global warming and raise public doubts about the roots and remedies of this massive global threat. At the very least, American voters deserve to know who is behind these efforts.

But it wasn't enough for the Koch brothers to have the paid-for, phony science masquerade. You also had to drive politicians to accept the phony science. You had to make politicians willing to participate in the masquerade and put on the phony science costume. To do that, they turned to the mother's milk of politics: money.

The money was set loose by five Republican justices on the Supreme Court when they decided *Citizens United*. *Citizens United* is described in "Dark Money" as "the polluters[]" triumph." Mayer quotes a defeated candidate the Kochs went after:

There was a huge change after *Citizens United*, when anyone could spend any amount of money, without revealing who they were, by hiding behind amorphous-named organizations, the floodgates opened. The Supreme Court made a huge mistake. There is no accountability. Zero.

The money got loaded into political organizations like Americans for Prosperity, the leading Koch brothers-backed political front group. They waved that money around like a club, touting how they were going to spend \$750 million just in this 2016 election. They told Republicans they would be so "severely disadvantaged" if they crossed them on climate change that they would be in political peril. Do the math. How much more obvious could you get?

Here is how Jane Mayer quotes their own official crowing about their victory. Remember what I said earlier? This is not me making wild allegations. This is them taking credit for what they did.

Tim Phillips gladly took credit for the dramatic spike in expressed skepticism. "If you look at where the situation was three years ago and where it is today, there's been a dramatic turnaround," he told the *National Journal*. . . .

We've made great headway. What it means for candidates on the Republican side is "if you . . . buy into green energy or you play footsie on this issue, you do so at your political peril. And that's our influence. Groups like Americans for Prosperity have done it."

That is what they say about what they are doing. And don't think we don't see that effect in this Chamber. The Koch brothers have had their day, doing their dirty work in the dark. I will give them that. It has been quite a racket, but the truth will come out. It always does.

Jane Mayer is not alone. Academic researchers like Robert Brulle at Drexel, Riley Dunlap at Oklahoma State University, Justin Farrell at Yale University, and Michael Mann at Penn State University are exposing the precise dimensions and functions of this denial machine. Investigative writers like Naomi Oreskes, Erik Conway, Naomi Klein, and Steve Coll are on the hunt. "Merchants of Doubt" is already a movie. Jeff Nesbit's forthcoming book, "Poison Tea," about how these big money boys suckered the tea party down this road, should be illuminating. On the official side, two attorneys general appear to be looking into Exxon's role in this climate denial scheme. In short, what could well be the biggest scam to hit politics since Teapot Dome and Watergate is being unraveled and exposed.

The dirty fossil fuel money has deliberately polluted our American politics, just as their carbon emissions have polluted the atmosphere and oceans. Justice cannot come too soon for these people.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The clerk will call the roll. The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENERGY POLICY MODERNIZATION BILL

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I was in the cloakroom listening to my colleague from Rhode Island talk about the issue he is clearly very passionate about relating to our climate and recognizing that in that space, as we think about energy and our energy needs as a nation, our economic security, our energy security, our national security, how that is all tangled and intertwined, I can't help but think we have colleagues from very different perspectives who have stood on this floor over the course of the past couple of weeks, and it seems that one thing we have found some level of consensus on is that it is time to update our energy policies. It has been over 8 years

now since we have seen any energy policies that do anything to move us forward as a nation, that work to help us be more energy efficient, be more energy independent, move toward a cleaner energy future, embrace the technologies we have available to us. There is a recognition we need to act together to update our energy policies.

I have come to the floor this evening to speak to where we are in this process of successfully moving an energy modernization bill across the floor of the Senate. We took this up some 2 weeks ago now. I wanted to comment on some of the comments that were actually made on the floor this morning. There was a comment that was made that as Republicans we need to "get to yes" on assistance for Flint.

I have stood on the floor and have made clear there is no doubt in my mind that Flint is the site of a tragedy that should have been, could have been avoided. There is no doubt in my mind that Federal assistance could be provided to help with the city's ongoing crisis, but there is also no doubt in my mind but that this is something where we need to get to yes on a number to help Flint out. We need to get to yes, and we need to figure out what that right amount is.

It sounds easy, and those of us who are committed to not only addressing the situation, the urgent situation we see in Flint, there is a recognition that there is a broader problem at play when we think about our Nation's infrastructure and our water infrastructures. I wanted to take a few minutes this evening to speak to that and where we are in this process and why this "getting to yes" has perhaps been more problematic than most had hoped.

I remind my colleagues that what we have been debating on the floor is an energy bill. It is a bill that was written by myself as the chairman of the Energy Committee, along with Senator CANTWELL from Washington as my ranking member. It included the Presiding Officer as a member of the committee, along with dozens of other members who serve on the Energy Committee. It has been the result of more than a year of regular process, regular order, within the committee, where we worked to consider ideas from all over the board.

We undertook an effort that some would say you just don't see around here anymore. We started with an agreement, an agreement between the chairman, myself, and the ranking member, and asked: Do we want to send a message this year about what we need to do with energy and our energy policies or do we want to bring about some change? Is it time to update our energy policies after 8 years?

The two of us agreed we wanted to make that change. We recognized that in order to do that, in order to get it

through the committee with a good bipartisan vote, in order to get it to the floor, we were going to have to work together. We made that commitment, our staffs made that commitment, and we not only said we were going to do it, we did it.

We started off with a series of oversight hearings that we had in Washington, DC, and around the country, bringing people in, soliciting their ideas. After the oversight hearings, we had six legislative hearings before the committee, going through a host of different initiatives. There were 114 bills, separate bills—some from members of the committee, some from Members who were not serving on the Energy Committee but who had good ideas, and we reviewed them all, considered them as part of the bill we were building, and then we had our markup. We went into 3 days of markup before the Energy Committee. We considered over 50 different measures, 50 different measures from folks within the committee and outside the committee, Republicans and Democrats, urban and rural.

In the committee process, it was full-on. It was an open exchange. It was any good idea, any amendment that you have, if you think you have the votes, let's run it. If you think you don't and you still want to run it anyway, let's work it. We worked that committee process. We considered 59 amendments within the committee. It was a good process, and because it was good process and it was so inclusive, we got a bill that moved out of the committee 18 to 4. The four dissenting votes were interesting. We had two Republicans who dissented and two Democrats. Even the opposition was bipartisan.

I say this by laying the groundwork for what we have built because I want colleagues to appreciate the substance of the measure we have before us with the Energy Policy Modernization Act. We then came to the floor the first of the year, the first big bill to come to the floor and take up valuable floor time, and I am pleased we were able to come to the floor early. In the time that we have been to the floor, we have dispensed with 38 amendments. Most of those have gone by voice, not because it has been a take-this-or-leave-it approach. A voice vote means it comes by unanimous consent. You have to get consent to get these before the body. We worked through a host of different issues, all over the board—whether it related to advanced nuclear or whether it related to coal research or whether it related to issues as they relate to our public lands. We have been working this throughout this process.

In fact, I think it is important to recognize that even during this time period where it has been quiet on the floor, we haven't heard people talking much about where we are with the Energy bill. Our staffs on the majority

side and the minority side have been working together to clear even more amendments that have that support that we could move by voice, almost 30 additional amendments on top of what we have already done.

We are not letting the moss collect and gather as we are trying to deal with the situation that has detracted and distracted this Energy bill, and that is the nature of the Flint issue. I don't want people to think the basis of the bill which brought us here, a bill that would modernize our energy policies, a bill that would help America produce more energy, a bill that would help Americans save money, a bill that would help our Nation with our national security, our energy security, and our economic security, a bill that would help to cement our status as a global energy superpower—it is important we remember why we are here.

Others are remembering that when we left the floor on Thursday with an indeterminate path forward into how we were going to advance the Energy bill, those groups that have been interested in following this debate come to us with concern saying: Wait. Don't stop that forward movement. The Bipartisan Policy Center has sent out a letter urging us to move forward with this Energy Policy Modernization Act. ClearPath has urged us: Please, this is important to us from a clean energy perspective. Bill Gates has put out a letter on his blog post urging us: Please don't forget that as we are talking about how to resolve this situation for Flint, MI, that we don't forget the importance of the underlying bill we are debating, which is the Energy Policy Modernization Act.

The progress we have made on this bill is critically important. Again, we are working with the ranking member to keep plugging along on all of those issues we have outstanding. We believe we have a path forward for a bipartisan bill, a bill that so many Members of this body have come to the floor and said that this is good, this is important, this is something we need to do.

We are not going to forget that, but in the meantime, what we are dealing with is this plea for assistance, Federal assistance by the people of Flint, MI. As I said last week, I don't fault that request. Coming from a State like Alaska, which has considerable needs of its own when it comes to water infrastructure, in far too many of my communities it is not a situation of aging infrastructure. It is a situation of no infrastructure, no clean water, no safe drinking water.

I understand, but I am increasingly frustrated by where we are now and how the decisions that have been made to date are effectively stopping all activity on an energy bill, even as it becomes perhaps increasingly obvious or clear that the issue related to Flint, the urgency of Flint's situation—the

bigger issue we see looming when it comes to our Nation's water infrastructure, that is a problem that demands a level of scrutiny and attention that we as a Congress should give—but is the Energy Policy Modernization Act the right vehicle for what is being sought right now?

I want to make sure that not only colleagues know but people who have been following this issue know that we have been working in good faith toward a solution that will help address the situation in Flint. Many of my Republican colleagues are working with the Senators from Michigan to try to find a good-faith solution. I have been engaged in this from the very get-go. I have been working on this issue, as have many Republican members.

We found some programs out there that make sense for providing assistance. The State revolving fund is one we have looked to and have, along with our staffs, spent considerable hours debating the merits of different approaches and drafting language for them in the hope of being able to resolve scoring issues and generally trying to seek a path forward.

While others were enjoying the Super Bowl on Sunday, my staff was not. Actually, the Senator from Washington and I happened to be on the same airplane when we were coming back from the west coast so we could be here to work on this bill, and we missed the game as well. Our staffs were going back and forth with CBO to determine if the solutions that we had laid down were going to work. Were they going to meet the scoring issues? Were they going to avoid the blue slip issues? Was it going to be a viable path forward? We have been doing this since day one.

I think it is important to outline these issues to people so that when someone suggests that somehow or other we just need to "get to yes" quickly, they know that there is a range of factors that have complicated our efforts. It doesn't help that the Energy bill that has drawn widespread acclaim for having a very open process has to now try and deal with the situation in Flint, so there hasn't been an open process. In fact, there hasn't been a process. I think that is part of what is complicating this situation.

This is a big issue. There is an urgency to address Flint's situation, which is maybe more specific, but again, this is bigger than Flint. We heard from colleagues on both sides of the aisle about the issues around their respective States and around our country which we are going to have to be dealing with.

We have an amazing, complete process with the Energy bill that we have methodically and consistently—almost over the top—gone through a process, and now we have something that is kind of been airdropped in, to use an expression around here, that is not as

easy as people would suggest. It is not something where you can say: Just throw some money at it. We are not helped by attempts to federalize the process, regardless of the Federal Government's share of the responsibility in it. I believe there is a proportionate share where we have to be there to help.

We are not helped by the President's decision not to issue a disaster declaration but instead to grant a much more limited emergency declaration, and then we are not necessarily helped by the President's budget that he laid down today. He didn't request funding for Flint in this massive budget proposal. In fact, the level of funds that we have been looking at that could help Flint—the State revolving funds—have not increased. What we have actually seen is a decrease in the Clean Water Fund. That is not going to help us because we recognize that we have to address those issues as well. Also, we are not helped when they ask for far more Federal dollars than the city of Flint may be capable of spending over the next year. We have been trying to identify and discern what would help.

I had a conversation with the Governor of Michigan to try to discern it. I have talked to the Senators from Michigan, and I have talked to the House Members from Michigan. We have at least four Flint-related amendments that are pending to the Energy bill from the Michigan delegation alone, but again, in terms of the extent of the repairs that need to be made, does it include all of the pipes in Flint? Are they trying to get a corrosion control system in place? Is that it? Do we have a final estimate for what those repairs will cost and the plan of action that will be required?

I appreciate the response of the Senator from Michigan when there was a little bit of back and forth with the Senator from Texas, saying that in her bill there is a requirement to detail how the money will be spent. I truly appreciate that part of it. We are being put in a situation where we are trying to define the right amount here, and it is important that we get that right. As important as it is for us to get to yes and figure out what we can do to help Flint in a way that is fair to Flint and fair overall, we have to get it right as well.

Again, I was reading some newsclips last night. The New York Times had an article about how all around the country we are seeing other States that are setting up an alarm in terms of situations within their communities—from Pennsylvania to Ohio to California—where there is a need to not only improve the current infrastructure, but there are issues in these communities that have raised a level of concern that we should all be concerned and care about. So how we approach this issue and how we make sure that—in an ef-

fort to kind of rush money out the door to Flint alone—we don't put ourselves in a place where we commit to a course of action where the Federal Government pays for all of the costs for local water systems. We can't legislate crisis by crisis, community by community, or pretend that the Federal Government is not already \$19 trillion in debt. We have to do right by this. We want to address the urgency—I want to address the urgency—for the people in Flint, but I also want to make sure we do it right.

I think most Members recognize that our solution is going to have to be national in scope because there are other communities in other States that may also need help. Most Members know that our answers must be responsible in light of our already difficult fiscal situation, and most Members are at least willing to consider the legislation that provides assistance so long as it doesn't violate our Senate rules, the Constitution, or add to the Federal deficit. Again, that is why we are kind of sitting here today, Tuesday evening.

There are a couple of plans that have been viewed as viable because they meet that criteria. They meet the criteria in terms of not adding to the Federal deficit, not violating the rules of the Senate, and not violating our Constitution, and it is interesting that both of those measures are actually measures that come from this side of the aisle.

I note that the majority leader is on the floor, and I will defer to him at his convenience; otherwise, I will continue with my comments.

I laid down an offer last week. The offer would make \$550 million available, \$50 million would be made available through State-revolving grants. This money could help the people of Flint and other communities that have contaminated drinking water. It gives access to \$500 million in loans. It is fully paid for. It is one of the few viable offsets that we have found within the jurisdiction of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee where I am the chairman, and I think that is part of the issue that we need to be discussing here. It is so important to make sure—as we look to these pay-fors—we can make an agreement on the pay-fors, and I believe this one is viable because I believe it is one we can agree on.

Last week I asked unanimous consent to have this amendment pending for a vote, but that was rejected. The second proposal was one made by Chairman INHOFE, who is the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, which is the committee of jurisdiction, and last week he also introduced an amendment that was fully paid for. He used funds that are available from an all-but-dormant loan program at the Department of Energy which is used to subsidize the auto industry. We can go back and forth about

the merits of that fund, but the fact remains that it would have been a viable pay-for for the measure that Senator INHOFE laid down. It, too, was rejected even though it was effectively an offer to prioritize assistance for the families and the children in Flint over some of the major corporations, and we were told no. That is kind of where we are right now. If you want to know why the negotiations aren't proceeding as quickly and as smoothly as they had hoped, I think that is one of the reasons we are where we are.

The fact is, many of us are willing and trying valiantly, and in many cases desperately, to get to yes, but we can't get to yes on just anything. We cannot accept something that is not paid for. Quite honestly, we can't do something that would jeopardize and doom the underlying Energy bill, and I think we can't get to yes on something that provides more funding than could reasonably be used in the short term or ignores the problems that we are facing in other parts of the country.

We have looked at how we can separate this and how we can work it out as a stand-alone measure. I think it needs to be made a priority. I think Chairman INHOFE, who is on the EPW, has made it one, but I think it needs to be separate and apart from what we are doing on this bipartisan Energy bill which already includes priorities from over 62 Members of the Senate.

I don't think it is too much to ask that our Energy bill be allowed to move forward in the meantime. If we had been able to move forward as we had planned, we would have tucked this legislation away last Thursday, and we would have had a full week to buckle down and figure out a path forward for Flint and for the Nation. Instead, here we are on a Tuesday, we have a recess coming up at the end of the week, and we haven't had an opportunity to approve these almost 30 amendments that could go by voice. We are kind of at a stall spot.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a comment?

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I will.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I just want to assure the chairman of the Energy Committee that we are not giving up on this bill. It has too much support on a bipartisan basis for us to walk away from it, and I know all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle appreciate the ongoing efforts the Senator has made to deal with the other issue that has arisen here, regrettably right when she was on the verge of achieving an agreement here. I know the Senator from Alaska will stick with it, and I am behind this effort all the way.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I appreciate those comments, and I appreciate the support of the majority leader. I had an opportunity to speak with the minority leader earlier today,

and he reiterated the priority of this Energy bill. To my colleagues and those who have been urging us to carry on and continue, know that we are doing exactly that and that I remain committed to not only the Energy Policy Modernization Act, but I am committed to finding a path forward as we deal with the important issue that relates to Flint and also relates to the rest of the Nation when it comes to the security and safety of our water supply.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

INTERNET TAX FREEDOM FOREVER ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on an entirely different matter, I think many Americans would agree with the following statement: The Internet should remain open and free. Politicians should certainly not try to tax it.

Congress passed a temporary ban on Internet taxes back in 1998. It was an important bipartisan win for the American people, but Congress has never made that ban permanent. In fact, there have been eight different short-term extensions of the Internet tax ban. It is time we made it permanent. It is time we made it permanent.

The bipartisan Internet Tax Freedom Forever Act has 51 cosponsors. It was introduced by the top Republican on the Commerce Committee and the top Democrat on the Finance Committee. In my office we have received many, many messages from Kentuckians who support this measure.

Here is what the bipartisan Internet Tax Freedom Forever Act would do. It would ensure any existing Internet taxes are phased out permanently. It would ensure any new attempts to tax the Internet are prohibited permanently. It would ensure Americans' access to information and online communications remain open and free permanently.

The House already passed this kind of commonsense bipartisan legislation to make the ban on Internet taxes permanent. It is time we did it here in the Senate. The action I am about to take will allow us to have that chance on Thursday of this week.

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2015— CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate the conference report accompanying H.R. 644.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair lays before the Senate the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, which will be stated by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the

amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 644), to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes, having met, have agreed that the Senate recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment and the House agree to the same, signed by a majority of the conferees on the part of both Houses.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the conference report.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of December 9, 2015.)

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, an act to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, Pat Roberts, Roy Blunt, Chuck Grassley, Shelley Moore Capito, Richard Burr, Mike Crapo, Thad Cochran, John Thune, John Hoeven, Tim Scott, Lisa Murkowski, Rob Portman, Kelly Ayotte, Tom Cotton, Orrin G. Hatch.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived with respect to the cloture motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I just filed cloture on the Customs conference report. The House has passed this commonsense bipartisan bill, and it is time for the Senate to do it as well.

MORNING BUSINESS

"I WANT TO LIVE"

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, over nearly four decades of public service, I have long endeavored to protect the rights of the unborn. As I have fought to uphold pro-life values in Congress, I have been inspired by countless individuals who are equally committed to the cause.

Last month, I was particularly moved when I listened to a recording of "I Want to Live"—a song composed by singer-songwriter Russ Marsh. Marsh writes this song from the perspective of an unborn child eager to live and be loved. The lyrics underscore a truth too often overlooked in the debate over abortion—that each unborn child is a living soul.

I ask unanimous consent that this song be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

"I WANT TO LIVE"—MUSIC AND LYRICS BY
RUSS MARSH

VERSE 1

I want to live. Can't you see my life's begun?
Don't you think I feel the pain? I'm the helpless one. I want to live to feel the gentle rain fall upon my face. And to see the light of day.

I want to live to see your smiling face, have you hold me in your arms. Don't leave me here to die. Please take me home. Won't you give me a chance to have the things you have

And a life that's full of love.

CHORUS

I want to live to see the morning sun. I want to live to see my Mommy and Daddy. Let me live. Don't take my life away. I want to live to be all that I can be.

VERSE 2

I want you to live. Can't take your life away; 'cause I would feel the pain if you're not here with me. I want you to live. Forgive me, won't you please.

You will see the light of day and I'll take you home with me.

The years have passed. You've seen all that I have done. My life's a happy one. And I want to Thank You Mom.

CHORUS

You let me live to see the morning sun. You let me live to see my Mommy and Daddy. You let me live. Didn't take my life away. You let me live to be all that I can be.

CHILDREN'S CHORUS

I want to live to see the morning sun. I want to live to see my Mommy and Daddy. Let me live. Don't take my life away. I want to live to be all that I can be.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING RAY BISHOP

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of a great Wyoming citizen: Col. Raymond "Ray" Corbett Bishop, retired. Col. Bishop was an experienced leader who devoted his life to serving the country and State he loved.

Ray grew up as part of a military family originally from Douglas, WY. His formative years were spent in a number of States, including Hawaii and Utah. Though he traveled extensively with his parents, Loren and Eleanor, and his two siblings, John and Helen, Ray's roots were firmly planted on Wyoming soil. He returned to the State to attend college at the University of Wyoming. In 1970, he graduated with his bachelor of science degree in ecology and received his commission from the U.S. Air Force ROTC program. This distinct honor became the first in a long line of achievements earned while serving his country.

Ray had a successful career in the U.S. Air Force. He was driven and focused and honorably served his country for over 25 years. He had a distinct talent for flying. Throughout his service,

Ray completed two combat tours in Vietnam and logged over 4,100 hours of flight time piloting B-52 and C-7A aircraft. Ray continued his record of leadership with a number of other assignments. He was commander at a number of bases, including 325th Bomb Squadron Commander at Fairchild Air Force Base, Operations Commander at Anderson Air Force Base, and Wing Commander at Castle Air Force Base. He was also a skilled educator, providing training for T38 pilots and serving as the Strategic Air Command Chair at the Air War College in Alabama.

Ray met each new assignment with enthusiasm and fortitude. He earned many accolades during his years of service. In addition to the Air Force Commendation Medal, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and numerous other Meritorious Service Medals. These accomplishments and his Active-Duty service highlight his extraordinary patriotism.

Following his military career, Ray continued his service in the aviation industry as the director of airports for Kern County, California. He served in this position until 2006, when Wyoming welcomed his return. Settling in Jackson, he became the director of the Jackson Hole Airport. He successfully rose to the challenge of directing the only commercial airport located in a national park. In the years he served as director, Ray brought the airport to new heights of success. Under his guidance, the airport experienced over \$80,000,000 in capital improvements, including a complete renovation and expansion of the main terminal.

Safety was Ray's first priority, and the runway was improved with several safety features that many larger airports have yet to implement. During his tenure, the airport received both airline and FAA accolades and national recognition for the terminal updates. Ray loved Grand Teton National Park, and he was proud of the strong working relationship between the park and the airport's board members that made the airport renovations possible.

Ray retired in late 2014 and decided to remain in the area so that he could continue to enjoy the scenic beauty of the Jackson Hole area. According to friends, Ray was most at peace when he was in his boat on Jackson Lake. In addition, he was a seasoned triathlete and had been training to run in an international marathon.

Ray is survived by his wife, Debbie, and his children, Brian and Kristina Bishop, Abbey and Mike Donley, and Clark and Christine Bishop. He loved his grandchildren, Megan Bishop, Elise Bishop, and William Donley; his sister, Helen Thompson, and her husband, Fred.

Wyoming flies a little higher because of Ray Bishop's service. We thank Ray for his service to our Nation and Wyoming. We will miss him, but we are

confident that his legacy lives on and can be seen by all who visit the Jackson Hole Airport.●

REMEMBERING CLAYTON JAMES

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, today I wish to remember the life of a great Wyoming citizen, Clayton James. A longtime Jackson Hole resident, Clay was well-loved by all in the community. I am honored to recognize Clay's lifetime of accomplishments.

Born in St. Louis, Clay first felt the call of the West in college. He attended Arizona State University, eventually graduating with a bachelor of science degree in business. He held several jobs during the academic year, but his summers were reserved for the great beauty of Grand Teton National Park. It was here that he first began working for the Grand Teton Lodge Company. During this time, he learned to appreciate the natural beauty of the park, while also gaining firsthand experience in the hospitality industry.

This experience proved useful upon his graduation. He returned to the Grand Teton Lodge Company as a full-time employee. The company was part of the Rockefeller RockResort Company, owned by Laurance Rockefeller. Clay's career in the resort management and development sector was largely the result of his relationship with Rockefeller. Shortly after being hired, he was selected to open a new Rockefeller resort in the British Virgin Islands; thus began a nearly 20-year career of opening, operating, and managing resorts and hotels.

Clay was an outstanding representative for Wyoming's tourism industry. In working with the RockResort Company, Clay travelled extensively, opening resorts across the United States. During one such assignment in Hawaii, he met his future wife, Shay. They were married in 1966. And although they traveled frequently, often with family in tow, Clay never lost his love for the Teton Mountain Range. In 1984, they settled in Jackson Hole permanently, and he again returned to the Grand Teton Lodge Company as the general manager. His love for the resort and his staff was truly remarkable. When he retired in 2006, Clay was the well-admired president of the company.

Clay was deeply passionate about conservation. He believed that it was possible to preserve the diverse ecosystem in Grand Teton National Park while also welcoming the millions of visitors who came to enjoy its splendors each year. This guiding principle led to his involvement in the transfer of the historic JY Ranch to the National Park Service. Owned by the Rockefeller Estate, the JY Ranch was a parcel of about 33,000 acres that was originally purchased by John Rockefeller, Jr., in the early 20th century. In

2007, Laurance Rockefeller asked Clay to manage this important transition. The project was completed in 2008, and the Laurance S. Rockefeller Preserve was opened in Grand Teton National Park for the public to enjoy. Clay was especially proud of this achievement because it brought so many of his passions together.

Clay's extensive background in hotel management, as well as his experience as a concessionaire in Grand Teton National Park, was especially useful during his service on the Jackson Hole Airport's board of directors. This experience, coupled with his unique perspective, made Clay an effective liaison between the National Park Service and the Jackson Hole Airport. He was instrumental in the design and construction of the airport's terminal renovation and expansion project. With Clay's advocacy, the airport was able to complete all renovations while working with the Park Service to maintain the environmental integrity of Grand Teton National Park.

Clay's penchant for giving back to the community was incredible. He devoted his free time to serving on several local and State boards and committees, each as different as his wide range of interests. He was a proud member of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and also served in the Army National Guard. He always strove to improve the quality of life for his family, friends, and the community of Jackson, and his impact will be felt for years to come.

Clay is survived by his wife of 49 years, Shay Orlin James, and his children and their spouses, Scott and Jennifer James and McKenzie and Robert Hammond. He loved his grandchildren Emma and Cole James and Rigdon and Riley Hammond. He also is survived by his brothers and their spouses, several nieces and nephews, and many close family friends.

It is an honor to celebrate Clay James and his extraordinary legacy of community service. He was kind, personable, and a natural leader. I know that the community of Jackson shines brighter because of his special contributions.●

REMEMBERING A. DAVID HAMILL

● Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate the life of Ranson Mayor A. David Hamill, who recently passed away at the age of 71. I first met Dave following my election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2000, and I came to know him as a passionate advocate for the city of Ranson. We began working together very early in my House tenure, revitalizing Ranson through Federal Brownfields initiatives.

With his height, his booming voice, and his mischievous sense of humor, he certainly cut an impressive figure. And

while he was in many ways a larger-than-life persona, his greatest strength was his willingness to listen. He tried to genuinely understand the needs of his constituents and the people with whom he worked. Indeed, his humility was evident in an excerpt from the open letter he wrote to the city last month, sharing his worsening prognosis. He wrote, "I have tried to do what is best for the City of Ranson—sometimes my result may not have been successful as I planned, but it was not for my lack of passion or desire to do the right thing."

Born in Kitchener, Ontario, Dave met his wife, Helen, while working in Macon, GA. Although they married in Canada, Dave would always submit job applications to local employers when he and Helen would return to her hometown of Ranson, WV. They would return to Ranson for good in 1979 when Dave was hired at Abex, in nearby Winchester, VA. Dave rose to become a certified purchasing manager and negotiated purchasing contracts for the company's eight factories in its North American division. When Dave became a U.S. citizen, he almost immediately began his public service career. Beginning with the planning commission, Dave soon became a member of Ranson's city council. In 1987, he was appointed mayor and was subsequently reelected seven consecutive times, most recently in 2013.

Dave will be celebrated for his many accomplishments as mayor, including his work with the Brownfields initiative, the redevelopment surrounding the American Public University System campus, Ranson's annexations for future growth, the city's streetscape projects, Ranson's youth football field, and the Fairfax Boulevard extension project. The list could certainly go on, but to highlight only the accomplishments of the man would be to overshadow Dave's spirit and his dedication to the city he served.

In addition to his wife, Helen, Dave is survived by his three children: Cindy, Melissa, and James; and nine grandchildren. In addition to his public service, Dave was also very active in the United Methodist Church, where he was a lay speaker and lay member to the Methodist Annual Conference.

I will miss Mayor Dave Hamill, as will all who knew him. I am honored to have worked with this talented individual and am proud to have called Dave my friend for more than 15 years. Today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the memory of "Ranson's Champion."●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017—PM 41

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with accompanying reports and papers; which was referred jointly, pursuant to the order of January 30, 1975 as modified by the order of April 11, 1986; to the Committees on the Budget; and Appropriations:

THE BUDGET MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT

To the Congress of the United States:

As I look back on the past seven years, I am inspired by America's progress—and I am more determined than ever to keep our country moving forward. When I took office, our Nation was in the midst of the worst recession since the Great Depression. The economy was shedding 800,000 jobs a month. The auto industry was on the brink of collapse and our manufacturing sector was in decline. Many families were struggling to pay their bills and make ends meet. Millions more saw their savings evaporate, even as retirement neared.

But thanks to the grit and determination of the American people, we rescued our economy from the depths of the recession, revitalized our auto industry, and laid down new rules to safeguard our economy from recklessness on Wall Street. We made the largest investment in clean energy in our history, and made health care reform a reality. And today, our economy is the strongest, most durable on Earth.

Our businesses have created more than 14 million jobs over 70 months, the longest streak of job growth on record. We have cut our unemployment rate in half. Our manufacturing sector has added nearly 900,000 jobs in the last six years—and our auto industry just had its best year of sales ever. We are less reliant on foreign oil than at any point in the previous four decades. Nearly 18 million people have gained health coverage under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), cutting the uninsured rate to a record low. Our children are graduating from high school at the highest rate ever. And we managed to accomplish all of this while dramatically cutting our deficits by almost three-quarters and setting our Nation on a more sustainable fiscal path. Together, we have brought America back.

Yet while it is important to take stock of our progress, this Budget is not about looking back at the road we have traveled. It is about looking forward. It is about making sure our economy works for everybody, not just those at the top. It is about choosing investments that not only make us stronger today, but also reflect the kind of country we aspire to be—the kind of country we want to pass on to

our children and grandchildren. It is about answering the big questions that will define America and the world in the 21st Century.

My Budget makes critical investments while adhering to the bipartisan budget agreement I signed into law last fall, and it lifts sequestration in future years so that we continue to invest in our economic future and our national security. It also drives down deficits and maintains our fiscal progress through smart savings from health care, immigration, and tax reforms. And, it focuses on meeting our greatest challenges not only for the year ahead, but for decades to come.

First, by accelerating the pace of American innovation, we can create jobs and build the economy of the future while tackling our greatest challenges, including addressing climate change and finding new treatments—and cures—for devastating diseases.

The challenge of climate change will define the contours of this century more dramatically than any other. Last year was the hottest on record, surpassing the record set just a year before. Climate change is already causing damage, including longer, more severe droughts and dangerous floods, disruptions to our food and water supply, and threats to our health, our economy, and our security.

We have made great strides to foster a robust clean energy industry and move our economy away from energy sources that fuel climate change. In communities across the Nation, wind power is now cheaper than dirtier, conventional power, and solar power is saving Americans tens of millions of dollars a year on their energy bills. The solar industry employs more workers than the coal industry—in jobs that pay better than average.

Despite these advances, we can and must do more. Rather than shrinking from the challenge, America must foster the spirit of innovation to create jobs, build a climate-smart economy of the future, and protect the only planet we have. To speed our transition to an affordable, reliable, clean energy system, my Budget funds Mission Innovation, our landmark commitment to double clean energy research and development funding. It also calls for a 21st century Clean Transportation initiative that would help to put hundreds of thousands of Americans to work modernizing our infrastructure to ease congestion and make it easier for businesses to bring goods to market through new technologies such as autonomous vehicles and high-speed rail, funded through a fee paid by oil companies. It proposes to modernize our business tax system to promote innovation and job creation. It invests in strategies to make our communities more resilient to floods, wildfires, and other effects of climate change. And, it protects and modernizes our water supply

and preserves our natural landscapes. These investments, coupled with those in other cutting-edge technology sectors ranging from manufacturing to space exploration, will drive new jobs, new industries, and a new understanding of the world around us.

Just as a commitment to innovation can accelerate our efforts to protect our planet and create a sustainable economy, it can also drive critical medical breakthroughs. The Budget supports a new “moonshot” to finally cure cancer, an effort that will be led by the Vice President and will channel resources, technology, and our collective knowledge to save lives and end this deadly disease. It also supports the Precision Medicine Initiative to accelerate the development of customized treatments that take into account a patient’s genes, environment, and lifestyle, as well as the BRAIN Initiative, which will dramatically increase our understanding of how the brain works.

Second, we must work to deliver a fair shot at opportunity for all, both because this reflects American values and because, in the 21st Century global economy, our competitiveness depends on tapping the full potential of every American. Even as we have rebounded from the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes, too many families struggle to reach the middle class and stay there, and too many kids face obstacles on the path to success.

Real opportunity begins with education. My Budget supports the ambitious goal that all children should have access to high-quality preschool, including kids from low-income families who too often enter kindergarten already behind. It also supports States and cities as they implement a new education law that will place all students on a path to graduate prepared for college and successful careers. The bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act sets high standards for our schools and students, ensures that States are held accountable for the success of all students, including those in the lowest performing schools, spurs innovation in education, helps schools recruit and support great teachers, and encourages States to reduce unnecessary testing. And because jobs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics are projected to grow faster than other jobs in the years ahead, the Budget makes critical investments in math and science. Through a new Computer Science for All initiative, the Budget will expand the teaching and learning of these important concepts across America’s schools, better preparing our Nation’s students for today’s innovation economy.

Higher education is the clearest path to the middle class. By 2020, two-thirds of jobs will require some education beyond high school. For our students and for our economy, we must make a quality college education affordable for

every American. To support that goal, the Budget strengthens Pell Grants to help families pay for college by increasing the scholarships available to students who take enough courses to stay on track for on-time graduation, allowing students making progress toward their degrees to get support for summer classes, and providing scholarships to help incarcerated Americans turn their lives around, get jobs, and support their families. It also offers two years of free community college to every responsible student and strengthens the American Opportunity Tax Credit.

In addition to preparing students for careers, we must help workers gain the skills they need to fill jobs in growing industries. My Budget builds on the progress we have made to improve the Nation’s job training programs through implementation of the bipartisan Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. It funds innovative strategies to train more workers and young people for 21st Century jobs. And it doubles down on apprenticeships—a proven pathway to the middle class—and supports a robust set of protections for the health, safety, wages, working conditions, and retirement security of working Americans.

Even as we invest in better skills and education for our workforce, we must respond to dramatic changes in our economy and our workforce: more automation; increased global competition; corporations less rooted in their communities; frequent job changes throughout a worker’s career; and a growing gap between the wealthiest and everyone else. These trends squeeze workers, even when they have jobs, even when the economy is growing. They make it harder to start a career, a family, a business, or retirement.

To address these changes and give Americans more economic security, we need to update several key benefit structures to make sure that workers can balance work and family, save for retirement, and get back on their feet if they lose a job. The Budget supports these priorities by funding high-quality child care, encouraging State paid leave policies, extending employer-based retirement plans to part-time workers, putting us on a path to more portable benefit models, and providing a new tax credit for two-earner families. It also modernizes the unemployment insurance system, so that more unemployed workers receive the unemployment benefits they need and an opportunity to retrain for their next job. And, if that new job does not pay as much initially, it offers a system of wage insurance to encourage workers to rejoin the workforce and help them pay their bills. The Budget includes tax cuts for middle-class and working families that will make paychecks go further in meeting the costs of child care,

education, and saving for retirement. It builds upon the demonstrated success of the Earned Income Tax Credit by expanding it for workers without children and non-custodial parents.

Providing opportunity to all Americans means tackling poverty. Too many Americans live in communities with under-performing schools and few jobs. We know from groundbreaking new research that growing up in these communities can put lifelong limits on a child’s opportunities. Over the past few years, we have made progress in supporting families that were falling behind. For example, working family tax credits keep more than 9 million people—including 5 million children—out of poverty each year, and the ACA provides access to quality, affordable health care to millions. Nevertheless, we need to do more to ensure that a child’s zip code does not determine his or her destiny. Improving the opportunity and economic security of poor children and families is both a moral and an economic imperative.

The Budget funds innovative strategies to support this goal, including helping families move to safer neighborhoods with better schools and more jobs, revitalizing distressed communities to create more neighborhoods of opportunity, preventing families experiencing a financial crisis from becoming homeless, and ensuring that children have enough to eat when school is out for the summer. It also supports efforts to break the cycle of poverty and incarceration through criminal justice reform.

Finally, as we work to build a brighter future at home, we must also strengthen our national security and global leadership. The United States of America is the most powerful nation on Earth, blessed with the finest fighting force in the history of the world.

Still, this is a dangerous time. We face many threats, including the threat of terrorist attacks and violent extremism in many forms. My highest priority is keeping the American people safe and going after terrorist networks. That is why my Budget increases support for our comprehensive strategy to destroy the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), in partnership with more than 60 other countries, by eliminating its leadership, cutting off its financing, disrupting its plots, stopping the flow of terrorist fighters, and stamping out its vicious ideology. If the Congress is serious about winning this war and wants to send a message to the troops and the world, it should specifically authorize the use of military force against ISIL.

The Budget also sustains and builds the strength of our unmatched military forces, making the investments and reforms that will maintain our Nation’s superiority and ensure our advantage over any potential adversary. It also makes investments to ensure

that our men and women in uniform, who sacrifice so much to defend our Nation and keep us safe, get the support they have earned to succeed and thrive when they return home.

Cybersecurity is one of our most important national security challenges. As our economy becomes increasingly digital, more sensitive information is vulnerable to malicious cyber activity. This challenge requires bold, aggressive action. My Budget significantly increases our investment in cybersecurity through a Cybersecurity National Action Plan. This Plan includes retiring outdated Federal information technology (IT) systems that were designed in a different age and increasingly are vulnerable to attack, reforming the way that the Federal Government manages and responds to cyber threats, and recruiting the best cyber talent. It will also help strengthen cybersecurity in the private sector and the digital ecosystem as a whole, enhancing cyber education and making sure companies and consumers have the tools they need to protect themselves. But many of our challenges in cybersecurity require bold, long-term commitments to change the way we operate in an increasingly digital world. That is why, to complement these steps, I am also creating a commission of experts to make recommendations for enhancing cybersecurity awareness and protections inside and outside of Government, protecting privacy and empowering Americans to take better control of their digital security.

To ensure security at home, we must also demonstrate leadership around the world. Strong leadership means not only a wise application of military power, but also rallying other nations behind causes that are right. It means viewing our diplomacy and development efforts around the world as an essential instrument of our national security strategy, and mobilizing the private sector and other donors alongside our foreign assistance to help achieve our global development and climate priorities. The Budget supports this vision with funding for effective global health programs to fight HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other illnesses; assistance for displaced persons and refugees, including from Syria; and expanding educational opportunities for girls, among many other critical development initiatives.

As we make these investments to meet our greatest challenges, we are also working to build a 21st Century Government that delivers for the American people. The Budget supports efforts to make the Federal Government more efficient and effective, through smarter IT delivery and procurement, improving digital services, eliminating outdated regulations, and recruiting and retaining the best talent. It also invests in a new approach to working in local communities, one

that disrupts an outdated, top-down approach, and makes our efforts more responsive to the ideas and concerns of local citizens. The Budget supports the use of data and evidence to drive policymaking, so the Federal Government can do more of what works and stop doing what does not.

The Budget is a roadmap to a future that embodies America's values and aspirations: a future of opportunity and security for all of our families; a rising standard of living; and a sustainable, peaceful planet for our kids. This future is within our reach. But just as it took the collective efforts of the American people to rise from the recession and rebuild an even stronger economy, so will it take all of us working together to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

It will not be easy. But I have never been more optimistic about America's future than I am today. Over the past seven years, I have seen the strength, resilience, and commitment of the American people. I know that when we are united in the face of challenges, our Nation emerges stronger and better than before. I know that when we work together, there are no limits to what we can achieve. Together, we will move forward to innovate, to expand opportunity and security, and to make our Nation safer and stronger than ever before.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 9, 2016.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE—TREATIES

The following executive reports of committee were submitted:

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations:

Treaty Doc. 112-1: Protocol Amending Tax Convention with Swiss Confederation (Ex. Rept. 114-1);

Treaty Doc. 113-4: The Protocol Amending the Tax Convention with Spain (Ex. Rept. 114-2);

Treaty Doc. 113-5: Convention on Taxes with the Republic of Poland (Ex. Rept. 114-3);

Treaty Doc. 112-8: Tax Convention with Chile (Ex. Rept. 114-4);

Treaty Doc. 114-1: Protocol Amending the Tax Convention with Japan (Ex. Rept. 114-5);

Treaty Doc. 111-8: Protocol Amending Tax Convention with Luxembourg (Ex. Rept. 114-6);

Treaty Doc. 111-7: Tax Convention with Hungary (Ex. Rept. 114-7); and

Treaty Doc. 112-5: Protocol Amending the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters (Ex. Rept. 114-8).

The text of the committee-recommended resolutions of advice and consent to ratification are as follows:

[Treaty Doc. 112-1 Protocol Amending Tax Convention with Swiss Confederation]

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and the Swiss Confederation for the

Avoidance of Double Taxation With Respect to Taxes on Income, signed at Washington October 2, 1996, signed September 23, 2009, at Washington, with a related agreement effected by an exchange of notes September 23, 2009, as corrected by an exchange of notes effected November 16, 2010 (the "Protocol") (Treaty Doc. 112-1), subject to the declaration of section 2.

Section 2. Declaration

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration:

The Protocol is self-executing.

Section 3. Conditions

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following conditions:

(1) Not later than 2 years after the Protocol enters into force and prior to the first arbitration conducted pursuant to the binding arbitration mechanism provided for in the Protocol, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transmit to the Committees on Finance and Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Joint Committee on Taxation the text of the rules of procedure applicable to arbitration panels, including conflict of interest rules to be applied to members of the arbitration panel.

(2)(A) Not later than 60 days after a determination has been reached by an arbitration panel in the tenth arbitration proceeding conducted pursuant to the Protocol or any of the treaties described in subparagraph (B), the Secretary of the Treasury shall prepare and submit to the Joint Committee on Taxation and the Committee on Finance of the Senate, subject to laws relating to taxpayer confidentiality, a detailed report regarding the operation and application of the arbitration mechanism contained in the Protocol and such treaties. The report shall include the following information:

(i) For the Protocol and each such treaty, the aggregate number of cases pending on the respective dates of entry into force of the Protocol and each treaty, including the following information:

(I) The number of such cases by treaty article or articles at issue.

(II) The number of such cases that have been resolved by the competent authorities through a mutual agreement as of the date of the report.

(III) The number of such cases for which arbitration proceedings have commenced as of the date of the report.

(ii) A list of every case presented to the competent authorities after the entry into force of the Protocol and each such treaty, including the following information regarding each case:

(I) The commencement date of the case for purposes of determining when arbitration is available.

(II) Whether the adjustment triggering the case, if any, was made by the United States or the relevant treaty partner.

(III) Which treaty the case relates to.

(IV) The treaty article or articles at issue in the case.

(V) The date the case was resolved by the competent authorities through a mutual agreement, if so resolved.

(VI) The date on which an arbitration proceeding commenced, if an arbitration proceeding commenced.

(VII) The date on which a determination was reached by the arbitration panel, if a determination was reached, and an indication as to whether the panel found in favor of the United States or the relevant treaty partner.

(iii) With respect to each dispute submitted to arbitration and for which a determination was reached by the arbitration

panel pursuant to the Protocol or any such treaty, the following information:

(I) In the case of a dispute submitted under the Protocol, an indication as to whether the presenter of the case to the competent authority of a Contracting State submitted a Position Paper for consideration by the arbitration panel.

(II) An indication as to whether the determination of the arbitration panel was accepted by each concerned person.

(III) The amount of income, expense, or taxation at issue in the case as determined by reference to the filings that were sufficient to set the commencement date of the case for purposes of determining when arbitration is available.

(IV) The proposed resolutions (income, expense, or taxation) submitted by each competent authority to the arbitration panel.

(B) The treaties referred to in subparagraph (A) are—

(i) the 2006 Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital and to Certain Other Taxes, done at Berlin June 1, 2006 (Treaty Doc. 109-20) (the “2006 German Protocol”);

(ii) the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, and accompanying protocol, done at Brussels July 9, 1970 (the “Belgium Convention”) (Treaty Doc. 110-3);

(iii) the Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and Canada with Respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital, signed at Washington September 26, 1980 (the “2007 Canada Protocol”) (Treaty Doc. 110-15);

(iv) the Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the French Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed at Paris August 31, 1994 (the “2009 France Protocol”) (Treaty Doc. 111-4).

(3) The Secretary of the Treasury shall prepare and submit the detailed report required under paragraph (2) on March 1 of the year following the year in which the first report is submitted to the Joint Committee on Taxation and the Committee on Finance of the Senate, and on an annual basis thereafter for a period of five years. In each such report, disputes that were resolved, either by a mutual agreement between the relevant competent authorities or by a determination of an arbitration panel, and noted as such in prior reports may be omitted.

(4) The reporting requirements referred to in paragraphs (2) and (3) supersede the reporting requirements contained in paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 3 of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the 2009 France Protocol, approved by the Senate on December 3, 2009.

[Treaty Doc. 113-4 The Protocol Amending the Tax Convention with Spain]

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Spain for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion With Respect to

Taxes on Income and its Protocol, signed at Madrid on February 22, 1990, and a related Memorandum of Understanding signed on January 14, 2013, at Madrid, together with correcting notes dated July 23, 2013, and January 31, 2014 (the “Protocol”) (Treaty Doc. 113-4), subject to the declaration of section 2 and the conditions of section 3.

Section 2. Declaration

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration:

The Protocol is self-executing.

Section 3. Conditions

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following conditions:

(1) Not later than 2 years after the Protocol enters into force and prior to the first arbitration conducted pursuant to the binding arbitration mechanism provided for in the Protocol, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transmit to the Committees on Finance and Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Joint Committee on Taxation the text of the rules of procedure applicable to arbitration panels, including conflict of interest rules to be applied to members of the arbitration panel.

(2)(A) Not later than 60 days after a determination has been reached by an arbitration panel in the tenth arbitration proceeding conducted pursuant to the Protocol or any of the treaties described in subparagraph (B), the Secretary of the Treasury shall prepare and submit to the Joint Committee on Taxation and the Committee on Finance of the Senate, subject to laws relating to taxpayer confidentiality, a detailed report regarding the operation and application of the arbitration mechanism contained in the Protocol and such treaties. The report shall include the following information:

(i) For the Protocol and each such treaty, the aggregate number of cases pending on the respective dates of entry into force of the Protocol and each treaty, including the following information:

(I) The number of such cases by treaty article or articles at issue.

(II) The number of such cases that have been resolved by the competent authorities through a mutual agreement as of the date of the report.

(III) The number of such cases for which arbitration proceedings have commenced as of the date of the report.

(ii) A list of every case presented to the competent authorities after the entry into force of the Protocol and each such treaty, including the following information regarding each case:

(I) The commencement date of the case for purposes of determining when arbitration is available.

(II) Whether the adjustment triggering the case, if any, was made by the United States or the relevant treaty partner.

(III) Which treaty the case relates to.

(IV) The treaty article or articles at issue in the case.

(V) The date the case was resolved by the competent authorities through a mutual agreement, if so resolved.

(VI) The date on which an arbitration proceeding commenced, if an arbitration proceeding commenced.

(VII) The date on which a determination was reached by the arbitration panel, if a determination was reached, and an indication as to whether the panel found in favor of the United States or the relevant treaty partner.

(iii) With respect to each dispute submitted to arbitration and for which a deter-

mination was reached by the arbitration panel pursuant to the Protocol or any such treaty, the following information:

(I) In the case of a dispute submitted under the Protocol, an indication as to whether the presenter of the case to the competent authority of a Contracting State submitted a Position Paper for consideration by the arbitration panel.

(II) An indication as to whether the determination of the arbitration panel was accepted by each concerned person.

(III) The amount of income, expense, or taxation at issue in the case as determined by reference to the filings that were sufficient to set the commencement date of the case for purposes of determining when arbitration is available.

(IV) The proposed resolutions (income, expense, or taxation) submitted by each competent authority to the arbitration panel.

(B) The treaties referred to in subparagraph (A) are—

(i) the 2006 Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital and to Certain Other Taxes, done at Berlin June 1, 2006 (Treaty Doc. 109-20) (the “2006 German Protocol”);

(ii) the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, and accompanying protocol, done at Brussels July 9, 1970 (the “Belgium Convention”) (Treaty Doc. 110-3);

(iii) the Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and Canada with Respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital, signed at Washington September 26, 1980 (the “2007 Canada Protocol”) (Treaty Doc. 110-15); or

(iv) the Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the French Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed at Paris August 31, 1994 (the “2009 France Protocol”) (Treaty Doc. 111-4).

(3) The Secretary of the Treasury shall prepare and submit the detailed report required under paragraph (2) on March 1 of the year following the year in which the first report is submitted to the Joint Committee on Taxation and the Committee on Finance of the Senate, and on an annual basis thereafter for a period of five years. In each such report, disputes that were resolved, either by a mutual agreement between the relevant competent authorities or by a determination of an arbitration panel, and noted as such in prior reports may be omitted.

(4) The reporting requirements referred to in paragraphs (2) and (3) supersede the reporting requirements contained in paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 3 of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the 2009 France Protocol, approved by the Senate on December 3, 2009.

[Treaty Doc. 113-5 Convention on Taxes with the Republic of Poland]

Section. 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Convention between the United States of America and the Republic of Poland for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion

with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed on February 13, 2013, at Warsaw (the “Convention”) (Treaty Doc. 113-5), subject to the declaration of section 2.

Section 2. Declaration

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration:

The Convention is self-executing.

[Treaty Doc. 112-8 Tax Convention with Chile]

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Chile for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed at Washington February 4, 2010, with a Protocol and a related agreement effected by exchange of notes February 4, 2010, as corrected by exchanges of notes effected February 25, 2011, and February 10 and 21, 2012 (the “Convention”) (Treaty Doc. 112-8), subject to the declaration of section 2.

Section 2. Declaration

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration:

The Convention is self-executing.

[Treaty Doc. 114-1 Protocol Amending the Tax Convention with Japan]

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and the Government of Japan for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and a related agreement entered into by an exchange of notes (together with the “proposed protocol”), both signed on January 24, 2013, at Washington, together with correcting notes exchanged March 9 and March 29, 2013 (the “Protocol”) (Treaty Doc. 114-1), subject to the declaration of section 2 and the conditions of section 3.

Section 2. Declaration

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration:

The Convention is self-executing.

Section 3. Conditions

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following conditions:

(1) Not later than 2 years after the Protocol enters into force and prior to the first arbitration conducted pursuant to the binding arbitration mechanism provided for in the Protocol, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transmit to the Committees on Finance and Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Joint Committee on Taxation the text of the rules of procedure applicable to arbitration panels, including conflict of interest rules to be applied to members of the arbitration panel.

(2)(A) Not later than 60 days after a determination has been reached by an arbitration panel in the tenth arbitration proceeding conducted pursuant to the Protocol or any of the treaties described in subparagraph (B), the Secretary of the Treasury shall prepare and submit to the Joint Committee on Taxation and the Committee on Finance of the Senate, subject to laws relating to taxpayer confidentiality, a detailed report regarding the operation and application of the arbitration mechanism contained in the Protocol

and such treaties. The report shall include the following information:

(i) For the Protocol and each such treaty, the aggregate number of cases pending on the respective dates of entry into force of the Protocol and each treaty, including the following information:

(I) The number of such cases by treaty article or articles at issue.

(II) The number of such cases that have been resolved by the competent authorities through a mutual agreement as of the date of the report.

(III) The number of such cases for which arbitration proceedings have commenced as of the date of the report.

(ii) A list of every case presented to the competent authorities after the entry into force of the Protocol and each such treaty, including the following information regarding each case:

(I) The commencement date of the case for purposes of determining when arbitration is available.

(II) Whether the adjustment triggering the case, if any, was made by the United States or the relevant treaty partner.

(III) Which treaty the case relates to.

(IV) The treaty article or articles at issue in the case.

(V) The date the case was resolved by the competent authorities through a mutual agreement, if so resolved.

(VI) The date on which an arbitration proceeding commenced, if an arbitration proceeding commenced.

(VII) The date on which a determination was reached by the arbitration panel, if a determination was reached, and an indication as to whether the panel found in favor of the United States or the relevant treaty partner.

(iii) With respect to each dispute submitted to arbitration and for which a determination was reached by the arbitration panel pursuant to the Protocol or any such treaty, the following information:

(I) In the case of a dispute submitted under the Protocol, an indication as to whether the presenter of the case to the competent authority of a Contracting State submitted a Position Paper for consideration by the arbitration panel.

(II) An indication as to whether the determination of the arbitration panel was accepted by each concerned person.

(III) The amount of income, expense, or taxation at issue in the case as determined by reference to the filings that were sufficient to set the commencement date of the case for purposes of determining when arbitration is available.

(IV) The proposed resolutions (income, expense, or taxation) submitted by each competent authority to the arbitration panel.

(B) The treaties referred to in subparagraph (A) are—

(i) the 2006 Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital and to Certain Other Taxes, done at Berlin June 1, 2006 (Treaty Doc. 109-20) (the “2006 German Protocol”);

(ii) the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, and accompanying protocol, done at Brussels July 9, 1970 (the “Belgium Convention”) (Treaty Doc. 110-3);

(iii) the Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America

and Canada with Respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital, signed at Washington September 26, 1980 (the “2007 Canada Protocol”) (Treaty Doc. 110-15); or

(iv) the Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the French Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed at Paris August 31, 1994 (the “2009 France Protocol”) (Treaty Doc. 111-4).

(3) The Secretary of the Treasury shall prepare and submit the detailed report required under paragraph (2) on March 1 of the year following the year in which the first report is submitted to the Joint Committee on Taxation and the Committee on Finance of the Senate, and on an annual basis thereafter for a period of five years. In each such report, disputes that were resolved, either by a mutual agreement between the relevant competent authorities or by a determination of an arbitration panel, and noted as such in prior reports may be omitted.

(4) The reporting requirements referred to in paragraphs (2) and (3) supersede the reporting requirements contained in paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 3 of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the 2009 France Protocol, approved by the Senate on December 3, 2009.

[Treaty Doc. 111-8 Protocol Amending Tax Convention with Luxembourg]

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed on May 20, 2009, at Luxembourg with a related agreement effected by exchange of notes also signed on May 20, 2009 (the “Protocol”) (Treaty Doc. 111-8), subject to the declaration of section 2.

Section 2. Declaration

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration:

The Convention is self-executing.

[Treaty Doc. 111-7 Tax Convention with Hungary]

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Hungary for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed at Budapest February 4, 2010, with a related agreement effected by exchange of notes on February 4, 2010 (the “Convention”) (Treaty Doc. 111-7), subject to the declaration of section 2.

Section 2. Declaration

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration:

The Convention is self-executing.

[Treaty Doc. 112-5 Protocol Amending the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters]

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol Amending the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters, done at Paris May

27, 2010 (the "Protocol") (Treaty Doc. 112-5), subject to the declaration of section 2.

Section 2. Declaration

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration:

The Convention is self-executing.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 2514. A bill to require the Bureau of Justice Statistics to report on recidivism rates of Federal prisoners who are released early, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 2515. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to ensure criminal background checks of employees of the military child care system and providers of child care services and youth program services for military dependents; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mrs. ERNST):

S. 2516. A bill to revitalize Army arsenals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. JOHNSON (for himself and Mrs. ERNST):

S. 2517. A bill to require a report on United States strategy to combat terrorist use of social media, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. JOHNSON:

S. 2518. A bill to authorize the use of Ebola funds for Zika response and preparedness; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 2519. A bill to provide for incentives to encourage health insurance coverage, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2520. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the care provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to newborn children; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. ERNST (for herself, Mr. GRAMHAM, Mr. KIRK, Mrs. MCCASKILL, and Mr. MIKULSKI):

S. 2521. A bill to amend the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to improve the treatment at non-Department of Veterans Affairs facilities of veterans who are victims of military sexual assault, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CARPER:

S. 2522. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to build partnerships to prevent violence by extremists; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 2523. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for continued energy self-sufficiency at Fort Knox, Kentucky; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. BENNET):

S. 2524. A bill to insure adequate use and access to the existing Bolts Ditch headgate and ditch segment within the Holy Cross Wilderness in Eagle County, Colorado, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 2525. A bill to increase the number of States that may conduct Medicaid demonstration programs to improve access to community mental health services; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. COONS):

S. 2526. A bill to improve the competitiveness of United States manufacturing by designating and supporting manufacturing communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. COONS, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. Res. 367. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education Month; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. CORKER, and Mr. KAINE):

S. Res. 368. A resolution supporting efforts by the Government of Colombia to pursue peace and the end of the country's enduring internal armed conflict and recognizing United States support for Colombia at the 15th anniversary of Plan Colombia; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. Res. 369. A resolution affirming the importance of student data privacy and recognizing Digital Learning Day; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 134

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 134, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to exclude industrial hemp from the definition of marihuana, and for other purposes.

S. 524

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

S. 682

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S.

682, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 795

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 795, a bill to enhance whistleblower protection for contractor and grantee employees.

S. 849

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 849, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for systematic data collection and analysis and epidemiological research regarding Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson's disease, and other neurological diseases.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 1074

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1074, a bill to clarify the status of the North Country, Ice Age, and New England National Scenic Trails as units of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

S. 1110

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1110, a bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to publish in the Federal Register a strategy to significantly increase the role of volunteers and partners in National Forest System trail maintenance, and for other purposes.

S. 1607

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1607, a bill to affirm the authority of the President to require independent regulatory agencies to comply with regulatory analysis requirements applicable to executive agencies, and for other purposes.

S. 1775

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1775, a bill to direct the

Secretary of Homeland Security to accept additional documentation when considering the application for veterans status of an individual who performed service as a coastwise merchant seaman during World War II, and for other purposes.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 2014

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2014, a bill to demonstrate a commitment to our Nation's scientists by increasing opportunities for the development of our next generation of researchers.

S. 2071

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2071, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to modernize payments for ambulatory surgical centers under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 2119

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2119, a bill to provide for greater congressional oversight of Iran's nuclear program, and for other purposes.

S. 2185

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2185, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

S. 2268

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2268, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the United States Army Dust Off crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their extraordinary heroism and life-saving actions in Vietnam.

S. 2311

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2311, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, to make grants to States for screening and treatment for maternal depression.

S. 2322

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2322, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide that over-the-road bus drivers are covered under the maximum hours requirements.

S. 2449

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2449, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to remove limitations on the ability of certain dual citizens from participating in the Visa Waiver Program.

S. 2450

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2450, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to address administrative leave for Federal employees, and for other purposes.

S. 2473

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2473, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide veterans the option of using an alternative appeals process to more quickly determine claims for disability compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 2474

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2474, a bill to allow for additional markings, including the words "Israel" and "Product in Israel," to be used for country of origin marking requirements for goods made in the geographical areas known as the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

S. 2483

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2483, a bill to prohibit States from carrying out more than one Congressional redistricting after a decennial census and apportionment, to require States to conduct such redistricting through independent commissions, and for other purposes.

S. 2487

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2487, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

S. 2497

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Tennessee

(Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2497, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide protections for retail customers, and for other purposes.

S. 2505

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2505, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2506

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2506, a bill to restore statutory rights to the people of the United States from forced arbitration.

S.J. RES. 18

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 18, a joint resolution proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

S. RES. 99

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 99, a resolution calling on the Government of Iran to fulfill its promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

AMENDMENT NO. 3107

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3107 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3120

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3120 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3133

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3133 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED
BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 2514. A bill to require the Bureau of Justice Statistics to report on recidivism rates of Federal prisoners who are released early, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, today I wish to discuss the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act that has been voted out of the Judiciary Committee.

There is much debate about the wisdom of this bill. That is, like most bills we discuss in this Chamber, a judgment call. But there cannot be debate over the facts of this bill. We have to be very clear on what this bill, by its own text, is designed to do.

Proponents of the bill often invoke four phrases to describe the felons to be released under the terms of the bill: "first-time," "nonviolent," "low-level," "drug possession" offenders. Yet none of these four terms is accurate.

By its text, the bill will apply sentence reductions not to first-time offenders but to repeat offenders—some many times over. These are felons who have made the conscious choice to commit crimes over and over.

By its text, the bill will not just apply to so-called "nonviolent offenders" but to thousands of violent felons and armed career criminals who have used firearms in the course of their drug felonies or crimes of violence.

By its text, the bill will reduce sentences not for those convicted of simple possession but for major drug traffickers—ones who deal in hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of heroin and thousands of pounds of marijuana. And let's be clear. Drug trafficking is not nonviolent, as the bill's proponents often claim. It is built on an entire edifice of violence, stretching from the narcoterrorists of South America to the drug-deal enforcers on our city streets. If you think dealing drugs on a street corner while armed with a gun is a nonviolent offense, you probably live in a rich suburb or a gated community.

By its text, this bill will apply to felons convicted as juveniles of murder, rape, assault, and other crimes for which they were justly tried as adults.

By its text, this bill will apply to repeat felons whose past crimes include kidnapping, carjacking, armed robbery, and other violent crimes.

By its text, this bill will make eligible for early release into America's communities thousands of drug traffickers and other violent felons. And when we catch such criminals going forward, we will not be able to keep them locked up for the same sentences.

It has been reported that the bill's sponsors are preparing to release a revised bill, one that would address some

of the many shortcomings. Regarding this news, I thank the sponsors for acknowledging that the bill as passed by committee does, in fact, apply to serious drug traffickers and other violent felons. I look forward to evaluating the new legislative text, and I hope it addresses these problems. Until then, though, we can only examine more closely the bill as passed by the committee and its consequences.

Make no mistake, the consequences of this bill are all too predictable. Sadly, more than half of released prisoners are rearrested within 1 year, and 77 percent are rearrested within 5 years. We can be sure, then, that we will see more crimes committed by those who might be released early—thanks to this bill. That is indisputable. Those new crimes will wreak havoc on the citizens, families, and communities in each of our States.

This risk is not hypothetical. Sterile statistics do not adequately convey the severity of the threat of mass recidivism. Last month in Columbus, OH, a man named Wendell Callahan brutally killed his ex-girlfriend and her two young daughters. In what was described as a "stabbing rampage," Callahan murdered Erveena Hammonds, her 10-year-old daughter Anaesia, and Anaesia's little sister, 7-year-old Brea.

These murders were an atrocity, and they were completely avoidable. Wendell Callahan walked out of Federal prison in August 2014, but his original sentence should have kept him in jail until 2018. If he had been in jail instead of on the streets, a young family would still be alive today.

Callahan walked out of jail early because the U.S. Sentencing Commission reduced sentences retroactively for hardened violent criminals like him. The Commission first reduced sentencing guidelines in 2007. It did so again in 2010 and again in 2014. That is three major systemic sentencing reductions in the span of a mere 7 years. The result is that 46,000 Federal convicts will walk from jail early. Wendell Callahan was one among that 46,000. There will be many more like him. While we pray against all odds that none of them go on to commit a triple-murder like Wendell Callahan did—or any other heinous crime—I am afraid our prayers will go unanswered, at least in part.

The U.S. Sentencing Commission is an independent judicial agency that provides uniform sentencing guidelines to judges. Congress didn't have a hand in those sentencing reductions, but with the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act, the Senate would impose a fourth major sentencing reduction within 8 years—one that is deeper and broader than the reductions imposed by the U.S. Sentencing Commission.

This is badly misguided. The Senate would be launching a massive social experiment in criminal leniency with-

out knowing the full consequences of the first three reductions imposed by the Sentencing Commissions. This experiment threatens to undo the historic drops in crime that we have seen over the last 25 years.

That drop in crime rate was no accident. It was the result of higher mandatory minimums put in place in the 1980s, coupled with vigilant policing strategies pioneered by scholars like Jim Wilson and practiced by elected leaders like Rudy Giuliani and other American mayors and law enforcement officials. The combination of mandatory minimums and innovative policing is not a haphazard anticrime strategy. It is one that was reached through tough trial-and-error performed at local, State, and, eventually, the Federal levels. It is one that arose from advocacy that originated in the communities and cities that were hardest hit by the drug trade. It is one that has a proven record of success, not in terms of crime rates but in terms of lives saved, families protected, and communities healed.

The connection between higher mandatory minimums and lower crime is often lost on those unfamiliar with this history or blinded by ideology. For example, in 1997 the New York Times reported: "Crime Keeps On Falling, but Prisons Keep On Filling." One year later, in 1998, the Times added: "Prison Population Growing Although Crime Rate Drops." In 2004 the Times reiterated yet again, just for good measure: "Despite Drop In Crime, An Increase In Inmates." You can't make this stuff up, yet it is real and appears to be all too soon forgotten.

Like most conservative achievements, the reduction in crime over the past generation is built on the hard lessons of experience. We should not lightly abandon the criminal justice wisdom accumulated over decades to the passing fashions of current thinking. We should not blithely move from a proven strategy of accountability and vigilance to an experimental theory of leniency. We should not trade away concrete, hard-won gains when the results may be devastating to American communities.

The Senate and the American people need to consider any change to our sentencing laws with full information. We need to know if this sentencing leniency bill will return us closer to the days of the 1970s and 1980s, when our cities were besieged by the drug trade and whole communities were being rotted out as a result. We need to debate sentencing changes with all the data available to us, and we need to do this with eyes wide open.

That is why today, together with Senators HATCH, SESSIONS, and PERDUE, I am introducing the Criminal Consequences of Early Release Act. This is a simple but very needed bill. It will require the Federal Government to

report on the recidivism rates of the 46,000 Federal inmates to be released early under the Sentencing Commission's reductions, and it will require the same reporting for any prisoners released early under any future reductions mandated by Congress.

The report required by this bill will make clear how many crimes are being committed by released felons who would otherwise still be in prison. It will make clear what types of crimes—from drug trafficking to assault to robbery to murder—are being committed by these felons. It will make clear in which States these crimes are occurring.

Currently this type of data is extremely hard to compile. It is not reported by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and any information we do have comes mostly through anecdotes and sporadic media reports. Full information on the criminal consequences of early release must be published in detail. Before voting on any bill to reduce sentences, Senators need to understand fully the criminal consequences of prior sentence reductions.

To hold Senators accountable for their votes, the American people need to understand how their communities are being affected. When the Federal Government decides to release thousands of violent criminals onto the streets, no legislator or official should be able to plead ignorance. If people are being killed, drugs trafficked, property stolen, and children kidnapped by felons who should have been in prison but instead are out on the streets, then the people in our States and communities deserve to know that.

I want to be clear. To those who support the Sentencing Reform Corrections Act, we are not in full disagreement. Like you, I oppose jail for first-time drug users with no prior record. It is vanishingly rare for such offenders to be prosecuted and jailed in the Federal system, of course, but it remains true that the better option for them—particularly if they are addicts—would be drug treatment. Like you, I believe that our prisons should not be an anarchic jungle that is a danger to both prisoners and corrections officers. Like you, I believe that those prisoners who will someday complete their sentences and reenter society should be given a chance to rehabilitate and redeem themselves while in prison so they do not commit additional new crimes once they are out of prison. Like you, I do believe there exists a possibility of a manifestly unjust sentence.

So I suggest: Let's work on that bill. Let's work on a bill that identifies and addresses all first-time drug possession inmates in the Federal system but keeps drug traffickers and other violent offenders in prison to finish their sentences. Let's improve prison conditions and give prisoners a shot at redemption and a better life while pro-

tecting our communities. If you wish, let's work on a bill to speed the consideration of commutation and pardon applications because, if you want to undo manifestly unjust sentences, we can help the President use his constitutional power of pardon and commutation as a precise scalpel to identify and remedy those very rare cases of manifestly unjust sentences. What we should not do is use the blunt instrument of releasing thousands of violent felons and major drug traffickers back onto our streets early.

The President has a constitutional power to remedy unjust sentences, but you know what power he doesn't have? The power to bring back to life the victims who are murdered by prisoners released early or sentenced inadequately.

In the discussion about the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act, there is much talk about legacy, and, in particular, a legacy of President Obama after he leaves office. If considerations of legacy should factor into the debate, I would close with this observation. Legacies are not necessarily positive. They can be negative and deeply tragic. If supporters of this bill and President Obama are wrong, if this grand experiment in criminal leniency goes awry, how many lives will be ruined and how many dead? How much of the anticrime progress of the last generation will be wiped away for the next?

Those are the questions we must ask as we consider this bill. If we ask them honestly, soberly, and with full information, we will invariably be led to one conclusion: We should not grant early release to thousands of drug traffickers and other violent criminals nor should we shorten their sentences in the future.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 2519. A bill to provide for incentives to encourage health insurance coverage, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, it has been more than 5 years since ObamaCare was signed into law. Since then, the American people have only seen higher health care costs, less access, decreased quality of care, and fewer choices.

Every day I hear from Arizonans who have been forced to give up the health insurance plans they liked and now face skyrocketing monthly premiums and never-ending wait times for appointments. Moreover, I have spoken with small business owners across my State who have been forced to choose between complying with costly government mandates, laying off employees or, worse, closing their doors.

For 5 long years, the American people have been unfairly burdened by this failed law, and the negative effects are only expected to grow. According to

the Department of Health and Human Service's own data, 24 insurance plans in the ObamaCare exchanges were expected to see double-digit rate hikes in 2016, while residents of Phoenix, AZ, were expected to see their premiums increase by roughly 19 percent. The highest average premium increase in Arizona was projected to reach a whopping 78 percent.

ObamaCare's numerous failures are well established. Take, for example, the President's broken promise that Americans who liked their health care plans and doctors could keep them; skyrocketing premiums and deductibles; 21 tax increases that both the CBO and the Joint Committee on Taxation predict would be passed on to the consumer; over \$1 billion wasted on failed ObamaCare-established health care co-ops; and an estimated 2 million full-time equivalent workers expected to lose their jobs by 2024, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

For these reasons, a majority of Americans today oppose the President's failed health care law. They are counting on us, their elected representatives in Congress, to fight to fully repeal and replace it. That is why I was proud to partner with my Republican colleagues in sending the first ObamaCare repeal to the President's desk. That is also why I am proud to stand before the Congress today to reintroduce the Empowering Patients First Act along with my friend, the Senator from Georgia, Mr. PERDUE, to replace the President's failed law with health care reform that puts patients and physicians back in charge of their health care decisions. The Empowering Patients First Act is companion legislation to a bill introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman TOM PRICE that would fully repeal the Affordable Care Act and replace it with solutions that put patients, families, and doctors back in charge of their medical decisions—not Washington bureaucrats.

It is past time for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to wake up to the reality that ObamaCare is the wrong solution to health care reform. Just consider a recent report by the Galen Institute which notes that since the President's health care law was passed in 2010, it has undergone 70 significant changes through either acts of Congress, administrative actions, or the U.S. Supreme Court. Let me repeat that. ObamaCare has been changed a total of 70 times—in many cases through unilateral action—in order to protect the American people from its damaging effects.

I am as convinced today as I was 7 years ago when I stood on this floor to propose the first Republican amendment to ObamaCare that this law is the wrong approach to health care reform.

The bill I am reintroducing today would create policies that empower

patients and doctors to take charge of their health care decisions, including by ensuring no one is priced out of the market, including individuals with pre-existing conditions; building on and expanding health savings accounts and other models to drive down costs; establishing age-adjusted tax credits for health insurance; equalizing tax treatment of employer-sponsored plans and plans purchased by individuals by letting individuals buy health insurance with pretax dollars; enhancing coverage options by letting small business owners band together across State lines through association health plans to create more affordable and comprehensive health care; letting consumers buy insurance across State lines; curbing defensive medicine and lawsuit abuse through tort reform; and making coverage more affordable by enabling individuals to own their insurance, like a 401(k) plan, so they can take it with them across State lines and if they change jobs. That only makes sense.

Americans deserve an alternative to the mandates, high costs, and bureaucratic mess that have been created by ObamaCare. The Empowering Patients First Act would repeal ObamaCare once and for all and replace it with health care reform that gives patients, families, and doctors the power to make medical decisions—not bureaucrats in Washington.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 367—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. COONS, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 367

Whereas a competitive global economy requires workers who are trained in skilled professions;

Whereas, according to the National Association of Manufacturers, 80 percent of respondents indicated a moderate to severe shortage of qualified skilled production employees, including front-line workers such as machinists, operators, craft workers, distributors, and technicians;

Whereas career and technical education (referred to in this preamble as “CTE”) ensures that competitive and skilled workers are ready, willing, and capable of holding jobs in high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand career fields such as science, technology, engineering, mathematics, nursing, allied health, construction, information technology, energy sustainability, and many

other career fields that are vital in keeping the United States competitive in the global economy;

Whereas CTE helps the United States meet the very real and immediate challenges of economic development, student achievement, and global competitiveness;

Whereas approximately 14,000,000 students are enrolled in CTE across the country with CTE programs in nearly 1,300 public high schools and 1,700 2-year colleges;

Whereas of the 20 fastest growing occupations—

(1) 10 require an associate’s degree or a degree with fewer requirements;

(2) 13 with the largest numbers of new jobs projected require on-the-job training, an associate’s degree, or a certificate; and

(3) nearly all require real-world skills that can be mastered through CTE;

Whereas CTE matches employability skills with workforce demand and provides relevant academic and technical coursework leading to industry-recognized credentials for secondary, postsecondary, and adult learners;

Whereas CTE affords students the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills, and credentials needed to secure careers in growing, high-demand fields;

Whereas CTE students were significantly more likely than non-CTE student to report having developed problem-solving, project completion, research, math, college application, work-related, communication, time management, and critical thinking skills during high school; and

Whereas students at schools with highly integrated rigorous academic and CTE programs have significantly higher achievement in reading, mathematics, and science than students at schools with less integrated programs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 2016 as “Career and Technical Education Month” to celebrate career and technical education across the United States;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education month;

(3) recognizes the importance of career and technical education in preparing a well-educated and skilled workforce in the United States; and

(4) encourages educators, counselors, and administrators to promote career and technical education as an option to students.

SENATE RESOLUTION 368—SUPPORTING EFFORTS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF COLOMBIA TO PURSUE PEACE AND THE END OF THE COUNTRY’S ENDURING INTERNAL ARMED CONFLICT AND RECOGNIZING UNITED STATES SUPPORT FOR COLOMBIA AT THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF PLAN COLOMBIA

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. CORKER, and Mr. KAINE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 368

Whereas, on October 1, 2000, President William Clinton, having worked with the support of Republican majorities in the United States Senate and the United States House of Representatives, commenced implementation of the first United States foreign assistance package in support of Plan Colombia;

Whereas Plan Colombia has received steadfast commitments from the administrations of Presidents William Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama, and continuously has been strengthened by broad bipartisan support in the United States Congress;

Whereas the United States Congress, through Plan Colombia, has appropriated more than \$9,000,000,000 in foreign assistance to support initiatives of the Government of Colombia to combat the illicit narcotics trade and terrorism, confront irregular armed actors, advance democratic governance, promote economic growth, defend human rights, and pursue a strategy towards sustainable peace;

Whereas the Government of Colombia, throughout the administrations of Presidents Andrés Pastrana, Alvaro Uribe, and Juan Manuel Santos, has made investments in Plan Colombia and carried out transformational efforts to consolidate domestic security, socioeconomic development, and the rule of law that far exceed those contributions made by the United States;

Whereas the United States and Colombia have forged a resolute bond through the implementation of Plan Colombia, which has been bolstered by the support of hundreds of thousands of Colombian-Americans and their contribution to American life;

Whereas, over the past 15 years, levels of crime and violence have subsided sharply in Colombia, with annual per capita homicide rates declining from 62 per 100,000 people in 1999 to 27 per 100,000 people in 2014, and the annual number of kidnappings decreasing from more than 3,000 in 1999 to less than 300 in 2014;

Whereas the alignment of improved security and sound economic policies has translated into steady growth in Colombia’s Gross Domestic Product, which increased from \$86,000,000,000 in 1999 to more than \$377,000,000,000 in 2014, and led to greater Foreign Direct Investment, which grew from \$1,500,000,000 in 1999 to one of the highest in Latin America at \$16,000,000,000 in 2014;

Whereas the Government of Colombia has made impressive strides in reducing poverty during the last 15 years, with the poverty rate decreasing from 64 percent in 1999 to 28.5 percent in 2014, according to the World Bank;

Whereas, since 1999, the Government of Colombia has expanded the presence of the state across all 32 territorial departments, has contributed to the professionalism of the Colombian judiciary, and has improved the capacity of the Colombian Army, Navy, Air Force, and National Police;

Whereas, in November 2012, the Government of Colombia entered into talks to negotiate an end to the country’s enduring conflict with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), a guerilla movement that has ties to the illicit narcotics trade, has kidnapped Colombian and United States civilians, and has been designated by the United States Department of State as a Foreign Terrorist Organization;

Whereas a half-century of conflict has taken a devastating toll on Colombia’s civilian population, has claimed the lives of more than 220,000 people, and has left more than 6,500,000 people internally displaced, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

Whereas the internal armed conflict has victimized all Colombians, including women, children, and Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples, and has led to the repeated targeting of leading representatives of civil society, including trade unionists, journalists, human rights defenders, and other community activists;

Whereas efforts to achieve lasting peace in Colombia must address the hardships faced by victims of the armed conflict, as exemplified by the Government of Colombia's Law on Victims and Restitution of Land of 2011;

Whereas the prospects for national reconciliation and sustainable peace in Colombia rely on the effective delivery of justice for victims of the conflict and the ability to hold accountable and appropriately punish perpetrators of serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law; and

Whereas a potential accord between the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) represents an opportunity to end the enduring conflict in Colombia and bring peace to the Americas; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms the unwavering support of the Government and people of the United States for the people of Colombia in their pursuit of peace and their aspiration to live in a country free of violent conflict;

(2) commends efforts to bring an end to Colombia's enduring internal armed conflict;

(3) maintains its commitment to the victims of Colombia's armed conflict and urges the negotiating parties to forge an agreement that holds accountable perpetrators of serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law and ensures that they are appropriately punished;

(4) encourages the Government of Colombia to promote informed public debate about the details of a potential peace accord in advance of voter ratification;

(5) encourages the Secretary of State to develop a comprehensive, multiyear strategy to ensure the successful implementation and sustainability of a potential peace accord in Colombia, if such an accord is endorsed by the Colombian people, and further strengthen the close bilateral partnership shared by the Governments of the United States and Colombia; and

(6) reaffirms its commitment to continued partnership between the United States and Colombia on issues of mutual security, including counternarcotics cooperation, combating transnational organized crime, and ensuring justice for those who have caused indelible harm to our populations.

SENATE RESOLUTION 369—AFFIRMING THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDENT DATA PRIVACY AND RECOGNIZING DIGITAL LEARNING DAY

Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 369

Whereas, on February 17, 2016, Digital Learning Day is recognized;

Whereas laws must sufficiently protect the personal information of students as data becomes a form of currency;

Whereas, without sufficient safeguards, student information could end up in the hands of criminals or other bad actors around the world;

Whereas Digital Learning Day highlights the many ways in which technology can enhance the classroom experience;

Whereas teachers and schools use technology and digital information in innovative ways that benefit students;

Whereas schools use electronic records to update student information and transfer

electronic records from one school to another school; and

Whereas it is important to maintain student privacy and ensure the data is stored safely and securely; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That Congress recognizes—

(1) the benefits of digital learning and the importance of student privacy; and

(2) that policies should safeguard student data and encourage innovative educational technologies.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3295. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3296. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. JOHNSON) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 2109, to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3295. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 44. NATIONAL PARK CENTENNIAL.

(a) NATIONAL PARK CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1049 of title 54, United States Code (as amended by section 5001(a)), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 104909. National Park Centennial Challenge Fund

“(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to establish a fund in the Treasury—

“(1) to finance signature projects and programs to enhance the National Park System as the centennial of the National Park System approaches in 2016; and

“(2) to prepare the System for another century of conservation, preservation, and enjoyment.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) CHALLENGE FUND.—The term ‘Challenge Fund’ means the National Park Centennial Challenge Fund established by subsection (c)(1).

“(2) QUALIFIED DONATION.—The term ‘qualified donation’ means a cash donation or the pledge of a cash donation guaranteed by an irrevocable letter of credit to the Service that the Secretary certifies is to be used for a signature project or program.

“(3) SIGNATURE PROJECT OR PROGRAM.—The term ‘signature project or program’ means any project or program identified by the Secretary as a project or program that would further the purposes of the System or any System unit.

“(c) NATIONAL PARK CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE FUND.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a fund, to be known as the ‘National Park Centennial Challenge Fund’.

“(2) DEPOSITS.—The Challenge Fund shall consist of—

“(A) qualified donations that are transferred from the Service donation account, in accordance with subsection (e)(1); and

“(B) such amounts as are appropriated from the general fund of the Treasury, in accordance with subsection (e)(2).

“(3) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts in the Challenge Fund shall—

“(A) be available to the Secretary for signature projects and programs under this title, without further appropriation; and

“(B) remain available until expended.

“(d) SIGNATURE PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS.—

“(1) DEVELOPMENT OF LIST.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall develop a list of signature projects and programs eligible for funding from the Challenge Fund.

“(2) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations and Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committees on Appropriations and Natural Resources of the House of Representatives the list developed under paragraph (1).

“(3) UPDATES.—Subject to the notice requirements under paragraph (2), the Secretary may add any signature project or program to the list developed under paragraph (1).

“(e) DONATIONS AND MATCHING FEDERAL FUNDS.—

“(1) QUALIFIED DONATIONS.—The Secretary may transfer any qualified donations to the Challenge Fund.

“(2) MATCHING AMOUNT.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Challenge Fund for each fiscal year through fiscal year 2020 an amount equal to the amount of qualified donations received for the fiscal year.

“(3) SOLICITATION.—Nothing in this section expands any authority of the Secretary, the Service, or any employee of the Service to receive or solicit donations.

“(f) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall provide with the submission of the budget of the President to Congress for each fiscal year a report on the status and funding of the signature projects and programs.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections affected for title 54, United States Code (as amended by section 5001(b)), is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 104908 the following:

“§ 104909. National Park Centennial Challenge Fund.”.

(b) SECOND CENTURY ENDOWMENT FOR THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 1011 of title 54, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 101121. SECOND CENTURY ENDOWMENT FOR THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The National Park Foundation shall establish an endowment, to be known as the ‘Second Century Endowment for the National Park System’ (referred to in this section as the ‘Endowment’).

“(b) CAMPAIGN.—To further the mission of the Service, the National Park Foundation may undertake a campaign to fund the Endowment through gifts, devises, or bequests, in accordance with section 101113.

“(c) USE OF PROCEEDS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—On request of the Secretary, the National Park Foundation shall

expend proceeds from the Endowment in accordance with projects and programs in furtherance of the mission of the Service, as identified by the Secretary.

“(2) **MANAGEMENT.**—The National Park Foundation shall manage the Endowment in a manner that ensures that annual expenditures as a percentage of the principal are consistent with Internal Revenue Service guidelines for endowments maintained for charitable purposes.

“(d) **INVESTMENTS.**—The National Park Foundation shall—

“(1) maintain the Endowment in an interest-bearing account; and

“(2) invest Endowment proceeds with the purpose of supporting and enriching the System in perpetuity.

“(e) **REPORT.**—Each year, the National Park Foundation shall make publicly available information on the amounts deposited into, and expended from, the Endowment.”.

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections affected for title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 101120 the following:

“§101121. Second Century Endowment for the National Park System.”.

(c) **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROTECTION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 1049 of title 54, United States Code (as amended by subsection (a)(1)), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 104910. Intellectual property

“(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

“(1) **SERVICE EMBLEM.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term ‘Service emblem’ means any word, phrase, insignia, logo, logotype, trademark, service mark, symbol, design, graphic, image, color, badge, uniform, or any combination of emblems used to identify the Service or a component of the System.

“(B) **INCLUSIONS.**—The term ‘Service emblem’ includes—

“(i) the Service name;

“(ii) an official System unit name;

“(iii) any other name used to identify a Service component or program; and

“(iv) the Arrowhead symbol.

“(2) **SERVICE UNIFORM.**—The term ‘Service uniform’ means any combination of apparel, accessories, or emblems, any distinctive clothing or other items of dress, or a representation of dress—

“(A) that is worn during the performance of official duties; and

“(B) that identifies the wearer as a Service employee.

“(b) **PROHIBITED ACTS.**—

“(1) **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE EMBLEM OR UNIFORM.**—No person shall, without the written permission of the Secretary—

“(A) use any Service emblem or uniform, or any word, term, name, symbol or device or any combination of emblems to suggest any colorable likeness of the Service emblem or Service uniform in connection with goods or services in commerce if the use is likely to cause confusion, or to deceive the public into believing that the emblem or uniform is from or connected with the Service;

“(B) use any Service emblem or Service uniform or any word, term, name, symbol, device, or any combination of emblems or uniforms to suggest any likeness of the Service emblem or Service uniform in connection with goods or services in commerce in a manner reasonably calculated to convey the impression to the public that the goods or services are approved, endorsed, or authorized by the Service;

“(C) use in commerce any word, term, name, symbol, device or any combination of words, terms, names, symbols, or devices to suggest any likeness of the Service emblem or Service uniform in a manner that is reasonably calculated to convey the impression that the wearer of the item of apparel is acting pursuant to the legal authority of the Service; or

“(D) knowingly make any false statement for the purpose of obtaining permission to use any Service emblem or Service uniform.

“(2) **PENALTIES.**—Any person who violates the provisions of paragraph (1), shall—

“(A) in the case of a first violation by an individual, be fined not more than \$5,000 per use, imprisoned not more than 180 days, or both;

“(B) in the case of a subsequent violation by an individual, be fined not more than \$100,000 per use, imprisoned not more than 1 year, or both;

“(C) in the case of a first violation by a person or entity other than an individual, be fined not more than \$10,000 per use; or

“(D) in the case of a subsequent violation by a person or entity other than an individual, be fined not more than \$200,000 per use.

“(c) **CIVIL CAUSE OF ACTION.**—The Attorney General may, on request of the Secretary, bring a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction, to obtain injunctive or other equitable relief and to recover damages, against a person who manufactures, reproduces, or uses the Service emblem or Service uniform, without the written permission of the Secretary.

“(d) **RETENTION OF FUNDS.**—Any fines collected under section (b)(2) and any damages collected under subsection (c) shall be retained by the National Park Service, until expended and without further appropriation, for use by System units and programs administered by the Service.”.

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections affected for title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 104908 (as added by subsection (a)(2)) the following:

“§104910. Intellectual property.”.

(d) **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Division A of subtitle I of title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after chapter 1007 the following:

“CHAPTER 1008—EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

“CHAPTER 1008—EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

“Sec.

“100801. Purposes.

“100802. Definitions.

“100803. Interpretation and education authority.

“100804. Interpretation and education evaluation and quality improvement.

“100805. Improved utilization of partners and volunteers in interpretation and education.

“§ 100801. Purposes

“The purposes of this chapter are—

“(1) to more effectively achieve the mission of the Service by providing clear authority and direction for interpretation and education programs that are carried out by the Service under separate authorities;

“(2) to ensure that the public encounters a variety of interpretive and educational opportunities and services during visits to System units;

“(3) to recognize that the Service provides lifelong learning opportunities and contrib-

utes to interdisciplinary learning in traditional and nontraditional educational settings;

“(4) to provide opportunities for all people to find relevance in the System; and

“(5) to strengthen public understanding of the natural and cultural heritage and the United States.

“§ 100802. Definitions

“In this chapter:

“(1) **EDUCATION.**—The term ‘education’ means enhancing public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the resources of the System through learner-centered, place-based materials, programs, and activities that achieve specific learning objectives as identified in a curriculum.

“(2) **INTERPRETATION.**—The term ‘interpretation’ means—

“(A) providing opportunities for people to form intellectual and emotional connections to gain awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the resources of the System; and

“(B) the professional career field of Service employees, volunteers, and partners who interpret the resources of the System.

“(3) **RELATED AREA.**—The term ‘related area’ means—

“(A) a component of the National Trails System;

“(B) a National Heritage Area; and

“(C) an affiliated area administered in connection with the System.

“§ 100803. Interpretation and education authority

“The Secretary shall ensure that management of System units and related areas is enhanced by the availability and utilization of a broad program of the highest quality interpretation and education.

“§ 100804. Interpretation and education evaluation and quality improvement

“The Secretary may undertake a program of regular evaluation of interpretation and education programs to ensure that the programs—

“(1) adjust to the ways in which people learn and engage with the natural world and shared heritage as embodied in the System;

“(2) reflect different cultural backgrounds, ages, education, gender, abilities, ethnicity, and needs;

“(3) demonstrate innovative approaches to management and appropriately incorporate emerging learning and communications technology; and

“(4) reflect current scientific and academic research, content, methods, and audience analysis.

“§ 100805. Improved utilization of partners and volunteers in interpretation and education

“The Secretary may—

“(1) coordinate with System unit partners and volunteers in the delivery of quality programs and services to supplement the programs and services provided by the Service as part of a Long-Range Interpretive Plan for a System unit;

“(2) support interpretive partners by providing opportunities to participate in interpretive training; and

“(3) collaborate with other Federal and non-Federal public or private agencies, organizations, or institutions for the purposes of developing, promoting, and making available educational opportunities related to resources of the System and programs.”.

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of chapters for division A of subtitle I of title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 1007 the following:

“1008. Education and Interpretation 100801”.

(e) PUBLIC LAND CORPS AMENDMENTS.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—Section 203(10)(A) of the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1722(10)(A)) is amended by striking “25” and inserting “30”.

(2) PARTICIPANTS.—Section 204(b) of the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1723(b)) is amended in the first sentence by striking “25” and inserting “30”.

(3) HIRING.—Section 207(c)(2) of the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C., 1726(c)(2)) is amended by striking “120 days” and inserting “2 years”.

(f) VOLUNTEERS IN PARKS PROGRAM.—Section 102301(d) of title 54, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “is” and inserting “are”; and

(2) by striking “not more than \$3,500,000” and inserting “such sums as are necessary”.

(g) NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION.—

(1) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—Subchapter II of chapter 1011 of title 54, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in section 101112—

(i) by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

“(a) MEMBERSHIP.—The National Park Foundation shall consist of a Board having as members at least 6 private citizens of the United States appointed by the Secretary, with the Secretary and the Director serving as ex officio members of the Board.”; and

(ii) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(c) CHAIRMAN.—

“(1) SELECTION.—The Board shall select a Chairman of the Board from among the members of the Board.

“(2) TERM.—The Chairman of the Board shall serve for a 2-year term.”; and

(iii) in section 101113(a)—

(I) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(II) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) COORDINATION WITH SERVICE.—Activities of the National Park Foundation under paragraph (1) shall be undertaken after consultation with the Secretary to ensure the activities are consistent with the programs and policies of the Service.”.

(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 1011 of title 54, United States Code (as amended by subsection (b)(1)), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 101122. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subchapter \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2026.

“(b) USE OF APPROPRIATED FUNDS.—Amounts made available under subsection (a) shall be provided to the National Park Foundation for use for matching, on a 1-to-1 basis, contributions (including money, services, or property) made to the National Park Foundation.

“(c) PROHIBITION OF USE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—No Federal funds made available under subsection (a) shall be used by the National Park Foundation for administrative expenses of the National Park Foundation, including for salaries, travel and transportation expenses, and other overhead expenses.”.

(B) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections affected for title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 101121 (as amended by subsection (b)(2)) the following:

“§101122. Authorization of appropriations.”.

SA 3296. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. JOHNSON) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 2109, to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 10, line 5, insert “for 7 years beginning on the date of enactment of this Act” after “each year”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 9, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the

Senate on February 9, 2016, at 5 p.m., to conduct a classified briefing entitled “Administration Update on the Way Forward in Syria and Iraq.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 9, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 9, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FISHERIES, WATER, AND WILDLIFE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife of the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 9, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “Federal Interactions with State Management of Fish and Wildlife.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 9, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FOREIGN TRAVEL FINANCIAL REPORTS

In accordance with the appropriate provisions of law, the Secretary of the Senate herewith submits the following reports for standing committees of the Senate, certain joint committees of the Congress, delegations and groups, and select and special committees of the Senate, relating to expenses incurred in the performance of authorized foreign travel:

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Paul Grove:									
Burma	Kyat		1,087.00		440.00				1,527.00
Japan	Yen		1,169.01						1,169.01
United States	Dollar				5,423.10				5,423.10
Jason Wheelock:									
Burma	Kyat		1,087.00						1,087.00
Japan	Yen		1,169.01						1,169.01
United States	Dollar				5,423.10				5,423.10

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Lamar Alexander:									
Italy	Euro		2,275.83						2,275.83
Greece	Euro		732.09						732.09
Sara Fairchild:									
Italy	Euro		2,275.83						2,275.83
Greece	Euro		732.09						732.09
Senator Susan Collins:									
Italy	Euro		2,275.83						2,275.83
Greece	Euro		732.09						732.09
Elizabeth McDonnell:									
Italy	Euro		2,275.83						2,275.83
Greece	Euro		732.09						732.09
Senator Thad Cochran:									
Italy	Euro		2,275.83						2,275.83
Greece	Euro		732.09						732.09
Kay Webber:									
Italy	Euro		2,275.83						2,275.83
Greece	Euro		732.09						732.09
Linda Good:									
Italy	Euro		2,275.83						2,275.83
Greece	Euro		732.09						732.09
Patrick Magnuson:									
Japan	Yen		672.75						672.75
United States	Dollar				7,184.80				7,184.80
Michael Bain:									
Japan	Yen		672.75						672.75
United States	Dollar				6,935.60				6,935.60
Senator Brian Schatz:									
Jordan	Dinar		685.96		221.24		91.07		998.27
Germany	Euro		306.15		521.42		145.36		972.93
United States	Dollar				18,399.50				18,399.50
William Rogers:									
Jordan	Dinar		685.96		221.23		91.06		998.25
Germany	Euro		306.15		521.42		145.35		972.92
United States	Dollar				12,957.50				12,957.50
Adam Yezerski:									
Tanzania	Tanzanian Franc		309.00						309.00
Rwanda	Rwandan Franc		297.00						297.00
United States	Dollar				8,039.20				8,039.20
* Delegation Expenses:									
Japan	Yen						1,918.52		1,918.52
Burma	Kyat						1,517.00		1,517.00
Greece	Euro						10,128.00		10,128.00
Italy	Euro						1,522.08		1,522.08
Jordan	Dinar				442.47		182.13		624.60
Germany	Euro				1,042.84		290.71		1,333.55
Total			29,503.18		67,773.42		16,031.28		113,307.88

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95-384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR THAD COCHRAN,
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations, Feb. 1, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Jonathan Epstein:									
United States	Dollar				12,000.20				12,000.20
Belgium	Euro		913.95						913.95
* Delegation Expenses:									
Belgium	Euro				1,150.16				1,150.16
David E. Sayers:									
United States	Dollar				17,811.00				17,811.00
Australia	Dollar		1,777.00						1,777.00
* Delegation Expenses:									
Australia	Dollar				696.00				696.00
Senator Jeanne Shaheen:									
United States	Dollar				15,629.50				15,629.50
Greece	Euro		511.27						511.27
Ukraine	Hryvnia		293.41						293.41
Germany	Euro		448.22						448.22
Brian McKeon:									
United States	Dollar				11,503.50				11,503.50
Greece	Euro		479.83						479.83
Ukraine	Hryvnia		293.75						293.75
Germany	Euro		467.88						467.88
Josh Lucas:									
United States	Dollar				12,099.90				12,099.90
Greece	Euro		539.15						539.15
Ukraine	Hryvnia		293.75						293.75
Germany	Euro		448.22						448.22
* Delegation Expenses:									
Greece	Euro						4,356.66		4,356.66
Ukraine	Hryvnia						379.06		379.06
Germany	Euro						1,000.47		1,000.47
United Kingdom	Pound				13.34				13.34
Steven Barney:									
United States	Dollar				21,103.08				21,103.08
Israel	Shekel		1,369.64						1,369.64
United Kingdom	Pound		524.01						524.01
James B. Hickey:									
United States	Dollar				21,025.56				21,025.56

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Israel	Shekel		1,369.64						1,369.64
United Kingdom	Pound		615.01						615.01
Samantha Clark:									
United States	Dollar				21,071.56				21,071.56
Israel	Shekel		1,369.64						1,369.64
United Kingdom	Pound		615.01						615.01
Jonathan Clark:									
United States	Dollar				21,080.68				21,080.68
Israel	Shekel		1,369.64						1,369.64
United Kingdom	Pound		615.01						615.01
* Delegation Expenses:									
Israel	Shekel				495.90		660.33		1,156.23
United Kingdom	Pound						186.06		186.06
David E. Sayers:									
United States	Dollar				19,351.00				19,351.00
Japan	Yen		383.47						383.47
Philippines	Peso		1,380.34						1,380.34
Ozge Guzelsu:									
United States	Dollar				24,026.05				24,026.05
Japan	Yen		419.50						419.50
Philippines	Peso		1,386.75						1,386.75
* Delegation Expenses:									
Philippines	Peso						437.23		437.23
Kathryn Wheelbarger:									
United States	Dollar				18,183.00				18,183.00
Turkey	Lira		315.00						315.00
Kuwait	Dinar		265.00						265.00
Qatar	Riyal		584.96						584.96
Hungary	Forint		285.00						285.00
Thomas Goffus:									
United States	Dollar				25,960.80				25,960.80
Turkey	Lira		355.00						355.00
Kuwait	Dinar		265.00						265.00
Qatar	Riyal		595.00						595.00
Hungary	Forint		278.00						278.00
Adam Barker:									
United States	Dollar				25,783.70				25,783.70
Turkey	Lira		108.00						108.00
Kuwait	Dinar		357.00						357.00
Qatar	Riyal		549.96						549.96
William G.P. Monahan:									
United States	Dollar				25,932.40				25,932.40
Turkey	Lira		98.00						98.00
Kuwait	Dinar		337.00						337.00
Qatar	Riyal		320.00						320.00
Michael Kuiken:									
United States	Dollar				16,700.00				16,700.00
Turkey	Lira		365.00						365.00
Kuwait	Dinar		265.00						265.00
Qatar	Riyal		557.96						557.96
* Delegation Expenses:									
Turkey	Lira				166.38				166.38
Kuwait	Dinar						172.52		172.52
Qatar	Riyal						69.15		69.15
Robert Soofer:									
United States	Dollar				17,936.50				17,936.50
United Kingdom	Pound		1,336.25						1,336.25
France	Dollar		530.30						530.30
Jonathan Epstein:									
United States	Dollar				17,870.50				17,870.50
United Kingdom	Pound		1,465.24						1,465.24
France	Dollar		530.30						530.30
* Delegation Expenses:									
United Kingdom	Pound						509.20		509.20
France	Dollar				1,745.00				1,745.00
James B. Hickey:									
United States	Dollar				19,268.60				19,268.60
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		990.04						990.04
Qatar	Riyal		389.89						389.89
Kuwait	Dinar		979.36						979.36
Kathryn Wheelbarger:									
United States	Dollar				19,268.60				19,268.60
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		90.04						90.04
Qatar	Riyal		389.89						389.89
Kuwait	Dinar		884.36						884.36
Thomas Goffus:									
United States	Dollar				19,268.60				19,268.60
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		939.04						939.04
Qatar	Riyal		389.89						389.89
Kuwait	Dinar		889.36						889.36
Adam Barker:									
United States	Dollar				10,897.60				10,897.60
Kuwait	Dinar		669.36						669.36
Samantha Clark:									
United States	Dollar				15,441.30				15,441.30
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		497.53						497.53
William G.P. Monahan:									
United States	Dollar				15,441.30				15,441.30
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		358.43						358.43
Michael Kuiken:									
United States	Dollar				11,015.08				11,015.08
Kuwait	Dinar		844.36						844.36
* Delegation Expenses:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham				52.25				52.25
Qatar	Riyal						108.77		108.77
Kuwait	Dinar						900.00		900.00
Afghanistan	Afghani						923.00		923.00
Ozge Guzelsu:									
United States	Dollar				11,184.60				11,184.60
Myanmar	Burmese Kyat		1,395.00						1,395.00
* Delegation Expenses:									
Myanmar	Burmese Kyat						371.50		371.50

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
David E. Sayers:									
United States	Dollar				14,365.80				14,365.80
Japan	Yen		787.00						787.00
Singapore	Dollar		712.00						712.00
Jason Potter:									
United States	Dollar				14,365.80				14,365.80
Japan	Yen		787.00						787.00
Singapore	Dollar		712.00						712.00
* Delegation Expenses:									
Japan	Yen				1,102.75				1,102.75
Senator Tim Kaine:									
United States	Dollar				764.49				764.49
Canada	Dollar		442.90						442.90
Christian Brose:									
United States	Dollar				764.49				764.49
Canada	Dollar		116.00						116.00
Ryan Colvert:									
United States	Dollar				764.49				764.49
Canada	Dollar		57.25						57.25
Nicole Porreca:									
United States	Dollar				764.49				764.49
Canada	Dollar		57.25						57.25
* Delegation Expenses:									
Canada	Dollar					9,035.50			9,035.50
Senator John McCain:									
United States	Dollar				12,634.30				12,634.30
Christian Brose:									
United States	Dollar				12,634.30				12,634.30
Iraq	Dinar		122.00						122.00
James B. Hickey:									
United States	Dollar				12,634.30				12,634.30
Kathryn Wheelbarger:									
United States	Dollar				12,634.30				12,634.30
Iraq	Dinar		122.00						122.00
Senator Lindsey Graham:									
United States	Dollar				12,634.30				12,634.30
Iraq	Dinar		5.00						5.00
Craig Abele:									
United States	Dollar				12,634.30				12,634.30
* Delegation Expenses:									
Iraq	Dinar				16,800.00				16,800.00
United Arab Emirates	Dirham				243.03				243.03
Kathryn Wheelbarger:									
United States	Dollar				9,207.56				9,207.56
Israel	Shekel		570.00						570.00
Jordan	Dinar		1,139.67						1,139.67
Thomas Goffus:									
United States	Dollar				9,340.60				9,340.60
Israel	Shekel		565.00						565.00
Jordan	Dinar		1,164.67						1,164.67
Adam Barker:									
United States	Dollar				13,764.86				13,764.86
Israel	Shekel		572.00						572.00
Jordan	Dinar		761.11						761.11
* Delegation Expenses:									
Israel	Shekel				374.07	745.80			1,119.87
Jordan	Dinar				293.45	325.04			618.49
Daniel Lerner:									
United States	Dollar				12,082.00				12,082.00
Germany	Euro		520.75						520.75
Total			46,567.21		641,977.32	20,180.29			708,724.82

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95-384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, Feb. 1, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Elizabeth Warren:									
Greece	Euro		184.37						184.37
Ukraine	Hryvnia		73.59						73.59
Germany	Euro		150.48						150.48
United States	Dollar				15,629.50				15,629.50
Jonathan Donenberg:									
Greece	Euro		212.25						212.25
Ukraine	Hryvnia		58.48						58.48
Germany	Euro		88.00						88.00
United States	Dollar				16,040.00				16,040.00
Total			767.17		31,669.50				32,436.67

SENATOR RICHARD C. SHELBY,
Chairman, Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs,
Jan. 11, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Kusai Merchant:									
France	Euro		1,744.00		1,458.10		3,033.00		6,235.10
Total			1,744.00		1,458.10		3,033.00		6,235.10

SENATOR MICHAEL B. ENZI,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget, Jan. 29, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
David Quinalty:									
United States	Dollar				2,223.30				2,223.30
Ireland	Euro		791.20						791.20
Jeffrey Farrah:									
United States	Dollar				2,223.10				2,223.10
Ireland	Euro		791.20						791.20
John Branscome:									
United States	Dollar				2,223.10				2,223.10
Ireland	Euro		791.20						791.20
Shawn Bone:									
United States	Dollar				2,223.10				2,223.10
Ireland	Euro		791.20						791.20
Senator Brian Schatz:									
France	Euro		1,173.06						1,173.06
* Delegation Expenses:							608.09		608.09
Dale Hahn:									
France	Euro		1,296.23						1,296.23
* Delegation Expenses:							608.09		608.09
Total			5,634.09		8,892.60		1,216.18		15,742.87

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR JOHN THUNE,
Chairman, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation,
Feb. 2, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Angus King, Jr.:									
United States	Dollar				1,836.50				1,836.50
Ireland	Krona		507.25						507.25
Margaret Williams:									
United States	Dollar				2,419.60				2,419.60
Ireland	Krona		507.25						507.25
* Delegation Expenses:									
Iceland	Krona						4,158.00		4,158.00
Senator Al Franken:									
France	Euro		1,371.74						1,371.74
Ali Nouri:									
United States	Dollar				524.00				524.00
France	Euro		2,169.59						2,169.59
* Delegation Expenses:									
France	Euro						1,250.92		1,250.92
Total			4,555.83		4,780.10		5,408.92		14,744.85

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR LISA MURKOWSKI,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources,
Jan. 21, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator James M. Inhofe:									
France	Euro		780.00						780.00
Senator Sheldon Whitehouse:									
France	Euro		2,796.00						2,796.00
Senator Jeff Merkley:									
France	Euro		1,299.00						1,299.00
Senator Edward J. Markey:									
France	Euro		1,621.00						1,621.00

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Cory A. Booker:									
United States	Dollar				5,224.40				5,224.40
France	Euro		1,379.53						1,379.53
Jan Brunner:									
United States	Dollar				1,121.80				1,121.80
France	Euro		5,913.00						5,913.00
Brandon Elsner:									
United States	Dollar				1,112.90				1,112.90
France	Euro		5,165.00						5,165.00
Ann Mesnikoff:									
United States	Dollar				1,602.90				1,602.90
France	Euro		5,709.00						5,709.00
Frederick Illston:									
United States	Dollar				1,602.90				1,602.90
France	Euro		6,522.00						6,522.00
Kathryn R. Thomas:									
United States	Dollar				1,416.10				1,416.10
France	Euro		4,775.00						4,775.00
Emily Enderle:									
United States	Dollar				1,406.90				1,406.90
France	Euro		2,200.00						2,200.00
Aaron Goldner:									
France	Euro		784.00						784.00
Jeremiah Baumann:									
France	Euro		1,435.00						1,435.00
Adrian Deveny:									
United States	Dollar				610.80				610.80
France	Euro		4,210.00						4,210.00
Ana Unruh Cohen:									
United States	Dollar				1,122.10				1,122.10
France	Euro		5,647.00						5,647.00
Jessica Clowser:									
United States	Dollar				1,652.90				1,652.90
France	Euro		5,300.00						5,300.00
Adam Zipkin:									
France	Euro		1,290.00						1,290.00
Philip Moore:									
United States	Dollar				1,122.10				1,122.10
France	Euro		4,688.00						4,688.00
Brian Clifford:									
United States	Dollar				1,088.20				1,088.20
France	Euro		1,526.00						1,526.00
Amanda Gunasekara:									
United States	Dollar				1,121.90				1,121.90
France	Euro		5,502.00						5,502.00
Ryan Jackson:									
France	Euro		1,559.00						1,559.00
* Delegation Expenses:									
France	Euro					10,945.04			10,945.04
Total			70,100.53		20,205.90		10,945.04		101,251.47

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95-384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE,
Chairman, Committee on Environment & Public Works, Feb. 2, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FINANCE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Dan Coats:									
Italy	Euro		750.02						750.02
Greece	Euro		459.66						459.66
Terry Snell:									
Italy	Euro		722.90						722.90
Greece	Euro		445.98						445.98
* Delegation Expenses:									
United States	Dollar					2,426.14			2,426.14
Shane Warren:									
Philippines	Peso		2,593.68						2,593.68
United States	Dollar				12,938.50				12,938.50
Everett Eissenstat:									
Kenya	Shilling		1,125.40						1,125.40
United States	Dollar				12,535.10				12,535.10
Shane Warren:									
Kenya	Shilling		1,176.51						1,176.51
United States	Dollar				12,535.10				12,535.10
* Delegation Expenses:									
United States	Dollar					1,512.35			1,512.35
Theda Khrestin:									
Estonia	Euro		689.09						689.09
Ukraine	Hryvnia		1,165.42						1,165.42
United States	Dollar				12,271.60				12,271.60
Tyler Brace:									
Estonia	Euro		603.58						603.58
Ukraine	Hryvnia		1,521.59						1,521.59
United States	Dollar		45.72		11,428.60				11,474.32
Ryan Evans:									
Estonia	Euro		662.06						662.06
Ukraine	Hryvnia		1,094.28						1,094.28
United States	Dollar				12,196.70				12,196.70
* Delegation Expenses:									
United States	Dollar					1,623.37			1,623.37

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FINANCE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Total			13,055.89		73,905.60		5,561.86		92,523.35

* Delegation Expenses include transportation, embassy overtime, as well as official expenses in accordance with the responsibilities of the host country.

SENATOR ORRIN HATCH,
Chairman, Committee on Finance, Feb. 2, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator John Barrasso:									
Canada	Dollar		539.21						539.21
United States	Dollar				2,100.29				2,100.29
Senator Christopher Murphy:									
Canada	Dollar		471.63						471.63
United States	Dollar				1,052.53				1,052.53
Jessica Elledge:									
Canada	Dollar		646.63						646.63
United States	Dollar				764.49				764.49
* Delegation Expenses:									
Canada	Dollar						7,744.71		7,744.71
Senator John Barrasso:									
United Arab Emirates	Dollar		244.00						244.00
United States	Dollar				10,615.60				10,615.60
Charles Ziegler:									
United Arab Emirates	Dollar		237.00						237.00
United States	Dollar				9,813.00				9,813.00
* Delegation Expenses:									
Afghanistan	Dollar						15,900.00		15,900.00
Senator Bob Corker:									
France	Euro		673.05						673.05
Egypt	Pound		501.84						501.84
United States	Dollar				11,161.10				11,161.10
David Kinzler:									
France	Euro		848.30						848.30
Egypt	Pound		684.00						684.00
United States	Dollar				10,959.30				10,959.30
* Delegation Expenses:									
France	Euro						1,659.00		1,659.00
Egypt	Pound						3,208.00		3,208.00
Senator Cory Gardner:									
Mexico	Peso		627.92						627.92
United States	Dollar				750.59				750.59
Chris Hansen:									
Mexico	Peso		627.92						627.92
United States	Dollar				1,190.49				1,190.49
* Delegation Expenses:									
Mexico	Peso						2,133.00		2,133.00
Senator Ben Cardin:									
France	Euro		1,436.91						1,436.91
Debbie Yamada:									
France	Euro		1,565.88						1,565.88
Josh Klein:									
France	Euro		1,464.91						1,464.91
Adam Sharon:									
France	Euro		1,060.00						1,060.00
United States	Dollar				1,086.90				1,086.90
Senator Christopher Coons:									
France	Euro		1,796.88						1,796.88
United States	Dollar				5,714.40				5,714.40
Allison Schwier:									
France	Euro		1,848.35						1,848.35
Senator Jeanne Shaheen:									
France	Euro		1,422.91						1,422.91
Robert Diznoff:									
France	Euro		1,554.91						1,554.91
Senator Tom Udall:									
France	Euro		1,621.00						1,621.00
* Delegation Expenses:									
France	Euro						6,080.83		6,080.83
Amber Bland:									
Finland	Euro		291.12						291.12
Lithuania	Euro		798.12						798.12
Croatia	Kuna		285.28						285.28
United States	Dollar				3,093.80				3,093.80
Curtis Swager:									
Finland	Euro		243.59						243.59
Lithuania	Euro		746.60						746.60
Croatia	Kuna		261.76						261.76
United States	Dollar				3,128.80				3,128.80
Lydia Westlake:									
Finland	Euro		312.54						312.54
Lithuania	Euro		940.97						940.97
Croatia	Kuna		313.76						313.76
United States	Dollar				3,128.80				3,128.80
* Delegation Expenses:									
Lithuania	Euro						1,211.80		1,211.80
Croatia	Kuna						29.07		29.07
Jaime Fly:									
Bahrain	Dinar		289.46						289.46
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		403.27						403.27
Egypt	Pound		412.76						412.76
United States	Dollar				7,707.80				7,707.80

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
John Rader:									
Bahrain	Dinar		396.00						396.00
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		484.33						484.33
Egypt	Pound		517.00						517.00
United States	Dollar				7,742.80				7,742.80
* Delegation Expenses:									
Bahrain	Dinar					1,379.26			1,379.26
Saudi Arabia	Riyal					688.00			688.00
Egypt	Pound					61.00			61.00
Heather Flynn:									
United Kingdom	Pound		1,035.40						1,035.40
France	Euro		978.00						978.00
Belgium	Euro		814.86						814.86
United States	Dollar				3,848.50				3,848.50
* Delegation Expenses:									
United Kingdom	Pound					186.06			186.06
Jodie Herman:									
Israel	Shekel		1,563.77						1,563.77
United States	Dollar				9,751.06				9,751.06
Dana Stroul:									
Israel	Shekel		1,521.89						1,521.89
United States	Dollar				6,399.86				6,399.86
* Delegation Expenses:									
Israel	Shekel					4,433.72			4,433.72
David Kinzler:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		1,000.00						1,000.00
United States	Dollar				12,822.70				12,822.70
Stacie Oliver:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		920.00						920.00
United States	Dollar				12,822.70				12,822.70
* Delegation Expenses:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal					116.00			116.00
David Kinzler:									
Bahrain	Dinar		1,073.17						1,073.17
United States	Dollar				14,073.80				14,073.80
Dana Stroul:									
Bahrain	Dinar		1,073.17						1,073.17
United States	Dollar				13,574.10				13,574.10
* Delegation Expenses:									
Bahrain	Dinar					1,743.00			1,743.00
Carolyn Leddy:									
Burma	Kyat		699.33						699.33
United States	Dollar				5,704.60				5,704.60
Frank Polley:									
Burma	Kyat		621.00						621.00
United States	Dollar				5,669.70				5,669.70
Michael Schiffer:									
Burma	Kyat		747.00						747.00
United States	Dollar				5,771.00				5,771.00
* Delegation Expenses:									
Burma	Kyat					9,559.50			9,559.50
Stacie Oliver:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		1,462.00						1,462.00
United States	Dollar				2,079.20				2,079.20
David Fite:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		1,126.00						1,126.00
United States	Dollar				2,079.20				2,079.20
* Delegation Expenses:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham					753.28			753.28
Margaret Taylor:									
France	Euro		2,561.45						2,561.45
United States	Dollar				1,637.90				1,637.90
Nick Barbash:									
France	Euro		1,918.23						1,918.23
United States	Dollar				1,637.70				1,637.70
Michael Bednarczyk:									
France	Euro		2,628.00						2,628.00
United States	Dollar				1,637.60				1,637.60
* Delegation Expenses:									
France	Euro					1,824.24			1,824.24
Brandon Yoder:									
Colombia	Peso		1,453.81						1,453.81
United States	Dollar				806.60				806.60
Viviana Bovo:									
Colombia	Peso		796.39						796.39
United States	Dollar				848.00				848.00
Nury Gambarotti:									
Colombia	Peso		1,434.10						1,434.10
United States	Dollar				806.60				806.60
Matthew Padilla:									
Colombia	Peso		1,810.00						1,810.00
United States	Dollar				1,130.10				1,130.10
* Delegation Expenses:									
Colombia	Peso					3,083.00			3,083.00
Total			53,807.38		183,111.61		61,793.47		298,712.46

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95-384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, Jan. 27, 2015.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Ron Johnson:									
Guatemala	Quetzal		272.99						272.99
Honduras	Lempira		191.00						191.00
Senator Tom Carper:									
Guatemala	Quetzal		267.49						267.49
Honduras	Lempira		185.50						185.50
Senator Heidi Heitkamp:									
Guatemala	Quetzal		272.99						272.99
Honduras	Lempira		191.00						191.00
Senator Gary Peters:									
Guatemala	Quetzal		264.65						264.65
Honduras	Lempira		182.66						182.66
Holly Idelson:									
Guatemala	Quetzal		268.13						268.13
Honduras	Lempira		186.14						186.14
Stephen Vina:									
Guatemala	Quetzal		273.68						273.68
Honduras	Lempira		191.68						191.68
Eric Bursch:									
Guatemala	Quetzal		272.99						272.99
Honduras	Lempira		191.00						191.00
Jose Bautista:									
Guatemala	Quetzal		273.67						273.67
Honduras	Lempira		191.69						191.69
Zephrañie Buetow:									
Guatemala	Quetzal		279.48						279.48
Honduras	Lempira		212.16						212.16
Brooke Ericson:									
Guatemala	Quetzal		273.00						273.00
Honduras	Lempira		191.68						191.68
Katie Delacenserie:									
United States	Dollar				1,734.10				1,734.10
Germany	Euro		1,668.09						1,668.09
Jason Rauch:									
United States	Dollar				4,235.90				4,235.90
Estonia	Euro		453.22						453.22
Ukraine	Hryvnia		659.16						659.16
* Delegation Expenses:									
Honduras	Quetzal						3,982.00		3,982.00
Total			7,414.05		5,970.00		3,982.00		17,366.05

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR RON JOHNSON,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs, Feb. 3, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Virginia Boney:									
United States	Dollar				18,512.80				18,512.80
Estonia	Euro		419.51						419.51
Ukraine	Hryvnia		803.69						803.69
* Delegation Expenses:									
Estonia	Euro						114.32		114.32
Ukraine	Hryvnia						426.69		426.69
Senator Amy Klobuchar:									
United States	Dollar				13,712.40				13,712.40
Greece	Euro		552.02						552.02
Ukraine	Hryvnia		297.20						297.20
Asal Sayas:									
United States	Dollar				12,112.70				12,112.70
Greece	Euro		579.90						579.90
Ukraine	Hryvnia		298.34						298.34
Germany	Euro		234.95						234.95
* Delegation Expenses:									
Greece	Euro						2,904.44		2,904.44
Ukraine	Hryvnia						252.71		252.71
Germany	Euro						428.78		428.78
Total			3,185.61		44,337.90		4,126.94		51,650.45

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Jan. 26, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Mike Enzi:									
Italy	Euro		1,184.45						1,184.45

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Greece	Euro		687.85						687.85
Senator Johnny Isakson:									
Italy	Euro		1,184.45						1,184.45
Greece	Euro		687.85						687.85
David Cleary:									
Italy	Euro		1,178.93						1,178.93
Greece	Euro		687.85						687.85
Tara Shaw:									
Italy	Euro		1,178.93						1,178.93
Greece	Euro		687.85						687.85
Joan Kirchner:									
Italy	Euro		1,178.93						1,178.93
Greece	Euro		687.85						687.85
* Delegation Expenses:									
Italy	Euro						6,065.38		6,065.38
Greece	Euro						6,816.90		6,816.90
Total			9,344.94				12,882.28		22,227.22

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95-384, and S. Res. 179, agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR LAMAR ALEXANDER,
Chairman, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions,
Jan. 7, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Brian Walsh			926.00						926.00
			550.00						550.00
Emily Harding					9,389.80				9,389.80
			926.00						926.00
			550.00						550.00
Ryan Tully					9,389.80				9,389.80
			926.00						926.00
			550.00						550.00
Mike Pevzner					7,983.00				7,983.00
			926.00						926.00
			550.00						550.00
* Delegation Expenses					9,386.80				9,386.80
Ryan Kaldahl					13,608.20		240.00		240.00
			1,836.08						13,608.20
			535.00						1,836.08
Nate Adler					13,608.20				1,535.00
			1,836.08						13,608.20
			535.00						1,836.08
James Catella			256.00						535.00
					14,072.90				256.00
Brian Miller			256.00						14,072.90
					14,072.90				256.00
Emily Harding			256.00						14,072.90
Ryan Tully									504.00
			504.00						300.00
			300.00						326.00
Senator Tom Cotton			504.00						504.00
			300.00						300.00
			326.00						326.00
Chris Joyner			504.00						504.00
			300.00						300.00
			326.00						326.00
Christian Cook			504.00						504.00
			300.00						300.00
			326.00						326.00
Senator Richard Burr			509.33				14.50		523.83
			1,196.00				109.53		1,305.53
					14,788.85				14,788.85
Senator Tom Cotton			509.33				14.50		523.83
			1,196.00				109.53		1,305.53
					14,788.85				14,788.85
Chris Joyner			509.33				14.50		523.83
			1,196.00				109.53		1,305.53
					14,788.85				14,788.85
Christian Cook			509.33				14.50		523.83
			1,196.00				109.83		1,305.83
					14,788.85				14,788.85
Ryan Tully			509.33				14.50		523.83
			1,196.00				109.83		1,305.83
					14,788.85				14,788.85
James Catella			509.33				14.50		523.83
			1,196.00				109.83		1,305.83
					14,788.85				14,788.85
Paul Matulic			509.33				14.50		523.83
			1,196.00				109.83		1,305.83
					14,788.85				14,788.85
Total			27,871.47		209,106.45		1,109.41		238,087.33

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95-384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR RICHARD BURR,
Chairman, Committee on Intelligence, Feb. 4, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE (AMENDED REPORT) FOR TRAVEL FROM JULY 1 TO SEPT. 30, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Amb. David Killion:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		594.00						594.00
Czech Republic	Koruna		466.00						466.00
Finland	Euro		2,050.00						2,050.00
United States	Dollar				10,024.10				10,024.10
Poland	Zloty		2,600.00						2,600.00
United States	Dollar				9,272.00				9,272.00
* Delegation Expenses:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia						600.17		600.17
Czech Republic	Koruna						1,577.92		1,577.92
Finland	Euro						2,219.52		2,219.52
Poland	Zloty						239.73		239.73
Total			5,710.00		19,296.10		4,637.34		29,643.44

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95-384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR ROGER WICKER,
Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe,
Jan. 11, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Amb. David Killion:									
Israel	Shekel		1,085.00						1,085.00
Jordan	Dinar		900.19						900.19
United States	Dollar				9,769.96				9,769.96
Serbia	Dinar		947.00						947.00
United States	Dollar				11,019.40				11,019.40
* Delegation Expenses:									
Israel	Shekel						2,044.78		2,044.78
Jordan	Dinar								
Serbia	Dinar								
Total			2,932.19		20,789.36		2,044.78		25,766.33

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95-384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR ROGER WICKER,
Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe,
Jan. 11, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), MAJORITY LEADER FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 9 TO OCT. 17, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Mitch McConnell:									
Spain	Euro		421.00						421.00
Israel	Dollar		450.00						450.00
Jordan	Dollar		711.89						711.89
Iraq	Dollar		5.00		2,700.00				2,705.00
Kuwait	Dollar		418.81						418.81
Afghanistan	Dollar		6.00						6.00
Turkey	Dollar		354.00						354.00
Senator Tom Cotton:									
Spain	Euro		456.21						456.21
Israel	Dollar		485.21						485.21
Jordan	Dollar		746.03						746.03
Iraq	Dollar		5.00		2,700.00				2,705.00
Kuwait	Dollar		418.81						418.81
Afghanistan	Dollar		6.00						6.00
Turkey	Dollar		354.00						354.00
Senator Mike Rounds:									
Spain	Euro		421.00						421.00
Israel	Dollar		450.00						450.00
Jordan	Dollar		718.38						718.38
Iraq	Dollar		5.00		2,700.00				2,705.00
Kuwait	Dollar		418.81						418.81
Afghanistan	Dollar		6.00						6.00
Turkey	Dollar		354.00						354.00
Senator Joni Ernst:									
Spain	Euro		421.00						421.00
Israel	Dollar		450.00						450.00
Jordan	Dollar		713.14						713.14
Iraq	Dollar		5.00		2,700.00				2,705.00
Kuwait	Dollar		418.81						418.81
Afghanistan	Dollar		6.00						6.00
Turkey	Dollar		354.00						354.00
Dr. Brian Monahan:									
Spain	Euro		442.35						442.35
Israel	Dollar		471.36						471.36
Jordan	Dollar		732.18						732.18
Iraq	Dollar		5.00		2,700.00				2,705.00
Kuwait	Dollar		418.81						418.81

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), MAJORITY LEADER FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 9 TO OCT. 17, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Afghanistan	Dollar		6.00						6.00
Turkey	Dollar		354.00						354.00
Thomas Hawkins:									
Spain	Euro		473.66						473.66
Israel	Dollar		502.67						502.67
Jordan	Dollar		763.49						763.49
Iraq	Dollar		5.00		2,700.00				2,705.00
Kuwait	Dollar		418.81						418.81
Afghanistan	Dollar		6.00						6.00
Turkey	Dollar		354.00						354.00
Stefanie Muchow:									
Spain	Euro		421.00						421.00
Israel	Dollar		450.00						450.00
Jordan	Dollar		711.89						711.89
Iraq	Dollar		5.00		2,700.00				2,705.00
Kuwait	Dollar		418.81						418.81
Afghanistan	Dollar		14.00						14.00
Turkey	Dollar		354.00						354.00
Philip Maxson:									
Spain	Euro		421.00						421.00
Israel	Dollar		450.00						450.00
Jordan	Dollar		711.89						711.89
Iraq	Dollar		5.00		2,700.00				2,705.00
Kuwait	Dollar		418.81						418.81
Afghanistan	Dollar		14.00						14.00
Turkey	Dollar		354.00						354.00
* Delegation Expenses:									
Spain	Euro					2,499.17			2,499.17
Israel	New Shekel					10,588.75			10,588.75
Jordan	Dinar					3,073.25			3,073.25
Iraq	Dollar					69.80			69.80
Kuwait	Dinar					518.84			518.84
Afghanistan	Dollar					69.80			69.80
Turkey	Lira					1,081.20			1,081.20
Total			19,281.83		21,600.00		17,900.81		58,782.64

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State, under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95-384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, Jan. 21, 2016.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), MAJORITY LEADER FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Thomas Hawkins:									
United States	Dollar				14,788.85				14,788.85
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		382.83						382.83
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		1,069.50						1,069.50
Total			1,452.33		14,788.85				16,241.18

SENATOR MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, Jan. 21, 2016.

DIRECTING DOLLARS TO DISASTER RELIEF ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 313, S. 2109.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2109) to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Directing Dollars to Disaster Relief Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term “administrative cost”—

(A) means a cost incurred by the Agency in support of the delivery of disaster assistance for a major disaster; and

(B) does not include a cost incurred by a grantee or subgrantee;

(2) the term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Agency;

(3) the term “Agency” means the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(4) the term “direct administrative cost” means a cost incurred by a grantee or subgrantee of a program authorized by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) that can be identified separately and assigned to a specific project;

(5) the term “hazard mitigation program” means the hazard mitigation grant program authorized under section 404 of the Robert T. Staf-

ford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c);

(6) the term “individual assistance program” means the individual assistance grant program authorized under sections 408, 410, 415, 416, 426, and 502(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174, 5177, 5182, 5183, 5189d, and 5192(a));

(7) the term “major disaster” means a major disaster declared by the President under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170);

(8) the term “mission assignment” has the meaning given the term in section 641 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 741); and

(9) the term “public assistance program” means the public assistance grant program authorized under sections 403(a)(3), 406, 418, 419, 428, and 502(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170b(a)(3), 5172, 5185, 5186, 5189f, and 5192(a)).

SEC. 3. INTEGRATED PLAN FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COST REDUCTION.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Not later than 365 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(1) develop and implement an integrated plan to control and reduce administrative costs for major disasters, which shall include—

(A) steps the Agency will take to reduce administrative costs;

(B) milestones needed for accomplishing the reduction of administrative costs;

(C) strategic goals for the average annual percentage of administrative costs of major disasters for each fiscal year;

(D) the assignment of clear roles and responsibilities, including the designation of officials responsible for monitoring and measuring performance; and

(E) a timetable for implementation;

(2) compare the costs and benefits of tracking the administrative cost data for major disasters by the public assistance, individual assistance, hazard mitigation, and mission assignment programs, and if feasible, track this information; and

(3) clarify Agency guidance and minimum documentation requirements for a direct administrative cost claimed by a grantee or subgrantee of a public assistance grant program.

(b) *CONGRESSIONAL UPDATE.*—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall brief the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives on the plan required to be developed under subsection (a)(1).

(c) *UPDATES.*—If the Administrator modifies the plan or the timetable under subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report notifying Congress of the modification, which shall include the details of the modification.

SEC. 4. REPORTING REQUIREMENT.

(a) *ANNUAL REPORT.*—Not later than November 30 of each year, the Administrator shall submit to Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the development and implementation of the integrated plan required under section 3 for the previous fiscal year.

(b) *REPORT UPDATES.*—

(1) *THREE YEAR UPDATE.*—Not later than 3 years after the date on which the Administrator submits a report under subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit an updated report for the previous 3-fiscal-year period.

(2) *FIVE YEAR UPDATE.*—Not later than 5 years after the date on which the Administrator submits a report under subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit an updated report for the previous 5-fiscal-year period.

(c) *CONTENTS OF REPORTS.*—Each report required under subsections (a) and (b) shall contain, at a minimum—

(1) the total amount spent on administrative costs for the fiscal year period for which the report is being submitted;

(2) the average annual percentage of administrative costs for the fiscal year period for which the report is being submitted;

(3) an assessment of the effectiveness of the plan developed under section 3(a)(1);

(4) an analysis of—

(A) whether the Agency is achieving the strategic goals established under section 3(a)(1)(C); and

(B) in the case of the Agency not achieving such strategic goals, what is preventing the Agency from doing so;

(5) any actions the Agency has identified as useful in improving upon and reaching the goals for administrative costs established under section 3(a)(1)(C); and

(6) any data described in section 3(a)(2), if the Agency determines it is feasible to track such data.

(d) *PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.*—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Administrator submits a report to Congress under this section, the Administrator shall make the report publicly available on the website of the Agency.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the Johnson amendment be agreed to; the committee-reported substitute amendment, as amended, be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3296) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To sunset the reporting requirement after 7 years)

On page 10, line 5, insert “for 7 years beginning on the date of enactment of this Act” after “each year”.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill (S. 2109), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2109

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Directing Dollars to Disaster Relief Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term “administrative cost”—

(A) means a cost incurred by the Agency in support of the delivery of disaster assistance for a major disaster; and

(B) does not include a cost incurred by a grantee or subgrantee;

(2) the term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Agency;

(3) the term “Agency” means the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(4) the term “direct administrative cost” means a cost incurred by a grantee or subgrantee of a program authorized by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) that can be identified separately and assigned to a specific project;

(5) the term “hazard mitigation program” means the hazard mitigation grant program authorized under section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c);

(6) the term “individual assistance program” means the individual assistance grant program authorized under sections 408, 410, 415, 416, 426, and 502(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174, 5177, 5182, 5183, 5189d, and 5192(a));

(7) the term “major disaster” means a major disaster declared by the President under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170);

(8) the term “mission assignment” has the meaning given the term in section 641 of the

Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 741); and

(9) the term “public assistance program” means the public assistance grant program authorized under sections 403(a)(3), 406, 418, 419, 428, and 502(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170b(a)(3), 5172, 5185, 5186, 5189f, and 5192(a)).

SEC. 3. INTEGRATED PLAN FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COST REDUCTION.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Not later than 365 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(1) develop and implement an integrated plan to control and reduce administrative costs for major disasters, which shall include—

(A) steps the Agency will take to reduce administrative costs;

(B) milestones needed for accomplishing the reduction of administrative costs;

(C) strategic goals for the average annual percentage of administrative costs of major disasters for each fiscal year;

(D) the assignment of clear roles and responsibilities, including the designation of officials responsible for monitoring and measuring performance; and

(E) a timetable for implementation;

(2) compare the costs and benefits of tracking the administrative cost data for major disasters by the public assistance, individual assistance, hazard mitigation, and mission assignment programs, and if feasible, track this information; and

(3) clarify Agency guidance and minimum documentation requirements for a direct administrative cost claimed by a grantee or subgrantee of a public assistance grant program.

(b) *CONGRESSIONAL UPDATE.*—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall brief the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives on the plan required to be developed under subsection (a)(1).

(c) *UPDATES.*—If the Administrator modifies the plan or the timetable under subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report notifying Congress of the modification, which shall include the details of the modification.

SEC. 4. REPORTING REQUIREMENT.

(a) *ANNUAL REPORT.*—Not later than November 30 of each year for 7 years beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the development and implementation of the integrated plan required under section 3 for the previous fiscal year.

(b) *REPORT UPDATES.*—

(1) *THREE YEAR UPDATE.*—Not later than 3 years after the date on which the Administrator submits a report under subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit an updated report for the previous 3-fiscal-year period.

(2) *FIVE YEAR UPDATE.*—Not later than 5 years after the date on which the Administrator submits a report under subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit an updated report for the previous 5-fiscal-year period.

(c) **CONTENTS OF REPORTS.**—Each report required under subsections (a) and (b) shall contain, at a minimum—

(1) the total amount spent on administrative costs for the fiscal year period for which the report is being submitted;

(2) the average annual percentage of administrative costs for the fiscal year period for which the report is being submitted;

(3) an assessment of the effectiveness of the plan developed under section 3(a)(1);

(4) an analysis of—

(A) whether the Agency is achieving the strategic goals established under section 3(a)(1)(C); and

(B) in the case of the Agency not achieving such strategic goals, what is preventing the Agency from doing so;

(5) any actions the Agency has identified as useful in improving upon and reaching the goals for administrative costs established under section 3(a)(1)(C); and

(6) any data described in section 3(a)(2), if the Agency determines it is feasible to track such data.

(d) **PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.**—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Administrator submits a report to Congress under this section, the Administrator shall make the report publicly available on the website of the Agency.

JUDICIAL REDRESS ACT OF 2015

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 356, H.R. 1428.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1428) to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment, as follows:

(The part of the bill intended to be stricken is shown in boldface brackets and the part of the bill intended to be inserted is shown in *italic*.)

H.R. 1428

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Judicial Redress Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF PRIVACY ACT REMEDIES TO CITIZENS OF DESIGNATED COUNTRIES.

(a) **CIVIL ACTION; CIVIL REMEDIES.**—With respect to covered records, a covered person may bring a civil action against an agency and obtain civil remedies, in the same manner, to the same extent, and subject to the same limitations, including exemptions and exceptions, as an individual may bring and obtain with respect to records under—

(1) section 552a(g)(1)(D) of title 5, United States Code, but only with respect to disclosures intentionally or willfully made in violation of section 552a(b) of such title; and

(2) subparagraphs (A) and (B) of section 552a(g)(1) of title 5, United States Code, but such an action may only be brought against a designated Federal agency or component.

(b) **EXCLUSIVE REMEDIES.**—The remedies set forth in subsection (a) are the exclusive remedies available to a covered person under this section.

(c) **APPLICATION OF THE PRIVACY ACT WITH RESPECT TO A COVERED PERSON.**—For purposes of a civil action described in subsection (a), a covered person shall have the same rights, and be subject to the same limitations, including exemptions and exceptions, as an individual has and is subject to under section 552a of title 5, United States Code, when pursuing the civil remedies described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a).

[(d) DESIGNATION OF COVERED COUNTRY.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Attorney General may, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of Homeland Security, designate a foreign country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, as a “covered country” for purposes of this section if—

(A) the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, has entered into an agreement with the United States that provides for appropriate privacy protections for information shared for the purpose of preventing, investigating, detecting, or prosecuting criminal offenses; or

(B) the Attorney General has determined that the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, has effectively shared information with the United States for the purpose of preventing, investigating, detecting, or prosecuting criminal offenses and has appropriate privacy protections for such shared information.

(2) **REMOVAL OF DESIGNATION.**—The Attorney General may, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of Homeland Security, revoke the designation of a foreign country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, as a “covered country” if the Attorney General determines that such designated “covered country”—

(A) is not complying with the agreement described under paragraph (1)(A);

(B) no longer meets the requirements for designation under paragraph (1)(B); or

(C) impedes the transfer of information (for purposes of reporting or preventing unlawful activity) to the United States by a private entity or person.]

[(d) DESIGNATION OF COVERED COUNTRY.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Attorney General may, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of Homeland Security, designate a foreign country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, as a “covered country” for purposes of this section if—

(A)(i) *the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, has entered into an agreement with the United States that provides for appropriate privacy protections for information shared for the purpose of preventing, investigating, detecting, or prosecuting criminal offenses; or*

(ii) *the Attorney General has determined that the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, has effectively shared information with the United States for the purpose of preventing, investigating, detecting, or prosecuting criminal offenses and has appropriate privacy protections for such shared information;*

(B) *the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, permits the transfer of personal data for commercial purposes between the terri-*

tory of that country or regional economic organization and the territory of the United States, through an agreement with the United States or otherwise; and

(C) *the Attorney General has certified that the policies regarding the transfer of personal data for commercial purposes and related actions of the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, do not materially impede the national security interests of the United States.*

(2) **REMOVAL OF DESIGNATION.**—The Attorney General may, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of Homeland Security, revoke the designation of a foreign country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, as a “covered country” if the Attorney General determines that such designated “covered country”—

(A) *is not complying with the agreement described under paragraph (1)(A)(i);*

(B) *no longer meets the requirements for designation under paragraph (1)(A)(ii);*

(C) *fails to meet the requirements under paragraph (1)(B);*

(D) *no longer meets the requirements for certification under paragraph (1)(C); or*

(E) *impedes the transfer of information (for purposes of reporting or preventing unlawful activity) to the United States by a private entity or person.*

(e) DESIGNATION OF DESIGNATED FEDERAL AGENCY OR COMPONENT.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Attorney General shall determine whether an agency or component thereof is a “designated Federal agency or component” for purposes of this section. The Attorney General shall not designate any agency or component thereof other than the Department of Justice or a component of the Department of Justice without the concurrence of the head of the relevant agency, or of the agency to which the component belongs.

(2) **REQUIREMENTS FOR DESIGNATION.**—The Attorney General may determine that an agency or component of an agency is a “designated Federal agency or component” for purposes of this section, if—

(A) the Attorney General determines that information exchanged by such agency with a covered country is within the scope of an agreement referred to in subsection (d)(1)(A); or

(B) with respect to a country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, that has been designated as a “covered country” under subsection (d)(1)(B), the Attorney General determines that designating such agency or component thereof is in the law enforcement interests of the United States.

(f) **FEDERAL REGISTER REQUIREMENT; NON-REVIEWABLE DETERMINATION.**—The Attorney General shall publish each determination made under subsections (d) and (e). Such determination shall not be subject to judicial or administrative review.

(g) **JURISDICTION.**—The United States District Court for the District of Columbia shall have exclusive jurisdiction over any claim arising under this section.

(h) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this Act:

(1) **AGENCY.**—The term “agency” has the meaning given that term in section 552(f) of title 5, United States Code.

(2) **COVERED COUNTRY.**—The term “covered country” means a country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, designated in accordance with subsection (d).

(3) **COVERED PERSON.**—The term “covered person” means a natural person (other than

an individual) who is a citizen of a covered country.

(4) COVERED RECORD.—The term “covered record” has the same meaning for a covered person as a record has for an individual under section 552a of title 5, United States Code, once the covered record is transferred—

(A) by a public authority of, or private entity within, a country or regional economic organization, or member country of such organization, which at the time the record is transferred is a covered country; and

(B) to a designated Federal agency or component for purposes of preventing, investigating, detecting, or prosecuting criminal offenses.

(5) DESIGNATED FEDERAL AGENCY OR COMPONENT.—The term “designated Federal agency or component” means a Federal agency or component of an agency designated in accordance with subsection (e).

(6) INDIVIDUAL.—The term “individual” has the meaning given that term in section 552a(a)(2) of title 5, United States Code.

(1) PRESERVATION OF PRIVILEGES.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to waive any applicable privilege or require the disclosure of classified information. Upon an agency’s request, the district court shall review in camera and ex parte any submission by the agency in connection with this subsection.

(j) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This Act shall take effect 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment was agreed to.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed, and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The bill (H.R. 1428), as amended, was passed.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 367, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 367) supporting the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education Month.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 367) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

AFFIRMING THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDENT DATA PRIVACY AND RECOGNIZING DIGITAL LEARNING DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 369, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 369) affirming the importance of student data privacy and recognizing Digital Learning Day.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, as a fifth generation Montanan and engineer who worked at a cloud computing company for, 13 years, I have seen firsthand the opportunities created by advances in technology. As a father of four, I am aware of the huge role technology plays in our students’ lives.

February 17, 2016, is Digital Learning Day. Students around the globe will be using technology to enhance the classroom learning experience. While digital learning offers many benefits, we must sufficiently protect the personal information of our students. Without proper safeguards in place, our children’s privacy is at risk, and student data could end up in the hands of criminals and other bad actors. We need policies in place to ensure students’ information and electronic records are processed and stored safely and securely.

I am committed to working with my colleagues to harness the power of dig-

ital learning while protecting the privacy of our kids.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 369) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow, Wednesday, February 10; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:06 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, February 10, 2016, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate February 9, 2016:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SCOT ALAN MARCIEL, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNION OF BURMA.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN RECOGNITION OF PINE FORGE
ACADEMY

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Pine Forge Academy for providing 70 years of exemplary education to Pennsylvania's 7th District.

Pine Forge Academy is a co-educational boarding school that serves grades 9 through 12. It is a part of the Seventh-Day Adventist education system, the world's second largest Christian school system.

Today, the school remains committed to providing African-American high school students with an exemplary education, a chance to develop their faith and to prepare for a life of service.

Mr. Speaker, Pine Forge Academy has been changing the lives of young men and women for the past 70 years. I congratulate the school and look forward to seeing the excellent work it will continue to do in the years to come.

CELEBRATING THE 150TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF LEBANON VALLEY
COLLEGE

HON. CHARLES W. DENT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize the 150th Anniversary of Lebanon Valley College. Lebanon Valley College was founded on February 23, 1866. For 150 years it has delivered quality liberal arts educational instruction to its students.

During this time, the school has grown to become a vital and vibrant part of the culture and community of Lebanon County and of Annville Township.

Lebanon Valley College currently offers thirty-six undergraduate majors to its student body of approximately sixteen hundred undergraduate students. At various times, the U.S. News & World Report, the Princeton Review and Forbes have all placed the school on their respective lists recognizing America's best colleges.

Mr. Speaker, I warmly extend my congratulations to the students, faculty, employees, administrators and alumni of Lebanon Valley College on the happy occasion of their Sesquicentennial. I extend my congratulations to Lebanon Valley College for its outstanding record of successfully providing so many young men and women with a strong liberal arts education, and wish continued growth and success for the College and all of its students.

NATIONAL TRAUMA INSTITUTE
RECOGNITION

HON. WILL HURD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, traumatic injury in America affects everyone, claiming over 190,000 lives and costing hundreds of billions of dollars in healthcare annually. It is the number one cause of death for Americans between 1 and 46 years old. As a result, in 2006, the National Trauma Institute was founded in San Antonio, Texas, to stop unnecessary suffering from trauma through prevention, education and research. Ten years later, the National Trauma Institute celebrates a decade of trauma research advocacy and funding.

The National Trauma Institute has enjoyed much success throughout its first decade in existence advocating for federal appropriations for trauma-related research so that patients can receive care faster and more efficiently. To date, the organization has been responsible for securing \$55 million in funding for trauma-related research, special projects and research infrastructure. That \$55 million has made an incredible impact on millions of Americans, allowing them to survive injuries that were once unthinkable and go on to lead healthy productive lives.

There is no question that the National Trauma Institute, founded in San Antonio, Texas, has contributed to trauma research that has saved and dramatically improved lives. The organization has become a pillar of the community and is now the leading voice of advocacy for the funding of clinical trauma research. I am proud to congratulate The National Trauma Institute for its incredible achievements for San Antonio and the rest of the nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I missed several votes last week while meeting with the Speaker of Parliament of the Republic of the Sudan. I wish to state how I would have voted had I been present:

Roll Call No. 55—No

Roll Call No. 56—No

COMMEMORATING THE 75TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF PEORIA CHARTER
COACH COMPANY

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor a remarkable business, Peoria Charter Coach Company, an icon of Central Illinois celebrating their 75th anniversary.

Peoria Charter Coach Company started in Lacon, Illinois under Walter Winkler who had nothing but the earnest desire to put his community first. After seeing his fellow citizens struggle to travel to work due to the World War II gas rations, he opened a bus service so that others around him could safely commute to work to earn their paychecks.

Seventy-five years later and now headquartered in Peoria, Illinois, four generations of Winklers have found many other ways to serve their community. From transporting war-time United States Defense Workers and Military Personnel to serve their country to helping schoolchildren to attend classes, from assisting college students returning home for the holidays to serving locals looking to catch a ball game in Chicago, the Winklers continue to pride themselves on assisting others. To date, the Peoria Charter Coach Company now carries an impressive half million passengers over four million miles annually.

I am thankful that America has been a country where hard-working families with a vision, such as the Winklers can grow their small business, employ others, and serve their fellow Americans. I extend my sincere congratulations to the Winkler Family and Peoria Charter Coach Company for their impressive accomplishments and thank them for their continued service to the 18th District. I wish them seventy-five more years of good fortune and safe travels.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF MRS. WAYEDEAN BEATRICE
MCGRAW

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and legacy of Mrs. Wayedean Beatrice McGraw of Broward County, Florida, who sadly passed away on Friday, January 1, 2016 at age 73. Wayedean was born in Leeds, Alabama where she attended Moton High School. She later moved to Florida where she worked providing private home health care in various locations throughout Broward County. She worshipped at Bethel Baptist and Evergreen Missionary Baptist

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Church, now known as Greater Providence Baptist Church.

Waydean is survived by her three loving children, Bruce, Annette and Ronald; seven wonderful grandchildren: Cornelius Sr., Valencia, Antwon Sr., Calvin Sr., Marquis, Brittany and Lauren; ten great-grandchildren: Roy, Cornelius Jr., D'Naisah, Kristian, Antwon Jr., A'Niyah, Nakyla, Calonne, Calvin Jr., and Makai; one sister, Nancy of Oakland Park, Florida; and many loving nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. Her mother, Arlene, and four siblings: Jean, Mary, Paul and Charles all preceded her in death.

Mr. Speaker, I am truly honored to celebrate the incredible life of Mrs. Waydean Beatrice McGraw, and express my deepest condolences to her family. I know that her spirit, loving memory, and legacy will always live on.

CONGRATULATIONS TO LIBRADA PAYAN

HON. WILL HURD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 101st birthday of Mrs. Librada Payan of El Paso, Texas.

A beloved mother of 7 children, 30 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, and several more great-great-grandchildren, Mrs. Payan is known for her cheerful outlook and devotion to her beloved family.

Mrs. Payan was born in 1915, and moved to the El Paso area in 1918. She was happily married to the love of her life for over 65 years. She never ceases to be amazed at the changes of the world around her, and greets each day with an enthusiasm that eludes even the most optimistic of people.

On behalf of the Twenty-Third Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to Librada Payan on turning 101 years old, and may she celebrate many more.

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF DR. JAMES H. BILLINGTON

HON. JEFF FORTENBERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor the accomplishments of James H. Billington as founding chairman of the Open World Leadership Center in Washington, DC, in recognition of his retirement in September 2015.

James H. Billington served as the 13th Librarian of Congress from 1987 until his retirement in 2015.

"Jim", a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is an accomplished author, scholar, educator, and administrator and has earned the respect and admiration of his students, colleagues, peers, and fellow Trustees.

Librarian Billington earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Princeton University in 1950

and a doctorate from Balliol College, Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar.

After serving with the United States Army and in the Office of National Estimates, Mr. Billington taught history at Harvard University from 1957 to 1962 and subsequently at Princeton University where he was professor of history from 1964 to 1973.

James H. Billington became director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in September 1973, an institution created by the United States Congress in 1968 as a living memorial to the 28th President. He grew the Woodrow Wilson Center International Center for Scholars allowing American and invited foreign scholars to spend time reflecting on issues central to understanding a complex world.

He then helped create the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies in 1974, believing that the relationship with the Soviet Union was America's most important international challenge.

As a scholar of Russian history and culture, Dr. Billington has accompanied 10 congressional delegations to Russia and the former Soviet Union, and joined President Reagan at the summit meeting in June, 1988.

On September 14, 1987, Professor Billington was sworn in as the 13th Librarian of Congress where he oversaw the largest collection of books, maps, photographs, recordings, and motion pictures in the world.

Dr. Billington is the author of *Mikhailovsky and Russian Populism* (1956), *The Icon and the Axe* (1966), *Fire in the Minds of Men* (1980), *Russia Transformed: Breakthrough to Hope*, August 1991 (1992), *The Face of Russia* (1998)—a companion book to the three-part television series of the same name, which he wrote and narrated for the Public Broadcasting Service, and *Russia in Search of Itself* (2004), books translated and published in a variety of languages.

James H. Billington has received over 40 honorary doctorates—including from the University of Tbilisi in Georgia (1999), the Russian State University for the Humanities in Moscow (2001), and the University of Oxford (2002), has been awarded the Woodrow Wilson Award from Princeton University (1992), the UCLA Medal (1999), the Pushkin Medal of the International Association of the Teachers of Russian Language and Culture (2000), the Karamzin Prize (2005) from the Foreign Literature Library in Moscow, the Likhachev Prize (2006) from the Likhachev Foundation in St. Petersburg, the inaugural Lafayette Prize by the French-American Cultural Foundation, the EastWest Institute Outstanding Leadership Award, and the Presidential Citizens Medal by President Bush in 2008.

Dr. Billington is a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. He was decorated as Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters and as Chevalier of the Legion of Honor by the President of France, as Commander of the National Order of the Southern Cross of Brazil, the Order of Merit of Italy, a Knight Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit by the Federal Republic of Germany, the Gwanghwa Medal by the Republic of Korea, the Chingiz Aitmatov Gold Medal by the Kyrgyz Republic and the Order of Friendship by the President of the Russian Federation;

the highest state order that a foreign citizen may receive.

Dr. Billington will continue to study and write on important Russian-American issues, after retiring as the second-longest-serving Librarian of Congress, and as Founding Chairman of the Open World Leadership Center.

It is fitting that the United States Congress recognize his deeds throughout his 28 years of service as Librarian of Congress and the accomplishments and achievements of James H. Billington as founding Chairman of the Open World Leadership Center throughout his 16 years of service.

HONORING DR. JAMES BILLINGTON

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate and thank Dr. James Billington upon completion of his 42 years of distinguished public service, culminating in 28 years as the 13th Librarian of Congress. He presided over a doubling of the Library's holdings and a major enhancement of the Library's role in American cultural life.

Dr. Billington, a Rhodes Scholar and a distinguished expert on Russia, began his career as a professor of history at Harvard University and Princeton University. He served as director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and helped found the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies before coming to the Library of Congress in 1987.

Dr. Billington recognized that the Library must be a great public asset, an educational resource for all Americans, not just for academics and Members of Congress. He set about digitizing many of the Library's collections and arranging the purchase and display of dozens of important relics that had long been hidden from public view. He also created the National Book Festival, which has brought hundreds of thousands of book lovers to Washington to celebrate our literary history.

As a Member of Congress and a leader of the House Democracy Partnership (HDP), I have particularly appreciated Dr. Billington's application of his background as a scholar of Russia and his extensive international experience to the establishment of the Open World Leadership Center, a unique legislative branch initiative that has brought some 24,000 young leaders from post-Soviet states to the U.S. for intensive exposure to our people and community life. I have enjoyed hosting these delegations in North Carolina, parliamentary colleagues but also teachers, doctors, provincial leaders, and others from all walks of life.

The Library and the Congressional Research Service (CRS) have also been invaluable in HDP's outreach to parliaments in democratizing countries, helping build their staff, research, and IT capabilities. This work began with the Frost-Solomon Task Force in the early 1990s, when post-communist states faced the challenge of equipping and operating modern parliaments. It has continued over the past decade as HDP has helped establish research facilities and personnel, with

the help of CRS, in countries ranging from Liberia to Afghanistan to Timor-Leste.

I congratulate Dr. Billington on his historic career, and I wish him and his family the very best for a well-deserved retirement.

**HONORING TERRY'S HOUSE AS
THEY CELEBRATE THEIR 5 YEAR
ANNIVERSARY**

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Terry's House, a hospitality home dedicated to providing affordable and convenient lodging for families of patients in critical care units at the Community Regional Medical Center. This year Terry's House is celebrating its five year anniversary of continuous service in Downtown Fresno, California. Since its inception in 2011, Terry's House has served over 3,600 families, from forty-two states and twenty-three countries around the world. Operating solely on donations, Terry's House has been made possible by the generosity of the community, and it is their hope that they may continue to assist families of those in critical care for many years to come.

This residential facility is named in honor of Terry Richards who suffered and survived a serious trauma at the age of five when he was injured in a car accident. For nearly five months, his mother, Marie Richards traveled nearly 80 miles a day to see her son while he was recovering in the hospital. Her story was the story of many people before Terry's House opened its doors. Many families had to seek accommodations miles from the hospital, and many who couldn't afford lodging slept in waiting rooms, in their cars, or had to try their best to find a spot in a busy hospital. Often, patients' loved ones had no alternative but to leave the hospital and make the long drive home. Terry's House addresses this need, and has provided families with a home away from home, while their loved ones receive care.

Terry's House is situated on 17,000 square feet and features two stories of living quarters located across the street from the Community Regional Medical Center, so families can visit their loved ones daily. The twenty hotel and suite style rooms at Terry's House have a capacity of up to four individuals and feature various amenities, including balcony seating areas, in-room refrigerators, access to adjoining rooms for increased capacity, and various common areas including a kitchen, dining area, laundry facility, and children's play room.

Terry's House was made possible by the tireless work of Terry Richards's brother, Tom Richards, a local community developer and CEO of the Penstar Group. With the dedication of Tom Richards, Leta Ciavaglia, Christa Short, the Terry's House Development Council, the Community Regional Medical Center Foundation and many generous members of the community, a family dream has become a reality.

The sustainability of Terry's House is entirely dependent on private gifts, contributions

from generous individuals, and organizations. More than \$5 million was raised to initially build and furnish the home. In addition to generous gifts from Tom Richards and Bank of America, a large number of in-kind donations also continue to assist in sustaining the ongoing operations of the home. Terry's House has been fortunate enough to receive staffing support from the Community Medical Centers. To minimize costs, volunteers generously perform many of the daily operations of the home.

Mr. Speaker, for the last five years, Terry's House has had the privilege and responsibility of housing families as they face some of the most difficult days of their lives. Terry's House has been there for them, and will continue to be there thanks to the generosity and support of our community. Through their selfless service, Terry's House has made an immense difference in the lives of so many individuals, and it is important that we recognize them for all that they have done and will continue to do for years to come.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO HELEN
FORBRICH**

HON. WILL HURD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 103rd birthday of Helen Virginia Forbrich, of San Antonio, Texas.

Helen was born in Adkins, Texas on February 25th, 1913. She was married to the love of her life for 45 years. She had 4 wonderful children, and 4 grandchildren. She has always enjoyed cooking and is known for her homemade biscuits. In 1921, at the age of 8, she began the life-long habit of drinking four ounces of red wine every night before bed, which her family attributes to her wonderful longevity.

On behalf of the Twenty-third Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to Helen Virginia Forbrich on turning 103 years old, and may she celebrate many more.

**RECOGNIZING HARRY BOWEN AS
VETERAN OF THE YEAR**

HON. MARTHA MCSALLY

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Harry Bowen, a veteran from Sierra Vista who was recently selected as the Veteran of the Year by the Greater Sierra Vista Area United Veterans' Council. Mr. Bowen has continued the proud tradition of service to our country long after leaving the military.

Mr. Bowen served in the United States Army during Vietnam and retired as a Chief Warrant Officer 3. After his service in the Army, Mr. Bowen has actively served in the Military Officers Association of America in many capacities including as the Employer

Support to the Guard and Reserve Outreach coordinator who works to educate companies on the benefits of hiring veterans as employees. He is also active in the Warrant Officers' Association, and the American Legion Post 52.

Recently, Mr. Bowen joined the Cochise Serving Veterans Committee—as a founding member—to aid in helping homeless and at-risk veterans in Cochise County. He has served on the board for the Cochise County Stand-down event for two years and his involvement is credited with making the Cochise County Stand-down the largest event of its kind in Southern Arizona.

The extent of Mr. Bowen's service and civic involvement is not limited to Veteran Service Organizations. He has also served the Kiwanis club in several capacities since 1993, and has led the American Cancer Society Relay for Life event in Sierra Vista for 9 years.

To quote his friend, "It is clear he does not perform his duties or take on these leadership roles for any kind of recognition, but for the love of service to his fellow veterans and countrymen." Harry Bowen is an excellent representative of the veterans of Southeastern Arizona who have continued to exemplify the time-honored values at the core of our military: duty, service, and an abiding commitment to a cause greater than any one individual. Congratulations to Mr. Bowen for being selected as Veteran of the Year, a well-deserved honor.

IN RECOGNITION OF BOB CHERECK

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work of an outstanding Texan, Robert A. Chereck, as he recently concluded his distinguished work as the long-term Chairman of the Board for the Children's Health Systems of Texas (CHST) in Dallas. While serving as Chairman for the Children's Health Systems of Texas, Mr. Chereck also served as the Executive Chairman and President/CEO of Southwest Securities FSB and previously served as the Executive Vice President of Wells Fargo Bank.

The Children's Health Systems of Texas' original location is in Dallas and has now grown to include the several other specialty and pediatric care centers located throughout North Texas. The Children's Health Systems of Texas remains the seventh largest pediatric health care provider in the country—receiving more than 760,000 patients annually and performing more than 26,588 surgeries at its two full-service campuses in Dallas and Plano. The Dallas campus serves as the main campus as well as the only academic healthcare system in the Dallas-Fort Worth area dedicated solely to the comprehensive care of children from birth to age 18. Children's Health has also been recognized as (1) one of the most connected hospitals in the nation for its excellence in patient safety, patient engagement and clinical connectedness; (2) one of only six STS three-star designations for congenital heart surgery; (3) a Level IV Neonatal

Intensive Care Unit—the highest qualification for such programs; and (4) a Level 1 Trauma Center for pediatric care.

I have seen the power of the Children's Health System of Texas as both a Member of Congress and as the father of a patient. Our region is blessed to have the resources and expertise of the CHST medical professionals and staff available to meet the needs of our children. So much of the CHST success story is due to the involved engagement of civic leaders like Bob Chereck. Together, those leaders have ensured the children of our region would never have to leave home to have the best possible medical care.

I have personally had the opportunity to work with Mr. Chereck over the years in Dallas on a number of issues important to our community, region and state. Besides serving as Chairman of the Board at CHST, Bob has served as Chairman of the Dallas Regional Chamber of Commerce, Chairman of the Dallas Citizens Council, a member of the Downtown Dallas Association Board, the Youth Services Council, and a number of initiatives at his beloved University of Texas. Over the years, my work with Bob via any number of these organizations has forged a strong bond and friendship with both Bob and his wife Donna.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my esteemed colleagues to join me in wishing Bob and Donna Chereck all the best in their future endeavors.

CELEBRATING THE 200TH BIRTHDAY OF THE CITY OF JACKSON

HON. BRADLEY BYRNE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 200th birthday of Jackson, Alabama, which is located in Alabama's First Congressional District. Over the past 200 years, the City of Jackson has had a rich and storied history that is reflected in all of the hardworking residents of Jackson today.

Situated on a rise overlooking the east bank of the Tombigbee River is where you will find Jackson's historic downtown. In 1815, a stock company, the Pine Level Land Company, was formed by a group of investors who believed they could promote the site to attract settlers. Formerly known as "Pine Level," and "Republicville," it was finally decided that the little village would be named Jackson, in honor of General Andrew Jackson, hero of the War of 1812 as well as the Creek Indian War of 1813–14, who would later become our seventh president. Jackson was incorporated by an act of the Mississippi Territorial Legislature on November 27, 1816, which also created the town's first governing body.

Like many of our country's communities, Jackson has experienced both ups and downs throughout its history. In 1816, the prosperous Jackson had a population of 1,500, which was quite large for a rural frontier town. The town experienced growth and success through the Civil War, but then declined. By 1875, the town was home to only 15 families. With the arrival of the railroad in 1886 and the hard

work and dedication of the people of Jackson, the town once again boomed. The railroad brought with it the timber industry, which was instrumental in reviving the tiny town. Throughout the early 20th century, Jackson experienced economic growth and expansion. The town experienced another setback during the Great Depression, but was sparked yet again by economic growth in the 1930s. This year is not only Jackson's 200th birthday; it is also a year that will bring even more success to Jackson with the opening of the new iSpice food manufacturing and distributing plant.

The Post Civil War Era and the Depression could have easily led to a different fate for Jackson, but the people of this quaint timber town refused to give up on their home. The hardworking men and women of Jackson are not only pillars of their community, but they also represent the true backbone of the United States. Their hard work and perseverance through troubling times serves as an example that should be followed by all Americans. Success is not given, it is earned, and Jackson has earned it throughout its 200-year existence.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to congratulate Jackson on its bicentennial.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF KIRBY HIGHT

HON. BRUCE POLIQUIN

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join loving family members, dear friends and the entire Skowhegan community in recognizing the 100th birthday of Kirby Hight. I am honored to extend birthday greetings on this truly special occasion.

I congratulate Mr. Hight on this major milestone but also express profound gratitude for his valiant service to our Nation as a proud member of the United States Navy.

We are forever grateful and humbled by his heroism and selflessness during World War II as a Captain of one of our naval destroyers.

Upon returning to Maine after the war, he continued to give back to his community. He developed a successful family business, gave his time to the local Rotary Club and served as a member on the board of the Skowhegan Fair Association and Redington Fairview Hospital, not to mention the numerous local causes his late wife, Grace, and he supported.

The fantastic turnout expected for his birthday celebration will be but a small testament to the magnificent impact his hard work and unwavering generosity has had on his family, community and country.

Happy 100th Birthday to Mr. Hight—I wish him many more years of continued good health and happiness. May we all be so lucky to live such a long and meaningful life. God Bless America and God Bless you, Mr. Hight.

TRIBUTE TO MURIEL LOIS CORRIN DAVIS

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 90th birthday of a very incredible constituent, Muriel Lois Corrin Davis. Muriel was born on February 9, 1926 in Sea Bright, New Jersey. At the age of 1, her family moved to East Orange, New Jersey. She graduated from East Orange High School in 1944 and left for Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia in 1945. She received her B.A. in English and Spanish in 1950. An avid moviegoer, her dream was to see the world she had only seen onscreen.

After graduation in August 1950, Muriel was the first African American woman to be hired by Doubleday Publishers. Her position was Assistant Secretary in the Executive Office of Doubleday. Her courtship with Morehouse College graduate (Class of 1947) Griffith "Griff" Davis began while he lived in the Harlem home of Langston Hughes. Mr. Hughes used them as the prototype for his Simple book series.

Liberia President William V. S. Tubman commissioned Griff to do the first photography exhibit on Liberia at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City and the filming of Liberia's first promotional film entitled "Pepperbird Land." In March 1952, Muriel flew to Liberia to marry Griff. Their "Global Honeymoon" on three continents was written and photographed by Griff and appeared in the September 1952 issue of Ebony magazine.

Upon returning from their honeymoon, Griff took the Foreign Service exam in Washington, DC. In November 1952, they returned to Liberia as African-American pioneers in President Harry Truman's Point Four Program for foreign aid.

As the spouse of a U.S. Foreign Service Officer during the family's tours of duty in Liberia from 1952 to 1957, Muriel was unofficially responsible for developing, cultivating and maintaining diplomatic relationships with President Tubman, key business and government officials of Liberia, citizens and high level visitors to the country: like the future Prime Minister of Ghana Kwame Nkrumah in January 1953.

Muriel was the first Bank Teller for the first indigenous bank in Liberia (Bank of Liberia) founded by her former Morehouse classmate A. Romeo Horton. She taught Early European History and Political Science at Monrovia High School. She gave birth to her two children in Monrovia: Dorothy Davis and Ben Davis.

In 1957, the family was posted to newly independent Tunisia. Muriel repeated the same unofficial diplomatic duties she had in Liberia but faced an even more multicultural and potentially hostile environment. Although women could not attend government activities, Muriel was able to meet Tunisia's first President Habib Bourguiba.

Muriel returned to New Jersey in 1959 to enroll her two children in private school. When she met the principal of The Carteret School of West Orange, he rescinded the school's initial offer for admission to her daughter, Dorothy, because she was African American. On

behalf of her daughter, Muriel filed a complaint with the State of New Jersey Division Against Discrimination of the Department of Education in 1959. She won the next year. This decision enabled African Americans to attend New Jersey's private schools. In June 1967, Muriel taught pre-schoolers at East Orange Co-op Day Care Center until 1980. She became an Investigator for the Essex County Probation Department's Bail Program in Newark until she retired in 1994.

Since her retirement in February 1994, Muriel has traveled across the United States and to France, Ghana, Switzerland, Barbados and the U.S. Virgin Islands and remains friends with people from around the world. She has volunteered for several institutions including the United Black Episcopalians, the Church of the Epiphany, the United Nations International School (UNIS), and the Women's Africa Committee of the African-American Institute.

Ms. Davis is the proud grandmother of Joelle Joseph, Anne-Laure Davis and Daniel Davis. She has lived a life that makes me honored to acknowledge her 90th birthday and wish her another year of happiness.

INAUGURATION OF THE FORT MCDOWELL YAVAPAI NATION TRIBAL COUNCIL

HON. DAVID SCHWEIKERT

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my warmest congratulations to the newly elected members of the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation Tribal Council. Bernadine Burnett was elected to the Council as President, Pamela Mott has been reelected as Treasurer, and Gerald Doka has been reelected as Council Member. I wish them all the best as they govern the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation.

COMMENDING THE SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA VOL- UNTEERS WHO PROVIDED HE- ROIC SERVICE DURING WINTER STORM JONAS

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the selfless assistance provided by many of the volunteer fire department and public assistance agencies from southern and central Pennsylvania during the recent Winter Storm Jonas.

While many of us sought shelter during the recent winter storm that struck the East Coast, some of us were not so fortunate, as was made evident by the miles and miles of cars that were stranded on the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Many of these travelers had gotten trapped on the turnpike as a number of crashes stopped traffic while a huge amount of

snow fell. Fortunately for the beleaguered travelers, a number of local volunteer fire departments from the surrounding communities braved the weather to assist those in need.

For the drivers stranded overnight, these volunteer emergency responders were the only ones who could reach the area to help. As snow continued to fall, these volunteers worked together to ensure the well-being of those stranded by traveling car to car and offering supplies to many. To aid the cause, many local stores and restaurants contributed food and water to be distributed. It was truly a community effort.

On behalf of the 9th Congressional District of Pennsylvania and all of those who were assisted by the area's volunteers, I would like to thank these public servants for their selflessness. It is my honor to highlight this tremendous effort and its illustration of the neighborly commitment my constituents embody.

To the volunteer organizations and governmental agencies listed below, we thank you for your generous dedication to serving the public:

New Baltimore Vol. Fire Co.
Shawnee Valley Vol. Fire Co.
Shawnee Valley EMS
Bedford Fire Co.
Everett Fire Co.
Breezewood Fire Co.
Southern Cove Fire Co.
Alum Bank Fire Co.
Chestnut Ridge EMS
Blue Knob Fire Co.
Claysburg Fire Co.
Martinsburg Fire Co.
Imler Fire Co.
Bedford American Legion
Pa. National Guard
SCMRTF Incident Management Team
DCNR
PEMA
Pa. State Police
Pa. Turnpike
Somerset Co. EMA & 9-1-1
Bedford County EMA & 9-1-1
American Red Cross
Salvation Army.

RECOGNIZING THE ESTABLISH- MENT OF FLOTILLA 77 OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY DIVISION 7

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the chartering of Flotilla 77 of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Division 7. Flotilla 77 was officially recognized in a chartering ceremony on January 23, 2016, in Polk County, Florida.

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary is the volunteer corps that assists the U.S. Coast Guard in promoting boating safety. Formed originally as the Coast Guard volunteer Reserve on June 23, 1939, the volunteer Reserve was renamed the Auxiliary two years later. During World War II, the Auxiliary rapidly expanded as Auxiliarists provided oversight assistance in

many of the Coast Guard surface and air operations, which freed up active duty Coast Guardsman for wartime missions. Today the Auxiliarists support and augment the non-military and non-law enforcement operations including communication watchstanding, public education programs, marine safety, and assisting with search and rescue missions.

The selflessness by which they voluntarily serve and put their lives on the line for our safety and security is inspiring. We honor these brave men and women whose dedication to our great nation have and continue to ensure the safety and security of our ports, waterways and coastal regions.

It is my distinct pleasure, as a representative of the people of Central Florida, to recognize and honor the establishment of Flotilla 77 of the United States Coast Guard. I thank them and their loved ones for their dedication and service to our community and country.

CONGRATULATING DAVID JOHN- SON AND JAMES FERENTZ ON REMARKABLE NFL SEASONS

HON. DAVID LOEBSACK

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate two of my constituents, Arizona Cardinals running back David Johnson and Denver Broncos center James Ferentz, on a remarkable 2015-2016 NFL season. David and James each helped lead their teams to the AFC and NFC conference championship games, and James now has the distinct honor of being called a Super Bowl champion.

Having grown up in Clinton and Iowa City, David and James both know the meaning of hard work. This hard work ethic propelled them from the gridirons of the University of Northern Iowa and University of Iowa to the top of their profession.

Currently in their rookie and sophomore NFL seasons, each has achieved so much in just a few short years. Their successes can be attributed to the family, friends, teachers, and coaches that continue to challenge the future David Johnsons and James Ferentzes of Iowa.

I am honored to represent these men in Congress and look forward to seeing them achieve much more in their careers. The state of Iowa looks forward to watching these young men play on Sundays for years to come.

Congratulations on a great season, David and congratulations on becoming Iowa's Super Bowl champion, James.

HONORING THE LIFE, ACHIEVE- MENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF MAURICE WHITE

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Memphis singer, drummer,

songwriter, producer and founder of the world-renowned band Earth, Wind & Fire, Maurice White. Maurice White was born in Memphis, Tennessee on December 19, 1941, and attended Booker T. Washington High School where he was in the drum corps. After graduating, he and his family moved to Chicago, Illinois and Maurice White enrolled at the Chicago Conservatory of Music. Having developed a love for drums while singing in his church choir in Memphis and watching marching bands, Maurice found work as a drummer in nightclubs and in 1963, he became a session drummer for Chess Records.

While at Chess Records, Maurice recorded with music legends Etta James, Fontella Bass, Muddy Waters, The Impressions, Betty Everett and many more. In 1966, he joined the Ramsey Lewis Trio during a time when the group was one of only a few jazz groups to rise to the upper levels of the pop charts. Maurice White left the group to form the Salty Peppers in 1969 alongside his two friends, Wade Flemons and Don Whitehead. After little success, he moved to Los Angeles, California, recruited new band members including his brother Verdine White and, drawing inspiration from the astrological chart, changed the group's name to Earth, Wind & Fire.

Earth, Wind & Fire signed with Warner Bros. in 1971 but did not gain renowned fame until Maurice, again, brought on new band members, with the exception of Verdine, and signed the band with Columbia. It was then that Earth, Wind & Fire infused its sound with jazz, funk, soul and pop, and recorded the album *Head to the Sky* in 1973, which sold over 500,000 copies and included hit songs *Evil* and *Keep Your Head to the Sky*. In 1974, Earth, Wind & Fire released the album *Open Our Eyes* and reached the pop Top 40 for the first time with the song *Mighty Mighty*. Their next album released just a year later, *That's the Way of the World*, included the group's first and only No. 1 pop hit, *Shining Star*. Earth, Wind & Fire also recorded hit songs *Reasons* (1975), *That's the Way of the World* (1975), *Fantasy* (1977), *September* (1978), *Boogie Wonderland* (1979), and *Let's Groove* (1981), including many more hits and popular songs. Maurice White helped produce seven double platinum albums, two platinum albums, two gold albums and two gold singles.

In addition to writing or co-writing many of the songs for Earth, Wind & Fire, Maurice White produced music for the Emotions, Ramsey Lewis and Deniece Williams, and in 1985, he released a solo, eponymous album and earned a hit with his cover of Ben E. King's *Stand by Me*.

In all, Earth, Wind & Fire had 16 Top 40 singles and sold an estimated 90 million albums worldwide. The group has won six Grammy Awards from seventeen nominations, four American Music Awards from twelve nominations, the BET Lifetime Achievement Award, the NAACP Hall of Fame Award, Soul Train's Legend Award, and has been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the Vocal Group Hall of Fame as well as earned a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. In 2010, Maurice White was inducted into the Songwriter's Hall of Fame along with band members Verdine White, Philip Bailey, Al McKay and Larry Dunn. Earth, Wind & Fire has

earned a list of other awards and recognitions and will receive the 2016 Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.

Maurice White's music was written and produced to inspire and bring all people together. Maurice once said, "Being joyful and positive was the whole objective of our group. Our goal was to reach all the people and to keep a universal atmosphere—to create positive energy. All of our songs had that positive energy. To create uplifting music was the objective." Maurice's goal was easily recognized by all who heard and loved his work. President Barack Obama stated, "Only Maurice could make such sophisticated songs so catchy. Only he could inspire generations of such diverse artists. And only he could get everyone—old and young, black and white—to let the groove move them on the dance floor."

Maurice's universal sound was remembered by Flea, bassist for Red Hot Chili Peppers, who said, "In my junior high school, the white kids loved Zeppelin, the black kids loved p funk [Parliament Funkadelic], the freaky kids loved Bowie, but everyone loved Earth, Wind & Fire. They were just undeniable. Old people loved 'em, kids loved 'em, every race and economic class loved 'em. They just crossed every line with the power of incredible music and amazing performances." Tributes from artists from all genres include mentions of Maurice as a genius, a king, a masterful artist, a leader and a teacher.

Maurice White passed away on February 3, 2016 in Los Angeles at 74 years of age. He was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 1992. The music community has lost one of the greatest musical minds of our time. Maurice White's influence cannot be denied and his contributions are lasting. Maurice White was a true "shining star" and his legacy will shine on for generations to come.

HONORING LORI FLORES

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Lori Flores, a South Texas native and a leading researcher in the fields of Latino and labor history.

Lori attended Yale University, and she was the first woman in her family to earn a college degree. At Yale, she realized her passion to study Mexican American history, ultimately leading her to earn a PhD from Stanford University. Lori's dissertation explored the political development of Mexican Americans and immigrants in California's Salinas Valley during the mid-1900s. Her research on the Latino civil rights movement culminated in the publication of a book which will be released this year.

Lori now teaches at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, where she nurtures the thinkers and dreamers of tomorrow. Dr. Flores has received numerous awards, and she continues to be a role model for young people in her community.

RECOGNIZING DOMINION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR THEIR DISTRACTED DRIVING CAMPAIGN

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize three students from Dominion High School who recently led a Distracted Driving Campaign at Dominion High School in Sterling, Virginia. Kirsten Chun, Bryce Griffin, and Joseph Pavich took on this campaign as part of their Creative Marketing Project, which focused on Distracted Driving and Joshua's Hands. Joshua's Hands is a non-profit organization based in the 10th District whose mission focuses on community service and teen safe driving, founded in memory of Joshua Guthrie who died in a car accident. Their mission is to keep roads safe and to educate teens about the consequences of distracted driving. To create a visualization to meet this awareness goal, these students removed 15 students from classes throughout the day and instructed them to dress in black and not interact with their classmates. This exercise served to represent the 15 people that are killed each day due to distracted driving. Ms. Chun, Mr. Griffin, and Mr. Pavich utilized the school announcement system to convey their message, in addition to selling t-shirts which said "Take Action STOP the Distraction." Students at Dominion also took a distracted driving survey in order to gain a better understanding of their peers' views of distracted driving. These students partnered with Chantilly Autobody in addition to Joshua's Hands for their project.

Driving while distracted seems to plague many of our drivers today, and young people are particularly susceptible to this. I am honored to recognize these students today for their mission to educate their peers about the grave consequences of texting while driving. It is my sincere hope that their project will facilitate more awareness in the future about the growing problem of distracted driving so that our community will remain safe.

DR. AJANWACHUKU TO RECEIVE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Vincent Ajanwachuku, who will be honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Dreamers, Visionaries, and Leaders Project on February 6, 2016. Currently, Dr. Ajanwachuku serves as the chief of surgery at St. Mary Hospital in Apple Valley, California, a position he's held since 2004.

Dr. Ajanwachuku's journey is a remarkable one. Born and raised in Nigeria, he arrived in the United States in 1973 to pursue his undergraduate education at New York University. Eventually, he earned his medical degree from the Howard University School of Medicine and was selected to teach medical students in the discipline of surgery.

During his career in medicine, Dr. Ajanwachuku has received a number of accolades, including "Humanitarian of the Year" from St. Mary Hospital. He was given this award because of his dedication to improving the educational growth and practical experiences of nurses and medical technicians at his hospital. He has also been honored with a "Values in Action" award from St. Mary Hospital for being a servant leader.

It is long overdue that Dr. Ajanwachuku is receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award. He has persevered through significant obstacles during his life, yet he continues to give back to his community and improve the lives of those around him. I want to congratulate Dr. Ajanwachuku for this notable achievement and for being a role model to the youth in the Victor Valley.

RECOGNIZING THE BOCA POINTE
CHAPTER OF AFMDA

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Boca Pointe Chapter of the American Friends of Magen David Adom on the occasion of their ambulance dedication.

Magen David Adom is Israel's emergency medical service, blood bank, and disaster-relief organization. The American Friends of Magen David Adom (AFMDA), a nonprofit organization, is the largest supporter of MDA worldwide. Today, the AFMDA Boca Pointe Chapter will dedicate a fully-equipped ambulance to the people and State of Israel. This is the fourth such ambulance they have donated, a generous gift that truly saves lives.

I express deep appreciation for the Boca Pointe Chapter's selfless humanitarian endeavors. Their unwavering support for the State of Israel not only sets an example for the future but for the South Florida Jewish community as a whole. I am proud to honor them and thank them for their work and service.

HONORING MICHAEL BURNETT,
THE DON SHULA NFL HIGH
SCHOOL COACH OF THE YEAR

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my constituent, Michael Burnett, who the NFL and Washington Redskins recently recognized as the Don Shula NFL High School Coach of the Year. The award was created to honor exemplary high school football coaches who exhibit a commitment to the health and safety of their players as well as integrity in leadership. Michael is the head coach of Tuscarora High School's Varsity Football Team. Following a coaching career in California, he led Broad Run High School in Ashburn, Virginia to two consecutive state ti-

tles. He moved to Tuscarora High School to start their football program. Michael has taken the opportunity as a high school football coach to build character in his players and ensure their growth as both players and leaders. It is fitting that he earned this high honor from the NFL because of his commitment to personal growth in youth and their overall health and safety.

In addition to his recognition by the NFL, Michael will receive \$25,000 from the NFL Foundation which he plans to donate to the Adam Fortune Scholarship Fund, which was created in honor of his close friend and former defensive coordinator at Broad Run and Tuscarora, who died in 2014. The fund is designed for players who exemplify strong character on and off the field. In addition to coaching, Michael teaches Advanced Placement (AP) Economics and serves as Department Chair of Social Studies at Tuscarora High School. I am honored to recognize him today for helping shape young athletes in our community to lead lives of integrity.

CONGRATULATING LAURA KRAUS
ON HER VOLUNTEER WORK WITH
THE LEARN TO READ PROGRAM

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Laura Kraus for her outstanding service to her country through her volunteer work with the Learn to Read program.

Since 1975, Laura's volunteer work has exemplified her love for people and her tireless efforts to give back to the community. Her commitment was no secret: the neighborhood held banquets in her honor, television stations recognized her, and even the nation's leaders honored her service. President Barack Obama signed a letter of recognition and Neal Bush presented the Presidential Bronze Medal of Volunteering Service.

Still, she found the most satisfaction seeing the impact from the people she helped themselves. Her work has always extended to those in the greatest need regardless of physical or psychological obstacles. Volunteering with the Arthritis Foundation, Laura spent time with physically disabled members of the community through Horses for Therapy. In addition, victims of domestic abuse in a Hubbard House, a 24-hour hotline and emergency shelter, were touched by her support as well.

Laura began her training with the Learn to Read program as an intern, eager to assist adults and already willing to persist with compassion and patience through the challenges that were to come. Only a year and a half into the work with her first student, the impact that Laura had on her student was not only evident but incredibly touching, particularly for Laura herself.

Anthony was only 23 years old when he became Laura's first student in the Learn to Read program, struggling to read because of a learning disability. Yet Anthony was dedicated to his goal to create a better future and he never failed to be prompt and respectful

every session. After a year and three months of the hour and a half routine, he articulated a simple and profound truth representative of the impact Laura's work has had for many: "Miss Laura, you have changed my life."

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of Congress to join me in recognizing Laura Kraus for her tireless dedication to serving each person with the care and opportunities that they deserve as a citizen of this great nation.

HONORING THE NAPA COUNTY
LIBRARY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Napa County Library (NCL), which is celebrating its 100th anniversary as a county library system.

In 1916, the California State Legislature authorized the creation of free county libraries around the state. As a result, in February of that year, the unincorporated areas of Napa County gained library services when the Napa County Board of Supervisors established the Napa County Free Library.

The NCL offers reading programs for all ages, outreach services, literacy initiatives, job-search and small business resources, information services, computer training, Internet access, and other means of community support and enrichment. More generally, the library enables individuals to make informed decisions about their self-governance by promoting unrestricted access to information and by serving as a community center for lifelong learning. In the last fiscal year, over 18,000 people received technology-related help, while 567,192 individuals visited the NCL. And over 4,000 adults, children and teens participated in the NCL's summer reading program.

The library's importance extends beyond its bookshelves. Basic literacy and computer-proficiency programs have broad and positive effects on local economies, bolstering the capabilities of local workers and businesses. Furthermore, the NCL's myriad child- and employment-focused initiatives help children and adults find, evaluate and use information they need for their jobs, health, education and success.

Mr. Speaker, the NCL is a dynamic civic resource that promotes free and open access to information, while providing valuable materials and services to all members of the community. The Napa County Library continues to benefit its community immensely, and it is fitting and proper that we honor it here today.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. DINO
ANTONIO PETRUCCI

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Mr. Dino Antonio

Petrucchi of Madera, California who recently passed away on January 4, 2016, at the age of 85. Mr. Petrucci was a remarkable farmer, teacher, and business owner of Petrucci's catering. His commitment to family and to his community will forever live in lives of the people he touched.

Dino Antonio Petrucci was born to Italian immigrant parents, Vincenzo and Ilide Petrucci, on January 17, 1930. His parents were members of the large Italian community who helped settle and pioneer Madera, California with its rich agricultural history. A life-long resident, he attended Madera schools and enrolled at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, where he received his bachelor's degree in crop production. In 1951, he married the love of his life, Peggy Hayes, and they would have celebrated 65 years of marriage this March.

As an Agriculture Education instructor, he found joy in teaching and in expanding students' minds by showing them what they were capable of. All in all, Dino spent 40 plus years of his life devoted to Vocational Agriculture and Education. Although he was a fulltime teacher, Dino would spend evenings, and weekends helping his brother Enzo on the family grape farm.

Dino was also passionate about cooking and in 1974, he initiated his catering business, Petrucci's Catering. He expanded and bought the Howard School building and used it to host events. Saturday's were his favorite, because he loved being at the old school house serving barbecue tri tip, chicken and side dishes. His favorite place to be was at the end of the buffet line greeting everyone, and making sure their plates were full. Dino's love for food was so strong he developed his own barbecue sauce, "Petrucchi's Secret Sauce" and a dry meat rub that are sold locally.

Civil service and giving back to his community were two other areas of interest to Dino. He was active in The Young Farmers, Lions Club and Italo-American Club of Madera. He served on the boards of the Madera County Farm Bureau, Madera County Food Bank, and Madera Unified School District Board of Education. In 1999, he was honored as the Madera County Senior Farmer of the Year by the Madera Chamber of Commerce.

Without question, Dino's integrity, honor, and long-lasting involvement in the Central Valley made him a reputable man; he was well known, well-liked, and shown enormous appreciation by anyone who had the pleasure of calling him a friend. Dino lived his life to the fullest surrounded by family and friends. He leaves behind his loving family, including his wife, Peggy, his two children, and grandchildren. It is my honor to join his family in celebrating the life of this amazing man, who will never be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life of Mr. Dino Antonio Petrucci. We are all better for having known Dino Petrucci, a remarkable Californian, and Central Valley Native.

RECOGNIZING PATRICIA VAIL FOR RECEIVING THE FLORIDA BAR PRESIDENT'S PRO BONO SERVICE AWARD FOR THE 4TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Patricia Vail for receiving The Florida Bar President's Pro Bono Service Award for the 4th Judicial Circuit.

In her legal career, she has served in several capacities, from statewide coordinator for Florida Legal Services to corporate counsel for CSX Transportation. In addition, Patricia has also served on the board of Jacksonville Area Legal Aid. Upon retirement from CSX Transportation, Patricia served in The American Bar Association's Collaborative Europe and Eurasia Law Initiative program as a volunteer lawyer in Kazakhstan. Patricia's commitment to pro bono work for low-income people and her positive impact have been quite remarkable.

Since 2008, Patricia has been a regular presence in Northeast Florida senior citizen centers and HUD residential facilities, where she has become a trusted pro bono legal resource. Patricia meets with individuals and groups as legal questions arise, and she helps prepare simple wills, durable powers of attorney, designation of health care surrogate, and designation of pre-need guardian. For nearly three years, Patricia provided these services single-handedly. When it became clear that the need far exceeded one attorney's ability in 2011, Patricia initiated a program to serve more area seniors with comprehensive and scheduled legal services called Advance Directives for Seniors Project. The Project provides 60–80 seniors annually with complete advance directive packets and has expanded to include senior patients at medical clinics and seniors at the Councils on Aging in Clay and Nassau counties.

In recognition of all her countless hours spent helping needy Jacksonville area residents through pro bono legal work, Patricia Vail was selected to receive The Florida Bar President's Pro Bono Service Award for the 4th Judicial Circuit.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of Congress to join me in congratulating Patricia Vail on winning the Florida Bar President's Pro Bono Service Award.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$18,996,371,521,571.14. We've added \$8,369,494,472,658.06 to our debt in 7 years. This is over \$8 trillion in debt our na-

tion, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

COMMEMORATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREATER PEORIA CHILDREN'S HOME FOUNDATION

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor a remarkable organization in the Peoria area. The Children's Home of Greater Peoria is celebrating 150 years of improving the lives of children and families.

Children's Home (previously Christian Home Mission, Women's Christian Association, and Home for the Friendless) opened in 1866 and is divulged in the principles of lending a helping hand to those in need, specifically women and children. Christian Home Mission was founded by women looking to alleviate suffering among the poor and provide shelter for homeless women and children. The foundation quickly expanded and became too small for the services they wanted to provide.

Children's Home continued to grow and began focusing on children with behavioral and emotional disorders who were abused. By 2009, the foundation furthered their mission in helping children by offering programs focused in special education, community-based opportunities, and live-in care and treatment.

Currently, Children's Home houses six locations and are staffing over 400 professionals to provide services for over 1,700 children and families each month. With each resource, Children's Home tirelessly dedicates itself to achieve its mission: Giving children a childhood and future by protecting them, teaching them and healing them, and by building strong communities and loving families. Because of their efforts, many disadvantaged children have brighter futures.

As a proud husband and loving father of three, I applaud the continual efforts of the Children's Home. Their success equates to our future's success. Congratulations, Children's Home, for its sesquicentennial and I wish the organization many more years of great service to our children.

HONORING PETER TER FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES IN THE PEACE CORPS AFTER COMING TO THE U.S. AS A REFUGEE

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Peter Ter for his outstanding service to his country through his volunteer work with the Peace Corps.

Peter Ter was born in southern Sudan, although his exact birth date is not known because his family, like many others, did not

keep these records. His father and mother, a cattle keeper and farmer respectively, were both illiterate. He lived with his family, including five sisters and three brothers, in a small hut built with wood and mud and thatched with grass.

However, Peter's childhood was cut short due to the breakout of the Second Sudanese Civil War that began in 1983 and lasted for twenty-one years. Like thousands of other children in Sudan, Peter became a "Lost Boy," losing his family in conflict between the warring Sudanese government and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army. After fleeing the violence and enduring a grueling journey, Peter ended up in the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, living what he described as a hopeless life.

While living in the Kakuma camp, Peter completed an application for refugee status in America. In the application, he had to write one page on why he wanted to go to America. He wrote of living a hopeless life in the refugee camp and of how he yearned to go to a place where he could restore his dignity and educate himself—the United States of America.

After two years, Peter's application was approved, and he was resettled in my congressional district in Jacksonville, Florida. Peter went on to graduate from the University of Florida and attended graduate school at Brandeis University in Boston.

After graduation, Peter knew he wanted to give back to the country that had saved him, so he volunteered for the Peace Corps. Since 2009, Peter has served as a cultural ambassador and an international development practitioner in Azerbaijan, China, and the Republic of Georgia, promoting the values of the United States along the way. In his work abroad, Peter has faced many challenges, including blatant racism. However, having faced greater challenges before, he doubled down on his commitment to service and eventually earned respect in the villages and cities where he served.

As the co-chair of the House Peace Corps Caucus, I have the privilege of interacting with and supporting the work of outstanding individuals, such as Peter Ter. America is the world's most generous country, made up of people from around the world, and Peter is proof that this generosity touches those who need it most. I am proud that Peter calls Jacksonville, FL home. Peter has fully utilized the great opportunities presented to him by the United States of America and has dedicated his life to helping others around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of Congress to join me in congratulating Peter Ter on overcoming great obstacles in his life and on his continued success abroad on behalf of our great nation.

HONORING DIANNE EDMONDSON'S
LIFETIME OF DISTINGUISHED
SERVICE

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dianne Edmondson for her distin-

guished service to the Denton County Republican Party.

Dianne Edmondson is a native Texan born in San Antonio. She attended Oklahoma State University where she was a member of the Gamma Phi Beta sorority. In 1983, she founded a successful executive search firm which she later sold in 2006. Dianne and her husband Bob live in Denton, Texas and are blessed with two grown children (and one deceased son) and seven grandchildren. I have had the pleasure of knowing Dianne and Bob for over a decade. Dianne is actively involved in her local community where she has spent her time fulfilling a selfless passion to serve others. Dianne is a member of many civic service organizations and advisory groups including: Vice-Chair of the Denton County Citizens Budget Advisory Committee, Denton County Commissioners' Re-Districting Committee, and Board of Directors of the Denton Chamber of Commerce, among others.

Throughout her adult life, Dianne has been involved in nearly every aspect of the political arena. Dianne is the former Executive Director of Republican National Coalition for Life. She has served as a National Republican Convention Delegate in 2000, former President of the Denton Republican Women's Club, Chair of Senate District 12 Rules Committee, Chair of the 2012 and 2014 State Convention Permanent Organization Committee, and managed or volunteered in dozens of Republican candidates' campaigns for nearly 20 years in Denton County.

In 2002, Dianne was elected as Chairman of the Denton County Republican Party and serves on the Board of the Texas Republican County Chair Association. Dianne has spent countless hours educating voters on public policy and encouraging voter engagement. As a creative planner and master organizer, Dianne has the ability to bring people together around a common goal and vision. She has worked with precinct chairs and candidates to ensure that Denton County remains conservative. As a result, every county, state, and federal elected office in Denton County is held by a Republican.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I would like to thank Dianne Edmondson for her leadership as the Chairman of the Denton County Republican Party. I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing Dianne for her lifetime of service.

HONORING MR. JOSEPH FAZIO ON
HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. LEE M. ZELDIN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay a special tribute to the incredible life of Mr. Joseph Fazio.

Born in 1916 in the Bronx, Joseph was the oldest son of 5 children. Tragically, when Joseph was in high school his father passed away, forcing him to quit school so that he could provide for his family. After receiving a small loan from a friend, Joseph bought his

own truck and subsequently started a trucking business. He worked tirelessly for his customers to ensure they received the best possible service year after year. Joseph's altruism is only one of the many qualities that make him such a wonderful and caring person.

Joseph retired at the age of 65 so that he could truly appreciate the community of Mastic Beach full-time; however, you would not know that by the way he has maintained such an active role in the town's affairs. To name a few of his many contributions to Mastic Beach: Joseph has built floats for the Mastic Beach Parade; built benches for the docks; volunteered for the Annual Seafood Festival; was the former Director of the Mastic Beach Property Owners Association; and enjoys playing the piano for other seniors. When he's not busy helping his fellow community members, he takes great pleasure in gardening, planting hundreds of tomato plants and many varieties of vegetables. He is known as the Beloved Farmer of Mastic Beach, as he generously shared the treasures of his garden with friends throughout the Tri-Hamlet Community. Joe is also a long standing member of St. Jude Catholic Church and Knights of Columbus.

Joseph will be turning 100 years old on March 27, 2016. Joseph, and his lovely wife Ann, are the proud parents of 2 children, 5 grandchildren, and 8 great-grandchildren. Good food, good family, good friends and a strong belief in God have kept him going to 100. I am blessed to serve and represent such an incredible human being like Joseph Fazio in the First Congressional District of New York, and proud to express my gratitude for all he does for his community; as well as wish him a very happy 100th birthday.

CONGRATULATING MICHAEL
WARD, CHAIRMAN AND CEO AT
CSX CORPORATION, ON RECEIVING
THE CITIZENSHIP SERVICE
AWARD BY VOICES FOR NA-
TIONAL SERVICE

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my constituent, Michael Ward, for his outstanding service to his country through his volunteer work with City Year.

Michael has invested tremendous amounts of time, energy and resources to support City Year, an education-focused national service organization that is dedicated to helping our students and school succeed. City Year provides high-impact student, classroom and school-wide support to help students stay in school and to graduate from high school, ready for college and career success. City Year is partners with 27 urban, high-poverty communities across the United States and abroad, and Michael was instrumental in bringing City Year to Jacksonville, Florida.

In addition to serving as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of CSX Corporation, Michael is a dedicated Trustee of City Year and is the Chairman of the local City Year program. In addition to his work with City Year,

Michael also serves on the board of United Way of Northeast Florida and on the board of Hubbard House, which helps victims of domestic violence.

Earlier this year, the Corporation for National and Community Service, the federal agency that oversees millions of American volunteers, faced significant budget cuts that would have forced many national service programs to close. However, Michael took action and led the effort to remind my colleagues that federal investment in national service is vital to improving lives, strengthening communities and uniting the nation.

The drive to protect federal funds for national service succeeded in no small part thanks to the contributions of Michael Ward. In recognition of all of his many contributions to national service, Michael Ward was recently awarded the Citizen Service Award by the Voices for National Service.

As a Member of Congress, I have the privilege of supporting the work of outstanding individuals, such as Michael Ward. Michael has striven tirelessly to ensure to promote education across the country and in my district, and I am proud that Michael calls Jacksonville, Florida home.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of Congress to join me in recognizing Michael Ward for his tireless dedication to educational attainment and congratulate him on receiving the Citizenship Service award.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SARKIS SAHATDJIAN

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Sarkis Sahatdjian of Madera, California, who recently passed away on December 29, 2015—at the age of 95. Mr. Sahatdjian was a remarkable farmer of 80 years, and a generous leader who was proud of his community, and Armenian roots.

Sarkis Sahatdjian was born in Constantinople in 1920 to Armenian parents, Vagharshag and Makrouhi Sahatdjian. The Sahatdjians were survivors of the Armenian Genocide of 1915, an event Sarkis would never forget. His family set sail on an unpredictable journey when Sarkis was two years old, and his brother Haig only five days old. The Sahatdjian family first landed in Buenos Aires, Argentina where they resided for one year and a half. After this the family immigrated to the United States, arriving through Ellis Island, and eventually settling in California's San Joaquin Valley in April of 1924. The Sahatdjians started off as migrant workers, working at canneries and packing houses throughout California following the crop cycles. In 1928, the family bought their first farm—twenty acres of vineyards, where Sarkis worked after school and on weekends while attending Central High School.

After graduating from high school in 1939, Sarkis worked at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard, repairing warships. Sarkis joined the Army Air Force, serving in Guam during World

War II as a military policeman guarding Japanese prisoners of war. After the war he married Iris Odabashian in 1947, and soon after had three children. The couple went on to purchase a farm in Madera, California in 1947, and Sarkis returned to farming.

In 1963, Sarkis and his brother Haig Sahatdjian, purchased raisin processing equipment, placed it on 40 acres in Madera and named it in memory of their late father: Victor Packing. Victor Packing became a full-time farming and packing business when Sarkis and his brother Haig began to process and pack their own raisins along with the raisins of other growers. The business required all hands on deck. Sarkis's wife Iris handled the payroll; their eldest child Victor and his high school friends worked as clean-up crew; and their daughter Margaret and youngest child Bill joined in later. The family company Sarkis co-founded has grown to become a leader in the raisin industry; growing, dehydrating, processing, and packing raisins that are sold and shipped worldwide. Victor Packing remains a family business, and currently employs five of Sarkis's 12 grandchildren. Hard work, desire, and business acumen ultimately paid off for the Sahatdjian brothers.

Not only was Sarkis a well-known businessman, he was also dedicated to serving his community. Sarkis was a board member of the local VFW; a benefactor and delegate of Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church; major donor to California State University, Fresno's Viticulture and Armenian Studies Department; major donor to Fresno Community Hospital; board member of the Armenian Community School of Fresno; founding board member of the Armenian Technology Group; and countless other local, regional and international charities. Further, he was also a major contributor in establishing the Armenian Genocide Centennial Monument, which marked 100 years since the start of the genocide in Armenia in 1915. The monument is displayed at California State University, Fresno and is the first monument on a U.S. college campus marking the genocide.

Without question, Mr. Sarkis's integrity, honor and long-lasting involvement in the Central Valley made him a reputable man; he was well known, well-liked and shown enormous appreciation by anyone who had the pleasure of calling him a friend. Sarkis lived his life to the fullest, surrounded by family and friends. He leaves behind his loving family, including his wife of 68 years, Iris, their two sons and daughter; their spouses, twelve grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. It is my honor to join his family in celebrating the life of this amazing man, who will never be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life of Sarkis Sahatdjian. His commitment to family and to his community will forever live in the lives of the people he touched. We are all better for having known Sarkis Sahatdjian, a remarkable Californian, and Central Valley native.

DR. HAMPTON-HENRY TO RECEIVE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Mildred Dalton Hampton-Henry for her efforts to improve educational outcomes for low-income students in San Bernardino, California. On February 6, 2016, Dr. Hampton-Henry will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Dreamers, Visionaries, and Leaders Project during their annual awards ceremony. It is an honor to highlight Dr. Hampton-Henry's professional achievements today.

A native of Arkansas, Dr. Hampton-Henry arrived in San Bernardino in 1983 and became the executive director of the Provisional Accelerated Learning Center, also known as the PAL Center. The PAL Center provides structured educational services to low-income students from urban environments. The programs at the center strive to reduce the number of high school dropouts in her community.

In addition to her work with at-risk youth, Dr. Hampton-Henry is an accomplished educator. She was the first African American professor to receive tenure at the California State University, San Bernardino College of Education. In addition, Dr. Hampton-Henry taught courses at Southern Illinois University, the same school from which she received her Ph.D. in philosophy.

I want to congratulate and thank Dr. Hampton-Henry for her passion and commitment to bettering her community. She truly embodies the spirit of selfless sacrifice and is well-deserving of the Lifetime Achievement Award that she will receive on Saturday.

RECOGNIZING CARLY CRUMP FOR HER RESEARCH ON THE DENGUE VIRUS AND FOR ATTENDING NOBEL PRIZE WEEK

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Carly Crump on her outstanding research work on the transmission of the dengue virus and on her invitation to attend Nobel Prize Week in Stockholm, Sweden. As the U.S. Congressman of Jacksonville, Florida and the co-chair of the Caucus on Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases it is an honor to recognize Carly for her exceptional accomplishments.

Carly, a graduate of Episcopal School of Jacksonville, Florida, first began her work in her parents' garage breeding mosquitos. Eventually, Carly's work evolved from offering blood meals to these mosquitos to studying the proteins involved in the transmission of the dengue virus, related to the viruses that cause West Nile infection and yellow fever, that can lead to the dengue fever. In her most recent research at Johns Hopkins University, Carly

helped identify 11 proteins that may be involved in the transmission of dengue virus 2 and could set the basis for vaccine development.

As a result of her prestigious work, Carly was invited to attend Nobel Prize Week in Stockholm, one of only 26 young people from 19 countries invited to attend. There, Carly gave a presentation to 1,000 students on her work and interacted with another 2,000 students who stopped at her booth to discuss her project.

Carly has also been recognized as one of the nation's top 16 young STEM researchers by US News and World Report and has won first place at the International Science and Engineering Fair, the Florida Science Fair, and the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium.

Currently, Carly is studying microbiology at the University of Florida and hopes to be a surgeon like her father and her grandfather and to continue her research.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of Congress to join me in congratulating Carly Crump on the success of her research and on attending Nobel Prize Week in Stockholm. Her research and the research of many other rising talents will lead the world to develop cures for this and other devastating diseases that cripple both Americans and our foreign partners alike.

HONORING REV. JAMES ANTHONY NOEL

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of an outstanding member of the Bay Area community, Reverend James Anthony Noel. With his passing on Sunday, January 31st, 2016 at the age of 68, we honor his many years of faithful service.

Born on New Year's Day in 1948, in Queens, New York, Reverend Noel moved to Berkeley, California when he was a young child. He would go on to earn his B.A. from the University of California, Berkeley in 1969, as well as a Master of Divinity degree from San Francisco Theological Seminary (SFTS) in 1975, and his Ph.D. from the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in 1999.

Reverend Noel joined the SFTS faculty in 1988, where he was the H. Eugene Farlough, Jr. Chair of African-American Christianity, as well as a professor of American Religion. He also served as a member of the Core Doctoral Faculty at the GTU, and was the convener of the Black Church/Africana Studies Certificate Program. Reverend Noel received a distinguished professor award from his colleagues at GTU, for his embodiment of scholarly standards, teaching excellence, and commitment to ecumenism.

From 1976 to 1987, Reverend Noel served as the pastor of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Marin City, CA. Following that, until his passing, he was the pastor of New Liberation Presbyterian Church in San Francisco. He also served as interim pastor of Sojourner Truth Presbyterian Church in Richmond, CA.

Considered by many a true renaissance man, Reverend Noel was a gifted painter, with his vibrant artwork on display throughout the Bay Area. Reverend Noel was also a 7th Dan Tae Kwon Do Master, having studied the Korean martial art since he was a teenager. He would also often break into song with his rich bass voice during lectures or sermons.

Reverend Noel is survived by his beautiful wife, Dianna, and his children Michelle, Kaiya, Daniel and Amada. He will be forever remembered for his love, legacy, and the impact he had on the hearts and minds of those whom he touched.

On a personal note, Reverend Noel was a prophetic and prolific preacher. He was a great leader who demonstrated what it means to live a life in service to humankind and to God. We will miss this magnificent man of God who taught us what a spirit filled life means.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes the life of an exemplary individual and devoted community member, Reverend James Anthony Noel. I join all of Reverend Noel's loved ones in celebrating his inspirational life and achievements, and offer my sincerest condolences.

HONORING THE ASIAN PACIFIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Asian Pacific Development Center for its ongoing service to the growing population of Asian American and Pacific Islander residents throughout the state of Colorado and to celebrate its Annual Banquet in recognition of the Asian New Year, the year of the Fire Red Monkey.

The Asian Pacific Development Center is a role model for other communities and works to provide culturally appropriate and linguistically proficient wellness and lifestyle services to enrich the lives of our state's Asian American and Pacific Islander residents.

Originally created to serve Vietnamese refugees 35 years ago, APDC has grown to include a diverse list of communities.

Every day, the Center grants self-sufficiency to these residents so that they may better navigate our shared home.

I, in addition to many community leaders in Arapahoe County and Aurora, attend the Annual Banquet each year as tribute to APDC's efforts, and I am proud to have the opportunity to speak this year in honor of the celebration's 35th anniversary.

I applaud the Asian Pacific Development Center for continuing to empower our state's Asian American and Pacific Islander refugees and immigrants, and thus, for continuing to fight poverty and to address literacy, education, and employment in Colorado.

RECOGNIZING LISC JACKSONVILLE FOR 15 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work of Local Initiatives Support Corporation Jacksonville for its outstanding service to the Northeast Florida community through its transformative efforts to empower citizens and to build up the neediest neighborhoods.

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) is a nationally known nonprofit that works with local leaders to invest in housing, health, education, public safety, and employment. This year marks the 15 year anniversary for its involvement in the Jacksonville community. Over the last 15 years LISC Jacksonville has leveraged almost a quarter of a billion dollars to create affordable housing and community development all while fostering financial stability within the Jacksonville community.

LISC Jacksonville's invaluable efforts within our local community from supporters across the country have turned out \$62.6 million in grants and loans, \$220.7 million in leveraged investments, and \$20 million for the Jacksonville property tax rolls from new homes developed within our community.

Much more than large dollar amounts, multiple areas in Jacksonville are building up an infrastructure able to sustain and promote community development. Approximately 295 homes and 1,509 apartment units were built and 3,100 jobs were created. Tax credits helped to finance the first KIPP charter school of Florida, investments were made in the EverBank Stadium neighborhood, and a business incubator was established with the Beaver Street Enterprise Community.

Representing Northeast Florida, I have the privilege of interacting with and supporting the work of outstanding nonprofits such as LISC Jacksonville and its dedicated workers. The remarkable transformation of our community is proof that no neighborhood is outside the possibility of revitalization and redevelopment. I am proud that these devoted constituents call Jacksonville their home and I believe every community can experience similar success.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of Congress to join me in recognizing LISC Jacksonville for its belief in holistic change, and its long-term commitment that will continue to create a flourishing community for so many people who call Jacksonville home.

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT MAJOR DEBRA J. WILCOX

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Sergeant Major Debra J. Wilcox, an honored veteran that served our country with honor and distinction.

I was saddened to hear about the passing of a daughter of Jacksonville. On behalf of the constituents of Florida's Congressional District Five we salute and pay tribute to SGM Wilcox.

Sergeant Major Debra J. Wilcox was born in Jacksonville, Florida. She volunteered for the U.S. Army and took the oath of enlistment on 19 August 1979 and subsequently completed Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. She completed 35 years, 9 months, 19 days of service.

Her past assignments include: Information Management Specialist, Joint Staff, DOM; Administrative Sergeant, Defense Intelligence Agency; Command Sergeant Major, 436th Transportation Command; Command Sergeant Major, 3/318th MP OSUT; student at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Ft. Bliss, Texas; Administrative NCO, J-5; Training Chief Instructor, HQ/6/80th DIV; NCOIC DCSPER, 5115th Garrison Support Unit; Force Management NCO, 97th ARCOM; PAB NCOIC, 318th Reception Battalion; Test Administrator, MEPS Los Angeles; Mail Clerk, Fort Rucker, AL; Administrative Specialist, 43rd USA Artillery Detachment, Germany.

Sergeant Major Wilcox's military and civilian education includes: Primary Leadership Development Course, Basic and Advanced Non-commissioned Officer Course, Personnel, Administrative, and Training Management Courses, a graduate of the Sergeants Major Academy. She completed a double Master's in Interdisciplinary Studies and an MBA Degree followed with a number of Graduate Certificates.

Her awards and decorations include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal (1st OLC), Army Commendation Medal, Joint Service Achievement Medal (3rd OLC), Army Achievement Medal (4th OLC), Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal (w/ Bronze Star), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal (w/ M, Silver H), NCO Professional Development Ribbon (w/Numeral 4), and the Overseas Service Ribbon.

As twice the Citizen Debra's civilian work includes The Aerospace Corporation, Defense Finance and Accounting Service, and the Department of the Army Inspector General Agency.

Sergeant Major Wilcox is survived by her mother, Jean Walker, two sisters, Cheryl Adams, Deandrous Wilcox; four brothers, George Wilcox, Anthony Wilcox, Vaughn Wilcox, Joe Walker; Aunties; many cousins, Angela, Joy, nieces and nephews, great-nieces and -nephews, and friend John Jackson.

CELEBRATING THE INAUGURATION OF THE BETTY RODRIGUEZ RE- GIONAL LIBRARY

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of the late Betty Rodriguez and inauguration of the state of the art Betty Rodriguez Regional Library named in her

honor. The newly reconstructed 14,000 square foot library located in east-central Fresno features 25 computers, a 3-D printer, and robotics kits, making it Fresno County's newest, most technologically advanced library. The library also features a meeting room for 50, group study spaces, and a separate quiet reading room. The site on which the Betty Rodriguez Regional Library exists, is nearly double the size of its 40 year predecessor, and creates a significant advancement for the City of Fresno. This new library serves as a reminder to all of the life of Betty Rodriguez, and the legacy she created within the community through her selfless dedication to others.

Mrs. Rodriguez was an individual of outstanding character and throughout her career, achieved a great deal of success and impacted the lives of many. Mrs. Rodriguez was an inspiration to all, especially to students and young children, teaching them that through hard work and education, they are able to achieve success in their lives. Mrs. Rodriguez dedicated her life to serving as a role model for our youth by motivating them to dream big and to work hard. Demonstrating her strong commitment to our youth, Betty was a member of Friends of the Fresno County Library, and was a great supporter of the Boys and Girls Club of Fresno County, the Boy Scouts of America, the Girl Scouts of the United States of America, and the Special Olympics.

Public service was important to Mrs. Rodriguez, and she was very active in many community organizations. For example, Betty served on Fresno's Torreon Sister City Committee, a non-profit organization that supports the development of partnerships between U.S. cities and cities around the world. She also helped to launch the League of Mexican American Women in 1973 in order to help women in her community become more politically aware and to facilitate the contribution of their services for schools and organizations. For her contributions to the Mexican-American community, she was awarded the "Medalla de Ohtli" by the Institute of Mexicans Abroad, in 2009.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering a woman who always demonstrated a strong commitment to serving others. The new library, located near Cedar and Clinton Avenues in Fresno, will rightly bear the name of someone who has positively influenced the lives of so many people in the community. Her memory will live on through her family and will continue to serve as a reminder to all who access the state of the art library. It is a beautiful tribute to the life of Mrs. Betty Rodriguez, and I know she will continue to inspire others through her ever-lasting presence at the Betty Rodriguez Regional Library.

CONGRATULATING MILDRED OGILVIE FOR CELEBRATING HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mildred Atkinson Ogilvie, for celebrating her 100th birthday on January 1, 2016.

Mildred Ogilvie was born the youngest of nine children to Jesse and Agatha Atkinson in Callahan, Florida on January 1st, 1916. Mildred's parents passed away when she was still young, but her older siblings kept the family together and continued to raise them in Callahan. In 1932 at the age of 16, Mildred married Bill Ogilvie. Mildred and Bill had four children together—Marlin, Dallas, Harold, and Cheryl.

Mildred has lived her entire life in Northeast Florida. While raising her four children, Mildred also helped her husband Bill run his many businesses, including grocery stores and laundromats.

Mildred celebrated her birthday at the Jacksonville Nursing and Rehabilitation Center surrounded by 35 family members, including nieces, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren. Her niece, Gwen Harvey, fondly recalled walking to Mildred and Bill's grocery store to see their beautiful smiling aunt, knowing that she would walk away with a cold Pepsi-Cola.

Despite being orphaned at a young age, Mildred and all eight of her siblings went on to become successful adults.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of Congress to join me in congratulating Mildred Ogilvie on overcoming great obstacles, serving as a model for a life well lived, and on celebrating 100 full years of life.

IN HONOR OF DR. ANDREW J. VITERBI RECEIVING THE CHARLES STARK DRAPER PRIZE FOR ENGINEERING

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of Rep. SCOTT PETERS, Rep. DUNCAN HUNTER, and Rep. SUSAN DAVIS today to congratulate Dr. Andrew Viterbi on being awarded the Charles Stark Draper Prize for Engineering for the development of the Viterbi algorithm.

One of the world's preeminent awards for engineering achievement, The Charles Stark Draper Prize for Engineering was established in 1988 at the request of the Charles Stark Draper Laboratory Inc., to honor the memory of "Doc" Draper, the "father of inertial navigation," and to increase public understanding of the contributions of engineering and technology. The National Academy of Engineering annually awards the prize in recognition of innovative engineering achievements and their reduction to practice in ways that have led to important benefits and significant improvement in the well-being and freedom of humanity.

Andrew J. Viterbi is president of the Viterbi Group, which advises and invests in startups in the digital and wireless communication fields. As cofounder of Linkabit in 1968 and Qualcomm in 1985, he led the development of innovative technologies based on code division multiple access. In addition to his career in the communication industry, Viterbi was a professor at the UCLA School of Engineering and Applied Science from 1963 to 1973 and then taught part-time at the University of California, San Diego, where he has been professor emeritus since 2004. Viterbi received

his Ph.D from the University of Southern California (USC), where he and his wife Erna Viterbi made a naming gift to rename the USC engineering school the Viterbi School of Engineering. Viterbi was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1978 and the National Academy of Sciences in 1996.

Andrew J. Viterbi developed the Viterbi algorithm as a method for enhancing error-correcting code used in telecommunication, making it easier to eliminate static in transmissions. The Viterbi algorithm has had the greatest impact in digital cellular phones, but it is also used in other applications such as cable, DSL modems, and Ethernet. The Viterbi algorithm has also been instrumental in interplanetary communication signals, allowing for greater signal strength in deep space missions such as the Mars Pathfinder, the Mars Exploration Rover and the Cassini probe to Saturn. Usage of the Viterbi algorithm has been expanded to include speech recognition, speech synthesis, keyword spotting, computational linguistics, and bioinformatics.

Mr. Speaker, we would echo the National Academy of Engineering President C. D. Mote, Jr. who said "The Viterbi algorithm has led to significant benefits to the health, safety, and well-being of the world's citizen. His work embodies the prize's mission, which is to recognize an engineer whose accomplishments have meaningfully impacted society."

COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING BRIGADIER GENERAL TRACY L. SMITH ON BECOMING THE FIRST WOMAN GENERAL OFFICER FROM GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Tracy L. Smith on her promotion to Brigadier General in the U.S. Army. BG Smith is the first woman from Guam to attain a general officer rank in the U.S. military, and she currently serves as the Deputy Commander, U.S. Army Reserve Medical Command. She was nominated by President Barack Obama on April 13, 2015 and confirmed by the U.S. Senate on April 30, 2015. She received her first star during a ceremony at the Army Reserve Medical Command in Pinellas Park, Florida on January 24, 2016.

BG Smith is part of a strong heritage of exceptional men and women from Guam who have bravely and dutifully served our nation in uniform. Her promotion to Brigadier General is an important milestone in her career and a reflection of her perseverance, dedication, and commitment to service. As the first woman general officer from Guam in any of the U.S. military services, BG Smith is a role model for future woman servicemembers and her promotion is source of pride for our island.

Brigadier General Smith was born on Guam and started her career of service nearly thirty years ago. She, like many families from Guam, comes from a proud military family; her father, Franklin Artero, is a retired Sergeant

Major in the U.S. Army, and her brother, Audie Artero, is a Lieutenant Colonel in the Guam National Guard. She was commissioned as Second Lieutenant after completing the Reserve Officers Training Corps program at the University of Guam. Since then, she has held a number of posts in the military medical field. A natural trailblazer, she earned the recognition of being the first Active Guard and Reserve Commander of the 865th Combat Support Hospital in Utica, New York. During her military career, BG Smith has earned numerous awards and recognitions, including the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star.

I join the people of Guam in commending and congratulating Tracy L. Smith on her distinguished career and promotion to Brigadier General in the U.S. Army. I look forward to her continued service to our nation, and I am confident that as she assumes this new position, she will continue to inspire not only the soldiers she commands, but also women in Guam and throughout our country. I also extend my congratulations and appreciation to husband, retired Army Sergeant Scott Smith, and her entire Artero and Smith families.

HONORING BASMA ALAWEE FOR HER OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF FELLOW REFUGEES

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Basma Alawee for her outstanding service to her country through her work in the community advocating on behalf of fellow refugees.

Basma's impact began two years ago, when she came with her husband, Ali Aljubouri, and their daughter Dana, to Jacksonville, Florida from Iraq in order to escape persecution resulting from their assistance to the United States. Not only did they come to America for a better life, but they have bettered the lives of those now around them.

Now in North Florida, the two have both given much back to their adopted community. Basma teaches middle school girls at the Foundation Academy much more than just math and science. Through example, she instills the value of taking initiatives and the importance of making a difference in the lives of others. To do this, she brings her classes to visit a local nursing home and organizes clothing at the church's thrift store. Her husband, Ali, contributes to the Christian academy through his work as a chef and a soccer coach, both bridging gaps in different religious communities.

For Basma, the work doesn't end when the school day is over. Basma has been volunteering with refugee-resettlement agencies, working as the Florida delegate to the UNHCR, and even founding the Iraqi Family Organization so that the Iraqi community could support one another.

The increasing conflict in the Middle East has threatened the future of refugees to the United States. Basma, who became an Amer-

ican citizen in July, wrote an essay with great courage, telling her own story in response to the political rhetoric about banning Muslims and refugees from certain countries. Her expressions of the struggles she faced and the love she had for America were simple, yet the message was clear and powerful.

As a Member of Congress, I have the privilege of interacting with and supporting the work of outstanding individuals, such as Basma Alawee. America is the world's most generous and diverse country, and Basma is proof that this generosity touches those who need it most. I am proud that Basma and her family call Jacksonville, FL their home. Basma has fully utilized the great opportunities presented to her by the United States of America and has dedicated her life to fostering community in Jacksonville and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of Congress to join me in recognizing Basma Alawee, not only for overcoming incredible challenges as a refugee, but for her dedication making this country a home for her family, her neighbors, and those who have dreams of escaping conflict for a better life.

HONORING MR. DOUGLAS HEUSER ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE SEE SCIENCE CENTER

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my congratulations to Douglas Heuser on his retirement from the SEE Science Center after 32 years, and thank him for the outstanding work he did during his career.

Mr. Heuser's commitment to promoting and instilling a love of science in people across the Granite state has been a critical aspect of his dedication to education. Under Mr. Heuser's leadership, the SEE Science Center has grown from a staff of one to a staff of 23 and the center has grown from 4,500 square feet to 45,000. This expansion exemplifies Mr. Heuser's outstanding management abilities and successful marketing techniques.

The creativity, knowledge and experience Mr. Heuser brought to New Hampshire during his time at the SEE Science Center has been invaluable, and it's clear he leaves an example of strong leadership for others to emulate in his wake.

It is with great admiration that I congratulate Mr. Heuser on his retirement, and wish him the best on all future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF GEORGIE CLARK

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments and celebrate the tourism award being presented to a truly remarkable woman and dear friend, Georgiana

Clark. Today, the National Tour Association at their annual convention in Atlanta, Georgia, is recognizing Mrs. Clark with the Pioneer Award for her lifetime dedication to the tourism industry in the United States. I have known Georgie and her late husband, Norman, since the early 1980s. They are the founders and operators of a family attraction in Santa Cruz County: Roaring Camp Railroads. The goal of the Clark Family was to freeze a period in time so visitors can step across the authentic wooden covered bridge and step back in time to the 1880's.

Norman and Georgiana Clark realized their family owned tourist attraction would never be able to financially afford the worldwide marketing needed to make their attraction a success, but they believed in cooperative marketing. Georgiana and Norman were the founders of what is today Cal Travel but was founded as the California Travel Industry Association and were the founders of what today is known as US Travel but was founded as the Travel Industry Association of America.

After Norman's passing in 1985, Georgiana went on to launch the company's second rail service, the Santa Cruz, Big Trees & Pacific Railway, the train from the California Redwoods to the beaches of Santa Cruz, Monterey Bay and the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. I'm proud to say I was part of the original dedication ceremony when this tourist attraction began in Santa Cruz County. Today Roaring Camp is a thriving tourist attraction hosting many historical events and one of the largest Day Out With Thomas (Thomas the Tank Engine) events in the world.

Georgiana Collins Clark was born in 1935 Honolulu, Hawaii. She learned the importance of tourism at a very young age. Georgie and her sisters would make leis and sell them to arriving visitors to Honolulu as they disembarked off of cruise ships. Remember—back then there was no commercial air services. Georgiana later became a stewardess for Aloha Airlines where she met her husband, Norman on a flight. After Norman and Georgiana were married they settled in to their new home on the property of Roaring Camp where together they raised their three daughters Chemene, Melani and Kapiolani. Today two of their daughters work in tourism; Melani is the CEO for Roaring Camp Railroads and Kapiolani is an Operations Director at the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim.

Georgiana has played such a huge part in so many lives but especially to her family and friends. As the National Tour Association recognizing Georgiana P. Clark for her lifetime contribution to tourism, I am proud to say I have watched this family owned and operated attraction grow and flourish over the years.

Mr. Speaker, I know I speak for the whole House in celebrating Georgiana P. Clark's amazing spirit and offering our congratulations to her on her lifetime of dedication to the tourism industry.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LIFE OF JAMES J. PAVLICIN

HON. DAVID W. JOLLY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jim Pavlicin, a resident of Gulfport, Florida, who passed away on January 7, 2016. James Joseph Pavlicin was born and raised in Westbury, New York, the son of United States Navy veteran and Nassau County Police Detective Michael Thomas Pavlicin and his wife, Margaret Josephine (née Clay).

During World War II, Jim's mother sewed three blue stars on her Military Service flag, as all three of her sons, members of the Greatest Generation, defended our nation overseas. Following his older brothers—Mike, who served in the United States Navy, and George, who served in the United States Marine Corps—Jim joined the United States Army. In the post-war period, he was assigned to the Military Police Honor Guard, IX Corps Headquarters, in Sendai, Japan.

Returning home, he married his beloved wife of sixty years and eight months, Mary (née Horton). Settling on Long Island, New York, Mary and Jim raised four children: James (Annie), William (Debra), Jo Ann (Van), and Robert (Melissa); had seven grandchildren: Jessica (Sean), Amy (Matt), Kellie (Brandon), William, Rachel, Matthew, and Rebecca; and five great-grandchildren: Kaelyn, Matthew, Sam, Jacob, and Thomas. A sixth great-grandchild, Brandon Jr., will be born this month. He is also survived by two sisters, Mary Elliott and Margaret Clark, and dozens of nieces and nephews.

Jim was a proud member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers for fifty-five years. He enjoyed gardening, sport aviation, and travel, and was a master woodworker. Mary and Jim retired to Gulfport in 1998 after four years of living in a recreational vehicle and seeing this beautiful country. They belonged to the Gulfport Presbyterian Church, and were active and avid volunteers with the Experimental Aircraft Association, and the Sun 'n Fun Fly-In & Expo, Florida's largest convention. In 2012, Jim and his daughter Jo Ann participated in an Honor Flight, along with many other veterans from the Tampa area, traveling to Washington to visit the National World War II Memorial along the Mall.

Jim's goal in life was to "build a better mouse trap"—and most of the time, he did. He always had a smile on his face, and was happiest when he was with his family, helping others, telling a story, or singing. At his funeral, his grandchildren recounted how meaningful it was to hear their grandfather say to them, "Good job. I'm proud of you."

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to honor James J. Pavlicin, whose life and service reflect great credit upon himself, his family, and his community. He will be remembered as a man who selflessly answered his country's call; as a devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, son, brother, and uncle; and as an important part of Florida's 13th Congress-

sional District. My wife Laura and I offer our prayers for his wife, Mary; children, Jim, Bill, Jo, and Bob; and the rest of his large, loving family, as we remember and honor the life of Jim Pavlicin.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MAY YING MARY YANG

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of May Ying Mary Yang of Merced, California who passed away on November 22, 2015, at the age of 69. Mrs. Yang's family and friends will miss her greatly as she dedicated her life to assisting those she met and always strived to make a difference in the community.

May Ying Mary Yang was born on October 1, 1946 in Xieng Khouang, Laos. When she was 15 years old, she married a military man, Ge Paul Yang, whom she would spend the rest of her life with. In 1975, the Yang family made the decision to flee from the war in Vietnam with their 8 children in order to seek refuge in a refugee camp in Thailand, prior to immigrating to the United States. When they arrived to the refugee camp, the Yang family had no money or food for their children and faced numerous hardships. Additionally, while living in the refugee camp, the family witnessed many children dying from malnutrition and diseases. It goes without saying that Mrs. Yang overcame many struggles in her life and managed to persevere in order to provide her family with a safe future lifestyle.

Throughout her life, Mrs. Yang touched many lives. Her commitment to her husband, Ge Paul Yang played a huge role in his career. Further, Mrs. Yang was known as an intelligent woman with a big heart, who was compassionate and always encouraging. She actively made a difference in her community alongside her husband, preparing meals, planning community events, and engaging in social work. The Yang family did this as a means to maintain a strong Hmong group within the community.

Mrs. Yang's work led to more Hmong individuals believing in the concept of "giving more than what one is called upon to give." Her work was instrumental to the development of the belief that women should be equal and that equality is not based on gender. These beliefs were instilled in Mrs. Yang's children and she always encouraged them to succeed.

Further, the dedication Mrs. Yang had to serving her community; her integrity, honor, and long service to the Central Valley made her a cherished figure. Her commitment to family and to her community will forever live in the lives of the people she touched. It is my honor to join Mrs. Yang's family in celebrating a life that will never be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering a great woman of tireless service and dedication to her community. Mrs. Yang's memory will live on through her family and be remembered by our entire community.

TO AMPLIFY CONCERNS OF IMMIGRANT DEATHS IN PRIVATE PRISONS

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the first sections of a terrific article, entitled, 'This Man Will Almost Certainly Die' by Seth Freed Wessler, and published by The Nation. As we continue to discuss Criminal Justice Reform, I hope that this article can be invaluable resource to my colleagues.

Where Claudio Fagardo-Saucedo grew up, on the colonial streets of the Mexican city of Durango, migrating to the United States was almost a rite of passage. It was following the stream of departures from Durango in the 1980s that the lanky young man left his family and traveled north. His mother, Julieta Saucedo Salazar, heard that he'd found jobs working as a laborer in Los Angeles. But they soon lost touch. "We did not know much about him, really," his younger sister told me.

This article was reported in partnership with the Investigative Fund at the Nation Institute, with support from the Puffin Foundation. It will be part of the February 6 episode of Reveal, a new podcast and public radio show produced by The Center for Investigative Reporting and PRX. Fagardo-Saucedo worked, his jobs sometimes taking him out of California, and occasionally he got into trouble—once for "possession for sale" of cocaine, another time for stealing jewelry. Every seven or eight years, his mother recalled, he'd return to her house—but never by choice. "They caught him all the time for being illegal," Julieta said. She always hoped her wandering son might stay, get to know the family again, but he never did. "He would be here a month, and then he'd go again."

In the summer of 2003, immigration agents detained Fagardo-Saucedo on his way back to California, but this time the Border Patrol referred him to federal prosecutors, who charged him with "illegal re-entry," or returning to the United States after deportation. He served nearly five years before being sent back to Mexico. Again, he tried to return. Early one morning in August of 2008, Fagardo-Saucedo triggered an infrared sensor as he and two others ran across the border near Tijuana. He pleaded guilty in a U.S. District Court to another "illegal re-entry" charge. The judge sentenced him to four years in federal prison.

When Fagardo-Saucedo arrived at Reeves, a prison complex in rural West Texas, he entered a little-known segment of the federal prison system. Over the previous decade, elected officials and federal agencies had quietly recast the relationship between criminal justice and immigration enforcement. These changes have done as much to bloat the federal prison population as the War on Drugs; they have also helped make Latinos the largest racial or ethnic group sentenced to federal custody.

Until the 1990s, border crossing was almost always treated as a civil offense, punishable by deportation. But in the late 1980s, Congress started to change that. By 1996, crossing the border after deportation was punishable by years of imprisonment, with enhanced sentences for people previously convicted of crimes—most often drug offenses.

Though federal investigators have found no evidence that criminalization has reduced the pace of border crossings over the long term, prosecutions for illegal entry and re-entry rose from fewer than 4,000 a year at the start of Bill Clinton's presidency, to 31,000 in 2004 under George W. Bush, to a high of 91,000 in 2013 under President Obama.

By the late 1990s, the flood of inmates from this new class of prisoner, coupled with a raging War on Drugs, sent the Bureau of Prisons searching for places to put them. The BOP turned to private companies to operate a new type of facility, low-security prisons designed to hold only noncitizens convicted of federal crimes. As of June 2015, these facilities—which are distinct from immigration detention centers, where people are held pending deportation—housed nearly 23,000 people.

Three private companies now run 11 immigrant-only contract prisons. Five are run by the GEO Group, four by the Corrections Corporation of America, and two by a privately held company called the Management & Training Corporation. (A third MTC prison was recently shut down after inmates ransacked it in a protest.) Except for a prison largely used to house inmates from Washington, DC, these 11 facilities are the only privately run prisons in the federal criminal-justice system. In 2013, the BOP spent roughly \$625 million on them. The contracts include the provision of medical care, for which the companies often hire health-services subcontractors. In one such facility in Reeves County, Texas, the BOP entered into an agreement with the county, which in turn hired GEO to operate the prison and Correct Care Solutions to manage prison healthcare.

The BOP's contracts with these facilities are meant to cut costs. Though the prisons are part of the federal infrastructure, the companies that run them operate under a different—and less stringent—set of rules in order to allow cost-cutting innovations. As a retired BOP contracting official said in an interview, "The more specificity you put in the contract, the more money the contractors are going to want for performing the service."

At least five times since 2008, inmates have rioted in the BOP's contract prisons. The unrest has often come after medical-care complaints. (Pecos Enterprise, Smokey Briggs / AP)

Repeated federal audits and reports have found these facilities to be in crisis. Prison medical care is notoriously bad, but for years, immigrant- and prisoner-rights advocates have sounded the alarm about these sites in particular, describing them as separate and unequal, segregated on the basis of citizenship. "These prisons operate without the same systems of accountability as regular Bureau of Prisons facilities, and prisoners suffer," said Carl Takei, an ACLU attorney who coauthored a 2014 report documenting the subpar conditions.

Yet the full scale of the medical neglect at these immigrant-only contract prisons has remained opaque—until now. After two years of negotiations with the BOP in and out of federal court over an open-records request, I obtained more than 9,000 pages of medical records that contractors submitted to the BOP. They include the records for 103 of at least 137 people who have died in federal contract prisons from 1998 (the year after the first one opened) through the end of 2014. The records all concern men; women are sent to regular BOP-run prisons. The documents include nurse and doctor notes, records from hospital visits, psychological files, autopsies,

and secret internal investigations. In their pages can be found striking tales of neglect. Each case file—sometimes hundreds of pages long—was reviewed by at least two independent doctors who rendered opinions on the adequacy of the medical care provided. Some of the case files are meager and appear to be missing pages. But of the 77 that provided enough information to render a judgment, the doctors found that 38 contained indications of inadequate medical care. In 25 of these—a third of the total—the reviewers said the inadequacies likely contributed to the premature deaths of the prisoners. In only 39 cases did at least one reviewer find indications that the care had likely been in accordance with recognized medical standards.

Combined with interviews with relatives and cellmates of the deceased inmates, and with correctional officers and medical staff, the files tell the story of men sick with cancer, AIDS, mental illness, and liver and heart disease, forced to endure critical delays in care. They show prison medical units repeatedly failing to diagnose patients correctly despite obvious and painful symptoms, as well as the use of underqualified workers pressed to operate on the borders of their legal scope of practice. The files also show men dying of treatable diseases—men who very likely would have survived had they been given access to adequate care.

Fagardo-Saucedo, then 43, was booked into Reeves, run by the GEO Group and a separate medical contractor, on January 27, 2009. When he arrived, the facility was in tumult. Six weeks earlier, inmates at the sprawling 3,700-bed complex had rioted, protesting the death of a man who was left in solitary confinement for a month without proper treatment for his epilepsy; he died after suffering a seizure. Four days after Fagardo-Saucedo's arrival, the prisoners rioted again when another sick man was reportedly placed in segregation.

According to the BOP, prisons holding people who will be deported don't require the same level of inmate services as regular prisons. (Josh Begley)

Reeves was still recovering from the unrest when a prison physician scrawled a cursory note in Fagardo-Saucedo's file. The doctor noted that the inmate had arrived from pretrial detention with records indicating that he'd tested positive for latent tuberculosis and had complained of headaches. BOP rules require that TB-positive inmates also be tested for HIV, but an HIV test was never performed. Indeed, over the next two years, Fagardo-Saucedo wasn't seen by a medical doctor even once.

After three weeks in Reeves, he began to show up in the clinic complaining of pain—first tooth pain, then headaches, then nausea and back pain. Over two years, Fagardo-Saucedo went to the clinic 18 times. He was seen on nearly all of these occasions by one of a rotating group of licensed vocational nurses, or LVNs. Usually, the LVN sent him back to his bed with a prescription for Tylenol or ibuprofen. Meanwhile, his body was signaling a fatal breakdown, something that doctors who reviewed his case said should have been caught by the facility's care providers.

The training for LVNs (known as licensed practical nurses, or LPNs, in some states) takes only a year. They are taught to change dressings, check blood pressure, help patients bathe, and gather basic information. They're often hired to provide routine care in nursing homes or to assist registered nurses in hospitals. Unlike the RNs, who provide patients with substantive medical care

and perform triage and evaluations, LVNs are intended as support staff.

This is the reason that BOP-run prisons rarely hire LVNs, said Sandy Parr, a vice president in the federal correctional officers' union and formerly a registered nurse in a federal prison. "LVNs are too limited to make sense to hire," she said. Yet in the BOP's immigrant-only contract prisons, LVNs often appear in the files as the sole caregivers that sick prisoners see for days or weeks. They seem to perform jobs equivalent to those of registered nurses, a practice that prison medical staff confirm. In 19 of the cases reviewed, at least one medical doctor flagged the overextension of LVNs as a factor impeding proper medical care.

In only 39 of 77 cases did a reviewer find that the care had likely been in accordance with recognized medical standards.

Martin Acosta, a Salvadoran man who served time in Reeves for illegal re-entry at the same time as Fagardo-Saucedo, began complaining of abdominal pain late in the summer of 2010. Over four and half months, he went to the clinic more than 20 times. Other than a doctor's visit a month after his complaints began, he saw only nursing staff until the last two weeks of his incarceration; on 14 of those occasions, he saw only LVNs. Notes in the handwritten medical logs and nursing templates reveal a cascade of missed signs indicating serious illness, said doctors who reviewed the files. The prison medical staff described Acosta as a difficult patient; one thought he was simply trying to obtain a prescription for narcotics. Acosta was sent back to his room with nothing but Maalox nine times. Physicians who reviewed the files said the nurses appear to have missed the larger story of a protracted medical condition.

"For prison medicine to work, a doctor has to be able to trust the people who work there," said Dr. Neal Collins, a retired BOP and immigration detention-center physician and clinical director who reviewed the Acosta files. "If they have competent nurse practitioners, then they can trust that the system is catching it. But when people don't know what to look for, that's what you worry about."

In significant discomfort on one of his many trips to plead for help, Acosta told an LVN that he'd vomited a dark substance and had seen blood in his stool. He asked to be sent to a hospital, and the LVN took a stool sample. Leafing through the file, I expected to find a hospital referral or at least the test results. Instead, the records suggest that the LVN eyeballed the stool sample and deemed it unremarkable. There's no indication in the files that lab tests were performed or a doctor was called. When Acosta finally saw a physician at Reeves in December 2010, he could no longer eat. He was transferred to a hospital, where a massive tumor was found in his abdomen. Acosta was ultimately diagnosed with severe metastatic stomach cancer.

In early 2014, an LVN at another facility—this one run by MTC—similarly failed to complete a basic test. Tasked with evaluating a man who complained of chest pains, the LVN attempted to use an electrocardiogram machine. But he wrote in his notes that he couldn't get the machine to work because the patient's "skin is oily and electroids [sic] did not stick." Rather than call a doctor, the LVN checked a box marked "No action indicated at this time" on the form for chest-pain complaints. The patient later died of a heart attack, despite subsequent treatment. Doctors who reviewed the

file were divided about whether the shoddy care contributed to his death. In the aftermath of the 2008 and 2009 riots at Reeves, BOP monitors began to visit the facility more regularly to check on healthcare conditions. But the increased oversight accomplished little: Each time the monitors returned, they found that Reeves had failed to fix the problems. One year after the riots, Reeves remained derelict. "The lack of an internal system of administrative and clinical controls has contributed to the provision of less than adequate medical care," the monitors wrote.

Acosta's common-law wife, Guillermina Yanez, showed me a photograph of him before his illness. Acosta appeared youthful and strong, his T-shirt hugging muscular arms. Then Guillermina showed me a picture taken after she and the couple's 2-year-old daughter, Tania, boarded a bus from Atlanta to visit him in the hospital. Acosta's frame was now skeletal, his face sunken, his chest tattoo pinned to paper-thin skin. "I asked a question to the guards: 'Looking at him, how could you have left him to look like that?'" Guillermina recalled.

Acosta died in late January 2011. In a will that a nurse's assistant at the hospital helped him prepare, Acosta wrote: "I want the deed to my house and land"—in a small town by a river on El Salvador's far eastern edge—"to be placed in the name of the mother of my daughter." Salvadoran officials facilitated the return of Acosta's body to the country of his birth. Martin Acosta's daughter, Tania, shows pictures of her father before and after stomach cancer drained away his body, and life. (Courtesy of the Martin Acosta family)

"By the time he got to the hospital, it was too late," said Collins, the retired prison doctor. "If this case went to court, would they win a malpractice suit? Yes, I think they would."

Reeves continued to fall short. The Justice Department's inspector general, Michael Horowitz, released the results of an audit of the facility in April 2015. The audit found that Reeves's medical contractor at the time, Correctional Healthcare Companies, had failed to meet contractual staffing obligations in the medical unit for at least 34 of the 37 months from 2010 to 2013. The BOP may have incentivized the understaffing: The financial penalties for failing to fill open LVN positions were so modest that it cost CHC less simply to leave them vacant. The inspector general is currently conducting a broader investigation of the BOP's contracting. About the understaffing in the medical unit at Reeves, Horowitz asks: "Why was it happening for 34 to 37 months? Why wasn't that caught before we showed up?"

The rest of the article can be found at <http://www.thenation.com/article/privatized-immigrant-prison-deaths/?nc=1>.

IN RECOGNITION OF OUR STELLAR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard working School Board members of Clear Creek Independent School District.

Our school board members of Clear Creek ISD in the 22nd Congressional District of

Texas play a critical role in the success of our schools. Our district is the most diverse and fastest growing congressional district in America, due largely in part to the hardworking and caring educators and school board members that dedicate their time and energy on our schools; ensuring that our children can achieve whatever they set their mind to. Our school board members were elected or hired to be the caretakers of the American Dream—any child can be anything they want—if they receive the education that will give them the necessary tools to achieve their dream. Our schools are stronger because each of them embrace the challenge.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, thank you again to Clear Creek ISD for being Super-Heroes in developing our leaders of tomorrow.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize American Heart Month and to acknowledge the tireless advocacy of the staff and volunteers of the American Heart Association, and the organizations in my home state of New Jersey and across the country. They work this month, and year round, in the effort to raise awareness of heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases. The Association is leading the charge in increasing visibility of American Heart Month through coordinated campaigns, such as National Wear Red Day on February 5, Go Red For Women, and a congressional briefing on February 24.

American Heart Month provides a critical platform to promote public awareness and heart-healthy lifestyles. The American Heart Association focuses on seven health factors and behaviors that increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, or CVD. These areas of prevention include smoking cessation, physical activity, healthy diet and body weight, as well as managing cholesterol, blood pressure, and blood sugar. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the leading cause of heart disease and stroke is uncontrolled high blood pressure. Outlining these areas gives us the knowledge to focus our prevention efforts in the fight against CVD.

The statistics speak for themselves. CVD is the leading cause of death nationally and globally. One in three American deaths is caused by CVD, a disease which claims the life of an American every forty seconds. To fully understand what that means, in 2013, the most recent year for which data is available, CVD killed over 800,000 people in America. In addition to the lives it claims, over eighty-five million Americans are currently living with CVD and its effects. CVD also has a real impact on our national economy. Annually, the economic cost of CVD is over \$316 billion. \$1 of every \$6 spent on health care in this country is spent treating CVD.

That said, there is good news. The efforts of the advocates are working. The mortality rate from heart disease has fallen by 38 percent.

This is encouraging, but there remains so much more to be done.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the good work being done in my home state in the fight against CVD. The American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association are funding nineteen Founders Affiliate research awards in the state of New Jersey.

In my own Congressional district, the Meridian Health Foundation's "Women's Heart Fund"—focused on promoting heart health in Monmouth and Ocean Counties—has worked to promote heart health awareness and raise funds for heart health at the Meridian Health System including the Jersey Shore University Medical Center, Riverview Medical Center, K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital, and Bayshore Community Hospital.

Each year, the Fund selects and supports a cardiac initiative. In 2015, the Fund supported the Community of LifeSavers program. Working together with the American Heart Association, Community of LifeSavers equips everyday people with the skills to perform CPR. Over 5,000 students from seventeen schools have been trained, at no cost to the schools or students, since the program's inception.

I am honored to have served as co-chair of the Congressional Heart and Stroke Coalition since the 113th Congress. This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Coalition's establishment and our numbers have grown to over one hundred members of Congress. Over the past twenty years our bi-cameral, bi-partisan Coalition has served as a resource for all members of Congress and worked to advance federal policies that raise the quality of life for individuals with heart disease.

The American Heart Association and the Coalition work in partnership to raise awareness of CVD and provide those of us making funding and policy decisions with the tools and information to address the problems most critical to those affected by CVD.

Heart and stroke patients, as well as their loved ones and caregivers, need vocal advocates on Capitol Hill to ensure access to quality care and treatments. We have a duty to see that programs aimed at combating CVD, as well as medical research for prevention and treatment of stroke and heart attacks are supported appropriately at the federal level.

As we look forward to promoting awareness during American Heart Month, it is important to remember that the work continues year round. Finally, I would like to acknowledge my colleagues who are fellow members of the Congressional Heart and Stroke Coalition and thank them for their efforts. I encourage those members who have not yet joined the Coalition to do so. The Coalition will continue to work with the Association throughout the year in the fight against America's number one killer.

IN RECOGNITION OF OUR STELLAR
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard-working School Board

members of Needville Independent School District.

Our school board members of Needville ISD in the 22nd Congressional District of Texas play a critical role in the success of our schools. Our district is the most diverse and fastest growing congressional district in America, due largely in part to the hard-working and caring educators and school board members that dedicate their time and energy on our schools; ensuring that our children can achieve whatever they set their mind to. Our school board members were elected or hired to be the caretakers of the American Dream—any child can be anything they want—if they receive the education that will give them the necessary tools to achieve their dream. Our schools are stronger because each of them embrace the challenge.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, thank you again to Needville ISD for being Super-Heroes in developing our leaders of tomorrow.

KINGWOOD HIGH SCHOOL AT THE
PAN AMERICAN DEBATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Kingwood High School Debate team has been invited to compete at the Pan American Schools Debate Championships in Vancouver, Canada on March 16th, 2016. The competition is organized by the Pan-American Debate Organization (PADO) and aims "to promote debate in the Americas, and to encourage high school students to participate in international competitions."

Members of Team Kingwood include Morgan Lee, junior; Reese Grayson, senior; Colette Faulkner, junior—also the designated alternate to Team USA; Connor Smith, junior; Gaurav Gawankar, junior. The team is coached by Audra and Jason Langston. These students will not only be representing their high school, but the state of Texas as well. As they enter the competition, the Texas students will face competitors representing Argentina, Bermuda, Canada, Chile, Mexico, Peru, USA and Venezuela. The Kingwood team will be the only team that will represent a high school, rather than a country.

The principles of open debate have long been a lifeblood to our democracy. Society is shaped every day by open conversation, public opinion and debate. The great debaters, men like Patrick Henry, Daniel Webster, and John C. Calhoun shaped American society, bringing democracy to a new born nation. Debaters like Margaret Thatcher broke barriers, improved economies, and shaped their countries' policies for an entire generation. Great Debaters are leaders who have had an impact on our society.

These students have taken the first step towards becoming future leaders. Debate teaches students how to speak both powerfully and persuasively, fosters critical thinking, and how to defend their point of view. As a former de-

bater, Judge and Congressman, I know that it's important to learn how to make a point.

Congratulations to the Kingwood Debate team. Good luck at the Pan American Championships.

And that is just the way it is.

IN RECOGNITION OF OUR STELLAR
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard working School Board members of Stafford Municipal School District.

Our school board members of Stafford MSD in the 22nd Congressional District of Texas play a critical role in the success of our schools. Our district is the most diverse and fastest growing congressional district in America, due largely in part to the hardworking and caring educators and school board members that dedicate their time and energy on our schools, ensuring that our children can achieve whatever they set their mind to. Our school board members were elected or hired to be the caretakers of the American Dream—any child can be anything they want—if they receive the education that will give them the necessary tools to achieve their dream. Our schools are stronger because each of them embrace the challenge.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, thank you again to Stafford MSD for being Super-Heroes in developing our leaders of tomorrow.

RESTORE THE VOTE

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today is both Restoration Tuesday, and the New Hampshire Primary, our nation's first primary of the election season. As Americans head to the polls today, let us all be reminded that today will be the first presidential primary in the past 50 years where Americans will not be afforded the full protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

New Hampshire is one of 16 states with new voting restrictions that have been implemented since the Supreme Court gutted Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act. Unfortunately for voters in New Hampshire, a new voter-ID law will be in full effect for the first time today.

New Hampshire's voter ID law is designed to require those without a photo ID to sign an affidavit and have their picture taken, a motif clearly designed to intimidate and imply suspicion of criminality. The authors and proponents of the law have yet to make the case for the need or intended use of the photos. In addition to intimidation, the law will undoubtedly lead to longer lines at the polls, further inhibiting access for those who have to return to work.

Congress has had two years to answer the Supreme Court's call to develop a modern day formula for preclearance under the Voting Rights Act, and therefore prevent such dangerous laws from being implemented. But here we are, on the day of the New Hampshire Primary, and nothing has been done to restore the vote. Election season has commenced, and Americans cannot wait any longer.

Thousands of our constituents will face new barriers to voting throughout this election cycle. From African American communities in my home state of Alabama, to Native American communities in Alaska, Asian American communities in California and Latino communities in Texas, thousands of minority communities across America will be met with modern-day barriers to the ballot box due to our inaction. Any attempt to restrict a certain portion of our electorate is a threat to our democracy, whether that is through voter ID laws, the closure of driver's license offices, or the scaling back of early voting.

While these don't appear to be as egregious as literacy tests and poll taxes, they represent modern-day attempts to achieve the same goal—to restrict the voice of a portion of the electorate.

I respect the differing opinions of my colleagues on issues of economic, energy, education, and foreign policy. However, I cannot comprehend how we can disagree on something as American as protecting the right to vote. Voting Rights is not a partisan issue. It is a pillar of our democracy.

As the primary season begins, I urge my colleagues to co-sponsor the Voting Rights Advancement Act and join me and many others in urging Speaker Ryan to bring this bill to the floor for a vote.

IN RECOGNITION OF OUR STELLAR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard working School Board members of Alvin Independent School District.

Our school board members of Alvin ISD in the 22nd Congressional District of Texas play a critical role in the success of our schools. Our district is the most diverse and fastest growing congressional district in America, due largely in part to the hard-working and caring educators and school board members that dedicate their time and energy on our schools; ensuring that our children can achieve whatever they set their mind to. Our school board members were elected or hired to be the caretakers of the American Dream—any child can be anything they want—if they receive the education that will give them the necessary tools to achieve their dream. Our schools are stronger because each of them embrace the challenge.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, thank you again to Alvin ISD for being Super-Heroes in developing our leaders of tomorrow.

TEXAS 4000

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, during the summer months of 2016, TEXAS 4000, a University of Texas non-profit organization, will host their annual summer bike ride: the longest charity bicycle ride in the world (as they say, everything's bigger in Texas). The ride starts in Austin, TX and stretches 4,000 miles across the country to Anchorage, Alaska. Participating in this ride are 75, carefully selected, University of Texas college students. These 75 UT students will commit 70 days of their summer to complete the 4,000-mile ride, utilizing each day to raise awareness about cancer prevention, detection, and research in the communities they visit along the way. One of the 75 UT students, Jeffery Saeling, happens to be a constituent of mine.

Jeffery attended Kingwood High School in Texas from 2008 to 2012. During his senior year, in 2012, he was nominated as the Kingwood High School student of character for exhibiting responsibility, respect, trustworthiness, fairness, caring and citizenship; consequently, I, along with Dr. Guy Sconzo, the superintendent of Humble ISD, and Texas State Representative, Dan Huberty had the pleasure of meeting Jeffery, where we experienced firsthand the quality of his character. Four years later, in 2016, Jeffery's continued display of character is one of the reasons he was selected to participate in the TEXAS 4000's summer ride. However, selection for the ride is only the beginning.

Once selected to participate, each rider is expected to raise \$4,500 and volunteer at least 50 hours in their community. On top of this, riders must commit to dedicate time and effort in the planning, preparation, and execution of the summer ride. These lofty expectations coupled with the physicality of the ride work in tandem to cultivate volunteers and philanthropists dedicated to eradicating cancer. However, this wouldn't be possible without TEXAS 4000, the non-profit organization responsible for the 4000-mile ride.

Their mission: to share "hope, knowledge, and charity through leadership development, grant making, and their 4,000 plus mile bike ride from Austin to Anchorage: They share hope by letting those affected by cancer know that they are riding for them and fighting for a world without cancer; they share knowledge by bringing life-saving information about cancer prevention to communities and providing leadership development training to tomorrow's leaders; and they share charity by contributing to cancer research and cancer support services while developing the next generation of volunteers and philanthropists."

To date, TEXAS 4000 has raised over \$5 million for distribution to various organizations such as M.D. Anderson and the American Cancer Society. Their impact and influence is not contained by the boundaries of the community they operate within, it spans nationwide.

Organizations, like TEXAS 4000, and people, like Jeffery Saeling, represent some of the

best my district and Texas has to offer. Their selflessness, dedication, and volunteerism stand as a shining example of the type of quality Americans who call Texas home. Their mission is honorable and their hearts huge. And that's just the way it is.

HAPPY 25TH ANNIVERSARY TO COLONY ONE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Colony One Auto in Stafford, Texas on its upcoming 25th anniversary. Colony One has been open since April 15, 1991.

This quarter century anniversary reflects 25 years of hard work, commendable service and quality relationships built within the community. Colony One's commitment to excellence and their customers has resulted in high praise and positive reviews on Angie's List, among other service review websites. Their dedication to their business and their community has also enabled them to be on track to work on their 250,000th automobile during this year, averaging 11,000–12,000 a year since the business opened. Colony One has remained a friendly, reputable business for the community. We appreciate their business and are proud to see their success.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to Colony One Auto for 25 years of successful, quality service.

THANKING JUANITA CAMPBELL FOR HER SERVICE TO THE LI- BRARY OF CONGRESS

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank Ms. Juanita Campbell, who is retiring after more than forty-two years of outstanding service to the United States Congress.

Ms. Campbell retired in January as a Manager of Legislative Data, with more than four decades of service to the Library of Congress. She first started working for the Library in 1973 as a high school student, at which time she served as a Library Aide working on the National Union Catalog. Ms. Campbell went on to become a Clerk Typist in 1974 and, soon after, joined the Congressional Research Service's Economic Division as an Editorial Assistant. Three years later, she moved to the American Law Division, originally called the Bill Digest Section, where she helped track and summarize all pending public legislation. Since 1996, Ms. Campbell has served as a Manager of Legislative Data. Through the years, she has been a highly reliable and knowledgeable liaison to House and Senate staff, relaying bill status information and sharing her expertise on the interaction of the different legislative information management systems.

Ms. Campbell has been focused intently on improving access to legislative proceedings. She aided in the transition of where transcripts and details of legislative proceedings could be found: from only being available through a Library of Congress database, with a limited range of users, to their availability on the internet through the THOMAS website, which everyone can access. Ms. Campbell's knowledge was invaluable during the recent transition to the more modern Congress.gov.

Ms. Campbell has been instrumental at increasing legislative transparency and moving Congress into the digital age. The services she helped develop are invaluable to Congress, the public, and our democracy. The work of her unit, particularly on bill status information, has vastly increased accessibility to the legislative database as well as documentation. Her keen attention to detail has been largely responsible for the high quality of work the Library and CRS's legislative service provides.

Throughout her career, Ms. Campbell's thoughtfulness and positive attitude have earned her the respect and confidence of countless Congressional and CRS staff. As a manager responsible for much of what makes complex information not merely reliable but understandable, she has always demonstrated a passion for teamwork, learning, and problem-solving.

Although Ms. Campbell will be retiring, her many accomplishments will stand as a fitting tribute to her as a professional and as a patriot. Ms. Campbell's presence will be greatly missed. On behalf of this House, I congratulate Juanita Campbell on her retirement and thank her for her dedication and outstanding contributions to the institution. I wish her the best in all her future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF OUR STELLAR
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard working School Board members of Katy Independent School District.

Our school board members of Katy ISD in the 22nd Congressional District of Texas play a critical role in the success of our schools. Our district is the most diverse and fastest growing congressional district in America, due largely in part to the hard-working and caring educators and school board members that dedicate their time and energy on our schools; ensuring that our children can achieve whatever they set their mind to. Our school board members were elected or hired to be the caretakers of the American Dream—any child can be anything they want—if they receive the education that will give them the necessary tools to achieve their dream. Our schools are stronger because each of them embrace the challenge.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, thank you again to Katy ISD for being Super-Heroes in developing our leaders of tomorrow.

MOURNING THE LOSS AND HONORING THE UNFORGETTABLE
LIFE OF MAURICE WHITE

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, it is with a deep sadness and a heavy heart that I rise today to pay tribute to Maurice White, a man who touched the hearts of millions of Americans as a founding member of the legendary band called Earth, Wind & Fire.

Maurice "Reese" White was born on December 19, 1941, in Memphis, Tennessee.

From a young age he displayed a true talent for playing music.

He left Memphis to study music in Chicago at the elite Chicago Conservatory of Music.

In 1963, Maurice White began working as a session drummer for Chess Records. Soon after, he began playing with the Ramsey Lewis Trio. In 1969, he formed his own band, the Salty Peppers. After moving to Los Angeles, California, Maurice White renamed the band as Earth, Wind & Fire. He asked his younger brother, bassist Verdine White, to join his band. The band's first album failed to become a break out hit, which prompted Maurice White to shuffle the membership. Maurice White brought in several new members that included singer Philip Bailey, keyboardist Larry Dunn, and guitarist Al McKay. The band began experimenting with jazz, R&B, funk, soul, pop music, and African sounds.

Then in 1973, with the new band members and a new sound, Earth, Wind & Fire released their first hit album titled Head to the Sky, selling more than 500,000 copies. The group continued to build on that success by producing a succession of gold and platinum albums throughout the 1970s and the early 1980s. Maurice White helped compose many of the band's hits and the songs that helped define the decade: "Shining Star," "That's the Way of the World," "Reasons," "September," and "Let's Groove." Maurice White won six Grammys with Earth, Wind & Fire, and received a solo award for his arrangement of "Got To Get You Into My Life." Maurice White and Earth Wind & Fire were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2000.

Also, in 2000, Maurice White revealed to the world that he had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. This announcement served as an explanation to his legion of loyal fans around the world for his decision to withdraw from performing. Despite the effects of his health condition, Maurice White decided to remain active in the Music industry by founding a new recording label called Kalimba Records. He also collaborated on Hot Feet, which was a musical set to Earth, Wind & Fire songs. Then in 2010, Maurice White was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame. After a long battle with Parkinson's disease, Maurice White passed away in his sleep on February 3, 2016 in Los Angeles, California. Mr. Speaker, Maurice White leaves behind a legacy as one of the most innovative and unique artists and songwriters of the 21st century.

IN RECOGNITION OF OUR STELLAR
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard working School Board members of Pearland Independent School District.

Our school board members of Pearland ISD in the 22nd Congressional District of Texas play a critical role in the success of our schools. Our district is the most diverse and fastest growing congressional district in America, due largely in part to the hardworking and caring educators and school board members that dedicate their time and energy on our schools; ensuring that our children can achieve whatever they set their mind to. Our school board members were elected or hired to be the caretakers of the American Dream—any child can be anything they want—if they receive the education that will give them the necessary tools to achieve their dream. Our schools are stronger because each of them embrace the challenge.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, thank you again to Pearland ISD for being Super-Heroes in developing our leaders of tomorrow.

IN RECOGNITION OF OUR STELLAR
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard working School Board members of Fort Bend Independent School District.

Our school board members of Fort Bend ISD in the 22nd Congressional District of Texas play a critical role in the success of our schools. Our district is the most diverse and fastest growing congressional district in America, due largely in part to the hardworking and caring educators and school board members that dedicate their time and energy on our schools; ensuring that our children can achieve whatever they set their mind to. Our school board members were elected or hired to be the caretakers of the American Dream—any child can be anything they want—if they receive the education that will give them the necessary tools to achieve their dream. Our schools are stronger because each of them embrace the challenge.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, thank you again to Fort Bend ISD for being Super-Heroes in developing our leaders of tomorrow.

IN RECOGNITION OF OUR STELLAR
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard working School Board members of Lamar Consolidated Independent School District.

Our school board members of Lamar Consolidated ISD in the 22nd Congressional District of Texas play a critical role in the success of our schools. Our district is the most diverse and fastest growing congressional district in America, due largely in part to the hard-working and caring educators and school board members that dedicate their time and energy on our schools; ensuring that our children can achieve whatever they set their mind to. Our school board members were elected or hired

to be the caretakers of the American Dream—any child can be anything they want—if they receive the education that will give them the necessary tools to achieve their dream. Our schools are stronger because each of them embrace the challenge.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, thank you again to Lamar Consolidated ISD for being Super-Heroes in developing our leaders of tomorrow.

SENATE—Wednesday, February 10, 2016

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, glorious in strength and marvelous in majesty, we ascribe to You the glory due Your Name. You have elevated this Nation and sustained it through its history. Keep us from forgetting that righteousness exalts, but sin destroys.

Lord, infuse our Senators with the spirit of humility, enabling them to refuse to become legends in their own minds. May they cultivate esteem for others, seeking for opportunities to practice the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. As they work to find common ground, give them Your wisdom and peace.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Democratic leader is recognized.

CLEAN POWER PLAN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I was disappointed last night to learn that the Supreme Court temporarily halted the implementation of President Obama's Clean Power Plan program. This was an especially stunning move by the Supreme Court, given that just weeks ago the DC Circuit Court of Appeals categorically rejected a halt in the Clean Power Plan and States do not need to start implementing the plan until 2022.

This shortsighted decision by the Court's five conservative Justices is an unfortunate setback. It unnecessarily puts into question a major part of our country's effort to address climate change and protect our environment. Notwithstanding my amazement, I remain confident that the Obama administration's carbon rules are legally sound and will prevail in the courts.

In the landmark case *Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency*,

the Supreme Court itself directed the Environmental Protection Agency to address climate change if carbon pollution was found to be a danger to human health. Based on enormous scientific evidence, the EPA did make that finding and the Agency is required by law to regulate carbon pollution. I can't imagine that the Supreme Court would take such an unprecedented and drastic step at this time. But the unparalleled nature of the Supreme Court's decisions show why Congress must play a role in addressing climate change.

Climate-denying Republicans in the House and Senate might applaud this decision, but their refusal to protect Americans from the impact of climate change is the real loss for our country.

NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS LEGISLATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is no nation on this planet more dedicated to fear and intimidation than North Korea. Its leader Kim Jong Un is a brutal dictator. He will stop at nothing to keep his power intact and his people isolated. That has been proven.

To accomplish these objectives, the North Korean Government relies on threats to Japan and other neighbors and, of course, the United States. Recently, the number of alarming developments out of North Korea has accelerated. These acts of aggression are extremely concerning to the American community, as they should be.

Last Saturday, North Korea defied international warnings and launched a rocket using ballistic missile technology. This was a flagrant violation of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions. This came less than a month after North Korea detonated a nuclear device, also in clear violation of international law.

That brings us to yesterday, when the U.S. Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, confirmed that North Korea has restarted a plutonium reactor. The Director estimated that North Korea would be able to recover fuel from its reactor within a matter of weeks or months.

The international community quickly condemned these incidents, as it should have. President Obama has been a leader in pushing back against the saber-rattling from North Korea. He has worked to galvanize the world in opposing North Korea's provocative and destabilizing behavior. Under the President's leadership, the United States has built a global coalition, including China and Russia, to impose sanctions against North Korea.

There is an international consensus that North Korea's actions violate international law and threaten our allies and partners in the region. Here in the Capitol there is also broad bipartisan agreement that there must be consequences for North Korea's provocations. The House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed new sanctions legislation. Now the Senate must act. We need to do it today. Two weeks ago the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously approved the sanctions bill that is now before this body.

This legislation would require the President to investigate and sanction any person who knowingly imports into North Korea certain goods, technologies, service, training or advice concerning weapons of mass destruction. It also directs the President to investigate and sanction people who engage in human rights abuses, money laundering and related activities, and cyber terrorism or other cyber vandalism.

In addition, the legislation authorizes \$15 million to transmit radio broadcasts to North Korea for the next 5 years. These are commonsense steps that Congress should take in response to North Korea's unwarranted provocation. Everyone in the Senate agrees that North Korea's aggression cannot go unanswered. Its actions threaten the peace and security of the region and, actually, the world. I hope my colleagues will join with me in passing this legislation today to send a message to Kim Jong Un that his reckless behavior will not go unanswered.

TRIBUTE TO ED PESCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I so admire the family we have here in the Senate. Many people work ceaselessly to make sure the Senate runs well. In the Senate Periodical Press Gallery, a small group of nonpartisan staffers helps the congressional press office to work together with the communications staff of Senators and their committees. Their fingerprints can be found on nearly every part of the Senate's business.

The Senate Periodical Press Gallery facilitates key parts of Senate business, including press access, print and digital media planning, security protocols, and communications across hundreds of thousands of media platforms. For over 15 years, one man has been at the helm of this exceptionally fine team. His name is Ed Pesce. After graduating from Loyola University in 1990, Ed began working in the Senate Periodical Press Gallery. During his 26

years of service, Ed has always acted with warmth and professionalism.

As the news industry transitioned from sole dependence on print and traditional mediums to a thriving combination of print and digital media, Ed ensured the Senate Periodical Press Gallery was not left behind. He created the first Web site for the Senate Periodical Press Gallery way back in 1999 and developed a social media communications program since then.

Ed has been a trailblazer in the news industry and a principal leader here in the Senate. He has served under 11 Sergeants at Arms. During countless historic achievements here in the Senate, he has seen so much. When asked what they will miss most, Ed's coworkers recall his infectious laughter and dedication to team building.

Last year, Ed announced that he would retire after more than two decades of service. I congratulate him for his many dedicated years of remarkable service. I wish Ed and John, his husband, all the best in the years to come. On behalf of my colleagues, our staff, and the entire congressional community, I extend my gratitude to Ed for his tireless commitment to the Senate.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO ED PESCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I too wish to say a few words about Ed Pesce, who today, after 25 years of Federal service, is retiring as the director of the Senate Periodical Press Gallery. Ed has been a fixture around here for years. You could usually find him right outside the Chamber, behind the saloon swinging doors of the Senate Periodical Press Gallery.

When George Mitchell was the majority leader, that is where you found him. When Bob Dole had the job, that is where you found him. It has been true ever since. But you can sometimes find Ed in other places too. Some mornings you can spot Ed at the gym on a spin cycle. Later in the evening, you might see Ed queuing for the premiere of a Star Wars sequel, maybe even a prequel.

At almost any other time, you likely would find Ed buried in a book. Fiction is one of his favorite genres; history is the other. He certainly witnessed plenty of it firsthand. He oversaw media planning and execution for six Presidential inaugurations, for half a dozen Republican Conventions, and for just as many Democratic ones, not to mention hundreds of congressional hearings and press conferences.

Ed is a Baltimore native who came to the Senate Periodical Press Gallery

shortly after graduating from Loyola. He diligently worked his way through the ranks, and after a decade spent learning the tricks of the trade, he assumed his current role back in 2000. The job has brought Ed in contact with thousands of Senate staffers and congressional reporters. It necessitated many long hours and plenty of late nights. It presented ample amounts of tense situations as well.

But Ed never lost his good attitude or his boisterous laugh. Just ask his staff. "Fun-loving," "thoughtful," "tough, but fair"—that is how people who work closest with Ed describe him.

At 6 feet 2 inches, Ed Pesce is hard to miss, but I know he will be missed here in the Senate when he leaves. He took on a tough job with a great attitude. He gained a lot of fans. It is a legacy that anyone could be proud of. I think I can speak for my colleagues when I say that we thank Ed for his many years of service. We send him our best, and we look forward to seeing what he will be able to accomplish in the next chapter of his life.

NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today the Senate has an opportunity to pass bipartisan legislation that would add to our Nation's ability to hold North Korea accountable for its growing aggression. North Korea threatens regional stability and our own national security. It threatens allies in the region, especially South Korea and Japan.

As General Clapper stated yesterday, it is a country that will continue to advance its nuclear program. I would urge my colleagues to vote yes to the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act today so we can work toward keeping our Nation and our allies safer.

CLEAN POWER PLAN REGULATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now on yet another matter, a few years ago the Obama administration rolled out a massive regulatory scheme they dubbed a "Clean Power Plan," an odd choice, given that it would not have a meaningful impact on global emissions or the health of our planet. Here is what those massive regulations likely would do, though: ship middle-class jobs overseas, punish the poor, impose more pain on Kentucky coal families who just want to put food on the table—all for the sake, one must assume, of letting well-off folks on the left feel better about themselves for "doing something."

It is pretty clear that the administration's energy regulations threaten a lot of middle-class pain for hardly any substantive environmental gain. There

is another huge problem too. These regulations are, in my view, likely illegal. Yesterday's Supreme Court order is just the latest sign of that. If nothing else, it shows we were right to let Governors know their options. We thought Governors should know they could take a wait-and-see approach before locking their States into some massive regulatory scheme. We thought Governors should know the economic jeopardy they would place their States in by moving ahead without a clearer understanding first of what might be legally required. We thought Governors should not feel bullied by the heavy hand of this administration. That cautious approach was the most responsible one, in my view. Yesterday's decision shows it was a prudent one as well. We will see what the Supreme Court ultimately decides, but we are going to keep fighting against these regressive regulations regardless.

It is worth remembering how we got here in the first place. President Obama tried to push a regressive, anti-middle class energy tax through a Democratic-controlled Congress, and his own party said no. That was in 2010 when Democrats controlled the Senate. They said no. He simply went around Congress to impose a similarly regressive plan anyway.

Kentuckians in the eastern part of my State are experiencing a severe depression—a depression that policies such as these are only making worse. I have repeatedly invited Gina McCarthy and the President to my home State to see the devastation firsthand. They have yet to accept. But even if they won't come to us, we have brought the concerns of Kentuckians directly to them. For example, we have brought constituents to administration hearings in Washington to try to make people here listen.

I put myself on the Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior so that I could have a stronger influence in the oversight of the EPA budget. It has given me the opportunity to shed light on the struggles of my home State and question officials like Gina McCarthy. It has given me the chance to push for policy riders in legislation that would undermine or overturn these regulations in their entirety. I have repeatedly done so and will continue to do so. I have also worked successfully with Members of both parties to pass measures through Congress that would also overturn these anti-middle class regulations in their entirety.

President Obama pulled out all the stops to defeat previous attempts to pass riders. He vetoed the bipartisan measures we passed through Congress. But he cannot stop the Supreme Court from making the right decision, as we hope it ultimately will. He also cannot stop the American people from electing a successor who is ready to support the middle class.

Here is the bottom line. I think we owe it to the people under attack to represent them and to stand up on their behalf. The Americans whom these regulations attack have committed no crime. They have done nothing wrong. They are human beings with families. It is about time we had an administration that treated them that way. Until then, we will keep fighting and we will celebrate important progress along the way, just as we did with yesterday's Supreme Court action.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2016

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 757, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 757) to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the “North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016”.

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Findings; purposes.

Sec. 3. Definitions.

TITLE I—INVESTIGATIONS, PROHIBITED CONDUCT, AND PENALTIES

Sec. 101. Statement of policy.

Sec. 102. Investigations.

Sec. 103. Reporting requirements.

Sec. 104. Designation of persons.

Sec. 105. Forfeiture of property.

TITLE II—SANCTIONS AGAINST NORTH KOREAN PROLIFERATION, HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, AND ILLICIT ACTIVITIES

Sec. 201. Determinations with respect to North Korea as a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern.

Sec. 202. Ensuring the consistent enforcement of United Nations Security Council resolutions and financial restrictions on North Korea.

Sec. 203. Proliferation prevention sanctions.

Sec. 204. Procurement sanctions.

Sec. 205. Enhanced inspection authorities.

Sec. 206. Travel sanctions.

Sec. 207. Travel recommendations for United States citizens to North Korea.

Sec. 208. Exemptions, waivers, and removals of designation.

Sec. 209. Report on and imposition of sanctions to address persons responsible for knowingly engaging in significant activities undermining cybersecurity.

Sec. 210. Codification of sanctions with respect to North Korean activities undermining cybersecurity.

Sec. 211. Sense of Congress on trilateral cooperation between the United States, South Korea, and Japan.

TITLE III—PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Sec. 301. Information technology.

Sec. 302. Strategy to promote North Korean human rights.

Sec. 303. Report on North Korean prison camps.

Sec. 304. Report on and imposition of sanctions with respect to serious human rights abuses or censorship in North Korea.

TITLE IV—GENERAL AUTHORITIES

Sec. 401. Suspension of sanctions and other measures.

Sec. 402. Termination of sanctions and other measures.

Sec. 403. Authorization of appropriations.

Sec. 404. Rulemaking.

Sec. 405. Authority to consolidate reports.

Sec. 406. Effective date.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSES.

(a) *FINDINGS.*—Congress finds the following:

(1) The Government of North Korea—

(A) has repeatedly violated its commitments to the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of its nuclear weapons programs; and

(B) has willfully violated multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions calling for North Korea to cease development, testing, and production of weapons of mass destruction.

(2) Based on its past actions, including the transfer of sensitive nuclear and missile technology to state sponsors of terrorism, North Korea poses a grave risk for the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

(3) The Government of North Korea has been implicated repeatedly in money laundering and other illicit activities, including—

(A) prohibited arms sales;

(B) narcotics trafficking;

(C) the counterfeiting of United States currency;

(D) significant activities undermining cybersecurity; and

(E) the counterfeiting of intellectual property of United States persons.

(4) North Korea has—

(A) unilaterally withdrawn from the Agreement Concerning a Military Armistice in Korea, signed at Panmunjom July 27, 1953 (commonly referred to as the “Korean War Armistice Agreement”); and

(B) committed provocations against South Korea—

(i) by sinking the warship Cheonan and killing 46 of her crew on March 26, 2010;

(ii) by shelling Yeonpyeong Island and killing 4 South Korean civilians on November 23, 2010;

(iii) by its involvement in the “DarkSeoul” cyberattacks against the financial and communications interests of South Korea on March 20, 2013; and

(iv) by planting land mines near a guard post in the South Korean portion of the demilitarized zone that maimed 2 South Korean soldiers on August 4, 2015.

(5) North Korea maintains a system of brutal political prison camps that contain as many as 200,000 men, women, and children, who are—

(A) kept in atrocious living conditions with insufficient food, clothing, and medical care; and

(B) under constant fear of torture or arbitrary execution.

(6) North Korea has prioritized weapons programs and the procurement of luxury goods—

(A) in defiance of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1695 (2006), 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013), and 2094 (2013); and

(B) in gross disregard of the needs of the people of North Korea.

(7) Persons, including financial institutions, who engage in transactions with, or provide financial services to, the Government of North Korea and its financial institutions without establishing sufficient financial safeguards against North Korea's use of such transactions to promote proliferation, weapons trafficking, human rights violations, illicit activity, and the purchase of luxury goods—

(A) aid and abet North Korea's misuse of the international financial system; and

(B) violate the intent of the United Nations Security Council resolutions referred to in paragraph (6)(A).

(8) The Government of North Korea has provided technical support and conducted destructive and coercive cyberattacks, including against Sony Pictures Entertainment and other United States persons.

(9) The conduct of the Government of North Korea poses an imminent threat to—

(A) the security of the United States and its allies;

(B) the global economy;

(C) the safety of members of the United States Armed Forces;

(D) the integrity of the global financial system;

(E) the integrity of global nonproliferation programs; and

(F) the people of North Korea.

(10) The Government of North Korea has sponsored acts of international terrorism, including—

(A) attempts to assassinate defectors and human rights activists; and

(B) the shipment of weapons to terrorists and state sponsors of terrorism.

(b) *PURPOSES.*—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to use nonmilitary means to address the crisis described in subsection (a);

(2) to provide diplomatic leverage to negotiate necessary changes in the conduct of the Government of North Korea;

(3) to ease the suffering of the people of North Korea; and

(4) to reaffirm the purposes set forth in section 4 of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7802).

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **APPLICABLE EXECUTIVE ORDER.**—The term “applicable Executive order” means—

(A) Executive Order 13382 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking property of weapons of mass destruction proliferators and their supporters), Executive Order 13466 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to continuing certain restrictions with respect to North Korea and North Korean nationals), Executive Order 13551 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking property of certain persons with respect to North Korea), Executive Order 13570 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to prohibiting certain transactions with respect to North Korea), Executive Order 13619 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking property of persons threatening the peace, security, or stability of Burma), Executive Order 13687 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to imposing additional sanctions with respect to North Korea), or Executive Order 13694 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking the property of certain persons engaging in significant malicious cyber-enabled activities), to the extent that such Executive order—

(i) authorizes the imposition of sanctions on persons for conduct with respect to North Korea;

(ii) prohibits transactions or activities involving the Government of North Korea; or

(iii) otherwise imposes sanctions with respect to North Korea; and

(B) any Executive order adopted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, to the extent that such Executive order—

(i) authorizes the imposition of sanctions on persons for conduct with respect to North Korea;

(ii) prohibits transactions or activities involving the Government of North Korea; or

(iii) otherwise imposes sanctions with respect to North Korea.

(2) **APPLICABLE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION.**—The term “applicable United Nations Security Council resolution” means—

(A) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1695 (2006), 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013), or 2094 (2013); and

(B) any United Nations Security Council resolution adopted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act that—

(i) authorizes the imposition of sanctions on persons for conduct with respect to North Korea;

(ii) prohibits transactions or activities involving the Government of North Korea; or

(iii) otherwise imposes sanctions with respect to North Korea.

(3) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Financial Services, and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives.

(4) **DESIGNATED PERSON.**—The term “designated person” means a person designated under subsection (a) or (b) of section 104 for purposes of applying 1 or more of the sanctions described in title I or II with respect to the person.

(5) **GOVERNMENT OF NORTH KOREA.**—The term “Government of North Korea” means the Government of North Korea and its agencies, instrumentalities, and controlled entities.

(6) **HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.**—The term “humanitarian assistance” means assistance to meet humanitarian needs, including needs for food, medicine, medical supplies, clothing, and shelter.

(7) **INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY.**—The term “intelligence community” has the meaning given such term in section 3(4) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003(4)).

(8) **LUXURY GOODS.**—The term “luxury goods”—

(A) has the meaning given such term in section 746.4(b)(1) of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(B) includes the items listed in Supplement No. 1 to part 746 of such title, and any similar items.

(9) **MONETARY INSTRUMENTS.**—The term “monetary instruments” has the meaning given such term in section 5312(a) of title 31, United States Code.

(10) **NORTH KOREA.**—The term “North Korea” means the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

(11) **NORTH KOREAN FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.**—The term “North Korean financial institution” means any financial institution that—

(A) is organized under the laws of North Korea or any jurisdiction within North Korea (including a foreign branch of such an institution);

(B) is located in North Korea, except for a financial institution that is excluded by the President in accordance with section 208(c);

(C) is owned or controlled by the Government of North Korea, regardless of location; or

(D) is owned or controlled by a financial institution described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C), regardless of location.

(12) **SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES UNDERMINING CYBERSECURITY.**—The term “significant activities undermining cybersecurity” includes—

(A) significant efforts to—

(i) deny access to or degrade, disrupt, or destroy an information and communications technology system or network; or

(ii) exfiltrate information from such a system or network without authorization;

(B) significant destructive malware attacks;

(C) significant denial of service activities; and

(D) such other significant activities described in regulations promulgated to implement section 104.

(13) **SOUTH KOREA.**—The term “South Korea” means the Republic of Korea.

(14) **UNITED STATES PERSON.**—The term “United States person” means—

(A) a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States; or

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or of any jurisdiction within the United States, including a foreign branch of such an entity.

TITLE I—INVESTIGATIONS, PROHIBITED CONDUCT, AND PENALTIES

SEC. 101. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

In order to achieve the peaceful disarmament of North Korea, Congress finds that it is necessary—

(1) to encourage all member states of the United Nations to fully and promptly implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 2094 (2013);

(2) to sanction the persons, including financial institutions, that facilitate proliferation, illicit activities, arms trafficking, cyberterrorism, imports of luxury goods, serious human rights abuses, cash smuggling, and censorship by the Government of North Korea;

(3) to authorize the President to sanction persons who fail to exercise due diligence to ensure that such financial institutions and member states do not facilitate proliferation, arms trafficking, kleptocracy, or imports of luxury goods by the Government of North Korea;

(4) to deny the Government of North Korea access to the funds it uses to develop or obtain nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles, cyberwarfare

capabilities, and luxury goods instead of providing for the needs of the people of North Korea; and

(5) to enforce sanctions in a manner that does not significantly hinder or delay the efforts of legitimate United States or foreign humanitarian organizations from providing assistance to meet the needs of civilians facing humanitarian crisis, including access to food, health care, shelter, and clean drinking water, to prevent or alleviate human suffering.

SEC. 102. INVESTIGATIONS.

(a) **INITIATION.**—The President shall initiate an investigation into the possible designation of a person under section 104(a) upon receipt by the President of credible information indicating that such person has engaged in conduct described in section 104(a).

(b) **PERSONNEL.**—The President may direct the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the heads of other Federal departments and agencies as may be necessary to assign sufficient experienced and qualified investigators, attorneys, and technical personnel—

(1) to investigate the conduct described in subsections (a) and (b) of section 104; and

(2) to coordinate and ensure the effective enforcement of this Act.

SEC. 103. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) **PRESIDENTIAL BRIEFINGS TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and periodically thereafter, the President shall provide a briefing to the appropriate congressional committees on efforts to implement this Act.

(b) **REPORT FROM SECRETARY OF STATE.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall conduct, coordinate, and submit to Congress a comprehensive report on United States policy towards North Korea that—

(1) is based on a full and complete interagency review of current policies and possible alternatives, including with respect to North Korea’s weapons of mass destruction and missile programs, human rights atrocities, and significant activities undermining cybersecurity; and

(2) includes recommendations for such legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate based on the results of the review.

SEC. 104. DESIGNATION OF PERSONS.

(a) **MANDATORY DESIGNATIONS.**—Except as provided in section 208, the President shall designate under this subsection any person that the President determines—

(1) knowingly, directly or indirectly, imports, exports, or reexports to, into, or from North Korea any goods, services, or technology controlled for export by the United States because of the use of such goods, services, or technology for weapons of mass destruction or delivery systems for such weapons and materially contributes to the use, development, production, possession, or acquisition by any person of a nuclear, radiological, chemical, or biological weapon or any device or system designed in whole or in part to deliver such a weapon;

(2) knowingly, directly or indirectly, provides training, advice, or other services or assistance, or engages in significant financial transactions, relating to the manufacture, maintenance, or use of any such weapon, device, or system to be imported, exported, or reexported to, into, or from North Korea;

(3) knowingly, directly or indirectly, imports, exports, or reexports luxury goods to or into North Korea;

(4) knowingly engages in, is responsible for, or facilitates censorship by the Government of North Korea;

(5) knowingly engages in, is responsible for, or facilitates serious human rights abuses by the Government of North Korea;

(6) knowingly, directly or indirectly, engages in money laundering, the counterfeiting of goods or currency, bulk cash smuggling, or narcotics trafficking that supports the Government of North Korea or any senior official or person acting for or on behalf of that Government;

(7) knowingly engages in significant activities undermining cybersecurity through the use of computer networks or systems against foreign persons, governments, or other entities on behalf of the Government of North Korea;

(8) knowingly, directly or indirectly, sells, supplies, or transfers to or from the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government, a significant amount of precious metal, graphite, raw or semi-finished metals or aluminum, steel, coal, or software, for use by or in industrial processes directly related to weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems for such weapons, other proliferation activities, the Korean Workers' Party, armed forces, internal security, or intelligence activities, or the operation and maintenance of political prison camps or forced labor camps, including outside of North Korea;

(9) knowingly, directly or indirectly, imports, exports, or reexports to, into, or from North Korea any arms or related materiel; or

(10) knowingly attempts to engage in any of the conduct described in paragraphs (1) through (9).

(b) **ADDITIONAL DISCRETIONARY DESIGNATIONS.**—

(1) **PROHIBITED CONDUCT DESCRIBED.**—Except as provided in section 208, the President may designate under this subsection any person that the President determines—

(A) knowingly engages in, contributes to, assists, sponsors, or provides financial, material or technological support for, or goods and services in support of, any person designated pursuant to an applicable United Nations Security Council resolution;

(B) knowingly contributed to—

(i) the bribery of an official of the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that official;

(ii) the misappropriation, theft, or embezzlement of public funds by, or for the benefit of, an official of the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that official; or

(iii) the use of any proceeds of any activity described in clause (i) or (ii); or

(C) knowingly and materially assisted, sponsored, or provided significant financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, the activities described in subparagraph (A) or (B).

(2) **EFFECT OF DESIGNATION.**—With respect to any person designated under this subsection, the President may—

(A) apply the sanctions described in section 204, 205(c), or 206 to the person to the same extent and in the same manner as if the person were designated under subsection (a);

(B) apply any applicable special measures described in section 5318A of title 31, United States Code;

(C) prohibit any transactions in foreign exchange—

(i) that are subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; and

(ii) in which such person has any interest; and

(D) prohibit any transfers of credit or payments between financial institutions or by, through, or to any financial institution, to the extent that such transfers or payments—

(i) are subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; and

(ii) involve any interest of such person.

(c) **ASSET BLOCKING.**—The President shall exercise all of the powers granted to the President

under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in property and interests in property of a designated person, the Government of North Korea, or the Workers' Party of Korea, if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(d) **APPLICATION TO SUBSIDIARIES AND AGENTS.**—The designation of a person under subsection (a) or (b) and the blocking of property and interests in property under subsection (c) shall apply with respect to a person who is determined to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to have acted for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to this section.

(e) **TRANSACTION LICENSING.**—The President shall deny or revoke any license for any transaction that the President determines to lack sufficient financial controls to ensure that such transaction will not facilitate any activity described in subsection (a) or (b).

(f) **PENALTIES.**—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to any person who violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of any prohibition of this section, or an order or regulation prescribed under this section, to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that commits an unlawful act described in section 206(a) of such Act (50 U.S.C. 1705(a)).

SEC. 105. FORFEITURE OF PROPERTY.

(a) **AMENDMENT TO PROPERTY SUBJECT TO FORFEITURE.**—Section 981(a)(1) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(1) Any property, real or personal, that is involved in a violation or attempted violation, or which constitutes or is derived from proceeds traceable to a prohibition imposed pursuant to section 104(a) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016.”.

(b) **AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF CIVIL FORFEITURE STATUTE.**—Section 983(i)(2)(D) of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(D) the Trading with the Enemy Act (50 U.S.C. 4301 et seq.), the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.), or the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act of 2016; or”.

(c) **AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF SPECIFIED UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY.**—Section 1956(c)(7)(D) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “or section 92 of” and inserting “section 92 of”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: “, or section 104(a) of the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act of 2016 (relating to prohibited activities with respect to North Korea);”.

TITLE II—SANCTIONS AGAINST NORTH KOREAN PROLIFERATION, HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, AND ILLICIT ACTIVITIES

SEC. 201. DETERMINATIONS WITH RESPECT TO NORTH KOREA AS A JURISDICTION OF PRIMARY MONEY LAUNDERING CONCERN.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, who is responsible for safeguarding the financial system against illicit use, money laundering, terrorist financing, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and has repeatedly expressed concern about North Korea's misuse of the international financial system—

(A) in 2006—

(i) stated, “Given [North Korea's] counterfeiting of U.S. currency, narcotics trafficking and use of accounts world-wide to conduct proliferation-related transactions, the line between illicit and licit North Korean money is nearly invisible.”; and

(ii) urged financial institutions worldwide to “think carefully about the risks of doing any North Korea-related business”;

(B) in 2011, stated that North Korea—

(i) “remains intent on engaging in proliferation, selling arms as well as bringing in material”; and

(ii) was “aggressively pursuing the effort to establish front companies.”; and

(C) in 2013, stated—

(i) in reference to North Korea's distribution of high-quality counterfeit United States currency, that “North Korea is continuing to try to pass a supernote into the international financial system”; and

(ii) the Department of the Treasury would soon introduce new currency with improved security features to protect against counterfeiting by the Government of North Korea.

(2) The Financial Action Task Force, an intergovernmental body whose purpose is to develop and promote national and international policies to combat money laundering and terrorist financing, has repeatedly—

(A) expressed concern at deficiencies in North Korea's regimes to combat money laundering and terrorist financing;

(B) urged North Korea to adopt a plan of action to address significant deficiencies in those regimes and the serious threat those deficiencies pose to the integrity of the international financial system;

(C) urged all jurisdictions to apply countermeasures to protect the international financial system from ongoing and substantial money laundering and terrorist financing risks emanating from North Korea;

(D) urged all jurisdictions to advise their financial institutions to give special attention to business relationships and transactions with North Korea, including North Korean companies and financial institutions; and

(E) called on all jurisdictions—

(i) to protect against correspondent relationships being used to bypass or evade countermeasures and risk mitigation practices; and

(ii) to take into account money laundering and terrorist financing risks when considering requests by North Korean financial institutions to open branches and subsidiaries in their respective jurisdictions.

(3) On March 7, 2013, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2094, which—

(A) welcomed the Financial Action Task Force's—

(i) recommendation on financial sanctions related to proliferation; and

(ii) guidance on the implementation of such sanctions;

(B) decided that United Nations member states should apply enhanced monitoring and other legal measures to prevent the provision of financial services or the transfer of property that could contribute to activities prohibited by applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions; and

(C) called upon United Nations member states to prohibit North Korean financial institutions from establishing or maintaining correspondent relationships with financial institutions in their respective jurisdictions to prevent the provision of financial services if such member states have information that provides reasonable grounds to believe that such activities could contribute to—

(i) activities prohibited by an applicable United Nations Security Council resolution; or

(ii) the evasion of such prohibitions.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING THE DESIGNATION OF NORTH KOREA AS A JURISDICTION OF PRIMARY MONEY LAUNDERING CONCERN.—Congress—

(1) acknowledges the efforts of the United Nations Security Council to impose limitations on, and to require the enhanced monitoring of, transactions involving North Korean financial institutions that could contribute to sanctioned activities;

(2) urges the President, in the strongest terms—

(A) to immediately designate North Korea as a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern; and

(B) to adopt stringent special measures to safeguard the financial system against the risks posed by North Korea's willful evasion of sanctions and its illicit activities; and

(3) urges the President to seek the prompt implementation by other countries of enhanced monitoring and due diligence to prevent North Korea's misuse of the international financial system, including by sharing information about activities, transactions, and property that could contribute to—

(A) activities sanctioned by applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions; or

(B) the evasion of such sanctions.

(c) DETERMINATIONS REGARDING NORTH KOREA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Attorney General, and in accordance with section 5318A of title 31, United States Code, shall determine whether reasonable grounds exist for concluding that North Korea is a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern.

(2) ENHANCED DUE DILIGENCE AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—If the Secretary of the Treasury determines under paragraph (1) that reasonable grounds exist for concluding that North Korea is a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern, the Secretary, in consultation with the Federal functional regulators (as defined in section 509 of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (15 U.S.C. 6809)), shall impose 1 or more of the special measures described in section 5318A(b) of title 31, United States Code, with respect to the jurisdiction of North Korea.

(3) REPORT REQUIRED.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Secretary of the Treasury makes a determination under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains the reasons for such determination.

(B) FORM.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

SEC. 202. ENSURING THE CONSISTENT ENFORCEMENT OF UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS AND FINANCIAL RESTRICTIONS ON NORTH KOREA.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) All member states of the United Nations are obligated to implement and enforce applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions fully and promptly, including by blocking the property of, and ensuring that any property is prevented from being made available to, persons designated for the blocking of property by the Security Council under applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions.

(2) As of May 2015, 158 of the 193 member states of the United Nations had not submitted reports on measures taken to implement North Korea-specific United Nations Security Council resolutions 1718, 1874, and 2094.

(3) A recent report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO-15-485)—

(A) finds that officials of the United States and representatives of the United Nations Panel of Experts established pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1874 (2009), which monitors and facilitates implementation of United Nations sanctions on North Korea, “agree that the lack of detailed reports from all member states is an impediment to the UN’s effective implementation of its sanctions”; and

(B) notes that “many member states lack the technical capacity to enforce sanctions and prepare reports” on the implementation of United Nations sanctions on North Korea.

(4) All member states share a common interest in protecting the international financial system from the risks of money laundering and illicit transactions emanating from North Korea.

(5) The United States dollar and the euro are the world’s principal reserve currencies, and the United States and the European Union are primarily responsible for the protection of the international financial system from the risks described in paragraph (4).

(6) The cooperation of the People’s Republic of China, as North Korea’s principal trading partner, is essential to—

(A) the enforcement of applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions; and

(B) the protection of the international financial system.

(7) The report of the Panel of Experts expressed concern about the ability of banks to detect and prevent illicit transfers involving North Korea if such banks are located in member states with less effective regulators or member states that are unable to afford effective compliance.

(8) North Korea has historically exploited inconsistencies between jurisdictions in the interpretation and enforcement of financial regulations and applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions to circumvent sanctions and launder the proceeds of illicit activities.

(9) Amroggang Development Bank, Bank of East Land, and Tanchon Commercial Bank have been designated by the Secretary of the Treasury, the United Nations Security Council, and the European Union as having materially contributed to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

(10) Korea Daesong Bank and Korea Kwangson Banking Corporation have been designated by the Secretary of the Treasury and the European Union as having materially contributed to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

(11) The Foreign Trade Bank of North Korea has been designated by the Secretary of the Treasury for facilitating transactions on behalf of persons linked to its proliferation network and for serving as “a key financial node”.

(12) Daedong Credit Bank has been designated by the Secretary of the Treasury for activities prohibited by applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions, including the use of deceptive financial practices to facilitate transactions on behalf of persons linked to North Korea’s proliferation network.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the President should intensify diplomatic efforts in appropriate international fora, such as the United Nations, and bilaterally, to develop and implement a coordinated, consistent, multilateral strategy for protecting the global financial system against risks emanating from North Korea, including—

(1) the cessation of any financial services the continuation of which is inconsistent with applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

(2) the cessation of any financial services to persons, including financial institutions, that present unacceptable risks of facilitating money laundering and illicit activity by the Government of North Korea;

(3) the blocking by all member states, in accordance with the legal process of the state in which the property is held, of any property required to be blocked under applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

(4) the blocking of any property derived from illicit activity, or from the misappropriation, theft, or embezzlement of public funds by, or for the benefit of, officials of the Government of North Korea;

(5) the blocking of any property involved in significant activities undermining cybersecurity by the Government of North Korea, directly or indirectly, against United States persons, or the theft of intellectual property by the Government of North Korea, directly or indirectly from United States persons; and

(6) the blocking of any property of persons directly or indirectly involved in censorship or human rights abuses by the Government of North Korea.

(c) STRATEGY TO IMPROVE INTERNATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF UNITED NATIONS NORTH KOREA-SPECIFIC SANCTIONS.—The President shall direct the Secretary of State, in coordination with other Federal departments and agencies, as appropriate, to develop a strategy to improve international implementation and enforcement of United Nations North Korea-specific sanctions. The strategy should include elements—

(1) to increase the number of countries submitting reports to the United Nations Panel of Experts established pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1874 (2009), including developing a list of targeted countries where effective implementation and enforcement of United Nations sanctions would reduce the threat from North Korea;

(2) to encourage member states of the United Nations to cooperate and share information with the panel in order to help facilitate investigations;

(3) to expand cooperation with the Panel of Experts;

(4) to provide technical assistance to member states to implement United Nations sanctions, including developing the capacity to enforce sanctions through improved export control regulations, border security, and customs systems;

(5) to harness existing United States Government initiatives and assistance programs, as appropriate, to improve sanctions implementation and enforcement; and

(6) to increase outreach to the people of North Korea, and to support the engagement of independent, non-governmental journalistic, humanitarian, and other institutions in North Korea.

(d) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that describes the actions undertaken to implement the strategy required by subsection (c).

SEC. 203. PROLIFERATION PREVENTION SANCTIONS.

(a) EXPORT OF CERTAIN GOODS OR TECHNOLOGY.—A validated license shall be required for the export to North Korea of any goods or technology otherwise covered under section 6(f) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. 4605(f)). No defense exports may be approved for the Government of North Korea.

(b) TRANSACTIONS IN LETHAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall withhold assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) to the government of any country that provides lethal military equipment to the Government of North Korea.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The prohibition under paragraph (1) with respect to a government

shall terminate on the date that is 1 year after the date on which the prohibition under paragraph (1) is applied to that government.

(c) **WAIVER.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of State may waive the prohibitions under this section with respect to a country if the Secretary—

(1) determines that such waiver is in the national interest of the United States; and

(2) submits a written report to the appropriate congressional committees that describes—

(A) the steps that the relevant agencies are taking to curtail the trade described in subsection (b)(1); and

(B) why such waiver is in the national interest of the United States.

(d) **EXCEPTION.**—The prohibitions under this section shall not apply to the provision of assistance for human rights, democracy, rule of law, or emergency humanitarian purposes.

SEC. 204. PROCUREMENT SANCTIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in this section, the head of an executive agency may not procure, or enter into any contract for the procurement of, any goods or services from any person designated under section 104(a).

(b) **FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Federal Acquisition Regulation issued pursuant to section 1303(a)(1) of title 41, United States Code, shall be revised to require that each person that is a prospective contractor submit a certification that such person does not engage in any activity described in section 104(a).

(2) **APPLICABILITY.**—The revision required under paragraph (1) shall apply with respect to contracts for which solicitations are issued on or after the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) **REMEDIES.**—

(1) **INCLUSION ON LIST.**—The Administrator of General Services shall include, on the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Nonprocurement Programs maintained by the Administrator under part 9 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation, each person that is debarred, suspended, or proposed for debarment or suspension by the head of an executive agency on the basis of a determination of a false certification under subsection (b).

(2) **CONTRACT TERMINATION; SUSPENSION.**—If the head of an executive agency determines that a person has submitted a false certification under subsection (b) after the date on which the Federal Acquisition Regulation is revised to implement the requirements of this section, the head of such executive agency shall—

(A) terminate any contract with such person; and

(B) debar or suspend such person from eligibility for Federal contracts for a period of not longer than 2 years.

(3) **APPLICABLE PROCEDURES.**—Any debarment or suspension under paragraph (2)(B) shall be subject to the procedures that apply to debarment and suspension under subpart 9.4 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

(d) **CLARIFICATION REGARDING CERTAIN PRODUCTS.**—The remedies specified in subsection (c) shall not apply with respect to the procurement of any eligible product (as defined in section 308(4) of the Trade Agreements Act of 1979 (19 U.S.C. 2518(4)) of any foreign country or instrumentality designated under section 301(b) of such Act (19 U.S.C. 2511(b)).

(e) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to limit the use of other remedies available to the head of an executive agency or any other official of the Federal Government on the basis of a determination of a false certification under subsection (b).

(f) **EXECUTIVE AGENCY DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “executive agency” has the meaning given such term in section 133 of title 41, United States Code.

SEC. 205. ENHANCED INSPECTION AUTHORITIES.

(a) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that identifies foreign ports and airports at which inspections of ships, aircraft, and conveyances originating in North Korea, carrying North Korean property, or operated by the Government of North Korea are not sufficient to effectively prevent the facilitation of any of the activities described in section 104(a).

(b) **ENHANCED CUSTOMS INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS.**—The Secretary of Homeland Security may require enhanced inspections of any goods entering the United States that have been transported through a port or airport identified by the President under subsection (a).

(c) **SEIZURE AND FORFEITURE.**—A vessel, aircraft, or conveyance used to facilitate any of the activities described in section 104(a) under the jurisdiction of the United States may be seized and forfeited under—

(1) chapter 46 of title 18, United States Code; or

(2) title V of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.).

SEC. 206. TRAVEL SANCTIONS.

The Secretary of State may deny a visa to, and the Secretary of Homeland Security may deny entry into the United States of, any alien who is—

(1) a designated person;

(2) a corporate officer of a designated person; or

(3) a principal shareholder with a controlling interest in a designated person.

SEC. 207. TRAVEL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNITED STATES CITIZENS TO NORTH KOREA.

The Secretary of State shall expand the scope and frequency of issuance of travel warnings for all United States citizens to North Korea. The expanded travel warnings, which should be issued or updated not less frequently than every 90 days, should include—

(1) publicly released or credible open source information regarding the detention of United States citizens by North Korean authorities, including available information on circumstances of arrest and detention, duration, legal proceedings, and conditions under which a United States citizen has been, or continues to be, detained by North Korean authorities, including present-day cases and cases occurring during the 10-year period ending on the date of the enactment of this Act;

(2) publicly released or credible open source information on the past and present detention and abduction or alleged abduction of citizens of the United States, South Korea, or Japan by North Korean authorities;

(3) unclassified information about the nature of the North Korean regime, as described in congressionally mandated reports and annual reports issued by the Department of State and the United Nations, including information about North Korea's weapons of mass destruction programs, illicit activities, international sanctions violations, and human rights situation; and

(4) any other information that the Secretary deems useful to provide United States citizens with a comprehensive picture of the nature of the North Korean regime.

SEC. 208. EXEMPTIONS, WAIVERS, AND REMOVALS OF DESIGNATION.

(a) **EXEMPTIONS.**—The following activities shall be exempt from sanctions under sections 104, 206, 209, and 304:

(1) Activities subject to the reporting requirements under title V of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3091 et seq.), or to any authorized intelligence activities of the United States.

(2) Any transaction necessary to comply with United States obligations under the Agreement

between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, or under the Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, and entered into force March 19, 1967, or under other international agreements.

(3) Any activities incidental to the POW/MIA accounting mission in North Korea, including activities by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency and other governmental or nongovernmental organizations tasked with identifying or recovering the remains of members of the United States Armed Forces in North Korea.

(b) **HUMANITARIAN WAIVER.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The President may waive, for renewable periods of between 30 days and 1 year, the application of the sanctions authorized under section 104, 204, 205, 206, 209(b), or 304(b) if the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees a written determination that the waiver is necessary for humanitarian assistance or to carry out the humanitarian purposes set forth section 4 of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7802).

(2) **CONTENT OF WRITTEN DETERMINATION.**—A written determination submitted under paragraph (1) with respect to a waiver shall include a description of all notification and accountability controls that have been employed in order to ensure that the activities covered by the waiver are humanitarian assistance or are carried out for the purposes set forth in section 4 of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7802) and do not entail any activities in North Korea or dealings with the Government of North Korea not reasonably related to humanitarian assistance or such purposes.

(3) **CLARIFICATION OF PERMITTED ACTIVITIES UNDER WAIVER.**—An internationally recognized humanitarian organization shall not be subject to sanctions under section 104, 204, 205, 206, 209(b), or 304(b) for—

(A) engaging in a financial transaction relating to humanitarian assistance or for humanitarian purposes pursuant to a waiver issued under paragraph (1);

(B) transporting goods or services that are necessary to carry out operations relating to humanitarian assistance or humanitarian purposes pursuant to such a waiver; or

(C) having merely incidental contact, in the course of providing humanitarian assistance or aid for humanitarian purposes pursuant to such a waiver, with individuals who are under the control of a foreign person subject to sanctions under this Act.

(c) **WAIVER.**—The President may waive, on a case-by-case basis, for renewable periods of between 30 days and 1 year, the application of the sanctions authorized under section 104, 201(c)(2), 204, 205, 206, 209(b), or 304(b) if the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees a written determination that the waiver—

(1) is important to the national security interests of the United States; or

(2) will further the enforcement of this Act or is for an important law enforcement purpose.

(d) **FINANCIAL SERVICES FOR HUMANITARIAN AND CONSULAR ACTIVITIES.**—The President may promulgate such regulations, rules, and policies as may be necessary to facilitate the provision of financial services by a foreign financial institution that is not a North Korean financial institution in support of activities conducted pursuant to an exemption or waiver under this section.

SEC. 209. REPORT ON AND IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS TO ADDRESS PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWINGLY ENGAGING IN SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES UNDERMINING CYBERSECURITY.

(a) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—The President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that describes significant activities undermining cybersecurity aimed against the United States Government or any United States person and conducted by the Government of North Korea, or a person owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government.

(2) *INFORMATION.*—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) the identity and nationality of persons that have knowingly engaged in, directed, or provided material support to conduct significant activities undermining cybersecurity described in paragraph (1);

(B) a description of the conduct engaged in by each person identified;

(C) an assessment of the extent to which a foreign government has provided material support to the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government to conduct significant activities undermining cybersecurity; and

(D) a United States strategy to counter North Korea's efforts to conduct significant activities undermining cybersecurity against the United States, that includes efforts to engage foreign governments to halt the capability of the Government of North Korea and persons acting for or on behalf of that Government to conduct significant activities undermining cybersecurity.

(3) *SUBMISSION AND FORM.*—

(A) *SUBMISSION.*—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter.

(B) *FORM.*—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in an unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(b) *DESIGNATION OF PERSONS.*—The President shall designate under section 104(a) any person identified in the report required under subsection (a)(1) that knowingly engages in significant activities undermining cybersecurity through the use of computer networks or systems against foreign persons, governments, or other entities on behalf of the Government of North Korea.

SEC. 210. CODIFICATION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO NORTH KOREAN ACTIVITIES UNDERMINING CYBERSECURITY.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—United States sanctions with respect to activities of the Government of North Korea, persons acting for or on behalf of that Government, or persons located in North Korea that undermine cybersecurity provided for in Executive Order 13687 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to imposing additional sanctions with respect to North Korea) or Executive Order 13694 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking the property of certain persons engaging in significant malicious cyber-enabled activities), as such Executive Orders are in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, shall remain in effect until the date that is 30 days after the date on which the President submits to Congress a certification that the Government of North Korea, persons acting for or on behalf of that Government, and persons owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by that Government or persons acting for or on behalf of that Government, are no longer engaged in the illicit activities described in such Executive Orders, including actions in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013), and 2094 (2013).

(b) *RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.*—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the authority of the President pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

SEC. 211. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON TRILATERAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES, SOUTH KOREA, AND JAPAN.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—It is the sense of Congress that the President—

(1) should seek to strengthen high-level trilateral mechanisms for discussion and coordination of policy toward North Korea between the Government of the United States, the Government of South Korea, and the Government of Japan;

(2) should ensure that the mechanisms specifically address North Korea's nuclear, ballistic, and conventional weapons programs, its human rights record, and cybersecurity threats posed by North Korea;

(3) should ensure that representatives of the United States, South Korea, and Japan meet on a regular basis and include representatives of the United States Department of State, the United States Department of Defense, the United States intelligence community, and representatives of counterpart agencies in South Korea and Japan; and

(4) should continue to brief the relevant congressional committees regularly on the status of such discussions.

(b) *RELEVANT COMMITTEES.*—The relevant committees referred to in subsection (a)(4) shall include—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

TITLE III—PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

SEC. 301. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.

Section 104 of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7814) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) *INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STUDY.*—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2015, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a classified report that sets forth a detailed plan for making unrestricted, unmonitored, and inexpensive electronic mass communications available to the people of North Korea.”.

SEC. 302. STRATEGY TO PROMOTE NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with other appropriate Federal departments and agencies, shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that details a United States strategy to promote initiatives to enhance international awareness of and to address the human rights situation in North Korea.

(b) *INFORMATION.*—The report required under subsection (a) should include—

(1) a list of countries that forcibly repatriate refugees from North Korea; and

(2) a list of countries where North Korean laborers work, including countries the governments of which have formal arrangements with the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government to employ North Korean workers.

(c) *STRATEGY.*—The report required under subsection (a) should include—

(1) a plan to enhance bilateral and multilateral outreach, including sustained engagement with the governments of partners and allies with overseas posts to routinely demarche or brief those governments on North Korea human rights issues, including forced labor, trafficking, and repatriation of citizens of North Korea;

(2) public affairs and public diplomacy campaigns, including options to work with news organizations and media outlets to publish opinion pieces and secure public speaking opportunities for United States Government officials on issues related to the human rights situation in North Korea, including forced labor, trafficking, and repatriation of citizens of North Korea; and

(3) opportunities to coordinate and collaborate with appropriate nongovernmental organizations and private sector entities to raise awareness and provide assistance to North Korean defectors throughout the world.

SEC. 303. REPORT ON NORTH KOREAN PRISON CAMPS.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—The Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that describes, with respect to each political prison camp in North Korea, to the extent information is available—

(1) the camp's estimated prisoner population;

(2) the camp's geographical coordinates;

(3) the reasons for the confinement of the prisoners;

(4) the camp's primary industries and products, and the end users of any goods produced in the camp;

(5) the individuals and agencies responsible for conditions in the camp;

(6) the conditions under which prisoners are confined, with respect to the adequacy of food, shelter, medical care, working conditions, and reports of ill-treatment of prisoners; and

(7) imagery, to include satellite imagery of the camp, in a format that, if published, would not compromise the sources and methods used by the United States intelligence community to capture geospatial imagery.

(b) *FORM.*—The report required under subsection (a) may be included in the first human rights report required to be submitted to Congress after the date of the enactment of this Act under sections 116(d) and 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d) and 2304(b)).

SEC. 304. REPORT ON AND IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO SERIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES OR CENSORSHIP IN NORTH KOREA.

(a) *REPORT REQUIRED.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—The Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that—

(A) identifies each person the Secretary determines to be responsible for serious human rights abuses or censorship in North Korea and describes the conduct of that person; and

(B) describes serious human rights abuses or censorship undertaken by the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government in the most recent year ending before the submission of the report.

(2) *CONSIDERATION.*—In preparing the report required under paragraph (1), the Secretary of State shall—

(A) give due consideration to the findings of the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea; and

(B) make specific findings with respect to the responsibility of Kim Jong Un, and of each individual who is a member of the National Defense Commission of North Korea or the Organization and Guidance Department of the Workers' Party of Korea, for serious human rights abuses and censorship.

(3) *SUBMISSION AND FORM.*—

(A) *SUBMISSION.*—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter for a period not to exceed 3 years, and shall be included in each human rights report required under sections 116(d) and 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d) and 2304(b)).

(B) **FORM.**—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(C) **PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.**—The Secretary of State shall publish the unclassified part of the report required under paragraph (1) on the website of the Department of State.

(b) **DESIGNATION OF PERSONS.**—The President shall designate under section 104(a) any person listed in the report required under subsection (a)(1) that—

(1) knowingly engages in, is responsible for, or facilitates censorship by the Government of North Korea; or

(2) knowingly engages in, is responsible for, or facilitates serious human rights abuses by the Government of North Korea.

(c) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that the President should—

(1) seek the prompt adoption by the United Nations Security Council of a resolution calling for the blocking of the assets of all persons responsible for severe human rights abuses or censorship in North Korea; and

(2) fully cooperate with the prosecution of any individual listed in the report required under subsection (a)(1) before any international tribunal that may be established to prosecute persons responsible for severe human rights abuses or censorship in North Korea.

TITLE IV—GENERAL AUTHORITIES

SEC. 401. SUSPENSION OF SANCTIONS AND OTHER MEASURES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Any sanction or other measure required under title I, II, or III (or any amendment made by such titles) may be suspended for up to 1 year upon certification by the President to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of North Korea has made progress toward—

(1) verifiably ceasing its counterfeiting of United States currency, including the surrender or destruction of specialized materials and equipment used or particularly suitable for counterfeiting;

(2) taking steps toward financial transparency to comply with generally accepted protocols to cease and prevent the laundering of monetary instruments;

(3) taking steps toward verification of its compliance with applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

(4) taking steps toward accounting for and repatriating the citizens of other countries—

(A) abducted or unlawfully held captive by the Government of North Korea; or

(B) detained in violation of the Agreement Concerning a Military Armistice in Korea, signed at Panmunjom July 27, 1953 (commonly referred to as the “Korean War Armistice Agreement”);

(5) accepting and beginning to abide by internationally recognized standards for the distribution and monitoring of humanitarian aid; and

(6) taking verified steps to improve living conditions in its political prison camps.

(b) **RENEWAL OF SUSPENSION.**—The suspension described in subsection (a) may be renewed for additional, consecutive 180-day periods after the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of North Korea has continued to comply with the conditions described in subsection (a) during the previous year.

SEC. 402. TERMINATION OF SANCTIONS AND OTHER MEASURES.

Any sanction or other measure required under title I, II, or III (or any amendment made by such titles) shall terminate on the date on which the President determines and certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of North Korea has—

(1) met the requirements set forth in section 401; and

(2) made significant progress toward—

(A) completely, verifiably, and irreversibly dismantling all of its nuclear, chemical, biological, and radiological weapons programs, including all programs for the development of systems designed in whole or in part for the delivery of such weapons;

(B) releasing all political prisoners, including the citizens of North Korea detained in North Korea’s political prison camps;

(C) ceasing its censorship of peaceful political activity;

(D) establishing an open, transparent, and representative society; and

(E) fully accounting for and repatriating United States citizens (including deceased United States citizens)—

(i) abducted or unlawfully held captive by the Government of North Korea; or

(ii) detained in violation of the Agreement Concerning a Military Armistice in Korea, signed at Panmunjom July 27, 1953 (commonly referred to as the “Korean War Armistice Agreement”).

SEC. 403. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There are authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021—

(1) \$3,000,000 to carry out section 103 of the North Korea Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7813);

(2) \$3,000,000 to carry out subsections (a), (b), and (c) of section 104 of that Act (22 U.S.C. 7814);

(3) \$2,000,000 to carry out subsection (d) of such section 104, as add by section 301 of this Act; and

(4) \$2,000,000 to carry out section 203 of the North Korea Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7833).

(b) **AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.**—Amounts appropriated for each fiscal year pursuant to subsection (a) shall remain available until expended.

SEC. 404. RULEMAKING.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The President is authorized to promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act (which may include regulatory exceptions), including under section 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1704).

(b) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this Act, or in any amendment made by this Act, may be construed to limit the authority of the President to designate or sanction persons pursuant to an applicable Executive order or otherwise pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

SEC. 405. AUTHORITY TO CONSOLIDATE REPORTS.

Any and all reports required to be submitted to appropriate congressional committees under this Act or any amendment made by this Act that are subject to a deadline for submission consisting of the same unit of time may be consolidated into a single report that is submitted to appropriate congressional committees pursuant to such deadline. The consolidated reports must contain all information required under this Act or any amendment made by this Act, in addition to all other elements mandated by previous law.

SEC. 406. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Except as otherwise provided in this Act, this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be up to 7 hours of debate equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I start by thanking the leader for bringing to

the floor today the bipartisan North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act.

This legislation passed unanimously out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to address a critical national security issue—the nuclear and ballistic missile threat from North Korea.

We know all too well that the past two decades of North Korean policy, including both Republican and Democratic administrations, have been an abject failure. While there is no silver bullet solution, it is clear that Congress must play a proactive role in providing a more robust policy tool to the executive branch to confront this threat.

There has been a lot of attention on North Korea in the weeks following North Korea’s fourth nuclear test, but Senators CORY GARDNER and BOB MENENDEZ demonstrated leadership on North Korea long before recent events, and I thank them personally—Senator GARDNER chairing the subcommittee that looks after policy relative to North Korea and Senator MENENDEZ coming together with a robust piece of legislation. I thank Senator GARDNER for his leadership. He is new to the committee but certainly not new to addressing problems our Nation faces, and I thank him for that. I thank them for their efforts over many months to focus attention on the threat posed by North Korea and to work with Senator CARDIN and myself to develop a bipartisan Senate bill.

I want to single out Senator CARDIN and his staff for the collaborative and constructive manner in which they worked with my team on this important bipartisan piece of legislation. Senators SHAHEEN and MARKEY also made important contributions as well.

Senator CARDIN just arrived late, but I want the Senator to know I was just boasting about his tremendous efforts. If he would please know that has occurred.

This was truly an all-hands-on-deck bipartisan committee effort to ensure a piece of legislation that the Senate, the Congress, and the country can be proud of.

Over the past decade, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has convened every couple of years at the full committee level to assess the state of U.S. policy toward North Korea. There has been surprisingly little variation in their overall descriptions of the danger and recommended policy prescriptions. Former U.S. officials have all characterized North Korea’s nuclear and ballistic missile activities as posing serious and unacceptable risk to U.S. national interests. These same officials also all stressed the importance of standing with our close regional allies, South Korea and Japan, in the face of destabilizing North Korean provocations. In addition, they all cited the

necessity of cooperating with the international community to deter further North Korean provocations and prevent the spread of sensitive technologies to and from North Korea. They all noted the importance of enforcing U.N. Security Council sanctions on North Korea, specifically the need for China to exercise greater influence over Pyongyang.

Let me say this. I am personally very disappointed at the way the U.N. Security Council is functioning—whether it is Iran, where we had two ballistic missile tests and yet nothing has been done at the U.N. Security Council level. Most recently, China sent a delegation to meet with North Korea right before this last test in order to try to influence them, and the country of China was embarrassed by the fact that North Korea went ahead with this ballistic test. Yet, in spite of that embarrassment, in spite of the fact it is their neighbor on their border that is conducting these provocations, they still have not agreed to U.N. Security Council resolutions to put into place sanctions against North Korea. That is very disappointing.

In the recent years, U.S. officials have spoken increasingly of the deplorable human rights situation in North Korea, including highlighting North Korea's notorious prison camps. Of course, there have been some differences in approaches toward North Korea over the years, particularly with respect to the tactics of engaging North Korea and the appropriate balance of carrots and sticks. Yet it is apparent that the past several decades of U.S. policy are not working. North Korea continues to advance their nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities unchecked. They have orchestrated malicious cyber attacks that threaten our allies as well as our own national security. Meanwhile, the North Korean people remain impoverished and subject to brutal treatment at the hands of the Kim regime.

I appreciate the complexity of risks posed by North Korea and our limited options. However, there is certainly more we can and should be doing in addressing this issue. Our bill sets precedent and puts in place strong mandatory sanctions and establishes for the first time a statutory framework for sanctions in response to North Korean cyber threats. The President will be required to investigate a wide range of sanctionable conduct, including proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, arms-related materials, luxury goods which affect the elite in that country, human rights abuses, activities undermining cyber security, and provision of industrial inputs such as precious metals or coal for use in a tailored set of activities, including WMD, proliferation activities, and prison and labor camps. Penalties include the seizure of assets, visa bans, and denial of government contracts.

I am also pleased this bill goes beyond just these sanctions—which, by the way, are very strong—and I want to underline the word “mandatory.” It establishes a more robust policy framework, including tools to improve enforcement, and shines a brighter spotlight on North Korea's abhorrent human rights record, such as their forced labor practices. The bill requires a strategy to promote improved implementation and enforcement of multilateral sanctions, a strategy to combat North Korean cyber activities, and a strategy to promote and encourage international engagement on North Korean human rights issues. There are reporting requirements related to these strategies as well as a report on political prison camps and a feasibility study on providing communications equipment to the people of North Korea.

After the careful work over many months by a bipartisan coalition in Congress, we have a piece of legislation that I believe will begin to allow our country, working with our allies, to begin seizing the initiative in constraining North Korea's ability to threaten its neighbors and the world with nuclear weapons while also continuing to focus world attention on the plight of the North Korean people.

I look forward to hearing the perspectives of my colleagues on the significance of this legislation that I expect will receive wide bipartisan support and eventually become law.

Mr. President, I yield the floor to my distinguished friend and the ranking member, Senator CARDIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, let me first start by thanking Chairman CORKER.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has a proud tradition of working on national security and foreign policy issues in the best interest of our country and putting partisan differences aside so we can speak with a strong voice. Chairman CORKER has carried out that tradition and has elevated it to a level that I think has been not only in the best interest of the Senate but the best interests of our country. That is particularly true in the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016. So I thank him for the manner in which he brought different views together. We all had the same objectives, but as the Presiding Officer knows, when dealing with 100 Members of the Senate and the 19 Members of our committee, we each have different views, and to try to harmonize that so we can get legislation done in a timely way takes a great deal of talent and patience. Senator CORKER has both talent and patience, and I thank him very much for the way he led our committee to bring a bill to the floor of the Senate that I think will get

overwhelming support, will become law, and will advance U.S. national security interests.

I have my two chairmen here. Senator GARDNER is the chairman of the East Asia and Pacific Subcommittee in the Foreign Relations Committee. He understood the importance of North Korea, its nuclear weapon program, its weaponization program, and the impact it has globally. That is for sure, but East Asia is a particular concern, and Senator GARDNER understood that, working with our allies in East Asia to develop the right U.S. leadership so we will have an international coalition isolating North Korea because of its conduct. So I thank Senator GARDNER for introducing the original bill in the Senate and working with Senator MENENDEZ particularly—who introduced it on our side—to bring together legislation that is a proper role for Congress.

I want to underscore that. This legislation represents what Congress needs to do. We are the policymakers of America. We pass the laws. Then the executive branch, which is critically important to foreign policy—don't get me wrong—but we enable the tools to be able to carry out this foreign policy. What this legislation shows is Congress speaks with a very clear voice, that we will not tolerate North Korea's proliferation of weaponry, its intimidation of its neighbors, its human rights violations, and that we will use the strongest possible measures to ensure that we contain that type of nefarious conduct.

Quite frankly, the legislation we have before us is similar to the approach we took with Iran and the congressionally mandated sanctions we had on Iran that made it clear we were going to isolate Iran until they changed course on their nuclear weapons program. What this legislation does is take the product that came over from the House of Representatives—it was a good bill that came over from the House of Representatives, but we strengthened it. We made it more effective through the input of the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. So it is a strong message—unified, bipartisan, working with the administration to produce a strong policy.

North Korea's foreign policy challenges are known by all. It has been known by every American President since the start of the Korean war. They have tested four nuclear weapons and they tested a long-range ballistic missile in defiance of numerous international obligations.

U.S. leadership is absolutely critical in standing up to North Korea's activities. We must isolate North Korea to prevent it from getting international help to further its illegal weapons program. That is the basic point of sanctions. We want to prevent commercial

interests anywhere in the world from trying to help North Korea get the type of weapons, equipment, and resources it needs in order to further its illegal weapon program. The United States must lead in effective diplomacy to provide incentives and disincentives toward North Korea's conduct. We need to form strong alliances and partnerships in the region. We have to work in close coordination with our allies, and quite frankly our goal is a peaceful and reunified peninsula. We think that is in the best interest of all the Korean people.

Over the last two decades, the North Korean regime has moved steadily forward in their nuclear weapons development program and in the production of nuclear material. They have continued to develop this ballistic missile program, they possess hundreds of short- and medium-range missiles, and they are seeking ICBM capabilities. They have active uranium and plutonium programs that pose a proliferation threat. They have tried in the past to help Syria build a nuclear reactor and have been a source of nuclear material missile technology to rogue states, including terrorists. It is not just about one country-state. It is about what they are doing in helping other countries that support terrorism and terrorist groups itself. It is critically important we act.

North Korea represents a grave and growing threat to the United States, the region, and the international community. To respond to North Korea's continued belligerence, the legislation we have before us includes mandatory sanctions—and the chairman mentioned that these are mandatory sanctions—directed against specific entities that violate U.S. law and United Nations Security Council resolutions, including proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, arms-related materials, human rights violations—and we will get to that because it is an important part of this legislation—and activities that undermine cyber security.

Our legislation targets for investigation those who support these activities by providing the regime with industrial inputs, such as coal that provides economic support for North Korea's illicit activities or luxury goods that allow the regime to continue to exercise its control.

We are going after the source of their financing of their illegal weapons program. It is not always the direct equipment that goes into building the weapons; in many cases, it is the mineral wealth of the country that they are using in order to finance that. This legislation targets those sectors. The President is mandated to sanction any person who has contributed to or engaged in or helped to facilitate these actions.

Even isolated regimes like North Korea are nonetheless tied to the glob-

al financial order in ways that provide the international community with leverage to seek changes in North Korea's behavior.

This legislation also codifies existing cyber security sanctions in response to North Korea's increasing capability and provocations in the cyber domain, including the attack on Sony. This is an important step in building and enforcing international norms when it comes to cyber space. One of the areas that we have strengthened in the House bill is to make it clear that our concerns about North Korea go well beyond their nuclear weapons tests but also to their cyber attack activities.

The vast majority of North Koreans endure systematic violations of their most basic human rights. Chairman CORKER talked about this. Many of these violations constitute crimes against humanity. It is a fact that is well-documented by the United Nations Commission of Inquiry. Widespread malnutrition, torture, and fear have made North Korea one of the most egregious human rights violators, unparalleled in the contemporary world. They are the worst.

These crimes by the North Korean regime should shock the conscience of humanity. Building on the important work of the U.N. Commission of Inquiry, the United Nations Human Rights Commission and General Assembly adopted by overwhelming margins resolutions calling for accountability for North Korea's human rights abuses. Just last year, the United Nations Security Council took up the DPRK's grave human rights injustices on their standing agenda for the very first time. These multilateral resolutions need to be backed up by appropriate action, and that is exactly what we are doing.

It is well past time to hold North Korea responsible for its human rights violations, and this legislation does just that. In response, this legislation imposes sanctions not just for North Korea's nuclear programs and continued provocative behavior but for the severe human rights abuses committed in North Korea as well. This is new and necessary policy ground for the United States with regard to North Korea.

Although tough sanctions have worked on North Korea when applied in the past—and I think it is important to point out that sanctions do work. In 2005 the United States designated Banco Delta Asia, BDA, as a money laundering concern for facilitating North Korean illicit activities and banned all U.S. financial institutions from dealing with that bank. It worked. It had a major impact on North Korea. The problem is, that was 2005 and we let up. We didn't keep the pressure on. This legislation will correct that oversight and remedy the reasons why these sanctions are not effective today.

This legislation acknowledges that sanctions and diplomacy are the most effective way when integrated into a comprehensive strategy that engages all of our instruments of national policy. The North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 includes instruments to improve the enforcement of multilateral sanctions, an overall strategy to combat North Korea's cyber activities, and other efforts to address human rights abuses. The legislation also protects important humanitarian assistance programs.

This is another point I want to underscore: We have no problem with the people of North Korea. It is the government. It is the government that is not only threatening its neighbors, it has damaged, threatened, and killed its own people. This legislation makes it clear that we will continue to try to get humanitarian assistance to the people of North Korea.

Finally, effectively enforcing sanctions against North Korea is not something the United States can do alone. It requires our allies, our partners, and the rest of the international community to join us in this effort. This legislation seeks to create the policy environment that makes such a multilateral effort at the United Nations Security Council possible.

The onus is now on China. Chairman CORKER is actually right in what he said. China is as much a threat as any country in the world as a result of North Korea's activities. China can make a huge difference in isolating North Korea and changing their behavior to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula. That is their objective. China has told us that. They need to take action. They shouldn't be blocking U.N. Security Council action. They should not only be supporting that, they should be using their influence over North Korea to bring about a change of behavior of North Korea as it relates to proliferation of weapons. So it is on China.

The United States will do what it must do to safeguard our interests and that of our allies. And that, we will do. But we hope China, which claims to share our same goals on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, will agree on the meaningful steps necessary so that we can achieve that goal.

Let me be clear. The United States and Republic of Korea alliance remains as firm and resilient as ever and stands ready to support the Korean people against any and all provocations by North Korea. Just this weekend, the alliance made a decision to begin formal consultations regarding improvements to the THAAD missile defense system operated by U.S. Forces Korea. I support this decision, as it is both an important element of our extended deterrence architecture and it sends the right signal of U.S. resolve to protect our allies and partners in the region.

We will look for new defense systems to help the Republic of Korea and our friends in the Korean Peninsula.

I also wish to commend President Park for her leadership in responding to this growing threat. She has demonstrated the necessary political will to strengthen cooperation and consultations within the alliance and with partners in the region to forge a united and strong international response to North Korea's reckless behavior.

We must also continue to look for opportunities to enhance trilateral cooperation between the United States, Japan, and South Korea. Japan and South Korea are our most important allies in the region, and as we approach North Korea, to be most effective, we need to act together.

Strong, clear-eyed, forward-looking leadership will be necessary if we hope to pursue eventual denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula. It calls for close coordination with our regional allies, South Korea and Japan, particularly in the areas of missile defense and information sharing. And it calls for U.S. leadership to strengthen the existing counterproliferation regime, to ensure that North Korea's most dangerous weapons are contained as we work toward their elimination. This legislation does that. It strengthens U.S. policy and allows us to ensure that North Korea will pay a price for its continued nuclear ambitions, while providing the administration with the toolkit it needs to develop and implement a more effective approach to North Korea. I urge all my colleagues to join us in supporting this very important legislation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I want to add to the comments made by Chairman CORKER, my colleague from Tennessee and chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, as well as Senator CARDIN, my colleague on the Subcommittee on East Asia, about the work we have done over the past year to put this before the Senate today.

One of the first meetings we held in the office of Chairman CORKER was to speak with my colleagues on the concern we shared about North Korea, the concern that while we have rightfully focused on the Middle East and the conflicts that have arisen in Syria and in various places around the country, at the same time we cannot take our eyes off of North Korea.

Of course, Senator CARDIN from Maryland and I have worked together on a variety of committee hearings. The first series of committee hearings we held on the East Asia Subcommittee were to address cyber security issues, the cyber attacks from North Korea, and the situation in regard to security on the North Korean Peninsula. I think the work we have

laid out over the past year is setting ground for this strong sanctions bill today.

I rise to speak in support of H.R. 757, the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act, as amended by the unanimous amendment that came out of the Foreign Relations Committee on January 28. This legislation is a momentous achievement, and I thank the members of the committee and particularly Senator MENENDEZ for working closely with me as we came together with a strong bipartisan solution to what is the problem with North Korea. I also thank House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman ED ROYCE, the sponsor of the underlying House legislation, for his years of tireless work and dedication on this issue. Having served with Chairman ROYCE in the House for a number of years, I know his passion and his dedication and his commitment to bringing peace to the peninsula.

This legislation comes at a critical time. Those of you who had a chance to see the news this morning woke up to a story in Reuters where yet another top military official in the Kim Jong Un regime was assassinated by Kim Jong Un, following a long list of others in his administration who have been killed, assassinated, tortured, including his own uncle, including those who have been killed by anti-aircraft guns.

North Korea poses a serious and growing threat to its neighbors, our allies, South Korea, Japan, and others. It poses a threat to our homeland, the United States, and to global security. While the threat is growing daily, our policies are failing to deter the forgotten maniac in Pyongyang, Kim Jong Un.

This past weekend, on February 7, North Korea conducted a satellite launch, which is essentially a test of an intercontinental ballistic missile that would be capable of reaching the U.S. mainland. Last month, on January 6, North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test, which is the third such test during the Obama administration. Moreover, North Korea has claimed that this test was a test of a thermonuclear device, also known as a hydrogen bomb—a vastly more powerful weapon than the atomic devices the regime has tested in the past. Regardless of whether the claim that it was a hydrogen bomb is true, this test represents a significant advancement in North Korea's nuclear weapons capability.

North Korea has violated a series of United Nations Security Council resolutions, including Resolutions 1718, 1874, 2087, and 2094—all while the regime's stockpile of nuclear weapons continues to grow exponentially. Most recently, nuclear experts have reported that North Korea may currently have as many as 20 nuclear warheads, with potential for over 100 in the next few years.

Yesterday James Clapper, the Director of National Intelligence, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that North Korea has restarted its plutonium reactor at Yongbyon and "could begin to recover plutonium from the reactor's spent fuel within a matter of weeks to months." The regime's ballistic missile capabilities are rapidly advancing. DNI Clapper stated that "North Korea has also expanded the size and sophistication of its ballistic missiles forces—from close-range ballistic missiles to intercontinental ballistic missiles [ICBMs]—and continues to conduct missile test launches. . . . Pyongyang is also committed to developing a long-range, nuclear-armed missile that is capable of posing a direct threat to the United States."

ADM Bill Gortney, the head of U.S. Northern Command, NORTHCOM, which is based in my home State of Colorado, at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, has publicly stated that North Korea may have already developed the ability to miniaturize a nuclear warhead, mount it on their own intercontinental ballistic missile—something called the KN-08—and "shoot it at the homeland." Those are not the words of a committee chairman or the words of a subcommittee chairman; those are the words of our commander of NORTHCOM, who believes that they may have developed the ability to shoot it at the homeland.

North Korea has demonstrated time and time again that it is an aggressive, ruthless regime that is not afraid to kill innocent people. On March 26, 2010, North Korean missiles sank a South Korean ship, killing 46 of her own crew, and several months later, North Korea shelled a South Korean island, killing 4 more South Korean citizens.

Pyongyang is also quickly developing its cyber capabilities as another dangerous tool of intimidation, as demonstrated by the attack on the South Korean financial institutions and communication systems in March of 2013 or the Sony Pictures hack attack in November of 2014.

According to a November 2015 report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, "North Korea is emerging as a significant actor in cyberspace with both its military and clandestine organizations gaining the capability to conduct cyber operations."

According to the Heritage Foundation:

Contrary to perceptions of North Korea as a technically backward nation, the regime has a very robust and active cyber warfare capability. The Reconnaissance General Bureau, North Korea's intelligence agency, oversees 3,000 "cyber-warriors" dedicated to attacking Pyongyang's enemies. A South Korean cyber expert assessed that North Korea's electronic warfare capabilities were surpassed only by the United States and Russia.

We should also never forget that this regime remains one of the world's foremost abusers of human rights. The North Korean regime maintains a vast network of political prison camps where as many as 200,000 men, women, and children are confined to atrocious living conditions and are tortured, maimed, and killed.

On February 7, 2014, the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights released a groundbreaking report detailing North Korea's horrendous record on human rights. The Commission found that North Korea's constituted a crime against humanity.

What then has been this administration's policy to counter the North Korean threat? Our policy is something called "strategic patience," which started in 2009 under then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. The main idea behind strategic patience, it seems, is to patiently wait until Kim Jong Un peacefully surrenders.

The latest developments show that we are reaping the rewards of this ill-conceived policy, and it can no longer be allowed to remain in effect. The simple fact is that strategic patience has been a strategic failure. All that our so-called "patience" has done is to allow the North Korean regime to continue to test nuclear weapons, to expand its testing of intercontinental ballistic missiles, to grow its military power, and to develop cyber warfare technologies while systematically continuing to torture its own people. We have neither militarily deterred this regime nor effectively used our punitive tools.

Our sanctions policy toward North Korea has been weak. This was noted in that same CSIS report:

The sanctions against North Korea pale in comparison to the level of sanctioning against Iran. . . . The number of individuals and entities sanctioned by the U.S. and UN are 843 (U.S.) and 121 (UN) for Iran, but only 100 (U.S.) and 31 (UN) for North Korea.

When we do impose sanctions against North Korea, they are often repetitive or ineffectual. Again, I quote from the Heritage Foundation report:

In response to the North Korean cyberattack on Sony, President Barack Obama issued Executive Order 13687, which, though expansive in legal breadth, was only weakly implemented. The Administration targeted 13 North Korean entities, three organizations already on the U.S. sanctions list, and 10 individuals not involved in cyber warfare.

That was our response to North Korea. To date, we have not imposed specific human rights sanctions on a single North Korean individual. There are 200,000 men, women, and children in political gulags in North Korea, and the United States has not imposed a specific human rights sanction on a single North Korean leader. It is a disgrace given the gravity of the abuses that have been perpetrated by this regime.

These policy failures are why a year ago I began working on the legislation that is before us today that would reverse course and apply the pressure necessary to stop the forgotten maniac in Pyongyang.

Last August, I had an opportunity to visit South Korea and meet with South Korean President Park. We talked about the situation on the peninsula, and we agreed that the status quo with North Korea is no longer sustainable. To witness the proximity of the threat for our South Korean allies, I visited the demilitarized zone, or the DMZ. Only days after I departed, North Korea fired artillery across the border, further illustrating the danger that South Koreans live under each and every day and the danger of armed escalation of this conflict.

I also traveled to China and met with Foreign Minister Wang as well as high-ranking officials of the People's Liberation Army to discuss North Korea. From my conversations, however, it became evident that although they are growing exasperated with the North Korean regime, Beijing has done little with the intention of undertaking meaningful action to stop Kim Jong Un.

Last October, I introduced S. 2144, the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act. I thank 17 of my colleagues in this Senate for cosponsoring this legislation. The substitute before us today represents a slightly modified version of S. 2144. In particular, this legislation mandates and not simply authorizes that the President impose sanctions against persons who materially contribute to North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile development and who import luxury goods into North Korea; mandatory sanctions against perpetrators who enable its censorship and human rights abuses, who engage in money laundering and manufacture of counterfeit goods and narcotics trafficking, who engage in activities undermining cyber security or have sold, supplied or transferred to or from North Korea precious metals or raw metals, including aluminum, steel, and coal for the benefit of North Korea's regime and its illicit activities.

These sanctions are tough, and we know that a significant portion of the foreign currency that North Korea receives is for trade in its precious metals, raw materials, aluminum, steel, and coal. We know that about 90 percent of North Korea's economy is through its relationship with China.

Senator CARDIN previously mentioned that nobody faces a greater threat than South Korea's neighbors Japan and China, which border a regime that is killing its own people and testing ballistic missiles in violation of China's determinations, the United States' determinations, and certainly the United Nations determinations.

I will note that the mandatory sanctions on North Korea's cyber activities and the mandatory sanctions on the minerals are unique to the Senate legislation. This bill also codifies the Executive orders that the President issued last year, 13687 and 13694, regarding cyber security as they applied to North Korea, which were enacted last year in the wake of the Sony Pictures hack and other cyber incidents. That is also a unique feature of the Senate bill.

Lastly, if enacted and signed into law, the mandatory sanctions on cyber violators will break new ground for Congress. It is something that we can take as a model and apply to other nations that perpetrate against the United States. We need to look for every way to deprive Pyongyang of income to build its weapons programs, strengthen its cyber capabilities, and abuse its own people.

We have to send a strong message to China, North Korea's diplomatic protector and largest trading partner, that the United States will use every economic tool at its disposal to stop Pyongyang.

Finally, I would like to quote the Washington Post editorial board from this past Monday, February 8:

President Obama's policy since 2009, "strategic patience," has failed. The policy has mostly consisted of ignoring North Korea while mildly cajoling China to pressure the regime.

The editorial concludes:

Both China and North Korea must see that they will pay a mounting price for what, to the United States, should be Mr. Kim's intolerable steps toward a nuclear arsenal. "Strategic patience" is no longer a viable option.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Washington Post editorial be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 8, 2016]

NORTH KOREA'S ROCKET LAUNCH SHOWS THAT MR. OBAMA'S 'STRATEGIC PATIENCE' HAS FAILED

(By Editorial Board)

Assessing the behavior of North Korean ruler Kim Jong Un is necessarily a matter of guesswork. In light of North Korea's launch Sunday of another long-range rocket, however, our favorite theory is a simple one: Mr. Kim is responding rationally, even shrewdly, to the outside world. The 30-something dictator no doubt noticed that after the regime's latest nuclear test, on Jan. 6, there was no response other than rhetoric from the U.N. Security Council, China and the United States. Moreover, he surely observed that his provocation served to widen a rift between Washington and Beijing over how to handle him. So why not double down?

The three-stage rocket launched Sunday, which supposedly put a satellite into Earth's orbit, could also serve as an intercontinental missile. If North Korea has succeeded, as it claims it has, in miniaturizing a nuclear warhead, Mr. Kim could target Hawaii and Alaska, or perhaps even the western U.S. mainland. The threat is not imminent—and yet it is likely to become so if the United

States does not devise a more effective strategy for containing and deterring the Kim regime.

President Obama's policy since 2009, "strategic patience," has failed. The policy has mostly consisted of ignoring North Korea while mildly cajoling China to pressure the regime. As the supplier of most of the isolated country's energy and food, Beijing has enormous leverage. But Chinese President Xi Jinping appears even more committed than his predecessors to the doctrine that it is preferable to tolerate the Kim regime—and its nuclear proliferation—than do anything that might destabilize it.

Since the nuclear test, China has been saying that it will support another U.N. resolution on North Korea, but it is balking at significant new sanctions. Instead it calls for "dialogue," by which it means negotiations between North Korea and the United States. This sounds reasonable; the problem is that talks on curbing North Korea's nuclear program and missiles have failed repeatedly, and Mr. Kim is now insisting that the regime be accepted as a nuclear power.

What is needed is a return to the only non-military strategy that brought results: sanctions that strike at the regime's inner circle. Mr. Kim and his cronies are still managing to import luxury goods from China, in spite of a U.N. ban; they still use Chinese banks to do business with the rest of the world. Those links could be curtailed if China, like Iran before it, were designated as a money launderer and U.S. sanctions were slapped on Chinese banks and other businesses that supply weapons and luxury goods.

Pending U.S. sanctions legislation, already passed by the House and scheduled for a Senate floor vote this week, would mandate these steps, while providing the administration with some flexibility. It should pass, and Mr. Obama should sign it. The administration and South Korea have taken one positive step, by announcing formal consultations on deploying an advanced missile defense system in South Korea as quickly as possible. That sensible step had been on hold because of China's objections.

Both China and North Korea must see that they will pay a mounting price for what, to the United States, should be Mr. Kim's intolerable steps toward a nuclear arsenal. "Strategic patience" is no longer a viable option.

Mr. GARDNER. This legislation begins the process of reversing course from these failed policies toward building the strong policies that we need to stop the forgotten maniac.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill—this amendment—which passed with unanimous support out of the Foreign Relations Committee. We can make a difference today. We can strengthen our partnership among South Korea, Japan, and the United States. We can stop the torture of the people of North Korea, and we can lift the threat of a nuclearized North Korea, which threatens to harm not just its neighbors or our allies but the people of this country, our homeland.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I know we have a number of speakers who are interested in this legislation. I think they will be coming to the floor be-

tween now and vote time. I ask that the other Members who wish to speak on this legislation come to the floor so we can fill in the gaps.

Again, I thank Senator GARDNER and Senator MENENDEZ for their efforts on the front end of this legislation. I think this is a meaningful piece of legislation. I was with the Presiding Officer yesterday during a lunch meeting, and I think he is OK with my sharing the fact that the Senate is playing a role in really projecting our strength. We continue to do so both through the Armed Services Committee that he serves on and also through the Foreign Relations Committee. I think this is a very strong piece of legislation.

A lot of times it is difficult for us to make a difference. Let's face it. The Commander in Chief has such powers and such staff at their disposal. However this is one of those pieces of legislation where I am certain we are going to make a difference.

Will it end North Korea's activities? It will take collective efforts to make that happen, but I think this begins the process of moving that along.

I have to say that I am so disappointed in the way the U.N. Security Council is behaving. Again, I don't want to rehash old discussions, but I know when we looked at the snapback provisions that were a part of the Iran nuclear agreement—when you are dealing with partners like China, which wants to buy oil from Iran, and Russia, which wants to sell them arms, I hate to say it, but our European friends are just dying to do business in the different ways that they are—mean nothing. They mean nothing.

It is the fact that Iran had two ballistic tests that have taken place, violating U.N. Security Council resolutions, and nothing has happened because Russia and China have blocked those. In many ways that means that for us to continue the project to cause change to occur, this body itself has to be even more proactive.

Senator GARDNER has visited the DMZ, just as I have, and has seen the 28,500 troops that we have there. I know Senator SULLIVAN has done the same thing. We understand the constant danger that South Korea and Japan face, as well as others. North Korea is right on the border of China, and China is the entity that can make the biggest difference. Yet China—again, after being embarrassed when North Korea paid no attention whatsoever to their reach-out when they tried to keep this last test, in particular, from occurring—was unwilling to listen.

So when we have "partners" on the U.N. Security Council unwilling to take steps, it means even more so that this body, of probably the greatest Nation on Earth, has to be proactive.

I commend the Senator from Colorado. I commend the Members of this

body who I think are certainly interested and will pass this piece of legislation overwhelmingly.

Again, I thank Senator MCCONNELL and Senator REID for allowing this legislation to come up in this manner. I too thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGLE. They have worked well together to cause us to project strength in this regard. They sent the base bill over, and it is a very good bill and a strong piece of legislation that the Senate, by passage later today, will strengthen.

This is a collaborative effort. I hate to even use words like that, but it is a collaborative effort by two bodies of Congress and two committees. Ultimately, at the end of the day, I think the two bodies will fully pass this legislation and it will become law. This is going to begin to make a difference in the way North Korea is behaving.

What is happening there is important. It is one of the greatest humanitarian crises, and this bill also addresses that.

I thank Senator GARDNER for his comments on the floor. More importantly, I thank him for his efforts in helping to bring this piece of legislation to the floor and for his leadership in the committee in helping to design this bill.

I look forward to our having a successful day in the Senate.

Mr. GARDNER. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CORKER. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. The Senator from Tennessee talked about his disappointment with the United Nations. I want to go back over some of the points we talked about earlier today.

Senator CARDIN, our colleague from Maryland, mentioned the fact that the United States has very similar approaches to our sanctions that brought Iran to the negotiation table in the first place—sanctions that we levied against Iran brought them to the negotiating table—and the fact that the United States has levied almost eight times more sanctions against Iran than we have a regime that does possess a nuclear weapon.

I think we have more work to do in the United States. This bill is a great step, but also the United Nations—and your expression of disappointment with the United Nations is well stated.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I think it is good that the Senator from Colorado brings up the fact that when we began putting these sanctions in place, there was a lot of push back because, in essence, for these things to work properly or make the biggest difference in outcomes, we need to have an international effort that takes place. When we began the Iran sanctions process, it was unilateral. And while we stressed on the front end—I know we passed an

amendment in the Banking Committee where that one originated—to really put in place efforts to make it multilateral, over time it did and, because of that, the world community obviously is joining us, so we were able to force a behavior change.

I would have liked to have had a better outcome when they got to the table, and I think most people in this body would have. But this bill, I would point out, does seek and does push the administration not only to implement these by mandatory statements, but it also, again, encourages them to work with others.

I had those same conversations in China that the Senator from Colorado had years ago. The Chinese, with such emphasis on stability—and I understand it is right on their border which, to me, should make these provocations even more infuriating and more important, relative to the security of their own country. But it just seems that they, too, have exercised the patience the Senator spoke about earlier that our country has exercised.

I really do believe that passage of this bill today, and an ultimate signature by the President, has the potential to unleash the same chain of events that occurred relative to Iran, hopefully with a better outcome.

Again, I thank the Senator for his efforts.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that any time spent in a quorum call before the vote in relation to H.R. 757 be charged equally against both sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise to speak in strong support of the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act.

This legislation serves as a critical component of the U.S. response to the North Korean regime's dangerous and destabilizing acts. These acts are just the latest in a series of flagrant violations of the U.N. Security Council's resolutions against North Korea's use of ballistic missiles and nuclear technology.

North Korea's unpredictable behavior, combined with their commitment to advancing their nuclear and missile capability, present a serious threat to our country and our allies.

My support of this bill is grounded in my belief that the United States must stand with our allies and lead an international response that condemns North

Korea's actions and reassures our allies, especially Japan and South Korea. Strengthening and expanding sanctions demonstrate that North Korea's behavior is unacceptable and that there will be consequences.

The Gardner-Menendez substitute amendment codifies and makes mandatory important cyber security sanctions on North Korea that were enacted in Executive orders in the wake of the Sony Pictures hacking incident. The amendment also requires the President to target Pyongyang's trade in key industrial commodities that are used to fund its weapons program.

The bill requires a strategy to promote improved implementation and enforcement of multilateral sanctions, a strategy to combat North Korea's cyber activities, and a strategy to promote and encourage international engagement on North Korean human rights-related issues, including forced labor and repatriation.

While passing this legislation is a critical part of the U.S. response, we also must work with our allies, as I mentioned before, to stand as a united international community.

Today, our allies Japan and South Korea took additional measures against Pyongyang. Japan declared that all North Korean ships, including those for humanitarian purposes, would be banned from coming to Japanese ports. Third-country ships that visited North Korea would also be banned from entering. South Korea announced it would pull out of a joint industrial complex that it ran with North Korea at Kaesong.

I agree with Secretary Kerry that the U.N. Security Council must act swiftly to impose penalties for North Korea's violations of U.N. resolutions. China needs to join the international community in supporting sanctions against Pyongyang and should use its leverage as North Korea's largest trading partner to expand U.S. sanctions.

This is an opportunity for the U.S. and China to work together toward a common goal—a denuclearized Korean peninsula.

While our country is engaged in the campaign to destroy ISIL, North Korea's serious provocations demonstrate that we cannot take our attention away from the Asia-Pacific region. The United States has longstanding strategic interests and commitments to the security of the Asia-Pacific area. It is a priority to maintain stability in the region where the United States has five treaty allies and many security partnerships. We must ensure that our solid commitment to defend South Korea and Japan remains firm.

While passing this sanctions bill is important to demonstrate our resolve and leadership, clearly this is not enough in the face of North Korea's provocations. We need to cooperate with our allies on missile defense. As

the north continues its provocative missile launches, our alliance with South Korea means that we must enhance our defenses against these threats. Pyongyang's missile capabilities threaten not only our allies and our servicemembers stationed in South Korea and Japan, but also the U.S. territory of Guam, my home State of Hawaii, Alaska, and much of the west coast.

South Korea's decision yesterday to begin formal talks with the United States to deploy a THAAD missile defense system is a major step toward this kind of missile defense cooperation. THAAD can target short, medium, and intermediate ballistic missiles in flight.

Again, stability in the Asia-Pacific area with key allies, largest and fastest growing economies, and provocative actors like North Korea and China, is critical to our national security. We must continue our commitment to an all-of-government Asia-Pacific rebalance with military, economic, and diplomatic attention and resource priorities to this part of the world.

Since my election to the Senate, I have made it a priority to visit this region every year. Most recently, this past summer, I visited Japan and Guam. I traveled to South Korea in 2013, and I know that our allies are counting on us to keep our focus on the Asia-Pacific and work with them to maintain stability and prosperity in this part of the world.

I urge my colleagues to send a strong message to North Korea and our allies by not only supporting the North Korean Sanctions Enforcement Act, but also by supporting the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, many of my colleagues, both Republicans and Democrats, have taken to the floor today in support of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act. It is a bill that I, too, am pleased to support.

This bill was developed in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee through the same spirit of collaboration and collegiality in America's best interests that we have seen in this committee time and again. Senators GARDNER and MENENDEZ deserve real praise for their work together drafting this bill, and I thank and commend Chairman CORKER and Ranking Member CARDIN for leading an open amendment process within

the committee that strengthened the bill with truly constructive changes—among them an amendment from Senator MARKEY to crack down on transfers of conventional weapons to and from North Korea, and another from Senator SHAHEEN, which makes sure these new sanctions will not impede our ability to recover the remains of any lost American servicemember in North Korea.

I want to thank Senators CORKER and CARDIN not only for advancing this bill but, just as importantly, for leading the Foreign Relations Committee in a bipartisan spirit that reflects the best of the Senate in an uncertain world. This is a strong bill, and I am confident it will enhance sanctions against North Korea in response to the regime's nuclear test last month and its dangerous nuclear missile launch last weekend. It is a clear, direct response that sends an unmistakable signal to North Korea and the world that we intend to continue to be actively engaged.

Frankly, the floor debate this week at some moments has not always reflected that same bipartisan spirit and the same spirit in which the House overwhelmingly passed a similar bill last month. Somehow the debate has at times shifted from questions of how best to punish North Korea for its illegal actions and how we can pull together in that effort to questions about President Obama's broader policy goals and motives. Suggestions that the President somehow enabled North Korea to engage in this provocative behavior by pursuing a separate nuclear agreement with Iran only distract from our shared goal that serves as the foundation and bipartisan purpose of this legislation.

I urge a more constructive course. We should apply the same bipartisan spirit in which we developed the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act toward passage of the Iran Policy Oversight Act, which was led by Ranking Member CARDIN and which will ensure that Congress can exercise effective oversight of the nuclear agreement with Iran.

Just as members of the Foreign Relations Committee worked together to develop a sanctions bill on North Korea, Republicans and Democrats in this body should come together to enforce the terms of the nuclear deal with Iran and to push back on Iran's support for terrorism in the Middle East, its ongoing human rights violations, and its illegal ballistic missile tests. The Iran Policy Oversight Act offers us an incredible way to accomplish all of these goals.

When it comes to the recent nuclear agreement with Iran, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or the JCPOA, too often we find ourselves distracted from the core question as to whether that deal has made Iran less able to pursue develop-

ment of a nuclear weapon. We are seeing the same tendency play out today as some of my colleagues have promoted a false comparison between the JCPOA and the 1994 agreed framework, which the United States negotiated with North Korea with the goal of stopping North Korea from developing a nuclear weapon. These comparisons make a false implication that just because the 1994 framework utterly failed to keep North Korea from pursuing an illicit nuclear weapons program, the JCPOA is destined to similarly fail with regard to Iran. I will take a moment to explain why this comparison is inaccurate at best and dangerously misleading at worst.

First the 1994 framework with North Korea was just that—a brief framework or outline, its text just three pages long. The nuclear agreement with Iran, on the other hand, is nearly 160 pages—thorough, detailed, and comprehensive, outlining the international community's expectations, specifying deadlines of deliverables, and laying out in clear terms the consequences for violations of the deal.

The second difference between the two is just as fundamental. The 1994 agreed framework with North Korea did not seek to block North Korea's plutonium pathway to a nuclear weapon. Not only does it eliminate its ability to produce weapons-grade plutonium, but international inspectors have recently certified Iran actually did so by filling the core of the Arak heavy water reactor with concrete.

The importance of including this provision in the JCPOA was made even clearer yesterday when James Clapper, the U.S. Director of National Intelligence, confirmed that North Korea has restarted its plutonium production reactor and may begin recovering spent plutonium fuel in a matter of weeks. If Iran even attempted to do the same, the international community would now know and would be able to take action long before it could achieve its objective.

The third key difference is this. The JCPOA allows the IAEA, the International Atomic Energy Agency, full access to monitor Iran's entire nuclear fuel cycle, from uranium mines to mills, to centrifuge production workshops, to enrichment facilities. Never before—including back in 1994 with North Korea—has a nuclear agreement given international inspectors such comprehensive access to monitor and inspect compliance. In fact, when I recently visited the IAEA headquarters in Vienna, Austria, the head of the agency said the access they have gotten to Iran's entire range of nuclear activities goes well beyond the access it had in North Korea in the 1990s.

The fourth difference is just as crucial. The JCPOA requires Iran to abide by the so-called Additional Protocol and other additional measures, which

guarantee the IAEA can seek access to suspicious undeclared locations. This Additional Protocol, a key deterrent to cheating, didn't even exist in 1994. The nuclear deal with Iran contains defined timelines for access to suspect potential nuclear sites and a dispute resolution mechanism that will resolve differences between Iran and the international community in favor of accessing inspection. The 1994 agreed framework didn't include any of these protections.

Fifth, the JCPOA is an agreement between Iran and the international community. While the United States maintains its ability to snap back international sanctions to punish Iran, the strength of the deal is not just from U.S. support but from buy-in from our P5+1 partners—the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, and China—and we have to continue to work together tirelessly on a bipartisan basis to ensure that those partners remain partners in enforcement of the deal.

Sixth, the JCPOA puts incentives in the right place, halting any sanctions relief for Iran until after the international community verified it had complied with the core terms of the deal. The 1994 framework allowed North Korea compensation and sanctions relief simply for signing up before the agreement was even implemented—clearly a fatal flaw.

Finally, and in some ways most importantly, although Iran and North Korea are dangerous, radical regimes—revolutionary regimes—and they are both ostensibly led by Supreme Leaders, they exist in different regions, have different goals, and exist in different contexts. I do think that Iran, rightly or wrongly, seeks and needs integration with the world economy, and North Korea continues to be a rogue regime isolated from the rest of the world.

The seven differences this Senator has just briefly outlined show the fundamental differences between the 1994 agreed framework with North Korea, which failed, and the JCPOA with Iran, which I hope and pray will still prove to be successful. We must focus on enforcing rigorously the terms of the JCPOA and pushing back on Iran's bad behavior in a bipartisan fashion and in the same spirit in which my colleagues in the Foreign Relations Committee developed this vital and important North Korea bill.

One way we could do so is to pass the Iran Policy Oversight Act, a bill led and developed by Senator CARDIN and the members of the Foreign Relations Committee who were both supporters and opponents of the JCPOA. The Iran Policy Oversight Act would clarify ambiguous provisions in the JCPOA, establish in statute our commitment to enforcing the deal, engage in comprehensive efforts to counter Iranian activities in the Middle East, and provide increased support to our allies in

the region, especially our vital ally, Israel.

I commend Senator CARDIN for his leadership in drafting a bill strong enough to earn the cosponsorship of both supporters and opponents of that nuclear deal.

Even in a dysfunctional Congress, today's debate and passage of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act shows that we can come together to make our country safer in the face of a dangerous world. Congress did the same last May when we came together to enact the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, which gave Congress a clear and focused opportunity to review the terms of the JCPOA before it was finalized. We can and must do similar things again.

We should work together, Republicans and Democrats, in the spirit of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act and the Iran Nuclear Review Act to introduce, debate, and pass legislation to show Iran and our allies that the United States is serious about continuing to hold them accountable for their bad behavior and to continue to demonstrate our leadership in the Pacific region and our determination to contain North Korea's dangerous nuclear activities.

Thank you, Mr. President.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on an amendment I submitted to the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act. This bill we are considering today will provide a more robust set of tools to confront the nuclear threat from Pyongyang by expanding and tightening enforcement on North Korea.

This bill goes beyond sanctions and calls for a more forceful response to North Korea's cyber attacks and human rights abuses. We now have an opportunity to highlight North Korea's cooperation with Iran on nuclear weapons and ballistic missile development. North Korea's nuclear cooperation with Iran is widely suspected, and yet the Obama administration has been reluctant to disclose what it knows to Congress.

Last month, North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear weapons test. Iranian officials reportedly traveled to North Korea to witness its three previous nuclear tests in 2006, 2009, and 2013. Given this trend, it would not be surprising at all if Iranians were actually present in North Korea's test just last month. Just before North Korea's 2013 test, a senior American official was quoted as saying "it's very possible that the North Koreans are testing for two countries."

Yesterday, the Director of National Intelligence, Jim Clapper, provided written testimony to Congress, which stated that Pyongyang's "export of

ballistic missiles and associated materials to several countries, including Iran and Syria, and its assistance to Syria's construction of a nuclear reactor . . . illustrate its willingness to proliferate dangerous technologies."

We have known that Iran and North Korea have been cooperating on ballistic missile technology, and it has been suspected for over a decade that they are also working together on nuclear weapons development as well as ballistic technology. In the wake of the nuclear agreement with Iran, Iran is starting to see a flow of funds from sanctions relief of potentially over \$100 billion. As Iran gets this flow of cash, this Senator is concerned that we will see this illicit cooperation increase and that Iran will use some of these funds to pay North Korea for further testing and technology.

This amendment No. 3294 would require a semiannual report to Congress; that is all. This report would cover North Korea's cooperation with Iran on nuclear weapon and ballistic missile testing, development, and research. We have been asking for this information and have not received it in a timely fashion.

The administration would also be required to disclose to Congress the identity of individuals who have knowingly engaged in or directed material support for or exchanged information between the governments of Iran and North Korea for their nuclear programs in this semiannual report. In order for us to tackle this problem head-on and to take steps to halt this illicit cooperation, we need a full report from the administration. It is as simple as that. That is all this amendment does.

I am glad to see this body moving so swiftly to enact punitive sanctions on North Korea for its recent actions, and this amendment will help further strengthen efforts to punish rogue regimes.

I would also like to applaud the efforts of my colleagues on the Foreign Relations Committee—Senator GARDNER, Chairman CORKER, and Senator MENENDEZ—for their work on getting this bill through committee and to the floor. Their leadership on this issue has been tremendous, and I look forward to working with them on the floor to see its passage.

Thank you, and I yield back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, while we are waiting on Senator PETERS to be here, I wanted to go through some of the history relative to the North Ko-

rean program. I think sometimes there has been so much focus on other countries' programs—I know Senator GARDNER alluded to some aspects of it in his comments—but North Korea's nuclear program actually dates back to the 1950s, when they pursued nuclear energy cooperation with the Soviet Union.

In ensuing years, North Korea acquired a full nuclear fuel cycle, including plutonium, reprocessing, and uranium enrichment capabilities. So this goes back to the 1950s, but in 2003 North Korea announced its withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and conducted four nuclear weapons tests in 2006, 2009, 2013, and 2016.

Experts believe the first two nuclear tests were plutonium based, and analysts assess the third nuclear test may have used highly enriched uranium. So they are on a two-track route. On January 6, 2016, North Korea announced that it successfully tested its first hydrogen bomb. We don't have verification of that. We don't have intelligence back that would verify that was the type of test that took place.

Today North Korea possesses nuclear weapons, a longstanding plutonium nuclear program at Youghbyon, and a uranium enrichment capability which it revealed in 2010 after years of denials. Open-source estimates of North Korea's nuclear arsenal vary from 10 devices to nearly 100 weapons, but most experts believe North Korea's nuclear arsenal is somewhere in the range of 10 to 20 devices that are made of both plutonium and highly enriched uranium.

North Korea's weapons of mass destruction extend beyond its nuclear capabilities to include biological and chemical weapons programs. It also maintains an extensive long-range ballistic missile program which poses a direct threat to allies, U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific, and the United States.

The Presiding Officer lives in a part of the world that is most directly certainly at threat. North Korea's nuclear program dates back to the 1970s. In 1984, North Korea conducted its first ballistic missile test of a Scud-B ballistic missile. North Korea's ballistic missile arsenal includes shorter range Scud missiles that can travel nearly 300 miles, No Dong missiles that can travel upward of 800 miles, and several longer range missiles that can travel from 4,000 upward to 6,000 miles.

In April 2012, North Korea displayed at a military parade a new long-range missile variant known as KN-08. The missile was displayed on a Chinese-made transporter erector launcher. In the fall of 2015, North Korea again displayed, at a military parade, the same missile on a Chinese TEL. In December 2012, North Korea successfully launched the Unha-3 launch vehicle, placed a satellite into orbit, representing a significant advancement in

North Korea's missile technology capabilities.

On February 7, 2016, North Korea announced it had successfully launched another satellite into orbit using the Unha-3 launch vehicle. Although the KN-08 missile has not been tested, it is believed that the space launch vehicle technology has some similar technological features of an ICBM. The head of the U.S. Northern Command, ADM William Gortney, has stated our government assesses that North Korea could miniaturize a nuclear weapon and place it on the KN-08, which would reach the U.S. homeland. Pretty amazing, really, to think about the progress that has occurred without any real actions taking place.

Again, this has gone through multiple administrations. North Korea stands as one of the most foremost proliferators of WMD-related materials and ballistic missile technologies. North Korea has engaged in WMD-related and missile cooperation with several states, including Iran, Pakistan, and Libya.

North Korea also assisted Syria in the construction of a plutonium-based nuclear reactor at al-Kibar, until Israel destroyed that facility in 2007. In addition, it has been reported that North Korea assisted both Iran and Pakistan with nuclear weapons design activities. Again, I think it is very timely that we are taking this up—actually beyond time—with the most recent activities that have taken place. This is timely.

Obviously, the policy—again, through multiple administrations, multiple Congresses—has really been left untouched in a significant way. I truly do believe the legislation that hopefully will pass this body today with overwhelming support will be the beginning of a process. We just have seen, by the way, with it being known that the U.S. House and Senate were probably going to pass a very strong piece of legislation—we are now seeing other countries in the region stepping up.

Again, it speaks to the power of us speaking in one voice and again pushing, as we did on Iran years ago, pushing the international community to join in with us. Again, as I said earlier, I am still disappointed that the U.N. Security Council cannot function—cannot function—in a way to speak more collectively in that way, but I am glad to see that countries in the region, as a result of certainly the stances being taken here and as a result of their own concerns about what is happening with North Korea—I am glad to see it looks as though we are beginning to push toward more international efforts against North Korea.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, one of the things that I think we have to continue to reiterate during today's debate is that this debate is not about the people of North Korea. It is about the dictator of the regime, the forgotten maniac, Kim Jung Un, and his reign of terror in North Korea, not only with the 200,000 people who are subject to imprisonment in political camps—200,000 men, women, and children who have been tortured and maimed—but it is about his leadership that seems to go along with him, a leadership that would aid and abet in the torture and maiming of innocent people.

I think perhaps this chart, this picture, this satellite image of the Korean Peninsula, best illustrates what the people of North Korea are subjected to each and every day. You can see North Korea right here, a big vast, empty space at night, very little light, maybe Pyongyang, the brightest light point compared to Seoul, compared to South Korea, compared to their neighbors in the south, their family members in the south because they have been deprived of an economy, because they have been deprived of an opportunity, and because the people of North Korea have been deprived of the freedoms their South Korean neighbors have enjoyed.

Standing on the DMZ—and I know the Presiding Officer has been there as well—standing on the DMZ, you can see the differences between the development of North Korea and South Korea. In just a few moments—I notice my colleague from Michigan is here and is scheduled to speak. In just a few minutes I will go into this chart a little bit more about how this bill not only creates mandatory sanctions but also will give us tools to help the people of North Korea.

With that, I will yield the floor to my colleague Senator PETERS from Michigan, whom I have had great opportunities to work with before on legislation from telecommunications to cars that communicate with each other. I am grateful he is here to speak on this bill as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise in support of legislation currently before the Senate to crack down on the North Korean regime's repeated nuclear provocations. I would certainly like to thank my colleague Senator GARDNER for his leadership on this issue as well.

Four days ago, on February 6, the world watched North Korea launch a rocket into space, in what was clearly an effort to test its advanced ballistic missile technology. The North Korean satellite is now tumbling in orbit and incapable of functioning in any useful

way. Last month, the regime announced it had successfully detonated a nuclear device as part of its rogue nuclear program, the fourth test we have detected in North Korea since 2006.

This combination of incompetence, aggression, and defiance of the international community is dangerous and simply cannot stand.

Just yesterday, the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, testified it is likely North Korea has restarted the plutonium reactor that has been shuttered since 2007 and could begin to recover fissile material within weeks.

These defiant acts fly in the face of existing international sanctions and must be met with a strong and unified response from the world community. It is a step in the right direction that the U.N. Security Council has strongly condemned North Korea's actions and vowed to adopt significant new punitive measures against the regime.

However, the dangerous path North Korea continues down poses a direct threat to the United States and our allies, particularly South Korea and Japan. We must go further and take action to punish the North Korean regime and those who aid and abet in its provocative actions.

The legislation before us today would significantly enhance our ability to curb the North Korean nuclear program. The bill requires the President to sanction anyone who knowingly supports the North Korean regime, whether by furnishing materials for North Korean weapons programs or by selling luxury goods to corrupt government officials while so many North Koreans live in poverty.

The bill also provides exemptions for humanitarian organizations that work to relieve the suffering of millions of North Koreans. We must continue to let the people under the rule of this brutal regime know that we stand with them in their democratic aspirations, even as their government continues to threaten the international community. I commend the efforts of the Foreign Relations Committee and particularly Senators Menendez and Gardner for their work on this important legislation.

The United States has long led the world in working to curb the threat of nuclear proliferation. We lead through sustained commitments to securing fissile material, such as spearheading the effort to secure loose nukes after the fall of the Soviet Union. We lead through precedence set in the bilateral 123 agreements, agreeing to share civilian nuclear technology so partner countries can diversify their energy mix while explicitly preventing them from enriching uranium on their own soil.

In the years to come, our leadership is necessary to raise this global standard even higher for every country regarding the enrichment of uranium. We

do not aim to deny peaceful nuclear energy to nations that seek it, but we must make clear that there is no universal right to enrichment. The United States has moral authority on this issue because we have led by example, committing to reductions in our own nuclear arsenal in the interest of a safer world. We must continue to work with unity of purpose and act to stem the spread of nuclear materials to rogue states and terrorist organizations.

Nowhere is American leadership more necessary than in the case of the Iranian nuclear program. I was proud to cosponsor the initial effort to pass sanctions against Iran in 2009 and help pass additional sanctions in the years since. I firmly believe crippling sanctions are what brought Iran to the negotiating table and the threat of additional sanctions enhanced our bargaining position during the painstaking negotiations that led to the JCPOA. Our work to unite world powers behind this effort led to an agreement that curbs Iran's nuclear program in the short term, but in the longer term we need to stand ready to act swiftly and decisively against any Iranian violations of the JCPOA, large or small.

The JCPOA is not the end of our multilateral efforts against Iran and its illicit behavior, just as the legislation before us today is not the end of our multilateral efforts against the North Korean regime and its repeated affronts to international security. We will continue to punish regimes that support terrorism, violate human rights, and illegally seek nuclear weapons. Surely our response to the North Korean provocations will be watched closely by the Iranian regime, which is why we must respond swiftly and why we must respond strongly.

The sanctions bill before us today is not a Democratic issue, it is not a Republican issue. The goal of preventing nuclear proliferation has been a uniting principle of the American foreign policy for decades, and it must continue to be so. We must come together today to pass this bill quickly and without opposition to demonstrate in no uncertain terms our unity of purpose in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Colorado, Mr. GARDNER, for his leadership on this issue—together with the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Senator CORKER—for bringing us to this moment. This is a rare bipartisan moment, where the Senate has come together and agreed to debate, vote, and pass an important bill that imposes sanctions on one of the most dangerous regimes in the world.

Recently, I was in Hawaii at the Pacific Command and we asked Admiral Harris, a four-star U.S. Navy admiral who heads Pacific Command, to rank the areas of the world that he was most concerned about, the regimes that he thought represented the biggest danger to peace. He listed North Korea as No. 1.

That may be because of the proximity of his area of responsibility to North Korea, but there is no question an unstable leader with nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles is a threat not only to the region but to the United States as well.

We know over the weekend North Korea successfully launched a long-range rocket and put a satellite into orbit. This was done in defiance of sanctions and represents a dangerous trend of an increasingly hostile and unstable North Korea. It was particularly alarming for several reasons.

First, the same technology that put that satellite in orbit can be used to deliver a nuclear weapon. Long-range ballistic missiles have the potential to hit the U.S. homeland. That is why North Korea has been considered a serious threat to our country, not just the region but our country as well. The timing of this launch was also very concerning because just last month North Korea claimed it had tested the components of a hydrogen bomb, a thermonuclear weapon that is more powerful than an atomic bomb—which we knew they had, but this represented an escalation, if it is true.

The idea that North Korea could soon develop advanced nuclear weapons, along with intercontinental ballistic missiles, and deliver them to our shores is a frightening proposition. Unfortunately, every day we grow closer to that reality.

I will just pause for a minute to say this is another reason why our missile defense systems are so important, not just to the safety of our friends and allies but also increasingly to the United States. I know in Colorado a lot of those efforts are headed up to provide that effective deterrent and missile defense system to the threat of the intercontinental ballistic missiles.

I have to be honest with you and say I am puzzled why the President hasn't done more on this issue to date, but while the President sits on the sidelines—I think somebody called it strategic patience—it has been a failure, not just patience. Patience I think of as a virtue but certainly not in this context.

Nevertheless, the Senate will do its part to make sure the regime in North Korea feels some consequences for its belligerent, illegal actions. Today we will vote on the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act. This bill mandates new sanctions on North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile program, and, importantly, it will provide

an overall strategy to help address North Korea's human rights abuses and combat its cyber activities. I don't think most people realize that in addition to its belligerence and its violating international norms, North Korea is a serial human rights abuser. Literally, because of its focus on its finances on military arms and its standing army, North Korea has seen many, many, many of its people starve to death for lack of an adequate food supply. So this is a rogue regime, it is a dangerous regime, and one we need to make sure feels the consequences of its actions.

This bill will help hold North Korea accountable, which is more than we have seen from the administration. I want to point out that North Korea's provocative actions are just another symptom of the Obama doctrine gone wrong. I mentioned strategic patience, which is hardly a strategy for keeping the world safe.

Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident. Through his words and deeds, the President continues to discredit and undercut American leadership around the world. As a result, the world is even more unstable and conflict-ridden than when he assumed office. It is absolutely the fact that in the absence of American leadership, tyrants, thugs, and bullies feel emboldened, and our friends and allies question our loyalty and whether they can rely on us or whether they have to go it alone and build the capacity to defend themselves in the absence of a strong America.

Many recall that when he ran for office, the President heavily criticized the foreign policy choices of his predecessor, particularly the surge in Iraq. I happened to be in the Senate during that time. I remember those debates. The Democratic leader, Senator REID, said the surge would never work, and many were skeptical because frankly it represented a bold dramatic move.

Well, not only did President Obama's decision to hastily withdraw in Iraq after the successful surge—not only did his decision to hastily withdraw from Iraq squander the hard-won progress achieved by the surge, that country is now one of a number of countries in the Middle East in shambles. We are seeing our friends and our allies—together with American advisers on the ground, special operations forces in a train-and-assist mission—trying to regain control of cities such as Ramadi that were won as a result of the blood and the treasure of the United States.

Let's look at a few things where they stand today. Over the past 2 years, ISIS has captured city after city where American troops shed that blood, sweat, and tears to bring relative peace. The border that used to exist between Syria and Iraq is gone. It has literally been erased. In spite of President Obama's misguided nuclear deal with

Iran, Iranian influence in Iraq has grown, not waned. I do find it interesting that speaker after speaker—even though we are talking about North Korea—is trying to come to the floor and speak about Iran after having allowed the President's ill-advised nuclear deal to go through, which guarantees a pathway for Iran to acquire nuclear weapons.

As a result of the administration's paralysis, Syria, too, has plunged deeper and deeper into chaos. Now we not only have a security problem on our hands, we have millions of Syrian and Iraqi refugees internally displaced or flooding across international borders into places such as Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, and Europe. I have visited some of those refugee camps in Turkey and Jordan. These people are doing what we all would do. They are fleeing for their survival because frankly, once the President drew that red line in Syria, when it came to the use of illegal weapons, the President never did anything to enforce it or make sure that Bashar al-Assad felt or suffered any consequences. So the President's inaction, time after time, place after place, has real consequences. The vacuum left as a result of the U.S. retreat in the Middle East has provided an open door for other countries to expand their influence there, as we have seen and as we continue to see on a daily basis.

Russia is the prime example. It continues to extend its influence through indiscriminate bombing campaigns that yield little regard for civilian lives. The Russian bombing campaign doesn't distinguish between combatants and civilians. Russian forces are even actively fighting against American-backed groups and working to undermine them at every turn.

Of course this doesn't even touch on Russia's aggressive actions along its own border with respect to Ukraine in NATO's backyard. Unfortunately, Russia has no reason to believe that the United States, under the current leadership of the Commander in Chief, will challenge it anywhere—not in the Middle East, not in Europe.

I could go on and on about other countries that are feeling emboldened, like a belligerent China in the South China Sea, or, as I mentioned a moment ago, a newly financed and emboldened Iran, the No. 1 state sponsor of international terrorism. When the administration basically wrote a check for \$50 billion to Iran, that Secretary Kerry, Vice President BIDEN, and others acknowledged could be used to finance international terrorism, it seemed to have no impact whatsoever because they were so determined to cut this bad deal with Iran.

The point is that our retreat and our lack of leadership around the world only underscore the President's lack of a larger foreign policy strategy. We

have asked him time and again: Please tell us what your strategy is. The President sends over a proposed authorization for the use of military force against ISIS, and we find out the real reason he did that is not because he thinks he lacks authority to do what he is doing now but because they want to tie the hands of future Presidents in terms of what that President could do under that authorization for the use of military force. But we keep asking, and all we hear is crickets—silence. We keep asking for a serious, comprehensive strategy to guide the foreign policy and national security efforts of the United States, and the President simply doesn't feel like it is his obligation to deliver one, opting instead for tactics that are guaranteed not to win, saying: Well, we bombed ISIS.

Well, that is all well and fine. But at some point, once you bomb ISIS, unless you have somebody who can occupy that territory, the terrorists are going to come right back in. We have friends and allies, such as the Kurds and other countries in the Middle East that have said: Well, we will help be the boots on the ground if you will help supply us, to which they are not provided any sort of answer.

I believe the American people do deserve better, and the men and women in uniform who have put their lives on the line deserve better. They deserve a strategy. They deserve the support to be able to accomplish the mission their country has asked them to accomplish.

So I am glad that in the absence of leadership from the White House, the Congress has decided to take up some of the slack here to fill the gap left by the President's inattention to this important issue. If the President won't step up to the plate and take these threats seriously enough to come up with a strategy to actually defeat them, the American people can trust the Senate to address it, and we will do so today on a bipartisan basis, insofar as it applies to the threat in North Korea.

So it is my hope that we will send a strong bipartisan message to North Korea that their repeated provocations will not go unanswered.

MENTAL HEALTH AND OUR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Mr. President, I just came from a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, which was one of the most unusual hearings I have attended since the time I have been in the Senate—certainly on the Judiciary Committee. Usually on the Judiciary Committee the habit is for the majority to select witnesses and then the minority gets to select witnesses, and then witnesses come out and are proxy fighters for the particular policy differences that members of the committee have—not today. Today, thanks to Chairman GRASSLEY, the senior Senator from Iowa, the Judi-

ciary Committee had a consensus panel on the subject of mental health and its intersection with our criminal justice system.

What we heard was that, increasingly, our jails and our prisons, our criminal justice system, and the homeless that we see on our streets are a product of a failed policy—one that said: Yes, we need to move people out of institutions and out of hospitals. But, of course, there is the promise—or at least it was the hope—that they would have somewhere else to go to get treatment and housing and the like.

Today what we heard reaffirmed from the sheriff of Bexar County, TX—San Antonio, my hometown—and from so many of the other witnesses from across the country is that now our jails, our prisons, and the criminal justice systems have become *de facto* warehouses for the mentally ill, completely ill-suited to deal with what they need, which is treatment, supervision, and help—and the families, too, who need additional tools available for them to turn to when they need help with a loved one who has become mentally ill.

So I have introduced legislation that we talked about during the hearing today called the Mental Health and Safe Communities Act, modeled off of successful experiments and programs in places like North Carolina, which we heard from before, San Antonio, Virginia, and elsewhere. I am sure there are a number of good stories.

This is the way I think Congress ought to legislate, rather than to dream up here behind closed doors some grand scheme—the masters of the universe trying to decide what is good for all 320 million of us in a one-size-fits-all approach. We have seen the disastrous consequences of that sort of thinking. Rather than that, let's look at what has actually proven to work in our cities, counties, and our States, and then scale that up, where appropriate, to apply more broadly after we have proven that it actually works. That is what my legislation, the Mental Health and Safe Communities Act, is designed to do.

As we will look—I believe tomorrow—in the Judiciary Committee at the opioid and heroin crisis that is being experienced in so many parts of our country and as we look, as we have, at reforming our prison systems to provide more incentives for people who are low-risk and mid-level offenders, if they will accept the opportunity to help themselves to deal with their underlying drug or alcohol problem, to learn a skill, to get a GED, to better prepare for life on the outside based on the experiences in Texas and elsewhere, we can actually lower crime rates, lower recidivism rates, and save taxpayers a lot of money.

So whether it is dealing with the mental health issue and its intersection with the criminal justice system

or dealing with our prison system, which used to believe that rehabilitation was an important part of what their obligation was, or dealing with this opioid and heroin abuse, we have a lot to do to make sure that our criminal justice system is brought into the 21st century and that we no longer punish people who mainly need help.

As somebody who is a recovering member of the Texas judiciary for 13 years, I certainly believe there are some people whom you can't help and whom you must punish. But there is a large segment of people—whether it is drug or alcohol related, or whether it is mental health issues—who will accept our help and will turn their lives around if given that opportunity.

I just wanted to say a few words about that because I feel so strongly about the importance of what we talked about at that hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Texas for the work he is doing on the Judiciary Committee. I hope we can continue in that bipartisan spirit to deal with addiction and, I hope, improvements in our criminal justice system, providing resources to people who have addiction needs. I know there is a strong bipartisan effort to deal with community mental health so we can get services in our community. This is not a partisan issue. I am glad to see that the work by the Judiciary Committee is productive in trying to lead to those conclusions.

I do want to, though, comment a little bit on what was said in regards to the Obama administration. We are here together with a bill on North Korea that is not partisan at all. Democrats and Republicans are working together. There is no division between Congress and the White House. We all believe we have to isolate North Korea and its conduct. The administration has been very strong in actions in the United Nations, keeping us closely informed, and we very much want to work with a strong, united voice. That is how we keep our country the strongest, and that is what we should do on national security. So let me just try to fill in the record a little bit from the previous comments made about the Obama administration.

Let us remember that the Obama administration took over after, I would say, a failed policy in the Middle East in which we went into Afghanistan—as we should have because of the attack on our country. But before completing Afghanistan, the previous administration went into Iraq, using our military first rather than looking for a solution that would provide the type of stability in that region to prevent the spread of radicalization. Instead, governments were formed that didn't represent all of the communities, and we saw splinter groups formed and the recruitment for extreme elements.

President Obama was able to develop international coalitions to work together. I think America is always best when we lead and we can be joined by the international community. The President also understood that it shouldn't be up to America's military to solve all of the problems, that there is not a military solution to the spread of radicalization, that internal support in the countries must come from the countries themselves, that we do not want to be seen as a conquering power, and that it is for the region to defend itself. Yes, we will help, but we are not going to put our ground troops in a situation where they are used as a recruitment for radical forces. We also understand that America leads best when we can get our ideals of good governance with governments that represent all the communities so there is no void. President Obama and his administration have been very strong in those areas.

With regard to dealing with ISIL, the radical forces that exist today, a policy is well understood: Cut off their support. Cut off their support in regards to recruitment by having representative governments. Cut off their support by dealing with their oil supplies and their looting and extortion. Cut off their support by taking back territory in a way that we can control that territory. That is what we have seen happening, certainly in the last several months, as territory that was formally held by ISIL is now being held by the Government of Iraq, particularly, but also Syria.

So I just wanted to correct on this day when we are bringing up the North Korea bill, that every President since the Korean War has had challenges in dealing with the problems in North Korea and that we are together on this issue as a Congress and as a Nation to isolate North Korea. It is not just their nuclear weapon program. As I pointed out earlier, it is their cyber attacks, their human rights violations, and all those issues to which we are speaking with a very strong voice today. I hope that as Democrats and Republicans, the House and Senate, the President and Congress speak with a strong, unified voice, America's national security interests will be better served.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, throughout this debate we continue to remind the people around America that this North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act is not intended to bow to the people of North Korea. Rather, our efforts are to try to help ensure that we are doing everything we can to help stand up for the people of North Korea, to give them the kinds of economic opportunities and freedoms from which they have been deprived by this regime under Kim Jong Un.

Today's sanctions act and the mandatory sanctions that will be levied here today by this act, if adopted and signed by the President—which I believe it will be with the overwhelming bipartisan support that it has—are about the Kim Jong Un regime itself. This is about a forgotten maniac in North Korea who has deprived his people of economic opportunity, who has imprisoned 200,000 men, women, and children, who has tortured his people, and who has assassinated members of his own inner circle and leadership. Today in the morning papers, an article outlined the death of his chief of staff of the army—again, the continued purge of top-level officials under the Kim Jong Un regime.

You can see the situation the people of North Korea are facing each and every day. This is a satellite image of the Korean Peninsula at nighttime. You can see the developments in South Korea, and you can see Seoul, Korea. There are millions of people who live right across the DMZ. And you can see the conditions the people of North Korea are suffering under—an economy that has failed, an economy that has failed to develop to give them the same kinds of opportunities other people in the Korean Peninsula are sharing.

This bill also promotes human rights. I want to point out section 301. This section requires the President to study the feasibility of bringing unmonitored and inexpensive cellular and Internet communications to the people of North Korea and trying to break through the emptiness of North Korea—the communication barriers, the firewalls—to try to get around the North Korean regime that doesn't want the people of North Korea to understand they can live better lives.

Section 302 directs the Secretary of State to develop a comprehensive strategy to promote human rights in North Korea and combat its forced labor practices, including a diplomatic outreach plan and a public diplomacy awareness campaign, what we can do together to try to bring awareness to North Koreans. Let them know that if they have family members in South Korea—what kind of opportunities people in South Korea are sharing.

It wasn't that long ago—a few decades ago—that North Korea had a more vibrant economy than South Korea, but that is certainly not the case today. If you stand on this line, if you stand on the DMZ and you look north into North Korea, you see the hillsides that have been completely deforested and all of the vegetation removed because people lacked food in North Korea, so they cut down the trees and created wood soup so they would have something to fill their stomachs because the North Korean regime of Kim Jong Un failed to do so. You look at the south, and you can see the hills, vegetation, development, prosperity. We

can help bring peace to the peninsula with the passage of this act today.

I know my colleague from New Jersey, Senator MENENDEZ, is coming to the floor today. He has been a great leader when it comes to North Korea, a great leader when it comes to the issue of human rights, and he has worked with me on this legislation. I worked with him to make sure we created a bipartisan solution to this great challenge that is North Korea today. I commend Senator MENENDEZ for the work and the opportunity to present the bipartisan solution before the Senate today.

I yield back and will listen to the words of Senator MENENDEZ.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, let me first start off by thanking the leadership of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Chairman CORKER and Ranking Member CARDIN, for creating the environment to have strong bipartisan legislation on a critical issue that affects the national interests and security of the United States and beyond that, in general, creating a strong bipartisan environment that I think is critical to U.S. foreign policy. It is a tone I tried to set when I had the privilege of being the chairman and Senator CORKER was the ranking member, and I appreciate his leadership in continuing in the same spirit, and, of course, Senator CARDIN, who worked very hard on maintaining that environment. I appreciate that they created the wherewithal to bring us here today.

I also thank Senator GARDNER, the East Asia Subcommittee chairman, for working with me to bring legislation in which we can come together in a strong bipartisan voice because when the Nation speaks with one voice, it speaks most powerfully to both friends and foes across the world. It has been a privilege to work with Senator GARDNER and to see his vision of how we deal with this and merge my vision of how we deal with it, and together I think we have come up with the most comprehensive strategic effort to deal with North Korea. I want to salute him, and I thank him for working with me.

Given the North Korean regime's recent test of what most agree is a ballistic missile—what U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon characterized as “deeply deplorable” and in violation of Security Council resolutions—one thing is abundantly clear when you look at this photograph: It is time to take North Korea seriously.

For too many years, the standard response of Republican and Democratic administrations alike whenever North Korea stages a provocation has been to dismiss the seriousness of the threat. We tend to see it as a strange regime seemingly disconnected from geopolitical reality, something of a par-

allel universe that doesn't function in the same way as the rest of the international community, a strange regime run by crazy leaders and certain to collapse any day, that there is no need to worry, it will not and it can't survive.

Well, four nuclear tests, three Kims, two violations of U.N. Security Council resolutions, and one attempt by North Korea to transfer nuclear technology to Syria later, it is clearly time for the United States to start taking the North Korea challenge seriously.

In fact, today it is estimated that North Korea has accumulated enough fissile material for more than a dozen nuclear weapons. It has now conducted four nuclear explosive tests, as you can see from this chart, starting in October of 2006, and with it, the quake magnitude has risen with virtually every test. It has developed a modern gas centrifuge uranium enrichment program to go along with its plutonium stockpile. It has tested ballistic missiles. It is seeking to develop the capability to match a nuclear warhead to an intercontinental ballistic missile.

Kim Jong Un has consolidated his grip on power, and he seems determined to proceed on a course of “byungjin,” Kim Jong Un's policy that strengthens both his military and his economy as opposed to strengthening one or the other.

Taken together, these developments present a growing danger that could set North Korea on a path to becoming a small nuclear power. It is a scenario which could lead other nations in the region to reconsider their own commitments to nonproliferation, and it could embolden North Korea in its relations with other bad actors such as Syria and Iran.

I know it has been referenced, but I think it is worthy that when the Director of National Intelligence—the person in charge of amassing all of our intelligence as a country—James Clapper, in testimony before the Armed Services Committee, says the following, it is worth repeating:

North Korea's export of ballistic missiles and associated materials to several countries, including Iran and Syria, and its assistance to Syria's construction of a nuclear reactor, destroyed in 2007, illustrates its willingness to proliferate dangerous technologies.

Director Clapper went on to say that following North Korea's third nuclear test, Pyongyang said it would “refurbish and restart” its nuclear facilities, to include the uranium enrichment facility at Yongbyon—shut down in 2007—and that it has followed through by expanding its Yongbyon enrichment facility and restarting the plutonium production reactor which has been online long enough to begin recovering plutonium from spent fuels within weeks or maybe months.

He told the committee:

Pyongyang is also committed to developing a long-range, nuclear-armed missile

that is capable of posing a direct threat to the United States; it has publicly displayed its KN08 road-mobile ICBM on multiple occasions. We assess that North Korea has already taken initial steps toward fielding this system.

Finally, according to the Director of National Intelligence:

North Korea probably remains capable and willing to launch disruptive or destructive cyberattacks to support its political objectives.

Although it hasn't received the attention it deserved during today's debate, the Gardner-Menendez substitute addresses the cyber security threat with robust sanctions against those who control North Korea's cyber warfare apparatus. The adoption of the Gardner-Menendez legislation creates a new policy framework that combines effective sanctions and effective military countermeasures that can stop North Korea's nuclear ambitions, address cyber security issues, and bring some sanity back to the political calculus—a new policy framework that leaves no doubt about our determination to neutralize any threat North Korea may present, with robust, realistic diplomacy toward the clear goal of a denuclearized Korean Peninsula.

This bipartisan bill, approved unanimously by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in January, expands and tightens enforcement of sanctions from North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile development and other destructive activities of the Kim regime. It requires the President to investigate sanctionable conduct, including proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, arms-related materials, luxury goods, human rights abuses, activities undermining cyber security, and the provision of industrial materials, such as precious metals or coal, for use in a tailored set of activities, including weapons of mass destruction proliferation activities or for use in prison and labor camps.

Under our substitute, the President is mandated to sanction any person found to have materially contributed to, engaged in, or facilitated any of those above activities. Penalties would include the seizure of assets, visa bans, and denial of government contracts.

To provide some flexibility, we have ensured that this and future administrations retain the discretionary authority to sanction any entity or person transferring or facilitating the transfer of financial assets and property of the North Korean regime.

The bill also requires the Secretary of the Treasury to determine whether North Korea is a primary money laundering concern, and if such a determination is made, assets may be blocked and special measures applied against those involved.

From a strategic perspective, the bill would promote a strategy to improve implementation and enforcement of multilateral sanctions, a strategy to

combat North Korean cyber activities, and a strategy to promote and encourage international engagement on North Korean human rights-related issues. There are reporting requirements relating to these strategies as well as a report on political prison camps and a feasibility study on providing communications equipment to the people of North Korea so we can permeate the opportunity for information to flow to the people of North Korea.

Last but not least, under the Gardner-Menendez substitute, the State Department is required to expand the scope and frequency of travel warnings for North Korea.

That is what we think about most of the time when we think about North Korea, but there is another dimension beyond nuclear challenges, missile challenges, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and that is the concern that there remain serious, unanswered questions about human rights and the lot of the North Korean people. We need only read headlines like the ones on this chart: “Life in a North Korean Labor Camp: ‘No Thinking . . . Just Fear’”; “Kim’s former bodyguard tells of beatings, starvation in North Korean prison camp”; “North Korean prison camp is one of the most evil places on earth—home to 20,000.”

Under the rule of Kim Jong Un, North Korea is one of the most harshly repressive countries in the world. All basic freedoms have been severely restricted under the Kim family’s political dynasty. A 2014 U.N. Commission of Inquiry found that abuses in North Korea were without parallel in any other country. Extermination, murder, enslavement, torture, imprisonment, rape, forced abortions, and unspeakable sexual violence are part of the ongoing story of this bizarre regime.

We know that North Korea operates a series of secretive prison camps where opponents of the government are sent and are tortured and abused, starved on insufficient rations, and forced into hard labor. Collective punishment is used to silence dissent and instill fear in the North Korean people that they could be next. The country has no independent media. It has no functioning civil society, and there is, of course, not even a hint of religious freedom except for the bizarre worship of the line from which Kim Jong Un hails. That is the reality, making it abundantly clear that, though security concerns may be our most important priority on the Peninsula, they are not and should not be our only priority.

The legislation we are proposing creates for the first time the basis in law to designate and sanction North Korea for its human rights violations. Such sanctions would elevate human rights and the fundamental issue of human dignity to be as important as nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

At the end of the day, there is no basis for successfully dealing with the

North, absent a solid foundation for a policy that is rooted in the U.S.-South Korea alliance. In President Park we have an important partner. I have visited South Korea and met with President Park. He is someone we can easily consult with and work closely with to chart out a future course in dealing with North Korea. Our partnership with Japan presents new opportunities for building a more effective approach to dealing with Pyongyang.

Whatever one’s views on the various U.S. policy efforts of the past 2 decades—what has worked, what has not worked, and why—there can be little question that these efforts have failed to end North Korea’s nuclear ambitions or end its missile programs. They have failed to reduce the threat posed by North Korea to our allies, failed to alleviate the suffering of North Korea’s people, and failed to lead to greater security in the region.

Let me be clear. I have no illusions that there are easy answers when it comes to dealing with a regime like North Korea. With the passage of this legislation, we have acted in concert not only in a bipartisan effort but with our values, and we will have established a policy for dealing with an unpredictable, rogue regime equal to the challenge. I urge this body to have a unanimous vote. It is not enough to condemn North Korea’s provocation, which is, by all accounts, a violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions and international will. It is not enough to convene the United Nations Security Council for another round of hollow rhetoric that does nothing to the Kim regime but signal a lack of international commitment to enforcing international will. It is not enough to do what we have always done and minimize the obvious threat from a rogue state living in its own false reality.

As the coauthor of the sanctions that brought Iran to the negotiating table, I know that the sanctions regime we are structuring here can have a real effect. Those who want to deal with North Korea and North Korea’s pursuit of missile technology and nuclear weapons will see a consequence to them far beyond North Korea. With this bipartisan legislation, we have before us a series of meaningful steps that speak the only language North Korea’s regime can understand: aggressive, material consequences for aggressive, reckless provocations.

This legislation is the most comprehensive strategy to deal with the challenge that North Korea presents. The launch over the weekend and recent nuclear tests makes it clear that when I introduced this bill last year, it was timely then. We didn’t get to act on it then, but we can do so now.

I urge the Senate, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, to unanimously pass the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement

Act. I urge my colleagues in the other Chamber to concur, and I look forward to the President quickly signing this legislation into law.

If the international community is serious about meeting the threat that North Korea poses, we should see measures like this act adopted by the United Nations and implemented by all of its member states. The international community should stand together with a single voice and one clear message: Any provocation will be met with consequences that will shake the Kim regime to its foundation. That is the opportunity we have to set the course here today in the Senate. I think one of the most powerful moments is when the Senate acts in a strong, bipartisan fashion that sends a message that will create a ripple effect not only here but across the world.

I look forward to what I hope will be an incredibly robust, if not unanimous, vote on this legislation.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I thank Senator GARDNER and Chairman CORKER for their leadership and tireless efforts within the Foreign Relations Committee in dealing with the national security challenges posed by North Korea.

As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I periodically receive intelligence briefings on North Korea’s military capacity and the political will of North Korea’s leaders to threaten the United States and our interests abroad. Based on these briefings and the extensive intelligence in forming them, I believe we need to embrace an “all of the above” approach to confront North Korea’s continued development of ballistic missile, nuclear, and cyber technologies. These threats have become too serious to ignore and far too complex to confront with anything short of a coordinated strategy that is prepared to employ the full force of the United States Government, including all of our diplomatic, intelligence, economic, and military resources.

As Americans, it can be easy for us to forget just how lucky we are to live in a free and open society. Most of us, myself included, simply have no idea of what it is like to live under a totalitarian regime like the one that has kept North Koreans in a state of impoverished servitude, cut off from the rest of the world for generations. But every so often the mask slips, and there is an event that gives the world a clue about what can happen when a nation-state operates and thrives behind a veil of mystery and secrecy. For me, and many of my fellow Utahans, one of these clues came nearly 12 years ago when a young man from Utah suddenly went missing in southern China.

In August 2004, David Louis Sneddon disappeared while hiking in the

Yunnan Province of China. He was 24 years old at the time and a student at Brigham Young University in Provo, UT. Having spent his summer studying Mandarin in Beijing, David wrote to his family about his plans to hike the scenic Tiger Leaping Gorge along the Jinsha River in southern China. That was the last time David's family would ever hear from him. His passport and credit cards were never used again; they were never seen again. David Sneddon was never seen again.

What happened to David Sneddon? To my knowledge he is the first American since the 1970s to go missing in China without an explanation. What happened to him? How can a young man, who is skilled in a country's language and knowledgeable of their culture, simply vanish without a trace?

These questions have answers. For more than a decade, David's family members, friends, and loved ones, as well as regional experts, reporters, and embassy personnel have searched for those answers in vain. For their part, local authorities point to the Jinsha River for answers. They contend that the lack of physical evidence surrounding David's disappearance could indicate that he fell and was swept away by the river, despite the fact that his body was never found. Well, it is certainly possible for that to happen to an unsuspecting tourist hiking on unfamiliar terrain, but David was not a novice outdoorsman by any stretch of the word. He was an Eagle Scout and an avid hiker who had years of experience trekking over rugged landscapes across the American West.

In recent years investigational reporters and regional experts have suggested an alternative explanation of David's disappearance. For instance, on April 25, 2013, Melanie Kirkpatrick, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute and a well-regarded expert on North Korea, wrote an excellent article in the *Wall Street Journal*.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From The Wall Street Journal,
April 25, 2013]

NORTH KOREA'S KIDNAPPERS AND THE FATE OF
DAVID SNEDDON

(By Melanie Kirkpatrick)

North Korea's recent bellicosity seems to have subsided for the moment, but the regime's malign practices continue. The United Nations Human Rights Council last month established an international commission of inquiry into what it describes as North Korea's "systematic, widespread and grave violations of human rights." The commission's mandate includes examining North Korea's abductions of foreigners and the likelihood that some victims are imprisoned in the North. Pyongyang is believed to have kidnapped nationals of at least 12 countries.

One such victim may be an American citizen. David Sneddon disappeared in China in

August 2004, when he was a 24-year-old student at Brigham Young University. He was vacationing in Yunnan Province after completing several months of study at Beijing International University and before returning to the U.S. for his senior year. Speaking in Tokyo last month about Mr. Sneddon's disappearance, Keiji Furuya, Japanese minister of state for the abduction issue, told me: "It is most probable that a U.S. national has been abducted to North Korea."

The charge that an American citizen was likely kidnapped by North Korea is noteworthy in and of itself. It is even more so coming from a cabinet-rank member of the Japanese government about a citizen of another country. The minister added: "I would not like to speak further about it because it would be an intervention in the domestic affairs of the United States."

Japan is in a unique position to evaluate North Korea's kidnapping operation, having investigated it for more than 30 years. North Korean agents infiltrated Japan in the 1970s and 1980s, snatched Japanese citizens and took them back to North Korea. Japanese traveling in Europe were also kidnapped. North Korea forced the abductees to teach Japanese language and customs at its spy schools so that its agents could travel the world posing as Japanese nationals.

In 2002, the late dictator Kim Jong II admitted to the visiting Japanese prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi, that North Korea had kidnapped 13 Japanese citizens. Kim did so in the expectation that his confession would pave the way for the normalization of relations with Japan. The move could have had the salutary effect for North Korea of attracting Japanese investment and reducing North Korea's economic dependence on China. Instead, Kim's confession inflamed Japanese public opinion and made normalization impossible.

North Korea allowed five of the abductees to go home. It said the other eight victims had died, but the death certificates supplied by Pyongyang were found to be fake. Japan believes those eight victims—as well as others whom Kim Jong II did not acknowledge—are alive in North Korea.

In recent years, Pyongyang's kidnappers have turned their attention to China, where they have abducted South Korean humanitarian workers. The South Koreans were targeted because of their work helping North Koreans escape on an underground railroad across China to eventual sanctuary in Seoul.

This brings us back to David Sneddon. In addition to speaking Chinese, Mr. Sneddon is fluent in Korean, having spent two years in South Korea as a Mormon missionary. This unusual linguistic ability may have thrown suspicion on him. The Sneddon family believes that David was kidnapped by North Korean agents who mistakenly thought he was helping North Korean defectors. Yunnan Province, which borders Laos, Burma and Vietnam, is along the underground railroad's usual route out of China. North Korean security agents are known to operate there, apparently with Beijing's permission.

At the time of David's disappearance in August 2004, China told the Sneddon family that its investigation had concluded that the young man likely had a fatal mishap while hiking through Tiger Leap Gorge. That theory was disproved by facts uncovered by David's father and two of his brothers three weeks after he went missing. The three Sneddon's retraced the young man's steps in Yunnan and found witnesses who reported seeing him during and after his hike through the gorge.

The Sneddon's have had their share of frustrations in dealing with the U.S. State Department. A senior diplomat wrote the family last year that "Under the Privacy Act, we are not permitted to release any information about David's case unless we have his written consent to do so." The diplomat noted a health-or-safety exception but only if the family "has convincing information as to where the U.S. citizen is located or what his/her condition may be."

"We're living a Catch-22," says David's brother, Michael Sneddon. "If our family had 'convincing information' as to David's whereabouts, David would no longer be missing. It's absurd." The Washington-based Committee for Human Rights in North Korea plans to file a Freedom of Information Act request for information on actions the State Department has taken on the Sneddon case, says executive director Greg Scarlatou.

The Sneddon's refute speculation that David may have disappeared voluntarily. He had purchased a plane ticket home, put a down payment on his student housing for the fall semester, and made arrangements to take the LSAT exam for entry to law school. His Beijing roommate, who traveled with him until a few days before his disappearance, says David was planning to go home.

Last year, a Tokyo-based research organization published a report citing new evidence that North Korea kidnapped Mr. Sneddon. A source in China told the National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Abducted by North Korea that in August 2004—the date of his disappearance—Yunnan provincial police arrested an American university student who was helping North Korean refugees. A second Chinese source told the Japanese researchers that the Yunnan police handed over the American to North Korean security agents. In both cases, personal details about the unnamed student correspond with facts known about David Sneddon. Seven Japanese parliamentarians traveled to Washington last May to present this evidence to the State Department and Congress.

For one former Japanese intelligence official, the Sneddon disappearance is a case of *déjà vu*. The official, who asked not to be identified by name, compares it to the abduction cases he tracked in the 1970s and 1980s. "The evidence is always fragmented and isolated," he says. Until Kim Jong II confessed to kidnapping 13 Japanese citizens, he notes, some in the Japanese government refused to acknowledge the abductions for fear of alienating Pyongyang. The former intelligence official has looked at the Sneddon evidence and believes there is a strong possibility that North Korea kidnapped the American.

The U.N. commission of inquiry will spend one year gathering and evaluating information on North Korea's abductions. Let's hope it discovers what happened to all those who disappeared—including the American David Sneddon.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, Kirkpatrick's research shows that David's disappearance in China fits the pattern of foreign national kidnappings by North Korea in East Asia since the 1970s. While this might sound strange to Americans—because it is indeed strange to us as Americans—it is an issue with which the people of Japan and South Korea are tragically all too familiar.

The circumstances of David's disappearance add a level of credibility to this theory. For instance, the area

where David was traveling is a well-known thoroughfare on an underground railroad for North Korean dissidents trying to escape to Southeast Asia. As a result, this area is monitored and patrolled by North Korean Government agents who were involved in the capture of a high-level North Korean defector and his family in the area only months before August 2004.

David was fluent in Korean, thanks to having spent 2 years serving a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in South Korea. He matched the profile of activists in this area who were thought to be assisting North Korean escapees.

In a coincidental twist of fate, David disappeared only a month after Charles Robert Jenkins, an Army deserter, was released by the North Korean Government after having spent nearly 40 years imprisoned in the totalitarian state, forced to teach English to North Korean intelligence agents. An American who spoke fluent Korean would be an attractive replacement for Charles Jenkins.

Three weeks after his disappearance, David's father and two of his four brothers traveled to China and retraced David's planned steps through the Tiger Leaping Gorge. The results of their factfinding mission, including their conversations with local residents, businesses, tour guides, and travelers have been shared with the State Department and detailed in an excellent piece by Chris Vogel published in *Outside Magazine* in 2014.

One of the most compelling pieces of evidence discovered by David's father and brothers is that several people, including a trail guide who had been hiking the Tiger Leaping Gorge around the time of his disappearance, remember interacting with a young man fitting David Sneddon's description. David's family also met with the owner of a small Korean restaurant in the city of Shangri-La, a bustling tourist outpost with a convenient access to the Tiger Leaping Gorge. When she saw a photograph of David, the young restaurant owner lit up. She immediately remembered David, and for good reason. Not only did David stand out because of his fluency in Korean, but he reportedly visited the restaurant on three separate occasions over the course of 2 days while he was in that city.

Indeed, according to the *Outside Magazine* article, the last time anyone saw David, which was on August 14, 2004, he was reportedly leaving a Korean restaurant. At first glance, this may seem like a minor detail, but seen in the right light, it is, in fact, an ominous clue.

According to many regional experts, there is a historical pattern of North Korean agents using Korean-run restaurants in China, Japan, and elsewhere to prey on their targets for kid-

napping and abduction. Despite these reports, there have been no further or more fruitful leads regarding David's whereabouts. People move away or change their stories. Embassy and State Department staff move to different assignments, and the trail grows cold.

For nearly 12 years, along with his family, we have been looking for David. There are many people who deserve credit for the contributions they made to this effort. In particular, I wish to thank Ambassador Robert King, the special envoy for North Korean human rights issues and a longtime personal friend of mine, as well as his office, for the attention they have given to David's case and the good-faith efforts they have made over the years to try to find answers. I commend Ambassador King for his work on this complex, sensitive, and very important issue.

There is still work yet to be done. An upstanding American citizen is still missing, and an aggrieved family—indeed, an entire community—continues to wait and pray for a resolution, which is what brings us here today.

The first and most important responsibility of the United States Government is to ensure the safety and freedom of the American people at home and abroad. When American citizens travel overseas, the State Department plays a critical role in fulfilling this core constitutional duty.

The amendment I am filing today—which I plan to submit as a stand-alone resolution with Senators HATCH, FISCHER, and SASSE—gives the sense of the Senate that the State Department, in conjunction with the intelligence community, should continue to fulfill that obligation to David Sneddon and his family. A companion bill will be introduced in the House of Representatives by my friend Congressman CHRIS STEWART and the rest of the Utah delegation.

The State Department's responsibilities in this matter include investigating all plausible explanations behind David's disappearance and leaving no stone unturned in trying to return one of our brothers to his family.

At the time of his disappearance, David had his whole life ahead of him. In fact, he was already planning for it. Before setting out to hike the Tiger Leaping Gorge on that fateful day in August of 2004, David had signed up to take the law school admissions test—the first step toward applying to law school, he had arranged business meetings back home in Utah to get an early start on pursuing his dreams of entrepreneurship, and, eager to get back to BYU's beautiful campus, he had already paid for his student housing for the upcoming fall semester, but he never had the chance to do any of those things, and the Sneddon family deserves to know why.

The greatest threat to totalitarian regimes in any part of the world is the truth; that the world may learn of the horrors they perpetrate every day against their own people and that their people may learn that there is a world full of freedom and opportunity beyond the ironclad borders of their enslaved homeland.

It is in pursuit of the truth—about David Sneddon's whereabouts—that I file this amendment today.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CUSTOMS AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to speak about a matter that will come before the Senate tomorrow when the Senate votes on whether to invoke cloture on the customs and trade enforcement conference report.

Last year, Democrats and Republicans in both Chambers of the Congress came together and said it was time for a fresh policy on international trade—a fresh, modern policy that I describe as trade done right. At the heart of trade done right is a tougher, smarter plan to fight the trade cheats who are ripping off American jobs.

Now, the inventiveness of these ripoff artists takes our breath away. It is something I know a fair amount about because a few years back, as chairman of the Trade Subcommittee, we put together a sting operation and in effect invited those ripoff artists from around the world to cheat, and we were just flooded—flooded with those who were interested in skirting the laws. They have extraordinarily inventive ways of moving their operations, concealing their identities, and shipping their products into our country through shadowy, untraceable routes. Sometimes sneaking illegal imports into this country is as simple as slapping a new label on a box. We call it merchandise laundering, and we saw it again and again and again as we conducted this sting operation.

So it is long past time to come up with a new and tough approach to enforcing our trade laws. In my view that is what this debate is about and that is what the vote will be about tomorrow.

The lingo of trade policy, as we call it, TPA—the trade promotion authority—what are the rules for trade and then the various agreements and what, of course, is being considered now, the Trans-Pacific Partnership—it is hard to keep track of this lingo under the best of circumstances. I think in beginning this discussion, what I want to note for the Senate is this is not—not—about the consideration of a new trade agreement. No trade agreement—no new trade agreement—is going to be considered by the Senate this week. What this debate is about is whether the Senate is going to put in place tougher, smarter, more modern trade enforcement policies, and when we have these policies, actually follow up on them and stand up to anybody around the world who is trying to figure out a way to get around them. My view is that tough, smart trade enforcement ought to be a priority for every Senator, no matter how they choose to vote on a particular new trade agreement.

My bottom line is that past trade policies were too old, too slow or too weak to keep up with the trade cheats, but that is what this legislation is going to change. This legislation says those days are over.

I wish to take just a few minutes to describe why I believe this package we will vote on is the strongest set of trade enforcement policies the Congress has considered in decades.

At its core, what trade law enforcement is all about is rooting out the universe of scofflaw tactics that the cheats rely on. They use fraudulent records and shell games and sophisticated schemes to evade duties and undercut our American producers. Foreign governments bully American businesses into relocating factories and jobs are turning over lucrative intellectual property. They spy on American companies and trade enforcers, steal secrets, and then they lie about it in the aftermath, and they try to undercut American industries so quickly that our Nation has been unable to act before the economic damage is done.

With the vote we are going to cast this week, we have an opportunity to say strongly and loudly that we are done sitting back and just watching our companies get their clock cleaned by trade cheats. This country is going to take trade enforcement to a new level to protect workers and businesses in Oregon and nationwide.

In my view, the center of this effort is the ENFORCE Act, which goes after what I consider to be one of the biggest of the trade loopholes; that is, merchandise laundering. This is a proposal that a number of Senators have worked for years to get enacted. What it will do is put a stop to the evasion of duties that are put in place to protect our workers, protect our manufacturers, and particularly when it comes to the

steel industry, a pillar of American industry. The ENFORCE Act ought to be understood to be clearly a priority matter for those who work in the steel industry and the companies for which they work.

Second, the legislation, once and for all, closes a truly offensive loophole that allowed products made with slave and child labor to be imported to the United States. My friend Senator BROWN has championed this issue. He and I believe that in 2016 and beyond, the Congress cannot allow for the perpetrators of slave or child labor to have any place in the American economy. So the old system that leaves the door open to child or slave labor, if it is used to make a product that isn't made in the United States, that system has to end and with this legislation it will. The old system essentially said that when it came to child labor, in the past, economics would trump human rights. Economics just mattered more than protecting vulnerable children. Senator BROWN said: No way. That is a grotesque set of priorities. And we closed that loophole. It is closed, once and for all.

Another major upgrade in this trade package is what I call an unfair trade alert. I have heard for years and years from union leaders, from companies and others that the trade cheats often try to exploit the fact that trade law enforcement moves along at a snail's pace. What happens is that the rip-off artists break the rules. They hope the damage is going to be done before anybody in Washington catches on. That way the factory lights go out at the plant, and the plant is shuttered before our country does anything about it. What we have done with this new unfair trade alert system is to ensure that there are going to be warning bells going off long before the damage is done.

Next, the package includes an important initiative from Senator STABENOW to mobilize the institutions of government into a permanent ongoing enforcement center so that we have all hands on deck to fight the trade cheats. With Senator STABENOW's proposal we are going to make sure that when it comes to fighting the trade cheats, the left hand and right hand are working in Congress.

The package creates a new trust fund for trade enforcement developed by Senator CANTWELL to drive America's investment in fresh ideas and do it in a way that will help protect our workers and businesses.

The proposal also ensures small businesses and their employees are going to be able to find an easier path into the winners' circle on international trade. It is going to lower the cost for a lot of small businesses in Oregon and nationwide that import products into our country. For my home State, this effort led by Senator SHAHEEN, who has

done great work on the Small Business Committee, is hugely important because in my State, when you are done counting a handful of big businesses, you have covered the big employers in our State. We are overwhelmingly about small business, and because of the good work of Senator SHAHEEN, we are going to give small businesses more tools they can use to reach new markets overseas. It is going to help guarantee that all our trade agencies are looking for opportunities to help small businesses grow.

I could go on with others. I think Senator FEINSTEIN has done very important work. For example, we have been looking for a model for trade-based humanitarian assistance. Senator FEINSTEIN's contribution has helped us secure that goal, and I appreciate greatly her leadership.

When it comes to trade policies, environmental protections are a special priority for me and for Oregonians and for the American people. I want one judgment about this bill to be very clear as we start this debate. This legislation cannot and will not in any way prevent the United States from negotiating a climate agreement. Not only that, the package tackles some particularly important environmental issues head-on. It directs our trade negotiators to act against illegal fishing and fishing subsidies that destroy our oceans. It is going to help guarantee that the Customs personnel are better trained to fight the trade of stolen timber from places like the Amazon. These are big improvements over the old playbook of trade enforcement.

Many Senators on both sides of the aisle are very concerned about currency manipulation. In the process of bringing this bipartisan, bicameral package together, it was clear that there were some differences between the Senate and the other body on this legislation and that the other body was willing to go only so far on currency questions. When Senators vote—and I know currency is important to them—I hope that they will reflect on the view that I am going to articulate. This legislation goes further than ever before to fight the currency manipulators. One of the major reasons it does is because of our colleague Senator BENNET. Senator BENNET has been working with all sides diligently on this issue. He has clearly given us a policy that we can build on in the years and days ahead. I intend to work with Senator BENNET and all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle at every opportunity to head off the currency manipulators, to stop them from undercutting American jobs and American businesses. There is no question in my mind that this legislation goes significantly further than ever before to fight currency abuse and manipulation.

Now, it has been my judgment for years that a more progressive approach

to trade and stronger trade enforcement are two sides of the same coin. Last year, the Senate said loudly and clearly that future trade deals have to raise the bar for American priorities such as labor rights and environmental protection. Because of Senator CARDIN, we will now have a new focus on human rights. Now the Senate has an opportunity to stand up for workers and businesses in Oregon and across the country by kicking the enforcement of trade law into high gear. This landmark trade enforcement proposal ought to have strong bipartisan support.

Also included in the conference report is a permanent extension of one of the most popular economic policies on the books today, the Internet Tax Freedom Act. Former Congressman Chris Cox and I introduced this bill back in 1998. For nearly two decades, this legislation protected working families, especially against regressive taxes on Internet access.

Working families are the focus of this bill. Working families who use the Internet, for example, get information about employment opportunities and educational opportunities. They shouldn't face a wave of new regressive taxes. Clearly, ensuring that they don't get hit by these regressive taxes has saved our working families and our small businesses hundreds of dollars a year.

But for all that time, this has been a kind of temporary stop-and-go policy that required its being renewed again and again. My hope is that, as Senators look at this bill, which in my view is the toughest trade enforcement law in decades, and move to the very new approach that I call "trade done right," I hope Senators will see that this legislation also ensures that working families, senior citizens, and others of modest means don't get hit by this big regressive tax simply when they want to access the Internet for the kind of information so important to them, given a modest income and their desire to get ahead.

With this legislation and its extension running out this year, it is important for the Senate to act now so that you don't have a situation again at the end of the year with the prospect of the Internet Tax Freedom Act expiring and working families getting hit with these regressive taxes.

I urge Senators to support this proposal. There has been an awful lot of work done by Senators on both sides of the aisle to advance this legislation. I am particularly grateful to our colleagues on the Finance Committee with whom I have the honor to serve.

I will close simply by saying to colleagues that this is not about a new trade agreement. It is not exactly an atomic secret. There are pretty strong differences of opinion about new trade agreements here in this body. This is

about whether we are going to get tough with the trade cheats who are ripping off American jobs. This legislation gives us the opportunity to do it, and I urge your support.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

OUR "WE THE PEOPLE" DEMOCRACY

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, the most important words in our Constitution are the first three words of that document: "We the People." These are words that the authors put in supersized print to tell us that this is what our government is all about—and also, what it is not about.

They did not start out this document by saying that we are a government to serve the ruling elites. They did not establish this Constitution to serve the titans of industry and commerce. And they did not write our Constitution to serve the best off, the richest in our society—quite the contrary. The genius of America was a government designed, as President Lincoln so eloquently summarized, to be "of the people, by the people, and for the people."

This Senator will be rising periodically to address issues that affect Americans across our Nation. It is important to a government of, by, and for the people to address issues that we should be addressing in this Chamber.

Today I will use this time to talk about the challenge we face in climate change. Last month, scientists reported that 2015 was the single hottest year on record. NASA says that this past year was a full 0.9 degrees centigrade. That is well over 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit hotter than the average during the 20th Century. Moreover, it rose significantly warmer from 2014, which was the previous hottest year on record—0.23 degrees Fahrenheit hotter than 2014. That is an unexpectedly massive increase in the challenge of global warming.

These numbers come from the best scientific analysis. They take the combined temperatures from the land, water, and air to get a comprehensive picture of what is going on in our beautiful blue green planet. In total, 15 of the hottest years our planet has experienced while humans have tread this Earth have been in the last 16 years.

These temperature records send a strong message to us, but there is also a message coming from what is happening on the ground—the facts on the ground. We see the impact of global warming on our own communities. We see the impacts in terms of the pine beetle expansion because the winters are not cold enough to kill them off. We see it in terms of the red zone that comes from that. We see it in terms of the longer fire season—60 days longer in the last 40 years in my home State of Oregon. On the Oregon coast we are having trouble with oysters reproducing because the first few days it is dif-

ficult to form a shell with waters 30 percent more acidic than they were before the Industrial Revolution. We see it in the Cascade Mountains, where the snowpack has been smaller. It affects our winter sports, and it certainly affects the runoff that serves our farms. We have had massive, difficult droughts in southern Oregon in the Klamath Basin.

These changes are not just happening in Oregon. They are happening across our Nation. They are happening across the world. This change is driving huge costs that can be measured in lost lives, lost homes, lost farms, lost businesses, burnt forests, and billions of dollars in disaster relief.

Scientists agree that we must keep the warming of our planet under 2 degrees Celsius to avoid catastrophic impacts. We are seeing severe impacts now, but these will be nothing compared to what is anticipated if we allow global warming to continue. At this stage below 2 degrees Celsius or 3.5 degrees Fahrenheit, we must pivot off of the fossil fuels to a clean energy economy. That means pursuing energy efficiency in our vehicles, in our freight transportation, and in our homes. It does mean investing in renewable energy, noncarbon electrical energy produced by sunlight and by wind.

The simple, sobering fact is this: Energy efficiency and renewable energy will not be enough to stop the warming of our planet unless we leave 80 percent of the currently known fossil fuel reserves in the ground. That is a powerful statement because there are enormous financial forces that seek to extract those proven reserves, to burn those proven preserves, and in doing so will destroy our planet.

You and I, fellow citizens, are owners together of a vast amount of fossil fuels, of coal, of natural gas, of oil. This is the oil and gas and coal that is underneath our public lands and water. We should use our "We the People" power to manage these fossil fuel reserves for the public good, and the public good is to move away from an era where the U.S. Government facilitates the extraction and burning of our citizen-owned fossil fuels to a new era where the Federal Government, together our "We the People" government, leads the transition from fossil fuels to a clean energy economy. As we face the threat of catastrophic climate change, the public good in regard to these fossil fuels is to keep them in the ground.

When we do a new lease for the extraction of our citizen-owned fossil fuels, we lock in carbon extraction for 20 years, 30 years, 40 years, even 50 years into the future. That is unacceptable. That is morally wrong because that extraction, decades into the future, will do enormous damage to our planet, to our forests, to our farming, and to our fishing. This is an assault,

first and foremost, on rural America, and it is our responsibility to stop it.

That is why I introduced the Keep It in the Ground Act. This legislation ends new leases for coal and oil and gas on public lands and waters, and it would drive a transition from fossil fuel extraction and combustion toward a renewable energy economy.

Critics might argue that we cannot simply end consumption of fossil fuels tomorrow. They might point out that society still depends on fossil fuels for electricity and for transportation, and they might know the leases that have already been put out there provide extraction opportunities decades after this bill is enacted. That being said, it is all the more important that we not do new leases, that we not do new leases that empower more extraction decades into the future. Time is short and public lands and waters are citizen owned. Public lands and waters are the right place to start, and it is critical to the future of our planet.

The success of this moment, the “keep it in the ground” movement, will depend on grassroots organizing. The grassroots stopped the Keystone Pipeline, which would have turned on the tap for some of the dirtiest fossil fuels in the world. Grassroots organizing has driven the administration to suspend and possibly to stop drilling in the Arctic waters—drilling, which is the height of irresponsibility in the fragile Arctic region, and just recently grassroots organizing and energy has encouraged the President to put a pause on coal leasing to evaluate its climatic impacts.

While these are important steps in the right direction, I want to encourage our President to go further. Just as he has suspended new leases for coal, President Obama has authority to do the same for oil and gas. Last week I joined with nine other colleagues in calling on the Department of the Interior to strengthen its climate commitments by dropping all new fossil fuel leases from the 5-year Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

I emphasize grassroots organizing as critical because this building on Capitol Hill is full of individuals, such as I, who have been elected, and in our elections vast funds from the fossil fuel industry are holding sway. So it is going to take citizens and a “We the People” government—of, by, and for the people—to be able to continue to drive what we all know is right. It will be essential to sustain and expand the “keep it in the ground” movement.

Not so long ago, when individuals outside of this building were talking about “keep it in the ground,” and then inside this building we started to have that conversation, many said: It is just too much of a stretch. It is just too much of a paradigm change from the past, when we sought to lease out

our fossil fuels, that this wouldn’t work.

Where are we now? Not only did we have success in the Keystone, not only did we have success in the Arctic, not only did we have success in terms of suspension of coal leases, but we have a broader conversation about ending all of these new leases in each of these areas of fossil fuels on our citizen-owned property.

Senator BERNIE SANDERS, who is a cosponsor of my keep it in the ground bill, said in November:

We cannot continue to extract fossil fuels from Federally owned land.

He continued and said:

You can’t talk the talk and say I’m concerned about climate change. And at the same time, say we’re going to extract a huge amount of oil, coal, and gas from federal land.

Last Friday Secretary Clinton called for banning fossil fuels or banning fossil fuels on public land a “done deal,” and she went on to say: “No future extractions, I agree with that.” That is what she said. So we have come a long way in a short period, from action in three specific areas to the leading Presidential contenders on the Democratic side calling for moral action to take on this threat.

Moving forward, there are two options before us. Our Federal Government can be a government of, by, and for the titans, and it can be complicit in digging our carbon hole even deeper and doing more damage to the land we love or our Federal Government can be the “We the People” government that was laid out by our Constitution, and it can lead this effort to manage our fossil fuels on public lands for the public good and work with our partners around the globe to save our planet.

It has been said we are the first generation to see the impacts of global warming and that we are the last generation that can do something about it. So the choice is simple. Let’s move aggressively away from a fossil fuel economy to a clean energy economy. Let’s work in partnership with the world to take on this worldwide challenge and let’s do the smart thing. When it comes to our publicly owned fossil fuels, let’s keep it in the ground.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President I rise to join my colleagues in condemning North Korea’s belligerence in East Asia.

For decades North Korea has starved its people, sponsored criminal misconduct and cyber attacks, and bullied South Korea. In the last month it has violated numerous U.N. resolutions regarding development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. DNI Clapper recently stated that the regime is expanding its Yongbyon enrichment facility and restarting the plutonium

production reactor. These actions are a threat to the United States, our allies, to their regional stability, and they remind us that the Kim regime has no interest in abiding by international rules.

The continued development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles threatens our military forces in Japan and South Korea and poses a risk to Seoul, Tokyo, and other major cities in the region. While North Korea regularly exaggerates its capabilities, it is clear that its belligerence is unending and its technology is improving.

This legislation will strengthen and expand the U.S. sanctions against North Korea. We should use every tool we have to increase pressure on the regime so it dismantles its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs, but it is not at all clear that they are responding to direct pressure from our own country. If there is going to be meaningful change in the security situation on the Korean Peninsula, then China is going to have to exert more leverage over its neighbor.

While we certainly do not see eye-to-eye with China on many things, we can and must work together to address our shared concerns. China has a tremendous amount at stake too. Unfortunately, Chinese efforts to rein in North Korea have so far been underwhelming. In response to China’s diplomatic overtures to stop the missile launch last Saturday, North Korea actually accelerated its plans and launched its missile on the eve of the Lunar New Year celebrations in China. If that is how North Korea treats its only ally, then we face an uphill battle, especially without China recalibrating its approach and increasing its pressure.

China must step up to the plate and recognize that dealing with the Kim regime now is better than dealing with it later. China ought to communicate to its ally that it is fed up with its belligerence and supports stronger U.N. sanctions. This is the way China will demonstrate its commitment to international peace and security.

The goal of this sanctions legislation is not to target the North Korean people. They are the victims of the Kim regime. They have borne the cost of these ballistic missile launches. One estimate is that it cost \$1 billion for the most recent launch, which would have fed the entire country for a year. Our goal is to convince North Korea that working with the international community is preferable to being isolated from it.

Since President Obama took office, the U.N. has adopted three major resolutions on North Korea’s nuclear program. President Obama has signed three major Executive orders, further sanctioning North Korea’s activities.

I support these efforts, and we must do more. This sanctions bill will give the administration additional tools to

squeeze North Korea to change its behavior, but sanctions are not going to be enough. We need to reassure our allies in the region and provide the necessary resources to protect our forces in South Korea and Japan. After all, diplomacy is advanced when it is backed up by a strong defense.

To that end, we need to do three things. First, we must continue serious discussions with South Korea about deploying the Terminal High Altitude Defense System, or THAAD, to defend against the missile threat. This has probably become a necessity because of North Korea's recent actions. If it is deployed, we will have to reassure countries in the region that THAAD is intended to defend solely against the North Korean missile threat to avoid any misperceptions. Second, we need to pass a well-funded defense budget that provides for the readiness of the forces under Admiral Harris's command at PACOM, through which General Scaparrotti at United States Forces Korea can keep our men and women ready to "fight tonight." Third, we ought to explore new opportunities to strengthen our ballistic missile defense, including increasing the protection of our forces in Hawaii and the Western Pacific by turning the Aegis Ashore Test Complex on Kauai into an operational site, a proposal Representatives GABBARD and TAKAI are working on with the Department of Defense.

These are preliminary steps we can take to reassure our allies and forces in the region that we are committed to their security, and we should refine our thinking as the threat evolves. The sanctions bill reinforces that commitment and sends a clear message that it is time to step up all levels of pressure on North Korea to end its belligerence in the region.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, recent developments in North Korea should have raised serious concern. As we have heard over and over again in the Senate from Members of both parties, they have raised serious concerns.

This weekend North Korea launched its latest so-called satellite into orbit. We know this was nothing but an attempt to conceal their development of ballistic missile programs that would actually check launch capability, not really launching a satellite.

On January 6, North Korea claims to have tested a hydrogen bomb, which, if true, would significantly increase and advance its nuclear capabilities. Even if not true, they have significant weapons in what everyone in the world would understand to be dangerous and even unstable hands.

In October 2014, the senior U.S. commander on the Korean Peninsula told reporters that North Korea has the capabilities to put together a miniatur-

ized nuclear warhead that can be mounted on a ballistic missile. Now we see them continuing to check that launch and missile capability. They already tested atomic nuclear weapons in 2006, 2009, and in 2013, in all cases in violation of multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions and, frankly, in violation of the agreements they had made in the early part of 2003 and 2004.

Nuclear experts have reported that North Korea may currently have as many as 20 nuclear warheads and that the capital, Pyongyang, has the potential to possess as many as 100 warheads within the next 5 years.

Combined with what appears to be growing sophistication in their missile technology, they have been seeking a way to represent a direct threat—something potentially disastrous in a nuclear way—to the United States and certainly to our allies in the region.

They have shown capacity to proliferate nuclear weapons and technology to other dangerous regimes and, we have every reason to believe, dangerous individuals. U.S. officials recently connected Iranian officials to North Korea and specifically mentioned two Iranians who, according to the report, "have been critical to the development of the 80-ton rocket booster, and both traveled to Pyongyang" to work on this. According to reports, Iran might coincidentally conduct a nuclear launch later this month. Now we see Iran doing what it is doing, and we see Korea with the capacity to do what it is doing.

Frankly, what we see in both cases, as well as Russia, are economies that are faltering, and people have every reason to wonder about those in charge of their government. The more that occurs, the more dangerous a government might be in an unstable country, trying to do everything they can to enemies they feel they need to defend themselves against and people they need to advance against.

We also know they have significantly increased their cyber capabilities. We continually hear from our intelligence community that a cyber threat is one of the greatest threats we face. We saw North Korea launch a cyber attack on Sony Pictures in 2014, which did incredible damage in many ways, including their ability to disrupt the critical infrastructure of our country in the same way they were able to get involved in the cyber world of one major company.

According to a November 2015 report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, "North Korea is emerging as a significant actor in cyberspace with both its military and clandestine organizations gaining the ability to conduct cyber operations." When we look at North Korea's attempts to increase and/or exaggerate the potential they have with the weapons they have or their ability to develop those weapons and when we look

at what North Korea is doing with their cyber activities, we see a continually growing threat.

The bill brought to the floor from Senator GARDNER's and Senator CORKER's committee, the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act, takes steps by providing the tools necessary to hold North Korea and its enablers accountable for what they do. The bill's overall goal is to peacefully disarm North Korea through mandatory sanctions that would deprive the regime of the means to build its nuclear and ballistic missile program and advance its malicious cyber activities. Specifically, it mandates sanctions against individuals who have materially contributed to North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile development; individuals who have engaged in money laundering, the manufacture of counterfeit goods, or narcotics trafficking that would benefit those programs; and individuals who have engaged in significant activities undermining cyber security against the United States or foreign individuals.

In addition to these sanctions, the legislation targets additional areas that would deny North Korea the resources it needs to continue its malicious activities. For example, the bill mandates sanctions on individuals involved in trading minerals and metals that could be part of a nuclear program.

This section would send a strong message, certainly to China, North Korea's chief diplomatic protector and largest trading partner. The things that could be used as sanctions would surely make China think twice about what they are doing with North Korea but also think twice about what North Korea is doing with the world. China purports to have a significant influence in North Korea. China purports to not want to see nuclear destabilization occur. This bill would be an incentive for China to live up to those claims. It has consistently failed to leverage its political or economic influence up until now. If China is getting serious about getting North Korea to change its behavior, we would like to see that happen.

In a new view of sanctions, there is a waiver in this bill, as there has traditionally been. The President of the United States will have a waiver of these penalties. But this waiver is much stronger from the legislative perspective in that the President can only use the waiver on a specific basis and has to report, as I understand it, what that basis is.

This measure also goes beyond the traditional sanctions regime because it requires the administration to put forth a comprehensive strategy to promote improved implementation and enforcement of how these sanctions would work and what they would do to combat North Korea's cyber activities,

to promote and encourage international engagement on North Korean human rights violations, and to report back to Congress on what they found.

There can be no doubt that other would-be nuclear regimes are going to be watching this carefully. We saw the lack of appreciation for U.S. commitment in the early weeks and months of the unfortunate Iranian deal. Frankly, the Iranians should and will look back at 2003 and 2004 and wonder why the agreements with North Korea didn't work and wonder if we are committed to those agreements and wonder if we still are determined to stop North Korea when we see the kind of activities we see today. This begins to send that message, but the required implementation and reports will send that message in more aggressive ways than the Congress and consequently the country have before.

Finally, we need to ensure that all U.S. forces deployed in the region are appropriately equipped with the most up-to-date surveillance and counterballistic missile platforms. Our regional allies—particularly South Korea and Japan—need to be assured that the United States is committed to both the stability and defense of all our partners and interests in the region. South Korea and Japan should also be encouraged to undertake any self-defense measures that are necessary to augment American forces already in the region.

North Korea remains a serious threat to peace and stability in the region and the world. North Korea continues to be a bad example of what happens when the United States makes agreements and isn't prepared to follow through on those agreements.

The world is watching. I hope my colleagues will join me in sending a clear message that North Korea's provocations are not acceptable and that its continuing pursuit of illicit nuclear weapons will not be tolerated. We will get a chance to vote on that issue today. I hope we send a strong message. I hope the administration becomes a stronger partner in this message than the messages we are failing to send right now on Iran. I think this is an important moment for the country and the world.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, we have heard a lot of great discussion and debate today about the sanctions bill on North Korea. Of course, one of the issues that continue to come up is the lack of response from the United Nations. As they are considering and deliberating what exactly to do with North Korea, I hope they will hear not only the words being discussed here on the floor of the Senate but also the actions that are taking place around the globe and particularly in South Korea.

We have long been aware of the Kaesong industrial complex. This is a

look at it, somewhere just north of Seoul, basically right on the DMZ line, right in between North Korea and South Korea. It is actually inside North Korea, where this industrial complex is a joint venture, so to speak, a number of efforts from South Korea where they are funding manufacturing facilities using labor from North Korea.

The purpose of this manufacturing center, the Kaesong industrial complex, was to create additional opportunities for North Korea and South Korea to come together economically and for them to perhaps join together in unification efforts as they continue to see that they can work together economically.

Earlier this year, in one of the first committee hearings I held in the East Asia Subcommittee, we heard testimony from Dr. Victor Cha, a professor of government at Georgetown University. He is the senior adviser and Korea chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. We had testimony on North Korea several months ago—at the beginning of the year—as we focused on how we were going to address this challenge and the Kim Jong Un regime.

In his testimony in the House of Representatives a few weeks ago, Dr. Cha talked about some of the steps that could be taken by the United States and South Korea to address this North Korea threat. He talked about asymmetric pressure points that we have which we can apply to try to bring peace to the peninsula.

In his statement, he said, "A new approach to North Korea must focus on those asymmetric pressure points." Then he talked a little bit about the Kaesong industrial complex:

Another useful asymmetric pressure point is the Kaesong Industrial Complex. A legacy of the sunshine policy, this project now provides \$90 million in annual wages (around \$245.7 million from December 2004 to July 2012) of hard currency to North Korean authorities with little wages actually going to the factory workers. The South Korean government will be opposed to shutting this down, as even conservative governments in South Korea have grown attached to the project as symbolic of the future potential of a unified Korea, but difficult times call for difficult measures.

Again, this is Dr. Cha's testimony before the House of Representatives just a few weeks ago saying that this is an asymmetric pressure point and that if we were to address something to Kaesong, perhaps that could apply pressure to the North Korea regime to change its behavior. But because of the investments, because of the amount of work and the opportunities there, closing that wouldn't happen. It is not supported by the government.

This shows you how serious North Korea's recent behavior has become. The testing of a fourth nuclear weapon—they claim it is a thermonuclear

bomb. We don't have evidence yet whether hydrogen was there or not, but either way, as we stated before, it significantly increases their technical capability, nonetheless, whether it is hydrogen based or not.

We saw recently a missile launch, a satellite launch that they used to disguise a test of an intercontinental ballistic missile. South Korea believes this is such a serious situation that South Korea has now shut down the Joint Factory Park at Kaesong over the nuclear test and the rocket. Just a few weeks ago, experts said this wouldn't happen, but the severity of North Korea's actions, violations, continued infringements on any number of U.S. sanctions and U.N. sanctions has forced South Korea to take the very dramatic step of closing this facility that they hoped could bring and be a symbol of further unification.

Kim Jong Un and his reckless activities, forgotten maniac of North Korea, is now responsible for the loss of employment of 45,000 people in North Korea, and we wonder why there is no economic development taking place in North Korea. We wonder why there are limited activities. Because this regime is willing to put his own totalitarian regime ahead of the people of North Korea, placing them in political prison camps, torturing them, maiming them—hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children.

So South Korea has taken a very serious step to express their displeasure with the actions of North Korea. The United Nations and the United States both continue to discuss and impose sanctions. The U.N. delay is disturbing.

We talk about China. We talk about the impact China could have on North Korea and their willingness to change their behavior and to denuclearize North Korea. We know China is responsible for somewhere around 90 percent of the economic activity of North Korea—right around 90 percent of the economic activity. We know trade, precious metals, coal, and raw metals have resulted in about 70 percent of foreign currency in North Korea.

That is another step this bill takes, a step to assure we are addressing any activity such as exports, coal, precious metals if the money derived from that goes to the illicit activities. That is why Kaesong was closed. That is why it was closed by South Korea, because they traced the money back from this industrial facility. The 45,000 employees who weren't making all the wages they were paying, a lot of that money was being siphoned off from the hard-working people of North Korea and given to the government and then used to fund weapons of mass destruction, nuclear proliferation. This effort that was used to try to unify the peninsula, to employ people, to find economic partnerships and opportunities was instead used by Kim Jong Un to further

the building of billion-dollar rockets while his people starved, to further the efforts of nuclear tests while his people are tortured.

This bill attempts to break through that curtain of silence in North Korea, providing ways to effectively communicate with the people of North Korea, to show them what the outside world has to offer in freedom and opportunity if they were to escape the regime in the reign of Kim Jung Un. I think the closure of the industrial complex in Kaesong is one further example of the steps South Korea is being forced to take as a result of these militant activities and provocative activities out of North Korea.

I see Senator SHAHEEN of the Foreign Relations Committee is joining us in this debate today. She was an active member of the sanctions debate on North Korea. I thank the Senator for being on the floor today, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am happy to join my colleague, also from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, CORY GARDNER from Colorado, in support of the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act. This is legislation that will help hold North Korea accountable for its dangerous weapons programs.

I know Senator GARDNER talked about today's news, North and South Korea, and in the past month we have witnessed a string of actions by the North Korean leadership that has demonstrated their determination to advance the country's nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missile programs. On January 6, North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test, and just this weekend the country launched another long-range rocket. North Korea's goal could not be clearer or more serious. It is to place a nuclear warhead on an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching the United States. Since North Korea's nuclear program was first uncovered in the mid-1980s, the United States has led the international effort to pressure the regime to abandon its nuclear activity. In large part, this pressure has come from the United States and United Nations sanctions. Although these sanctions have effectively halted most financial transactions between North Korea and the rest of the world, the North Korean regime and its benefactors continue to obtain hard currency to advance their illicit weapons programs.

One way the North Korean Government finances its nuclear program is by laundering money in banks outside of North Korea—banks that until this legislation have not been subject to secondary U.S. sanctions. This bill will change that situation. It gives the Obama administration the ability to

effectively cut off offending banks from the international financial system. When faced with this prospect, I believe prudent actors in China and other parts of the world will cast aside those in North Korea who have supported its nuclear activity. I certainly hope so.

Let me also mention a provision I have added during the Foreign Relations Committee's consideration of the bill. It is an amendment that makes clear that the new and powerful sanctions this bill authorizes will not come at the expense of those American families still searching for their loved ones who served in the Korean war and who have never come home.

I especially want to thank a New Hampshire advocacy organization—the Coalition of Families of Korean and Cold War POW/MIAs—for working with me on this important provision. The coalition, led by Portsmouth's Rick Downes, expressed concerns that the new sanctions in this legislation could inadvertently hinder efforts to find the more than 7,800 Americans still unaccounted for from the Korean war. Obviously, no one here wants to interfere with this mission, and I am happy this final bill explicitly exempts POW/MIA accounting efforts from these new sanctions.

NOMINATION OF ADAM SZUBIN

Mr. President, I want to raise one concern that I do have as we are heading into a vote on this bill; that is, the ability of the Treasury Department to identify and target those who should be subject to these new sanctions because that is crucial to the success of this legislation and to our overall North Korea strategy.

The debate we are having today provides yet another illustration of why it is so essential to confirm Adam Szubin to be Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes at the Treasury Department. As the Under Secretary, Mr. Szubin would lead the Department in identifying and disrupting financial support to a range of actors that threaten our national security—North Korea as well as ISIS, Al Qaeda, Hezbollah, and others. Not only would Mr. Szubin be responsible for directly implementing a significant portion of the legislation we are expected to pass today, but he would also lead the Treasury Department's efforts to rally international support for these sanctions.

I think this last point is critical and sometimes doesn't get a lot of attention. Enforcing sanctions requires cooperation. It requires often nudging other foreign governments and financial institutions to work within the sanctions regime. The lack of a Senate-confirmed appointee in this position undermines the Treasury Department and our efforts to build international coalitions to target terrorism and financial crimes.

I am pleased the Senate is poised to pass the North Korea Sanctions En-

forcement Act and increase the pressure on the North Korean regime, but I think it would make sense at the same time to confirm the person, Adam Szubin, who will be responsible for enforcing those very sanctions. Wouldn't it make sense for the Senate to strengthen Treasury's hand as they work to make the sanctions as effective as possible?

Adam Szubin was nominated on April 16, 2015—301 days ago. Although the Senate Banking Committee held a hearing on his nomination back in September, the committee still has not advanced that nomination to the Senate floor. No one doubts Mr. Szubin's qualifications for the position. At his nomination hearing, Chairman SHELBY called him eminently qualified.

Mr. Szubin has served in both Republican and Democratic administrations. He has bipartisan support in this body. When we are all here—Republicans and Democrats—talking about the need to increase the pressure on North Korea in order to deny Pyongyang the resources it is using to develop nuclear weapons and the missiles it needs to target the United States, shouldn't we be supporting a nominee whose job it is to do this exact work?

I think the Senate needs to vote on Mr. Szubin's nomination without further delay. I know he has the support of the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. As I said, he has bipartisan support in this body, and it is very disappointing that we can't move him at the same time we are moving this bill. I hope the committee will change their minds and they will decide to take up his nomination and move it so we can ensure that the important tenets that are in this bill to help address what North Korea is doing will actually be enforced.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, for some time now power has been gravitating from the legislature to the President. Many in Congress, including myself, have been critical of the President's overreach. However, Congress bears some of the responsibility and some of the blame in that this body continues to abdicate and transfer our power to the President. Nowhere is this more obvious than in foreign policy.

During the debate over the Iranian agreement to end sanctions, many congressional voices lamented that these sanctions were enacted by Congress and should not be unilaterally ended by the President without congressional approval. As many observers noted, Congress has only itself to blame. For decades now, Congress has granted the President national security waivers to just about anything. These allow the Executive to do what they want, to terminate sanctions or continue spending without any new vote of Congress.

A good example was when Egypt was overtaken by a military regime. This was not a democratic government. This became a military junta. Our laws on foreign aid said Egypt should no longer receive foreign aid if they are not a democratically elected government. Yet the President continues to give foreign aid to Egypt because he simply uses a waiver we wrote into the legislation.

It is a mistake to continue to grant so much power to the Presidency, and by doing so, we have abdicated our own power. For decades now, Congress has granted the President national security waivers on just about everything. The waivers are so flimsy and open-ended that all he has to do is write a report, claim that it affects national security, and then he can do whatever he wants. Congress then complains that the President is overreaching. Yet we give him that very power.

Looking back at the North Korean sanctions, we find that President Clinton removed sanctions by using the national security waiver that Congress provided him. Furthermore, about a decade later, President George W. Bush did the same thing, relieving sanctions against North Korea by taking advantage of national security waivers.

When we jump ahead to the Iran agreement, we find President Obama using national security waivers provided by Congress to unilaterally repeal Iranian sanctions without congressional authority. In fact, President Obama has utilized congressionally provided loopholes 40 times to remove Iranian sanctions. Everybody complains, and now we are going to do the same thing. We are going to write a sanction bill with the exact same boilerplate language that we had in previous sanctions bills, which will allow the President the leeway to end the sanctions if he desires.

When we fast-forward to these new North Korean sanctions before us, the new sanctions bill does exactly what previous sanction bills have done; namely, provide the President with the power to simply claim any nonspecific national security claim to waive sanctions.

Congressional critics of the President's use of national security waivers to end Iranian sanctions should decide now that they have no leg to stand on should a future President do the exact same thing with North Korean sanctions and decide to remove them without congressional approval. There are two examples of that—Clinton has already done this, and so did George W. Bush.

I propose that Congress take back their power. I propose that Congress not cede power to the Presidency, so I therefore ask unanimous consent to call up my amendment numbered 3301, which is at the desk. My amendment would remove national security waivers

and give Congress its power back where it belongs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Is there objection?

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Kentucky for his passion on this issue. We took great care in making sure we devised a sanctions bill that was strong in terms of its effect on North Korea and that it eliminated any of the shortcomings of the sanctions we faced when dealing with Iran.

I certainly agree with the Senator from Kentucky when he said that we faced a President willing to grant broad relief from sanctions in terms of national security waivers, and that is why we were very careful in making sure we constructed case-by-case waivers in this act, the North Korea act. The President must investigate and explain to Congress that there are no broad grants or wide swaths of discretionary ability to waive the sanctions. As I said, there are mandatory investigations with mandatory reporting requirements, and so I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Who yields time?

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES WEEK

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, today I rise to honor 37 tribal colleges and universities operating across 16 States on more than 85 campuses, 5 of which are located in North Dakota. Thank you to the more than 20 bipartisan Senators, including Indian Affairs Committee Chairman BARRASSO and Vice Chairman TESTER, who joined me in introducing a Senate resolution designating this week as National Tribal Colleges and Universities Week.

This resolution received unanimous support in the Senate last week, as it should. It shows that Native American issues and the support for education are part of this country's treaty and trust responsibilities, and it continues to be a bipartisan issue. While we too often hear about the hardships Native communities face due to the geographic isolation and insufficient ac-

cess to resources, we should also highlight those who are doing great work to build future leaders and a future generation of leaders across Indian Country. We see so much of that happening today at tribal colleges and universities.

Tribal colleges and universities act as unique community institutions that work to strengthen tribal nations and make lasting differences in the lives of American Indians and Alaska Natives. The tribal community colleges, technical schools, and 4-year institutions plant resilient seeds of hope by sustaining Native languages and building trusting and important tribal economies.

Supporting tribal colleges and universities both upholds our trust responsibility and provides much needed resources for students. Signed into law in 1978, the Tribally Controlled Community Colleges Assistance Act supported tribally chartered institutions of higher education to help uphold the Federal Government's unique relationship with federally recognized Indian tribes. Today, TCUs like Turtle Mountain Community College and Sitting Bull College in my State of North Dakota provide educational resources to Native students who otherwise surely would go without.

But tribal colleges and universities don't simply educate Native students. The American Indian Higher Education Consortium, a national network of this country's TCUs, estimates that because of the schools' often rural locations, more than 15 percent of the students attending these tribal colleges and universities are also non-Indian.

Tribal colleges and universities offer students access to a well-rounded education from an accredited institution that provides knowledge and skills grounded in cultural traditions and values, including the all-important education in indigenous languages. This enhances Native communities and enriches both tribes and the United States by preparing students to succeed in their academic pursuits as well as to enter a global competitive workforce.

The results have been telling. In the 2012–2013 school year, 75 percent of graduates earned degrees, with 22 percent earning certificates. But while this success is admirable, the tribal colleges and universities have been hindered by chronic underfunding. Although the Federal Government provides funding to some minority-serving institutions at levels equal to \$30,000 per student, tribal colleges receive literally a third of that. When we look at average numbers, it is around \$6,700 per student. Tribes and tribal colleges and universities have consistently figured out how to do more with less, but Congress should not shy away from its Federal responsibility.

I wish to speak about my experience this morning meeting with a number of

tribal students. We can give all of these numbers and the critical importance of making this kind of education accessible, but what we will never see is the hope and the opportunity in the eyes of these students. I can't do that for my colleagues here. I can only tell their stories.

I met a young woman who served our country in the military and after 10 years went home and discovered the opportunity to learn more about her culture and the opportunity to get an education at the tribal colleges. She said she wished she had known earlier. She probably would have gone to college at the tribal college at Sitting Bull first before she joined the armed services.

I met another young woman who told me of her early life of abuse and neglect. She said that after having two children and really no hope, she found a tribal college. In that tribal college she found not only an opportunity for advancement and the dream and the hope of becoming a lawyer someday, but she found a family. She described the faculty and the staff and the other students as the family she had never had.

I talked to another young woman, who is 18 years old and literally homeless. She sleeps on a friend's couch. The only family she has to nurture her is her tribe and the tribal college. She tells me—her words were this: I will be great. She would not have that hope, she would not have that belief, and she would not have that vision if she didn't have access to education. She is going to be a nurse. And I can tell you she is already great, from what I have heard. So the stories go on and on and on.

Because of the involvement in the tribal college at Spirit Lake Reservation, we have a student now, who, for the first time, graduated with an engineering degree from one of our 4-year institutions. He started out at a tribal college—first engineer ever from that tribe.

These are messages of hope in a world that all too often is a world of despair, a world of neglect, a world of abuse, a world of challenges for young people. But a tribal college gave them the foundation, the connection to their culture, the connection to a family and a group of people who cared about them, and an opportunity for something better—an opportunity to be great, as the young woman I spoke with earlier said.

So I am very proud of the work we have done to support the tribal colleges. We need to do more. If we truly want to change the outcome and the paradigm for Indian people and for Indian children, we must invest in Indian education, and that goes all the way from our Head Start programs all the way up to our programs for higher education.

I want to give one last story. This past summer I attended the STEM edu-

cation program for Native Americans at the University of North Dakota, and I met with a group of young people who talked about the difficulty of transitioning from the reservation into a major university—talking not so much about the challenges academically but about the challenges of loneliness, the challenges of the first time leaving what they knew and being the first generation in their families to actually attend a 4-year college. One young man said that he was so homesick and so shocked by the change in culture that he wanted to go home. I said: Well, did you? He said: No, I called my mom to tell her that I wanted to go, and she told me she would knock me upside the head if I came back. A brave mother—so he said he did what his mother asked him to do, and he was graduating with a degree in, I think, geology or some applied science.

That young man had a mother who kept him in that school. Many young people in Indian Country today do not have that kind of inspiration, and the great distrust people have for the outside world gets embedded. So these tribal colleges help prepare these students for the next step. They are critical for maintaining the cultural significance, critical for maintaining the pride that people have in who they are as a people, and then building on that for self-awareness, building on that for self-economic opportunity.

I am proud to represent five great institutions of higher learning in my State that are representative of the tribal colleges and universities.

Finally, I wish to talk about the wonderful men and women who run those institutions and what they do. These are people with Ph.D.s. These are people with amazing degrees who could go anywhere, and they continue to provide leadership to their people. Without their leadership and their support, these children would not have these opportunities. These returning vets would not have these opportunities, and these older-than-average students, with the challenges in their lives, would not have these opportunities.

So please join with me in recognizing tribal colleges and universities but also to take a look at the disparities in terms of reimbursements that these tribal colleges and universities incur, and let's make this investment. This is an investment in the lives and the changes we need to see in Indian Country.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I wish to comment on the statements that have been made by my colleague and friend from North Dakota, who has been an amazing leader, a very strong leader here in the Senate since she

came, trying to shine a spotlight on issues particularly surrounding our Native American and Alaska Native children.

We are working together on a mission that really does help to drill down—to find those best supports that we possibly can for these children who in so many instances have been left behind.

The Senator from North Dakota spoke about our tribal institutions and our tribal colleges as that next step to launch our young people successfully, while recognizing that we have opportunities to grow and do better by our tribal colleges. I had an opportunity just yesterday to be visited by some students from Ilisagvik College, a small facility located in Barrow, AK. I had a chance to meet with two students, Olive and Jillian, from a very small village called Atkasuk. One described what it was like as a young student who wants that education—but just the idea that one would go hundreds of miles away to the big city in Fairbanks or Anchorage to pursue an education was simply not possible—and how these students have been given opportunities in ways that perhaps they and their families never dreamed possible.

So I stand with my colleague, as we have stood shoulder to shoulder on so many of these issues that impact our Native children, our young people, their futures, and their opportunities, and recognizing that education can be that key to a better life and a better path forward.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, will the Senator from Alaska yield for a question?

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Certainly.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, there is no better partner for me in this quest than the great Senator from the State of Alaska. We have spent so much time relating and recounting our experiences in visiting with Native Alaskans or, in my case, American Indians, talking about the challenges and talking about what needs to happen and how we need to shed a light on not only the despair, so that we all are motivated for change, but how we need to shed a light on the gratefulness and the great spirit that is happening. I know that my great friend has had those situations where you just wonder how resilient a young girl can be who experiences these kinds of challenges and this kind of abuse to come back and say: This is going to be a great future.

So I wanted to thank the Senator from Alaska for her strong and abiding and great commitment to all the people of Alaska, and I want to thank her for her partnership.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I certainly appreciate the value of our partnership, and I know that we have a great deal of work ahead of us.

Madam President, I come to the floor today to express my support for the

North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act and the substitute that we will be voting on later this afternoon.

It is fair to say that the people of Alaska take great interest in this legislation, and it is not simply an intellectual interest. It stems from our geography, quite simply. At its closest point, Alaska is 3,100 miles from North Korea. Let me put that in context with where we are here. The distance between Washington, DC, and my hometown of Anchorage is 3,370 miles. So Alaska is actually closer to North Korea than I am to my home when I am working here in Washington, DC.

We are talking about the main population center in Anchorage and in the Mat-Su Valley area in south central Alaska, which is about 3,600 miles from Pyongyang. Perhaps it is a little longer than a North Korean missile can travel today or even in the near future, but it seems to me that North Korea is committed to advancing its nuclear capabilities. Its covert nuclear tests and the so-called satellite launch that we saw over the weekend appear to be purposeful steps in that direction.

Just to give a little vignette about how Alaskans pay attention to North Korea—we all go around and visit schools around our respective States—I was at a middle school and I had an eighth grader ask me a question. When asked what was on anybody's mind, what do you want me to know about, and how can I be a better representative for you back in Washington, DC, the first eighth grader that raised his hand said to me: Senator MURKOWSKI, what are you doing in Washington about this Kim Jong Un guy? This is an eighth grader.

I am not going to suggest to you that perhaps Alaskan eighth graders are more attuned to politics around the world. The reason I raise this is because around the dinner tables back home, people are talking about North Korea because our geography puts us within that range of sight, if you will. I use that term loosely, but when looking at the maps and understanding where Alaska is and where North Korea is and reading the news about what is happening with North Korea's nuclear intentions, it causes Alaskans to be worried enough to be discussing it at the dinner table, and eighth graders are saying: What is going on? It is real for us.

North Korea's actions demand decisive action here in Washington, DC, in Beijing, and at the United Nations. The Washington Post editorial just yesterday noted that the Obama doctrine of strategic patience is no longer an option. Mr. Kim seems to view that as a sign of weakness. He seems to fancy playing Washington off against Beijing, and neither capital can afford him that luxury, lest North Korea make fools of both.

China has a major role to play in showing Mr. Kim the light. Mr. Kim

wants the world to believe that he is smarter than all of us, and I would suggest that it is not in Beijing's interest to offer him a porous border. The United States and our allies have been patient enough with the carrot. We talk a lot about the carrot and stick when it comes to engagement. But this Senator suggests that we have been patient enough with the carrot, and now it is time to try the stick.

The sanctions bill that we are considering today is intended as a serious wake-up call to Mr. Kim's government. The sanctions are severe and they are targeted at those who enable Mr. Kim's regime to conduct business abroad. They are also intended as a wake-up call to Mr. Kim's advisers, who enjoy a pretty comfortable status quo, thanks to their leadership positions. But life is going to be a little bit tougher under our sanctions regime, if we advance this—no more luxury goods, no more creature comforts, and, if we are successful, no more access to hard currency—no exceptions.

This is an important shift for our government with regards to North Korea. As I mentioned, out of geographic necessity I follow developments in North Korea very closely, and I have since I came to the Senate. I have had the opportunity over the years to spend time with U.S. officials who have assumed the very difficult role of trying to conduct diplomacy with North Korea. Almost without exception, they have advised, when talking about North Korea, to choose respectful language, to avoid threats, to find ways to allow one's words and one's sincerity to penetrate. We are now at that point where some are saying quite strongly that this respectful approach hasn't really gotten us anywhere with this regime. This Senator would suggest that we can be and must be very firm while at the same time respectful.

Let me share a couple examples of some things that many of my colleagues may not have been aware of. I had an opportunity this past September to travel with a couple of my Senate colleagues to Svalbard, Norway. Svalbard is where one of the world's global seed vaults is located. The seed vault is intended to preserve a wide variety of plant seeds from around the world in the event there might be some kind of widespread regional or worldwide crisis that would wipe out local crops and seed. It is nicknamed "the doomsday vault."

I had an opportunity to go into this vault and just observe what various nations have sent to the top of the world up there. In that vault we saw one of the few instances of North Korean international cooperation. We saw boxes of seeds from North Korea. There was a box that came in with over 5,700 plant crop seeds from that hermit kingdom. Just last month, North

Korea signed the Svalbard Treaty, giving North Korea access to the Svalbard Islands.

We have also heard that North Korea has made use of the Northern Sea Route to assist with shipments to Russia. I put this out there because whatever reason there may be that North Korea signed on to this Svalbard Treaty and whatever the reason may be for its newfound interest in the Arctic, the point is that when the regime in North Korea sees that it is in its best interests to cooperate internationally, there is a willingness to engage. But to this point, they have not shown a willingness to engage when it comes to their nuclear and ballistic missile programs—at least not to any reasonable level of engagement where the terms are not dictated by the North Korean regime.

Here we are today. We have a bill on the floor directed to North Korean economic sanctions. It is not about an invasion or the use of offensive weapons against the people of North Korea. It is about bringing about peaceful change, firmly and respectfully.

In that vein, let me acknowledge that the people of North Korea are a proud, nationalistic people. Like all of the world's peoples, they wish to be respected by others. Yet they are governed by an intolerant and a very perplexing regime that tolerates hunger and poverty when it is clear that there are other choices.

If the people of North Korea were allowed to look across the border they would see an example of prosperity. They would see a strong commitment to traditional values. They would see family members with whom someday they would hope to reunify.

None of the world's nations are out to deny North Korea the opportunities for that prosperity, traditional values, and the reuniting of families. But we do rightly demand—and it is legitimate that we demand—that North Korea be a part of the community of nations. That means that Mr. Kim must abandon these nuclear ambitions.

I believe that it is important that our Nation be prepared for anything that may come our way. My home State of Alaska is host to our Nation's ground-based missile defense capabilities. I was pleased to read in yesterday's budget announcement plans to make a \$1 billion investment in the ground-based missile defense system. Significant investments are also made in the Long Range Discrimination Radar, or LRDR, which is slated for completion at Clear Air Force Station by the year 2020. That radar is exactly what the words imply—a radar that will enable our missile defenders to take a really good long look and better discriminate between threats and junk. I am also pleased to know that the United States is working through the placement of missile defense batteries in South Korea.

These investments provide an increment of protection, but the truth is that they are second-best to a change in attitude coming out of Pyongyang. That is truly what I hope we will achieve through this sanctions vote today.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, today I wish to steadfastly support the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016.

Before I discuss the merits of this critical legislation, however, I wish to congratulate the author of the Senate version of this act, the junior Senator from Colorado. The bill he crafted will reinvigorate our Nation's efforts to thwart North Korea's continued development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile technology. In addition, it seeks to further protect our Nation from cyber attack and begin to hold responsible those who have committed human rights abuses against the people of North Korea.

I also wish to commend the chairman and the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for working together to shepherd this bill through their committee with strong bipartisan support.

Once again the Senate turns its attention to confront one of the most atrocious regimes of the modern era: the so-called Democratic People's Republic of Korea—or North Korea. Instead of working to create the workers' paradise, which is purported to be one of the autocratic regime's primary objectives, millions have starved as part of North Korea's policy of placing the military first.

But make no mistake, the threat posed by North Korea is not an inconsequential concern about the domestic affairs of a distant land. On January 6, the regime conducted a subterranean nuclear weapons test, claiming to have detonated a hydrogen bomb for the first time. Even Russia decried the test as "a flagrant violation of international law and existing UN Security Council resolutions."

Then, this past weekend, the North Korean satellite launched on Sunday passed almost directly over the stadium where the Super Bowl was played an hour after the game, according to press reports. This hostile act is even more disconcerting when we remember that the technology to launch such a satellite into orbit is virtually identical to what is required to launch an intercontinental ballistic missile with a warhead.

Unfortunately, these provocative acts are only part of a recurring pattern orchestrated by North Korea over the past several years.

The pattern of closely pairing a nuclear test with rocket launches began in 2006, when the regime fired seven ballistic missiles, including the long-

range Taepo Dong-2. Three months later, North Korea conducted its first underground nuclear test.

These hostile acts prompted the U.N. Security Council to adopt, under Chapter VII, Resolution 1695—condemning the missile launch—and Resolution 1718—demanding that North Korea refrain from further nuclear tests and imposing sanctions on the regime.

Once again, in 2009, North Korea carried out a virtually identical pairing of rocket and nuclear tests. In April of that year, the rogue state launched a three-stage Unha-2 rocket. One month later, Pyongyang conducted another underground nuclear test. This second round of nuclear and rocket tests elicited U.N. Security Council Resolution 1874, which expanded sanctions, intensified inspections to prevent proliferation, and barred further missile tests.

Unfortunately, Pyongyang was not deterred and repeated its weapon and rocket pairing in late 2012 and early 2013. Specifically, in December 2012, the newly installed Kim Jong-un ordered the launch of another Unha-3 rocket. Two months later, North Korea conducted another underground nuclear test. The U.N. Security Council responded in kind with Resolution 2087—strengthening sanctions related to the missile launch—and Resolution 2094—tweaking sanctions related to North Korea's nuclear program.

In addition to the now-cyclical pairing of rocket launches and nuclear tests, North Korea has assumed the role of a petulant child in a variety of other areas. For example, North Korea has directly violated both the Korean Armistice Agreement and article 2 of the U.N. Charter by taking kinetic military action against South Korea.

In 2010 alone, North Korean forces sunk a South Korean patrol ship—according to a multinational commission that investigated the incident—and separately fired artillery rounds at a South Korean island, killing two Korean Marines and injuring 17 others.

North Korea has also been guilty of repeated acts of proliferation to rogue states around the world. The Washington Post and the New York Times reported that, in 2004, Libya received uranium hexafluoride of suspected North Korean origin. Similarly, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence revealed that North Korea assisted the Assad regime in constructing a nuclear reactor in northern Syria that Israeli forces destroyed in 2007.

I recite this partial history so that there is no misunderstanding. North Korea earned international condemnation not merely for its recent transgressions, but for countless bad dealings over the last decade. Unfortunately, previous U.N. resolutions and the sanctions imposed by our own government have not achieved the desired result of terminating North Korea's recalcitrant activity.

That is why the junior Senator of Colorado's legislation is so important. It provides our sanctions with greater teeth. It mandates sanctions on individuals who have materially contributed to North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile program.

I also think it is important to pause here to notice that, unlike North Korean autocrats who have imposed their will on the North Korean people by sending vast numbers to forced labor camps and early graves, the United States' sanctions are directed only at those who facilitate violations of international law.

In sum, North Korea's repression is indiscriminate. Our sanctions are focused on punishing the guilty. Accordingly, the junior Senator's legislation requires the administration to identify human rights abusers in North Korea and direct sanctions against them.

The bill also addresses one of the growing threats to our nation: cyber attack. Therefore, the administration is tasked to devise a strategy to confront and counter North Korea's cyber attacks against the United States. It also directs the executive branch to designate sanctions against those responsible for these belligerent acts.

This is an important piece of legislation which tightens the ring of deterrence against a regime that continues to defy international law. This bill's objective is not to needlessly interfere in the affairs of a foreign nation; rather, it is to provide a tool to force an aggressor into compliance with international law and to deter North Korea from committing hostile acts not only against the United States and its allies, but also against the North Korean people. I urge the prompt passage of this legislation.

Mr. REED. Madam President, today I join my colleagues in supporting the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016. This legislation will send a strong message to the North Korean regime that there are consequences to its dangerous and destabilizing activities on the Korean peninsula. Just in the past month, North Korea has conducted its fourth nuclear weapon test and launched a satellite into orbit, both of which violate several United Nations Security Council resolutions. The bipartisan bill before us makes clear that Congress will not tolerate the North Korean regime's continuing and flagrant violations of international law.

This bill is comprehensive and addresses a number of important concerns. First, it prohibits defense exports to North Korea and withholds foreign assistance to those governments that provide lethal military equipment to the government of North Korea. Second, it codifies and makes mandatory important cyber security sanctions under Executive Orders 13681 and 13694 that are essential to countering North Korea's dangerous cyber

attacks, like the one perpetrated against Sony Pictures Entertainment in November 2014. Third, it includes sanctions on individuals who knowingly engage in the serious human rights abuses that are perpetuated by the regime against its own people.

I would like to commend my colleagues from the Banking and Foreign Relations Committees who have worked to move this legislation forward. It is critical that we use all of our diplomatic and legal resources to further restrict North Korea's ability to fund its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs.

I urge my colleagues to support adoption of this important legislation.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I wish to speak in support of the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act.

Last week, North Korea launched a space satellite into orbit in direct violation of U.N. sanctions. Last month, North Korea tested its fourth nuclear bomb since 2006. North Korea's steady march toward expanding its nuclear arsenal continues unabated. Even more troubling is North Korea's willingness to sell its nuclear and ballistic missile technology to the highest bidder, as demonstrated by its previous cooperation with Iran.

The North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act is an appropriate and timely measure to expand U.S. sanctions against not only North Korea, but also those that facilitate North Korea's illicit and nefarious activities. In doing so, this legislation will deliver the message to the North Korean regime that its continued development and proliferation of nuclear weapons, material, and delivery systems will not be tolerated.

At the same time, the United Nations Security Council must address this issue with the same sense of urgency, unity, and commitment that the House has shown and the Senate will demonstrate in passing this bill later today.

First, U.N. member countries must fully understand and implement the many existing sanctions against North Korea already on the books. Unless they do, the sanctions will never work. The United States has minimal trade with North Korea, whereas China, a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, accounts for 70 percent of all of North Korea's economic trade.

Yesterday, a new report released by a panel of U.N. experts found that North Korea continues to evade international sanctions because the sanctions have been seldom implemented, and some countries do not fully understand their obligations under the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions. In other instances, there is simply a lack of political will to enforce the sanctions. This has to stop for sanctions to be effective against North Korea.

Second, the U.N. Security Council must adopt new sanctions to dem-

onstrate to the North Korean regime that further violations of U.N. sanctions will not be tolerated. Even though North Korea has continued to evade sanctions for the past decade, the response at the United Nations should be to identify the ways to make sanctions more effective and targeted rather than to walk away from sanctions entirely.

We know sanctions can work because they have before. In 2005, the U.S. Treasury Department froze \$24 million in North Korean accounts important to the regime at the Banco Delta Asia bank. As a result of this action, which was taken pursuant to authority Congress provided in the USA PATRIOT Act, the North Koreans returned to the six-party nuclear talks. They stayed at the talks until the frozen assets were released 2 years later.

The bill we are considering today requires the Department of the Treasury to reevaluate whether North Korea should be considered a primary money-laundering concern, which would permit the President to enact the same type of sanctions that brought the North Koreans back to the negotiating table 10 years ago. I urge the Treasury Department to complete this review as quickly as possible so that the President has at his disposal the full array of options to persuade, coerce, and effectively contain the dangerous North Korean regime.

I thank Chairman CORKER and Ranking Member CARDIN for bringing this measure to the floor, and I thank Senator GARDNER and Senator MENENDEZ as well for their extensive work on this legislation to address the nuclear threat posed by the erratic and unstable North Korean regime.

I urge my colleagues to support this vital, bipartisan legislation.

• Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, the totalitarian state of North Korea is becoming more belligerent by the day. In January, the country detonated its fourth nuclear bomb since 2006—which the North Korean military claims was a small hydrogen bomb. Just last week, the country launched a rocket carrying a satellite into space, foreshadowing the possible development of a long-range ballistic missile capable of delivering a nuclear payload. According to National Intelligence Director James Clapper, North Korea recently expanded a uranium enrichment facility and restarted a plutonium reactor that could start recovering material for nuclear weapons within months or even weeks. I am deeply concerned by these actions.

We must exhaust every diplomatic option we have to pressure North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons program, halt its aggressive military posturing with South Korea, and adhere to the tenets of international human rights law. That is why I strongly support the bipartisan effort

to strengthen sanctions on the rogue North Korean regime.

These sanctions are an important tool in resolving the growing threat from Pyongyang. The legislation before the Senate would help prevent North Korea from obtaining goods or technology related to nuclear weapons, ban foreign assistance to any country that provides lethal military equipment to North Korea, and target the country's trade in key industrial commodities. These steps are absolutely essential if we are to achieve our longstanding mission to end the North's nuclear weapons program. Certainly, sanctions are far preferable to preemptive military force, which I strongly oppose.

In addition to sanctions, the U.S. must work with the few nations that have diplomatic and economic relationships with North Korea—namely China—to pressure Kim Jong Un to stop threatening the stability of the region and join the community of nations. While China may have been a steadfast ally of North Korea's in the past, China now has far more shared interests with the U.S. than with Pyongyang. It is time to make resolving the Korean peninsula conflict a top diplomatic goal in terms of our own relationship with China.

I am pleased to see that the sanctions bill includes a waiver to allow humanitarian organizations to deliver much needed relief to ordinary North Korean citizens and authorizes \$2 million for humanitarian assistance. Sanctions come at a cost, and we must do everything possible to make sure the North Korean people—who already suffer so much under Kim Jong Un—do not pay an even greater price.

While I will be necessarily absent for the expected bipartisan passage of the bill, I strongly support the North Korea sanctions legislation. •

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, today the Senate will vote on the North Korean Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act, a bill I am proud to cosponsor with my colleague from Colorado, Senator CORY GARDNER. This legislation mandates new sanctions on North Korea's ballistic missile and nuclear program, targets cyber criminals and officials involved in censorship, and addresses the regime's long history of human rights abuses.

The recent rocket launch and the fourth nuclear test by North Korea last month is a stark reminder that it is a rogue state, under unstable leadership that will stop at nothing until it fully realizes its nuclear ambitions. The current policy of "strategic patience" has yielded nothing more than a flagrant testing of American resolve around the globe and a weakening of our Nation's credibility. North Korea's recent provocations have acknowledged that reality. Congress must act and do so loudly. Now, more than ever, we need to send a message to North Korea that

reassures our allies, forewarns our adversaries, and puts the world on notice. This legislation accomplishes that.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, we have a very significant vote coming up, and people are not talking about it as much as they should. We had a hearing, and, of course, the Chair was there at the hearing, where we had James Clapper talking about the threat that we are faced with here in the United States.

James Clapper—just to remind people—has been around as the chief intelligence director or involved with intelligence in hearings in Washington for 43 years. This guy knows what he is talking about. He made a statement yesterday that we have never been in as high of a threat position in all of the 43 years that he has been there.

In fact, there was an article released yesterday where it was stated that “North Korea had expanded its production of weapons-grade nuclear fuel, making clear that the Obama administration now regarded the reclusive government in Pyongyang, rather than Iran, as the world’s most worrisome nuclear threat.”

That threat is real. We all recall when Kim Jong Un replaced his father, and as bad as his father was, he was at least a little more dependable in terms of predictability than Kim Jong Un.

Just yesterday it was reported that he killed the chief of his general staff. It was a year ago that he did the same thing. So if someone disagrees with him, they execute him.

Under the leadership of Kim Jong Un, North Korea has repeatedly violated Security Council resolutions regarding weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. Since assuming power in 2012, his regime has conducted satellite launches in December 2012, and in February 2016 continues to develop its ballistic missile program. It has conducted missile tests from several launched locations, and he has conducted nuclear tests in February of 2013 and January 2016, so he just continued all the way through it. All of these things are in violation of the U.N. Security Council resolutions.

North Korea also continues to be involved in criminal activities around the world to include cyber attacks against organizations and governments. This bill that we are going to be considering—the passage of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act that we will be voting on—

toughens the sanctions against North Korea by authorizing comprehensive sanctions against countries, companies, and individuals who engage in certain trade with North Korea.

This is something that is a fairly recent attempt to get compliance with the arrangements that are being made by saying to a country: If you continue to do business in North Korea, then we will have sanctions against your country.

This is something that has worked to a degree in Iran. It is a system that should be set up, and we will have the opportunity to do that this afternoon.

If anyone engages in trade with North Korea, as well as those determined to be responsible for human rights abuses, money laundering, counterfeiting, or undermining cyber security, this bill demonstrates America’s resolve in holding North Korea responsible for its actions, along with those countries, organizations, and individuals who are assisting them.

Of course, it is very significant that we go ahead and move forward with this, get this passed today, and send a very clear message, not just to North Korea but to all of those countries who might be tempted to be trading with them that they could be subject to the same sanctions.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I know we have a little shift taking place, but I thank Senator INHOFE for his staunch national security support and certainly support of this legislation. I appreciate his comments, and I think we are going to have a successful day today in doing something that is important.

I think you know the administration has tried to work with the U.N. Security Council to get them to impose sanctions, as you would think they would wish to do. China has been the holdup there. You would think as a next-door neighbor they would be most apt to want sanctions and other actions to be put in place to push back against North Korea.

This is something that is important that we are doing in a proactive way, and hopefully it will spur other actions down the road.

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CORKER. I yield to the Senator.

Mr. INHOFE. It was January 7 of 2013 that I was there on the DMZ. That is the largest active DMZ that is out there now—160 miles long, 2 miles wide. Even at that time, we were talking about the necessity of immediately getting sanctions in there to stop the threats. Because our intelligence—while it can be good and it cannot be so good, still there is speculation that they had that capability, and that capability has to be stopped.

I applaud the Senator and his team for moving forward with this issue.

Mr. CORKER. I thank Senator INHOFE. I think most Americans, unlike my colleague, don’t realize we still have 28,500 troops there. It is an area where easily something can get out of hand. So, again, I thank him for his support and for being here today.

I know Senator FEINSTEIN now has the floor. I yield to our distinguished colleague, Senator FEINSTEIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I thank the chairman very much. I want Senator CORKER to know that I fully support his committee’s recommendation and believe the time has come to enforce and place some sanctions against North Korea.

I think we all judge the world’s leaders based on their actions and their stated intentions. To me there is no question that Mr. Kim’s intentions are adverse to the well-being of our country. As a citizen of the western United States and a Senator representing nearly 40 million people in California, this is all very alarming, and it should alarm the world.

If you take stock of North Korea’s recent actions and their capabilities, the cause for concern is apparent. On January 6 of this year, North Korea detonated its fourth nuclear device. Regardless of whether it was a hydrogen bomb or not, Mr. Kim’s intention is clear: he seeks a nuclear arsenal.

Unfortunately, the measures the international community have adopted to date have been insufficient to stop him. In October of 2006, the North Koreans first detonated a device which had an estimated yield of less than 1 kiloton. In May of 2009, they detonated a second device, roughly 2 kilotons. In February 2013, they detonated a third device, 6 kilotons to 7 kilotons, and the one this year was the fourth. I would not be surprised if their most recent test had a greater yield than the last.

Not only have North Korean weapons become more lethal, but their stockpile has likely increased over time. According to a February 2015 analysis by the Institute for Science and International Security, North Korea has between 15 and 22 nuclear weapons. By the end of 2014, and they could have 20 to 100 nuclear weapons. That is deeply troubling, especially as North Korea continues to make advances in their missile program.

Again, experts at the Institute for Science and International Security have warned that North Korea likely has the capability to mount a nuclear warhead on its medium-range missiles.

Most of Japan and all of South Korea, each of which hosts tens of thousands of U.S. military and civilian personnel, are easily in range. And just this past weekend, they again tested an ICBM under the guise of placing a satellite in space. According to various reports, North Korea tested a three-stage

likely Taepodong-2 rocket, which, in fact, did place a satellite into orbit.

Again, to me, the intention is clear. They want to build a missile capable of reaching the United States.

An ICBM on a launch pad is vulnerable to attack. So to evade this vulnerability, North Korea appears also to be developing a road-mobile ICBM, the KN-08, which it is estimated can reach the United States.

In April of this past year, ADM Bill Gortney, the head of the North American Aerospace Defense Command, said: "We assess that it [the KN-08] is operational today" and that the mobile nature of the KN-08 makes it a difficult target.

Gortney also said: "Our assessment is that they [the North Koreans] have the ability to put a nuclear weapon on a KN-08 and shoot it at the [U.S.] homeland."

It is not just the nuclear weapons and missile program that give me pause. In the last several years, North Korea has committed highly provocative acts. North Korea chose to sink a South Korean naval vessel in 2010, killing 46 soldiers. It has shelled South Korean islands and planted mines along the DMZ that maimed South Korean soldiers. It has undertaken sophisticated cyber attacks against U.S. companies, Sony Pictures, and South Korean banks.

Previously, North Korea walked away from the 1994 Agreed Framework and withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Most recently, it has repeatedly flouted U.N. Security Council resolutions and proliferated weapons of mass destruction technologies.

With respect to its own human rights record, a 2014 United Nations Human Rights Council report makes clear that North Korea's leaders should be prosecuted for crimes against humanity. The United Nations has found that North Korea is committing systematic, widespread and gross human rights violations against its own people. The regime selectively distributes food to privileged individuals and routinely uses starvation to punish dissent. Torture, forced disappearances, and inhumane detention conditions are routine. In the past, the regime even jailed three generations of dissidents on the concept of guilt by association. In its prison camps alone, the United Nations estimates that hundreds of thousands of dissidents have died.

One anecdote from the U.N.'s report demonstrates the total and diabolical suffering put upon the North Korean people under this regime. Ordinary Koreans must go to extraordinary lengths to survive, including prostitution, theft, and smuggling.

A U.N. investigator was told of an instance when a woman was pulled off a train, and a dead, small child—no more than 2 years old—was strapped to her back. State security suspected the

woman was smuggling copper but could find no evidence. After interrogating the woman for some time, they asked her to place her child on a desk before them. The woman then broke down and began to cry.

When she finally placed the quiet, dead child on the desk, the officials noticed its stomach was red. They then opened the child's stomach and found about 2 kilograms of copper inside. To survive, this woman was forced to smuggle copper in her own dead child's stomach. No mother anywhere on Earth should be forced to such extremes.

When it comes to the international response to North Korea and its provocative behavior, I very much regret that China has not seen fit to do more. In my view, China, in its size and capability, has the ability to rein in North Korea and is probably the only country in the region that can do so.

North Korea's nuclear test facilities are close to China's border. Just like Japan and South Korea, China's security is threatened by an unstable nuclear power in its neighborhood. Yet China continues to provide the fuel, food, trade, and international protection that sustains Mr. Kim's government.

In my meetings with China's Ambassador Cui in Washington, DC, I have expressed to him that China can and must do more. I have tried to impress upon him that a nuclear-armed North Korea, with ever-increasing weapons, is not in China's security interests.

The United States cannot sit in silence in the face of North Korea's ever-advancing nuclear and missile programs. For some, Iran has been a big threat. For me, reading the intelligence and seeing the progress over the years of North Korea's nuclear arsenal, I believe North Korea is a very serious threat to the well-being of this country. We must protect and reassure our allies in the region. That may include placing more advanced missile defenses, both in South Korea and Japan, as well as closer trilateral military cooperation with these countries.

The fact that the North Korean Government has resisted international overtures and condemnation leaves us little choice. So I come to the floor today to support the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enforcement Act of 2016. This bill will impose mandatory sanctions against North Korean persons and entities involved in weapons of mass destruction development, delivery, and proliferation; serious human rights abuses; trade in luxury goods; money laundering; smuggling; and narcotics trafficking. This legislation alone, though, will not cease North Korea's illegal activities. However, it is the beginning of a more comprehensive response to North Korea's increasingly dangerous behavior.

I thank the chairman and his committee for bringing forward this legis-

lation. I certainly intend to support it. I thank the Senator.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I want to take one moment to thank Senator FEINSTEIN, who knows so much about the intelligence around this and has spent a great deal of her Senate career making sure she does, and she understands China probably as much as any Senator here. She has been involved in all kinds of bilateral meetings and discussions and has led the Senate in many ways in understanding what is happening within the country. So her comments—especially today with this important piece of legislation—are certainly well-received and appreciated. Again, we thank her for what she does to help keep our country safe and for her diligent efforts on the Intelligence Committee.

I know Senator MARKEY is next in line to speak. Before he does, I wish to thank him for his contributions to making this bill better. He amended the bill. I think he has other amendments he would like to see happen at some time.

I would say that there is probably no one here who focuses more on proliferation and ensuring that rogue countries—and actually some that aren't even so rogue but that have rogue constituents within their countries—don't continue to proliferate by sharing information, sharing technology, and sharing assets with other countries. So I thank him for his contribution in bringing this bill to the floor today, and I look forward to his comments.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, let me begin by thanking the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, the gentleman from Tennessee, for the focus he has brought to these issues of nuclear proliferation and for his great service to our country, having all of our people understand the threats that can come from Iran, from North Korea, and from other places across our planet. It is the ultimate issue. If we get it wrong, the consequences will be catastrophic. So I thank the chairman for continuing to have the hearings and continuing to develop legislation that focuses our people on this issue. We are the global leader. We have to set the example for the rest of the world to follow. I thank him for his great leadership on these issues.

The sanctions in this bill represent a firm response to North Korea's latest nuclear test on January 6 and to its launch of a long-range rocket last weekend. These brazen actions remind us of the serious threat Pyongyang poses to global and regional security and underscore the urgency of ending North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

Together with our international partners, we must be vigilant against North Korea's development of boosted nuclear bombs which would allow Kim Jong Un's regime to shrink its weapons and load them onto missiles. And we must unequivocally convey to North Korea that any proliferation of nuclear technologies to other countries will lead to the gravest of consequences.

North Korea's nuclear and missile programs violate numerous U.N. Security Council resolutions. Those include Resolution 2094, which required North Korea to abandon "all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs" and imposed sanctions to pressure Kim to return to disarmament negotiations. These measures have not yet persuaded Kim to abandon his nuclear ambitions, in part because major gaps remain in the sanctions regime, particularly its enforcement by China.

In 2009 the Security Council imposed a conventional arms embargo on North Korea, but China insisted on a loophole allowing North Korea to import "small arms and light weapons." North Korea has exploited this loophole to continue its lucrative international trade in conventional arms. According to the U.N.'s own council of experts on North Korea, this trade remains "one of the country's most profitable revenue sources." North Korea is especially well known for purchasing light weapons from China, which it then sells to other countries for cash.

Although North Korea's arms exports violate U.N. sanctions, the Chinese companies that sell the arms in the first place get off scot-free. The involvement of Chinese companies in North Korean arms smuggling is part of a larger pattern of China's lax enforcement of nonproliferation sanctions against North Korea.

As Assistant Secretary of State Tom Countryman acknowledged in a Foreign Relations Committee hearing last May and again in December, Chinese entities continue to sell technologies to North Korea that could assist in its development of nuclear-capable ballistic missiles. China's efforts to clamp down on these activities remain feeble at best.

If the United States is to continue to provide extensive assistance to China's nuclear power industry, China must in return crack down on those who enable North Korea's nuclear provocations and its weapons-smuggling networks.

The United States must also take action on our own. That is why I worked to include an amendment in this bill that will impose sanctions on anyone who facilitates North Korea's arms trade, including Chinese corporations. My provision will further reduce North Korea's access to revenue, undermine its international arms smuggling, and put pressure on Kim to return to negotiations.

We must also put financial pressure on North Korea by designating the

country as a "primary money laundering concern." This would allow the Treasury Department to exclude North Korea from using the dollar-based financial system. The use of this designation in 2005 against the Banco Delta Asia in Macao disrupted North Korea's access to revenue and led one North Korean negotiator to admit that "you finally found a way to hurt us."

North Korea is one of the leading counterfeiters of U.S. currency. It uses front companies to hide its illicit earnings from trade in narcotics, weapons, and proliferation technologies. Although the Treasury has designated 18 financial institutions and 4 countries—including Iran—as primary money laundering concerns, it has never designated North Korea. For this reason, I filed an amendment in the Foreign Relations Committee—which I will work to include in the final version of this bill—that would require the Treasury Secretary to determine on an annual basis whether North Korea is a primary money laundering concern and to provide Congress with information about that determination, as well as any financial restrictions that result from it.

Just as we protect the international financial system from North Korea's counterfeit currency and money laundering, we must protect American investors who may unknowingly invest their money in companies that do business with North Korea. The prospect of American companies investing in North Korea is quite real. One American company, Firebird Management, has publicly declared its intention to invest in North Korea's oil industry.

That is why I introduced another amendment in committee that would require companies that issue securities in the United States to annually disclose any investments in North Korea to the Securities and Exchange Commission. This requirement would not impose any regulatory burden on companies that do not invest in North Korea, but those companies that do should have that information made public because the American people deserve to know which American companies are investing in North Korea. Again, I hope to strengthen this bill down the line by incorporating that requirement.

We know that sanctions are not an end in and of themselves; rather, they are meant to pressure the Kim regime to return to disarmament negotiations. But at the same time, as we pursue that critical goal, we must work to reduce the risk that North Korea will use its nuclear weapon, whether deliberately or through miscalculation.

First and foremost, we must make clear to Kim that his regime will not survive any use of nuclear weapons. We must also reduce the risk of Kim lashing out in desperation. If he comes to believe that we intend to destroy his nuclear weapons in a preventive war,

he will face pressure to "use them or lose them." Thus, even as we work to deter Kim, we must establish a means of communicating during crises to avoid the risk of accidental nuclear war. Ensuring deescalation at the same time as we pursue deterrence and denuclearization will not be easy. Nevertheless, given the devastating consequences of nuclear war, it is critical that we take a comprehensive approach.

Without additional sanctions, Kim will never disarm, but without a means of controlling escalation, we could one day wake up to a nuclear disaster that no one wants and everyone would lament. We should work on a continuous basis to make sure that—in the same way the Soviet President and the President of the United States were able to communicate to reduce the likelihood that we would have an accidental nuclear war, we have to make sure we have done everything in our power to accomplish the same goal with the North Korean Government, whether we like them or not.

I want to compliment the chairman, the Senator from Colorado, and the Senator from New Jersey for their great work on this legislation. It is going to be a long struggle to ultimately deal with that regime. I think we will have to return to it over and over again, but I think, as we are going forward, it is critical—through the Chinese or through others—to make sure we have maximum communication. We could have an accidental nuclear war. It could happen. We have to make sure that is avoided.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I think Senator CAPITO is on her way down and is the next speaker. While we have a moment, I want to thank Senator GARDNER in his presence. And on an issue that is important to not just our security but the world's security, I thank Senator MENENDEZ for taking leadership in the way that he has and for working with Senator GARDNER, Senator CARDIN, and me to make sure we ended up with something that I believe is going to receive warm support. These are issues he has been concerned about for a long time. He has not only been concerned about them, he has shown leadership in putting together policies to combat them. Senator GARDNER knows and said earlier that even though this is a step—we all know it is a big step, really, especially with the U.N. Security Council unwilling to take actions in light of the violations that have occurred. There is going to be a lot of diligence that will be necessary to get in what we want to get in, but this is certainly a significant step, and I thank him for his efforts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I thank the chairman. Earlier when the chairman couldn't be on the floor, I thanked him for his leadership in the committee, for creating an environment that is bipartisan. At a time in which bipartisanship in the Senate is a continuing challenge, it is particularly important in foreign relations—something that I tried to set out when I was a chairman. I appreciate the way his leadership has led the committee so that we could have moments like this and of course Senator GARDNER, who has very graciously worked together with me to bring a moment of what I hope will be an overwhelmingly, maybe unanimous vote in the Senate, because when we do that we send an incredibly strong message throughout the world. We generate leadership, where we may not see the will at the United Nations, particularly because of the Security Council's structure and the vetoes that exist on things like sanctions. Inevitably, when we have led as a country, we often get the world to join us and follow it, but sometimes it needs you to lead.

That is what I believe the Senate is doing today with an incredibly strong piece of legislation that, as I said earlier, was the most comprehensive strategy set to try to deal with the challenge that is North Korea itself. I appreciate the chairman's words and his leadership.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be allowed to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE
ENFORCEMENT BILL

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I rise to voice my opposition to an upcoming cloture vote on the conference report for the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act, commonly known as the Customs conference report. This vote is expected tomorrow.

While I am supportive of the conference report as it relates to the Customs legislation, added to the bill at the last minute is a measure known as the Internet Tax Freedom Act or ITFA for short. ITFA would put in place a moratorium to permanently prevent State and local entities from imposing existing sales and use taxes on Internet services.

In the past, I have expressed my support for ITFA as long as it was tied to the Marketplace Fairness Act, or MFA, which would allow State and local governments to collect sales and use taxes from online retailers without a physical presence within their State.

In South Dakota, this is a matter of fairness to the families who own small businesses and support our local com-

munities. They collect sales taxes on their products and on their services. Internet sales providers are not required to provide a collection service for those States for services or products that are being delivered into those States. It requires congressional action in order to allow them to accomplish this.

Pairing these plans would have been a net benefit for States, local governments, and small business owners who are already required to collect sales and use taxes on their products and services. Together they would represent sound tax policy, but that is not what we are doing with the Customs conference report by including ITFA and not including the Marketplace Fairness Act.

ITFA, enacted by itself, would put in place a moratorium to permanently promote State and local entities from imposing taxes on Internet services at the State and local level with no consideration or offset for the tax revenue lost by States or local governments that already collect many of these taxes.

I am all for cutting taxes, but I am also a strong proponent for the Tenth Amendment and local control and tax fairness for South Dakota businesses. In places like South Dakota, we are actually pretty good at balancing budgets. In fact, we are required to do it every single year. Washington has no business telling States or city commissioners how to run their books.

ITFA has zero impact on the Federal budget, but it really impacts States and local communities. I believe ITFA paired with the Marketplace Fairness Act continues to make sense. One without the other does not.

My opposition is not based on disagreement over Internet access. We need it. We should make it available. My opposition is based on the principle that we are taking away important revenue sources for State and local governments without any means for them to recoup their losses so they can continue to provide essential services to our communities.

Let me explain why sound and comprehensive tax policy is so important and why ITFA and MFA should continue to be a package deal. If the President signs a Customs conference report into law in its current form with ITFA attached to it, municipalities in my home State, South Dakota, will lose \$4.3 million in revenue annually. That is a revenue they rely on to fund essential services, such as training for firefighters and police officers, maintenance for parks, upkeep of community centers and libraries, and repairs to critical roads and bridges.

Without any way of recouping the loss, local leaders will be forced to make a tough decision to cut those important services to the community or to raise other taxes. Why is Washington making this decision?

In addition to municipalities losing out on important funds, the State of South Dakota would also lose out to the tune of \$9.3 million annually. Maybe in Washington DC we don't care about \$9.3 million, but in South Dakota they do. Well, we don't balance our budget, but every single State out there or just about every State does.

When we step back in and we tell them we are going to unilaterally take away one source of revenue, but we still expect them to provide the services, it seems to me we are moving in the wrong direction. We don't have the luxury of South Dakota punting. We are required to balance our books every year. At the State and local level, every single dollar counts.

Singled out, it is not right for the Federal Government to dictate State and local budgets, as the ITFA part of the conference reports attempts to do, to cut a State and local revenue source.

It is unfair to States like ours, which operate under tight budgets and stretch every dollar to the maximum. In fact, in South Dakota we aren't overtaxing. Our State burden is the second lowest in the Nation. We don't have an income tax. We rely on a very broad sales tax. That is the way our people have wanted to do it. That is why conventional wisdom in this body and elsewhere has always been the ITFA, which would stop taxing the cost of Internet services, would be paired with the MFA—the Marketplace Fairness Act—because MFA lets State and local governments recover the losses from ITFA.

MFA would make certain that Main Street businesses aren't at a competitive disadvantage to companies that have no physical presence, employees or investments in States such as South Dakota because right now they don't have to collect that sales tax or the use tax for products that are being delivered into the State. Brick-and-mortar businesses have that requirement.

Right now Main Street businesses are operating under a disadvantage. MFA would level the playing field. These brick-and-mortar stores are the businesses that provide good-paying jobs in South Dakota, pay local property taxes, sponsor community baseball leagues, and send their kids and grandkids to South Dakota schools and invest in the future of our State.

We have an opportunity to level the playing field for them, rather than picking winners and losers so they can continue to be successful and enrich the lives of South Dakotans. Let's let the States and local governments decide how to manage their finances.

Under MFA, South Dakota would bring in approximately \$25 million in new tax revenue, which would more than make up for the losses under ITFA. If we pass ITFA without MFA, it dramatically decreases the chance of

MFA being passed in the years to come, which is a huge blow to the mom-and-pop businesses who are struggling to compete with online vendors.

MFA passing the Senate without ITFA is unlikely dead on arrival in the House. ITFA would see a similar fate if not dumped into the Customs conference report. It would not pass the Senate alone. There is simply no evidence to suggest that either measure would pass as stand-alone legislation, but together sound tax policy would move.

That is why it is so important that ITFA not be implemented without also implementing the Marketplace Fairness Act. Together the two can make a real impact on the lives of South Dakotans and all Americans by providing permanent tax relief to South Dakota families, leveling the field of play for brick-and-mortar businesses that are contending with an increasingly competitive online marketplace and at the same time assure State and local governments can continue to provide essential services to their constituents while balancing their budgets. That is something we could learn a lot about. Because the Customs conference report includes only ITFA and fails to address MFA, I will open oppose cloture on this legislation, and I encourage my colleagues to join me.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote on legislation to significantly expand sanctions against North Korea in response to the country's dangerous provocations in recent months. This legislation has my strong support. In light of North Korea's recent actions, it is time we act decisively and call on the international community, particularly the U.N. Security Council in China, to do the same.

On January 6, North Korea conducted a nuclear test involving the underground detonation of a nuclear weapon. One month later, on February 7, they effectively conducted a long-range missile test under the guise of a satellite launch. Just yesterday in the Senate Armed Services Committee, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper testified that North Korea has expanded a uranium enrichment facility and restarted a plutonium reactor capable of providing fissile material for nuclear weapons.

Together these actions point to a dangerous trend of advancing and expanding North Korea's nuclear weapons program. While the antics of Kim Jong Un and his cronies may seem outlandish, the threat posed by North Korea should be taken seriously. Though open-source assessments cast doubt on Kim Jong Un's claim that he detonated a hydrogen bomb in January, the fact remains North Korea test-

ed a nuclear weapon that caused a magnitude 5.1 earthquake.

Though the satellite North Korea fired into space spent yesterday tumbling in orbit and it may be unusable, the fact remains that according to South Korean officials, if the rocket launched by North Korea on Sunday were successfully reconfigured as a missile, it could fly more than 7,400 miles. That is far enough to reach the shores of the United States.

Although North Korea has never tested a long-range ballistic missile capable of delivering a nuclear warhead, there can be no question that Kim Jong Un is intent on building up a nuclear arsenal capable of striking the United States.

In my role as ranking member of the Strategic Forces Subcommittee, I was in South Korea last July. I listened to the input of General Scaparrotti, the commander of U.S. Forces Korea. I heard from our servicemembers at Yongsan and Osan, and I sat with South Korea's Defense Minister to discuss our shared interests and the importance of this critical alliance. I then traveled directly to Beijing to meet with Rear Admiral Li Ji of the Chinese Ministry of National Defense. We had a frank and meaningful conversation about these topics. Despite our many differences, it is not in the interest of either the United States or China to have a nuclear-armed North Korea destabilizing Asia and destabilizing the globe with irresponsible rhetoric and dangerous actions.

It is my sincere hope that the U.N. Security Council and our international partners will follow our lead to expand international sanctions against North Korea, applying the lessons we learned in blocking Iran's nuclear program. In the meantime, we must continue to enhance our missile defense systems both at home and abroad.

I look forward to working with Senator SESSIONS to continue our bipartisan work on the Armed Services Committee, to provide necessary resources to the Missile Defense Agency, and to fulfill our commitment to key allies. We must continue to advance MDA's efforts to deploy additional sensors and to improve the reliability and effectiveness of ground-based interceptors.

This has the potential to be a pivotal moment for the international effort to counter North Korea's nuclear program, but the United States must lead the way. Strategic patience has worn thin, and it is time to act, by expanding tough sanctions, by strengthening our missile defense programs, and by calling on the international community—and especially China—to act responsibly and decisively in the face of the threat Kim Jong Un poses to global security.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, the pending legislation to enact tougher sanctions on North Korea is a welcome development as Congress once again begins to assert its role in defending national security and curtailing the growing number of nuclear weapons around the globe.

In the decade since North Korea's first successful nuclear test, the threat of nuclear proliferation has not diminished. The United States concluded an agreement with Iran that leaves its nuclear infrastructure in place, causing others in the region to declare their own interest in obtaining nuclear weapons.

Pakistan's nuclear arsenal is the fastest growing in the world, and it continues to destabilize the region through its ties to terrorist organizations. North Korea continues to build its nuclear stockpile and its ability to deliver future weapons.

In all three of these circumstances, Congress has been the source of pressure on these nations by enacting tougher sanctions on Iran, placing a hold on security funding for Pakistan, and now this legislation today builds on those previous efforts. The results may vary, but as I see it, my colleagues in this Chamber and in the House have been much more proactive than the administration in imposing costs for failing to adhere to international norms.

President Obama's approach of strategic patience has failed to accomplish the objective of bringing North Korea back to the negotiating table, and there is certainly no agreement by them to dismantle their nuclear arsenal and their nuclear program. North Korea has tested three nuclear weapons on the President's watch, and some experts believe its stockpile could grow to 100 weapons by 2020—from 10 to 15 weapons today. In addition to nuclear weapons, the regime is believed to possess chemical and biological weapons.

North Korea is advancing in missile technology and has engaged in cyber attacks against South Korea, Japan, and American entities. North Korean missiles might not yet be able to reach the continental United States, but American servicemembers stationed in South Korea and Japan and tens of millions of innocent lives are menaced by the threat of weapons of mass destruction in the possession of an aggressive regime with little regard for what the world thinks of it.

The Arms Control Association notes: "North Korea has been a key supplier of missiles and missile technology to countries in the developing world, particularly in politically unstable regions such as the Middle East and South Asia." The recipients of such expertise are said to be Pakistan and Iran, among others. In fact, American intelligence judged the Syrian nuclear reactor destroyed by the Israeli Air

Force in 2007 to have been constructed with North Korean assistance.

Equally worthy of attention is the brutal treatment by Kim Jong Un's regime of its own people. Just 2 years ago, the U.N. Human Rights Council published a report concluding that "the gravity, scale, and nature of these violations reveal a State that does not have any parallel in the contemporary world."

It would be disingenuous to stand here and place all the blame on the President or the administration. North Korea is one of the most difficult nations in the world to understand and regional complexities make it difficult to find a solution.

North Korea took advantage of lapses in American resolve during both the Clinton and Bush administrations by conducting its first nuclear test in 2006. Nevertheless, it is obvious to me that a change in approach is necessary. "Strategic patience" has been exhausted. Stronger measures are necessary. While the ideal approach is to work in concert with the U.N. Security Council, we cannot afford to wait for consensus on punitive measures from the U.N. that may never come.

The legislation that the Senate will pass today in a strong, bipartisan fashion seeks to compel Kim Jong Un to return to negotiations. My colleagues have written legislation that ensures sanctions are mandatory—to be waived only on a case-by-case basis that requires a written explanation justifying the waiver.

The secondary sanctions will penalize those outside of North Korea who assist in the regime's nefarious behavior. Without China's support in restricting North Korea's ambition, America and the world face an uphill battle. Up to this point, China has believed that an unstable North Korea is more dangerous than a North Korea with an advanced nuclear program; therefore, the enforcement of secondary sanctions is a necessary step to seek cooperation in dismantling their nuclear program.

I am pleased that the bill includes language to deter and punish cyber attacks by codifying sanctions as well as requiring the President to offer a counterstrategy to North Korea's cyber capabilities. The ongoing cyber activities are damaging to our security and our economy as well as the economy and security of our friends. The bill also attempts to address the deplorable treatment of the North Korean people by their own government.

This legislation is certainly not without risk. China may retaliate in some manner, North Korea may become even more bellicose, and it could very well fail to pressure Kim's regime to surrender its nuclear program. Yet it is painfully clear that the status quo is not working and that global security is imperiled as our government stands by.

Fear of risk and failure will not stop us from exhausting all peaceful options

to curb nuclear proliferation. Every effort must be made to convince North Korea to surrender its nuclear weapons. Congress is once again doing its part in the fight against proliferation.

Chairman CORKER, Senator GARDNER, and the members of the Foreign Relations Committee ought to be commended for their leadership on this issue, and I look forward to joining them in passing legislation later today that will put teeth to American diplomacy.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I rise in support of the pending legislation to sanction the regime of North Korea for its belligerent behavior toward the United States and its neighbors. Today the Senate takes up a bill to increase sanctions on North Korea.

Most Americans would be surprised, I think, to learn it is still possible to increase and strengthen sanctions on North Korea. In fact, while we have had certain sanctions on North Korea in place for many years, these sanctions have never been as strong as they could be and should be, and that is why we are here today.

We are now dealing with a third generation of dictators in Kim Jong Un, who is proving to be as disastrous as his infamous father and grandfather, Kim Il-sung, the founder of the Kim regime. The Kim family has done whatever it thought necessary to stay in power, including use of criminal enterprise to raise revenues and engage in systematic human rights abuses against its own people.

The legislation before us today requires the President to sanction anyone contributing to North Korea's weapons program, money laundering activities, and human rights abuses. It also requires sanctions on anyone helping North Korea raise hard currency through the sale of minerals and precious metals.

Additionally, the bill requires sanctions on anyone engaging in activities that would threaten cyber security. Perhaps most importantly, the legislation urges the administration to designate North Korea as a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern—a step that would block links between North Korea and the U.S. banking system. This is a very powerful sanction. If someone is doing business with the Kim regime, they should not be doing business with the United States banking system.

We need to pass this bill and push the administration to leverage the power

of the Treasury Department to cut North Korea from the international banking system. As I have said, this is a very strong and powerful sanction. It needs to be put in place and then fully enforced by the administration.

The imposition of sanctions, however, cannot be the end of our North Korea policy. As we have seen over the past few months, the Kim regime is intent upon disrupting the East Asian security environment, threatening both the United States and our allies with ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons.

Sanctions can work, but they must be enforced and they will take time. In addition, we need to augment these sanctions with other steps to limit the North Korean threat.

First, we should accelerate efforts to develop missile defenses both in East Asia and in the United States. Sanctions can curtail progress in North Korea's nuclear and missile programs; however, we must deal with the capabilities North Korea already has. We must ensure we are prepared for any further advancements North Korea might make before the sanctions take hold.

Second, we need to ensure that we have a credible and reliable nuclear force available to deter North Korea and reassure our South Korean and Japanese allies. In 2014, and again earlier this year, a nuclear-capable B-52 flew over the Korean Peninsula to perform this vital deterrence and assurance mission. But to maintain strategic credibility, we must modernize our bomber fleet and our nuclear cruise missiles.

To bring the Nation's bombers up to date, the Air Force is embarking on plans to develop a new Long Range Strike Bomber capable of penetrating advanced enemy air defenses. North Korea's increasingly provocative behavior underscores our need for a bomber that can fly over any North Korean target. Now is the time to get to work on the Long Range Strike Bomber program.

Similarly, we need to upgrade the nuclear cruise missile carried on the B-52 bomber. Cruise missiles fired from a distance allow us the option of threatening North Korean targets without flying over North Korean airspace. This standoff capability is tremendously important, but the existing nuclear cruise missile is based on 1970's technology and is well beyond its intended service life. We need to ensure that the Air Force has the resources necessary to develop a new cruise missile that can defeat modern air defense systems for decades to come.

We also need to ensure that the National Nuclear Security Administration has the resources it needs to refurbish the warhead that flies on the cruise missile. Letting our bomber and cruise missile capabilities become obsolete would send a disastrous signal to

the Kim regime that its nuclear program has yielded strategic benefits. On the other hand, modernizing our forces shows Mr. Kim that he will never get a nuclear upper hand in East Asia.

The bottom line is that we need a holistic approach to North Korea. We need the sanctions that we are considering here today in the Senate. We need a strong, strategic deterrent, as I have described.

I urge my colleagues to support the sanctions in front of us to put pressure on North Korea financially. This needs to be a comprehensive, ongoing, sustained effort. We have to stand strong against our adversaries and stand strong with our allies, we have to do it consistently, we have to do it over time, and we have to be steadfast. That is the type of foreign policy that can be effective. That is the kind of foreign policy we need to undertake. That is what we are trying to accomplish with this legislation.

I commend the sponsors of this legislation who are here on the floor today.

I further hope that my colleagues will support not only this legislation but critical investments in our nuclear bombers and cruise missile forces when we consider the annual Defense bills later this year. I am very familiar with these systems as the B-52s are based on Minot Air Force Base in my State. They provide a tremendous deterrent and a very important part of the nuclear triad, but we have to continue to invest in that nuclear triad—in the bombers, in the ICBM missiles, and in our submarine fleet.

I believe that both sanctions and a strong military are critical to our national security and that of our allies, as well as maintaining stability in this potentially volatile part of the world. As we have said before, the United States is the world's best hope for freedom, for peace, and for security.

Thank you, Mr. President.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, we have heard from a number of colleagues who have come to the floor in support of the legislation before us today, the North Korea sanctions legislation. Members of both sides of the aisle recognize the need to address the forgotten maniac in North Korea.

We have also heard Members speak about a number of firsts that this legislation contemplates—the first time that this would put in place mandatory cyber sanctions for cyber attacks. This

is something that applies, yes, to North Korea today but in the future could apply to any nation that wishes to use its means to attack the United States or our businesses. So it is critically important, that piece of legislation that we are going to pass today that can have a lasting impact on the security of this country.

We have also heard from a number of Members who have spoken about their concern with China. This legislation is not targeted at China; this legislation is targeted at North Korea. We have talked about how it is not targeted at the North Korean people but at the regime of Kim Jong Un. The legislation does everything we can to try to give the people of North Korea a better way of life; to try to find ways to communicate, to break down the silence they are faced with in this economic deprivation zone; to give them tools, perhaps radios and cell phone technology so they can find out what is happening beyond the confines of the torturous regime. But it does have an impact on those who try to get around the sanctions and the prohibited activities of the legislation—in fact, some of the strongest language in the legislation, whether exporting to or from North Korea, whether exporting to or importing from North Korea goods, raw metals, precious materials that can be funneled—the money from that funneled to weapons of mass destruction and other activities prohibited by the legislation. So when North Korea is exporting gold or coal—and we know that gold and coal are chiefly responsible for the North Korean foreign currency reserves—then that could be designated as a sanctioned entity under the legislation. Perhaps those entities are in China.

The fact is, we need cooperation with China. We need cooperation with Japan and South Korea. We had that so strongly, and there is a possibility we won't. We have an opportunity for trilateral alliance—that is cooperation between the three nations—and that will allow us to work together, to share intelligence, to share the cooperative efforts and exercises when it comes to North Korea, and to work with China to help make sure that it is sticking by what it says it wants to do, which is to denuclearize the North Korean regime peacefully. I think it is key to our cooperation with China as we work on any number of issues, whether it is trade issues, whether it is issues dealing with the Internet, whether it is issues dealing with the South China Sea.

Those are things that we continue to work with China on and are working to resolve, but we also have to make sure part of that conversation is North Korea. China controls a tremendous number of levers and power in North Korea. Ninety percent of their economic activities in North Korea can

find their way to some way of subsistence with China, to create a reliance on China, an economic reliance that they have right now.

So this legislation will target those who are doing too much to empower the Kim Jong Un regime and to give them the money they have used to develop missiles and to develop weapons of mass destruction.

Just to give an example of some of the commodity trade that we have seen, trade commodity sanctions in this bill would address the issue of rare earth minerals and coal and steel and other goods that are exported to other countries to earn foreign currencies for the North Korea regime. To give people an idea of how much money that is, expert estimates put rare earth minerals and steel exports at around \$1.8 billion and \$245 million respectively. That is a lot of money that the regime is currently getting from outside in trading these goods. But if that \$1.8 billion and that \$245 million goes back to build weapons of mass destruction, this act will begin sanctions. The President is required to, unless the issue is a very narrow, case-by-case national security issue. There is a mandatory investigation into those activities. So I think this is a strong step that is receiving tremendous bipartisan support.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, we have been discussing some of the opportunities to strengthen the alliance between Japan and South Korea and the United States. In the legislation before us today is language that addresses the trilateral cooperation between the United States, South Korea, and Japan; that we would seek to strengthen a high level of trilateral mechanisms for discussion and coordination of our policies toward North Korea; that we would work between the Government of the United States, the Government of South Korea, and the Government of Japan to meet these goals to ensure that the mechanisms North Korea is using when it comes to nuclear, ballistic, and conventional weapons programs are addressed by the three nations; that we address together in this trilateral alliance the human rights record, the atrocities of North Korea, and cyber security threats posed by North Korea.

It also talks about in the legislation before us that the United States, Korea, and Japan will meet on a regular basis. The legislation encourages

that the United States and the trilateral alliance meet together, including the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the intelligence community, and representatives of counterpart agencies in South Korea and Japan, so that we can continue to focus our efforts on the trilateral alliance.

If you look at the conversations taking place today, we have heard our colleague from Hawaii, Senator SCHATZ, talk about the need for cooperation when it comes to THAAD. We talked about the concern that our allies, neighbors of North Korea, have when it comes to their air defense systems and how they are going to protect themselves from a possible missile strike from North Korea. Those conversations are continuing. We talked about continued and extraordinary cooperation opportunities we have in sharing intelligence among the three nations.

It all comes on the heels of what has been over the past year—last year, in particular, with the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II—some recognition of the historical complexity in the relationship between Japan and South Korea. Late last year and early this year we saw an agreement entered into by Japan and South Korea to address some of those historical complexities. That agreement was a new step forward in cooperation, in terms of working through these complexities.

That activity was followed shortly thereafter by North Korea's fourth nuclear test. What a great statement it was for Japan and South Korea to begin finding solutions to these historical complexities at a time that perhaps is needed now more than ever because of the challenges that their neighbor in the north poses to them.

While we work together to find ways to protect our allies and to assure them that our alliance and our commitment remains stronger than ever, we have to make sure we are continuing to focus on our trilateral alliance and on the efforts we have there.

I know the Senator from Minnesota is on the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, today I join my colleagues in support of the North Korean Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act. I commend Senator GARDNER for his leadership, as well as Senator MENENDEZ, Chairman CORKER, and Ranking Member CARDIN for their leadership on this legislation, because protecting the American people and others in the region from national security threats like North Korea should, in fact, be our top priority.

The reason there is overwhelming bipartisan support for strong sanctions legislation against North Korea is because there is absolutely no doubt that

North Korea is a well-established threat in the region. North Korea threatens global peace and security. Experts at the United States-Korea Institute estimate that North Korea has 20 to 100 nuclear weapons. Since 2006, North Korea has tested four nuclear bombs.

Last month North Korea claims to have tested a hydrogen bomb. While our analysts in the United States are skeptical that it was in fact a hydrogen bomb, it was a nuclear bomb all the same. With each test, North Korea gets closer to testing a nuclear bomb small enough to fit on a long-range missile—the very same kind of missile that North Korea used over the weekend to launch a satellite into outer space. That missile has a range of 5,600 miles. That means that Alaska, California, and the rest of the west coast of the United States is actually within range of a North Korean bomb. Our European allies and Australia are also within range of a North Korean bomb. And, of course, Japan and South Korea—two of our key allies in East Asia—are closest to the danger North Korea poses. It is in our national security interests to protect these vital allies.

It is not just North Korea's nuclear threat that we need to be concerned about. North Korea funds its weapons regime through human trafficking—something I care deeply about—through the production of illegal drugs and selling counterfeit U.S. currency. North Korea is also one of the largest suppliers of the arms trade and has become the bargain-basement emporium for old Soviet weapons systems. North Korea has a pattern of shipping these illegal weapons on to terrorists in the Middle East.

North Korea also threatens our cyber security. North Korea's cyber attack on the Sony Corporation of America in 2014, which leaked private communications and destroyed the company's data systems, cost Sony, an American company, more than \$35 million. Why this company? Because the company produced a movie that mocked North Korea's leadership.

Last summer North Korea pledged to follow up on its attack on Sony with more cyber attacks, promising to “wage a cyber war against the U.S. to hasten its ruin.”

America is not the only target for North Korea's cyber attacks. In 2013, North Korea launched a cyber attack on three major South Korean banks, and two of South Korea's largest broadcasters were temporarily shut down after a cyber attack. This cost South Korea an estimated \$720 million. This is real money and real jobs in our own country and in the countries of our allies.

We must take strong action to curb North Korea's nuclear program and to address the other threats that it poses to us and our allies. Weak sanctions

against North Korea have proven unsuccessful. The legislation before us today represents the tough response that is necessary to send this message directly to North Korean leaders: Disarm or face severe economic sanctions.

This bill puts pressure on North Korea in three important ways. First, it requires the President to investigate those that help North Korea import goods used to make weapons of mass destruction. All people and businesses involved in helping North Korea obtain illicit weapons would be banned from doing business with the United States and would have their assets and financial operations immediately frozen and their travel restricted.

As we work with our allies to track down and bring to justice those who assist North Korea in its effort to harm the United States and our allies, we must also hit them financially. This bill will help to cut off North Korea's funding and further financially isolate them.

Second, this bill sanctions those who attack U.S. cyber security. This bill is the first piece of legislation to lay out a framework for sanctions against the North Korean cyber threat. Combating cyber terrorism is a key national security priority. We must be proactive about rooting out those who enable cyber attacks.

Lastly, this bill addresses a serious human rights crisis in North Korea. North Korea is the most isolated economy and society in the world. The current regime exerts total control over daily life. Even haircuts are controlled—that is right. Women are allowed to pick from 1 of 14 hairstyles, and men cannot grow their hair longer than 2 inches. Thirty-two percent of people in North Korea are undernourished, and 34 percent of the population receives food aid.

As a Member who has worked extensively to fight modern-day slavery, I am particularly disturbed by the fact that North Korea is also among the world's worst human traffickers. The State Department's annual report on human trafficking consistently rates North Korea as one of the worst human traffickers. The United Nations considers human trafficking to be one of the three largest criminal enterprises in the world. The first two are illegal drugs and illegal guns.

Last year I was proud to be the lead Democratic cosponsor of legislation with Senator JOHN CORNYN to fight trafficking and help trafficking victims that was signed into law by President Obama last May. The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act tackles trafficking head-on. We are doing work in our own country, but we also need to be a beacon for those victims abroad.

Sex and labor traffickers treat North Korean men and women like commodities. Yemoni Park, a North Korean woman who escaped after being sold

into the sex trade and raped at the age of 13, has dedicated her life to shining a light on what she calls “the darkest place on Earth”—North Korea.

This bill calls for harsh sanctions against human rights violators. It calls for mandatory investigations into those who bankroll North Korean labor prisons and sex trafficking rings. But it also acknowledges the important work of human rights organizations that provide assistance to those suffering in North Korea and allows them to continue their lifesaving work.

China fuels much of the demand for North Korea's human trafficking, and they help fund the North Korean regime. Beyond enacting swift and severe sanctions against those associated with North Korea's weapons suppliers, hackers, and human rights violators, we must pressure China to get serious about sanctioning the North Korean regime. Unless we have China's help, the regime will not truly feel the repercussions of its actions.

We have come together today across party lines in a bipartisan effort to address the growing threat that North Korea poses to the United States and our allies. We are united in our belief that our national security—and the security of our allies—requires a swift and strong response to North Korea and those who fund its tyrants. We are also united in our belief that we must vigorously investigate and sanction those who in any way help North Korea develop weapons of mass destruction and those who seek to undermine cyber security.

We must do everything in our power to help improve the lives of innocent North Koreans. That is why I am supporting this bill, and I thank my colleagues for their leadership—Senator MENENDEZ, Senator GARDNER, Senator CARDIN, and Senator CORKER.

AMBASSADOR NOMINATIONS

Madam President, I wanted to add one more thing. As I try to do every day with Senator SHAHEEN, I address the issue of the Ambassadors to Norway and Sweden. It has been 864 days since we have had an Ambassador to Norway. It has been 468 days since the President nominated Azita Raji to be Ambassador to Sweden.

I appreciate Senator CORKER's leadership on this issue. We are working very hard to get these two Ambassadors confirmed. These countries are the 11th and 12th biggest investors in the United States. Senator CRUZ is the one holding up the vote on these nominations. We are hopeful that at some point we will be able to move ahead. This has been going on way too long.

They are some of our best allies in the fight against Russian aggression. Norway actually shares a border with Russia. We have to be by their side if they take in thousands and thousands of refugees. We have talked about the need for a strong Europe. These are the

two major countries in Europe that don't have Ambassadors from the United States. That must change.

Again, I thank Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN for their leadership.

Thank you, Madam President, and I yield the floor.

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, I think Senator CAPITO is next to speak, but I do want to just mention that I appreciate the way that Senator KLOBUCHAR has worked on the issue of the Ambassadors to Norway and Sweden, and I do think we are on the cusp in the next 24 hours of that being resolved. I thank Senator KLOBUCHAR for her diligence and patience, and with that I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Thank you, Madam President.

I rise today in strong support of the North Korean Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act. I commend Senators CORKER, GARDNER, MENENDEZ, and CARDIN for their hard work on this bill, and I am proud to be a cosponsor.

North Korea poses a serious threat to the United States. Last month, the North Koreans tested a nuclear device as they continue to advance their weapons technology. Just this weekend the North Koreans launched a satellite as they work to build a ballistic missile program.

Cyber attacks launched by North Korea have crippled businesses such as Sony Pictures and targeted our allies in South Korea and Japan. The threats posed by North Korea will only continue to grow, and our current policy toward North Korea has failed to protect the safety and security of the American people.

This legislation takes significant steps to deny North Korea's capabilities and to limit the nuclear and ballistic missile programs, to stop cyber security attacks, and to end North Korea's horrendous human rights violations. Mandatory investigations and mandatory sanctions are the hallmark of this legislation. Under this bill, the administration is required to investigate the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, human rights abuses, and cyber crimes. When investigations reveal misconduct related to these activities, sanctions are required.

Importantly, this bill will target minerals and other items that the North Korean regime uses to finance its weapons programs at the expense of its own people. Sanctions under this bill would also apply to businesses or individuals around the world that help North Korea expand its nuclear weapons and cyber crime capabilities.

Similar legislation imposing sanctions targeted towards North Korea passed in the House last month with a nearly unanimous vote. That is quite an achievement. Today I hope this bill will pass by a similar margin and show

that the Senate is united in our resolve against the security threats posed by North Korea.

CLEAN POWER PLAN

Madam President, on another important note, last night the U.S. Supreme Court put the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan on hold. This landmark decision will prevent the Obama administration from enforcing this rule until all legal challenges are complete.

West Virginia, my State, has lost nearly 10,000 coal mining jobs since 2009. Nearly every week, hundreds of layoffs and more notices devastate West Virginia's coalfields, West Virginia families, and communities. The impact on State and local budgets has been stark. School boards have announced significant cuts to education due to the loss of coal severance tax revenue. This is all across the State. As bad as the current economic situation is, the Clean Power Plan would make things worse for families and communities in my State.

We know the EPA's playbook. Earlier this year, the Supreme Court struck down EPA's mercury rule targeting powerplants since the Agency failed to follow the legal requirements, but because the mercury rule went into effect years before legal challenges were complete, billions of dollars had already been invested and many jobs had already been lost.

My ARENA Act has recognized that the 29 States and hundreds of other organizations challenging the President's power grab deserve meaningful judicial review. My legislation said this rule could not go into effect until the litigation is complete—such common sense. I am very pleased the Supreme Court has agreed with this commonsense position and recognized the immediate impact of this rule.

I also want to extend my appreciation to West Virginia's attorney general, Patrick Morrisey, for his leading role in this case. On behalf of our State, he has headed the legal challenge against this administration, and last night's decision is just the latest legal setback for an out-of-control EPA.

Congress has passed legislation disapproving of the Clean Power Plan. We sent it to the President and he vetoed it. A majority of our States are still challenging this rule, and the judicial branch now seems poised to play its role in protecting both the separation of powers and the principles of federalism from the administration's power grab.

Increasingly, this lameduck President stands alone as he attempts to further his climate agenda. The American people are not behind him. A majority of Congress has come out against his efforts, and now the Supreme Court has raised concerns.

This is an important step toward having the American people—not an

unchecked bureaucracy—set our energy agenda, and we must continue to fight to permanently block this rule.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I also rise to support the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016. It is good to see on the floor colleagues who have worked on this important legislation from Maryland, New Jersey, our committee chair, and the Senator from Colorado. I appreciate their efforts and believe this can be a great example of bipartisanship and near-unanimous agreement.

We have witnessed recently many provocations by the North Koreans. The ballistic missile test this past weekend violates numerous U.N. Security Council resolutions and it threatens both the United States and especially our allies in the region. This closely follows a nuclear test in January—another deplorable action by North Korea—and missile nuclear weapons program proliferation concerns that have been the subject of a lot of discussion in this body.

I appreciate the drafters and the Foreign Relations Committee for moving swiftly to deliver a response that includes penalties for the missile launch and the nuclear test.

I will also mention that North Korea's detention of American citizens can't be overlooked. This includes the recent detainment in North Korea of Otto Frederick Warmbier, who is a third-year college student at the University of Virginia. As we move forward with our strategy on North Korea, we have to prioritize and ensure the safe return of our citizens who are detained there.

A little bit about how destabilizing North Korea's actions are. This recent test was expected, and it is proof of the North Korean grim determination to develop nuclear weapons, even if it is hampering and hobbling their economy and causing their citizens to suffer. They have been given warnings that they shouldn't do it, but they have also been giving warnings to the global community that they would.

This is a country that is determined to defy a host of U.N. Security Council resolutions that ban it from conducting nuclear and missile tests. The international community has been speaking with clarity about what the line is: Don't do this—but North Korea has chosen to proceed.

Kim Jong Un has once again displayed a willingness to defy the international community—and at such a cost to his people. The economy there is absolutely hobbled because of his desire to be a militaristic leader, but the result is the population of his country is suffering. His strategy to have nuclear, military, and economic development for his people is not going to

work because he can't have both, and the legislation demonstrates that these things are impossible by imposing a significant economic cost. The legislation shows that the United States will hold countries and private entities accountable for compliance with rules and law.

Kim Jong Un's backward calculus has left his country impoverished and almost entirely dependent on China for economic trade. Roughly 90 percent of North Korea's foreign trade is with China, which is why China can have significant leverage over North Korea, but the track record of China using its leverage to curb North Korean activity is very disappointing. We need to continue to pressure China to increase sanctions on North Korea and elevate this issue in bilateral discussions with China. The number of North Korean nuclear weapons could soon approach China's within the next decade, and that is a direct threat to regional security and global security.

Yesterday, in the Armed Services Committee hearing we attended, DNI James Clapper stated that North Korea is expanding its uranium enrichment activities, it has restarted plutonium production, and it could start extracting plutonium from spent fuel within a matter of months.

China can no longer turn a blind eye to this. As a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, China needs to help foster international peace and play the role that an international power on the U.N. Security Council needs to play. They need to play the role in additionally advancing or pushing for more human rights in North Korea because they have the leverage to do so. We don't trade with North Korea. Our leverage system is somewhat limited, but China, with a 90-percent trade share, has that leverage.

The good thing about these sanctions is that they will sanction the activities of Chinese companies and entities that are trading with North Korea, and that secondary sanction effect, I think, has the ability to work and put pressure on them.

We have seen recently how sanctions can work in another context, in the Iran context. The architects of the sanctions policy with Iran are in this room, and they deserve praise because there is no way Iran, a rogue nation that was moving forward to develop nuclear weapons, would have ever entertained a diplomatic discussion to try to put limits on that program had it not been for sanctions that were designed to have a strategic and careful effect. So we need to do the same thing here, and these sanctions do that.

In conclusion, the United States has to undertake a more proactive approach to North Korea to address the nuclear and ballistic missile programs. This legislation is good because it not only puts Congress even more firmly

on the record in opposition to North Korea's activity, but it also provides the executive branch a more robust set of policy tools to confront the threat that is posed by Pyongyang.

This is an example of legislation that came out of the committee—bipartisan and unanimous. It represents the best of bipartisan foreign policy cooperation, and I am strongly in support of the bill.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I first thank Senator KAINE for his input in this legislation and so much other legislation that goes through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He is an extremely valuable member of our committee, a very good thinker, but more importantly he listens to others in the committee and finds a common way that we can make important national foreign policy issues bipartisan. He has done that and did that with the Iran review act in reaching a way that we could bring that together in a bipartisan manner. He was very helpful on the North Korean sanction bill that we have on the floor, so I thank Senator KAINE for his contributions.

I say to Senator CORKER, I know we are getting near the end of this debate. I have been listening to this debate throughout the day, and I think it points out the best traditions of the U.S. Senate. So many Members have come to the floor in serious debate about the national security challenge that North Korea presents—not just, as I said, to the Korean Peninsula, not just to our allies in East Asia but globally—and how U.S. leadership is going to be vitally important and we are going to act.

The United States is going to act. The Senate tonight is going to pass a very strong sanctions bill, a very strong message bill that we do not intend to sit back and let North Korea proliferate their weapons of mass destruction. We also don't plan to sit back and let them commit gross violations of human rights. We will not sit back and allow them to attack our intellectual property through cyber security attacks, and we are going to act as one, united. We are going to act, Democrats and Republicans, House and Senate. We are going to work with the administration. We are going to get this done. Then, yes, we are going to go to the international community. We are going to put pressure on other countries.

We know the Republic of Korea is with us. We know Japan is with us. China needs to be with us, and we are going to go and talk to China, explain and work with them so we can get international pressure to isolate the North Korean regime until they change their course. It is critically important

to our security but also to the people of North Korea. I thought this debate has been in the best tradition of the U.S. Senate.

Again, we had the architects, as Senator Kaine pointed out, drafting this bill. Senator CORKER's leadership clearly set the climate in our committee so we could have that type of debate. I am sorry no one here could sit in on some of Senator CORKER and Senator MENENDEZ's meetings as they were negotiating the specific terms of the bill. Each had their views, but they listened to each other. They recognized that by listening to each other they could come out at the end of the day with a stronger bill. As a result of our two colleagues, we were able to reach that common ground and I think very shortly we are going to be able to show the people of in country the best traditions of the U.S. Senate on foreign policy issues.

I am very proud to work with Senator CORKER and my colleagues on this bill.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, obviously I appreciate the comments of the distinguished ranking member. Our former chairman, Senator MENENDEZ, is here; Senator GARDNER, the two of them. We are way ahead in the Senate in many ways in addressing this issue prior to these last provocations by North Korea. I thank them for that.

Again, as Senator Kaine mentioned, we are doing it in the best fashion of the United States. Where there are differences, we worked together to hammer those out and ended up, as Senator CARDIN just mentioned, with a stronger piece of legislation.

I also commend the House. They sent over a very good bill. They really did. It was strong. Senator GARDNER and Senator MENENDEZ, with all of us working together, were able to broaden it out and to deal with some other issues that were not dealt with in that piece of legislation.

The fact is, things have occurred since that legislation passed that have caused people to want to put in place a much stronger, much bolder footprint as it relates to North Korea.

What is amazing—and I appreciated your comments about Senator Kaine. I don't think we have a more thoughtful or more principled member on our committee, and I don't think there is any way the Iran review act would have occurred without him taking the steps that he did to break the logjam at that time. Let's face it, with some important constituents it mattered, and it allowed us to move ahead with it—obviously, Senator MENENDEZ on the front end and Senator CARDIN as the new ranking member.

What is amazing in many ways is that North Korea has gotten this far

along. I mean, it has been through multiple administrations, differing parties. Over the last 20 years, they have just continued to move along. While I think our Nation did a very good job in focusing on the problems that Iran was creating, and Senator MENENDEZ, who is sitting beside me, certainly led in putting sanctions in place with Senator KIRK and others. We moved swiftly to arrest that. Hopefully, while we had disagreements over the content of the actual agreement—and that is represented by differences in votes on the agreement itself—it did bring them to the table. What is amazing is that again they have progressed so far along, way beyond where Iran is.

What is also amazing to me is that China—I am going to be having those conversations this weekend with our counterparts in Munich regarding this very issue. What is amazing to me is you have right on their border this country which is definitely, you have to say, a rogue country that is creating provocations in the region.

We have all visited the DMZ and have seen that we have 28,500 troops who are there to keep peace. They have been there since 1953. So we are right there in the region. We have allies. Again, it is amazing that it has gone this far; that China has not been willing to take the steps; that, as Senator Kaine mentioned, their 90 percent trade partner could easily cause this to go in a different direction. But even more importantly, here we are taking action that I hope will lead to other members of the international community joining us in sanctions. But China—the very entity that could do something about this—is blocking the U.N. Security Council's action toward this being done on a multilateral basis on the front end.

But this is what happens. In the past, the Senate has taken unilateral action. We know we are much better off with multilateral sanctions. A lot of times it starts this way. It started this way with Iran, and over time we were able to build worldwide support—or mostly worldwide support—toward isolating them and causing them to come to the table.

Again, this country is much further along. Hopefully we will have the same success. But we have to realize, because of the 20 years of efforts that they have underway and especially the bold steps they have taken since 2003, as Senator GARDNER so aptly outlined in an earlier discussion, we are going to have to do far more than this. We need to put this in place, but we also have to remain diligent and keep moving ahead. It may take additional actions down the road. It is certainly going to take tremendous oversight and involvement by the administration, and the administration to follow, and the administration after them. This is a great step, though, for the

Senate. It is a great step for our country.

Again, I thank our House colleagues. My guess is that we will send this bill back over this evening at about 5:45, some changes may be made, and it will go to the President. We will have spoken with one voice in the best way the Senate speaks, and in a strong way. We will be doing something that furthers the safety and security of our own citizens, which is what we are here about.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, as we are winding down this debate that has been extraordinary not only because of its unanimity, which I think is incredibly important when we are facing a challenge in the national security interests of the United States, but also because of the tone it set and the seriousness of the issue with which Members on both sides have taken to it—that is incredibly important. I know my colleagues—the distinguished chairman and the distinguished ranking member—have spoken to this, but it is important to note that when the Senate on a bipartisan basis perceives a real threat to the potential national security of the United States and of significant allies, it can come together and send not just a powerful message but a powerful strategy to try to deal with that challenge. So I salute all of my colleagues for having engaged in this debate, and I thank the leadership of the committee, as well as Senator GARDNER, for working with me.

When I introduced this legislation last year, I felt that the time for strategic patience—which had been a hallmark of our policy—had run its course. We had hoped that patience would have had a unique regime in North Korea moving in a different direction. But it came to a point where multiple tests of nuclear explosions, each increasing in the size of its effectiveness; the attempts to miniaturize those efforts; the missile launches they were going through; the terrible labor camps and other human rights violations inside of North Korea and what is happening to the North Korean people—that strategic patience in and of itself was not getting us to the goal. If anything, while we were being patient, the North Koreans continued to move in a direction for which we needed what I think is a strategic resolve. And that is what we have come to here today—a bipartisan effort to have a strategic resolve to not only focus on North Korea but also the secondary sanctions to say: Those who want to deal with North Korea and to help North Korea achieve its goals in violation of international norms will have a consequence.

Right now we have all been focused on North Korea as a government, as an entity, but this legislation now broadens that to say to those who want to

help the North Koreans provide the material wherewithal for their nuclear missile and other programs that there is a consequence to you. I believe that is an appropriate use of sanctions. So I want to close on this question of sanctions.

For 24 years between the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the last 10 in the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, I have viewed U.S. foreign policy in that peaceful diplomacy has an arsenal. That arsenal is in part how one can direct international opinion to a country that is violating international norms, to the extent that country can really be affected by international opinion. North Korea is an example of a country that is difficult to affect by international opinion. There is the use of aid and the use of trade as inducements to a country to act in a certain way and join the international community and follow the norms and international will and then the denial of aid or trade and other sanctions as a way to get them to move away from the direction in which they are violating international norms.

Outside of that universe—international opinion, use of aid, use of trade, denial of aid, denial of trade, and sanctions, particularly that we have begun to perfect in the financial sector—which can be a very powerful tool. It shouldn't be used bluntly but nonetheless is an important tool in an arsenal of peaceful diplomacy in the world.

Looking aside from the military universe of what is available to us, which should be our last resort, when we are talking about peaceful diplomacy, there are moments in which sanctions are the last use of our peaceful diplomacy and a way to get countries to move in the direction we want. This moment, which I think is about strategic resolve, does exactly that. It uses sanctions not just against the regime in North Korea but against those who would give it the wherewithal to follow its illicit pursuits. I think that is what is incredibly powerful about this legislation and the appropriate use of our arsenal of peaceful diplomacy in the hopes that we can deter the North Koreans from where they are and move in a different direction and in the hope that we can get other countries in the world—and it will have to be more than hope; it will have to be a strategic resolve to get those other countries to join us, as we did in the case of Iran. We did not start with the world wanting to come together with us because of their economic interests and other strategic interests. Through American leadership, we ultimately drove the moment in which we had a multilateral international effort that brought the Iranians to the negotiating table.

It is my hope that what happens here in the Senate today begins a process that can proselytize others in the world to join us so that the nuclear

nightmare that is potentially North Korea never ever materializes.

With that, I hope we have an overwhelming unanimous vote on this legislation. I again thank the leadership for working with us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, as I listen to my colleagues, I think we know how proud we are to serve with people who have such deep knowledge and strategic views on how we as a nation can better defend ourselves and lead the world.

To Senator MENENDEZ's comments about America's strength, yes, I think everyone understands that we have the greatest arsenal in the world. We do. But America also understands the power of diplomacy, and diplomacy has to be backed up with incentives and disincentives.

Incentives, yes. The American taxpayer is generous with development assistance and our assistance in helping countries develop into stronger democracies in which they can be stronger economies and have a better life for their people and, by the way, be better consumers of U.S. products. That is what America does—it offers incentives—but we also lead the world in saying: If you do not follow the internationally acceptable norms, there will be consequences, and those consequences mean that we will not let you do commerce to strengthen your ability to harm your neighbors and to harm global security.

That is what Senator MENENDEZ was talking about. The sanctions we are imposing here are aimed directly at North Korea's ability to compile weapons of mass destruction, to harm their own people, and to harm others through the use of cyber. That is what these sanctions are aimed at. They are aimed at preventing them from being able to do that.

It also shows U.S. leadership because our allies look to the United States first. It is an international financial system, and if the United States is not prepared to move forward, we cannot expect the rest of our allies to move ahead. So it is a clear signal that we are prepared to take these actions. We are taking these actions. We are going to take them by ourselves if we have to, but it will be much more effective if we can get the international community to support us.

Senator MENENDEZ is absolutely correct. I remember when we did this against the apartheid of South Africa. We were able to get actions taken by other countries after we acted. The Senator is absolutely correct on Iran. We acted on Iran; we then got other countries to act. If the United States had not shown the leadership, they would not have acted. That is now true with North Korea. Our actions will

help us get other countries to act so that we can hopefully accomplish our goal of a peaceful North Korea without the use of our military might.

Let me explain what is at stake here. We all understand the tests that are going on with the so-called satellite tests to be able to develop a missile that can deliver a weapon well beyond the Republic of Korea that could directly attack U.S. interests and certainly our allies' interests. That is what they are trying to do with these tests, is to develop weapons of mass destruction that could cause unspeakable damage. That is what we are trying to prevent. And it is not just the direct actions by the North Koreans; they have already shown their willingness to work with other rogue states in developing weapons of mass destruction. If we allow them to accumulate these weapons, they could then transfer them to other rogue countries and they could be used against our interests. We also know that North Korea is willing to make arrangements with terrorist organizations, and these weapons could end up in the hands of terrorists and be used against our interests.

That is what is at stake. There is a lot at stake, and that is on the weapons program. We already saw North Korea act in regard to Sony on cyber. We know this is a growing field. If we don't take action now, the circumstances are only going to get more damaging to U.S. interests.

The one area that I really congratulate Senator GARDNER and Senator MENENDEZ for bringing to this bill is the human rights issues, the gross violations of human rights. We talked about this. There is no country in the world that treats its citizens worse than North Korea does. They are literally starving their population. They are starving their population. They torture their population. They imprison anyone who dares say anything against the government. They do summary executions if they don't like you. We know that. It has been documented over and over again.

This legislation speaks to American values. Our strength is in our arsenal and our strength is in our universal values; that we won't allow that to happen; that, yes, we have an interest in how the people of North Korea are treated; that these are international norms that have been violated by North Korea.

I just wanted to follow up with Senator MENENDEZ because I thought he articulated so well about America's strength and how we act. It is not just because we have the best military in the world; it is because we have the will to stand up for values that are important for not only our national security but for global security.

When the United States leads, other countries join us, and we get results. Hopefully, we are going to be able to

change North Korea's conduct through these measures. That is in the best interest of the United States, it is in the best interest of our allies, and it is in the best interest of North Korea. That is what this legislation speaks to.

I share Senator MENENDEZ's hope that we will see a very strong vote in a few minutes, and I know that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have expressed their views on this. I urge everyone to support this effort and to show America's resolve in the united policy in this regard.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I want to thank all of my colleagues for their thoughtful input during this debate. We have had great discussions from numerous Members who have come to the floor throughout the day to discuss North Korea and the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act.

I want to thank Senator CORKER for his leadership on the committee, the product of which is a very good bipartisan sanctions action. I hope and agree with Senator MENENDEZ, our colleague from New Jersey, that this will indeed receive unanimous support.

I wish to thank Senator MENENDEZ through the Chair for his efforts to make this a success, and thanks to the ranking member of the committee and ranking member of the Asia subcommittee, as well, for their work. We set out a year ago to work on this problem and address this challenge.

The purpose of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act is very simple. The purpose of the bill is to peacefully disarm North Korea through mandatory sanctions that would deprive the regime of the means to build its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, to deprive the regime of its means to carry out malicious cyber activities, and to deprive the regime of the means to continue its gross abuse of the human rights of its own people. That is the purpose of this bill. Obviously, there is more work to do.

The discussions today talk about the work we have to do with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, in the other Chamber, and the work we have to do around the globe to make sure that the United Nations Security Council recognizes this challenge and that China understands our basis of cooperation depends on actions against something we both agree on, and that is that we shouldn't have a nuclear North Korea.

Let's build that relationship of cooperation with China. Let's build that relationship of trilateral alliance among South Korea, Japan, and the United States. Those are the things we can begin to accomplish with this legislation.

I had a conversation with Admiral Gortney not too long ago about North Korea. He is the head of NORTHCOM, headquartered in Colorado Springs, CO. It was a conversation about North Korea and what he sees. Through his comments, you can tell he is concerned, and he believes the situation in the Korean Peninsula is at its most unstable point since the armistice. Over six decades, we today are seeing the most unstable point on the Korean Peninsula because of a rogue regime that tortures its own people, kills its own leaders, and deprives its citizens of human dignity.

Strategic patience has failed. One expert said we have moved from strategic patience to benign neglect. That is not leadership. So today we start a new policy based on strength and not patience. This legislation would mandate—not simply authorize but mandate—the imposition of sanctions against all persons who materially contribute to North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile development; import luxury goods into North Korea; enable its censorship and human rights abuses; engage in money laundering and manufacture of counterfeit goods and narcotic trafficking; engage in activities undermining cyber security; have sold, supplied or transferred to or from North Korea precious metals or raw metals, including aluminum, steel, and coal for the benefit of North Korea's regime and its illicit activities; that is, \$1.8 billion in raw metals, \$245 million in other goods that are sanctioned under this act, including those entities that decide they would import from North Korea if that money they would generate from the sale of that import goes to the development of proliferation activities.

The cyber sanctions and strategy that we require are unique to the Senate bill. They will be the first mandatory sanctions in history passed against cyber criminals. This bill also codifies Executive orders 13687 and 13694 regarding cyber security, as they apply to North Korea, which were enacted last year in the wake of the Sony Pictures hack and other cyber incidents. It is also a unique feature of our Senate bill today.

The mandatory sanctions on metals and minerals are unique to the legislation. Expert estimates, as we just said, put North Korea's rare metal minerals and steel exports at around \$2 billion, so these sanctions could have a significant impact in deterring the regime and its enablers. The sanctions in this bill are secondary, as we have discussed, which means they would be applied to individuals and entities, not just in the United States but around the world, who would assist the Government of North Korea and the designated entities that engage in the activities prohibited by this legislation. It mandates a strategy and sanctions

against North Korea's human rights abuses.

You can see what it does on the chart. You can see the opportunity we have before us and the American people and our obligation to make sure we are doing everything we can to stand up for the people of North Korea and stand up to the totalitarian regime of North Korea.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation tonight, this bipartisan product of countless hours of debate and discussions and negotiations, and to come away with a good product that we can be proud of, to work with the House Members so that this is on the President's desk. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I yield my time.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORKER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the committee-reported amendment is agreed to.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed, and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 0, as follows:

(Rollcall Vote No. 20 Leg.)

YEAS—96

Alexander	Fischer	Murphy
Ayotte	Flake	Murray
Baldwin	Franken	Nelson
Barrasso	Gardner	Paul
Bennet	Gillibrand	Perdue
Blumenthal	Grassley	Peters
Blunt	Hatch	Portman
Booker	Heinrich	Reed
Boozman	Heitkamp	Reid
Boxer	Heller	Risch
Brown	Hirono	Roberts
Burr	Hoeben	Rounds
Cantwell	Inhofe	Rubio
Capito	Isakson	Sasse
Cardin	Johnson	Schatz
Carper	Kaine	Schumer
Casey	King	Scott
Cassidy	Kirk	Sessions
Coats	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cochran	Lankford	Shelby
Collins	Leahy	Stabenow
Coons	Lee	Tester
Corker	Manchin	Thune
Cornyn	Markey	Tillis
Cotton	McCain	Toomey
Crapo	McCaskill	Udall
Cruz	McConnell	Vitter
Daines	Menendez	Warner
Donnelly	Merkley	Warren
Enzi	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Feinstein	Murkowski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—4

Durbin	Sanders
Graham	Sullivan

The bill (H.R. 757), as amended, was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business and also to be allotted time beyond 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CHILD CARE ACT AND LEAD POISONING

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise this evening to talk about childcare, in particular one piece of legislation which I have introduced today, S. 2539, but also to talk more broadly about the critical need in our country for more options, more opportunities for families—especially low-income families—to be able to afford high-quality childcare. The

bill that was introduced today is the Child Care Access to Resources for Early Learning Act. Of course, the acronym or shorthand for the bill is the Child CARE Act, standing for the words in the bill that focus on resources and in particular resources for early learning.

It is this Senator's belief, and I think the evidence is abundantly clear over time whenever this issue is studied, that in terms of the positive impact of early care and learning of a child, the evidence tells us over and over again that if kids learn more now, they will literally earn more later. That connection between learning and earning is compelling, and I think it is an essential part of the debate. Early education and care for a young child has an impact on all of our lives when it comes to the economy.

We know now from the evidence that high-quality early learning contributes to a reduction in need for special education. It also helps to lower juvenile justice rates. It also helps to improve health outcomes over time. It also increases high school graduation and college matriculation rates.

For some children from low-income households, a lot of these studies have also shown that by the age of 3, they will have heard 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers. Even before they enter kindergarten, this so-called word gap means they are already far behind. The income level of the household can often determine how many words that child has heard in his or her lifetime. Of course, the reason it is such a big number is because the words get repeated, but even when you factor in the repeating of words over and over again, just imagine how far behind they are if they are behind by 30 million words. If it were 5 million words, that would be a substantial gap, but, of course, it is much worse than that.

I believe and I think the evidence shows that in the decades to come, the strength of our economy and the fiscal stability of our Nation will depend on the viability and vitality of our future workforce. I think that is evident from the research. But, again, that connection between early learning and the earning potential of that individual is abundant.

Unfortunately, for many families, the need is still substantially great. Just last fall, Pennsylvania alone had a waiting list of 7,000 families who qualified for childcare vouchers but did not receive them. In other words, in one State there were 7,000 families who were eligible for these vouchers and did not receive them. That story, unfortunately, is playing out across the country. According to data from the Department of Health and Human Services, less than 1 in 10 children nationwide under the age of 4 received childcare assistance. In Pennsylvania

it is about 15 percent. Just think about that—nationwide, 1 in 10 is eligible for this kind of help and is not receiving it.

Child Care Aware—one of the many groups who helped with the legislation I just mentioned, the Child CARE Act—tells us that particularly in urban and rural communities, there is a severe shortage of high-quality or licensed childcare facilities.

In Pennsylvania, where we have a significant State investment in childcare, only 3.5 percent of childcare slots for children birth to age 4 years old are in the highest quality programs.

For many families who can even find care, the cost is very burdensome. For most families, childcare is often the second most costly expense, behind only housing. Just imagine that—the second highest expense in the life of a family for far too many families is childcare, second only to housing. In 2014, in more than half of the United States, a year of childcare costs more than a year of college tuition at a public college. That is another stunning comparison.

We hear it all the time from real people—not just numbers or studies, we hear it from real people. Last week when we were discussing the bill, the Child CARE Act, we heard from a Washington, DC, Metropolitan Police officer who also happens to be a parent. Her name is Zunnobia, and she told us how much there is a struggle for hard-working, even middle-class families who just want the best for their children, how difficult that struggle is to find quality, affordable childcare for early care and learning. This police officer also told me and told those in the room how all too often in her work as a police officer, she sees teenagers or young people who did not have the benefit of high-quality care and early learning.

This is another example from Pennsylvania. This is what Deanna, a parent, tells us, and I am quoting just in part:

Each month, with two children in daycare, our payment exceeded our mortgage payment.

So it is not the second highest cost but the highest cost in her household.

Deanna continues:

Some months we paid for daycare with our home equity line of credit. It took us 2 years to pay off the debt we acquired. Parents with young children are really struggling. It is a no-win situation.

That is what Deanna, a parent from Pennsylvania, tells us.

Christina, another Pennsylvanian, a parent, told us that the cost of “daycare is bringing us straight to foreclosure because we cannot afford our mortgage, groceries, diapers, and gas for our one car.”

So this is the real world and this is the real life of a struggling family but

especially struggling—even in a recovery—with the cost of childcare.

Let me talk for a moment about the component parts of the act. The Child CARE Act is legislation that will ensure that families with infants and toddlers who are living at or below 200 percent of the Federal poverty level, which we know is approximately \$40,000 for a family of three—it will help those families who need childcare have access to that high-quality care. The act will further the purposes of the child care and development block grant by raising quality standards and by providing resources necessary to make those higher quality standards a reality and available to families across the Nation. Over a 10-year period, we estimate that the legislation could help over 1 million additional children under the age of 4 gain access to high-quality childcare.

Part of achieving higher quality care is ensuring that childcare providers are receiving an appropriate level of support and that childcare workers are compensated fairly for their expertise. Unfortunately, across the Nation, the average childcare worker often makes below poverty wages. According to the 2013 National Survey of Early Care and Education, the median wage for center-based childcare staff was \$9.30 an hour, about \$19,000 a year. Just imagine that. The people who we believe are the best qualified and the most dedicated to taking care of our children, who will give them that early care and the learning that goes with it, the people whom we entrust with our most treasured asset, our children, in too many places in this country, those same workers are making just \$19,000 a year. This means that childcare workers on average make less than parking lot attendants, less than manicurists, and less than massage therapists. So if we really care about our children, I think we would pay them more than some of the occupations I just mentioned. Caring for and nurturing infants and toddlers requires specialized knowledge and competencies that are not easily developed and should not be taken for granted.

I believe and I think most Members of Congress, either in the Senate or in the House, believe that our children deserve quality. They deserve quality care and learning, but they especially deserve the quality that comes with someone who is paid an adequate wage and has a level of expertise and competency to provide that child with the kind of early care and learning she has a right to expect.

Childcare funding is critically important not only to families in Pennsylvania and across the Nation, but, of course, it is critical if we are going to meet that demand that our workforce must meet. The children who learn more now will earn more later.

We also know that this legislation is an opportunity to finally, at long last,

make that historic commitment to these same families. We know the return on investment, if that is all someone wants to focus on, is return on investment. I know some people like numbers sometimes better than testimonials from parents. But if your only concern is return on investment, this is a good deal. Return on investment in terms of high-quality early care and learning is as high as \$17 for \$1. That is a pretty good deal anywhere in the country. We want to emphasize the return on investment, but I also believe at the same time that we have to focus on the life of that child and that child's prospects for future employment to contribute to our economy.

We have to make this issue a priority. If we really care about economic growth, GDP growth, competing in a world economy, and having a skilled workforce, all those high aspirations, all those goals we talk about a lot, it starts with early care and learning. A child cannot earn what she should be able to earn if she doesn't have the opportunity for early care and learning—high-quality early care and learning.

We can spend up to \$40,000 a year on incarceration and thousands on drug treatment and/or special education or we can spend a small fraction of that now on early care and learning and give children both a healthy and a smart start in life.

I urge my colleagues, when it comes before them, to support the Child CARE Act that has been introduced today.

Mr. President, let me conclude with some brief comments about another related issue for our kids—lead poisoning.

What has happened in Flint, MI, is both horrific and inexcusable. No one should accept any excuse for what happened there. I commend Senator STABENOW and Senator PETERS for shining a light on what occurred in their home State.

But, unfortunately, this is an issue that involves not just the State of Michigan, not just the city of Flint, this is a nationwide problem, especially on the eastern seaboard. Unfortunately, many communities around the country have numbers that are even worse, even higher than the Flint numbers.

By one example, Pennsylvania—one of the largest States in the Union—18 cities in Pennsylvania are reporting higher levels of lead exposure among children than Flint. Let me say that again—higher levels than Flint. In Flint, 3.2 percent of children exceeded the danger threshold for lead exposure, tested levels of 5 or more micrograms per deciliter of blood. So 5 or more micrograms is the danger level, and Flint was at 3.2. Where were some cities in Pennsylvania that, as I said, have higher numbers? Instead of being at 5 or 3.2, this is what we see in Penn-

sylvania: Allentown, 23; Altoona, 20.5; my hometown of Scranton, 20 percent; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh—our largest cities, the two largest cities and the most urban parts of our State—were at 10 and 8 respectively, which is lower than the other Pennsylvania cities but still higher than Flint. In Pennsylvania, the primary source for childhood lead poisoning is not water but, rather, deteriorating infrastructure and exposure to the remnants of lead-based paint, paint dust, and chips. That is a problem in our State, but there are other States, especially on the eastern seaboard, that have a similar problem.

We must ensure that children who have been exposed to high levels of lead receive all—and I mean that literally—all of the followup services they need to reach their full potential. Whether that is remedial, medical, or educational, we need to be there for those children.

I supported funding for the Centers for Disease Control's Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, which supports State and local public health departments working to identify cases of childhood lead exposure. But that is just but one step. We have a lot more to do on this issue.

I will conclude by saying that we should take action on childcare to make sure that it is affordable and that it is of a high quality so that especially poor children can learn more now and earn more later. It is very difficult to learn, grow, and succeed if you have the disadvantage of not only not having childcare and early learning but the additional burden of high levels of lead. These are challenges that we face as a country, and these are challenges that both Houses and both parties must confront.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT BILL

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, tomorrow the Senate will be bringing up the Customs bill that I intend to support moving to. I believe it has a number of good provisions, and I hope to be able to support its final passage.

But first, I want to bring attention to the weakened currency provisions that the conference report included. This is not the language that initially passed the Senate, but instead is much weaker.

The Senate, several times, has affirmed the need to provide the Treasury Department and the Department of Commerce tools to prevent currency manipulation.

In 2011, the Senate passed such a bill to provide the Commerce Department with enforcement mechanisms by a vote of 63-35.

Second, in 2013, 60 Senators signed a letter to the U.S. Trade Representative, calling for the inclusion of enforceable currency provisions in Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Finally, in May of 2015, the Senate passed by a 78-to-20 vote this Customs enforcement bill, which, for the first time, included new tools that are necessary to defend American manufacturers from foreign currency manipulations—the language to confront currency cheating that the Treasury Department acknowledges is occurring, but they have refused to take action to confront it.

That original bill would have required, where this kind of currency manipulation occurs, action be taken to fix currency manipulation. Unfortunately, that language was removed from the conference report.

I think it is time—and I think a bipartisan majority of this Senate believes it is time—for us to pass enforceable currency protection measures and make sure they make it to the President's desk.

In June of 2015, a New York Times poll showed that 63 percent of Americans believe that trade restrictions are necessary, and only 16 percent of Americans believe that the Trans-Pacific Partnership would actually increase American jobs. I am absolutely convinced the American people are correct on that, based on a study of previous trade agreements and the analysis of studies by Tufts University and other groups.

A May 2015 poll conducted by Ipsos, a leading polling and communications firm, found that 73 percent of the U.S. public believes Congress should oppose any “international trade agreement that does not specifically prohibit currency manipulation.” That is a strong polling number.

A second Ipsos poll, conducted last year, found that 79 percent of respondents said that it was important for the trade deal to include enforceable currency protections.

In August, the Chinese Government devalued its currency 4 percent, creating a regional currency war in that area involving Australia, Malaysia, and South Korea. All those fell against the United States dollar, making their imports to the United States less expensive and our exports to their countries more expensive. It happens just that way.

Former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker, one of the great heroes of the economic rebound of the 1980s, has said that years of trade negotiations can be wiped out in minutes by currency manipulation. I don't think there is any doubt about that.

These depreciations throughout Asia further disadvantage American workers because they force our workers to compete against international competitors who receive discounts, in ef-

fect, on their exported goods in the form of artificially depressed currencies. These devaluations have a real impact.

I have talked at length to steel manufacturers in my State. They have all told me that steel manufacturing is being hammered by this kind of currency manipulation, dumping, and other unfair, improper trade policies. But they specifically mentioned currency. Foreign market manipulations have virtually eliminated profit margins that were already slim in the steel industry.

I had a conversation a few hours ago with a major paper company which said that currency manipulations have hurt their exports. They are still making the exports, but it has eliminated their profit. It is very problematic for them. They have to have profit, but they are trying to maintain their production, keep Americans working, and keep the plants operating, even though their profit margin has been hurt substantially by currency manipulation.

In June of 2015, eBay reported that international currency fluctuations eliminated 8 percent of its sales. Instead of 6 percent sales growth, the company reported a 2 percent decline. Our foreign competitors are exporting their unemployment to the United States. That is the way it is done: You reduce your currency, and you export your products to the United States at a lower price. Our foreign competitors keep their people working and undermine the ability of American manufacturers to keep their employees working. Sometimes American plants are totally closed.

A December 1 Wall Street Journal article highlighted the fact that the Chinese yuan had increased against most other major currencies but fallen 3 percent against the dollar. They let it decline against the dollar, thereby maintaining their trade advantage with the United States—their trade surplus, our trade deficit with China. Our trade deficit with China increased during January and increased substantially during the fourth quarter of last year. Our exports are down, our imports are up, and our trade deficit is up.

A big part of that is improper manipulation of currency by our so-called trading partners. It is time we said no to this. We have the leverage and the capability of doing so. They need us more than we need them.

When Governor Romney ran for President 8 years ago, he was in a debate and explained it very succinctly: If you don't stand up—in this case, to China—they will run over you. Critics say that if we stand up to China, it will create a trade war. But we are in a trade war; we are just not fighting. Finally, he said: And, anyway, they have a lot more to lose than we do in such an event.

We have no obligation—as a matter of fact, we must stop being a patsy for

those who take advantage of us. They need our markets. They desperately need to be able to sell huge amounts of products in our markets. If they will not comply with the rules of trade, we have a right to say no and to limit access to our markets. They say that would hurt American consumers—perhaps some—but in the long run, we cannot allow American manufacturing to be decimated by the sustained manipulation of trading partners. We have to have a manufacturing base in this country. The American people know this, and they are worried about that.

Even a Walmart executive has said: If nobody is working in America, who is going to buy cheap products from abroad? He even started a program to try to buy more from America.

Even the Department of Treasury in its October 2015 exchange rate report said, “Our judgment is that the [Yuan] remains below its appropriate medium-term valuation.” In other words, it is depressed. China devalued the Yuan. They gained market advantage over the United States and other countries.

On the face of all of this, the White House has refused to adopt any enforceable measures. The Treasury Department repeatedly acknowledges we have a problem, but they have refused to take any action to confront it. This is the kind of weakness we cannot accept. The time has come in America where we cannot afford to lose a single American job to unfair trading partners. We have to end this. We have to defend our people who are hurting.

While the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement that has now been signed by the President—off last week in New Zealand, 7,000 miles around the world. The President never even talked about it. Why didn't he talk about it? Why didn't they highlight it? Why did they want to sign it 7,000 miles away? The reason is, the American people don't want it. He didn't really want anybody to know he had signed it, and they hope they can slip it through Congress at some point. But I don't believe it is going to happen. I think too many things are being raised and discussed that show we have to be careful about these trade agreements. In particular, this is one that should not pass. The White House claims that the TPP includes a side measure addressing currency manipulation, but any study reveals that it does not have any real enforcement mechanisms.

The Wall Street Journal on November 5 wrote this: “Mexico, Canada and other countries signaled they were open to the [currency] deal when they realized it [would not] include binding currency rules that could lead to trade sanctions through the TPP.”

Get that? They were objecting to this currency rule. They like to manipulate their currency, and they don't want to be subject to sanctions if they manipulate it. When they found out the

truth—and the truth is that the currency manipulation language attached to TPP means nothing—then they said it was OK. So objected to addressing currency manipulation in the TPP until they found out this proposed fix meant nothing.

On November 6, the Japanese Finance Minister, Mr. Taro Aso, said that “there [will not] be any change” in Japan’s currency policy. In other words, by signing on to the TPP, after studying the agreement, Japan realized they are not going to have to change their policy. There is no teeth to the President’s side-agreement.

We were expecting that this currency language would be placed on the Customs bill that we would vote on tomorrow. It was passed in the Senate, and it went on the Customs bill. But when it went to the conference committee, President Obama said: No, we are not having this currency language in it. The conference committee eventually capitulated, and struck the enforceable currency provisions in their report. So we have no real enforceable mechanism now to ensure that American workers and American manufacturing are able to maintain a level playing field with our trading partners in this regard.

The statement by Japan’s Finance Minister caused Ford Motor Company to immediately object to and oppose the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement. They did it the day it was released. In their press release, Ford said they could not support such a deal in which currency rules fell “outside of [the] TPP, and . . . [failed] to include dispute settlement mechanisms to ensure global rules prohibiting currency manipulation are enforced.” They could not support it.

Ford and all these companies are placed under terrific pressure to sign on to these deals. A lot of them that signed on and said they will support it don’t like it, but they were basically put in a room and asked: What do you need to do? We will agree to some things if you will agree to support the deal. Many felt it was going to pass anyway, and they got a few little trinkets—a few little gifts out of the TPP that they liked out of the 5,000 pages that it consists of, and they have agreed to either be silent or support the deal. But many of these companies like Ford are very uneasy about it.

So where are we today? I was very pleased that one of the strong supporters of trade in Congress—the new Speaker of the House, PAUL RYAN—announced yesterday that there was not support in the House to pass the TPP now, and, in fact, he has concerns about it. He has been an advocate of these trade agreements. I have been worried about that. But I was very pleased that at least now, in the temporary situation, he has indicated that he has doubts about the agreement, it is not going to have the votes in the House.

Our leadership has indicated they don’t intend to bring it up immediately, either. I think that is a good decision. I believe we as a nation need to be studying how this works and studying whether these agreements are actually helping us. Or are they accelerating the decline in American manufacturing?

The Bush nor the Obama White House has taken strong actions to deal with currency manipulations. This administration and its own Treasury Department continues to reassure us that they are doing everything they can to protect American manufacturing from unfair currency manipulation. However, they repeatedly rejected Congress’s efforts to give the White House the tools they need to help enforce our laws. One of the best ways to do this is to give the White House the ability to implement countervailing duties, but they have opposed those efforts and steadfastly seen to it that they are not made law.

Last year, in the spring, we had a month-long debate about the importance of these measures. I think a lot of our Members learned a good bit in the course of that. The Senate passed a TPP negotiating objective calling for enforceable measures in the President’s trade agreement. What did the President do? He threatened to veto the Customs bill if it included the kind of currency language that I have just been describing.

In fact, the White House even issued a Statement of Administration Policy—a SAP—on this question stating that “the Administration opposes the way the [Customs] bill uses the countervailing duty process to address currency undervaluation.” With that objection, the conferees took out the language, so the bill we will vote on tomorrow does not have the language in it that passed in the U.S. Senate with 78 votes in favor.

Last year, I wrote the President and asked him a few simple questions. I believe these are simple questions that the American people are entitled to have answered by the leader of our country who is proposing and pushing the TPP.

One, I asked him to state whether the TPP would increase or decrease our trade deficit. Shouldn’t we know that? Our trade deficit is surging. Some try to contend that trade deficits don’t matter. They do matter. They do matter if your factory is closed. Trade deficits reduce GDP. Some studies say that about one-half percent of growth in GDP has been reduced as a result of the trade deficit. It does impact America.

I further asked the President, two, whether the TPP would increase or decrease the number of manufacturing jobs in the United States.

Third, I asked him how the TPP would affect the average hourly wages for the American middle class.

Shouldn’t he tell us that? Shouldn’t we be told whether wages are going to go up or down? Shouldn’t we be told whether the trade deficit would increase? Shouldn’t we be told whether manufacturing jobs are going to increase or decrease?

What have they said? This is so clever. I think the media deserves criticism for not talking about it more. All they have ever said was that the TPP would increase jobs in the exporting industries. They don’t say how many jobs are being lost when American factories are closed. In fact, the Administration used to make specific job claims, but stopped doing so once the Washington Post gave their claim that the TPP would create 600,000 jobs four Pinocchios.

Let’s go back to 2011, the U.S.—South Korean Free Trade Agreement. I voted for it. South Koreans are good people. They are allies of ours. We do business with them. I signed on to that agreement. When the President signed it, he stated to the American people it would increase our exports by \$10 billion a year.

We have had a chance to look at that. How has that promise come out? Have we increased our exports? Well, we did increase our exports. It was eight-tenths of \$1 billion last year. I think we will be a little over \$1 billion this year—not 10, 1. What about Korean exports to the United States? How did that come out? They increased annually \$12 billion a year. What about our trade deficit from 2010 through 2015? The trade deficit with South Korea increased 260 percent.

Are these trade agreements effective? Are they helping America? Are they fulfilling the promises being made for them? I don’t think so. The President has repeatedly rejected bipartisan efforts to put protections in for American workers. He clearly did not follow Congress’s negotiating objectives. He has ignored an issue which the Senate overwhelmingly approved, and he failed to negotiate enforceable currency protections for American workers.

American manufacturers cannot wait longer. It is time to give them the tools they need, a fair ability to compete, and a level playing field. The Customs bill that is before us is a step in the right direction. It ensures the Commerce Department and Customs and Border Protection share information more efficiently. It gives the Customs and Border Protection new tools to identify and stop illegal trading practices. It provides early notification of trade surges, which helps ensure stable prices of goods here at home, but it is important to note the Customs bill is not a perfect solution. There is still work to be done.

As I noted, Paul Volcker pointed out, all of these agreements can be eliminated overnight through currency manipulation. We can pass this Customs

legislation and send it to the President, but we must realize that the protections created in this legislation, the new tools that are provided to CBP, can be made irrelevant by our competitors that manipulate exchange rates to benefit their exports.

We have that problem now in China, Japan, South Korea, and other countries. I am not going to be satisfied until the President signs legislation granting the Commerce Department real powers to protect American workers and American manufacturing from these devastating market manipulations.

Our government does not offer such subsidies to American manufacturers. There are other subsidies, too, that foreign countries offer that we don't offer. These subsidies and currency manipulations are forbidden by international trading standards, but they go on anyway, and nothing is done about it. We must not allow other countries to take advantage of us any longer.

I will note some of the quotes that we heard about this subject, but no action of significance has been taken.

On September 3, Treasury Secretary Jack Lew in an interview on CNBC said, "[China has] to understand, and I make this point to them quite clearly, that there's an economic and political reality to things like exchange rates."

He is talking about currency exchange rates. There is a political reality there. In other words, Mr. Lew, who should be doing something effective besides just talking, acknowledges that currency rates have real impact on Americans.

He goes on to say:

They need to understand that they signal their intentions by the actions they take and the way they announce them. And they have to be very clear that they're continuing to move in a positive direction. And we're going to hold them accountable.

We haven't been holding them accountable.

Mr. Lew continues: "I think that we have been very clear for a very long time with China, how they manage their exchange rate is a matter of great concern to us and that they need to be willing to let market forces drive the value up, not just drive it down."

That is true, but they are not doing it, and China is going to continue to manipulate their exports until some action is taken to stop them.

He said in his interview:

I think it is something we will discuss at the G-20, is any temptation to slip into what might look like a competitive devaluation. It's both unfair and it ultimately leads to a worse global economy.

I think there is some truth to that. He is acknowledging that there is a problem. What he is saying is our response to devaluation—it is unfortunate if we are put in a position where we devalue, where Korea devalues, where Vietnam devalues, where other

countries in the world devalue. That is a currency war and that is not helpful. What needs to happen is we need to push back against countries that are improperly devaluing and stop that and try to create a currency system worldwide that serves our Nation in an effective way. It is part of the whole economic future of America.

Every business journalist is talking about this. They have different views about what ought to be done, if anything, but everybody talks about the impact.

This is T. Rowe Price. They did their fall 2015 Economic Outlook Report.

To be sure, the U.S. economy remains the world's largest and most innovative. But this summer's dramatic plunge in China's stock market and the unexpected devaluation of its currency quickly reverberated around the globe—triggering market volatility, dimming growth prospects for certain industries and the countries, and exacerbating pressure on emerging markets.

I don't think anybody would dispute that. That is common business knowledge. T. Rowe Price's Outlook Report says:

The devaluation, along with the government's unsuccessful intervention in its plunging stock market, also undermined confidence in China's leadership and, most important, in its ability to manage the transition of its economy from one led by investment and exports to one more driven by domestic services and consumption.

This is where we are. We need to get this ship on the right path, and we need to not adopt the TPP. We need to use the leverage we have as the greatest market in the world that all these countries want access to. We have the leverage. They have more to fear from a trade war than we do. We must put an end to it because we owe it to this country. The day we can give away more and more jobs and assume that this has no negative impact on the American economy is over. Wages are down in this country. The percentage of Americans of working age actually working today is the lowest we have had in nearly 40 years. We have had a tremendous drop in the percentage of males from 24 to 55, high working years, who are actually working in jobs today. It is a troublesome trend. We need to reverse that.

We need to put people to work and get them off welfare. We need to put them in good job training programs to help them take jobs that already exist in the country. We can't afford to bring in hundreds of thousands and millions of people from abroad to take jobs. Our people should be trained and be taken. That is so basic as to be without dispute, it seems to me.

I think the Customs bill that we consider tomorrow is worthy of our support. In the long run, I do believe that if we don't confront the trading issues that are facing America, we will regret it, and we will continue to see adverse economic consequences for the citizens we represent.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT BILL

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, 2015 was an extremely productive year for our Nation's trade agenda as, on multiple occasions, both parties were able to come together to take several steps to advance effective trade policies that will put our Nation on a more prosperous course.

Hopefully, we will take another step here in the Senate before we leave for the recess.

Before the Senate breaks for recess, we are likely to vote on the conference report for H.R. 644, the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015, legislation that originally passed in this Chamber back in May of last year. As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, I was one of the original authors of this legislation, and I was honored to serve as the chair of the conference committee. I believe our report represents a strong bipartisan, bicameral agreement that will effectively address a number of trade policy priorities. In fact, it has already passed the House with a strong, supermajority vote. I am hoping to see a similar vote here in the Senate.

I would like to take a few minutes to talk about some of the specifics of this legislation, which is generally referred to simply as "the Customs bill." If enacted, this compromise version of the Customs bill would address three main policy goals.

The first goal is to facilitate and streamline the flow of legitimate trade into and out of the United States. To accomplish this goal, the bill, among other things, reduces paperwork and bureaucratic burdens on U.S. traders and improves consultation between trade policymakers at the Customs and Border Protection, or CBP, agency and Congress, as well as private actors within the trade community. It also modernizes the way CBP operates by authorizing the continued development and implementation of the Automated Commercial Environment, or ACE. And it sets procedures and establishes deadlines to ensure that all import requirements are fulfilled through a single window process. These changes will facilitate trade by reducing unnecessary burdens and delays created by an overly bureaucratic system. This will improve our Nation's competitiveness, create jobs here at home, and provide

numerous benefits for our trusted trading partners.

The second major goal of the Customs bill is to improve enforcement of our trade laws. Toward that end, the bill establishes a new process at CBP—with strict deadlines and judicial review—for dealing with evasion of our antidumping and countervailing duties laws. The bill also ensures that all distributions required under the Continued Dumping and Subsidy Act are made correctly.

I am particularly pleased that the bill improves protections for intellectual property rights by creating additional monitoring tools to detect violations at the border and expanding requirements for USTR's existing Special 301 Report on our trading partners' IP enforcement efforts to include trade secrets. It also establishes a chief innovation and intellectual property negotiator at USTR to better ensure that our trade agreements reflect our Nation's interests in protecting intellectual property rights.

Providing proper enforcement and protection for intellectual property rights—both domestically and internationally—has long been a priority for me in large part because it is so important to Utahns. In Utah around 19 percent of the total workforce is directly employed in IP-intensive jobs, according to a recent report by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Global Intellectual Property Center. That same study also noted that Utah's IP industry employs, either directly or indirectly, over 590,000 Utahns—or more than half of Utah's workforce. More importantly, the IP industry makes up nearly 80 percent of current exports from my home State. So, for obvious reasons, protecting IP was one of my main focuses in drafting the Customs bill, passing it here in the Senate, and putting together the conference report.

I am very pleased that my colleagues on the conference committee shared my desire to improve upon our current efforts, and I think our inventors and innovators here at home—the people who drive so much of our economic growth and prosperity—will benefit greatly from this legislation.

The report addresses other enforcement priorities as well, including provisions to give clear direction and robust tools for identifying and addressing currency manipulation from our trading partners, an issue that I know is of particular interest to a number of our Members here in the Senate, as well as to many of our domestic businesses and industries. The result of all these enforcement provisions will be greater protections for American traders and consumers and a greater assurance that foreign competitors will not have unfair advantages in the global marketplace.

The third major goal of the Customs conference report is to strengthen the

trade promotion authority statute that we enacted last year, reflecting various priorities and concerns from members of both parties. The conference report strengthens TPA by enhancing Congress's oversight role in crafting trade policy, specifically with regard to administration nominees and at negotiating rounds for future trade agreements. It also strongly reaffirms that trade agreements should not include and TPA procedures should not be used with respect to, provisions dealing with immigration policy or greenhouse gas emissions. The bill also establishes a new negotiating objective to address barriers American fishermen face in exporting U.S. fish, seafood, and shellfish.

In addition, the conference report improves provisions relating to trafficking in persons in order to strengthen Congressional oversight and ensure that appropriate steps are being taken to put an end to human trafficking.

I think most of us would agree that we passed a good TPA bill last year. I certainly think that we did. The conference report on the Customs bill would simply ensure that the statute better reflects the bipartisan will and role of Congress in our trade negotiations.

Those have been the three main goals of the Customs bill. With this conference report, I think we have reached good outcomes on all three. But that is not all. Other important issues are also addressed by the conference report.

For example, the bill will combat politically motivated boycotts, divestments, and sanctions against Israel, bolstering our already strong economic ties with one of our most important strategic allies. The conference report also provides additional trade preferences for Nepal in order to promote economic recovery in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake last year. With this legislation, we will also take significant steps to promote small business exports and improve tariff classifications relating to footwear and outerwear.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that a number of my colleagues—as well as businesses and job creators around the country—had hoped that the conference report on the Customs bill would include a reauthorization of the Miscellaneous Tariff Bills or MTBs. I shared my colleagues' desire to pass MTBs with this vehicle. As you will recall, a revised MTB process was, after all, passed by the Senate in the original version of the Customs bill.

There are a handful of procedural concerns that complicate this issue—particularly over in the House—that made it difficult to adequately address MTBs in this conference report. However, the conference report does include a strong sense-of-Congress statement reaffirming our shared commitment to advancing MTB legislation in

a process that provides robust consultation and is consistent with both House and Senate rules.

And, on top of that, I just want to reaffirm my own commitment, as the chairman of the Senate committee with jurisdiction over this issue, to find a process that both the House and the Senate can agree on and get MTBs over the finish line. Our businesses and manufacturers that benefit from MTBs have waited too long for Congress to act on this matter, and I am going to do whatever I can to forge a path forward.

Let me just say that I am very pleased with the substance of this conference report. It has been a long road to get us here, but in my view, it has been worth it.

I will have many people to thank in the coming days as we debate—and hopefully pass—the conference report here in the Senate. For now, I specifically want to thank the vice chair of the conference committee, Chairman KEVIN BRADY, for his work on both the committee itself and on the substance of the report. I also want to thank the ranking member of the Finance Committee, Senator WYDEN, for his efforts to ensure that our final product was truly bipartisan.

This is a good bill. It is not perfect, by any means. But once again, it provides what I think are strong outcomes on many key policy priorities.

Both the House and the Senate came into the conference with their own set of demands, which required some compromise. However, throughout our negotiations, I worked extremely hard to preserve the Finance Committee's contributions to the Customs bill and to advance the Senate's priorities on this legislation. And in that regard, I think we can all be pleased with the overall outcome, even if some compromises had to be made.

I know that some of our members have specific objections to some of the individual compromises we had to make in order to get the deal done. I certainly don't want to minimize anyone's concerns. Instead, I will just say that this comes with the territory of passing legislation that tries to reconcile differences.

As a whole, I believe this legislation provides a path on the Customs bill that members of both parties can get behind. I am hoping we can get past tomorrow's cloture vote and final passage and send the bill to the President's desk in short order.

I urge all of my colleagues to work with us to make sure that happens.

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE TOM JENSEN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the long career in public service of a good friend of mine and a friend to the Commonwealth of Kentucky, circuit court

Judge Tom Jensen. After a lifetime of service in both elected office and on the bench, Judge Jensen has announced his retirement from the bench of the 27th Judicial Circuit Court, effective this February 16. Kentucky is going to miss his wisdom, his judgment, and the benefit of his many years of experience.

Judge Jensen has served for 3-plus years on the bench and, prior to that, had a lengthy career in the Kentucky General Assembly. He served in the Kentucky House of Representatives in the 1980s and 1990s. During his tenure there, he was elected as minority floor leader, the highest Republican position in the House of Representatives.

In 1996, Tom chose to not seek reelection to the house and instead was elected chairman of the Republican Party of Kentucky. During his leadership, the Kentucky GOP made some significant gains, adding an additional Republican to the U.S. House of Representatives delegation and sending another Republican to the U.S. Senate. Republicans also gained control of the Kentucky State Senate for the first time in history under his watch.

Judge Jensen was next elected to the Kentucky State Senate in 2005, representing the 21st District, which included Estill, Laurel, Powell, Jackson, and Menifee Counties. As a senator, he chaired the senate judiciary committee and the senate budget review subcommittee on justice and judiciary. He also served as the vice chairman of the senate natural resources and energy committee.

Judge Jensen has been honored many times in the Commonwealth for his achievements. He won recognition as Senator of the Year 2011 by the Kentucky Narcotics Officer Association. He received the highest award from the Kentucky Department of Corrections. He received the 2011 Public Advocate Award for advancing justice through criminal justice reforms. His alma mater, the University of the Cumberland, also presented him an award for his leadership.

After 18 years in the legislature, Judge Jensen has dispensed his wisdom from the bench for the last 3-plus years, where he presides over many cases involving drugs and drug offenses. He has won acclaim for his wisdom and judicial temperament, but even though he has more than 6 years left in his current term, he has chosen to retire and re-enter private law practice. Tom has practiced law in London since 1978, is licensed to practice in all courts of the Commonwealth, and has been admitted to practice before the sixth circuit of Appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court.

It seems advocacy is Judge Jensen's first love, and after a long and successful career, he wants to return to the role of advocacy in the courtroom. While he will certainly be missed on

the bench, I know he will be an outstanding attorney and advocate for his clients, who will be very lucky to benefit from his experience.

I know my colleagues join me in extending congratulations and best wishes to Judge Jensen and to his family: his wife, Nannette Curry Jensen; their two daughters, Natalie Jensen and Laura Jensen Hays; his son-in-law, Henry Hays; and grandchildren, Elle and Spencer.

As Judge Jensen begins this new chapter in his career, I want to thank him for his career in public service and contributions to the Commonwealth of Kentucky. We will miss him on the bench or in the general assembly halls, but look forward to still seeing him in the courtroom.

A local area newspaper in Kentucky published an article extolling Judge Jensen's life of service. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Times-Tribune, Feb. 7, 2016]

TRI-COUNTY PROFILES: JUDGE, LEGISLATOR RETURNS TO PRIVATE PRACTICE AFTER DECADES OF SERVICE

(By Christina Bentley, Feature Writer)

"Life's too short not to do things you enjoy," said Circuit Court Judge Tom Jensen, who recently announced his retirement from the bench of the 27th Judicial Circuit Court, effective Feb. 16.

For Jensen, the thing he will be enjoying for the foreseeable future will be his London private law practice, although he said he has enjoyed every phase of his career, from his 18½ years of service in the Kentucky State Legislature to his three-plus years on the bench. But his heart right now is in returning to private practice.

"I made a commitment that I would go back to my law office . . . When I left, I said, 'look, I'm just going to go stay three years, maybe four years, and then come back and practice law and finish up that way,'" he said. "I may take off a couple of weeks, but I am going back. My staff stayed in place, and I always promised them I'd come back, so I'm going to live up to my promise. And it's time. I've thought about not going back. I've got six-and-a-half more years or so in this term, and I considered it. At my age, maybe that's the smart thing to do. It's not overwhelming work to me. A lot of people have asked me why I'm going back to practice law, and the thing about it is I enjoyed that. I enjoyed that more than anything that I've ever done, I think."

Jensen said that while he has also enjoyed serving on the bench, he just doesn't get the same sort of satisfaction from it as he does from the process of problem solving with clients.

"It just turned out that I would rather advocate for somebody than be the mediator or make the decision," he said. "I think I miss the give and take, the camaraderie you develop by talking to a client, meeting with people, trying to solve a problem, not deciding the issue or the problem, but trying to solve it. I don't want to sound corny, but I think I'm a people person, and I don't think that's the role of a judge. I don't think I'll ever run for anything again, and I think I'd like to finish up practicing law."

Jensen's passion for advocacy is also evident when he discusses the years that he spent working in the Kentucky State Legislature, a political career that resulted in his recognition as Kentucky State Senator of the Year for 2011.

"I enjoyed (the legislature)," Jensen said, "trying to make a difference. I think it was seeing if you could make things better. It sounds crazy, but it wasn't the pay. Actually, it probably cost me money, practicing law, being in the legislature, being gone those periods of time. But it was a good feeling if you got something accomplished. It was a good feeling that you thought you could make things better. Sometimes we were right, sometimes we weren't. I think, you know, Kentucky's my home, and I wanted to make it as good as I possibly could. Of course, I wasn't a dictator, and I wasn't governor or anything like that, but I did, as Floor Leader in the House, have some impact on some things. We were able to put in some legislation that I think has made a difference in the state. It moved at a snail's pace; sometimes you'd get frustrated. Sometimes you would argue that there was a better of doing it and you couldn't get your way about it, but that's democracy, and the one thing that I saw in the legislature: for the most part, people were up there for the right reasons. They were up there to make Kentucky better."

Jensen is proud of much of what he accomplished in the legislature, but he said his signature accomplishment was House Bill 463, designed to cut down on prison overcrowding in the state.

"In about 2009 and 2010, we started looking at it," he said. "We were actually using private prisons to house state prisoners, and it was costing the state a considerable amount of money. It was to the point that we were either going to have to build a new prison or we had to do something. So that's when we came up with (House Bill) 463 to put a lot of people on probation, more than we had in the past, mainly drug offenses, and it has done what we said it would do . . . Now some people might say we're being too easy on them. The thing about drug addiction, the way I see it, in the courtroom, your criminal days are just filled up with drug cases. Most of them are pleading out, a lot of probation, some diversions. And then about 50 percent of them end up going to prison or jail anyway because they can't comply with the terms. But still, if you look at it that way, it's 50 percent, which is not a good rate, but actually there are 50 percent that aren't going back, which is a good rate, and it has saved us a considerable amount of money."

Jensen said that while he won't be running for office again, he enjoyed the political process and may involve himself in it in other ways, advocating for causes he believes in, primarily those that help his adopted hometown.

"This will be the last political position that I have," he said. "I'm not saying I won't help out somebody politically or maybe get involved in somebody's campaign, but I don't think I'll ever run for anything again. I think I'm done running. But I always liked politics . . . I intend to go back and practice law, but I might even lobby some. I've still got some real good friends in the legislature, so I might do that and lobby for some projects, mainly things that I think would help Laurel County."

For example, Jensen cites the ongoing efforts of Cumberland River Comprehensive Care to build a juvenile drug rehab in Laurel County as a project he would like to have more involvement in.

"One of the things that I even worked on as judge was to try to help Cumberland River Comp Care get the old juvenile detention facility," he said. "I did help by going to Frankfort to talk to the governor and some others . . . What they want to do is have a juvenile rehab center in there, and I can tell you, looking at my court system, these people that are adults on drugs in my court, they didn't start when they became 18. They started at 12, 13. It's actually alarming when you talk to some of them, the age they began this stuff. So I felt like that was a really good endeavor to get into. I'd like to even help them maybe get some more money to fix up more of that building . . . it's going to take considerable money to get it up and operating, and Comp Care has made the commitment to do it, but I thought I'd try to maybe help them, see if I could get them a little more money to help the renovation along a little quicker. That's one of the projects I've developed for myself in retirement."

Jensen is not a Laurel County native, but he has spent his entire career here, after following a basketball scholarship from his hometown of Cincinnati to Sue Bennett Junior College nearly 50 years ago.

"My high school coach was a guy named Ralph Rush, and he was from Bush, and of course I never heard of Bush, growing up in Cincinnati, but he brought me down here," Jensen said. "My grades were not real good in school. I was not a particularly good student. I went to school mainly to play sports probably . . . But that's what brought me down here, and I just kind of fell in love with it here in London and the surrounding area. I think I like the small town more than I ever did a big city. Even though London's not a particularly small town anymore, I wouldn't live anywhere else. This is it. When I left Sue Bennett, I had a lot of scholarship offers, and I went to Eastern Illinois University. I went up there and just didn't like it, and I quit. And this is 1969, I guess, and my dad was furious with me. Vietnam was going on, and he said, 'Here you are going to school for free. What are you going to do?' And I said, 'Well, I'll just join the Army.' But my dad threw such a fit . . . So I came back down to London and talked to Ernie Wiggins, who was my coach at Sue Bennett . . . and it just so happened that night they were going to play at Cumberland College, and he asked me if I wanted to go down . . . I went to Cumberland and finished up there. I met my wife there. Got married. Came to London—that's where her family's from—and decided to go to law school about two years later."

Jensen married Nannette Curry and the couple have two daughters, Natalie Jensen and Laura Jensen Hays, who were growing up during Jensen's time in the legislature.

"I enjoyed . . . all those years doing that, looking back on them, other than the time I was away from my family," Jensen said. "You know when you're away from your kids and then they grow up, and if anything goes wrong, you start blaming yourself: 'I should have been there more,' but my wife did a really good job, she covered all the bases. She was a good mother, she was real involved with the kids."

These days, Jensen says he's looking forward to having time to watch his grandchildren swim—they are both on the swim team at Corbin High School—but he doesn't really have any other hobbies. He said he wants to keep serving Laurel County, just in different ways.

"How many years can you do this? I don't know. I just know that I want to work until I can't work anymore," he said.

He would like to continue to combat the drug problem in the area, something he has seen first-hand as a judge.

"The biggest problem I see facing us today is drugs, and if you come and watch a criminal day, it's nearly all drugs, everybody that's convicted. Now, they might have a theft with it, but they were stealing money to buy drugs . . . It's really sad. I see that as a major problem, not only in Kentucky but across the nation," Jensen said.

All told, though, Jensen said he is proud of his life's work and feels fortunate to have been able to accomplish what he has for the people of the region.

"I'm glad I left Cincinnati to come down here. It's just been a good life for me here," Jensen said. "I've made a lot of good friends . . . I've been very fortunate. And the people of this community . . . have been really, really good to me. When I was in the Senate, I was representing five counties: Laurel, Jackson, Estill, Powell and Menifee counties. They were always good to me. This (Laurel County) courthouse here, I put the money in the budget for this and the one in Jackson County, too. Those kind of things, when you look back on it, things you were able to accomplish, it kind of makes you feel good about some of it. Some of the things you couldn't accomplish, you know, it's frustrating that you thought you knew the right way to go and couldn't get there, but the things that you have gotten right . . . that makes you feel good. And I know what I accomplished. I don't need my name on a building or anything to know what I did, and I'm pretty proud of the things I did accomplish. It's up to the next generation now to accomplish even more and do things even better."

NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS AND POLICY ENHANCEMENT BILL

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I was necessarily absent from today's vote, vote No. 20, on the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act due to events in Illinois. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" in support of H.R. 757, to advance sanctions against North Korea, and was glad to see it adopted.

Today marks the ninth anniversary of President Obama's announcement of his intention to run for President. He made the announcement from the steps of the old State capitol, the reconstructed building where Abraham Lincoln delivered his "House Divided" speech in my hometown of Springfield, IL. Today, the President and I returned to Illinois to commemorate his historic announcement and his service in the Illinois State Senate. I try to never miss votes, but this was a very special occasion in my home State.

I have been deeply concerned about nuclear weapons programs in countries such as Iran and North Korea. Almost 10 years ago, I joined with then-Senator Gordon Smith in introducing the Iran Counter-Proliferation Act, which became the basis for eventual petroleum sanctions against Iran that helped compel a negotiated nuclear agreement. I also cosponsored and voted for the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Sanctions Consolidation Act, which became law in 2012.

And I was pleased to be one of the three cosponsors of the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act of 2015 led by Senator MENENDEZ, key parts of which are included in the bill being voted on today.

North Korea has bedeviled administrations, both Republican and Democratic alike, and as such, this legislation is a step in the right direction.

I have some concerns with the final bill in areas where I think more flexibility for the executive branch would have been appropriate, but such is the nature of compromise.

North Korea's recent actions testing nuclear weapons, launching missiles that could carry a nuclear warhead, and apparently restarting its plutonium production are all deeply troubling. North Korea's leadership does this while many of its own people are starving or locked away in political prison camps. This is unconscionable.

One often wonders how such an isolated and repressive regime is able to continue such dangerous antics.

How does it pay for such endeavors and how does it pay off the sycophants and enablers needed to maintain such a police state?

After all, a nuclear-armed, erratic North Korea is not only a threat to the United States and its allies in the region, but to China as well. Such actions clearly are not in China's security interests.

Yet, frustratingly, too often, China seems unwilling to take necessary steps to isolate and pressure the North Korean regime. I understand China doesn't want a collapsed state on its border. I also understand it doesn't want a unified, Western-leaning Korea on its border.

But I ask our Chinese friends, is what we have today really serving Chinese security interests?

The North Korean leadership has thumbed its nose at the Chinese, ignoring entreaties and some measure of protection offered against tighter sanctions or Security Council action. I was recently in New York meeting with our talented Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power, and I was dismayed at the challenge she faces in obtaining greater Chinese help on this matter.

Now, I know the Chinese and some other apologists will argue that North Korea is so isolated that further sanctions would not work and may even backfire. But we know that there have been effective measures against the North, for example, going after luxury goods and overseas accounts linked to the regime and ruling elite.

Yet, despite international sanctions on luxury goods to North Korea, the New York Times recently reported how China loosely defines such goods and continues to allow North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's army's to import equipment from China to build a world-class ski resort.

That is right—a world-class ski resort in a country that can't feed its own people.

In fact, according to the report, Chinese customs data showed that North Korea imported \$2.09 billion in luxury goods between 2012 and 2014, including armored cars and luxury yachts.

And, according to United Nations trade statistics, in 2014, China exported \$37 million worth of computers, \$30 million of tobacco, \$24 million of cars, and \$9 million of air-conditioning equipment to North Korea.

So I hope this legislation will tighten the measures against luxury goods used to buy loyalty for the regime. And I hope the Chinese realize that ignoring this regime is far riskier than working with the United States and others to rein in North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

Let us also not forget that in 2014, the U.N. General Assembly voted to refer the North Korean regime to the International Criminal Court for well-documented crimes against humanity.

Earlier, a U.N. commission of inquiry report documented massive crimes against humanity in North Korea, including deliberate starvation, forced labor, executions, torture, rape, and infanticide, among other crimes—most of them committed in North Korea's political prison camp systems.

The almost 400-page report concluded that the bulk of the crimes against humanity were committed "pursuant to policies set at the highest levels of the state" and were "without parallel in the contemporary world."

This criminal regime holds between 80,000–120,000 political prisoners in its system of gulags.

So I am glad this sanctions legislation also includes provisions that address North Korea's terrible human rights record.

Let me close by reaffirming my support for our South Korean and Asian allies that are at the most immediate threat from North Korea—not to mention the more than 25,000 U.S. military personnel stationed in South Korea. As such, without progress on ending North Korea's nuclear weapons program, I support the deployment of necessary missile defense technologies to help protect these allies.

DISAPPEARANCE OF 43 STUDENTS IN MEXICO

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it has been well over a year since 43 students from Ayotzinapa Rural Teachers' College were forcibly disappeared in the state of Guerrero, Mexico. On September 26, 2014, around 100 students from the college traveled to the city of Iguala. They were there to raise money and to obtain buses to attend a commemoration of the infamous massacre of more than 600 students in the capital in 1968.

The now former mayor of Iguala has been accused of ordering the attack on the students that evening. While the motive remains a mystery, what appears to have occurred is that the police used lethal force against the students, and the 43 who are missing were handed over to the criminal organization Guerreros Unidos. Six people were killed that day, and the fate of the 43 disappeared students remains unknown.

After it became clear, thanks to the courageous and dogged work of foreign journalists that a horrific crime had been covered up by Guerrero officials and the police, the Mexican Government established the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to provide independent analysis and technical assistance to the government.

The experts' September 2015 report, released on the eve of the 1-year anniversary of this tragedy, exposed significant deficiencies in the government's handling of the investigation and provided an opportunity for the government to restore the integrity of its own inquiry. The government's decision to extend the experts' mandate in the fall was a welcome signal of political will and a desire to build credibility.

But as the end of the experts' mandate nears, President Pena Nieto is running out of time to demonstrate that that political will has a lasting impact. The manner in which this investigation is conducted has grave implications not only for the victims of the attacks in Iguala and their families, but for the victims of countless other incidents in which Mexican citizens have vanished during the past decade and remain unaccounted for.

I urge the Mexican Government to fully support the experts' investigation by ensuring maximum cooperation of all Mexican officials, including on issues related to the experts' access to all those potentially involved in this incident and the serious pursuit of all possible leads the experts have identified, including by soliciting assistance from the United States.

I also urge the government to publicly refute the campaign that some have waged to delegitimize the experts as a way to discredit their work. If the experts' work is forced to carry on with only the passive acquiescence of the government—or worse, subtle attempts to hinder its work—rather than its active support, the progress that has been made may be lost and with it the truth and the Mexican Government's remaining credibility on this issue.

The Mexican people, like people everywhere who care about human rights, deserve to know what happened to these students. As I mentioned, we also know there are thousands of other cases in Mexico of disappearances and many reports by the National Human

Rights Commission and reputable human rights organizations of incidents of torture and extrajudicial killings. The only way to effectively address the kind of lawlessness that has become far too prevalent in Mexico is to conduct credible, thorough investigations and appropriately punish those responsible, so the message is clear that no one is above the law.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO FRED SEARS

• Mr. COONS. Mr. President, today, on behalf of Delaware's congressional delegation of U.S. Senator TOM CARPER and U.S. Representative JOHN CARNEY, I wish to recognize a close friend from Delaware, Fred Sears—a community leader and a passionate advocate for all in our community; a man whose name is synonymous with business leadership and public service in my home State of Delaware, and a man I am proud to call my friend.

Fred is known statewide for his generosity, his enthusiasm, and his business acumen. For decades, his impact has been felt by elected officials, non-profit and community leaders, and countless Delawareans of all backgrounds and careers. He is a true leader, an authentic champion of the community, and the embodiment of what service means in Delaware.

Fred Sears is a Delawarean through and through, born just blocks away from his boyhood home at what was then called Wilmington Hospital, he grew up across the river from Brandywine Zoo. This Delaware native attended Mt. Pleasant Elementary, Alfred I. DuPont Junior High, and Wilmington Friends School for high school. Fred went on to earn a business degree from the University of Delaware and had a great deal of fun, including a truly memorable spring break trip to the Bahamas with JOE BIDEN, his classmate and friend.

After graduating from UD in 1964, Fred began a nearly 40-year career in banking. Fresh out of college, Fred was scheduled to interview for a job with the Bank of Delaware, but accidentally walked into Delaware Trust instead. Fortunately, Delaware Trust was also hiring, and after starting as a management trainee, he rose to become the institution's first vice president of business development. From there, Fred went on to later work at Wilmington Trust, Beneficial National Bank, and ultimately Commerce Bank, where he was Delaware market president.

While Fred was well and widely known as a leader in our financial services industry, he found many other ways to serve our community as well. Early in his career, Mayor Tom Maloney asked his friend Fred to take a leave of absence from Delaware Trust

to serve as the city's director of finance and then later as director of economic development. Fred not only fulfilled those two roles terrifically, but decided afterwards to run for an at-large city council seat in 1976. Fred won and went on to serve two full terms.

Many of us in younger generations of politics after Fred's elected service have called on his wisdom, his insight, and his ability to bring people together, as we had important decisions to make. So Fred served on the transition teams of Wilmington Mayor James Sills, Delaware Governor Ruth Ann Minner, and co-chaired my transition team after I was elected New Castle county executive in 2004.

For many of us, decades of success in finance, in business, in politics might be the hallmark of a complete and successful career, but for Fred, these experiences were just a few of the ways he fulfilled a lifelong passion for service in our State of Neighbors. Just over 13 years ago, while Fred was at Commerce Bank, our mutual friend Jim Gilliam, Jr., called Fred one day and said to him, "I have a job for you." After some convincing, Fred accepted the job, and since then, he has served admirably at the helm of one of the most important organizations in Delaware: the Delaware Community Foundation. The DCF plays an integral role in my home State, helping local nonprofits direct philanthropy to Delaware's most worthy causes and encouraging long-term charitable giving to improve our State.

Since Fred began as CEO in 2002, the DCF has tripled its long-term charitable funds and built its assets to \$285 million. Dozens of nonprofits and community funds have flourished under Fred's leadership, and he and his team and their astute financial guidance continues to generate the funding that enables them to serve. Fred didn't join the DCF though just to raise money and just to be important and recognized; rather, he sought to improve the entire philanthropic community and quality of community life in Delaware, and his success in doing so reflects his values and his vision.

Fred is a true leader: honest, insightful, thoughtful; creative, positive and confident. And Fred possesses that rare quality: the ability to inspire others. He has used his passion for service to motivate the next generation of great leaders in our State.

Take, for example, one of Fred's many initiatives called the Next Generation. It is one he is most proud of—and justifiably so. Next Gen takes groups of civic-minded young professionals with limited or no experience in philanthropy and, with just the right amount of guidance and encouragement, helps mold them into nonprofit board leaders. Since 2004, Next Gen's chapters up and down the State have helped direct over \$300,000 in

grants to community needs all over my home State of Delaware.

My good friend Tony Allen, who also calls Fred a mentor and a friend and a brother, tells a story of how Fred helped establish the African-American Community Empowerment Fund. The fund is today known as the Council on Urban Empowerment, and it promotes philanthropy that supports educational, social, and economic empowerment of African-American Delawareans. As Tony notes, Fred didn't just help establish the fund, he wasn't just one of its first donors; he attended every meeting of the group. In 2010, Tony introduced Fred when Fred Sears was set to receive an award for nonprofit leadership. As Tony put it then, "While patience is a virtue, impatience is a weapon. And Fred can be appropriately impatient. Fred doesn't demur to what others would call insurmountable tasks and taboo topics of conversation. He takes every opportunity to constructively push the status quo."

Tony's absolutely right, and given that legacy of leadership, it is no surprise Fred has been honored by countless organizations for his business and community efforts. He has received a Lifetime Achievement in Philanthropy Award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals. He has been given a distinguished service award from the Wilmington Rotary Club. He has been deemed a Superstar in Business by the Delaware State Chamber and was named Citizen of the Year by the Delmarva Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Those awards and merits are certainly a reflection of Fred's values and his many successes. But those of us who have had the privilege to work closely with Fred and to know him know that his commitment to service shines most brightly in the hundreds of interactions he has with Delawareans every day, whether he is offering ideas and advice or just saying a quick hello.

We know that even though Fred's leaving the Delaware Community Foundation, he will undoubtedly continue to serve the community he loves. In fact, Fred just accepted an appointment from Governor Markell to chair Delaware's Expenditure Review Commission, suggesting Fred has no intention of taking "retirement" literally.

In a testament to Fred's thoughtfulness, leadership, and sense of compassion, just a day after the passing of our beloved friend Beau Biden earlier this year, Fred spoke to the Bidens and offered to help the family establish an organization in Beau's name. That idea became the Beau Biden Foundation for the Protection of Children—and 2 days after it was launched, they had already raised over \$125,000.

If this is all there was to Fred's story, it would be a remarkable one, but there is even more to Fred as a businessman, a philanthropist, and a

person. If you speak to those who have been around him the longest, they will tell you his true passion is his family: his wife, JoAnn; his son, Graham; his daughter-in-law, Kathryn; his son, Jason; his daughter-in-law, Jen; and of course his treasured grandchildren, Kylie, Paxton, and Charlie. I have no doubt that Fred's retirement means he will be spending a lot more time as Pop Pop to his three treasures, becoming even more of a fixture at their frequent school functions and their baseball and soccer games.

Fred's friends and family will also tell you how much he adored his mother, Marjorie, visiting her daily at Stonegates until her passing, and how much he cares for his father-in-law today. They will tell you that Fred loves dancing, snappy suspenders, and vinyl records.

Fred's friend Tom Shopa will tell you about Fred's passion for golf and how, for decades, he has kept track of all of his golf scores, the number of putts he made, the weather that day—recording every single detail just as his father did. Fred's friends and colleagues will tell you they hear Fred say thank you dozens of times every day.

Today I pause for a moment on the floor of this great institution to say thank you to Fred. Thank you for giving your time and talents over decades to more than 40 community nonprofit organizations, for serving on countless boards, from Christiana Care to the Rodel Foundation, from the Housing Partnership, to the United Way. Thank you for your decades of service to Wilmington and Delaware and for a lifelong commitment to family, friends, and community. Fred, as our friend Tony Allen puts it, everyone in Delaware is better off because of your efforts.

On behalf of Senator TOM CARPER and Congressman JOHN CARNEY, I wholeheartedly thank you, Fred Sears, and congratulations on many jobs well done. I eagerly look forward to seeing where your so-called retirement will take you next.●

REMEMBERING ALEX DIEKMANN

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, at the beginning of February, Montana lost a true conservationist. Alexander Boris Diekmann, 52 years old, passed away peacefully at his Bozeman home after battling cancer for many years. He is survived by his wife, Lisa, and his two sons, Logan and Liam.

Alex is originally from California, graduated from Yale University, and previously worked as a financial analyst and in a commercial real estate agency before deciding to pursue his love of the outdoors and taking a position with the Trust for Public Land in Bozeman, MT.

In Bozeman, Alex worked as a senior project manager for the Trust for Public Land. He not only worked diligently

to increase access to public lands, but also strived to secure Montana's beauty for many years to come. Alex did just that through his 16 years of work to protect the Madison and greater Yellowstone Area, which include the Taylor Fork in the Gallatin Canyon, Three Dollar Bridge, Chestnut Mountain, and Frog Rock and the restoration of O'Dell Creek in the Madison Valley.

A large part of his success came from Alex's remarkable ability to facilitate open dialogue and cooperation amongst different interest groups, such as landowners, government agencies, elected officials, and nonprofits.

Alex was known as a man very passionate about his work and his efforts to preserve open spaces will have a lasting impact for many years to come. His heartfelt love for conservation can be understood by his own words: "It is unbelievable how proud people are of being involved in this (conservation) and that's something you can't put a price tag on. The rewards are entirely different. It is all about the heartfelt connection we have with the places we help conserve."

He worked on more than 55 projects and helped to preserve more than 100,000 acres during his time with the Trust for Public Lands. Some of his accomplishments also include conserving 23,000 acres of forested lands surrounding Whitefish, MT.

As a result of Alex's efforts, there is also an abundance of wildlife habitat, water resources, and migratory corridors that are now secured in Montana.

Despite Alex's impressive achievements from his time with the Trust for Public Land, he kept a humble spirit and truly cared about the people he worked with. He considered the concerns of others when making decisions and going about his work. He has been described by some of his colleagues as honest, warm, generous, creative, and extremely dedicated.

Alex Diekmann, you will be greatly missed, but your legacy of conservation lives on. Thank you for doing what you did to keep the beauty of Montana secure for generations to come. Montanans thank you, and I thank you.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting a sundry nomination and treaties which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 10:03 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 3033. An act to require the President's annual budget request to Congress each year to include a line item for the Research in Disabilities Education program of the National Science Foundation and to require the National Science Foundation to conduct research on dyslexia.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

At 12:55 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 677. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for annual cost-of-living adjustments to be made automatically by law each year in the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain service-connected disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

H.R. 890. An act to revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida.

H.R. 2360. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the approval of certain programs of education for purposes of educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

H.R. 2915. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3016. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs relating to health care, educational assistance, and vocational rehabilitation, to establish the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3036. An act to designate the National September 11 Memorial located at the World Trade Center site in New York City, New York, as a national memorial, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3106. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the administration of Department medical facility construction projects.

H.R. 3234. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to evaluate the ability of each medical center of the Department to provide quality health care to veterans, to ensure that the Secretary improves such medical centers that are underperforming, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3262. An act to provide for the conveyance of land of the Illiana Health Care Sys-

tem of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Danville, Illinois.

H.R. 3894. An act to amend title 10, United States Code, to require the prompt notification of State Child Protective Services by military and civilian personnel of the Department of Defense required by law to report suspected instances of child abuse and neglect.

H.R. 4056. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States to the property known as "The Community Living Center" at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida.

H.R. 4437. An act to extend the deadline for the submittal of the final report required by the Commission on Care.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 677. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for annual cost-of-living adjustments to be made automatically by law each year in the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain service-connected disabled veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 890. An act to revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 2360. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the approval of certain programs of education for purposes of educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 2915. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

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H.R. 3036. An act to designate the National September 11 Memorial located at the World Trade Center site in New York City, New York, as a national memorial, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 3106. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the administration of Department medical facility construction projects; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3234. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to evaluate the ability of each medical center of the Department to provide quality health care to veterans, to ensure that the Secretary improves such medical centers that are underperforming, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3262. An act to provide for the conveyance of land of the Illiana Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Danville, Illinois; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3894. An act to amend title 10, United States Code, to require the prompt notification of State Child Protective Services by military and civilian personnel of the Department of Defense required by law to report suspected instances of child abuse and neglect; to the Committee on Armed Services.

H.R. 4056. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States to the property known as "The Community Living Center" at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 4437. An act to extend the deadline for the submittal of the final report required by the Commission on Care; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4318. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Poly(oxy-1,2-ethanediyl), a-(3-carboxy-1-oxosulfo)propyl)-w-hydroxy, alkyl (C10-C16) ethers, disodium salts; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9941-15-OCSPP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4319. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Importation of Orchids in Growing Media from Taiwan" ((RIN0579-AE01) (Docket No. APHIS-2014-0041)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 4, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4320. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of General Counsel of the Department of the Army, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 4, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4321. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe that was declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4322. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Ukraine that was originally declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4323. A communication from the Assistant Director for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Cuban Assets Control Regulations" (31 CFR Part 515) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4324. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Venezuela that was originally declared in Executive Order 13692 of March 8, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4325. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Pumps" ((RIN1904-AC54) (Docket No. EERE-2012-BT-STD-0031)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 4, 2016; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4326. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Disapproval of California Air Plan Revisions, South Coast Air Quality Management District" (FRL No. 9941-72-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4327. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Authorization of State-Initiated Changes and Incorporation by Reference of Approved State Hazardous Waste Management Program" (FRL No. 9940-27-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4328. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval of Missouri's Air Quality Implementation Plans; Americold Logistics, LLC 24-Hour Particulate Matter (PM10) National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) Consent Judgment" (FRL No. 9941-68-Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4329. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plan Revisions; Rules, General Requirements and Test Methods; Utah" (FRL No. 9933-49-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4330. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Louisiana" (FRL No. 9941-51-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4331. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Minnesota; Inver Hills SO2" (FRL No. 9941-53-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4332. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; KY; Emissions Statements for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone NAAQS" (FRL No. 9941-64-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4333. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Additions to List of Section 241.4 Categorical Non-Waste Fuels" ((RIN2050-AG74) (FRL No. 9929-56-OLEM)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4334. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District; Permit Program" (FRL No. 9940-19-Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4335. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval of California Air Plan Revisions, Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District" (FRL No. 9941-11-Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4336. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval of Air Plan Revisions; Arizona; Rescissions and Corrections" (FRL No. 9942-03-Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4337. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; California; San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District; Employer Based Trip Reduction Programs" (FRL No. 9941-16-Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4338. A communication from the Deputy Director, Administration for Aging, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)" (RIN0985-AA11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 4, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4339. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Health Insurance Providers Fee; Procedural and Administrative Guidance" (Notice 2016-14) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4340. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revenue Procedure 2016-10" (Rev. Proc. 2016-10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4341. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Permitted Disparity in Employer-Provided Contributions or Benefits" (Rev. Rul. 2016-05) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4342. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Allocation of Creditable Foreign Taxes" ((RIN1545-BM57) (TD 9748)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4343. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Medicare National Coverage Determinations for Fiscal Year 2015"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4344. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15-122); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4345. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4346. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15-050); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4347. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2016-0012—2016-0021); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4348. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition Library Address; Technical Amendments" (Docket No. FDA-2015-N-0011) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4349. A communication from the Deputy Director, Directorate of Cooperative and State Programs, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Maine State Plan for State and Local Government Employers" (RIN1218-AB97) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4350. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Extension of Temporary Placement of PB-22, 5F-PB-22, AB-FUBINACA and ADB-PINACA in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act" (Docket No. DEA-385E) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4351. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Temporary Placement of the Synthetic Cannabinoid MAB-CHMINACA into Schedule I" (Docket No. DEA-421F) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4352. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Table of Excluded Nonnarcotic Products: Nasal Decongestant Inhaler/Vapor Inhaler" (Docket No. DEA-409) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4353. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Table of Excluded Products: Vicks VapoInhaler" ((RIN1117-AB39) (Docket No. DEA-367)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4354. A communication from the Chief of the Border Security Regulations Branch, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Elimination of Nonimmigrant Visa Exemption for Certain Caribbean Residents Coming to the United States as H-2A Agricultural Workers" ((RIN1651-AB09) (CBP Dec. 16-03)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4355. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Competition, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revised Jurisdictional Thresholds for Section 7A of the Clayton Act" (FR Doc. 2016-01451) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4356. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal

Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2015-8433)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4357. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2015-1275)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4358. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2015-0678)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4359. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2015-1427)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4360. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2015-1991)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4361. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2015-0824)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4362. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2014-1045)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4363. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2015-1429)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4364. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" ((RIN2120-

EC-4387. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures: Miscellaneous Amendments (131):

Amdt. No. 3675" (RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4388. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (49); Amdt. No. 3673" (RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4389. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (15); Amdt. No. 3674" (RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4390. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (124); Amdt. No. 3677" (RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4391. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (19); Amdt. No. 3678" (RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4392. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Helicopters" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-2069) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4393. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following New York Towns; Elmira, NY; Ithaca, NY; Poughkeepsie, NY" (RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2015-4514) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4394. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; El Paso TX" (RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2014-1074) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Com-

mittee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4395. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Boise, ID" (RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2015-3674) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4396. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revocation and Establishment of Class E Airspace; Bowman, ND" (RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2015-1834) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4397. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace, Revocation of Class E Airspace; Chico, CA" (RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2015-3899) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4398. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class D Airspace; Denver, CO" (RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2015-6753) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4399. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Modification of VOR Federal Airway V-443; North Central United States" (RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2015-7611) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4400. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of United States Area Navigation (RNAV) Route Q-35, Western United States" (RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-6001) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4401. A communication from the Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; North Atlantic Swordfish Fishery" (RIN0648-XE295) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4402. A communication from the Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "At-

lantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries" (RIN0648-XE346) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4403. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Critical Habitat for Endangered North Atlantic Right Whale" (RIN0648-AY54) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4404. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Final Listing Determinations on Proposal to List the Banggai Cardinalfish and Harrison's Dogfish Under the Endangered Species Act" (RIN0648-XE328) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-129. A concurrent resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio urging the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to take action to improve prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of Lyme disease; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NUMBER 51

Whereas, Lyme disease is the most common tick-borne illness in the United States, with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimating that 300,000 Americans are diagnosed with the disease each year; and

Whereas, Many cases of Lyme disease are never reported to the CDC, as only approximately 30,000 of the estimated 300,000 cases of Lyme disease are reported to the CDC by state health departments each year; and

Whereas, Lyme disease can cause devastating health consequences if left untreated, such as severe pain, heart palpitations, and chronic neurological damage; and

Whereas, Diagnosis of Lyme disease is difficult because there is no general consensus on the definition of its symptoms and the symptoms are similar to those of other conditions, leading to misdiagnoses. Furthermore, current Lyme disease testing methods often lead to inaccurate results; and

Whereas, There remains much debate in the medical community concerning the proper courses of action for diagnosing and for treating Lyme disease; and

Whereas, Greater knowledge of Lyme disease and its causes will put the general public in a better position to avoid contracting the disease: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That we, the members of the 131st General Assembly of the State of Ohio, in adopting this resolution, urge the CDC to take the following actions:

(1) Update definitions of Lyme disease symptoms by clinical diagnosis;

(2) Reconsider standards and best practices for diagnosing and for treating Lyme disease;

(3) Provide more resources for health care professionals and the general public to learn about Lyme disease to aid in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of the disease;

(4) Improve the techniques that state and local public health agencies use to report cases of Lyme disease diagnoses so that fewer cases go unreported and the CDC can better monitor the incidence of the disease across the nation;

(5) Provide the means for improved laboratory testing or funding for improved laboratory testing to enhance early detection of Lyme disease in humans; and be it further

Resolved, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, to the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services, to the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, to the President Pro Tempore and Secretary of the United States Senate, to the members of the Ohio Congressional delegation, and to the news media of Ohio.

POM-130. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Michigan urging the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the United States Congress to create a pilot program in Michigan instituting a flexible Veterans Choice Card system structured similar to a traditional health care program for all veterans in Michigan; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 7

Whereas, The men and women who serve our country deserve our utmost respect and appreciation. Many of them are injured in the line of duty and come home to face challenging physical disabilities and other health issues. All veterans are entitled to the best health care we can give them; and

Whereas, According to the U.S. Government Accountability Office, several variables affect a veteran's ability to access VA health care. Veterans may have difficulty travelling to a distant facility for care or be unable to secure an appointment in an acceptable period of time to deal quickly with a medical issue; and

Whereas, To provide a more flexible VA health care system, Congress enacted the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014, allowing for care outside of the traditional VA system. Under the act, the new Choice Program will provide many veterans with VA compensated health care at a non-VA center, providing more timely appointments, less bureaucratic red tape, and easier travel; and

Whereas, As currently structured, the Choice Program limits non-VA health care to veterans residing more than 40 miles from a VA health facility. The law does not differentiate between types of VA health care facilities. Therefore, a veteran living near a small VA clinic but needing specialty cardiology care at a VA facility 100 miles away will not be allowed to access private cardiology care. Also, the program requires that every appointment for care be cleared by a program manager: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate Concurring), That we urge the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the United States Congress to create a pilot program in Michigan instituting a flexible Veterans Choice Card system structured similar to a traditional health care program for all veterans in Michigan; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, and the United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

POM-131. A petition by a citizen from the State of Texas urging the United States Congress to propose, for ratification by special conventions held within the individual states, an amendment to the United States Constitution which would establish a procedure by which members of the United States Senate and of the United States House of Representatives may be involuntarily removed from office by means of a recall election; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title and with an amended preamble:

S. Res. 99. A resolution calling on the Government of Iran to fulfill its promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 330. A resolution congratulating the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet for winning the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with amendments and with a preamble:

S. Res. 361. A resolution urging robust funding for humanitarian relief for Syria.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

*Beth F. Cobert, of California, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management for a term of four years.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 2527. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the mental health treatment provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to veterans who served in classified missions; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. NELSON:

S. 2528. A bill to promote the safe manufacture, use, and transportation of lithium bat-

teries and cells, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2529. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require that the Buy American purchase requirement for the school lunch program include fish harvested within United States waters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 2530. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the exemption for certain aircraft from the excise taxes on transportation by air; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 2531. A bill to authorize State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 2532. A bill to authorize appropriations for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 2533. A bill to provide short-term water supplies to drought-stricken California and provide for long-term investments in drought resiliency throughout the Western United States; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. TOOMEY:

S. 2534. A bill to amend the National Child Protection Act of 1993 to establish a permanent background check system for private security officers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 2535. A bill to provide deadlines for corrosion control treatment steps for lead and copper in drinking water, and other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 2536. A bill to require the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue a notice of proposed rulemaking regarding the inclusion in aircraft medical kits of medications and equipment to meet the emergency medical needs of children; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CRUZ:

S. 2537. A bill to amend the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987 with respect to certain prohibitions regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization under that Act; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS):

S. 2538. A bill to provide resources and incentives for the enforcement of immigration laws in the interior of the United States and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. REED, Ms. WARREN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2539. A bill to amend the Social Security Act to provide for mandatory funding, to ensure that the families that have infants and toddlers, have a family income of not more

than 200 percent of the applicable Federal poverty guideline, and need child care have access to high-quality infant and toddler child care by the end of fiscal year 2026, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. Res. 370. A resolution recognizing that for nearly 40 years, the United States and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have worked toward stability, prosperity, and peace in Southeast Asia; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. FISCHER, and Mr. SASSE):

S. Con. Res. 30. A concurrent resolution expressing concern over the disappearance of David Sneddon, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 71

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 71, a bill to preserve open competition and Federal Government neutrality towards the labor relations of Federal Government contractors on Federal and federally funded construction projects.

S. 391

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 391, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 613

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 613, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to improve the efficiency of summer meals.

S. 800

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 800, a bill to improve, coordinate, and enhance rehabilitation research at the National Institutes of Health.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory

board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 1081

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1081, a bill to end the use of body-gripping traps in the National Wildlife Refuge System.

S. 1378

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) were added as cosponsors of S. 1378, a bill to strengthen employee cost savings suggestions programs within the Federal Government.

S. 1566

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1566, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to require group and individual health insurance coverage and group health plans to provide for coverage of oral anticancer drugs on terms no less favorable than the coverage provided for anticancer medications administered by a health care provider.

S. 1622

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1622, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to devices.

S. 1831

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1831, a bill to revise section 48 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) were added as cosponsors of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1909

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1909, a bill to protect communities from destructive Federal overreach by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

S. 1968

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1968, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require certain companies to disclose information describing any measures the company has taken to identify and address conditions of forced labor, slav-

ery, human trafficking, and the worst forms of child labor within the company's supply chains.

S. 2021

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2021, a bill to prohibit Federal agencies and Federal contractors from requesting that an applicant for employment disclose criminal history record information before the applicant has received a conditional offer, and for other purposes.

S. 2040

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2040, a bill to deter terrorism, provide justice for victims, and for other purposes.

S. 2144

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2144, a bill to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

S. 2166

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2166, a bill to amend part B of title IV of the Social Security Act to ensure that mental health screenings and assessments are provided to children and youth upon entry into foster care.

S. 2178

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2178, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent certain provisions of the Heartland, Habitat, Harvest, and Horticulture Act of 2008 relating to timber, and for other purposes.

S. 2218

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2218, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care.

S. 2235

At the request of Mr. UDALL, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2235, a bill to repeal debt collection amendments made by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015.

S. 2272

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2272, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 regarding proprietary institutions of higher education in order to protect students and taxpayers.

S. 2423

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2423, a bill making appropriations to address the heroin and opioid drug abuse epidemic for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

S. 2444

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2444, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for the disposition, within 60 days, of an application to exempt a projectile from classification as armor piercing ammunition.

S. 2469

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2469, a bill to repeal the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act.

S. 2474

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2474, a bill to allow for additional markings, including the words "Israel" and "Product in Israel," to be used for country of origin marking requirements for goods made in the geographical areas known as the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

S. 2487

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2487, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

S. 2492

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2492, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide matching payments for retirement savings contributions by certain individuals.

S. 2497

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of

S. 2497, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide protections for retail customers, and for other purposes.

S. 2502

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) were added as cosponsors of S. 2502, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2505

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2505, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2512

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) were added as cosponsors of S. 2512, a bill to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus.

S. RES. 346

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 346, a resolution expressing opposition to the European Commission interpretive notice regarding labeling Israeli products and goods manufactured in the West Bank and other areas, as such actions undermine the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

AMENDMENT NO. 3167

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3167 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3215

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3215 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 2533. A bill to provide short-term water supplies to drought-stricken California and provide for long-term investments in drought resiliency throughout the Western United States; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the historic drought that is devastating California and much of the West.

To help address this disaster, today I am introducing the California Long-Term Provisions for Water Supply and Short-Term Provisions for Emergency Drought Relief Act.

Let me begin by saying that the El Niño we're seeing now in California brings with it some good news.

The Sierra Nevada snowpack is the deepest it has been in 5 years, and water content is up.

The California Department of Water Resources reported in early-February that the statewide snowpack stands at 25.4 inches, or 130 percent of the historical average.

But we are faced with three problems.

First, one El Niño—even a strong El Niño—won't be sufficient to pull us out of this drought. Experts say we need at least 3 consecutive years of above-average precipitation.

Second, we lack the infrastructure needed to store much of this water. We need to do more to increase the amount of water we can hold from wet years to dry years.

And while river flows are extremely high from these winter storms, we are not taking advantage of them to the extent we should.

What that means is tens of thousands of acre-feet are flowing out into the Pacific Ocean rather than being collected for later use.

So while California is getting some much-needed rain, it's not likely to be enough to end this historic drought.

Let me be clear; this drought is hurting California.

Mr. President, 69 communities are facing significant water supply and water quality issues, 2,591 wells are critically low or dry affecting some 13,000 residents; California's economy lost \$2.7 billion from the drought in 2015.

The agricultural sector lost approximately \$1.8 billion from the drought in 2015, exceeding the \$41.5 billion loss in 2014.

More than 1 million acres of California farmland were fallowed in 2015, an increase of more than 600,000 acres over 2011.

Since 2014, the drought has led to 35,000 permanent jobs lost in California, 21,000 seasonal and part-time agricultural jobs have also been lost.

Farmworkers cannot find employment and are forced to move in with family members or friends who are also struggling.

Some single mothers are traveling as far as Washington State for work to help support their families.

Land subsidence from pumping too much groundwater has caused large areas of the San Joaquin Valley to sink by as much as two inches per month. As a result, bridges, aqueducts and roads have already begun to crack.

Mr. President, 50 million large trees are dead or likely will die from lack of

water, and another 888 million trees experienced loss of canopy cover since 2011.

These are just some of the many examples of the dreadful effect the drought is having on California.

The bill I am introducing today includes a wide range of provisions to address two key needs:

First, long-term solutions. In addition to helping the many communities that are running out of water, we must create a new water infrastructure that is not as dependent on annual levels of rain or snow. That is why the bill includes many programs to promote long-term drought resiliency.

California is now home to 40 million people, but is relying on State and Federal water infrastructure first constructed in the 1960s when California's population was just 16 million.

The Central Valley Project and the State Water Project were completed in the 1970s, and neither have kept pace with the rapid growth in California's population or economy.

Put another way, California's major water infrastructure has remained largely unchanged for the past 40 years while California's population has more than doubled.

To address this, we must come up with long-term solutions to address these water infrastructure gaps.

This must include investments in water storage projects, desalination plants and water recycling projects, as well as programs to assist vulnerable communities, fund research and support ecosystem restoration.

In addition to those long-term solutions, the bill would also provide short-term, temporary solutions which are limited to the duration of the Governor's drought declaration or two years, whichever is longer.

These provisions will help make the water-delivery system more efficient during this current drought, and they will do so without any mandated pumping levels.

Under this bill State and Federal officials will continue to determine appropriate pumping levels, and all short-term operations must comply with existing applicable laws.

Let me repeat: there are no mandated levels of pumping in this bill.

Let me briefly discuss how this bill will help California and the positive impacts it will have west-wide.

Over the past 2 years, my staff and I have gone through an extensive consultation process with both State and Federal agencies.

We have worked through every proposal or suggestion we received from those agencies and all are incorporated in the bill I am introducing today.

On the Federal side, we worked with the Department of the Interior; Department of Commerce; Bureau of Reclamation; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Fish and Wildlife Service; NOAA

Fisheries; and the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

On the State side, we worked with the California Natural Resources Agency; California Department of Water Resources; California Department of Fish and Wildlife; and the Office of the Governor of California.

In addition to integrating proposals from State and Federal agency experts, we have incorporated feedback from a variety of stakeholders including environmental groups; urban and agricultural water districts; wildlife advocates and Democratic and Republican congressional offices.

As part of the consultation process, we received and incorporated more than 40 suggested changes.

I would first like to cover the long-term provisions.

As I said, California is home to around 40 million people, but has the same water infrastructure as the 1960s, when only 16 million people lived in the state.

Given the changing climate, I believe that California will become a desert state if we don't act. Droughts will only become more frequent and more severe.

That's why the long-term provisions of this bill look at new sources of water and new ways to store water.

These long-term provisions authorize a total of \$1.3 billion and include desalination, recycling, storage, and loan assistance for drought-stricken communities. And as I said, these investments can produce a new water infrastructure not as dependent on weather.

This bill increases the WaterSMART authorization by \$150 million for long-term water conservation, reclamation and recycling.

Some of these WaterSMART funds can then be used for a new Bureau of Reclamation program to help rural and disadvantaged communities that are running out of water. These grants would cover everything from emergency bottled water to long-term solutions like water treatment facilities.

But we also need to look beyond the current emergency and consider ways we can shift these communities from vulnerable water sources like wells to more sustainable and resilient water systems.

That's why this bill prioritizes money from the Environmental Protection Agency's Revolving Loan Fund for water infrastructure projects that would help drought-stricken communities that are at risk of running out of clean water.

This bill also authorizes \$200 million for the Reclamation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, known as RIFIA. This loan-guarantee program will help water districts and municipalities fund long-term solutions to store more water and provide additional clean water.

We also need to invest in desalination and water recycling. These are

two of the most promising technologies that may offer long-term solutions.

The bill identifies 137 local recycling and desalination projects that, if constructed, could produce upwards of 1.4 million acre feet in "new" water.

This includes 27 desalination projects identified by the State—totaling more than 352,000 acre-feet of water—that the Secretary of the Interior must consider funding if eligible.

The bill also reauthorizes the Desalination Act and authorizes \$100 million for feasibility studies and project design as well as desalinization research to improve the energy co-efficient from reverse osmosis and membrane technology. These funds run through 2020.

In addition, the bill identifies 110 water recycling projects that the Secretary of the Interior must consider funding. These projects total more than 1,060,334 acre-feet of water.

The bill authorizes \$200 million for the Bureau of Reclamation's Title XVI water recycling program and streamlines the program by eliminating the hurdle of congressional authorization for individual projects.

We also have to encourage public-private partnerships. That's why the bill funds a loan-guarantee program and other financing mechanisms to help make projects a reality.

If all the projects identified in the bill were completed, nearly 1.4 million acre-feet of "new" water could be made available.

Given the consensus that droughts will grow more severe, we have to increase the amount of water we can hold from wet years for use in dry years.

In order to help accomplish this, the bill authorizes \$600 million for water storage projects in California and other Western States. These funds would be available through 2025.

But the Federal Government can't do it all on its own. California signaled that it's ready by enacting a \$7.5 billion water bond. The bill therefore positions the federal government as a partner with California to take advantage of these funds to build new reservoirs and expand existing reservoirs.

Recognizing that the drought has taken a toll on many aspects of life in California, including fish and wildlife, this bill authorizes \$55 million for habitat restoration efforts. Measures include protections for the entire life cycle of fish, from increasing spawning habitat to reducing mortality during migration out to the ocean; reducing threats to fish, including smelt and salmon, by removing predators such as striped bass from specific locations where they prey on endangered fish; using real-time monitoring of turbidity and fish to determine pumping rates, rather than specific congressional mandates or targets; funding daily boat monitoring to survey for smelt near the pumps when turbidity levels are high and the smelt are often attracted

to the pumps; funding studies to track the smelt's most current locations and make decisions that are key to running pumps in a way that is not harmful to fish, and providing \$10 million in water infrastructure for refuges, a vital resource for billions of migratory birds that use the Pacific Flyway.

In addition to the long-term provisions, the bill includes short-term, temporary provisions to allow for more efficient operation of the Federal and State water systems.

As I stated, these emergency operations provisions last only for the length of the Governor's Emergency Declaration or 2 years—whichever is longer.

These short-term provisions will allow the agencies to capture water from winter storms. Already, the snowpack is significantly higher in height and water content than the last few years, and more water is flowing down the Delta.

The bill has eight key provisions that will allow for water to be captured and stored:

Improved data to operate pumps. Enhanced daily monitoring and data collection will help to operate pumps more efficiently, and pump at higher levels when no fish are present and pump at reduced levels when fish are nearby.

The revised bill requires daily boat monitoring to survey for smelt near the pumps when turbidity levels are high, so that pumping reductions are made based on the most up-to-date facts.

The bill also authorizes studies to identify smelts' location in the Delta on a real-time basis.

In addition, the bill authorizes a Delta Smelt Distribution study to identify how many smelt are in different parts of the Delta in drier and wetter years. This is critical to know what level of take of the smelt is a threat to the species.

Winter storms and "payback." The revised bill authorizes agencies to increase pumping during winter storms using their best judgment to determine when and by how much.

Once the storms end, the agencies would no longer be required to "payback" water already pumped unless there was an environmental reason, such as harm to fish.

This so-called "payback" has led to the loss of tens of thousands of acre-feet of water. Payback currently requires agencies to reduce subsequent water pumping by an equal amount of water as was captured during the storms, which results in the loss of tens of thousands of acre-feet of water that could instead be stored or transferred for use throughout the State.

Agencies must explain pumping levels under the Delta Smelt Biological Opinion.

The bill does not impose any mandated pumping levels, instead leaving

those pumping levels up to the discretion of the water agencies. But the bill does require officials to justify the levels at which they pump.

By requiring written justification for the level of pumping, the bill attempts to maximize the amount of water pumped by requiring officials to consider whether real-time monitoring justifies lowering pumping levels. This water system must be operated based on science, not intuition.

I want to be clear: The revised text does not include any mandate. We removed a provision that would have mandated pumping at 5,000 cubic feet per second in the Old and Middle Rivers, unless pumping at these levels would cause additional adverse effects on the Delta smelt.

The 1:1 transfer ratio. The strong El Niño means more water is likely to be available for voluntary transfers from willing sellers with extra water to buyers downstream who need water.

This provision helps facilitate those transfers in April and May by allowing a 1:1 transfer ratio. In past years, agencies have reduced the likelihood of transfers by requiring water users to send more water downstream than could be captured and stored at a 4:1 ratio.

By allowing for a 1:1 ratio—while adhering to environmental law and biological opinions—more water transfers can be accomplished, providing water to users who truly need it.

Extending the time period for water transfers by five months. The bill extends by 5 months the time period when transfers may take place.

The current transfer window of July through September is extended to April through November. Extending the transfer window allows water transfers to be available during the spring planting season.

All transfers must remain consistent with the biological opinions.

Expediting review of transfers and the construction of barriers. Environmental reviews of water transfers and the installation of temporary barriers must be completed within 60 days, unless an environmental impact statement is required.

Agencies must maximize water supplies consistent with applicable laws and biological opinions.

Federal agencies can and should try to both protect species and provide water supplies.

The bill makes very clear that agencies cannot harm the fish in violation of the biological opinions—but within this environmental protection mandate, the agencies should try to increase water supplies—especially during a drought emergency.

This requirement complements the additional requirement that agencies must explain any harm to the fish that requires a reduction in water supplies.

Delta Cross-Channel Gates. The bill requires the Secretary of the Interior

and the Secretary of Commerce to ensure that the gates remain open as long as possible.

These gates are critically important for controlling salinity in the Delta. When the gates are closed, water that would otherwise be pumped or stored is instead used to flush salty water out through the Delta.

Keeping the gates open for longer will help to reduce salinity in the interior Delta and avoid releasing water unnecessarily in the Central Valley Project and State Water Project. This helps both Delta farmers and communities as well as those south of Delta.

As I stated before, all of these short-term provisions are temporary and will sunset when the Governor's drought emergency expires or two years from the date of enactment, whichever is later.

We have spent untold hours working on this bill.

We have addressed—to the best of our ability—the concerns raised by a host of constituent groups and individuals including environmentalists, water districts, Federal and State agencies, and the agricultural sector.

The bill reflects many meetings between Democrats and Republicans, water districts, cities, rural communities, farmers, fishermen, and a number of environmental groups.

While this bill will not satisfy every water interest, I believe that these provisions will place California on a long-term path to drought resiliency.

This is a bill that offers real help to California while adhering to the laws and biological opinions that protect fish and wildlife.

The result of our efforts is a bill that stands a real chance of being approved by both parties and signed into law. I look forward to working with my colleagues to make that happen.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 370—RECOGNIZING THAT FOR NEARLY 40 YEARS, THE UNITED STATES AND THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH EAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN) HAVE WORKED TOWARD STABILITY, PROSPERITY, AND PEACE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. HIRONO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 370

Whereas the February 2016 U.S.-ASEAN summit at Sunnylands in Rancho Mirage, California is an opportunity to deepen the United States-ASEAN partnership;

Whereas the United States and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) established dialogue relations on

September 10, 1977, with the issuing of the 1977 Joint Communiqué Of The First ASEAN-U.S. Dialogue, and the United States acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) at the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference Session with the United States in Thailand on July 22, 2009;

Whereas the United States was the first non-ASEAN country to appoint an ambassador to ASEAN on April 29, 2008, and the first dialogue partner to establish a permanent mission to ASEAN in 2010;

Whereas the United States has supported efforts to strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat and expand its role in providing greater coordination between and enhancing the effectiveness of regional institutions;

Whereas the first-ever U.S.-ASEAN Defense Forum was held on April 1, 2014, in Honolulu, Hawaii, further deepening ties on the challenges to security, peace, and prosperity in the region, and on November 21, 2015, the United States and ASEAN elevated their relationship to the ASEAN-U.S. Strategic Partnership in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia at the 3rd U.S.-ASEAN summit;

Whereas the Governments and people of the United States and ASEAN can help realize their common vision of a peaceful, prosperous, rules-based Asia-Pacific region that offers security, opportunity, and dignity to all of its citizens;

Whereas ASEAN is the 7th largest economy in the world, at \$2,400,000,000,000, representing the United States' 4th largest export market with total-two way trade in goods and services reaching \$254,000,000,000 and accounting for more than 500,000 jobs in the United States, and it represents a diverse group of nations and dynamic economies with an expanding workforce, a growing middle class, and a diverse set of skills, cultures, and resources;

Whereas ASEAN is home to critical global sea lanes located at the center of the world's strongest economic growth area, with \$5,300,000,000,000 of global trade and more than half of total shipped tonnage transiting through ASEAN's sea lanes each year;

Whereas the United States has a national interest in freedom of navigation and overflight, open access to Asia's maritime commons, and respect for international law in the South China Sea;

Whereas the South China Sea represents a critical international waterway not just for the region but the entire world;

Whereas the United States does not take sides on the competing territorial disputes, but believes claimants should pursue their territorial claims without resort to coercion, and through collaborative diplomacy, including international arbitration, and in accordance international law and institutions;

Whereas the United States opposes all claims in the maritime domain that impinge on the rights, freedoms, and lawful use of the sea that belongs to all nations and upholds the principles that territorial and maritime claims, including territorial waters or territorial seas, must be derived from land features and otherwise comport with international law;

Whereas the United States supports the Philippines' decision to use arbitration under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), done at Montego Bay December 10, 1982, to peacefully and lawfully address competing territorial claims;

Whereas the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) was signed by all members of ASEAN and the People's Republic of China on November 4, 2002, and the United States supports efforts

by ASEAN and the People's Republic of China to develop an effective Code of Conduct (COC), encourages claimants not to undertake new or unilateral attempts to change the status quo since the signing of the 2002 Declaration of Conduct, including reclamation activities or asserting administrative measures or controls in disputed areas in the South China Sea; and supports efforts to fully and effectively implement the Declaration of Conduct in its entirety and to work toward the expeditious conclusion of an effective Code of Conduct;

Whereas the United States has invested significantly in maritime security capacity building with allies and partners in ASEAN to respond to threats in waters off their coasts and to provide maritime security more broadly across the region;

Whereas the United States, as a long-standing Asia-Pacific power, will maintain and exercise freedom of operations in the international waters and airspace in the Asia-Pacific maritime domains, which are critical to the prosperity, stability, and security of ASEAN and the entire Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas ASEAN is a partner to the United States on key transnational challenges, such as terrorism, violent extremism, climate change, environmental degradation and pollution, energy, infectious diseases, disarmament, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, cybersecurity, trafficking in persons, illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber and illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing;

Whereas the United States, ASEAN, and other Dialogue Partners, through the 2015 East Asia Summit, adopted a statement on transnational cyber issues, emphasizing the importance of regional cooperation to improve the security and stability of cyber networks which sets an important precedent for strengthening practical cooperation, risk reduction, and confidence building in cyberspace;

Whereas the 2015 East Asia Summit in Kuala Lumpur adopted a statement on countering violent extremism, where the United States, ASEAN, and other Dialogue Partner leaders sent a clear signal of the region's determination to tackle challenges posed by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and other violent extremist groups, and to respond to their efforts to spread their ideology of violence and terrorism;

Whereas 2015 East Asia Summit leaders also adopted a statement on health security in responding to diseases with pandemic potential, which committed the region to improve health surveillance systems in each nation, and emphasized the importance of information sharing to promote early detection and response to potential pandemics;

Whereas all members at the 2015 East Asia Summit adopted a statement on maritime cooperation, including preventing incidents at sea, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, irregular migration, piracy, and to collaborate on protecting the marine environment;

Whereas changes in climatic conditions in the ASEAN region over the past four decades have resulted in major loss and damage throughout the ASEAN region with disproportionate impact on developing countries, with the experiences of Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar and Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines providing stark evidence of the destructive impacts on the region;

Whereas conservation and sustainable management of forests throughout ASEAN play an important role in helping to miti-

gate changes in the climate, reduce the risks of extreme weather events and other climate-driven disasters, and provide sustainable economic livelihood opportunities for local communities;

Whereas the United States will pursue initiatives that are consistent with broader sustainable development, including the achievement of food security and poverty alleviation throughout the ASEAN region, and build on cooperative efforts outlined at the 2014 ASEAN-U.S. Summit to further tackle this global challenge;

Whereas ASEAN is the third-fastest growing economy in Asia after China and India, expanding by 30 percent since 2007 and exceeding the global growth average for the past 10 years;

Whereas the ASEAN Economic Community aims to create one of the largest single market economies in the world, facilitating the free movement of goods, services, and professionals and a sense of economic community among its member states;

Whereas the United States is the largest investor in Southeast Asia, almost \$190,000,000,000 in 2012, creating millions of jobs in the United States and in ASEAN Member States, while investment in the United States from Southeast Asia has increased more than from any other region in the past decade;

Whereas the United States has helped ASEAN create a Single Window customs facilitation system that will help to expedite intra-ASEAN trade and make it easier for United States businesses to operate in the region;

Whereas the U.S.-ASEAN Business Alliance for Competitive SMEs has already trained 3,500 small-medium enterprises, with nearly half of the individuals trained being young women entrepreneurs;

Whereas United States-ASEAN development cooperation has focused on innovation and capacity-building efforts in technology, education, disaster management, food security, human rights, and trade facilitation;

Whereas the Lower Mekong Initiative, established on July 23, 2009, is a multinational effort that helps promote sustainable economic development in mainland Southeast Asia to foster integrated, multi-sectoral sub-regional cooperation and capacity building;

Whereas the United States is a committed partner with ASEAN on the protection of human rights, which are essential for fostering and maintaining stability, security, and good governance;

Whereas, on November 18, 2012, ASEAN Member States came together and adopted an ASEAN Human Rights Declaration that by its own terms "affirms all the civil and political rights" and the "economic social and cultural rights" in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

Whereas the United States supports the work and mandate of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), including capacity building for the promotion and protection of human rights and its priority, programs, and activities;

Whereas the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Program has now engaged over 60,000 people between the ages of 18 and 35 across all 10 ASEAN nations to promote innovation among young people while also providing skills to a new generation of people who will create and fill the jobs of the future;

Whereas the irregular movement of persons continues to be one of the main security threats in the South East Asia region;

Whereas addressing migration flows and combatting human smuggling in ASEAN is

an important, ongoing challenge requiring increased coordination and shared responsibility;

Whereas, on November 21, 2015, ASEAN signed the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which represents an important step forward in preventing trafficking, prosecuting the perpetrators, and protecting the survivors; and

Whereas the United States supports ASEAN Member States in anti-corruption efforts through, among other initiatives, the implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) welcomes the leaders of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to the United States for the special February 2016 U.S.-ASEAN summit meeting at Rancho Mirage, California, and affirms the summit as the first regular U.S.-ASEAN summit;

(2) supports and welcomes the elevation of the United States-ASEAN relationship to a strategic partnership and recommitments the United States to ASEAN centrality and to helping to build a strong, stable, politically cohesive, economically integrated, and socially responsible ASEAN community with common rules, norms, procedures, and standards consistent with international law and the principles of a “rule-based” Asia-Pacific community;

(3) supports efforts towards increasing two-way trade and investment, promoting trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, encouraging strong, sustainable, and inclusive economic growth and job creation, and deepening connectivity;

(4) urges ASEAN to continue its efforts to foster greater integration and unity, including with non-ASEAN economic, political, and security partners, including Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, the European Union, and India, both inside of and outside of Asia;

(5) supports efforts by ASEAN nations to address maritime and territorial disputes in a constructive manner and to pursue claims through peaceful, diplomatic, and legitimate regional and international arbitration mechanisms, consistent with international law;

(6) urges all parties to maritime and territorial disputes in the Asia-Pacific region—

(A) to respect the status quo;

(B) exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would undermine stability or complicate or escalate disputes through the use of coercion, intimidation, or military force;

(C) cease land reclamation activities; and

(D) refrain from inhabiting or garrisoning or otherwise militarizing uninhabited islands, reefs, shoals, and other features;

(7) opposes actions by any country to prevent any other country from exercising its sovereign rights to the resources of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and continental shelf by making claims to those areas in the South China Sea that have no support in international law;

(8) opposes unilateral declarations of administrative and military districts in contested areas in the South China Sea;

(9) opposes the imposition of new fishing regulations covering disputed areas in the South China Sea, which have raised tensions in the region;

(10) urges parties to refrain from unilateral actions that cause permanent physical change to the marine environment in areas pending final delimitation;

(11) supports efforts by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the

People's Republic of China to develop an effective Code of Conduct (COC) and urges ASEAN to implement and work toward the expeditious conclusion of an effective Code of Conduct with regards to the South China Sea;

(12) urges ASEAN to develop a common approach to reaffirm the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague's ruling with respect to the case between the Republic of the Philippines and the People's Republic of China;

(13) supports efforts by United States partners and allies in ASEAN—

(A) to enhance maritime capability;

(B) to retain unhindered access to and use of international waterways in the Asia-Pacific region that are critical to ensuring the security and free flow of commerce;

(C) to improve maritime domain awareness;

(D) to counter piracy;

(E) to disrupt illicit maritime trafficking activities and other forms of maritime trafficking activity; and

(F) to enhance the maritime capabilities of a country or regional organizations to respond to emerging threats to maritime security in the Asia-Pacific region;

(14) reaffirms the enhancement of United States-ASEAN economic engagement, including the elimination of barriers to cross-border commerce, and supports the ASEAN Economic Community's goals, including strong, inclusive, and sustainable growth and cooperation between the United States and ASEAN that focuses on innovation and capacity building efforts in technology, education, disaster management, food security, human rights, and trade facilitation, including for ASEAN's poorest countries;

(15) supports the Lower Mekong Initiative, which has made significant progress in promoting sustainable economic development in mainland Southeast Asia and fostering integrated sub-regional cooperation and capacity building;

(16) supports capacity building for the promotion and protection of human rights and related priority, programs, and activities;

(17) supports the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative program as an example of people-to-people partnership building that provides skills and networks to a new generation of people who will create and fill the jobs of the future;

(18) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to continue joint efforts with ASEAN to halt human smuggling and trafficking of persons and urges ASEAN to make increased efforts to create and strengthen regional mechanisms to provide assistance and support to refugees and migrants;

(19) urges ASEAN nations to engage directly with leaders of civil society, human rights, and environmental groups before, during, and after the February 2016 summit; and

(20) encourages the President to communicate to ASEAN leaders the importance of releasing political prisoners and ending politically motivated prosecutions.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 30—EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER THE DISAPPEARANCE OF DAVID SNEDDON, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. FISCHER, and Mr. SASSE) submitted the following concurrent resolu-

tion; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 30

Whereas David Louis Sneddon is a United States citizen who disappeared while touring the Yunnan Province in the People's Republic of China as a university student on August 14, 2004, at the age of 24;

Whereas David had last reported to family members prior to his disappearance that he intended to hike the Tiger Leaping Gorge in the Yunnan Province before returning to the United States and had placed a down payment on student housing for the upcoming academic year, planned business meetings, and scheduled law school entrance examinations in the United States for the fall;

Whereas People's Republic of China officials have reported to the Department of State and the family of David that he most likely died by falling into the Jinsha River while hiking the Tiger Leaping Gorge, although no physical evidence or eyewitness testimony exists to support this conclusion;

Whereas there is evidence indicating that David did not fall into the river when he traveled through the gorge, including eyewitness testimonies from people who saw David alive and spoke to him in person after his hike, as recorded by members of David's family and by embassy officials from the Department of State in the months after his disappearance;

Whereas family members searching for David shortly after he went missing obtained eyewitness accounts that David stayed overnight in several guesthouses during and after his safe hike through the gorge, and these guesthouse locations suggest that David disappeared after passing through the gorge, but the guest registers recording the names and passport numbers of foreign overnight guests could not be accessed;

Whereas Chinese officials have reported that evidence does not exist that David was a victim of violent crime, or a resident in a local hospital, prison, or mental institution at the time of his disappearance, and no attempt has been made to use David's passport since the time of his disappearance, nor has any money been withdrawn from his bank account since that time;

Whereas David Sneddon is the only United States citizen to disappear without explanation in the People's Republic of China since the normalization of relations between the United States and China during the administration of President Richard Nixon;

Whereas investigative reporters and non-governmental organizations with expertise in the Asia-Pacific region, and in some cases particular expertise in the Asian Underground Railroad and North Korea's documented program to kidnap citizens of foreign nations for espionage purposes, have repeatedly raised the possibility that the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was involved in David's disappearance; and

Whereas investigative reporters and non-governmental organizations who have reviewed David's case believe it is possible that the Government of North Korea was involved in David's disappearance because—

(1) the Yunnan Province is regarded by regional experts as an area frequently trafficked by North Korean refugees and their support networks, and the Government of the People's Republic of China allows North Korean agents to operate throughout the region to repatriate refugees, such as prominent North Korean defector Kang Byong-sop

and members of his family who were captured near the China-Laos border just weeks prior to David's disappearance;

(2) in 2002, North Korean officials acknowledged that the Government of North Korea has carried out a policy since the 1970's of abducting foreign citizens and holding them captive in North Korea for the purpose of training its intelligence and military personnel in critical language and culture skills to infiltrate foreign nations;

(3) Charles Robert Jenkins, a United States soldier who deserted his unit in South Korea in 1965 and was held captive in North Korea for nearly 40 years, left North Korea in July 2004 (one month before David disappeared in China) and Jenkins reported that he was forced to teach English to North Korean intelligence and military personnel while in captivity;

(4) David Sneddon is fluent in the Korean language and was learning Mandarin, skills that could have been appealing to the Government of North Korea after Charles Jenkins left the country;

(5) tensions between the United States and North Korea were heightened during the summer of 2004 due to recent approval of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-333) that increased United States aid to refugees fleeing North Korea, prompting the Government of North Korea to issue a press release warning the United States to "drop its hostile policy";

(6) David Sneddon's disappearance fits a known pattern often seen in the abduction of foreigners by the Government of North Korea, including the fact that David disappeared the day before North Korea's Liberation Day patriotic national holiday, and the Government of North Korea has a demonstrated history of provocations near dates it deems historically significant;

(7) a well-reputed Japanese non-profit specializing in North Korean abductions shared with the United States its expert analysis in 2012 about information it stated was received "from a reliable source" that a United States university student largely matching David Sneddon's description was taken from China by North Korean agents in August 2004; and

(8) commentary published in the Wall Street Journal in 2013 cited experts looking at the Sneddon case who concluded that "it is most probable that a U.S. national has been abducted to North Korea," and "there is a strong possibility that North Korea kidnapped the American": Now, therefore, be it—

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that Congress—

(1) expresses its ongoing concern about the disappearance of David Louis Sneddon in Yunnan Province, People's Republic of China, in August, 2004;

(2) directs the Department of State and the intelligence community to jointly continue investigations and to consider all plausible explanations for David's disappearance, including the possibility of abduction by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea;

(3) urges the Department of State and the intelligence community to coordinate investigations with the Governments of the People's Republic of China, Japan, and South Korea and solicit information from appropriate regional affairs and law enforcement experts on plausible explanations for David's disappearance;

(4) encourages the Department of State and the intelligence community to work with foreign governments known to have

diplomatic influence with the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to better investigate the possibility of the involvement of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in David Sneddon's disappearance and to possibly seek his recovery; and

(5) requests that the Department of State and the intelligence community continue to work with and inform Congress and the family of David Sneddon on efforts to possibly recover David and to resolve his disappearance.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3297. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3298. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3299. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3300. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3301. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3302. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3303. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3241 submitted by Ms. CANTWELL and intended to be proposed to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3304. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3305. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3297. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 91, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

(e) WITHHOLDING OF FUNDING.—The President shall temporarily withhold United States' funding from the United Nations if the United Nations Security Council does not make a decision regarding a reported

violation of any applicable United Nations Security Council resolution relating to prohibitions on ballistic missile testing or prohibitions on activities aimed at obtaining nuclear weapons within 30 days after receiving information of such a violation.

SA 3298. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 71, between lines 6 and 7, insert the following:

(c) STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall—

(1) conduct an investigation of the conduct of the Government of North Korea to determine if North Korea should be designated as a state sponsor of terrorism (as defined in section 202(d)); and

(2) submit a report to Congress that describes the evidence used by the Department of State to reach the determination described in paragraph (1).

SA 3299. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . RECOGNITION OF JERUSALEM AS THE CAPITAL OF ISRAEL AND RELOCATION OF THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY TO JERUSALEM.

(a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It should be the policy of the United States to recognize Jerusalem as the undivided capital of the State of Israel, both de jure and de facto.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) Jerusalem must remain an undivided city in which the rights of every ethnic and religious group are protected as they have been by Israel since 1967;

(2) every citizen of Israel should have the right to reside anywhere in the undivided city of Jerusalem;

(3) the President and the Secretary of State should publicly affirm as a matter of United States policy that Jerusalem must remain the undivided capital of the State of Israel;

(4) the President should immediately implement the provisions of the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-45) and begin the process of relocating the United States Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem;

(5) United States officials should refrain from any actions that contradict United States law on this subject; and

(6) any official document of the United States Government which lists countries and their capital cities should identify Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

(c) AMENDMENT OF WAIVER AUTHORITY.—The Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-45) is amended—

(1) by striking section 7; and

(2) by redesignating section 8 as section 7.

(d) RESTRICTION ON FUNDING SUBJECT TO OPENING DETERMINATION.—Not more than 50 percent of the funds appropriated to the Department of State for fiscal year 2016 for "Acquisition and Maintenance of Buildings

Abroad" may be obligated until the Secretary of State determines and reports to Congress that the United States Embassy in Jerusalem has officially opened.

(e) FISCAL YEARS 2017 AND 2018 FUNDING.—

(1) FISCAL YEAR 2017.—Of the funds authorized to be appropriated for "Acquisition and Maintenance of Buildings Abroad" for the Department of State for fiscal year 2017, such sums as may be necessary should be made available until expended only for construction and other costs associated with the establishment of the United States Embassy in Jerusalem.

(2) FISCAL YEAR 2018.—Of the funds authorized to be appropriated for "Acquisition and Maintenance of Buildings Abroad" for the Department of State for fiscal year 2018, such sums as may be necessary should be made available until expended only for construction and other costs associated with the establishment of the United States Embassy in Jerusalem.

(f) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "United States Embassy" means the offices of the United States diplomatic mission and the residence of the United States chief of mission.

SA 3300. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title III, add the following:

SEC. 305. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE DISAPPEARANCE OF DAVID SNEDDON.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) David Louis Sneddon is a United States citizen who disappeared while touring the Yunnan Province in the People's Republic of China as a university student on August 14, 2004, at the age of 24.

(2) David had last reported to family members prior to his disappearance that he intended to hike the Tiger Leaping Gorge in the Yunnan Province before returning to the United States and had placed a down payment on student housing for the upcoming academic year, planned business meetings, and scheduled law school entrance examinations in the United States for the fall.

(3) People's Republic of China officials have reported to the Department of State and the family of David that he most likely died by falling into the Jinsha River while hiking the Tiger Leaping Gorge, although no physical evidence or eyewitness testimony exists to support this conclusion.

(4) There is evidence indicating that David did not fall into the river when he traveled through the gorge, including eyewitness testimonies from people who saw David alive and spoke to him in person after his hike, as recorded by members of David's family and by embassy officials from the Department of State in the months after his disappearance.

(5) Family members searching for David shortly after he went missing obtained eyewitness accounts that David stayed overnight in several guesthouses during and after his safe hike through the gorge, and these guesthouse locations suggest that David disappeared after passing through the gorge, but the guest registers recording the names and passport numbers of foreign overnight guests could not be accessed.

(6) Chinese officials have reported that evidence does not exist that David was a victim of violent crime, or a resident in a local hos-

pital, prison, or mental institution at the time of his disappearance, and no attempt has been made to use David's passport since the time of his disappearance, nor has any money been withdrawn from his bank account since that time.

(7) David Sneddon is the only United States citizen to disappear without explanation in the People's Republic of China since the normalization of relations between the United States and China during the administration of President Richard Nixon.

(8) Investigative reporters and nongovernmental organizations with expertise in the Asia-Pacific region, and in some cases particular expertise in the Asian Underground Railroad and North Korea's documented program to kidnap citizens of foreign nations for espionage purposes, have repeatedly raised the possibility that the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was involved in David's disappearance.

(9) Investigative reporters and nongovernmental organizations who have reviewed David's case believe it is possible that the Government of North Korea was involved in David's disappearance because—

(A) the Yunnan Province is regarded by regional experts as an area frequently trafficked by North Korean refugees and their support networks, and the Government of the People's Republic of China allows North Korean agents to operate throughout the region to repatriate refugees, such as prominent North Korean defector Kang Byong-sop and members of his family who were captured near the China-Laos border just weeks prior to David's disappearance;

(B) in 2002, North Korean officials acknowledged that the Government of North Korea has carried out a policy since the 1970's of abducting foreign citizens and holding them captive in North Korea for the purpose of training its intelligence and military personnel in critical language and culture skills to infiltrate foreign nations;

(C) Charles Robert Jenkins, a United States soldier who deserted his unit in South Korea in 1965 and was held captive in North Korea for nearly 40 years, left North Korea in July 2004 (one month before David disappeared in China) and Jenkins reported that he was forced to teach English to North Korean intelligence and military personnel while in captivity;

(D) David Sneddon is fluent in the Korean language and was learning Mandarin, skills that could have been appealing to the Government of North Korea after Charles Jenkins left the country;

(E) tensions between the United States and North Korea were heightened during the summer of 2004 due to recent approval of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-333) that increased United States aid to refugees fleeing North Korea, prompting the Government of North Korea to issue a press release warning the United States to "drop its hostile policy";

(F) David Sneddon's disappearance fits a known pattern often seen in the abduction of foreigners by the Government of North Korea, including the fact that David disappeared the day before North Korea's Liberation Day patriotic national holiday, and the Government of North Korea has a demonstrated history of provocations near dates it deems historically significant;

(G) a well-reputed Japanese non-profit specializing in North Korean abductions shared with the United States its expert analysis in 2012 about information it stated was received "from a reliable source" that a United

States university student largely matching David Sneddon's description was taken from China by North Korean agents in August 2004; and

(H) commentary published in the Wall Street Journal in 2013 cited experts looking at the Sneddon case who concluded that "it is most probable that a U.S. national has been abducted to North Korea," and "there is a strong possibility that North Korea kidnapped the American".

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—Congress—

(1) expresses its ongoing concern about the disappearance of David Louis Sneddon in Yunnan Province, People's Republic of China, in August, 2004;

(2) directs the Department of State and the intelligence community to jointly continue investigations and to consider all plausible explanations for David's disappearance, including the possibility of abduction by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea;

(3) urges the Department of State and the intelligence community to coordinate investigations with the Governments of the People's Republic of China, Japan, and South Korea and solicit information from appropriate regional affairs and law enforcement experts on plausible explanations for David's disappearance;

(4) encourages the Department of State and the intelligence community to work with foreign governments known to have diplomatic influence with the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to better investigate the possibility of the involvement of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in David Sneddon's disappearance and to possibly seek his recovery; and

(5) requests that the Department of State and the intelligence community continue to work with and inform Congress and the family of David Sneddon on efforts to possibly recover David and to resolve his disappearance.

SA 3301. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 92, strike line 15 and all that follows through page 93, line 2.

Beginning on page 100, strike line 24 and all that follows through page 101, line 8.

Beginning on page 112, strike line 9 and all that follows through page 115, line 7.

SA 3302. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 41, between lines 10 and 11, insert the following:

(6) USE OF GRANT FUNDS.—A grant awarded under this section may not be used for the purpose of funding, in whole or in part, the actual construction, renovation, repair, or alteration of a building or work.

SA 3303. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3241 submitted by Ms. CANTWELL and intended to be proposed to the bill S. 2012, to provide for

the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the amendment, add the following:

SEC. ____ . USE OF GRANT FUNDS.

A grant awarded under section 1004 may not be used for the purpose of funding, in whole or in part, the actual construction, renovation, repair, or alteration of a building or work.

SA 3304. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 73, line 12, insert “or textile” after “smuggling.”

Beginning on page 73, strike line 21 and all that follows through page 74, line 8, and insert the following:

(8) knowingly, directly or indirectly, sells, supplies, or transfers to or from the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government, a significant amount of precious metal, graphite, raw or semi-finished metals or aluminum, steel, coal, software, synthetic filaments, or three-dimensional textiles for use by or in industrial processes directly related to weapons of mass destruction, delivery systems for such weapons, equipment designed to defend against radiological or chemical exposure from those weapons, other proliferation activities, the Korean Workers' Party, armed forces, internal security, or intelligence activities, or the operation and maintenance of political prison camps or forced labor camps, including outside of North Korea;

SA 3305. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . MODIFICATION OF DEFINITION OF SPORT FISHING EQUIPMENT UNDER THE TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL ACT.

Section 3(2)(B) of the Toxic Substances Control Act (15 U.S.C. 2602(2)(B)) is amended—

(1) in clause (v), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in clause (vi) by striking the period at the end and inserting “, and”; and

(3) by inserting after clause (vi) the following:

“(vii) any sport fishing equipment (as such term is defined in section 4162(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) the sale of which is subject to the tax imposed by section 4161(a) of such Code (determined without regard to any exemptions from such tax provided by section 4162 or 4221 or any other provision of such Code), and sport fishing equipment components.”

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “The Importance of Enacting a New Water Resources Development Act.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 10:30 a.m., in room SD-215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “The President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2017.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room SD-215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “The President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2017.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “U.S. Policy in Central Africa: The Imperative of Good Governance.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Sen-

ate on February 10, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Breaking the Cycle: Mental Health and the Justice System.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled “Do You Know What Is In Your Suitcase? How Drug Traffickers Are Deceiving Seniors to Smuggle Contraband.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Jeremy Lagelee, a law clerk on the Finance Committee, be granted floor privileges for the duration of the week.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Henry Schliefer, Justin Brown, Justin Hoffman, Michael George, Rebecca Gilbert, and Scott Richards, fellows in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this session in Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for my intern, Aaron Nelson, to be granted privileges of the floor for the remainder of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Gene Gerzhoy, a fellow working in my office, have full privileges during this session of the 114th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my defense fellow, SGM Travis Votaw, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this calendar year.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Maj. Matthew Schroeder, a defense fellow in my office, and LCDR Amy McElroy, a Coast Guard fellow in my office, be granted privileges of the floor for the remainder of the 114th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Sanjay Mukhi, Michael Pascual, and Heather Ichord, congressional fellows in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the 114th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMOVAL OF INJUNCTION OF SECRECY—TREATY DOCUMENT NOS. 114-5, 114-6, 114-7, 114-8, 114-9, AND 114-10

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the injunction of secrecy be removed from the following treaties transmitted to the Senate on February 10, 2016, by the President of the United States: U.N. Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts, Treaty Document No. 114-5; Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled, Treaty Document No. 114-6; U.N. Convention on the Assignment of Receivables in International Trade, Treaty Document No. 114-7; Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances, Treaty Document No. 114-8; U.N. Convention on Independent Guarantees and Stand-By Letters of Credit, Treaty Document No. 114-9; and Extradition Treaty with the Dominican Republic, Treaty Document No. 114-10. I further ask that the treaties be considered as having been read the first time; that they be referred, with accompanying papers, to the Committee on Foreign Relations and ordered to be printed; and that the President's messages be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The messages of the President are as follows:

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, subject to certain declarations and understandings, I transmit herewith the United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts (Convention), done at New York on November 23, 2005, and entered into force on March 1, 2013. The report of the Secretary of State, which includes an overview of the Convention, is enclosed for the information of the Senate.

The Convention sets forth modern rules validating and facilitating the use of electronic communications in international business transactions. The Convention will promote legal uniformity and predictability, and thereby lower costs, for U.S. businesses engaged in electronic commerce.

The Convention's provisions are substantively similar to State law enactments in the United States of the 1999 Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (UETA), and to the governing Federal law, the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act, Public Law 106-229 (June 30, 2000). Consistent with the Federal law, all States have

enacted laws containing the same basic rules on electronic commerce, whether based on UETA or on functionally equivalent provisions. The Federal statute allows States that enact UETA, or equivalent standards, to be subject to their State law, and not the corresponding provisions of the Federal law.

The United States proposed and actively participated in the negotiation of the Convention at the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law. Accession by the United States can be expected to encourage other countries to become parties to the Convention, and having a greater number of parties to the Convention should facilitate electronic commerce across borders.

The Convention would be implemented through Federal legislation to be proposed separately to the Congress by my Administration.

The Convention has been endorsed by leading associations and organizations in this area, including the American Bar Association and the United States Council on International Business. The United States Government worked closely with the Uniform Law Commission regarding the negotiation and domestic implementation of the Convention.

I recommend, therefore, that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention and give its advice and consent to ratification, subject to certain understandings and declarations.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 10, 2016.

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled, done at Marrakesh on June 27, 2013 (Marrakesh Treaty). I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, a report of the Secretary of State with respect to the Marrakesh Treaty that includes a summary of its provisions.

This copyright treaty, concluded under the auspices of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), advances the national interest of the United States in promoting the protection and enjoyment of creative works. The Marrakesh Treaty lays a foundation, in a manner consistent with existing international copyright standards, for further opening up a world of knowledge for persons with print disabilities by improving their access to published works.

The United States played a leadership role in the negotiation of the treaty, and its provisions are broadly consistent with the approach and structure of existing U.S. law. Narrow

changes in U.S. law will be needed for the United States to implement certain provisions of the treaty. Proposed legislation is being submitted to both houses of the Congress in conjunction with this transmittal.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Marrakesh Treaty, and give its advice and consent to its ratification.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 10, 2016.

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, subject to certain declarations and understandings set forth in the enclosed report, I transmit herewith the United Nations Convention on the Assignment of Receivables in International Trade, done at New York on December 12, 2001, and signed by the United States on December 30, 2003. The report of the Secretary of State, which includes an overview of the proposed Convention, is enclosed for the information of the Senate.

The Convention sets forth modern uniform rules governing the assignment of receivables for use in international financing transactions. In particular, the Convention facilitates the use of cross-border receivables financing by: (a) recognizing the legal effectiveness of a wide variety of modern receivables financing practices; (b) overriding certain contractual obstacles to receivables financing; and (c) providing clear, uniform conflict-of-laws rules to determine which country's domestic law governs priority as between the assignee of a receivable and competing claimants.

As a global leader in receivables financing, the United States actively participated in the negotiation of this Convention at the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law with the support of U.S. business interests. Drawing on laws and best practices prevalent in the United States and other countries where receivables financing flourishes, the Convention would promote the availability of capital and credit at more affordable rates and thus facilitate the development of international commerce. Widespread ratification of the Convention would help U.S. companies, especially small- and medium-sized enterprises, obtain much-needed working capital financing from U.S. banks and other lenders to export goods, and thereby help create more jobs in the United States.

The rules set forth in the Convention do not differ in any significant respect from those contained in existing U.S. law. In particular, in virtually all cases application of the Convention will produce the same results as those under the Uniform Commercial Code Article 9, which all States and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands have enacted.

I recommend, therefore, that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention and give its advice and consent to ratification, subject to certain declarations and undertakings set forth in the enclosed report.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 10, 2016.

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances, done at Beijing on June 24, 2012 (Beijing Treaty). I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, a report of the Secretary of State with respect to the Beijing Treaty that includes a summary of its provisions.

This copyright treaty, concluded under the auspices of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), advances the national interest of the United States in promoting the protection and enjoyment of creative works. The Beijing Treaty provides a modern international framework for the rights of performers in motion pictures, television programs, and other audiovisual works, similar to that already in place for producers of such works, for authors, and for performers and producers of sound recordings, pursuant to other WIPO copyright treaties the United States has joined.

The United States played a leadership role in the negotiation of the treaty, and its provisions are broadly consistent with the approach and structure of existing U.S. law. Narrow changes in U.S. law will be needed for the United States to implement certain provisions of the treaty. Proposed legislation is being submitted to both houses of the Congress in conjunction with this transmittal.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Beijing Treaty, and give its advice and consent to its ratification, subject to a declaration pursuant to Article 11 of the Beijing Treaty as described in the accompanying Department of State report.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 10, 2016.

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, subject to certain understandings set forth in the enclosed report, I transmit herewith the United Nations Convention on Independent Guarantees and Stand-By Letters of Credit (Convention), done at New York on December 11, 1995, and signed by the United

States on December 11, 1997. The report of the Secretary of State, which includes an overview of the proposed Convention, is enclosed for the information of the Senate.

As a leader in transactional finance, the United States participated in the negotiation of this Convention at the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law with the support of U.S. commercial and financial interests. The Convention establishes common rules on stand-by letters of credit and other independent guarantees, instruments that are essential to international commerce, and thereby reduces the uncertainty and risk that may be associated with cross-border transactions. With two minor exceptions, the Convention's provisions are substantively similar to the uniform State law provisions in the Uniform Commercial Code Article 5 (Letters of Credit), which all States and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands have enacted.

Ratification by the United States of this Convention can be expected to encourage other countries to become parties to the Convention. While eight countries currently are parties to the Convention, having a greater number of parties to the Convention would promote the stability and efficiency of international commerce.

The Convention has been endorsed by leading banking and business associations in the United States.

The Convention would be implemented through Federal legislation to be separately transmitted by my Administration to the Congress.

I recommend, therefore, that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention and give its advice and consent to its ratification, subject to certain understandings set forth in the enclosed report.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 10, 2016.

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Extradition Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Dominican Republic (the "Treaty"), signed at Santo Domingo on January 12, 2015. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty would replace the extradition treaty between the United States and the Dominican Republic, signed at Santo Domingo on June 19, 1909. The Treaty follows generally the form and content of other extradition

treaties recently concluded by the United States. It would replace an outmoded list of extraditable offenses with a modern "dual criminality" approach, which would enable extradition for such offenses as money laundering and other newer offenses not appearing on the list. The Treaty also contains a modernized "political offense" clause and provides that extradition shall not be refused based on the nationality of the person sought. Finally, the Treaty incorporates a series of procedural improvements to streamline and speed the extradition process.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 10, 2016.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY,
FEBRUARY 11, 2016

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 11; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate then resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, with the time until 10:30 a.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:02 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 11, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate:

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 50:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. KARL L. SCHULTZ

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, February 10, 2016

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 10, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JODY B. HICE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

DEDICATED WATER INFRASTRUCTURE TRUST FUND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I came to Congress committed to helping the Federal Government do a better job dealing with water and sanitation. We have had great success internationally raising the profile and directing more money in a more effective way to deal with water and sanitation in poor countries, making a difference in millions of lives.

In the United States, we often take those conditions for granted. But as has been demonstrated recently in Flint, Michigan, we do so at our peril because we have serious problems right here in the United States. It is not just Flint, Michigan. There are up to 10 million lead water lines that remain where even a slight change in the water chemistry, even from just repairing it, can damage lead pipes enough to start contaminating people's water. What is underground and out of sight is actually in worse condition than our crumbling roads and bridges. America leaks more water than we drink every day.

In the aftermath of the recession, we have seen States cut drinking water budgets and staff. The Federal Government had cut our investment in drinking water infrastructure by more than 80 percent by 1980. This, despite the fact that ours is a growing country with aging infrastructure that was rated a D by the American Society of Civil Engineers in their latest report.

Now, I am pleased that the administration in its budget would put a little extra money to help replace lead pipes. Sadly, that is being financed by cutting even more from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, essentially at the expense of keeping water clean in the first place.

We should look at our water infrastructure as an entire system and increased Federal investment is long overdue. We would have to increase our funding 500 percent to reach the level of spending during Jimmy Carter's presidency.

I have long advocated the development of a water infrastructure trust fund. We have reintroduced a bipartisan, budget-neutral solution to create a dedicated water infrastructure trust fund to provide additional revenue to State and local water and sanitation projects. It is financed by a voluntary program where businesses that rely heavily on clean water, like the beverage industry, for example, that have a keen interest in maintaining water infrastructure would, on a voluntary basis, pay a miniscule fee. In exchange, they would be designated as supporting the clean water trust fund.

It is estimated that this could generate up to \$7 billion annually in new revenue that could go to State and local governments as grants and loans, which in turn could leverage even more money.

This legislation would also give direction and resources for the EPA to deal with the affordability gap. We can actually finance much of the needed water and infrastructure improvements, but we are hamstrung because there is understandable reluctance to raise rates that fall too much on the poorest of citizens. Thus, we are in a cycle of unpaid water and sewer bills that leaves nobody with satisfactory alternatives.

This legislation would give more money to State and local governments, allowing them to leverage additional money and to focus on ways to deal with a very substantial problem of low income for whom access to safe drinking water and sanitation is every bit as

fundamental a human right as what we are doing to help poor people overseas achieve.

Mr. Speaker, I celebrate Secretary Clinton and a number of our colleagues going to Flint, Michigan, to focus on the problem. I applaud people who are looking at where the system failed, but I would hope we would pay as much attention to the systematic failure of Congress and at the State level to attach priority to this fundamental building block for a livable community.

I hope my colleagues will join me, not just in cosponsoring H.R. 4468, but enacting the trust fund and fighting for budgets that represent the resources this crisis demands.

DEDICATED WATER INFRASTRUCTURE TRUST FUND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, next week marks an important milestone in the history of North Carolina's Piedmont region—the 250th anniversary of the founding of the town of Salem.

In 1752, Moravian Church leaders purchased a 100,000-acre tract in North Carolina from the British Lord Granville. On February 19, 1766, twelve Moravian brethren from nearby settlements made an 8-mile journey to establish the town of Salem, a new community that would serve as the tract's commercial center.

Moravian Church leaders decided that the new town should have the convenience of running water to the buildings. The town built a waterworks, which was constructed by burying hollowed logs from springs located about a mile away. This addition to Salem's infrastructure attracted the attention of President George Washington, who visited in 1793.

However, Washington was not the first famous visitor to Salem. In 1767, the royal Governor William Tryon heard about the building going on in North Carolina's northwest wilderness. He and his wife made the long journey from New Bern to examine the Moravians' new settlement firsthand.

Along with its advanced plumbing, Salem was also at the forefront of innovative medicine and was home to the first university-educated physician in western North Carolina. In addition, Salem was known across the colonial South as a place of commerce and

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

trade, renowned for its pottery, furniture, silver, and other artistic trades.

In 1913, the town of Salem, with its focus on craftsmanship, sustainability, education, and religion merged with the fast-paced industrial town of Winston, thus becoming Winston-Salem.

Today, Winston-Salem is the fifth largest city in North Carolina. It is home to six colleges and universities, including Salem College, the oldest continuously running women's college in the United States, as well as the prestigious Wake Forest University and Winston-Salem State University.

Reaffirming this time-honored tradition of forging boldly ahead, the city continues to build a diverse business space leading in the areas of nanotechnology research, finance, and manufacturing.

The original settlement is a living history museum that engages visitors in an educational, historical experience about those who lived and worked in the early South.

During the yearlong anniversary celebration, the Moravian Church, Old Salem, the City of Winston-Salem, and Forsyth County will honor important milestones in the town's 250-year history, such as George Washington's two-night visit to Salem in 1739 and the Nation's first public July 4th celebration that took place in 1783. Most importantly, the local community will come together to celebrate and reflect on how Salem's past informs its present and shapes its future.

FORTHCOMING LEGISLATION ON PUERTO RICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, Congress will hold its eighth hearing on Puerto Rico later this month. At the direction of Speaker RYAN, the Natural Resources Committee will then lead an effort to craft legislation for the territory. The record will demonstrate that there is not a single crisis in Puerto Rico, but a series of intertwined crises. It is an economic crisis, a fiscal crisis, a liquidity crisis, a debt crisis, an immigration crisis, and a public administration crisis.

If you visualize Puerto Rico as a tree and each crisis as a withering branch, the root of the tree is Puerto Rico's unequal and undignified political status. While the immediate aim is to mend the branches, ultimately, we will need to attack the problem at its root and that means Puerto Rico must become a State or a sovereign nation.

Last week, Antonio Weiss, a senior Treasury Department official, stated as follows:

There is no question that status is vitally important. Why are we proposing that restructuring authorities and the earned in-

come tax credit and fair Medicaid treatment be provided to Puerto Rico? Well, as a territory, Puerto Rico's status does not afford it adequate tools in those three areas. So we believe that we need to afford the Commonwealth those tools that it needs so it can navigate this crisis. And we agree that over a long period of time, status has contributed to this crisis.

Since the problem in Puerto Rico has multiple dimensions, the legislative solution should as well. First, the bill must empower Puerto Rico to restructure a meaningful portion of its debt. The bill could provide a period in which consensual negotiations between bond insurers and their creditors, mediated by neutral experts, can take place. If those negotiations do not bear fruit, the Puerto Rico Government should be empowered to authorize its instrumentalities to adjust their debts under chapter 9 of the Federal Bankruptcy Code, a right that every State has and that Puerto Rico used to have.

Puerto Rico's congressionally approved constitution provides that bonds issued or guaranteed by the central government receive priority payment. What binds us together as Americans—and Puerto Ricans are proud American citizens—is our commitment to the rule of law.

While I do not believe that Congress should override Puerto Rico's constitution, I do expect all creditor classes, including GO bondholders, to make concessions for the public good that will ultimately benefit all stakeholders. I sense that a bipartisan consensus is finally emerging in support of reasonable debt restructuring authority for Puerto Rico.

Second, the bill should address the outrageous disparities that Puerto Rico faces under key Federal programs, a main driver of our deficits and debt. Consider that historically, Puerto Rico received \$300 billion in annual Medicaid funding, while the similarly sized Oregon receives \$5 billion. I challenge any State to run a decent Medicaid program with that insulting sum without overborrowing in the capital markets. Impossible.

Finally, the Puerto Rico Government has a record of fiscal mismanagement. This is a painful fact, but a fact nonetheless. We must face up to it, resolve to do better, and welcome some temporary assistance. I would support the creation of an independent board to approve Puerto Rico Government's financial plan and annual budgets and to help ensure they are adhered to.

The past is not always a prologue. There is no reason why future Puerto Rico leaders cannot embrace fiscal discipline, as distinct from austerity, and rapidly put the oversight board out of business. And Congress should be careful about casting moral judgment on Puerto Rico since the Federal Government has a \$14 trillion debt that is 75 percent of the GDP. We, in Puerto Rico, are responsible for our actions,

but Congress is responsible for its actions and inaction as well.

A balanced board will obtain buy-in from government, business, and labor leaders in Puerto Rico and can serve as a bridge to a brighter future. However, a punitive board that disrespects my constituents and tramples on the principle of states' rights will transform me from an ally to an adversary very quickly.

□ 1015

DEBT CEILING BILL IS FINANCIALLY IRRESPONSIBLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, America entrusted Republicans with the House in 2010 and the Senate in 2014.

Democrats lost Congress because their financially irresponsible conduct and trillion-dollar deficits threaten America with a debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy.

House Republicans inherited a \$1.3 trillion deficit in 2011. They cut it to \$1.1 trillion in 2012, cut it to \$680 billion in 2013, cut it to \$485 billion in 2014, and cut it to \$439 billion in 2015.

House Republicans did what the American people elected them to do. In each election thereafter, we were entrusted with 2 more years of a House Republican majority.

Unfortunately, newly released data from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office reveals America's financial condition has taken a sharp turn for the worse.

According to the CBO, the first quarter fiscal year 2016 deficit deteriorated by \$36 billion compared to 2015's first quarter deficit. If extrapolated to a full year, America's FY 2016 deficit would be \$583 billion. That is \$144 billion worse than in fiscal year 2015.

Out-of-control spending was the problem, not taxes. During the first quarter, tax revenues were up 4 percent, but spending was up even more, at 7 percent.

Now, for the first time since I have been in Congress, Republican compromises and surrenders to Obama and Democrats have made America's deficits worse, not better.

This Congress broke open our kids' piggy banks, stole money we cannot pay back, and used it to pay for a trillion-dollar omnibus spending bill that adds tens of billions of dollars to 2016's deficit. I am proud I voted against the financially irresponsible omnibus.

Mr. Speaker, America's Comptroller General and the CBO repeatedly warn that America's financial path is "unsustainable," meaning America faces a debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy unless we get our financial house in order.

Further, the CBO warns that, absent correction, America's debt service costs will increase by \$600 billion per year within a decade, roughly what America spends on national defense, which begs the question: Where will the money come from for an additional annual \$600 billion debt service payment?

America's total debt approached \$14 trillion when I was elected to Congress in 2010. We have blown through the \$19 trillion mark. Now the CBO projects America will blow through the \$29 trillion debt mark in a decade.

For emphasis, Washington is engaged in the worst generational theft in American history. Washington steals from our children and grandchildren with a callous devil-may-care attitude so that we can today live high on the hog, even though it forces our children into hardship and poverty.

Economic principles don't care if you are a family, a business, or a country. If you borrow more money than you can pay back, you go bankrupt. Time is running out. Washington must balance the budget before America's debt burden spirals out of control, before it is too late to prevent the debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy that awaits us.

Mr. Speaker, Americans are rightfully angry at Washington elected officials who care more about special interest campaign contributions than American voters or America's future.

Will the American people channel their anger in the 2016 elections and elect Washington officials who both understand the threat posed by deficits and debt and have the backbone to fix it? The answer to that question determines whether America continues as a great nation and world power or declines into the dustbin of history.

Mr. Speaker, I can't speak for anyone else, but as for me, Mo BROOKS from Alabama's Fifth Congressional District, I fight for financial responsibility and prosperity and against an American bankruptcy and economic depression.

EMERGENCY REQUEST FOR \$1.8 BILLION TO FIGHT ZIKA VIRUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD) for 5 minutes.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly urge my colleagues to support the President's emergency request of \$1.8 billion to fight the spread of the Zika virus, a dangerous, mosquito-borne illness that has surfaced in my home State of Hawaii and in at least 12 other States across the country.

The symptoms and effects of the Zika virus, which have prompted an international public health emergency from the World Health Organization, are not dissimilar to another mosquito-borne disease, Dengue fever.

Dengue fever is spread through the very same *Aedes aegypti* mosquito as carries the Zika virus, as well as other mosquito variations. Like the Zika virus, Dengue fever symptoms include fevers, rashes, joint and muscle pains, severe headaches, and other painful symptoms.

The CDC has reported the harmful symptoms and effects of both Zika and Dengue and the ability of both of these diseases to spread very rapidly through mosquitos present in many regions of the United States, including in my home district.

So far, there have been around 50 cases of Zika virus confirmed in the United States. But in the past 16 weeks, there have been 252 known cases of Dengue fever on Hawaii Island alone.

Now, Mayor Billy Kenoi, Hawaii County's mayor, on Monday announced a state of emergency for the county to deploy more resources to battle this Dengue fever outbreak.

I have asked our Governor to declare a state of emergency in response to this outbreak so that the people of Hawaii can receive every resource available to protect themselves, to eradicate this mosquito and its breeding grounds, and stop the spread of Dengue fever, which has quickly become the largest outbreak in the State of Hawaii since the 1940s.

The CDC has activated its emergency operations center to level 1 status. Now, to put this level 1 status in context, the CDC has only raised the emergency operations center to level 1 three times in the past: during the Ebola outbreak in 2014, during the H1N1 pandemic in 2009, and after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The President's leadership and emergency request on this urgent issue is warranted and necessary to respond aggressively to the Zika virus early on. He is treating this with the seriousness it deserves, recognizing this global public health threat, the impacts, and long-lasting effects of which still are not fully known.

At the end of last year, Congress came together and passed a bipartisan omnibus spending bill that increased funding for public health preparedness and response by more than \$52 million than the previous fiscal year, but this additional emergency funding request is necessary now in communities like mine on Hawaii Island and in different parts of the country to combat disease-transmitting mosquito viruses like Zika and Dengue fever.

It is imperative that Congress, Federal agencies, local governments, and private sector partners partner together to take action now to deal with the outbreaks we already have and prevent something far worse from occurring.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to push this critical public health funding forward.

PFC JOSEPH P. DWYER VETERANS PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, this week I introduced legislation in the House to expand the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support Program to the national level.

PFC Joseph Dwyer was from Mount Sinai, New York, located in my home district of Suffolk County.

PFC Dwyer served in Iraq and received nationwide recognition for a photograph that went viral, showing him cradling a wounded Iraqi boy while his unit was fighting its way up to the capital city of Baghdad.

Sadly, after returning home and struggling with PTSD, PFC Dwyer died in 2008 and left behind a young widow, Matina, and a 2-year-old daughter, Meagan.

In 2012, while serving in the New York State Senate, I created the Dwyer Program as part of the 2012-2013 State budget. Originally in four counties, including Suffolk, this program has since expanded to over a dozen counties throughout New York.

The Dwyer Program is a peer-to-peer support program for veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. The program provides a safe, confidential, and educational platform where all veterans are welcome to build vet-to-vet relationships, supporting each other's transition from service to post-service life.

During the first year alone, we were able to conduct 148 group sessions, serving 450 veterans just within Suffolk. Since 2013, the program has helped over 1,500 veterans in New York State battling PTSD and TBI.

With the success that we have had in New York, I know that, if we make this program national, we will ensure that every veteran across America will eventually have access to a peer-to-peer support group.

With the VA reporting that an estimated 22 veterans a day commit suicide, this national effort is long overdue. We must ensure that all veterans across America receive the proper care they need and deserve.

I will be working hard to spread awareness of my bill, gather cosponsors and the support of veteran groups and mental health organizations from all across the country so that we can pass this bill as soon as possible.

WE MUST ACT NOW ON THE ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, shifting gears, on a completely separate topic, I also rise today to discuss the mosquito-borne Zika virus, which has spread at rapid rates across South America, Central America, and the Caribbean, infecting individuals in more than 25 countries.

Zika has caused widespread alarm across the global community after

Brazil reported a rise in the reported cases of microcephaly, a disease that leads tragically to a baby being born with an unusually small head and brain damage.

What is so concerning about the Zika virus is how easily it can spread. The virus is spread not only through a mosquito bite, but also by contact with infected blood or sexual contact.

Furthermore, there is currently no vaccine to prevent or any medicine to treat the virus. All these factors have led the World Health Organization to declare the Zika virus a public health emergency.

Confirmed cases of the Zika virus have been popping up across the U.S., including at least three confirmed cases in my home district of Suffolk County, Long Island.

With the recent outbreaks and the number of Zika cases among travelers visiting or returning to the United States, it is only a matter of time before this becomes a widespread epidemic right here at home. This is why we must act now.

I recently introduced legislation, the Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016, H.R. 4314, which passed the House Committee on Foreign Affairs with bipartisan support.

One key aspect of this legislation is that the bill would put in place a monitoring system that would screen for infectious diseases abroad to contain and prevent any potential outbreaks.

The bill also helps quarantine the virus, authorizing the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide equipment and supplies to mitigate the risk or threat of infectious diseases such as Zika.

This is a measure that is long overdue to protect not only our homeland from terrorism, but also to ensure that we are prepared to combat the spread of any infectious diseases. With this bill's passage out of committee, it is clear that my colleagues in Congress share my view.

I will continue to push for full passage of my Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act in the House and urge my colleagues to bring this bipartisan bill to the House floor for a vote.

COMBATING BDS ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, in recent years, the boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement, more commonly known as the BDS movement, has been employed as a hateful weapon to delegitimize the State of Israel and all those who stand with her.

The BDS movement has neither brought Israelis and Palestinians closer to peace nor advanced the laudable goal of improving dialogue between the supporters of both sides. Instead, it has

served as a means to demagogue Israel and inflame tensions in communities and college campuses around our Nation.

Rather than sit back and react to the BDS movement's aggressive efforts to foment hatred for Israel, it is time to take charge and simply say: "Enough." It is time to go on offense against the BDS movement's ongoing economic warfare targeting Israel.

That is why I am proud to announce the Combating BDS Act of 2016, bipartisan legislation that I am introducing with the gentleman from California (Mr. VARGAS), a courageous leader in the anti-BDS movement.

The Combating BDS Act of 2016 affirms on the Federal level the authority of State and local governments to divest public funds or entities that engage in commerce or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activity targeting Israel.

Here is why this idea is so important. Similar to previous local efforts to divest from companies doing business with Iran, we are now seeing a growing movement in State and local governments throughout the Nation to enact measures to divest public funds from entities participating in anti-Israel BDS.

□ 1030

The Combating BDS Act of 2016 strengthens these efforts by affirming the legal authority of State and local governments to act on divestment without running afoul of any potential Federal limitations.

This important legislation empowers community leaders and individuals who seek to counter the hateful targeting and delegitimization against Israel, and it sends an unquestionable message about where the United States Congress stands on BDS.

This is not about left versus right. This is about right versus wrong. It must remain bipartisan. As the author of the Combating BDS Act of 2016, I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance this powerful and important legislation.

IRAN'S HOSTILITY MUST BE COMBATED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the Islamic Republic of Iran—its past and its future.

February 11 is just an ordinary day for Americans, but in Iran, tomorrow is anything but ordinary. Military parades and massive state-sponsored celebrations fill the streets of Tehran and cities across the Islamic Republic. In just a few hours, it will be Islamic Revolution's Victory Day in Iran. The regime celebrates 37 years since the vio-

lent coup that brought the Ayatollah Khomeini to power and transferred Iran into a fundamentalist Islamic theocracy and the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism.

It is a dark period of history, Mr. Speaker. Thousands of innocent people were killed as the revolutionaries consolidated power. The U.S. Embassy was overrun and more than 50 Americans were held hostage for 444 days.

The United States has seen six Presidents since 1979, reflecting a broad range of leadership styles and governing philosophies. The Islamic Republic has been led by two Supreme Leaders, both zealots fanatically committed to the revolutionary ideas they espouse being celebrated on the streets of Tehran on this day. Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with the same Iran today as we were in 1979.

The only day being celebrated by some Americans at the moment is implementation day, as President Obama's dangerous nuclear deal has now come and gone. The world is much more dangerous because of it.

Iran, the leading patron of global terrorism, just received a \$100 billion check. The mullahs continue to foment violence and chaos across the Middle East, and their nuclear structure remains intact. The Obama administration has long argued that we would only be giving them \$50 billion, but even they have conceded that it is closer to \$100 billion or more.

We were also told that Iran would moderate its behavior as a result of this capitulation. Just in the past few weeks, Iran captured and humiliated American sailors, illegally launched ballistic missiles, fired rockets within 1,500 yards of U.S. ships, and flew a drone over a U.S. aircraft carrier. The list goes on and on.

Iranian Special Forces continue to assist al-Assad in his slaughter of innocents in Syria. Over 200,000 have been killed so far. Iranian-backed militias are likely responsible for kidnapping three American contractors in Iraq.

It doesn't take much imagination to figure out what Iran will do with another \$100 billion, which is the windfall that they are about to receive based on this bad deal. As President Obama and Secretary Kerry have both begrudgingly admitted, it is nearly certain that the Iranians will use this money to sow the seeds of even more death and destruction. Think about that. They are nearly certain that part of this \$100 billion will go there.

The Islamic Republic is not our friend, Mr. Speaker. It is a dangerous geopolitical foe. It is led by a cult of extremists that are hellbent on our annihilation. Yet President Obama will do nothing to stem the tide of the Ayatollah's ambitions.

When faced with an adversary whose theology and eschatology are fundamentally incompatible with peace

and world order, the United States, under President Obama's leadership, chose a path of appeasement. I truly believe President Obama has made perhaps the most dangerous foreign policy blunder in our lifetime. We are now facing a newly emboldened, cash-rich, radical Islamic regime fully committed to weakening our Nation, terrorizing the West, and destroying our way of life.

Mr. Speaker, it is up to Congress to do everything in our power to keep as much of this money as possible out of the hands of Iran's terrorist proxies. The Congress must move swiftly to strengthen terrorism- and human rights-related sanctions against Iran and its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The Congress must maintain strict oversight over Iran's nuclear program as its infrastructure remains intact.

Iran's hostility must be combated, Mr. Speaker, and this body should not abrogate that responsibility, even if our President already has.

SARACINI AVIATION SAFETY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, in light of recent reports of ISIS entering Europe disguised as refugees and a terrorist having just tried to take down an aircraft, I think it is important to understand the threats we face, but also to learn from the past.

In the 9/11 Report, al Qaeda mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed told al Qaeda terrorists to watch the cockpit doors at takeoff and landing to observe whether the captain went into the lavatory during the flight and to note whether the flight attendants brought food into the cockpit.

We all know what happened when these attackers stormed the flight deck and turned our airliners into weapons of war. But today, more than 14 years after the attacks of September 11, the FAA still admits the cockpit is vulnerable when the reinforced door has to be opened. That is unacceptable.

We know that terrorists study our vulnerabilities and make their plans accordingly. Yet, even after the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission emphasized the importance of "a layered security system," we have not taken the simple, cost-effective step to protect the skies above us with the installation of secondary barrier doors.

These lightweight, wire-mesh gates can be closed whenever the cockpit door is opened and effectively protect against a terrorist—or team of terrorists—rushing the cockpit by providing the pilot enough time to recognize the threat and reenter and lock the reinforced cockpit door. They are easy to deploy and stow, and provide the "lay-

ered protection" that experts agree is needed.

That is why I have introduced the Saracini Aviation Safety Act. This is a one-page bill named after my constituent, United Airlines pilot Victor J. Saracini, whose life was taken when his aircraft was hijacked and flown into the South Tower of the World Trade Center on September 11. It requires that these cost-effective secondary barriers be included on large passenger aircraft.

We promised to never forget those lost on 9/11 and the lessons learned by all of us on that tragic day; yet after many years and more than 40 hijacking attempts around the world, including five that were successful, we are still not taking this threat seriously.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to advocate for the adoption of this common-sense policy, both as a stand-alone bill or as part of a larger piece of legislation like the FAA reauthorization, and I urge my colleagues to join me.

GTMO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, one of the most oft-repeated campaign promises from President Obama's 2008 campaign was his determination to close the U.S. Guantanamo Bay detention facility.

Congress, a coequal branch of government representing each citizen and re-elected every 2 years, hasn't come to the same conclusion as President Obama about the status of GTMO moving forward. Because of this, we have blocked funding for its closure year after year after year.

We have strong reasons for concern. Last September, the Director of National Intelligence reported that 117 transferred detainees are confirmed to be reengaging in terrorist activities, with another 79 suspected to have done so. Disturbingly, this amounts to a full 30 percent of transferred detainees either confirmed or suspected of reengaging in terrorist activities.

The Director's report clearly shows that the detainee transfer process is obviously deeply flawed and poses a significant unnecessary and unacceptable risk to the security of our Nation and, quite frankly, the world.

The high percentage of reengagement clearly exposes the fact that we have just simply failed to properly identify the threat posed by transferred detainees and provide necessary safeguards to protect our citizens—safeguards that should have been in place before one single transfer ever took place.

Given the dire national security implications posed by these detainee transfers, I, along with 23 of my colleagues in this House, sent a letter last week to President Obama requesting to

see the terms of agreements made with countries where detainees have and will be transferred.

There are 55 countries, by the way, including the likes of Yemen, Somalia, Pakistan, Libya, Iraq, and Iran. Yemen, really? Libya is a failed state—which we may have had a great part in creating—and we are sending terrorists there to be detained? Think about it. What incentive would it take for you to bring a terrorist to your country? to your neighborhood? to your home?

In particular, I am interested in the agreements' provisions to mitigate the inherent danger posed by detainee transfers. Specifically, what were the provisions aimed at preventing reengagement? Were there any? How did we ensure accountability by the home countries? What did these nations do to prevent contact with known terrorists, especially in countries that are full of terrorists, like Yemen or Somalia? How did we ensure these countries offer no form of aid and assistance to terrorist organizations?

The President says detaining these people is a recruiting magnet. Well, I wonder if we shouldn't detain gang members in our country. It is a right of passage to go to prison if you are in a gang. Should we let them all out, too? According to that logic, incarcerating them creates more of them.

He also says that detaining them indefinitely, without a trial, violates America's principles. You know what? He is right. You ought to ask yourselves as taxpayers: Why did we pay millions of dollars for a state-of-the-art court facility for sensitive and top-secret information during a trial, and yet no one has been put on trial? It is right there next to the detention facility. I walked through it myself. Why can't the military tribunals take place so we can find out what the deal is with these people and have them incarcerated correctly or set them free? It doesn't happen at all.

President Obama declared to America in 2013 that his administration is "the most transparent administration in history." I will take some issue with that. Despite that fact, the President has clearly not lived up to this standard recently.

I sincerely hope that the President will give his promise of transparency higher priority than the priority given to unilaterally closing GTMO as part of a final-year, legacy-driven agenda. It is not about his agenda. It is about the security of our Nation. It should be about the security of the world. These folks should not be let out. They should be given due process. They certainly shouldn't be sent to countries that are terrorist in nature.

Finally, the American people should know what the deal is. How much is this costing? Are we sending arms to these countries? What are the arrangements? There are 55 countries. Why would they take these terrorists?

RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL BOY SCOUTS DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this past Monday, February 8, is recognized by many as National Boy Scouts Day, marking the incorporation of the Boy Scouts of America 106 years ago.

I have spent close to four decades as a scoutmaster, Juniata Valley Boy Scout Council executive board member and council president, and as a scouting dad. My wife and I are scouting parents, with three sons we are very proud of who are Eagle Scouts today.

In my own scouting experience, I was honored to become one of just 2,000 people, since 1969, to receive the national Distinguished Eagle Scout Award.

It was my experience in scouting that first sparked my interest in public service—in the vein of the Boy Scout promise, which urges us, in part, to do our duty to God, to our country, and in the service of other people.

Scouting got its start around the turn of the last century, thanks to the efforts of British Army Officer Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell.

As Scouting history has it, in 1909, a Chicago businessman, a publisher, William D. Boyce, who actually grew up in western Pennsylvania, lost his way in a dense fog in London.

□ 1045

A young boy came to his aid, guiding Mr. Boyce to his destination. And in the end, when Mr. Boyce offered that young boy a tip, a coin, the boy refused the tip offered by Mr. Boyce stating: Sir, I am a Scout, and Scouts do not take rewards for doing good turns.

Well, that young boy was a Scout. We don't know his identity today, but he certainly has changed our country. That single act of volunteerism gave birth to what became the Boy Scouts of America, incorporated in 1910.

In 2013, there were more than 2.6 million members of the Boy Scouts of America. The program today serves not just boys, but also girls in our Scouting Venturing program.

In a time which has, in many ways, been highlighted by a decline of volunteerism and criticism of perhaps our younger newest generations, I know that our Nation's future is in good hands with those who live and dedicate themselves to the Scout Oath or the Scout Promise, which they state at the beginning of every meeting and they end with. The words since that time are:

"On my honor, I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight."

Scouting prepares youth to be productive and successful members of the workforce. The program introduces our youth to countless career opportunities, including the STEM fields.

As a Scout Master for almost three decades, I have seen these 11-year-old youths, until the time they become 18 and go on into life, the career paths they were exposed to for the first time—whether it was medicine, or teaching, or professional fire fighting, or across the board—through the Scouting experience. What employer would not benefit from an employee with practical exposure from an organization that emphasizes values, service, and leadership?

Scouting fosters the values that make communities strong and preferred for families to set down roots and to contribute.

Scouting offers the world's finest leadership training for adults and youth, leadership training that can be generalized to any occupations, including the United States House of Representatives.

As frequently said, "Scouting is out-ing." Scouting is the youth leadership program that is grounded, not just in values, but in the beauty and the nature of the outdoors, building appreciation and respect for God's creation and for active lives, for being physically active, that is so desperately needed today.

Now it is my hope that this wonderful organization continues to contribute to the lives of young men and young ladies for generations to come.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG EPIDEMIC IN WEST VIRGINIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, every morning, countless West Virginians wake up fearing that they lost a loved one to drugs the night before; and every morning, far too many West Virginians find this fear has come true.

The prescription drug abuse epidemic in our State is a tragedy that we cannot afford to ignore. It ravages our communities, rips families apart, stunts the development of our youth, and further ruptures our State's already ailing economy.

Overuse of prescription pain medication is one of the leading causes of opioid addiction. When a patient has more narcotic pain medication than they need after a medical event, this excess medication can fall into the wrong hands; and a narcotic pain medication in the wrong hands often leads to addiction. In fact, the National Institute on Drug Abuse has found that 1 in 15 people who take nonmedical prescription pain relievers will try heroin.

Last year, the number of fatal overdoses from prescription painkillers increased by 16 percent and, from heroin, 28 percent in the United States. In West Virginia, the story is even worse. According to a recent study by the Trust for America's Health, the Mountain State has the highest rate of overdose deaths in the entire United States.

This issue is above party politics. It is a plague that all Americans must come together to solve. That is why, yesterday, I introduced H.R. 4499, the Promoting Responsible Opioid Prescribing Act. This bipartisan bill strikes a harmful provision of ObamaCare that places unnecessary pressure on doctors and hospitals to prescribe narcotic pain medicine.

This concern was brought to my attention while meeting with doctors and other healthcare professional workers in Charleston, West Virginia, who are active in our State's medical society. In other words, this was their idea. I thank them for bringing this to my attention, and I encourage others to bring any ideas to help fight back against the opium epidemic to your local Congressman.

In 2006, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, and the Department of Health and Human Services developed a survey called the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems, pronounced "H-caps," for short. HCAHPS is a standardized survey used to measure patient perspectives and satisfaction on the care they receive in hospital settings.

At first, hospitals used this survey on an optional basis. However, when ObamaCare became law in 2010, it put in place "pay for performance" provisions that use these survey results as a factor in calculating Medicare reimbursement rates for physicians and hospitals on quality measures.

This provision of ObamaCare was intended to save money and to force improvements on hospital performance. However, it has led to unintended consequences in the area of pain management.

The HCAHPS survey contains three questions on pain management:

One, during this hospital stay, did you need medicine for pain?

Two, during this hospital stay, how often was your pain well-controlled?

Three, during this hospital stay, how often did the hospital staff do everything they could to help you with your pain?

Because of the tie to reimbursement, hospitals and physicians are pressured to perform well under HCAHPS, including the pain management questions. However, doctors, not the Federal Government, know how best to treat patients, and that includes the question of how best to use narcotic pain medication.

The PROP Act would remove these pain management questions from consideration when CMS is conducting reimbursement analysis. However, the patient would still answer the survey questions so that hospitals can monitor patient satisfaction.

By severing the relationship between HCAHPS questions on pain management and reimbursement, doctors would no longer feel the undue pressure to overprescribe opioid narcotics to people they believe may be abusing it. This simple change will help reduce access to narcotic pain medication for patients who do not need it, thereby reducing the risk of addiction.

I would like to take the time to thank the bipartisan cosponsors of this bill: ANNIE KUSTER, Chairman HAL ROGERS, STEPHEN LYNCH, FRANK GUINTA, TIM RYAN, and BARBARA COMSTOCK.

Our bill has been endorsed by the American Medical Association and the American Society of Addiction Medicine.

I encourage my colleagues in the House to consider cosponsoring my bill, H.R. 4499, the PROP Act.

DISAPPEARANCE OF DAVID SNEDDON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah (Mr. STEWART) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, on August 14, 2004, David Sneddon, a student at Brigham Young University, disappeared without explanation while hiking in the Yunnan province of southwest China.

David is an outstanding young man who speaks fluent Korean and had spent the summer studying Mandarin in Beijing, with plans to return to the U.S. in August to finish his degree in Chinese. He had already paid a housing deposit and registered to take the Law School Admission Test.

The U.S. State Department and the Chinese Government eventually concluded that David fell into a gorge while hiking, but David's family conducted their own exhaustive investigation, with David's father and two older brothers flying to China shortly after his disappearance to retrace his steps.

In the course of talking with numerous eyewitnesses, David's family discovered facts which contradict the official explanation and which, I believe, are compelling evidence of another possibility, which I will get to in just a moment.

My staff and I met David's family and heard his story soon after I was elected 3 years ago. The Sneddon family are remarkable people of great faith who have continued to pursue an explanation for David's disappearance for the past 11 years.

The resolution I am introducing today regarding David's disappearance

is a result of the hard work and diligence of David's parents, siblings, and cousins. They deserve answers. They deserve to have their government do everything possible to determine what happened to David.

I should also add that David's story is personal to me. He was a close friend of my oldest son, Sean. In fact, following David's 2-year missionary service in South Korea, David taught my son Sean the Korean language as he was preparing to begin his own missionary service in South Korea. Though I have not met David, I am grateful for the impact he had on Sean's life.

Over the past 3 years, I have had various opportunities to meet with State Department personnel to discuss David's disappearance. They are good people, and I commend them for their help, particularly in the immediate aftermath of his disappearance when they repeatedly pressured the Chinese Government to pursue the various leads identified by David's family.

However, I am concerned that bureaucratic inertia has made the State Department complacent in this case. I am concerned the State Department leadership has not done all they can do to pursue all of the possible explanations for his disappearance.

One of the unexplored possibilities is that David was abducted by agents of the North Korean regime, something which a number of respected experts on North Korea have advanced in recent years. While this may sound like an outlandish theory to those unfamiliar with North Korea's history, it is becoming very plausible when you understand the regime's long history of abducting foreign citizens to use in training their own foreign agents.

For many years, North Korea systematically kidnapped Japanese citizens and used captives to train their intelligence operatives in Japanese language and culture. The regime finally admitted to the abductions in 2002 and returned five of the Japanese citizens.

There are numerous other facts which, when combined, make North Korea's involvement conceivable.

North Korean agents are known to operate in Yunnan Province, a common area for those escaping North Korea into Southeast Asia.

David disappeared during a long time of heightened tensions between the U.S. and North Korea, just weeks after this House passed the North Korean Human Rights Act.

And David disappeared 1 month after North Korea released Charles Jenkins, an American deserter from the Korean war being held and used precisely as the abducted Japanese citizens: as a language teacher for North Korean military cadets and spies. Jenkins was the last of the known Americans being held for this purpose, and it is possible

the regime needed a replacement for him.

Just this past Sunday, North Korea's rocket launch, in defiance of sanctions and against explicit counsel of the international community, reminded us that North Korea doesn't operate on the same norms that guide diplomacy for most of the rest of the world. They are a criminal enterprise more than a government, and they can do nothing for their own people, let alone for other nations.

Mr. Speaker, I don't raise the possibility regarding David Sneddon's disappearance lightly, and I didn't sponsor this resolution lightly. I recognize the words we speak on foreign policy have consequences far beyond this room. But David is the only American to disappear in China without explanation since the normalization of relations during the Nixon administration.

This is not a fact to be taken lightly. My resolution lays out the facts of his disappearance and asks three essential actions by the State Department and intelligence community:

First, that they continue to investigate and consider all possible explanations for David's disappearance, including potential abduction by North Korea;

Second, that they coordinate their efforts with the Governments of Japan, South Korea, and particularly China, the country known to have at least some influence over North Korea;

And finally, that they keep the Congress and the Sneddon family informed of these efforts.

I would like to thank Senator LEE for sponsoring the companion bill in the Senate, and the rest of the Utah delegation for joining me as cosponsors. I think I can speak for the delegation when I say that David's family deserves a thorough effort from their own government to discover what happened to him. This is the very least that we can ask.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 58 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: God of mercy, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

May Your special blessings be upon the Members of this assembly as results from another primary election reverberate through our political landscape. Give them wisdom and charity, that they might work together, with needed focus, for the common good.

As the candidates now move on to other contests, may all Americans hear the call to responsible citizenship, learning the substance of candidates' positions and plans for the future of our Nation. May we all do our homework so that our experiment in representative democracy might flourish and all would take pride in the government to be constructed from our votes.

May all that is done this day in the people's House be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PETERS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

OUR BORDER IS NOT SECURE

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, new reports from the Department of Homeland Security show a surge in illegal immigration, 30 percent, actually. Last Friday I returned to McAllen, Texas, to tour the Rio Grande River by boat and see our security challenges firsthand, something President Obama has refused to do.

Let me be clear. Our border is not secure. Obama's amnesty is devastating for Texas, particularly its border cities, but the problems far exceed our border. This affects the whole country. It undermines the safety of all Americans and hurts law-abiding taxpayers.

My most sacred duty is to protect our homeland and every citizen in it. I

spent 29 years as a fighter pilot and 7 as a POW doing just that. Rest assured, I will continue to fight to keep America safe.

GUN VIOLENCE MYTHS

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, last Sunday 51 people were killed and 25 injured in four mass shootings in New York, Florida, Illinois, and Mississippi. Yet, Congress has done nothing to reduce gun violence in America.

While this is happening, opponents to commonsense, responsible gun safety legislation are spreading misinformation and sharing myths, myths such as: criminals don't exploit loopholes to buy guns; there is no gun show loophole; the assault weapons ban that was previously in place didn't work; and strong gun laws don't reduce gun crimes.

It is time that we start calling out these myths and correcting the record with the facts. In the coming days, I will be doing just that on my Web site and through social media to help build support for commonsense, responsible gun safety legislation.

After all, Mr. Speaker, facts should guide us in doing our work and doing all that we can to reduce gun violence in America.

HONORING PASTOR MICHAEL MOORE

(Mr. DENHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor Pastor Michael Moore for his many years of service to the Manteca community. After 29 years at Crossroads Grace Community Church, Pastor Mike is retiring from his role as senior leader.

Almost 50 years ago, Pastor Mike married the love of his life, Grace, and together they started a church where everyone could feel welcome.

In 1987, Crossroads Grace Community began with a Bible study group led by Pastor Mike made up of 17 members. The church grew to encompass Pastor Mike's and Grace's vision of a casual atmosphere, practical and relevant teachings, with contemporary worship.

Pastor Mike led the congregation in working with local churches to establish the Hope Family Shelter and provide housing to homeless families. The church also established a mobile medical clinic to provide free medical service for those in need and has sent teams to respond to global disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, the tsunami in Asia, and the Oklahoma tornadoes. The church has also sent missionaries to many corners of the globe.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Pastor Michael Moore and his unwavering leadership in our community and many accomplishments around the globe.

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

(Mr. PETERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PETERS. Spanish Fork, Utah, January 16, 2014:

Marie King, 55 years old.

Kelly Boren, 32.

Joshua Boren, 7 years old.

Haley Boren, 5.

Holly Hill, South Carolina, July 15, 2015:

Jerome Butler, 50 years old.

Krystal Hutto, 28 years old.

Shamekia Sanders, 17.

Tamara Perry, 14.

Saco, Maine, July 26, 2014:

Heather Smith, 35.

Jason Montez, 12 years old.

Noah Montez, 7.

Lily Smith, 4 years old.

Culpeper, Virginia, August 3, 2014:

Shauna Washington, 35 years old.

Onesha Washington, 13.

Onya Washington, 6.

Olivia Washington, 4.

Callison, South Carolina, October 29, 2013:

Richard Fields, 51 years old.

Melissa Fields, 49.

Chandra Fields, 26.

William Robinson, 9 years old.

Tariq Robinson, 9 years old.

BLUE RIBBON STUDY PANEL

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week I was grateful to chair the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities hearing to receive outside views on biodefense for the Department of Defense and review the bipartisan report of the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense.

Chaired by former Senator Joe Lieberman and former Governor and Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge, the panel evaluated the status of prevention, deterrence, preparedness, detection, response, attribution, recovery, and mitigation of our Nation's biodefense.

The report was clear. Our Nation faces a complex threat from both biological weapons and naturally occurring diseases. For example, the recent response to the Ebola outbreak demonstrates the importance of the Department of Defense's biodefense contributions to broader government and global efforts.

I am grateful that the former Attorney General Ken Wainstein and Dr. Gerald Parker, both members of the

panel, were there testifying before the subcommittee. I look forward to working with the Department of Defense to implement the findings and recommendations.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

PEOPLE OF FLINT, MICHIGAN, ARE STRONG

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, my hometown is Flint, Michigan. When we leave here at the end of every week, I fly home to Flint. This is a very proud community. It is the birthplace of General Motors. It is where the UAW workers sat down in 1936 to get the first UAW contract to help build the middle class.

The last few decades have been tough for my community. We have taken a lot of hits, a lot of poverty, high unemployment, but we have always been able to get back up again as a community because there are strong people in Flint, Michigan.

What has happened now in Flint is because of careless actions by State officials who put dollars and cents ahead of the health of people, ahead of the health of 9,000 children.

We can get back up again in Flint, but we need a State response far more robust than what has been recommended by Michigan's Governor and we need help from the Federal Government. These people are American citizens.

If the State won't act to make it right for the people of Flint, we need our Federal Government to do everything in its power to help these people and help Flint get back up again.

HAMILTON CITY, CALIFORNIA, LEVEE PROTECTION

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, it is budget season in Washington, D.C., and one of the things that should be in the budget is infrastructure. I am glad to hear that the President has included \$8.5 million in funding to replace the badly degraded levees on the Sacramento River near Hamilton City, California.

Flood danger has forced evacuation of Hamilton City six times since 1980. The existing levee project provides only 10-year flood event protection when the standard really should be 200-year flood event protection.

Working with local residents who have contributed their own money and resources to the project, we secured

over \$12 million in Federal funding so far.

Mr. Speaker, this year's additional funding will allow major progress on a project that will protect the homes and families of over 200 north State residents, finally giving Hamilton City some peace of mind.

AUTOMATED COLLECTION OF USER FEES AT THE PEACE BRIDGE

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, the budget that President Obama sent to Congress yesterday contained a number of important proposals: more cancer research funding, more treatment for prescription painkiller and heroin addiction, and making permanent the solar investment tax credit and the new market tax credit.

While these initiatives generated headlines, one small and simple provision could have a significant impact on the economy of western New York.

Beginning this year, at the Peace Bridge in Buffalo, Customs and Border Protection will automate the collection of user fees for commercial vehicles. Currently fees are collected manually, which increases congestion and deters Canadians from traveling to western New York.

I called for the implementation of this policy last year and am happy to see the Department of Homeland Security moved so quickly on it. By automating fee collection, hiring more Customs and Border Protection officers, this budget will benefit the western New York economy that is dependent on commerce via the Peace Bridge.

CONGENITAL HEART FUTURES REAUTHORIZATION ACT

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, as February is recognized as Heart Month, I rise on behalf of the nearly 40,000 babies born each year with congenital heart defects, CHD. CHD is the most common birth defect and the number one cause of birth defect-related deaths.

A few decades ago babies born with CHD were not living into adulthood. Now, due to continued investment and research and a series of medical breakthroughs, 90 percent of babies born with CHD are living into adulthood. Let's make it 100 percent.

There is still work to be done, and we must ensure these efforts to improve the lives of those with CHD continue. This is why I introduced the Congenital Heart Futures Reauthorization Act, to spend CHD research, raise

awareness of the importance of specialized care, and ensure important research continues.

We must advance this legislation for the millions of Americans who need our help.

□ 1215

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to highlight the success of the Affordable Care Act.

The numbers are in and, once again, millions of Americans signed up for quality affordable health coverage. More than 12.7 million Americans selected plans through the health insurance marketplaces—4 million, or 42 percent, of whom were new customers this year.

People want coverage. And, thanks to the ACA, millions can now have the security of knowing they won't go bankrupt if they get sick or have an accident, can't be denied coverage because of a preexisting condition, and have access to preventative and primary care services at little to no out-of-pocket cost.

In the 29th District that I am proud to represent, 55,000 residents fall into the expansion gap and have no insurance because States haven't expanded Medicaid. It is time for Texas and other States to do the right thing and recognize that health care is essential for some of our poorest families by expanding Medicaid.

The Affordable Care Act is here to stay. I hope Congress will move past repeal attempts and start talking about how we can make the Affordable Care Act work even better for the American people. I stand ready to work with my colleagues on this critical issue.

IT IS TIME TO RELEASE ZHU YUFU ONCE AND FOR ALL

(Mr. HULTGREN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today yet again in need of bringing the world's attention to the plight of Zhu Yufu.

Four years ago today, this democracy advocate was unjustly sentenced by the Chinese Government to 7 years behind bars, following previous imprisonments. His tireless advocacy for democratic rights, freedom of speech, and the rule of law is worthy of praise. Yet the Chinese Government has harassed and jailed him numerous times on faulty charges.

Yufu is in poor health. He is not able to stand without support. He has coronary heart disease and a coronary artery tumor, in addition to other ailments. Yet Chinese authorities refuse to provide him with medical care or medication. Further, they have forced him to do hard labor and have caused the job losses of his family members.

This Saturday, Zhu Yufu turns 63 years old. The least the Chinese Government can do is provide him with proper medical treatment, improve his living conditions, and leave his family alone. If China is serious about demonstrating any legitimate leadership, it should release him and the hundreds of others like him immediately.

MURDERED FOR THEIR FAITH

(Mr. ELLISON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, today marks 1 year since three young Americans were killed, I believe, for their faith. I think the evidence supports that.

On February 10, 2015, Deah Barakat, Yusor Abu-Salha, and Razan Abu-Salha were murdered in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. They were shot and killed because of their faith. They were Muslim.

Yusor was a graduate of North Carolina State University, and planned on enrolling at UNC Chapel Hill School of Dentistry, where her husband, Deah, was studying to become a dentist. Razan, Yusor's sister, was a student at NCSU as well. She was only 19.

These murders are heartbreaking. They should be heartbreaking to every American. They show us the stark reality that bigotry is alive and well and that good people have to stand against it. Hate speech and scapegoating have real life consequences.

Children are bullied in school, houses of worship are vandalized, and people are killed for the way they dress or how they pray. This should end now.

HONORING VERNITA TODD, CEO OF HEART CITY HEALTH CENTER

(Mrs. WALORSKI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to a champion of public health in my district as she moves to California to continue her work serving the public.

As chief executive officer of Heart City Health Center in Elkhart, Indiana, Vernita Todd has tirelessly advocated on behalf of others. Over the last 10 years, she has led the Center in achieving its mission of contributing to the health of our community by providing access to high-quality and accessible health care.

Vernita has received national recognition for her role in prioritizing ad-

vocacy as a crucial component to Heart City Health Center's mission. Whether at the city, State, or Federal level, the impact of her work can surely be felt by thousands.

On behalf of the people of Indiana's Second Congressional District, I thank Vernita Todd for her contributions to improving thousands of lives throughout the northern Indiana community and the country as a whole. I wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 10, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 10, 2016 at 9:25 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 2109.
That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 1428.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT IMPROVED COMPLIANCE AWARENESS ACT

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4470) to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act with respect to the requirements related to lead in drinking water, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4470

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act".

SEC. 2. ENFORCEMENT OF DRINKING WATER REGULATIONS.

Section 1414(c) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300g-3(c)) is amended—

(1) in the header, by inserting "STATES, THE ADMINISTRATOR, AND" before "PERSONS SERVED";

(2) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking "paragraph (2)(E)" and inserting "paragraph (2)(F)"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

"(D) Notice of any exceedance at the 90th percentile of a lead action level in a regulation promulgated under section 1412.";

(3) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking "subparagraph (D)" and inserting "subparagraph (E)";

(B) in subparagraph (C)—

(i) in the header, by striking "VIOLATIONS" and inserting "NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS";

(ii) in the matter preceding clause (i)—

(I) by inserting ", and each exceedance described in paragraph (1)(D)," after "for each violation"; and

(II) by inserting "or exceedance" after "Each notice of violation";

(iii) by inserting "or exceedance" after "the violation" each place it appears; and

(iv) in clause (iv)—

(I) in subclause (I), by striking "broadcast media" and inserting "media, including broadcast media,";

(II) in subclause (II)—

(aa) by striking "in a newspaper of general circulation serving the area" and inserting "for circulation in the affected area, including in a newspaper of general circulation serving the area,"; and

(bb) by striking "or the date of publication of the next issue of the newspaper"; and

(III) in subclause (III), by striking "in lieu of notification by means of broadcast media or newspaper";

(C) by redesignating subparagraphs (D) and (E) as subparagraphs (E) and (F), respectively; and

(D) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

"(D) NOTICE BY ADMINISTRATOR.—If, after 24 hours after the Administrator's notification under subsection (a)(1)(A), the State with primary enforcement responsibility or the owner or operator of the public water system has not issued a notice that is required under subparagraph (C) for an exceedance described in paragraph (1)(D), the Administrator shall issue such required notice pursuant to this paragraph.";

(4) in paragraph (3)(B)—

(A) by striking "subparagraph (A) and" and inserting "subparagraph (A)."; and

(B) by striking "subparagraph (C) or (D) of paragraph (2)" and inserting "subparagraph (C) or (E) of paragraph (2), and notices issued by the Administrator with respect to public water systems serving Indian Tribes under subparagraph (D) of such paragraph";

(5) in paragraph (4)(B)—

(A) in clause (ii), by striking "the terms" and inserting "the terms 'action level,'"; and

(B) in clause (iii), by striking "and (IV)" and inserting "(IV) the action level for the contaminant, and (V)"; and

(6) by adding at the end the following:

"(5) EXCEEDANCE OF SAFE LEAD LEVEL.—

"(A) STRATEGIC PLAN.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Administrator shall, in collaboration with owners and operators of public water systems and States, establish a strategic plan for how the Administrator, a State with primary enforcement responsibility, and owners and operators of public water systems shall conduct targeted outreach, education, technical assistance, and risk communication to populations affected

by lead in a public water system, including dissemination of information described in subparagraph (C).

“(B) EPA INITIATION OF NOTICE.—

“(i) FORWARDING OF DATA BY EMPLOYEE OF EPA.—If the Environmental Protection Agency develops or receives, from a source other than the State or the public water system, data, which meets the requirements of section 1412(b)(3)(A)(ii), indicating that the drinking water of a person served by a public water system contains a level of lead that exceeds a lead action level promulgated under section 1412, the Administrator shall require an appropriate employee of the Agency to forward such data to the owner or operator of the public water system and to the State in which the exceedance occurred within a time period established by the Administrator.

“(ii) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION BY OWNER OR OPERATOR.—If an owner or operator of a public water system receives a notice under clause (i), the owner or operator, within a time period established by the Administrator, shall disseminate to affected persons the information described in subparagraph (C).

“(iii) CONSULTATION.—

“(I) DEADLINE.—With respect to an exceedance at the 90th percentile of a lead action level in a regulation promulgated under section 1412, if the owner or operator of the public water system does not disseminate, in the time period established by the Administrator, the information described in subparagraph (C), as required under clause (ii), not later than 24 hours after becoming aware of such failure to disseminate, the Administrator shall consult, within a period not to exceed 24 hours, with the applicable Governor to develop a plan, in accordance with the strategic plan, to disseminate such information to affected persons within 24 hours of the end of such consultation period.

“(II) DELEGATION.—The Administrator may only delegate the duty to consult under this clause to an employee of the Environmental Protection Agency who is working in the Office of Water, at the headquarters of the Agency, at the time of such delegation.

“(iv) DISSEMINATION BY ADMINISTRATOR.—The Administrator shall, as soon as reasonably possible, disseminate to affected persons the information described subparagraph (C) if—

“(I) the Administrator and the applicable Governor do not agree on a plan described in clause (iii)(I) during the consultation period under such clause; or

“(II) the applicable Governor does not disseminate the information within 24 hours of the end of such consultation period.

“(C) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—Information required to be disseminated under this paragraph shall include a clear explanation of the exceedance of a lead action level, its potential adverse effects on human health, the steps that the owner or operator of the public water system is taking to correct the exceedance, and the necessity of seeking alternative water supplies until the exceedance is corrected.

“(6) PRIVACY.—Any notice under this subsection to the public or an affected person shall protect the privacy of individual customer information.”.

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON USE OF LEAD PIPES, SOLDER, AND FLUX.

Section 1417 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300g-6) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a)(2)(A) to read as follows:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—

“(i) IDENTIFICATION AND NOTICE.—Each owner or operator of a public water system shall identify and provide notice to persons who may be affected by—

“(I) lead contamination of their drinking water where such contamination results from—

“(aa) the lead content in the construction materials of the public water distribution system; or

“(bb) corrosivity of the water supply sufficient to cause leaching of lead; or

“(II) an exceedance at the 90th percentile of a lead action level in a regulation promulgated under section 1412.

“(ii) MANNER AND FORM.—Notice under this paragraph shall be provided in such manner and form as may be reasonably required by the Administrator. Notwithstanding clause (i)(II), notice under this paragraph shall be provided notwithstanding the absence of a violation of any national drinking water standard.”;

(2) in subsection (b)(2)—

(A) by striking “The requirements” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The requirements”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“Enforcement of such requirements shall be carried out by a State with primary enforcement responsibility or the Administrator, as appropriate.

“(B) NOTIFICATION BY ADMINISTRATOR.—In the case of an exceedance described in subsection (a)(2)(A)(i)(II), if the public water system or the State in which the public water system is located does not notify the persons who may be affected by such exceedance in accordance with subsection (a)(2), the Administrator shall notify such persons of such exceedance in accordance with subsection (a)(2), including notification of the relevant concentrations of lead. Such notice shall protect the privacy of individual customer information.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(f) PUBLIC EDUCATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall make information available to the public regarding lead in drinking water, including information regarding—

“(A) risks associated with lead in drinking water;

“(B) the likelihood that drinking water in a residence may contain lead;

“(C) steps States, public water systems, and consumers can take to reduce the risks of lead; and

“(D) the availability of additional resources that consumers can use to minimize lead exposure, including information on how to sample for lead in drinking water.

“(2) VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.—In making information available to the public under this subsection, the Administrator shall carry out targeted outreach strategies that focus on educating groups within the general population that may be at greater risk than the general population of adverse health effects from exposure to lead in drinking water.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and in-

sert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I wish we weren't here today. I wish this bill was not necessary, but it is. Our hearts go out to the folks of Flint, Michigan. The system let them down at every level. That is, frankly, unacceptable.

All folks want is the peace of mind that their government is looking out for their best interest and that their water is safe. This bill is the first step.

Imagine if you went to draw a cup of cold water from your kitchen faucet and suddenly had to think about whether it is safe to drink or not. Now put yourself into the shoes of a parent whose son or daughter has already taken a drink from that faucet. Or, you made coffee or infant formula. What health risk has your child already been exposed to? What do we do now? How can we expect a family to live life day-to-day without safe drinking water? And, after all those initial concerns, you begin asking yourself: How is this situation possible in the 21st century in the United States of America?

We have been seeking answers to that question from EPA, from the State of Michigan, and from others. In the meantime, we know that part of the answer—certainly, not the whole story—is that there was a terrible breakdown in communication at every level of government.

It is sickening and it breaks your heart that thousands of kids indeed could be at risk, being poisoned from faucets that they thought were safe.

Government officials knew there was serious cause for concern and failed to inform the people of Flint. Many of those officials did not even seem to be effectively communicating and sharing data among themselves.

The EPA regional office was not telling headquarters about everything, the State was not telling EPA everything, and we don't know yet what the city of Flint was telling the State or EPA. That has got to be fixed—and it has got to be fixed now.

□ 1230

The Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act ensures that the public learns of excessive lead levels in their drinking water by setting forth how and when States, EPA, and public water utilities communicate their findings.

The bill also strengthens public notification rules when lead levels are exceeded. Individual consumers will be told when their own house tests positive for lead problems. And if the community or States fail to notify the public, EPA will step in and do so. They are required to do that.

The bill also requires EPA to create a strategic plan for handling and improving information flow among water utilities, the States, EPA, and affected drinking water consumers before there is an enforceable lead exceedance in drinking water. Let me repeat that: before lead levels get too high.

Finally, this bipartisan bill requires consumer notification when water being transported in a lead pipe is so corrosive that, in fact, it could leach into public drinking water.

I want to thank all Members of the House for their support, especially my Michigan colleagues, every one of which, from both parties, signed as an original cosponsor of this legislation.

I want to particularly thank Mr. KILDEE, a friend, who led this effort.

I thank my colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee, particularly FRANK PALLONE, JOHN SHIMKUS, and PAUL TONKO, for their advice, collaboration, and support.

I also want to thank two McCarthys, KEVIN MCCARTHY, for scheduling this at almost a moment's notice, and my lead counsel on this legislation, Dave McCarthy, who helped write and improve the bill as it was originally introduced.

What is said on this floor today will not do anything to ease the mind of a parent in Flint. The entire situation breaks your heart, but we have a responsibility, working together as Republicans and Democrats, to fix the problem. This bill is an important step.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 4470, the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act, introduced last week by our colleague Representative KILDEE, with the support of other members of the Michigan delegation.

This bill would strengthen requirements to have the EPA notify the public when concentrations of lead exceed Federal standards. That is notifying the public.

While I support this legislation and urge my colleagues to support it, far more than this is needed to address the many failings that led to the tragic circumstances that are still being experienced by the residents of Flint, Michigan, a situation that has drawn the Nation's attention and drawn compassion for children and their families. This should never have occurred in any city in our Nation.

As with any such tragic failure, there is an attempt to assess blame. Well, accountability is important. Those who failed in their responsibility should be held accountable.

But no one here has yet taken responsibility for our part, Congress' part, in this event. Collectively, this Congress as well as many previous Congresses have failed to maintain Federal support for the maintenance and im-

provements of our water infrastructure.

We have been underfunding these systems for decades. The poor condition of the water treatment and distribution system in Flint set the stage for this tragedy.

We are doing this in an attempt to save money. Well, in fact, we are wasting many millions of dollars more by allowing essential infrastructure to deteriorate to the extent where a constant stream of emergency responses and repairs are required to keep these systems working.

Finally, we need to do something for the people of Flint. The State of Michigan and President Obama's administration have both begun to mobilize resources to deal with the immediate need for safe drinking water, and they are working to eliminate lead from the water distribution system. But we still don't know if essential corrosion control can be reestablished.

And bottled water does not solve Flint's problems. The residents of Flint need a fully functioning public water system that delivers safe, clean water to their homes, to their schools, and to their businesses. We need to work with the State of Michigan to make that happen.

We need to care for the people who were exposed to lead, especially our children, who are most vulnerable to lead exposure. They need treatment and sustained assistance to deal with the health problems they may experience as a result of this manmade disaster.

The conditions that enabled this crisis to happen are not unique to Flint. And while this bill is a first step to help communities that may face these problems in the future, it cannot be our last step. We must embrace our responsibility to support Federal investment in drinking water systems.

The public health and future prosperity of the people of Flint and thousands of other communities across our great Nation are continuing to suffer from the concerns and are counting on our progressive actions. I look forward to continuing this discussion.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG), a cosponsor of the bill.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I want to start by thanking my friends, DAN KILDEE and Chairman UPTON, for their work on this bipartisan legislation and ensuring a swift congressional response to the ongoing water crisis in Flint, Michigan.

What have we learned, and what will we do both now and into the future, Mr. Speaker, is the question.

What happened in Flint is not a natural disaster. It is a human disaster and a failure of government at every level.

In my questioning at last week's Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing, it became very clear that individuals with the EPA knew about the high lead levels in the drinking water for months but failed to communicate this information to the people of Flint, even under repeated Freedom of Information Act requests.

The bill we are considering today takes important steps to strengthen Federal requirements on the EPA to notify the public when concentrations of lead in drinking water are above Federal requirements.

I am glad the entire Michigan delegation is backing this bill; and I am committed to continuing to work together to get answers and help the families in Flint who need clean water and, for that matter, Mr. Speaker, learning from this for the families in the entire United States to make sure that this doesn't happen to them as well.

Mr. Speaker, in America, in the 21st century, children should not have to worry about safe and clean drinking water. The Flint water crisis never should have happened, and we must take action to ensure it never happens again.

Making things right must be a cooperative effort at every level, and this bill takes important steps to ensure proper coordination going forward.

I offer all of my support, all of my assistance, all of my help and my votes to make sure this happens.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), who has carried the concern and the emotion of this situation as the Representative in the House of Flint, Michigan. His energetic efforts, his determination, his obvious passion for getting this done, getting some relief, the relief essential for Flint done, is tremendously moving.

Mr. KILDEE. I thank Mr. TONKO for his comments and his support and leadership on this issue.

And I would like him to please extend my thanks to Ranking Member PALLONE for his effort and his support. I know he is dealing with a difficult time himself right now, and we extend our best wishes to him.

I want to thank all of my Michigan colleagues for joining as original cosponsors of this legislation; and I particularly thank Chairman UPTON for his help, his guidance, his assistance and, really, collaboration on getting a piece of legislation put together that we think is very helpful in preventing another situation such as what has occurred in my hometown from ever happening again in the United States.

I again thank Mr. UPTON for his assistance and leadership on this.

Flint is my home. The people I represent are the people I grew up with in Flint, Michigan. It is a great community. It has been through some struggles, for sure, in the last few decades,

but we have never dealt with anything quite like this, something so fundamental as safe drinking water that we take for granted.

You turn on the faucet, as Mr. UPTON said, you expect the water that comes out of that faucet to be safe for yourself, for your children, to make formula, to cook food, to drink. And because of a series of decisions that really are almost incomprehensible in their impact, people in Flint, Michigan, can't drink their water; 100,000 people can't drink the water.

The thing that makes me most upset—sad, yes, but also angry—is that this crisis, this situation, which will last for decades in its impact, was completely avoidable.

Unlike a lot of other struggles that my hometown has faced as a result of big changes in the economy—development patterns, et cetera—this was a series of decisions that we can easily identify that could easily have been prevented with just more thought and more care and, in this case, a stronger set of requirements for disclosure when lead levels are elevated in a drinking water system.

So this legislation is one step. It is not the total solution. We really have to deal—and I hope my colleagues will also join us—with putting together a response to the crisis being felt by the people in Flint right now.

This bill, unfortunately, is too late to help them, but it can help the next Flint, perhaps. This would require the EPA to provide notice if the State agency responsible for enforcement of the clean drinking water laws does not act to provide notice to the citizens affected and to the water system.

Let me just be clear on that. The State of Michigan, in the case of the Flint situation, has primacy in terms of enforcement of these laws. It is their obligation to ensure that the clean drinking water laws are enforced, to collect data, to do sampling and testing, and to provide remediation, to provide intervention, if, in fact, it is not the case.

So, yes, there has been a failure of government, but I think we have to take care not to attempt to create some sort of false sense of equivalency of responsibility.

The city of Flint, for example, which is the most local level of government and where the water system is operated, was under the control of an emergency manager, a State official appointed to overtake operation of the city of Flint. So to the extent that the city was responsible, the city was the State in this regard.

In terms of the Federal role, there was apparent confusion or disagreement as to whether the EPA had authority, absent State notification to the public of the data that they had, whether the EPA had authority to go public, to make it clear that there was

a problem. This legislation addresses that.

This legislation strengthens the hand of those who work at the EPA and actually requires them—not simply allows, but requires them—to provide notice to the public and to a water system operator in the event that the State fails to do so. Had that happened, it would not have prevented the bad decisions that led to this crisis, but it would have prevented them from going on for months and months and months with no action to protect the people in Flint.

This is important legislation. We need more. We need help for the people of Flint. But this is a step in the right direction in preventing what happened in Flint from happening to another community.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, might I inquire as to how much time I have remaining on my side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) has 13½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) has 11½ minutes remaining.

□ 1245

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BISHOP), again, an original cosponsor of the bill.

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I would first like to begin by thanking the gentleman from Flint, Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) for his leadership in this matter and for raising our attention to this.

Also, I would like to thank Chairman UPTON for his leadership for the Michigan delegation in bringing us together and putting aside any partisan differences to address a need of our great State and, also, for the children and families across our country.

I have spent my entire life in the State of Michigan. I was born there and raised there. Many generations before me were the same, born and raised in Michigan. My current family, my wife and my three kids, also live in Michigan and will also, I am sure, see to it that their children live there as well.

When I learned what happened in Flint, I was absolutely heartbroken. Frankly, it frightens me to think that a failure of this magnitude could happen in the 21st century and in our State.

Can you imagine not being able to drink the water from your own tap? What if you weren't able to bathe or take a shower because of fear of what might be in the water? The anger and the frustration is palpable, and it should be.

My district borders on Congressman KILDEE's, and I can tell you firsthand the crisis not only affects and impacts the community of Flint, but the entire Great Lakes State.

For weeks I have seen local high schools, veterans groups, and con-

cerned citizens—you name it—people from all over Michigan, rising up to address the crisis and to help the residents, the families, and children of Flint.

When it comes to local, State, and Federal leadership, we must do everything possible to help as well. Every single one of us here today has a duty to ensure families and children are safe and have access to the essentials, the most basic of which is clean drinking water from household faucets.

Sure, we can point fingers and play the blame game. But when it comes down to fixing it, we must do so fast. We need more action than words. We need solutions.

What Chairman UPTON and Congressman KILDEE have proposed is a first-step solution to ensure this won't happen again.

First and foremost, this legislation makes sure the EPA will step in and notify the public when they know concentrations of lead in drinking water are above Federal requirements. It also streamlines communication between utilities, the States, the EPA, and the affected customers.

The entire delegation of the State of Michigan and Congress agree that this is a crisis. But to be clear, this is not a Democratic or Republican issue. I would say shame on anyone who attempts to capitalize on this issue or use the families of Flint in this crisis to further their own personal agenda. This is about common sense and delivering solutions to these children and families.

I ask my colleagues on behalf of both sides of the aisle to join Michigan and help us take action.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE). She is another member of the Michigan delegation.

Representative BRENDA LAWRENCE has shown great leadership in her role on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee and, again, has been a passionate voice to address the families of Flint.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the crisis in Flint demands action. I ran for Congress after serving as a mayor because I felt strongly that our government has a responsibility.

When you ask for a vote, you are asking for the trust in our government. We betrayed the trust of our citizens when we did not provide a human need, and that is clean water.

I stand here today encouraged. I ran on the premise that we need to work together as a government. I can tell you that this crisis in Flint is not a political issue. It is a moral issue. It is why each of us in Congress sit here today on the vote of the people's trust, and that is to take care of this great country.

It is a moral issue, and it calls for all of us in Congress to act. Today I am standing here with a sense of hope being fulfilled that we have eliminated the aisle, and we are standing here together.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4470, the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act. This bill will ensure that EPA notifies communities of lead contamination if State or local agencies fail to do so. That clearly is what happened in Flint.

Local water authorities will have to provide notification to the public when lead contamination is a result of lead from pipes and other infrastructure leaching into the water supply. This notice will have to be provided to affected residents, regardless of whether any drinking water standards were violated.

If the operator does not notify the public—in this case, it was Michigan Environmental Quality—if they do not notify the public, then the EPA must do so. This is precisely what happened in Flint.

State officials repeatedly ignored the pleas of the residents and those we are calling civic heroes from outside and experts about the lead levels.

Passing this bill today will ensure that the situation in Flint—and I am joining with my Republican colleagues and Democratic—never happens again in our United States. The decision to share that type of critical information should not be based on political judgment.

H.R. 4470 will ensure that residents acquire the information they need about their drinking water systems and give EPA the ability and responsibility to step in and notify residents if a State or water system fails to act.

H.R. 4470 is just the first step, as we heard, in addressing our country's drinking water infrastructure issue. I hope that we can continue to work together in a bipartisan manner to ensure that Flint never happens again.

This is the first step in fixing our infrastructure in America because other Members of Congress have talked about lead water crises in their communities. So this is a first step.

For me, this is a fulfilling day to stand here and support my colleagues, regardless of our political affiliation, and take care of the people of America.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MOOLENAAR). Again, he is a cosponsor of Mr. KILDEE's bill.

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, I also want to join my Michigan colleagues as a cosponsor of this legislation and thank Representative KILDEE and Chairman UPTON for bringing this legislation forward.

Our hearts go out to the people of Flint who are enduring so much and persevering during this time. It is

heartwarming to see the way people across the country have come together in support of the people of Flint.

The sad thing is that this situation could have been prevented and should have been prevented. The legislation we are discussing today here in the House of Representatives is because of failures in local, State, and Federal Government.

The fact is that the officials at the EPA knew last April—10 months ago—that the Flint Utilities Department was not using corrosion controls, putting water safety at risk.

Instead of alerting the public, the EPA stayed silent. When an EPA employee tried to speak out, he was silenced. The EPA deferred to a State agency, the MDEQ, which also failed to tell the public.

Last month the EPA administrator sent a memo creating a formal policy on the importance of assessing and responding to critical public health issues. That the administrator had to remind employees of the importance of public health speaks to the misplaced priority of the EPA and its officials.

So today we have to pass a law requiring the Agency to notify the public when water quality is unsafe and constitutes a public health threat. This legislation is a reminder to the EPA that it needs to focus on its core responsibility with safe drinking water, using its authority appropriately, rather than overreaching outside of its jurisdiction.

This is an example of one community that has been adversely affected. Flint is not alone in this challenge, and this has ramifications all across our country.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I am waiting for another individual to offer testimony.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. TROTT), another cosponsor of the legislation.

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank Chairman UPTON and Representative KILDEE for their important, bipartisan work on this issue.

I rise today in support of the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act. This bill is a step in the right direction to preserve and protect the health of our citizens.

The legislation requires the EPA administrator to work with States and local water authorities to develop a strategic plan for addressing lead contaminants in drinking water. This important legislation will ensure that the complete failure to notify people of a health risk, which occurred in Flint, does not happen again.

This is an issue that many communities across our country will have to deal with as our water system infra-

structure ages. We must ensure that the public is aware, our citizens are informed, and that our water authorities and agencies identify and take steps to prevent this level of failure from happening again.

Mr. Speaker, on the Federal level, it is unacceptable that the EPA, an agency with a budget of over \$8 billion, did not escalate its concerns over the presence of lead contaminants.

This is an agency that is literally paid to protect the public health and environment, and it failed. This failure may not happen again. All Americans should feel safe drinking water from their kitchen sink.

This legislation is a commonsense solution. I urge its immediate passage.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this act. I thank the chairman for his hard work and the committee's hard work on this bill.

I will be exceedingly brief because certainly, as has been outlined by any number of different speakers, this is about a failure of government at a multitude of different levels, at the State, local, and Federal levels, a real failure and real consequences to the people of Flint.

It is also, I think, a reminder to all of us of the significance of bracket creep in government; wherein, if everybody is involved, nobody is involved; if everybody is accountable, nobody is accountable.

That is true of a government at a government level. It is true of a regulatory body. The importance of clearly defined missions I think is part of what your strategic plan really gets at in this act, and I admire your work on that.

I also want to just reference that this is also a reminder, a wake-up call, if you will, on the importance of watching out for unsustainable political promises.

I say that because, if you look at the general budget and the general fund within Flint, basically one-third of their revenue goes to pay for retiree benefits.

That number by the year 2020 is going to rise to essentially 40 percent, 40 percent. I bring that up because it is indeed a wake-up call to the unsustainability of our Federal promises as you look at the numbers going forward at the Federal level.

So my heart goes out to the people of Flint. I think that this is an important measure going forward, but it is also an important reminder to every one of us here at the Federal level to watch out for the unsustainable promises here in Washington.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, might I inquire how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). The gentleman from Michigan has 5½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York has 8 minutes remaining.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding. I appreciate all the comments and the support, especially the sympathy and, really, unity with the people of my hometown of Flint.

I do want to ensure, though, that we are properly characterizing the legislation, its reasoning, and its impact.

The legislation would actually not just require EPA to provide notice, but would require the local jurisdiction, the State agency, to provide them with the opportunity to do what they should do anyway, that is, to provide notice. Absent their willingness to do so, the EPA would then be required.

It is an important distinction because, in this case, the State of Michigan has primacy in enforcement of these rules.

The EPA in the case of Flint did take action when they learned of the elevated lead levels. The action was to repeatedly reach out to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and insist that they enforce the lead and copper rule.

Actually, they went so far as to insist that they initiate corrosion control, which is the mechanism by which lead leaching would have been prevented.

□ 1300

Not only did the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality fail to act, they actually told the EPA almost a year ago that they actually had initiated corrosion control when they had not.

I think it would be a mistake to create some sort of equivalency between the role of the EPA and the role of the State of Michigan in this. It was the State of Michigan that had prime responsibility that failed.

The EPA, while I would have preferred that they had shouted from the mountaintop that they were having this problem getting the lead agency to enforce the rule, there was at least confusion as to whether or not they had the authority to do so. Even today, the State of Michigan continues to push back on the EPA's attempts to test water to insist on enforcement. It is an important distinction to make.

Regarding my friend Mr. SANFORD's comments, I appreciate his reflection on the financial situation within the city of Flint. While that is a set of questions that clearly needs attention, the truth of the matter is, had the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality insisted on the use of corrosion control in the Flint water

system, as the law would require, the cost would have been \$140 a day. All of this could have been prevented by the State simply requiring that \$140 a day be spent.

This legislation is important in preventing this from happening again so that an agency of a State that refuses to enforce the law at least can't do so in the dark; and if the State won't give public notice, it would require the EPA to do so. This is an important step. We have crafted this legislation to make sure that each level of government is transparent when it comes to these issues.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In closing, let me again offer my appreciation to Chairman UPTON and our ranking member, Representative PALLONE, for their leadership on this and for working in a spirit of bipartisanship to bring this measure to the floor and in working with the Michigan delegation and, in particular, Representative KILDEE, who has been directly impacted on behalf of Flint, Michigan, which he represents.

I would also make certain that we remember that under the Safe Drinking Water Act, as Representative KILDEE indicated, States have primacy, an important issue for Members who frequently talked about empowering our State and local governments. It is a State's responsibility when they accept that role of primacy to run these systems and comply with Federal standards.

Before we point fingers at the EPA, let's remember that Congress has cut its budget year after year. We want them to do more with less. We have passed the point of achieving efficiency, we have cut valuable staffing, and we have cut valuable programs.

We can point to failures by all levels of government in this situation, but the public doesn't want to hear us blame anyone. They want and deserve real solutions and financial assistance to address the crisis at hand.

We need to help the people of Flint and better protect our public health going forward.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. TONKO said this bill is not about a blame game. We are trying to fix a problem so it doesn't happen again anywhere.

I just might note that the House was out 2 weeks. We had Martin Luther King week, then we had the snowstorm, and we couldn't come back.

Our committee held a number of briefings. I expanded it to include certainly all of the members—Republican

and Democrat—on the Energy and Commerce Committee, but I also extended that out to all of the members of the Michigan delegation, both our Senators, as well as the Oversight and Government Reform Committee majority and minority staff.

Mr. KILDEE mentioned about Mr. PALLONE not being here. His father died earlier this week, so he is where he should be. But he cares deeply about this legislation as well.

I know when I sat down with my friend Mr. KILDEE last week to talk about the intent of this legislation and where he was, we were able to, I think, make some important, constructive changes that strengthen the bill. It was a no-brainer for us to get every Member on both sides of the aisle from Michigan to be an original cosponsor, and I congratulate him for that initiative.

But I must say, too, this is a first step. I know in the future our committee is going to be looking at how we can better expand flexibility, I think, of States as it relates to their safe drinking water fund, and the State revolving fund as well. We are looking to hear from the States what we might be able to do on the Federal response. Again, the primacy is at the State and local level, particularly when a State, like we have seen here, actually has been given an emergency declaration, as our Governor sought.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this bill, and I commend Mr. KILDEE.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act and am proud to be a cosponsor of this bill, which will strengthen public notification requirements in the event of lead contamination.

The situation in Flint is unacceptable—it is a violation of the right to clean water and a breakdown of the basic responsibility of government to its citizens. And it was completely preventable—we know the damaging impacts of lead and we know how to protect people from lead poisoning. We need an aggressive response, both for the people in Flint and for every community that faces lead exposure.

Today's bill is just a first step to address this problem by ensuring that when contamination occurs, communities will be informed of what is happening and what will be done to fix it. We should follow this action with support for the Flint community and robust funding for lead poisoning prevention and clean water programs. I look forward to our continued work to protect children and communities from the dangers of lead.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act, as amended. This bill will allow more transparency and increase education and outreach efforts to communities about their drinking water systems.

Communities are entitled to information about their drinking water, and we should make every effort to ensure that Americans receive clear, concise and timely information

about the safety of that water. This bill addresses a concern raised during the Flint water crisis about the significant delay in informing Flint residents about the dangerous levels of lead in their water. I greatly appreciate the work of Mr. KILDEE and the Michigan Delegation in coming together and quickly putting forward this legislation. It is a good place to begin our efforts to help Flint and I support its passage.

Yet, this is a small, first step and does not address the imminent and long-term problems facing our nation's water systems. I know my friend from Michigan, Mr. KILDEE, agrees with me on this and has put forward legislation focusing on immediate and long-term investments for Flint to address both its health and infrastructure needs. We must do more for Flint and more to ensure that our nation as a whole receives safe, clean drinking water at the tap.

As I have stated time and again, our drinking water systems are deteriorating. Transparency is important, but we need to follow this effort with a reauthorization of the Safe Drinking Water Act that increases the investment in our drinking water systems.

We must invest in our drinking water infrastructure to repair, maintain, and replace aging pipes. We also must equip communities with the resources to ensure the delivery of safe drinking water, safeguard systems from vulnerabilities such as climate change, and encourage good financial and environmental management of water systems. There is no doubt that this will be a large task, but we cannot shy away from it. The longer we delay, the more costly the investment.

This should be a wakeup call that we cannot continue to stand by watching as Flint—and far too many other American communities—are exposed to unsafe drinking water. We must take action now.

Again, I commend Mr. KILDEE and the co-sponsors for their efforts on this legislation. I thank the Gentleman and his staff for working with me and my staff to ensure this bill will truly increase transparency for communities.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and look forward to additional opportunities to work in a bipartisan fashion in the remaining months of this Congress on the pressing issue of safe, reliable drinking water for all Americans.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4470, the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act. This bill is a good first step to helping ensure the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) never again allows an intransigent state government endanger the public welfare.

Let there be no mistake. The blame for what happened in Flint lies directly at the feet of Governor Snyder who ignored Flint's democratic rights, his appointed Emergency Managers who wanted to save a buck, and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) that was too timid to protect the public from haphazard changes to the Flint water system.

But the EPA needs to take some blame for not dismissing out of hands the efforts of the Governor, his Emergency Managers, and MDEQ to delay addressing the crisis in Flint. The EPA let the endless echo of "EPA over-

reach" prevent them from doing their job—which is telling anti-regulatory special interests that the public's health comes first.

This bill is a start to fixing that problem, but we have a long way to go. My colleagues across the aisle need to stop fighting EPA on behalf of special interests, and start fighting alongside EPA in the public interest.

Because if they don't, there will be more Flints, there will be more mothers who can't sleep because their children are sick, and there will be more "bi-partisan" bills expressing hindsight support for EPA action.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4470, the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Act. This legislation will help ensure no community in America ever experiences what is happening in Flint by ensuring that federal and state regulators promptly notify a local community if there are elevated levels of lead in their water systems.

Specifically, the bill requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to notify a local water system if EPA receives data indicating high lead levels in the water. The local water system must immediately notify their customers, and if they do not act quickly then EPA must notify local residents themselves.

It is critical that a community is immediately notified when there is a problem with their drinking water. Transparency is essential to ensuring water lead contamination never poisons another community, and this bill helps us achieve this important goal.

The facts about the Flint crisis are being gathered right now through multiple investigations, and every person responsible must be held accountable for the lack of appropriate action. Government at every level failed the people of Flint, but this is a man-made disaster led by the state of Michigan, and we must take action at the federal level to prevent this from ever happening again.

Every Member of the Michigan delegation co-sponsored this bill, and we thank our colleagues Congressman KILDEE and Congressman UPTON for their good work on it. This is an example of what can happen when we work together to solve the problems facing our nation, and we need more of it. Clean water is one of the most fundamental, basic rights we should guarantee anyone living in America.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this critical legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4470, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3442, DEBT MANAGEMENT AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3293, SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST ACT

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, by the direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 609 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 609

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3442) to provide further means of accountability of the United States debt and promote fiscal responsibility. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3293) to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in part B of

the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a rule and the underlying bills, both of which will enhance accountability and create better processes for our Federal Government.

Necessary legislation is what we are talking about today. Legislation that will help the Federal Government not only in its processes, but that will allow the American people to have confidence in what their government does not only on their behalf, but for a better future for the American citizens, including our children and grandchildren.

We are here today because these are important issues, and we are addressing them. That is what Speaker RYAN wants this body to be doing. Speaker RYAN wants us to bring our best ideas to the floor, to make sure the American people understand what they are, to fully debate them, and to have all the open processes that are necessary to make sure that we are bringing to the American people the best ideas of their elected representatives. That is why we are here today.

I also want to point out that the Rules Committee, of which I am chairman, asked Members to submit their ideas and amendments regarding these bills, and 14 amendments were made in order. That means that the Rules Committee met, we looked, and we had dis-

cussions with Members about the ideas that they have. Fourteen were made in order last night by the Rules Committee, and I am proud of that.

As a result, our resolution provides that H.R. 3442, the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2015, which was altered and supported by the gentleman from Coppell, Texas, Congressman KENNY MARCHANT, and H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, which was brought to the committee by the young chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, LAMAR SMITH from San Antonio, Texas, will both be considered today under a structured rule.

Mr. Speaker, I would normally run through my opening dialogue that I would have about what is in these bills, why they are important, and what they would do. But because of time considerations today, one of our newest Members of Congress wants to speak. He has got a meeting in a few minutes. I would like to ask him if he would at this time take part in my opening statement.

I yield to the gentleman from Windsor, Colorado (Mr. BUCK).

□ 1315

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, for years, our Nation has limped along from debt crisis to debt crisis. Every time, we say to ourselves “just a little more spending today, and we will fix this mess tomorrow,” but tomorrow never seems to come, and the ocean of red ink gets deeper and deeper with each passing day. Thanks to this “spend now” and “save never” mentality, the national debt has soared to \$19 trillion, and there is no end in sight. The Federal Government has been overspending for so long that we are financially bankrupt. If we continue to pass this debt on to our children and grandchildren, we are also morally bankrupt. We need a solution to our constant budget busting.

H.R. 3442 will help our Nation address this fiscal crisis. By requiring the administration to testify before Congress, we are requiring them to bring realistic, serious solutions to the table. We are calling on them to offer a plan for actually reducing our debt, and—this is key—we are requiring these solutions before we reach the point of no return.

What we have wrought in debt and deficit isn't merely a fiscal challenge or an economic problem—it is poisonous to our human potential. It is time for the Federal Government to start making the same tough choices that small businesses and folks in Colorado are making every day, and this bill is a good start.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The original intent also of a piece of legislation that we have goes back to 1950. The legislation that created the National Science Foundation was there at the time to support science that was

in the national interest. Unfortunately, the NSF has funded too many wasteful projects under the ideas that have been presented to us by the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, the purposes of which were probably nebulous at best, which would be the argument that Chairman LAMAR SMITH made with us, and which were, clearly, not necessarily in the national interest.

We heard testimony that every single project that the National Science Foundation handled was in the American people's best interest. We think that our discussion with Members of Congress today will show them that we need to change the wording to where the national interest is obligatory to a proposal before a proposal is given. You have to prove it is in the Nation's best interest to spend money. Examples of such projects include \$700,000 to create a climate change-themed musical, \$38,000 to study prehistoric rabbit hunting on the Iberian Peninsula, and—perhaps my favorite of all—\$605,000 to study why people around the world cheat on their taxes.

Mr. Speaker, this is hard-earned money that was spent that I do not believe was in the national interest. “In the interest of the Nation” means that it needs to be prioritized and that it needs to be something that would produce an outcome that would, from the National Science Foundation, benefit the American people.

H.R. 3293 directly benefits the American people by promoting greater accountability—a mission statement, so to speak—in funding scientific research, not only at the NSF, but that also ensures that the research conducted is always in the national interest.

This is, I believe, a commonsense, bipartisan answer. Certainly, LAMAR SMITH, as the chairman of the committee, brought forth the ideas on a bipartisan basis to ensure that what we would do is not get in the way of any projects that are currently out there. Instead, anything that is in the future would have to subscribe to the conditions of the national interest.

Reckless and mandatory spending has placed our national finances and our economy—including our jobs, our infrastructure, and our future—in peril. Today, the total debt is subject to the limit, which includes Treasury securities held by Federal trust funds and other accounts, which stand at over \$19 trillion. Additionally, the Congressional Budget Office projects that the 2016 deficit will be \$544 billion. You can see that we are not just at \$19 trillion but that we are adding to that.

Mr. Speaker, you know and I know, in just a matter of weeks, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. TOM PRICE), the chairman of the Budget Committee, will be bringing forth to this floor bills that address what our year is

going to look like in 2017. The President of the United States has a chance to do this. Every year, the President submits his budget. It is \$1 trillion more a year in spending. It is more government. It is more spending. It adds more things to our debt. Republicans, since 2011—since we have been in the majority—have tried to submit budgets that have held us in place; but by holding us in place, which is the best we can do, it does not mean that we were addressing creating a surplus, which would be required not to add to that debt.

So where we are is back to the American people again with an opportunity for them to understand our processes—a budget, an opportunity to get to where we do not add to the debt. Yet what we are here to do today is not the budget but to address what we do under a circumstance when we have a debt limit by which we have met the constitutional constraints, the legal constraints, and what we are going to do in moving forward.

We are taking a bill that comes directly from KENNY MARCHANT, who is a member of our Ways and Means Committee, who has spent a number of years in thinking through how we can put a spotlight—how we can put the light of day—on this issue to the point at which we can talk about it, understand more about it, and do something about it. That is also the second bill: the National Science Foundation, what is in the national interest, and, clearly, looking at the debt.

If we are going to have a debt limit increase, how do we as Members of Congress, under our constitutional powers, understand not just the issue but also the obligation that we have when we take votes so that we know what is at risk, what the plan would be, and, perhaps more importantly, how we can work together with the administration—Republicans and Democrats—to make sure we get a better answer.

Now, there is one last point that needs to be made, and I think it was made yesterday in the committee, not just by the gentleman TOM COLE, not just by VIRGINIA FOXX from North Carolina, and not just by me, which is that we don't know who the President is going to be next year. We don't know who the Secretary of the Treasury is going to be next year. The gentleman, the author of the bill, thinks that that is a prime reason his legislation should be a bipartisan, commonsense piece of legislation so that we are saying whoever it is has the authority and the responsibility to come to Congress and give us the insight.

Let's work together so that we avoid debt, so that we avoid making a mistake, and, mostly, so that we are on the same page together. That is why we are here today, Mr. Speaker.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), my good friend and distinguished chairman of the Rules Committee, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

I rise in strong opposition to this rule, which provides for the consideration of H.R. 3293, a bill to hamstring the National Science Foundation and its gold standard review process; and I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3442, a misnamed debt management bill that provides Congress with no new information about the debt limit and that does nothing to actually prevent default.

Despite a promise from Speaker RYAN and House Republican leadership for an open and deliberative process, this rule makes in order only 14 of the 47 amendments that were submitted on both pieces of legislation to our committee—only six amendments for the Science, Space, and Technology Committee's bill and eight for the debt limit bill. Democrats on the Rules Committee offered an open rule so that both Democratic and Republican Members could have an opportunity to make their views known on this bill, but as has become the custom, the Democrats voted for an open process, and every single Republican voted against an open process.

Members should have the opportunity to offer their ideas on the House floor, and we should be having a robust debate on these issues. Here is a crazy idea, Mr. Speaker: Maybe, if we actually opened up the process and allowed for a full debate, we could actually pass bipartisan legislation that would move through the legislative process and then go on to the President's desk where he would then sign it into law. Yet, for the most part, my friends on the other side of the aisle don't seem interested in working with Democrats to advance common goals that will actually help the American people, and the legislation before us today is no exception.

H.R. 3442 requires the Secretary of the Treasury to appear before Congress and submit a report on the administration's debt reduction proposals. I have got some good news for my friends. The Treasury Secretary already regularly meets with Congress to discuss the debt limit, and the President offers proposals to address the debt and the deficit in his annual budgets. I would say to my colleagues on the Republican side that it is okay—you can ask questions. That is what hearings are for. You can ask questions about the debt and deficit reduction.

In fact, just yesterday, President Obama sent his fiscal year 2017 budget request to Congress, which included over \$2.9 trillion in deficit reduction over the coming decade—this on top of the \$4 trillion to \$5 trillion in deficit reduction already achieved since 2010. If my friends are interested in hearing

about these proposals to reduce our deficit, perhaps they should reconsider their unprecedented and insulting decision to exclude the OMB from testifying on the administration's budget proposal. Such a contemptuous attitude demeans Congress and the American people.

In addition to its annual budget, the administration also provides the information requested by H.R. 3442 in the form of the Mid-Session Review, of the Daily Treasury Statement, of the Monthly Treasury Statement, of the Monthly Statement of the Public Debt, of the Schedules of Federal Debt, and of the Financial Report of the United States Government.

The Treasury manages our debt, but it is Congress that holds the power of the purse. It is our responsibility to raise the debt limit when it is reached, and I would point out that it is the legislative decisions made by Congress that determine the level of debt.

I say to my Republican friends, if you don't want to deal with the issue of raising the debt limit, then don't accumulate all of these bills. The debt limit debate is about making sure we live up to our financial obligations, the obligations that this Chamber agreed to.

Last night in the Rules Committee, we had a debate about deficit reduction and how to deal with the debt. Members on both sides of the aisle offered suggestions on ways to reduce our deficit, and that is an important discussion we should be having because it is a big issue. Yet this bill is not about deficit reduction; it is not about trying to get our debt under control; and it is not a serious attempt to help us avoid future default. The Republican majority has threatened default on at least three separate occasions: in 2011, when default was narrowly avoided with the Budget Control Act; in 2013, when Republican extremism led to a government shutdown, costing our fragile economy \$24 billion and 120,000 private sector jobs; and this past fall, when Democrats helped to pass the bipartisan budget agreement despite opposition from two-thirds of the Republicans in this Congress.

I would like to point out what is missing in this bill that we are going to be talking about later on this week. The report required by this legislation would exclude the most important information Congress needs when the debt limit is reached, which is an analysis of the catastrophic consequences of default. If this were a serious attempt to address our debt, I would think that the majority would want to know which bills the Treasury would need to stop paying if Congress failed to raise the debt limit. Would veterans stop receiving their benefits? Would Medicare providers stop being reimbursed? Would students stop receiving Pell grants? The chairman of the Rules

Committee said in his opening statement that the American people want us to do something. I agree.

□ 1330

This is not doing something. This is trying to point the finger somewhere else so that we can avoid responsibility for doing our job.

If we were serious about this issue, maybe we ought to think about actually passing legislation that would help reduce our deficit and pay down our debt. Maybe we ought to be talking about comprehensive immigration reform. CBO says that we would save hundreds of billions of dollars for our National Treasury if we actually did that, did something positive to resolve our immigration crisis and, in doing so, we would save all this money that could go to reducing our deficit.

Maybe one of the things we ought to be talking about here is actually not passing tax breaks for wealthy people that we don't pay for because that adds to the bills that we accumulate here in Congress. If you want to give Donald Trump another tax cut, pay for it. That is all.

Maybe we ought to talk about dealing with the issue of these war costs. I mean, we can't even come together and actually debate and vote on an AUMF as these new wars are popping up all over the world.

By the way, if we did, maybe we could talk about the cost, which, by the way, a big chunk of these war costs aren't even paid for. They are put on our credit card. I mean, the only people sacrificing in these wars are the men and women who we put in harm's way and their families. The rest of us do nothing. We don't even ask the American people to pay for it.

Well, here is an idea: if people don't want to pay for these wars, maybe we ought not to go. Just putting them on our credit card should not be an answer. Those are the kinds of things we should be talking about here today if we were serious about getting our budget under control.

Simply put, Mr. Speaker, this legislation is duplicative, unnecessary, and a waste of time. It does nothing to prevent future Republican threats of default, and I strongly oppose this effort.

This week, also, Mr. Speaker, House Republicans are bringing to the floor H.R. 3293, another antiscience piece of legislation. Now, some might call this a thinly veiled attempt by the majority to dictate what the National Science Foundation spends their funding on, but there really isn't even a thin veil trying to cover up what this is. This is a blatant attempt to coerce the NSF into only funding projects that fit into the Republican political messaging agenda.

The NSF receives upwards of 50,000 proposals a year. Out of all these proposals, only about 20 percent end up re-

ceiving funding. The NSF puts the applications through a rigorous process of peer review in order to determine which proposals they will fund.

I would like to emphasize the fact that this is a peer review, not a congressional review. It is a peer review. Congress does not review these applications because the vast majority of us are not scientists. I am not a scientist. I don't think many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are scientists.

The NSF review process is also designed to be confidential in order to protect against any internal or external bias. Injecting congressional interference and disruption into a well-functioning process will have a drastically negative effect.

Now, it should come as no surprise that a big part of the Republican majority's argument is that the NSF is focusing too much of its funding on projects studying climate change. I tried to figure out what the hook was, and I found that that is it.

I have said this here before, and I will keep saying it until we stop debating these ridiculous bills. We know that climate change is real. We see it. We live it. The scientific community overwhelmingly has verified it. Climate change is not a theory. It is not a hoax. It is not some silly fantasy. The NSF should be funding research that is directed toward understanding and mitigating the effects of climate change.

The majority on the Science Committee has been on a crusade to inject itself into NSF's independent grant review process. The committee has demanded an explanation on how roughly 40 studies could possibly serve our national interests. Now, we have seen time and time again that basic research leads to positive, life-changing outcomes never imagined by researchers.

Congress certainly does not have the experience or the knowledge to predetermine the future value of a research project. Just because the title of a project doesn't sound particularly overwhelmingly impressive doesn't mean it isn't, and we have a gazillion examples of that in the research that has been done in the NSF.

It is best to leave the scientific review process in the hands of our world-class scientists who resoundingly oppose efforts to interfere with NSF's rigorous review process. I join them in strong opposition to this bill.

Now, once again, Mr. Speaker, we are on the floor debating two bills that are going nowhere. Each bill has received a veto threat from the White House because this is not serious legislation. Mr. Speaker, this is just more political fodder for the right wing of the Republican Party, sound bites for my friends on the other side of the aisle to use while on the campaign trail to attempt to sound like they are dealing with

issues in a serious manner when, in fact, they are not. It doesn't matter what year it is. The American people elected us to solve problems, not pad Republicans' political talking points.

I ask my colleagues to oppose this restrictive rule and the two partisan pieces of legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Rules Committee made in order more amendments than Senator HARRY REID did as majority leader over 2 years—in just 1 day. In just 1 day, more amendments were made in order in the United States House of Representatives. So I get it. I do.

I think I would be on the defensive, also, if I were my colleagues, my friends that are Democrats, because what they are doing to this country doesn't work, and they are defensive about it. So they view anything that Republicans do, even on a bipartisan basis but doesn't fit their narrative as, "this is political."

Well, balancing the budget is in the best interest of the American people. Presenting realistic budgets—not a trillion dollars more in spending and bigger government—is exactly the kind of policies that Republicans do believe.

By the way, if they were really serious about trying to fix this global warming, they would look in their own backyard with home heating fuel, which is diesel fuel, which they are putting all through the Northeast to heat their homes. That is a huge contributor to global warming, as opposed to clean, natural gas. They can make their own decisions. But I would say back to them: I think you ought to measure three times and have seen once, not just go accusing other people of things.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the Rules Committee, we had the gentleman from Coppell, Texas, KENNY MARCHANT, a great member of our Ways and Means Committee, come and testify about this bill, about how we look at raising the debt limit. He spoke very passionately, and there was a lot of common sense involved about how do we look at this issue and how do we solve it.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT).

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding to me and his support on this issue. Also, I thank him for allowing the Rules Committee to spend over an hour on this issue yesterday to hear both sides of this issue as far as the debt ceiling goes.

Mr. Speaker, I can't go to a townhall meeting or even go to a gathering of just a few people without the subject of the debt ceiling coming up. My constituents on a regular basis, through emails, phone calls, and letters, ask me the questions: What is Congress doing

about addressing the debt ceiling? Why do you lurch from year to year to year about the debt ceiling? Why don't you ever look at the debt ceiling in a comprehensive manner?

The debt is too high. When I introduced this bill in September, the debt had reached \$18.1 trillion. Today, it is over \$19 trillion. If the current law remains unchanged, the Congressional Budget Office predicts that the Federal debt held by the public will exceed 100 percent of our GDP in 25 years, and this is unsustainable.

The window to get a handle on the Nation's debt is closing very quickly. We need to enact solutions to retire the debt before it is too late. That is what the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act is all about.

This bill creates a new debt limit framework that places greater attention on finding debt reduction solutions. It does so by injecting transparency, accountability, and timeliness into the debt limit process. The bill would allow Congress and the administration to take comprehensive assessments of the debt and its drivers well before the statutory debt limit is reached.

Each year since I have been in Congress, I can pick up the newspaper one day and find that the Secretary of the Treasury announces that we have reached our statutory debt limit and usually proclaims a date. In this case, the statutory debt limit will be reached next March of 2017. At that point, everybody seems to go about their business. There is no particular action taken.

In fact, last month after that proclamation was made that we had reached our statutory debt ceiling, 7 months went by without us reaching the debt ceiling. How did that happen? Well, it happened because the Secretary of the Treasury has the ability to implement extraordinary measures. Now, if any committees in the Congress should know what those extraordinary measures that he is using are going to be or are, it is the Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee.

So this bill very simply lays out a framework where, before the debt ceiling is reached—and the Secretary of Treasury knows that—he has a framework of up to 60 days to come and appear before the Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee, which could be a joint meeting, and lay out for us when the debt ceiling will be reached—not after we have reached the debt ceiling, but before we have reached the debt ceiling—what extraordinary measures he will take once we have reached that debt ceiling and when, in fact, he thinks we will actually run out of money.

In that report, he will actually then lay out the administration's plan on addressing that debt in the short term,

in the midterm, and in the future. So it is a very commonsense plan. It involves one very specific meeting with these two jurisdictional committees with the Secretary of the Treasury. The whole focal point of that meeting will be to talk about the debt ceiling. That does not happen now.

We have dozens of reports that are online. We have dozens of discussions besides this, but never statutorily is the Secretary of the Treasury and the two jurisdictional committees required to meet and discuss this. This is the great thing about this bill, the implementation of this bill.

Like so many Americans, my constituents have watched with great concern as the debt has skyrocketed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Tipton). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 additional minute to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. MARCHANT. If we share these concerns at all—and I know that many of us do—we need to pass the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the rule.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Maybe I can clear all this up so we don't have to debate this bill.

The gentleman asked a question about extraordinary measures that the Secretary of the Treasury could potentially use to deal with the debt ceiling. I would just tell him that they are defined in statute, and we will happily provide him a copy of the statute so that he can understand that.

I would go back to what I said in my opening statement that, if we are serious about dealing with our deficit and our debt, then maybe we ought to be thinking in these terms, about actually not accumulating all these bills that get us to the point where we have to raise the debt ceiling.

I mean, we in Congress—not the administration, but we in Congress—accumulate all these bills and all these financial obligations. Once you do that, you have to pay for them. Our constituents, when they accumulate credit card debt, they have got to pay it. They just can't not pay it because they don't want to. So we have to start behaving like adults here and understand that we need to pay our bills.

I would suggest to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that one way we might want to save some money and not add it to the deficit or to our debt is to stop giving Donald Trump tax cuts that you don't pay for.

□ 1345

If you want to have tax cuts for wealthy individuals, fine. Pay for them. Don't not pay for them. Stop subsidizing big oil companies in this country.

Maybe there was a time when we first started exploring for oil that you could make the case that taxpayers ought to be subsidizing oil companies. Not anymore. Not with global warming and certainly not when they are making zillions of dollars a year in profits. Maybe we could take that money and put it toward deficit reduction.

Or maybe we could pay for these wars that everybody seems to want to commit our young men and women to. If you want to go to war, you ought to pay for it, not just put it on a credit card. If you are not prepared to do that, then end these wars.

But just putting in danger the lives of our brave men and women and just accumulating all these massive bills that there is no accountability of I think is unconscionable.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I now yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH).

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I respect the motivation that underlies this bill. We have got a debt in this country that is too large, and we have got to address it, but this is a nonresponse.

The job of addressing the debt belongs to Congress. It can't be outsourced. The Secretary of the Treasury has no more authority to address the debt than the Secretary of Agriculture or Education or the Democratic National Committee or the Republican Campaign Committee. This is a job that has to be done, but it is our job to do it.

Asking the Secretary of the Treasury to come in and talk about when that date certain will be on default when we set that date when we pass budgets means that we are asking somebody else to do our job and asking somebody who actually doesn't even have the authority to do the job. That belongs to Congress.

Every time we vote on either a tax cut or an appropriation bill, it has clear implications for how that will impact on the debt ceiling. It is debatable because there are fluctuations as to when we will hit that date.

But it is absolutely certain that, when we appropriate money or we pass tax cuts, in one case spending will go up, and in the other case revenues will go down.

What we have done is gone along in a kind of la-la land where we think we can cut taxes, we can raise spending, and then we are astonished when a year or so later there is actually a bill that comes due.

This is not the debt management bill. It is not the fiscal responsibility bill. It is the debt mismanagement and fiscal irresponsibility bill.

Think about the things that we have done. Mr. MCGOVERN has been talking about it. But we had a war in Iraq, a trillion dollars. Nobody paid for that. We voted to spend a trillion dollars on tax cuts. We can have an argument

about tax policy. But you know what, revenues went down.

Congress voted to spend \$800 billion on the prescription drug program, something that had bipartisan support. Not paid for. And then just a few weeks ago we passed tax extenders that are going to reduce revenues by \$2 trillion.

Actions have consequences. The consequences are ones that are inevitable and foreseeable as a result of the actions of this Congress. This Congress, instead of assuming its responsibility, tries to outsource it.

The SPEAKER *pro tempore*. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. WELCH. To someone else, it is a dodge. That is all it is. It is us trying to fool the American people with a game of three-card Monte where we are pretending that the problem that we are decrying had somehow mysteriously evolved out of nowhere.

I respect the concern of the authors of this bill about our debt. What I don't respect is the failure of Congress to address it.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, the reason why we are doing this is because one day 2 years ago the President, through the Treasury, wrote off \$339 billion in one day. That is not responsible. It didn't happen in one day.

They play games at Treasury. The President of the United States plays games with this issue. Now it sounds like my colleagues are, also. This is an honest attempt to have a dialogue.

Regardless of who is going to be President or whoever is going to be Treasury Secretary next year, we want to know what kind of games or what kind of straightforward business they are going to operate.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Butler, Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), one of the most exciting young Members of this Congress.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman for referring to me as young and exciting. I am going to phone my wife to let her know that is the case.

Mr. Speaker, I come before you today because I am in strong support of H.R. 3442. I think that sometimes we make this a Democratic versus Republican issue. Responsibility is not a political issue. It is a moral issue.

Irresponsibility is the problem that we have. I wish we could go away from making political talking points into making solid policy positions that say: okay, fine, if we are going to increase our debt ceiling, tell me why you are going to get there.

I come from the private sector. There are many times in my life I have had to go to lenders and tell them I need to borrow money. The first thing they would say is: give me your financials; let me look at the way you are running

your company; let me see about what you are doing; then we will make a decision.

Then they would come back to me and say: you know what, I am looking at what you are asking for, and you definitely need an injection of capital; but my question is what is your turnaround plan so you are not back here in 6 months or 12 months asking for more money on a failed model.

The people's House, the Congress, is made up of both Republicans and Democrats. More importantly, it is made up of Americans. We are looking at a year when the tax revenues are the highest they have ever been—\$3.25 trillion—yet, we continue to spend \$3.7 trillion to \$3.8 trillion.

Now people look at that and their eyes kind of roll back in their head. They say: I have absolutely no idea what you are talking about.

So you reduce it down to this, which I think is the most effective way of explaining it. Hardworking American couples sit down at the kitchen table. It is kitchen table economics. It is not all this other stuff. It is not all these hieroglyphics.

The husband and the wife talk and say: you know what, Honey, we had a great year; I was able to bring home \$32,500; what I want you to do is to go out and spend \$37,500 or \$38,000.

They would look at each other and say: wait a minute, you told me you had a great year—and you did—but you want me to spend even more money than you brought in.

We constantly tell the American people: you are going to have to tighten your belts; you are going to have to live within your means. And then, because we don't have to, we go out and borrow and raise the debt ceiling.

Think about that couple that is increasing their debt load year after year after year—deficit spending—and we are crowing about the fact that you know what, we have cut our deficit spending by half a trillion dollars this year. Aren't we doing well?

My question is: so where does that deficit spending go? It goes onto your long-term debt. You are digging the hole so deep that you will never be able to climb out of it, but you are feeling good about it because you were able to satisfy whatever your needs were at that moment.

That is not only irresponsible, it is unconscionable. More than that, it is immoral for people to sit in this House as representatives of the American people who have been given the authority to tax, but they have also been given the responsibility to spend that hardworking American taxpayer's dollar.

More importantly, once you have authority and once you have responsibility, you have got to be accountable not just to that person in the mirror, but, in my case, the 705,687 people that I represent in western Pennsylvania.

Now, they are not all Republicans. They are not all Democrats. They are not all Libertarians. They are not all Independents. But they are all hardworking American taxpayers.

Why do we have to reduce this down to a political-talking-points issue instead of talking about what is fundamentally sound economically?

You cannot spend your way out of debt. You cannot continue to borrow irresponsibly and say: well, we have the power to do it. So when we ask the Secretary of the Treasury who else would you go to, that is who is responsible for it.

I don't care who is sitting in there. I don't care who is in the White House. I care about sound, fundamental fiscal policy that protects this country going forward, not only those that are with us right now, but those that came before us and those that are going to come after us.

We are putting ourselves in a position that is totally going to be unrecoverable. Why would we knowingly sit here and think if I can pin the blame on somebody else from the political opposite of me, I will somehow win an election?

Is it really that important to win an election and lose the country? Is it really that important to have a political talking point that makes you feel good about what you said so you can go back home to somebody and say: you saw what I did on the floor; right?

I would hope that the constituents would say: yes, I did. You just put me deeper in debt. You made it impossible for me to plan for my future. You made it impossible for us to remain one of the strongest countries in the world because debt will eliminate you. I don't care if it is a person. I don't care if it is a business. I don't care if it is a State or a country.

We are quickly approaching the point of no return. To sit here and try to make it a political battle instead of survival for the United States of America is totally irresponsible. More importantly, it is immoral.

This is not a political battle. This is a fight for the future of our country. This is a fight for sustainability in the greatest country the world has ever known.

I do not think that any of us should ever turn our back on our responsibility because it just wasn't politically right.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let me just say I have the greatest respect for my colleague from Pennsylvania, but the reason why we oppose this is because it does nothing.

Actually, it attempts to pin the blame on the Secretary of the Treasury, but the reality is—and I want to repeat this for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—that Congress' decision on revenue and spending policies ultimately determine the level of

debt and when the debt limit is reached. It is our responsibility.

What we object to is that, instead of debating concrete issues to reduce our deficit and reduce our debt, we are involved in this kind of debating a nonissue, a bill that does nothing, that will do nothing to reduce our deficit, reduce our debt, and is a complete waste of time.

At this point, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Massachusetts for his leadership.

I want to say to my friend from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), whom I respect and admire, this isn't like a simple, homespun, sit around the kitchen table and work this out and be responsible in paying our bills. I wish it were.

That homespun couple in Pennsylvania or my district in Virginia can't start a war that is unpaid for in Iraq, can't decide to give wealthy people a tax cut that is unpaid for, can't run the U.S. economy into the ground that costs trillions of dollars in additional debt because of policy choices made in this Congress, not by the Secretary of the Treasury.

It was Republican Vice President Cheney who actually said in the midst of all of that that debts no longer matter.

So we are glad to see the new-found religion here on the floor of the House with our friends on the other side of the aisle, who are now once again concerned about debt, debt they helped accumulate to an obscene degree.

I rise, Mr. Speaker, in opposition to not only that bill, but to the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act bill.

It comes as no surprise to my constituents in Virginia that the most anti-environmental Congress—the House majority is now attempting to tell the National Science Foundation how they ought to do and award Federal research grants based on what Congress deems worthy.

The House majority has been open about its climate denialism and candid about its outright political agenda against scientific fact. The very scientific community that we should trust to understand and forecast the effects of manmade global climate change is substituted in this bill by the United States Congress, a bunch of politicians.

This bill is a solution in search of a problem. It threatens the National Science Foundation's gold-standard merit-review process that has resulted in groundbreaking research over the years, including medical, technological, agricultural, and public health advancements.

Even worse, how are we to explain the majority's decision to exclude climate change, one of the most pressing

global challenges we face, as one of the bill's seven national interest criteria? It is not even in there.

I offered an amendment that would have ensured climate change is deemed in the national interest. The Republican majority would not even allow that amendment to come to this floor for debate.

The NSF is helping to lead research in global climate change. For example, it was an NSF grant that launched a program in my district at George Mason University that will help television weather forecasters better inform and explain to viewers how climate change will affect us and those communities.

□ 1400

In 2013, Mr. Speaker, I visited a place called Ny-Alesund in Svalbard, Norway. This is the northernmost research installation in the planet in the Arctic Circle and a leading research and monitoring station that serves many of our international partners, including Norway, Italy, Japan, China, and the Netherlands.

I saw firsthand on that visit the rapid decline of Arctic sea ice and rapidly retreating glaciers. The research NSF funds there will have environmental and geopolitical benefits to the U.S., and we should be expanding not retracting on those commitments. I ask: How is it that research is not in the national interest?

This destructive bill will have a chilling effect on our research community, stifling ambitious research necessary to a 21st century future.

Sadly, once again, the Republican majority insists on misinformation and belief over empirical evidence and science.

I urge rejection of the bill.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Texas for yielding, and I appreciate the chairman of the Rules Committee bringing this rule to the floor to allow for consideration of H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act.

H.R. 3293 requires each National Science Foundation public announcement of a grant award to be accompanied by a nontechnical explanation of the project's scientific merits and how it serves the national interest. This written justification affirms the National Science Foundation's determination that a project is worthy of taxpayer support based on scientific merit and national interest.

The bill sets forth that NSF grants should meet at least one of seven criteria that demonstrate a grant is in fact in the national interest. These national interest areas are in the original enabling legislation that established

the National Science Foundation and its mission or are part of the National Science Foundation mission today. These criteria are:

Increased economic competitiveness in the United States;

Advancement of the health and welfare of the American public;

Development of an American STEM workforce that is globally competitive;

Increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology in the United States;

Increased partnerships between academia and industry in the United States;

Support for the national defense of the United States; or,

Promotion of the progress of science in the United States.

These seven national mission areas encompass the overriding needs of America to which the scientific enterprise can contribute and advance. Under this umbrella, many scientific disciplines and research areas can and do receive support and flourish.

The amendments that were not made in order by the Rules Committee would have opened up this NSF national mission statement to include every pet project, earmark, or political point that Members on the other side could think of. In fact, the explicit, line item-directed subjects that Members wanted to add to the list of "what is in the national interest" are already covered by one of the seven categories in the bill.

We welcome a fair and open debate on the merits of the bill, and several amendments were made in order that allow us to have that debate. These include amendments by the ranking member of the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, as well as five other Democratic amendments.

This rule allows us to have that fair debate, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Every criticism I have heard in the last few minutes about this bill could be addressed if those who oppose the bill just took the time to read the bill. It is only three pages long. You can probably read it in 3 minutes. They would see that their opposition has no foundation whatsoever.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 8 minutes remaining.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question. If we can defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up a bill that would help prevent mass shootings by promoting research on the causes of gun violence, making it easier to identify and treat those prone to committing these acts.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous materials, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, again, I oppose both H.R. 3442 and H.R. 3293.

Again, on H.R. 3442, if we are serious about deficit and debt reduction, then we ought to be talking about substance and something real, not some sound bite where Members of the House can point to the administration to say it is all their fault.

The reality is, it really is the fault of all of us, when you come down to it, because this is the place where spending decisions are made, where tax policy is made.

If my colleagues do not want to raise the debt ceiling, then don't accumulate all these bills. It is Congress that does this. When you accumulate all these bills and you have to raise the debt ceiling, it is irresponsible to all of a sudden say that we don't want to do it and then to default on our debt.

As I mentioned before, back in 2013, when Republican extremism actually shut the government down, it cost our economy \$24 billion and 120,000 jobs.

Now, \$24 billion may not seem like a lot to my Republican friends, but I assure you that it all starts to add up. Those 120,000 jobs that were lost is all lost revenue coming into the government which would go to paying down our deficit and debt.

If you really want to deal with this issue, then let's talk about things like paying for these wars that no one seems to want to pay for. Let's talk about not enacting tax breaks and tax cuts for wealthy individuals and not paying for it. Let's talk about reeling in some of these excessive subsidies to Big Oil and to other big corporate interests in this country. Let's talk about passing comprehensive immigration reform, which, again, the CBO has said would save us hundreds of billions of dollars that we could put toward getting our fiscal house in order.

Those are real things. This is just talk for the sake of talk. I guess maybe it is a good press release; but, quite frankly, I think our time would be better spent doing something else.

Again, on H.R. 3293, the so-called Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, I take great exception to those who question the integrity of the NSF. The National Science Foundation has integrity, in my opinion, beyond question. The work that they do is extraordinary. The work that they do leads to all kinds of benefits not only for the people in this country, but for the environment and people all over the world.

I think the scientists who work there are having their reputations ques-

tioned by the introduction of this legislation, never mind us even considering it here today. I think you are diminishing the incredible work that they do.

I get it. For some reason, my Republican colleagues can't admit that we have a thing called climate change going on around the world. So any time anybody talks about climate change, you go after whatever department or agency it is. You attack them. You try to cut their funding. You try to question their integrity.

Well, I hate to tell my Republican friends that climate change is real. The overwhelming science says it is real. If you don't appreciate that, maybe you ought to go back to school and take a science class.

When we talk about the lack of accountability and the lack of proper stewardship of what we are supposed to be doing here, that is one area where I think we have let the American people down; indeed, the world community.

We are sitting here debating whether it is even an issue—which the American people can't believe—while things continue to get worse.

I would say to my Republican friends: admit it; climate change is for real. You are on the wrong side of public opinion. When you try to claim it is a hoax, you are on the wrong side of the scientific community and you are on the wrong side of history.

One final thing, because I couldn't help but take note that my colleague from Texas kind of took a jab at Massachusetts over home heating oil. I would say to the gentleman a couple of things. One, Massachusetts is leading the Nation in terms of investments in renewable and green energy. I am really proud of what my State is doing.

I would say one other thing to the gentleman from Texas, and that is that his State—Texas—generates 10 times more emissions from heating oil, compared to Massachusetts. So I would urge him to get his State's emissions under control for the sake of our planet.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The first thing I would like to say to the gentleman is that Texas is bigger than France and Texas is bigger than Massachusetts. In fact, we have economic output. We have lots of people working. We have economic prowess in Texas.

We do have more output of what might be carbon. We do. We also had \$290 billion worth of economic activity that we sent overseas. Texas helps the United States of America float its boat

because we have jobs, we have lower taxes, we have great schools, we have people that enjoy living where they live, and we have people that take responsibility.

Across the board, Texas is a great place to live. Texas does, as you have heard many times, move our country in a direction to more freedom, Mr. Speaker. What we are talking about is freedom. With that freedom comes responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, why we are here today—exactly as I started to say in the very beginning—is that our Speaker, PAUL RYAN, has challenged I think all of Congress, but in particular this Republican majority, to bring forth good ideas that address the issues, thoughts, and answers about the problems that the United States Congress perhaps is responsible for and perhaps the United States sees that we need to start talking about what our future is going to be.

When he was the chairman of the Budget Committee and the Ways and Means Committee, Speaker RYAN talked about growing our economy. I know our friends want to raise taxes. I know the President of the United States wants to also, now that the energy costs are down, stick them back up and stick the American people with a \$10 a barrel tax. I know that what they want is more and more and more spending. They will get their chance with the budget when it comes in a trillion dollars higher in a year than what we are spending right now. That is their vision.

What we are talking about today is our vision, Speaker RYAN's vision, and the Republican majority's vision. And what is that? We would like to put in place an agreement. We would like for it to be a bipartisan vote. We already have bipartisan support. And that is so that we could say that, regardless of who is President and Secretary of the Treasury—right now, I don't know who it is going to be; I really couldn't even guess—we, as a body, make sure that we are focusing on what this is going to look like at the time. The gentleman from Massachusetts was very clear to say we already know all these things, but we don't.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleague to support this rule and the underlying bill.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 609 OFFERED BY
MR. MCGOVERN OF MASSACHUSETTS

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 3. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3926) to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for better understanding of the epidemic of gun violence, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All

points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3926.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the pre-

vious question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adopting House Resolution 609, if ordered; and suspending the rules and passing H.R. 4470.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 237, nays 180, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 65]

YEAS—237

Abraham	Clawson (FL)	Fortenberry
Aderholt	Coffman	Fox
Allen	Cole	Franks (AZ)
Amash	Collins (GA)	Frelinghuysen
Amodei	Collins (NY)	Garrett
Babin	Comstock	Gibbs
Barletta	Conaway	Gibson
Barr	Cook	Gohmert
Barton	Costello (PA)	Goodlatte
Benishek	Cramer	Gosar
Billirakis	Crawford	Granger
Bishop (MI)	Crenshaw	Graves (LA)
Bishop (UT)	Culberson	Graves (MO)
Black	Curbelo (FL)	Griffith
Blackburn	Davis, Rodney	Grothman
Blum	Denham	Guinta
Bost	Dent	Guthrie
Boustany	DeSantis	Hardy
Brady (TX)	DesJarlais	Harper
Brat	Diaz-Balart	Harris
Bridenstine	Dold	Hartzler
Brooks (AL)	Donovan	Heck (NV)
Brooks (IN)	Duffy	Hensarling
Buchanan	Duncan (SC)	Hice, Jody B.
Buck	Duncan (TN)	Hill
Bucshon	Ellmers (NC)	Holding
Burgess	Emmer (MN)	Huelskamp
Byrne	Farenthold	Hultgren
Calvert	Fitzpatrick	Hunter
Carter (GA)	Fleischmann	Hurd (TX)
Carter (TX)	Fleming	Hurt (VA)
Chabot	Flores	Issa
Chaffetz	Forbes	Jenkins (KS)

Jenkins (WV)	Mooney (WV)	Scott, Austin
Johnson (OH)	Mulvaney	Sensenbrenner
Johnson, Sam	Murphy (PA)	Sessions
Jolly	Neugebauer	Shimkus
Jones	Newhouse	Shuster
Jordan	Noem	Simpson
Joyce	Nugent	Smith (MO)
Katko	Nunes	Smith (NE)
Kelly (MS)	Olson	Smith (NJ)
Kelly (PA)	Palazzo	Smith (TX)
King (IA)	Palmer	Stefanik
King (NY)	Paulsen	Stewart
Kinzinger (IL)	Pearce	Stivers
Kline	Perry	Stutzman
Knight	Peterson	Thompson (PA)
Labrador	Pittenger	Thornberry
LaHood	Pitts	Tiberi
LaMalfa	Poe (TX)	Tipton
Lamborn	Poliquin	Trott
Lance	Pompeo	Turner
Latta	Posey	Upton
LoBiondo	Price, Tom	Valadao
Long	Ratcliffe	Wagner
Loudermilk	Reed	Walberg
Love	Reichert	Walden
Lucas	Renacci	Walker
Luetkemeyer	Ribble	Walorski
Lummis	Rice (SC)	Walters, Mimi
MacArthur	Rigell	Weber (TX)
Marchant	Roby	Webster (FL)
Marino	Roe (TN)	Wenstrup
Massie	Rogers (AL)	Westerman
McCarthy	Rogers (KY)	Whitfield
McCaul	Rohrabacher	Williams
McClintock	Rokita	Wilson (SC)
McHenry	Rooney (FL)	Wittman
McKinley	Ros-Lehtinen	Womack
McMorris	Roskam	Woodall
Rodgers	Ross	Yoder
McSally	Rothfus	Yoho
Meadows	Rouzer	Young (AK)
Meehan	Royce	Young (IA)
Messer	Russell	Young (IN)
Mica	Salmon	Zeldin
Miller (FL)	Sanford	Zinke
Miller (MI)	Scalise	
Moolenaar	Schweikert	

NAYS—180

Adams	DeLauro	Kind
Aguilar	DelBene	Kirkpatrick
Ashford	DeSaulnier	Kuster
Bass	Deutch	Langevin
Beatty	Dingell	Larsen (WA)
Becerra	Doggett	Larson (CT)
Bera	Doyle, Michael	Lawrence
Beyer	F.	Lee
Bishop (GA)	Edwards	Levin
Blumenauer	Ellison	Lewis
Bonamici	Engel	Lieu, Ted
Boyle, Brendan	Eshoo	Lipinski
F.	Esty	Loeb sack
Brady (PA)	Farr	Lofgren
Brown (FL)	Fattah	Lowenthal
Brownley (CA)	Foster	Lowe
Bustos	Frankel (FL)	Lujan Grisham
Butterfield	Fudge	(NM)
Capps	Gabbard	Lujan, Ben Ray
Capuano	Gallagher	(NM)
Cardenas	Garamendi	Lynch
Carney	Graham	Maloney,
Carson (IN)	Grayson	Carolyn
Cartwright	Green, Al	Maloney, Sean
Castor (FL)	Green, Gene	Matsui
Chu, Judy	Grijalva	McCollum
Cicilline	Gutierrez	McDermott
Clark (MA)	Hahn	McGovern
Clarke (NY)	Hastings	McNerney
Clay	Heck (WA)	Meeks
Cleaver	Higgins	Meng
Clyburn	Himes	Moore
Cohen	Hinojosa	Moulton
Connolly	Honda	Murphy (FL)
Conyers	Hoyer	Nadler
Cooper	Huffman	Napolitano
Costa	Israel	Neal
Courtney	Jackson Lee	Nolan
Crowley	Jeffries	Norcross
Cuellar	Johnson (GA)	O'Rourke
Cummings	Johnson, E. B.	Pallone
Davis (CA)	Kaptur	Pascrell
Davis, Danny	Keating	Payne
DeFazio	Kennedy	Pelosi
DeGette	Kildee	Perlmutter
Delaney	Kilmer	Peters

Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff

Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres

Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—16

Castro (TX)
Duckworth
Fincher
Gowdy
Graves (GA)
Hanna

Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Kelly (IL)
Mullin
Quigley

Sanchez, Loretta
Smith (WA)
Speier
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1434

So the previous question was ordered.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 236, noes 178, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 66]

AYES—236

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishke
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole

Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson

Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)

King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent

Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus

Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—178

Adams
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.

Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lieue, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsock

Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff

Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai

Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela

Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—19

Aguilar
Castro (TX)
DeLauro
Duckworth
Fincher
Gowdy
Graves (GA)

Hanna
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Kelly (IL)
LaMalfa
Mullin

Quigley
Rothfus
Sanchez, Loretta
Smith (WA)
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1440

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 66, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT IMPROVED COMPLIANCE AWARENESS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4470) to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act with respect to the requirements related to lead in drinking water, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 416, nays 2, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 67]

YEAS—416

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishke
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)

Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon

Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)

Clay	Harris	McMorris
Cleaver	Hartzler	Rodgers
Clyburn	Hastings	McNerney
Coffman	Heck (NV)	McSally
Cohen	Heck (WA)	Meadows
Cole	Hensarling	Meehan
Collins (GA)	Hice, Jody B.	Meeks
Collins (NY)	Higgins	Meng
Comstock	Hill	Messer
Conaway	Himes	Mica
Connolly	Hinojosa	Miller (FL)
Conyers	Holding	Miller (MI)
Cook	Honda	Moolenaar
Cooper	Hoyer	Mooney (WV)
Costa	Huelskamp	Moore
Costello (PA)	Huffman	Moulton
Courtney	Hultgren	Mulvaney
Cramer	Hunter	Murphy (FL)
Crawford	Hurd (TX)	Murphy (PA)
Crenshaw	Hurt (VA)	Nadler
Crowley	Israel	Napolitano
Cuellar	Issa	Neal
Culberson	Jackson Lee	Neugebauer
Cummings	Jeffries	Newhouse
Curbelo (FL)	Jenkins (KS)	Noem
Davis (CA)	Jenkins (WV)	Nolan
Davis, Danny	Johnson (GA)	Norcross
Davis, Rodney	Johnson (OH)	Nugent
DeFazio	Johnson, E. B.	Nunes
DeGette	Johnson, Sam	O'Rourke
Delaney	Jolly	Olson
DeLauro	Jones	Palazzo
DelBene	Jordan	Pallone
Denham	Joyce	Palmer
Dent	Kaptur	Pascarell
DeSantis	Katko	Paulsen
DeSaulnier	Keating	Payne
DesJarlais	Kelly (MS)	Pearce
Deutch	Kelly (PA)	Pelosi
Diaz-Balart	Kennedy	Perlmutter
Dingell	Kildee	Perry
Doggett	Kilmer	Peters
Dold	Kind	Peterson
Donovan	King (IA)	Pingree
Doyle, Michael	King (NY)	Pittenger
F.	Kinzinger (IL)	Pitts
Duffy	Kirkpatrick	Pocan
Duncan (SC)	Kline	Poe (TX)
Duncan (TN)	Knight	Poliquin
Edwards	Kuster	Polis
Ellison	Labrador	Pompeo
Ellmers (NC)	LaHood	Posey
Emmer (MN)	LaMalfa	Price (NC)
Engel	Lamborn	Price, Tom
Eshoo	Lance	Rangel
Esty	Langevin	Ratcliffe
Farenthold	Larsen (WA)	Reed
Farr	Larson (CT)	Reichert
Fattah	Latta	Renacci
Fitzpatrick	Lawrence	Ribble
Fleischmann	Lee	Rice (NY)
Fleming	Levin	Rice (SC)
Flores	Lewis	Richmond
Forbes	Lieu, Ted	Rigell
Fortenberry	Lipinski	Roby
Foster	LoBiondo	Roe (TN)
Fox	Loeback	Rogers (AL)
Frankel (FL)	Lofgren	Rogers (KY)
Franks (AZ)	Long	Rohrabacher
Frelinghuysen	Loudermilk	Rooney (FL)
Fudge	Love	Ros-Lehtinen
Gabbard	Lowenthal	Roskam
Galleo	Lowey	Ross
Garamendi	Lucas	Rothfus
Garrett	Luetkemeyer	Rouzer
Gibbs	Lujan Grisham	Roybal-Allard
Gibson	(NM)	Royce
Gohmert	Lujan, Ben Ray	Ruiz
Goodlatte	(NM)	Ruppersberger
Gosar	Lummis	Rush
Graham	Lynch	Russell
Granger	MacArthur	Ryan (OH)
Graves (LA)	Maloney,	Salmon
Graves (MO)	Carolyn	Sánchez, Linda
Grayson	Maloney, Sean	T.
Green, Al	Marchant	Sanford
Green, Gene	Marino	Sarbanes
Griffith	Matsui	Scalise
Grijalva	McCarthy	Shakowsky
Grothman	McCaul	Schiff
Guinta	McClintock	Schrader
Guthrie	McCollum	Schweikert
Gutiérrez	McDermott	Scott (VA)
Hahn	McGovern	Scott, Austin
Hardy	McHenry	Scott, David
Harper	McKinley	Sensenbrenner

Serrano	Thornberry	Wasserman
Sessions	Tiberi	Schultz
Sewell (AL)	Tipton	Waters, Maxine
Sherman	Titus	Watson Coleman
Shimkus	Tonko	Weber (TX)
Shuster	Torres	Webster (FL)
Simpson	Trott	Welch
Sinema	Tsongas	Wenstrup
Sires	Turner	Westerman
Slaughter	Upton	Whitfield
Smith (MO)	Valadao	Williams
Smith (NE)	Van Hollen	Wilson (FL)
Smith (NJ)	Vargas	Wilson (SC)
Smith (TX)	Veasey	Wittman
Speier	Vela	Womack
Stefanik	Velázquez	Woodall
Stewart	Visclosky	Yarmuth
Stivers	Wagner	Yoder
Stutzman	Walberg	Yoho
Swalwell (CA)	Walden	Young (AK)
Takai	Walker	Young (IA)
Takano	Walorski	Young (IN)
Thompson (CA)	Walters, Mimi	Zeldin
Thompson (MS)	Walz	Zinke
Thompson (PA)		

NAYS—2

Massie

Rokita

NOT VOTING—15

Castro (TX)	Hanna	Mullin
Duckworth	Herrera Beutler	Quigley
Fincher	Hudson	Sanchez, Loretta
Gowdy	Huizenga (MI)	Smith (WA)
Graves (GA)	Kelly (IL)	Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1447

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 67 on H.R. 4470, I am not recorded because I was absent for personal reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I was absent today to attend the funeral of a family member.

Had I been present, on rollcall No. 65, I would have voted "yes," on rollcall No. 66, I would have voted "yes," and on rollcall No. 67, I would have voted "yes."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 65 on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of both H.R. 3293 and H.R. 3442. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 66 on H. Res. 609—Rule Providing for consideration of both H.R. 3293—Scientific Research in the National Interest Act and H.R. 3442—Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 67 on H.R. 4470—Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness

Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 3293.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 609 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3293.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1448

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3293) to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest, with Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, is a bipartisan bill that ensures the grant process at the National Science Foundation is transparent and accountable to the American people.

America's future economic growth and national security depend on innovation. Public and private investments in research and development fuel the economy, create jobs, and lead to new technologies that benefit Americans' daily lives.

Unfortunately, in recent years, the Federal Government has awarded too many grants that few Americans would consider to be in the national interest.

For example, the National Science Foundation awarded \$700,000 of taxpayer money to support a climate change-themed musical that quickly closed and almost \$1 million for a social media project that targeted Americans' online political speech.

A few other examples of questionable grants include: \$487,000 to study the Icelandic textile industry during the Viking era; \$340,000 to study early human-set fires in New Zealand; \$233,000 to study ancient Mayan architecture and their salt industry; and \$220,000 to study animal photos in National Geographic magazine.

When the NSF funds such projects as these, there is less money to support worthwhile scientific research that keeps our country on the forefront of innovation. Such areas include: computer science, advanced materials, lasers, telecommunications, information technology, development of new medicines, nanotechnology, cybersecurity, and dozens of others that hold the greatest promise of revolutionary scientific breakthroughs. These sectors can create millions of new jobs and transform society in positive ways.

NSF invests about \$6 billion a year of taxpayer funds on research projects and related activities.

The 1950 enabling legislation that created the NSF set forth the Foundation's mission and cited the "national interest" as the foundation for public support and dissemination of basic scientific research.

The Science in the National Interest Act reaffirms and restores this crucial mission. This will add transparency, accountability, and credibility to the NSF and its grant process.

H.R. 3293 requires NSF grants to meet at least one of seven criteria that demonstrates it is in the national interest. These seven criteria are: increased economic competitiveness in the United States; advancement of the health and welfare of the American public; development of an American STEM workforce that is globally competitive; increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology in the United States; increased partnerships between academia and industry in the United States; support for the national defense of the United States; and promotion of the progress of science in the United States.

Both the National Science Foundation director and the National Science Board have endorsed the principle that NSF should be more accountable in its grant funding decisions.

To NSF Director France Cordova's credit, the NSF began to implement new internal policies last year that acknowledge the need for NSF to communicate clearly and in nontechnical terms the research projects it funds and how they are in the national interest.

Opponents of this bill must think they know better than the NSF director. Director Cordova testified before the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee that the policy in H.R. 3293 is compatible with the NSF's internal guidelines. This legislation makes that commitment clear, explicit, and permanent.

Today, the NSF funds only one out of five proposals submitted by our scientists and research institutions.

How do we assure hardworking American families that their tax dollars are spent only on high priority research when we spend \$700,000 of their money on a short-lived climate change-themed musical? It is not Congress' money, it is the taxpayers'.

How could elected representatives not agree that we owe it to American taxpayers and the scientific community to ensure that every grant funded is worthy and in the national interest?

With a national debt that now exceeds \$19 trillion and continues to climb by hundreds of billions of dollars each year, we cannot fund every worthy proposal, much less frivolous ones like a climate change musical.

The legislation before us reaffirms in law that every NSF grant must support research that is demonstrably in the national interest.

Scientists still make the decisions. They just do not get a blank check signed by the taxpayer. They need to be accountable to the American people by showing their proposals are, in fact, in the national interest.

H.R. 3293 passed the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee in October by a voice vote.

Congress has a responsibility to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and are focused on national priorities. This bill is an essential step to restore and maintain taxpayer support for basic scientific research.

I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act.

I oppose this bill because I believe that this bill will hurt the Nation's premier basic research agency, lead to less high reward research, and, ultimately, leave America less competitive.

My Republican colleagues have a simple argument for their legislation: Shouldn't NSF research be in the national interest? That is a very good question, but one that can be easily answered.

My answer is that NSF research is already in the national interest. It has been for more than 60 years.

The Federal investment in basic research over the past 60 years has been

the primary driver of our Nation's economic growth and innovation. In innumerable ways, our investments in basic research have paid back a wealth of dividends.

This fact is widely recognized across academia and industry. The National Academies' "Rising Above the Gathering Storm" report made this point a decade ago. That panel, chaired by the former head of Lockheed-Martin, understood that investment in basic research was fundamentally in the national interest.

When we passed the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 as part of the Democrats' innovation agenda, that bill was endorsed by hundreds of business and research organizations, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers. They all understood that investment in basic research is in the national interest.

What is this bill really about? Is it really about enhancing our Nation's ability to innovate? No. Sadly, this bill continues the Republican majority's preoccupation with second-guessing America's best and brightest research scientists.

For the past 3 years, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology majority has been engaged in a relentless and pernicious campaign against research grants with silly or odd sounding titles.

Republicans have used that time to carry out an unprecedented rifling through the 70 NSF grants reviews. After all this effort, did they find any evidence of wrongdoing? No. The only thing they found was what they already knew: each of the research grants had passed NSF's merit review process with flying colors.

The majority may not like it and wish the results were different, but those are the facts. Let me be clear. Some of the greatest scientific achievements of the past 60 years were the result of funny sounding research, including research that was ridiculed in Congress as frivolous.

There are scores of examples. One of my favorites is "The Sex Life of the Screwworm," surely one of the silliest sounding titles for research there could possibly be. So silly, in fact, that in the 1970s, the grant was ridiculed as an example of government waste on the Senate floor. Sounds a lot like what the majority is doing here today.

It turned out that the screwworm was costing the U.S. cattle industry a small fortune. As a direct result of this silly sounding research, the cattle industry saved approximately \$20 billion in the U.S. and significantly reduced the cost of beef to U.S. consumers.

□ 1500

At its core, this bill is about second-guessing our Nation's best and brightest scientists and the grant-making decisions they make.

Perhaps this is not surprising when so many of my Republican colleagues openly question the validity of whole fields of established science, from the social sciences to climate science to evolutionary biology.

Far from adding anything useful to the NSF's review process, H.R. 3293 would add more bureaucracy and paperwork. Yet, my biggest concern about these requirements is that they will push NSF reviewers to fund less high-risk research, which, by its very nature, entails the pursuit of scientific understanding without it necessarily having any particular or known benefit. We know that high-risk research tends to have the highest reward, something that we have seen throughout the history of the NSF.

I am not alone in my concerns. The President's science adviser, Dr. John Holdren, noted:

H.R. 3293 would create doubt at NSF and in the research community about Congress' real intent in calling into question the adequacy of NSF's gold standard merit-review process for applied as well as for basic research.

This could easily have a chilling effect on the amount of basic research that scientists propose and that NSF chooses to fund, with detrimental consequences for this Nation's leadership in science, technology, and innovation alike.

Mr. Chair, I choose to stand with the scientists when it comes to science. For that reason, I strongly oppose this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

I say to the gentlewoman from Texas that her objections are simply too late. They are too late because the Director of the National Science Foundation has already incorporated the national interest standard into the current guidelines that are being used at the National Science Foundation. We are already using that, and the bill makes them permanent.

I do like the gentlewoman's example of a screwworm because that is a reason to vote for the bill and not to oppose the bill. One of the requirements in the bill is that these grants be explained in plain English so that we know their connection to the national interest. Clearly, there would be no problem in explaining why the example she gave is connected to the national interest.

In a few minutes, I will give just a few more examples of how taxpayers' money is currently being used and should not be used.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS), who is the vice chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. LUCAS. I thank Chairman SMITH for the time.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3293, Scientific Research in the National Interest Act.

The NSF invests about \$6 billion of public funds each year on research projects and related activities. It is the only Federal agency that is dedicated to the support of fundamental research and education in all scientific and engineering disciplines.

Since its creation in 1950, the NSF has served a mission that helps make the United States a world leader in science and innovation. In recent years, however, the NSF has seemed to stray away from its created purpose and has funded a number of grants that few Americans would consider in the national interest.

H.R. 3293 seeks to restore the NSF's critical mission by requiring the NSF to explain in writing and in non-technical language how each research grant awarded supports the national interest and is worthy of Federal funding.

Now, think about that for a moment: not just explaining it in scientific terms that the fellow scientific community can understand, but also in terms that taxpayers can understand.

In a time of distrust and suspicion of the Federal Government and of all institutions, that is a very important key point, being able to explain to the folks back home why it matters.

The bill also sets forth that NSF grants should meet one of seven criteria that demonstrates the grant is in the national interest.

Today, as was noted by the chairman, the NSF is able to fund only one out of every five proposals. This is a critical bill to restore faith in the process. We need to pass this.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TED LIEU).

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Chair, I rise to oppose this bill.

America is an exceptional nation. One of the reasons we are the best country in the world is that we believe in science and we believe in innovation. Our country has always believed in physics and in chemistry, and we trust scientists.

The National Science Foundation has helped this country grow in terms of innovation and in terms of amazing scientific discoveries. It is not broken. So why are we trying to meddle with what the scientists have done?

The chairman mentioned some examples of grants that sounded sort of funny. I understand that most of the Republican legislators do not believe in climate change, but the overwhelming majority of scientists do, as does the U.S. military, as does ExxonMobil today.

One of the grants had to do with how people learn about climate change. That is vitally important because climate change is going to affect our children and our grandchildren.

It is true that some of these grants sound funny. That is because scientists

do all sorts of things that, to a layperson, may not be very obvious.

Because I am not a scientist and because most people are not scientists, I think that is perfectly fine, that we don't have all sorts of redundant writings that explain what an experiment does. Let me give you one example that is on the NSF's Web site.

One of the grants is to study funny-looking colored clay in France, blue-green clay in another country. It sounds like a really silly grant, doesn't it?

It turns out that, when they looked at it, there were properties in this blue-green clay in France that kill bacteria, anti-bacterial properties that can help deal with MRSA, that can help deal with superbugs. This can be a groundbreaking grant, a groundbreaking discovery, but under this bill, it might have problems being funded.

Ultimately, what this is really about and what I have learned now in Congress is that often we are very arrogant. We do not trust scientists. We do not trust the people in America.

This is an arrogant bill that sort of says we know best, not the scientists who are doing peer reviews of what grants to fund, and that we know which experiment might do exactly what.

It turns out, in science, lots of times scientists study one area and get a completely different, amazing discovery in a totally unrelated area. We need to fund basic science. We need to take our hands off this. We need to trust scientists and trust the people in America.

Do not pass this bill. We are not that arrogant. We should not determine what scientists are to be doing and that we know better than they do, because we do not. I ask for opposition to this bill.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

I really wish the people who say they oppose this bill would actually read the bill. It is only three pages long. They can probably read it in 3 minutes. Let me read the last sentence of the bill itself.

"Nothing in this section shall be construed as altering the Foundation's intellectual merit or broader impacts criteria for evaluating grant applications."

Despite what just might have been told, we don't interfere with the merit-review process whatsoever.

The other thing is, when you come up with an example, as the gentleman just gave, it is clearly in the national interest. All we are asking is that the explanation show why it is in the national interest.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK), who is the chairman of the Oversight Subcommittee of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. I thank the gentleman from Texas, the chairman, for yielding this time and for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. Chairman, last month the Congressional Budget Office released an updated deficit projection for fiscal year 2016. The CBO now expects that our deficit will be \$544 billion this year, which is an increase from the original projection of \$414 billion.

Now, more than ever, Congress needs to work diligently to reduce spending and balance the Federal budget. However, it is equally important for us to make sure that every taxpayer dollar that is spent is used responsibly.

That is why I am an original cosponsor of the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act. It will help ensure that the National Science Foundation, one of our Nation's most critical research agencies, is using its funding in the most beneficial way possible.

This bill requires the NSF to explain how each of its grants further America's best interests. This could be done through advancing STEM education, national defense, economic competitiveness, public health, or other key priorities.

By requiring the NSF to justify its research, this bill will help crack down on frivolous government programs. And, yes, Mr. Chairman, there are frivolous government programs.

For example, the NSF is currently spending \$374,000 of taxpayer money on a study of the ups and downs of senior citizens' dating experiences. While we all want, I am sure, Americans to enjoy their romantic lives throughout the year, we cannot afford this type of wasteful taxpayer spending when we have a \$19 trillion debt.

This commonsense legislation will ensure that NSF research is well directed and that it will help prevent valuable taxpayer dollars from being wasted.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chair, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding.

Mr. Chair, I oppose this bill, which represents an effort by politicians to overrule expert scientists in deciding which scientific grants the NSF should fund.

In defense of their misguided effort, some of my colleagues like to pick a grant and poke fun at it or trivialize it or simply state that, in their opinion, it is not worth funding.

One of the grants that has been singled out is entitled Participant Support for the Zero Emissions Category of the Clean Snowmobile Challenge.

Snowmobiles are ideal modes of transportation in extreme polar locations. This grant funded the Clean

Snowmobile Challenge in which students formed teams to engineer a lower emissions snowmobile.

Engineering competitions are both an important proving ground for new technologies and an incredible opportunity for students to engage in real-world engineering challenges.

My colleagues frequently talk up the importance of STEM competitions. The Science, Space, and Technology Committee has held entire full committee hearings on that very topic. Now some of my same colleagues would ridicule an engineering competition just because it might have a climate change benefit.

I hope all of my colleagues here today agree with me that encouraging and, certainly, promoting our next generation of engineers is definitely in the national interest, even when it results in less pollution.

This grant, singled out for ridicule by some in the majority, is just another example of why we should be concerned about the intent of this legislation.

I would also like to point out that I strongly believe that the current gold standard merit-review process works and that we should not be politicizing science.

The sheer number of amendments to this legislation demonstrates the flawed methodology of trying to define which research is in the national interest.

I think all of the Members who offered amendments to this section would agree that important priorities have been left out. Personally, I believe we have unacceptably overlooked clean drinking water and climate change.

I offered an amendment with Congressman KILDEE that would expand the priority of advancement of health and welfare to include clean drinking water explicitly. Unfortunately, this amendment was not made in order.

As we have seen in the news recently out of Flint, Michigan, we have taken our drinking water infrastructure for granted for decades. This neglect and lack of investment has caused serious public health issues.

We need to invest more, but we should not invest in a 20th or, in some cases, in a 19th century drinking water system.

A 21st century economy requires a 21st century infrastructure, but that cannot happen unless it is coupled with the critical research that will help us improve the construction, the operation, and the maintenance of our water systems. Our Nation's future public health and economic development are counting on it.

Clean drinking water is one of many important priorities not listed in this legislation. However, beyond missing important priorities, I am concerned that this legislation will limit critical research.

The exciting part of research is that, at the start, we do not know what we will find; so, we cannot accurately predict ahead of time all of the implications the research will have on specific national priorities. Instead, we should invest and encourage high-risk, high-reward research.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

□ 1515

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Here are some more reasons why we need this bill, and these are some more examples of how taxpayers' dollars have been spent: \$200,000 to tour Europe for an overview of the Turkish fashion veil industry; \$1.5 million to study pasture management in Mongolia; \$735,000 for the American Bar Association to follow young lawyers' careers; \$920,000 to study textile making in Iceland during the Viking era; \$164,000 to study Chinese immigration to Italy in 1900.

There are dozens and dozens of more examples.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) who is the chairman of the Energy Subcommittee of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of Chairman SMITH's bill, H.R. 3293. At a time when budget constraints and the deficit loom large and ominous, why in the world would anyone object to more transparency and accountability? Can anyone explain that to me? I didn't think so.

Here is how some of our hardworking taxpayer money is being spent.

Mr. Chairman, I have a list of 41 studies and programs that, if taxpayers knew, they would rise up and revolt.

Some of the more notable are:

\$227,000 to review animal photos in National Geographic magazine. (what baboon thought that up?)

\$350,000 to study human-set fires in New Zealand in the 1800s. (the main "human set fire" here is our taxpayer dollars being burned)

\$200,000 to tour Europe for an overview of the Turkish fashion-veil industry. (I am reminded that fashion is a form of ugliness so bad, it has to be changed about every 6 months!)

\$735,000 for the American Bar Association to follow young lawyers' careers (3 awards).

\$920,000 to study textile-making in Iceland during the Viking era (2 awards).

\$50,000 to support STEM education in Sri Lanka.

\$164,000 to study Chinese immigration to Italy (1900 to present).

\$20,000 to study stress among people from lowland Bolivia (one of 12 awards).

\$147,000 to analyze fishing practices at Lake Victoria, Africa. (Heck: all you gotta do is come down to my district in Galveston TX and we'll show you how to analyze fishing practices for a lot less and you can spend that money in our country!)

\$147,000 to study international marriages between citizens of France and Madagascar.

\$50,000 to study civil lawsuits in colonial Peru (1600–1700 AD).

\$250,000 to survey public attitudes about the Senate filibuster rule.

\$300,000 to study law firms in Silicon Valley.

\$170,000 to study basket weaving among Alaskan native peoples (2 awards). Perhaps that's what folks think Congress is majoring in.

\$276,000 to study the pre-history of Chiapas, Mexico.

\$246,000 to study migration and adoption between Peru and Spain.

\$134,000 to study Late Bronze Age metallurgy in the Southern Urals, Russia.

\$195,000 to contrast the histories of Patagonian and Amazonian national parks.

\$281,000 to analyze the history of Izapa, Mexico.

\$136,000 to study life/history transitions among indigenous people of northern Argentina.

\$27,000 to study Mayan wooden architecture and salt industry (600–900 AD).

\$92,000 to study Mexico's public vehicle registration system.

\$373,000 to study Chinese kinship, women's labor and economy (1600–2000 AD).

\$152,000 to analyze accountability and transparency in China's dairy industry.

\$300,000 to study Cyprus during the Bronze Age (2 awards).

\$226,000 to study cultural dynamics in western Turkey.

\$119,000 to coordinate an international archaeological project in the S. American Andes.

\$300,000 to produce an experimental dance program about nature and physics.

\$516,000 to help amateurs create a video game—"Relive Prom Night."

\$200,000 to devise social media algorithms for "Truthly.com," a website aimed at censoring political speech by Tea Party members, conservatives, etc.

\$605,000 to travel and study why people around the world cheat on their taxes.

\$193,000 to study human fish consumption in Tanzania (300–1500 AD).

\$221,000 to study use of ochre pigment for painting in Stone Age Kenya.

\$101,000 to pay for American psychologists to international conferences.

\$250,000 to educate local TV meteorologists about climate change (2 awards).

\$38,000 to consider whether livestock herding families in rural, undeveloped areas have more children in response to herd growth, or if increased family size drives herd growth.

\$193,000 to study human fish consumption in Tanzania (1300–1500 AD).

\$38,000 to study prehistoric rabbit hunting on the Iberian Peninsula.

\$1.8 million to study the potential of commercial fish farming at Lake Victoria, Africa.

\$330,000 to study the careers of 2,500 new lawyers in Russia.

\$1.5 million to study pasture management in Mongolia.

Mr. Chairman, some of the more notable are:

\$227,000 to review animal photos in National Geographic magazine. What baboon thought that up?

\$350,000 to study human-set fires in New Zealand in the 1800s. The only

thing being set on fire here is taxpayers' dollars.

\$200,000 to tour Europe for an overview of the Turkish fashion veil industry. I am reminded what a friend of mine says. He says fashion is a form of ugliness so bad that we have to change it every 6 months, and yet we want to study it over in another country.

\$147,000 to analyze fishing practices at Lake Victoria, Africa. Heck, folks, if y'all come on down to Galveston, Texas, we will show y'all how to fish and analyze that, and you can spend money in our country.

\$170,000 to study basket weaving among Alaskan Native peoples. Is it any wonder that most of Americans think Congress must major in basket weaving?

These are just some of the more notable ones, Mr. Chairman. I could go on through the 41 on the list. For example, \$330,000 to study the careers of 2,500 new lawyers in Russia. It is not that we don't have enough lawyers over here in America; now we are concerned about the ones in Russia.

I could go on and on, Mr. Chairman. I just want to simply say, I urge my colleagues to support transparency and accountability on behalf of our constituents and taxpayers. After all, they are paying the freight for this stuff. Shouldn't we be open and accountable to them?

I commend Chairman SMITH for his bill and for putting hardworking tax-paying Americans first.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER).

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chair, I rise to voice my strong opposition to H.R. 3293, the legislation of my friend, Chairman LAMAR SMITH, the so-called Scientific Research in the National Interest Act.

I understand the genesis of this bill: Mr. SMITH's dismay at some of the titles of the National Science Foundation's funded research.

This bill is the wrong approach to addressing the very occasional misuse of NSF grants, and it represents classic short-term thinking.

I am a businessman, and I know of no one in the business community who wants politicians or government to decide business winners or losers.

Of course, none of us, Democrat or Republican, believe that politicians should be making science decisions either. I believe Representative BILL FOSTER is the only Ph.D. scientist in the House, and the rest of us don't qualify.

By proclaiming the seven definitions of what science is in the national interest, we politicians are, in fact, deciding what is worthy of scientific research. By the way, no one on this side yet has raised any objections to the transparency or the accountability of the National Science Foundation. That

completely mischaracterizes our objections.

These standards sound constructive and benign—increased economic activity, advancement of health and welfare, support for the national defense, et cetera—but only one of the seven definitions even mentions science. The last one says for the "promotion of the progress of science for the United States," whatever that means.

Where, oh, where is the commitment to basic research, the kind of fundamental research that I know all of us value?

Listen to all the funny names that would have sounded especially funny at the time: Would Einstein's 1905 papers on special relativity, on the photoelectric effect, and on Brownian motion even qualify under the seven definitions? How about Niels Bohr's research on quantum mechanics? How about Murray Gell-Mans' work on particle physics in quarks? How about Rosalind Franklin's work on the crystallography of DNA?

My college roommate spent 4 years at Berkeley, 1972 to 1976, studying something called Roman spectroscopy. He had no idea what it would do. Today we call them MRIs.

That is the whole point of basic research. We don't know where it will lead. We don't know that it is in the national interest. It just adds to our knowledge.

On the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, we reveled in the NASA presentation of the Pluto photographs. How does our New Horizons mission to Pluto possibly qualify under the seven definitions of the national interest?

I respect that the chair of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee wants the NSF funds expended into legitimate scientific research. I agree. Mr. SMITH used the phrase "demonstrably in the national interest." How could we definitely know, when all of basic research is, by definition, long term rather than short term?

Let's let the scientists decide and oppose this well-meaning but ill-conceived legislation.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

To those who are on the other side, I really again encourage them to read the bill. It is three pages long. There is nothing in the bill that says we are going to tell the scientists what to do or think. It is very clear, in the examples that the gentleman just gave, that all of those are connected to the national interest. If a scientist can't explain that, then there are greater problems than we might expect.

The other point is, to repeat what I said a while ago, if you oppose the national interest standard, you are too late. The National Science Foundation Director has incorporated the national interest standard in the current guidelines. If you want to oppose the bill because you don't want to make the

standard permanent, that is your prerogative, but don't oppose the national interest standard that is in the current guidelines.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI), who is an original cosponsor of this legislation.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Chairman, I want to start where we all have agreement. I think everyone would acknowledge that they want research funded by the NSF to be in the Nation's interest. We agree the Nation's interest is furthered by promoting scientific progress. That is certainly one of the principal reasons that I have served on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee for 12 years.

We also have some disagreements. I have respectfully disagreed with the chairman over his criticisms of some NSF grants. At a hearing in November of 2013, I spoke out strongly against a very different NSF bill, and I believe some people are confusing that bill with this bill that we have here today.

If you read this bill's text, I don't believe you can find anything that could undermine the merit review process at the NSF. In fact, I think this bill will help protect the NSF from future attacks and make the Foundation stronger.

H.R. 3293 says research funded by the NSF must be worthy of Federal funding and in the national interest. The national interest is defined by a series of broad criteria, one of which is that a grant have the potential to promote "the progress of science for the United States." It is difficult to conceive of research that would be recommended by an NSF peer review panel that would not meet that standard. Thus, it is difficult for me to see how this standard could harm the work that the Foundation does.

The bill clearly states that it is the job of the Foundation to determine what is worthy of funding, not politicians, and that nothing in the bill would alter NSF's blunted peer review process, which we agree is the gold standard for funding scientific research. As a scientist myself, I believe this is as it should be.

Nevertheless, there have been suggestions that this bill is politicians creating a political filter on what research should be funded, but it is striking how similar this language is to the broader impacts criterion that we advanced in a bipartisan fashion in the 2010 COMPETES Reauthorization Act. There was no concern at the time about that language being a political filter, nor was there any concern that broader impacts be applied to a portfolio of grants, rather than individual awards.

Furthermore, at the time, the Foundation already had broader impact criterion as part of their review process, yet this committee still acted to put the criteria in statute. And the ease

with which NSF has implemented the broader impacts criteria suggests to me that they could implement this language without changing the nature of the research they fund.

There is some concern that this bill would cause the Foundation to become more risk averse or applied, not funding breakthrough grants like the one that started Google. So let's take a look at that grant.

The NSF funded the Stanford Integrated Digital Library Project in 1994, and the research conducted through that grant, as well as other private and public support, including a graduate research fellowship for Sergey Brin, led to the algorithms that were the intellectual basis of Google.

The purpose of that grant, as stated in the abstract, was "to develop the enabling technologies for a single, integrated and 'universal' library, proving uniform access to the large number of emerging networked information sources and collections." Even putting aside the emerging collections on the Web that could be impacted, that grant clearly seemed to have the potential to promote the progress of computer science and be worthy of Federal funding and, thus, would have been funded under the provisions of this bill.

Indeed, the debate around this bill has focused less on the language in the bill and more on the concern of intentions behind the bill. As I have said, I have disagreed with recent criticisms of the NSF. Time has shown us that some of William Proxmire's Golden Fleece Awardees have proven to be golden geese, as Ranking Member JOHNSON mentioned in her opening statement.

I think much of the criticism of grants comes from misunderstandings. This bill can help prevent misunderstandings or at least give NSF a better ability to defend its work. This will come from the requirement that abstracts be rewritten to more plainly explain the purpose of a grant.

I applaud the NSF for steps they have already taken to better explain why scientific research is valuable and to better explain why promoting the progress of science is in the Nation's interest and worthy of Federal funds. This policy and this bill will further help the NSF defend worthwhile grants.

All of us may never see eye to eye on what types of research should be supported by the Federal Government. For example, I see more value in social science and geoscience than many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, and I never miss an opportunity to point that out.

But far from acting as a political filter, I believe this bill will help the NSF continue to be the world's preeminent foundation in funding scientific research, and that is why I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to point out that this grant was mentioned earlier in remarks. In defense of their misguided efforts, some of our colleagues like to pick certain grants and make fun of them—just as has just been said—and then say they are not worth funding.

One of the grants that my colleagues like to pick on is a grant entitled, "Ecosystems Resilience to Human Impacts: Ecological Consequences of Early Human-Set Fires in New Zealand." It may be easy for some of my colleagues to question why the Federal Government should spend money on studying fires that were set in a foreign country hundreds of years ago. Apparently, it is harder for them to spend 5 minutes reading the abstract.

It turns out that those early settlers in New Zealand caused the loss of more than 40 percent of the forests in just decades. By studying the long-term effect on the ecosystem impacts of those long-ago fires, we can gain knowledge to help natural resource managers make smarter decisions about how to mitigate, prepare for, and respond to massive wildfires in our own country. It is right in the public interest.

Just to put an economic figure to this, in 2012, the United States spent \$2 billion to suppress over 65,000 wildland fires that burned over 9 million acres.

□ 1530

It sounds like this is of national interest to study the long term impact of fires that were set so many years ago. I choose to stand with the scientists when it comes to science. For that reason, I really uphold this misguided bill.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I have one more Member on the way to the floor to speak, and then I am prepared to close.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chair, I have no further requests for time.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN), who is on his way to the podium right now.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act.

The National Science Foundation spends \$7 billion in taxpayer funds, most of which goes to important research that helps advance America's competitive edge. However, the NSF has funded far too many wasteful projects that are not in the national interest.

Here are several examples: \$1.5 million to study pasture management in Mongolia; \$147,000 to study international marriages between the citizens of France and Madagascar; \$20,000

to study stress among the people of Bolivia.

While the NSF has begun to implement some new internal policies that are intended to increase transparency and accountability, this bill will help strengthen those reforms and make them permanent.

The Director of the NSF even testified before the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee that the policy of H.R. 3293 is "compatible with the NSF's internal guidelines."

I highly commend Chairman LAMAR SMITH for his leadership on this important bill, and I encourage my colleagues to very much support it.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, once again, I stand with the scientists. I also stand with the President's potential statement. If this bill is presented to the President, scientists have recommended that he veto it.

I stand with the scientists again and ask the people to vote against this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

I am glad that the gentlewoman brought up the administration's position on this bill because it is absolutely no surprise.

When President Obama was elected, he promised that this would be the most transparent administration in history. It has turned out to be the exact opposite.

Opposing a bill to bring more transparency to government, more accountability to the National Science Foundation is a perfect natural for this administration.

Let me give you some more examples. According to an analysis of Federal data by the Associated Press, the Obama administration set new records 2 years in a row for denying the media access to government files.

More than that, in an unprecedented letter to several congressional committees, 47 inspectors general, who are the official watchdogs of Federal agencies, complained that the Justice Department, EPA, and others consistently obstruct their work by blocking or delaying access to critical information.

This is the record, this is the history of an administration who opposes this bill. Again, a bill that is going to bring transparency and accountability to the Federal Government.

Mr. Chairman, it seems obvious to most of us and to most Americans that taxpayer-funded grants should be in the national interest, but let me address some of the false arguments that have been presented by Members on the other side.

Opponents claim that the bill interferes with the merit-review process for approving grants. This is false. The three-page bill clearly states "nothing in this section shall be construed as altering the Foundation's intellectual

merit or broader impacts criteria for evaluating grant applications."

Scientists still make the decisions. They just do not get a blank check written by the taxpayer. They need to be accountable to the American people by showing that their proposals are in the national interest.

What the bill does do is ensure that the results of the peer-review process are transparent and that the broader societal impact of the research is better communicated to the public. This makes it clear how the grant is in the national interest.

Another common falsehood spread by opponents of the bill is that it means research projects will be judged by the title as to whether or not they are worthy of Federal funding. Again, this is false. The bill actually corrects a past problem with some NSF-funded grants.

Often, the title and an incomprehensible summary were all that was publicly available about a research grant. The bill ensures that a project's benefits are clearly communicated to earn the public support and trust. Researchers should embrace the opportunity to better explain to the American people the potential value of their work.

Finally, opponents have claimed that the bill discourages high-risk, high-reward research. Once again, this is false. Research with the potential to be groundbreaking is almost always worthy of Federal funding and in the national interest.

Basic research, by its very nature, is uncertain regarding outcomes and results, but payoffs to society, quality of life, and standards of living can be transformative.

Research that has the potential to address some of society's greatest challenges is what the NSF should be funding.

Improving computing and cybersecurity, advancing new energy sources, discovering new medicines and cures, and creating advanced materials are just some of the ways that NSF-funded research can help create millions of new jobs and transform society in a positive way.

On the other hand, how does spending \$700,000 on a climate change musical encourage breakthrough research? There may well be good answers to those questions, but we weren't able to come up with them, and neither was the National Science Foundation.

When the NSF funds projects that don't meet such standards, there is less money to support worthwhile research that keeps our country at the forefront of innovation.

Both the National Science Foundation Director and the National Science Board have endorsed the principle that NSF should be more accountable in its grant-funding decisions.

Why would Congress oppose such a commonsense requirement? Why do opponents of this bill think they know

better than the NSF Director, who has approved the national interest standard in the current guidelines?

It is just inconceivable to me that an elected U.S. Representative would oppose requiring government grants funded by the U.S. taxpayer to be spent in the national interest. Whose money do they think the NSF spends on these frivolous research grants? The taxpayers should know how their hard-earned dollars are, in fact, being spent.

I ask my colleagues to bolster transparency and accountability, protect American taxpayers, and promote good, fundamental science and basic research.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois who spoke just a minute ago. He made a really, really good point that I want to repeat, and that is that this bill is actually going to help strengthen the National Science Foundation because it is going to give it more credibility and taxpayers are going to have more assurance that their hard-earned money is being spent on worthwhile projects that are, in fact, in the national interest.

Mr. Chairman, taxpayers spend \$6 billion; \$6 billion is being spent by the National Science Foundation. They only approve one out of five grant requests.

Shouldn't those grant proposals be in the national interest? Shouldn't they be about breakthrough technology, technological inventions? Shouldn't they increase productivity in America? I think that is exactly how the taxpayers' dollars should be spent.

Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia). The gentleman from Texas has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, what I would like to do is to give more examples of how the taxpayers' dollars actually should not be spent. These are grants that have been approved by the National Science Foundation in the past.

Again, I want to give the current Director full credit. She has changed the standards. She has implemented the national interest as a part of their guidelines. But if we don't make these guidelines permanent, this is what could happen.

This is how the taxpayers' dollars have been spent:

\$250,000 to survey public attitudes about the Senate filibuster rule;

\$276,000 to study the prehistory of Chiapas, Mexico;

\$246,000 to study migration and adoption between Peru and Spain;

\$136,000 to study life/history transitions among indigenous people of northern Argentina;

\$27,000 to study Mayan wooden architecture and the salt industry;

\$152,000 to analyze accountability and transparency in China's dairy industry;

\$300,000 to study Cyprus during the Bronze Age;

\$226,000 to study cultural dynamics in western Turkey;

\$119,000 to coordinate an international archaeological project in the South American Andes;

\$60,000 to study the Gamo caste system in southwestern Ethiopia;

\$300,000 to produce an experimental dance program about nature and physics.

Speaking of that, I think there was another \$516,000 to help amateurs create a video game, \$516,000 to help amateurs create a video game called "Re-live Prom Night."

There is no national interest that I am aware of. If there is, they sure ought to point it out before we ask the taxpayers to spend half a million dollars on reliving prom night.

Let's see.

\$605,000 to travel and study why people around the world cheat on their taxes;

\$38,000 to consider whether livestock herding families expand in response to herd growth;

\$193,000 to study human fish consumption in Tanzania from 1300 to 1500 AD;

\$250,000 to educate local TV meteorologists;

\$275,000 to study tourism in northern Norway;

\$450,000 to create the Climate Change Narrative Game;

\$131,000 for a 1-day program about climate change education using giant-screen TVs;

\$430,000 to study Irish climate, environment, and political change in the past 2,000 years;

\$2.5 million to create dioramas for the Oakland Museum of California;

\$590,000 to support private groups advocating drastic climate change;

\$289,000 to study how colonialism and climate change threaten the survival of Arctic peoples in Russia;

\$549,000 to—I am sorry. My time is about expired, and I appreciate that.

I could go on and give dozens and dozens of examples, but I think it is clear that this is not how the American taxpayers' dollars should be spent.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 3293, the so-called Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, a bill that would actually hinder the National Science Foundation's (NSF) ability to meet the dynamic demands of science and provide resources across all scientific disciplines without political manipulations. This bill is simply another in a line of Republican efforts to politicize science and jeopardize discovery and innovation.

The NSF engages in remarkable, groundbreaking work. We must continue to support this organization and ensure that America remains a world-wide leader in scientific advances. To that end, I cosponsored a number

of amendments with my colleague from Virginia, Mr. BEYER, that would allow NSF scientists to further our understanding of climate and environmental science. Unfortunately my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have displayed such open hostility towards climate science and research that they won't allow a vote on these amendments.

While I believe it's important that the NSF hold itself accountable regarding the research it funds, politicizing scientific research is shortsighted and can damage our ability to compete in the world economy. H.R. 3293 would interfere with ongoing efforts at NSF to better quantify and communicate the value of the research it funds.

Mr. Chair, I am also concerned that this legislation will have a chilling effect on many of the scientists at NSF and throughout our scientific community. This bill would force scientists to second-guess their research based on political whims and require them to justify all their actions according to short-term returns, stifling high-risk, high-reward research and innovation across all fields. We must not squelch creativity, critical thinking, and the open exchange of ideas.

Federal agencies like NIH and NOAA are headquartered in my district and I represent countless federally funded scientists who are advancing knowledge, discovering cures, and developing innovative technologies. I am committed to ensuring that the NSF and all of our research agencies have the resources they need without being subject to superfluous political tests. The valuable work done by our scientists and researchers at NSF and other institutions not only leads to the development of new innovations, but also enables our Nation to attract and retain the top research talent in the world. In order to continue to compete, we need sustained investments free from political interference.

I strongly oppose this bill and any other efforts to needlessly politicize scientific research.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule and shall be considered as read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3293

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Scientific Research in the National Interest Act".

SEC. 2. GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY IN FEDERAL FUNDING FOR RESEARCH.

(a) STANDARD FOR AWARD OF GRANTS.—The National Science Foundation shall award Federal funding for basic research and education in the sciences through a new research grant or cooperative agreement only if an affirmative determination is made by the Foundation under subsection (b) and written justification relating thereto is published under subsection (c).

(b) DETERMINATION.—A determination referred to in subsection (a) is a justification by the responsible Foundation official as to how the research grant or cooperative agreement promotes the progress of science in the United States, consistent with the Foundation mission as established in the National

Science Foundation Act of 1950 (42 U.S.C. 1861 et seq.), and further—

(1) is worthy of Federal funding; and
(2) is in the national interest, as indicated by having the potential to achieve—

(A) increased economic competitiveness in the United States;

(B) advancement of the health and welfare of the American public;

(C) development of an American STEM workforce that is globally competitive;

(D) increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology in the United States;

(E) increased partnerships between academia and industry in the United States;

(F) support for the national defense of the United States; or

(G) promotion of the progress of science for the United States.

(c) WRITTEN JUSTIFICATION.—Public announcement of each award of Federal funding described in subsection (a) shall include a written justification from the responsible Foundation official as to how a grant or cooperative agreement meets the requirements of subsection (b).

(d) IMPLEMENTATION.—A determination under subsection (b) shall be made after a research grant or cooperative agreement proposal has satisfied the Foundation's reviews for Merit and Broader Impacts. Nothing in this section shall be construed as altering the Foundation's intellectual merit or broader impacts criteria for evaluating grant applications.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in part B of House Report 114-420. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

The Chair understands amendment No. 1 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MS. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON OF TEXAS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part B of House Report 114-420.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 15, through page 4, line 15, amend subsection (b) to read as follows:

(b) DETERMINATION.—A determination referred to in subsection (a) is a justification by the responsible Foundation official as to how the research grant or cooperative agreement—

(1) by itself, or by contributing to a portfolio of research in that field or across fields, is in the national interest as reflected in the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 (42 U.S.C. 1861 et seq.), namely to promote the progress of science, to advance the national health, prosperity and welfare, and to secure the national defense; and

(2) is worthy of Federal funding, as demonstrated by having met the merit review criteria of the Foundation.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, my colleague from Texas, the chairman of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, has stated many times that H.R. 3293 is consistent with the policy announced by NSF in January 2015.

He also frequently cites a year old comment by NSF Director Dr. Cordova about this bill. However, it is one thing to use such vague statements in defense of this bill; it is quite another thing to look directly at the NSF policy issued by Dr. Cordova to see what it actually says.

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I will quote directly from NSF's January 2015 policy:

The nontechnical component of the NSF award abstract must serve as a public justification for NSF funding by articulating how the project serves the national interest, as stated by NSF's mission, to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; and to secure national defense.

As Dr. Holdren, the President's Science Adviser, said:

According to the clear wording and intent of the 1950 act that created the National Science Foundation, promoting the progress of science through basic research is in the national interest.

Likewise, Dr. Cordova, in describing what she means by "national interest," points directly to the 1950 NSF mission statement. In her policy, there is no separate list defining national interest with criteria that, in fact, promotes more applied research, not basic research.

While the words "promoting the progress of science" appear in the bill before us, they do so only as an afterthought, in dead last place and added only after many versions of this bill.

Now that we all understand the National Science Foundation's actual policy, I can briefly explain my amendment.

By tying the term "national interest" to the 1950 national statement, my amendment brings the bill truly in line with the National Science Foundation's own policy for transparency and accountability.

My amendment also provides clarity to what we mean by the words "worthy of Federal funding," by stating that anything that has passed the rigor of the National Science Foundation's peer-review process is "worthy of Federal funding."

In short, my amendment fixes the underlying bill by removing restric-

tions that may stifle high-risk basic research, and by taking decisions about grant funding out of the hands of politicians and putting it back in the hands of scientists, where it belongs.

The National Science Foundation's 1950 mission statement, implemented through its gold standard merit-review process, has served science and this Nation so well. Let's leave it intact by passing my amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I oppose the gentlewoman's amendment, which undermines the bill and weakens accountability and transparency.

First, the amendment seeks to dilute the bill's requirement that the grant must be worthy of Federal funding. It is difficult to understand why anyone would have objections to requiring that a research grant be worthy of taxpayer support. Worthy means: having adequate or great merit, character, or value; and commendable excellence or merit; deserving.

The opposite of worthy of Federal funding are awards of taxpayer money to frivolous, low-priority projects, like producing a climate change musical, creating a voicemail game, or studying tourism in Norway.

One would think that fundamental standards like "worthy of Federal funding" and "in the national interest" would already be embedded in the standards the National Science Foundation uses to evaluate thousands of grant applications and decide which ones should receive \$6 billion in basic research grants each year. From the Science, Space, and Technology Committee's review of past NSF grants, we have learned that this is not always the case.

This amendment eliminates the requirement that each grant be worthy of Federal funding. It asserts that any grant approved by NSF through its merit selection system will be considered worthy of Federal funding. With this change, every NSF-funded project would be considered worthy of Federal funding, no matter how absurd.

With this amendment, Congress would effectively abnegate its responsibility to ensure that NSF spends taxpayer dollars only on projects worthy of Federal funding.

The underlying bill does not interfere with the National Science Foundation's merit selection process. I have already quoted from the bill twice tonight. It only requires that NSF be transparent and explain in writing and in nontechnical terms why each research project that receives public funds is in the national interest. Taxpayers deserve this information. It is their money.

Moreover, in order to maintain an increased public support for vital invest-

ment in basic research, NSF must be transparent and accountable and explain why every scientific investment deserves to receive hard-earned tax dollars.

NSF Director France Cordova and her team at NSF understand this. That is why the NSF is implementing new policies to make NSF grant-making more transparent and understandable for the American people.

These policies acknowledge the primary importance of national interest in awarding tax dollars. In fact, during her testimony before the Science, Space, and Technology Committee last year, Dr. Cordova described this national interest act and NSF's new transparency policies as consistent and fully compatible with each other.

I would like to remind everyone that it is not Congress' or the NSF's money. It is the American people's money.

The amendment offered by the ranking member seeks to change the section of the bill that requires NSF to accompany public announcement of every grant award with a nontechnical explanation of the award's scientific merit and national interest.

My concern is that the proposed amendment would create a loophole through which blocks of hundreds of grants in a particular area of science would be justified by just one general statement. This is the opposite of accountability and transparency.

I strongly oppose the amendment for these reasons.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, this does not do any more than what was intended under the law. It leaves it in the hands of the peer review board and not the politicians.

It does nothing to make this bill worse. In fact, it improves it so that it can meet the charter of this Congress in doing its work.

Every grant that goes out of the National Science Foundation is peer-reviewed in a system that was set up 60 years ago. It has worked well. We have gained great research. I don't think that making sure that the politicians have something to say about it makes it any better. It makes it worse.

I ask for the adoption of my amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, the National Science Foundation Director and the National Science Board have both expressed and endorsed a principle that NSF should be more transparent and accountable in its grant funding decisions. In fact, the NSF has already incorporated the national interest standard in their guidelines.

This amendment creates loopholes and dilutes the intent of the bill—a bill

that NSF Director France Cordova has testified: is very compatible with the new internal NSF guidelines and with the mission statement of the National Science Foundation.

I ask my colleagues to say “yes” to accountability and transparency and “no” to the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, today, I will vote no on H.R. 3293, the so-called “Scientific Research in the National Interest” Act.

This bill is the latest in the House Majority’s campaign to undermine science and the scientific community. The scientific peer-based, merit review process that the National Science Foundation (NSF) currently has in place is widely regarded as the “gold standard” for funding scientific research. This bill would add unnecessary bureaucratic paperwork to this process, but more troublingly, it would undermine our nation’s basic research enterprise. The attempts to insert politics into this process have already caused our nation’s scientists to shy away from high-risk, potentially high-reward research that some House members may find controversial.

We must not allow elected officials to arbitrarily override expert scientific review. We have seen this type of stunt time and time again with efforts to undermine climate change science, and today, the target is on basic research. It is time to stop this charade. We should be focusing more on evidence-based, performance-based policymaking, rather than finding a solution in search of a problem.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chair, I want to state my support for H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act. This bill, in an effort to enhance transparency and accountability at the National Science Foundation (NSF), would include a determination by the NSF that any grant or cooperative agreement by the NSF promotes the progress of science by being in the national interest.

Under this bill’s broad definitions of what “is in the national interest”, I expect that for virtually all successful grant applications, the NSF would have no difficulty in making the certification. Section 2(b)(2)(G)’s “promotion of the progress of science for the United States” is such a broad justification for determining if research is within the national interest, that it likely covers all current research being funded by the NSF and could cover all future directions that the Foundation would like to explore. Any research that advances the frontiers of knowledge and drives technological innovation promotes the progress of science for the United States.

I would like to point out that all the justifications of Section 2(b)(2) can be construed both broadly and liberally. For example, Section 2(b)(2)(A)’s inclusion of “increased economic competitiveness in the United States” could encompass all funding that promotes the progress of engineering, physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, and mathematics in order to build and strengthen our national capacity for innovation and production.

Section 2(b)(2)(B)’s “advancement of the health and welfare of the American public” could include research into biology, life, the natural world, and the environment. Behavioral and social science research could also fall

under the “advancement of the health and welfare of the American public” justification as well, because behavioral and social science build fundamental knowledge of human behavior, interaction, and social and economic systems that underpin the health and welfare of our society.

Section 2(b)(2)(C)’s “development of an American STEM workforce that is globally competitive” could be seen as promoting STEM education at all levels and in all settings, including both formal and informal settings. Having a well-informed workforce that has access to the ideas and tools associated with STEM education serves to enhance the quality of life of all citizens while promoting U.S. economic competitiveness, advancing the health and welfare of the American public, and supporting the national defense.

To reiterate, I believe that Section 2(b)(2) of this bill is to be construed broadly and liberally. I believe that the inclusion of Section 2(b)(2)(G)’s “promotion of the progress of science for the United States” likely covers all current and future research engaged in by the NSF. Further, I believe that the fact that the Foundation is provided the discretion to make the determination allows the NSF ample room to continue its desired research. And I expect that for virtually all successful grant applicants, the NSF will have no difficulty in making this determination applaud Chairman SMITH for his work on this important legislation.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part B of House Report 114-420.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 22, strike “and”.

Page 3, line 23, redesignate paragraph (2) as paragraph (3).

Page 3, after line 22, insert the following:

(2) is consistent with established and widely accepted scientific methods applicable to the field of study of exploration; and

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the ranking member,

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, for her leadership. I also want to thank Mr. SMITH for his chairmanship of the committee.

I have known the commitment to science that so many Members have. I hope that my amendment reinforces the emphasis that we have had with respect to science.

Scientists should control the direction and guidance of our research. The National Science Foundation does simply that. I hope that both of my amendments contribute to that premise, and I would like to acknowledge the Rules Committee for making these amendments in order.

The Jackson Lee amendment seeks to improve H.R. 3293 by ensuring that NSF-funded research, as it has been, remains consistent with established and widely accepted scientific methods applicable to the study of exploration.

In conducting experiments or research in new areas of inquiry, grant recipients would now follow protocols that ensure that the outcomes of research are able to be reproduced by other scientists or researchers.

I have always believed that science is the work that creates the ultimate work in decades and centuries to come. Having served on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee some years back, I used to always say: science is the work of the 21st century. If you create in science, innovation, products, and research, you create opportunities for jobs and products to be sold. This is what good science is all about and why basic research relies on the scientific method in the routine practice of scientists and researchers around the world.

I fully believe that the National Science Foundation gets it. That is what their underlying work is about.

The Jackson Lee amendment will support the promise that basic research is conducted with the expectation that good science should be the underlying goal. History has shown that basic research often leads to results with the utmost beneficial consequences for society.

I would ask my colleagues to support this amendment.

I thank Chairman SESSIONS and Ranking Member SLAUGHTER for making the Jackson Lee Amendment in order for consideration under H.R. 3293, the “Scientific Research in the National Interest Act.”

My thanks and appreciation to Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member JOHNSON for their support of this amendment and their staffs for working with my staff to ensure the amendment reflects a goal we all share.

The Jackson Lee amendment improves H.R. 3293, by ensuring that NSF funded research, as it has been, remains consistent with established and widely accepted scientific methods applicable to the study of exploration.

In conducting experiments or research in new areas of inquiry, grant recipients would now follow protocols that ensure that the outcomes of research are able to be reproduced by other scientists or researchers.

This is what good science is all about and this is why basic research relies on the scientific method in the routine practice of scientists and researchers around the world.

In 1950, Congress passed the National Science Foundation Act to “promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; and to secure the national defense; in addition to other purposes” by creating the National Science Foundation.

The Act authorized and directed the Foundation to “initiate and support basic scientific research and programs to strengthen the potential of scientific research and education programs at all levels in the mathematical, physical, medical, biological, social, and other sciences.”

The 1950 Act also authorized and directed NSF to fund applied scientific and engineering research.

One hundred years of basic scientific research has revealed its value, exemplified in the advances that helped our nation win World War II and allowed Congress to appreciate science as the gateway to the pre-eminent economic global success the nation could achieve.

This Jackson Lee Amendment would support the promise that basic research is conducted with the expectation that good science should be the underlying goal.

History has shown that basic research often leads to results with the utmost beneficial consequences for society; although, at the time that basic research is conducted, it may be impossible to predict how it will benefit the nation or the world.

One such example is the Genomic studies of nematode worms that led to the discovery of genes that ultimately control cell death; this study in turn opened the avenues of discovery for new treatment possibilities for cancer and Alzheimer’s Disease.

Additionally, basic research on atomic physics led to the development of the atomic clocks that now enable the highly precise Global Positioning System (GPS) used to guide commercial aircraft to their destinations.

In 2014, due to a global embrace of scientific research the world saw:

The first landing of a space craft on the surface of a comet;

The discovery of a new fundamental particle, which provided information on the origin of the universe;

Development of the world’s fastest supercomputer; and

A surge in research on plant biology that is uncovering new and better ways to meet global food needs.

Unfortunately none of these achievements were led by our nation’s researchers or scientists.

I ask my colleagues to support this Jackson Lee Amendment so that we may make strides toward joining and surpassing our global competitors in the emerging scientific community.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to this amendment, but I do not oppose the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I support this amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The amendment requires that, in addition to the National Science Foundation making a determination that a grant is worthy of Federal funding and in the national interest, the NSF must also determine that the grant is: consistent with established and widely accepted scientific methods applicable to the field of study or exploration.

I agree that this is an important determination. Basic research funded by taxpayers must have a sound scientific foundation.

Reproducibility—the ability of an entire experiment or study to be duplicated—especially by someone else working independently, is the gold standard in the scientific method.

NSF should ensure that the research it funds meets this gold standard so taxpayer dollars do not go to waste.

I thank the gentlewoman for her amendment, and I do support it.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, let me thank the gentleman from Texas and the ranking member for their support.

With that, I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part B of House Report 114-420.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 22, strike “and”.

Page 3, line 23, redesignate paragraph (2) as paragraph (3).

Page 3, after line 22, insert the following:

(2) is consistent with the definition of basic research as it applies to the purpose and field of study; and

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I restate my earlier premise that science is the work of the 21st century. Maybe we will be saying the 22nd century. Because when you are innovative and do research, you create jobs and opportunities. This amendment establishes that basic research is in the national interest of the United States.

Let me suggest to you that we have a lot of universities in this country. When I travel, I always hear individuals seeking to come to be taught in American institutions of higher education. It is because of the creative thought and, in many instances, the research that is done, whether in medicine or all the forms of science and technology, because we have a free-flowing basis upon which people can think and invent. I want that to continue. I want the National Science Foundation to be at the cornerstone of that.

I will include in the RECORD an article titled, “The Future Postponed.” Why Declining Investment in Basic Research Threatens a U.S. Innovation Deficit.

[From the Massachusetts Institute of Technology]

THE FUTURE POSTPONED

WHY DECLINING INVESTMENT IN BASIC RESEARCH THREATENS A U.S. INNOVATION DEFICIT

(A Report by the MIT Committee to Evaluate the Innovation Deficit)

2014 was a year of notable scientific highlights, including:

the first landing on a comet, which has already shed important light on the formation of the Earth;

the discovery of a new fundamental particle, which provides critical information on the origin of the universe;

development of the world’s fastest supercomputer;

a surge in research on plant biology that is uncovering new and better ways to meet global food requirements.

None of these, however, were U.S.-led achievements. The first two reflected 10-year, European-led efforts; the second two are Chinese accomplishments, reflecting that nation’s emergence as a science and technology power. Hence the wide-spread concern over a growing U.S. innovation deficit, attributable in part to declining public investment in research (see figure).

This report provides a number of tangible examples of under-exploited areas of science and likely consequences in the form of an innovation deficit, including:

opportunities with high potential for big payoffs in health, energy, and high-tech industries;

fields where we risk falling behind in critical strategic capabilities such as supercomputing, secure information systems, and national defense technologies;

areas where national prestige is at stake, such as space exploration, or where a lack of specialized U.S. research facilities is driving key scientific talent to work overseas.

This introduction also cites examples of the benefits from basic research that have helped to shape and maintain U.S. economic power, as well as highlighting industry trends that have made university basic research even more critical to future national economic competitiveness.

Basic research is often misunderstood, because it often seems to have no immediate payoff. Yet it was just such federally-funded research into the fundamental working of cells, intensified beginning with the “War on Cancer” in 1971, that led over time to a growing arsenal of sophisticated new anti-cancer therapies—19 new drugs approved by the U.S.

FDA in the past 2 years. Do we want similar progress on Alzheimer's, which already affects 5 million Americans, more than any single form of cancer? Then we should expand research in neurobiology, brain chemistry, and the science of aging (see Alzheimer's Disease). The Ebola epidemic in West Africa is a reminder of how vulnerable we are to a wider pandemic of emergent viral diseases, because of a lack of research on their biology; an even greater public health threat looms from the rise of antibiotic resistant bacteria right here at home, which, because commercial incentives are lacking, only expanded university-based research into new types of antibiotics can address (see Infectious Disease).

America's emergence last year as the world's largest oil producer has been justly celebrated as a milestone for energy independence. But the roots of the fracking revolution stem from federally-funded research—begun in the wake of the first OPEC oil embargo 40 years ago—that led to directional drilling technology, diamond drill bits tough enough to cut shale, and the first major hydraulic fracturing experiments. Do we also want the U.S. to be a leader in clean energy technologies a few decades hence, when these will be needed for large scale replacement of fossil energy sources, a huge global market? Then now is when more investment in advanced thin film solar cells, new battery concepts, and novel approaches to fusion energy should begin (see Materials Discovery and Processing, Batteries, Fusion Energy).

Some areas of research create opportunities of obvious economic importance. Catalysis, for example, is already a \$500 billion industry in the United States alone and plays a critical role in the manufacture of virtually every fuel, all types of plastics, and many pharmaceuticals. Yet today's catalysts are relatively inefficient and require high temperatures compared to those (such as enzymes) that operate in living things. So the potential payoff in both reduced environmental impact and a powerful economic edge for countries that invest in efforts to understand and replicate these biological catalysts—as Germany and China already are—could be huge (see Catalysis). The U.S. also lags in two other key areas: developing advances in plant sciences that can help meet growing world needs for food while supporting U.S. agricultural exports, and the growing field of robotics that is important not only for automated factories but for a whole new era of automated services such as driverless vehicles (see Plant Sciences and Robotics).

In an increasingly global and competitive world, where knowledge is created and first applied has huge economic consequences: some 50 years after the rise of Silicon Valley, the U.S. still leads in the commercial application of integrated circuits, advanced electronic devices, and internet businesses. But foreseeable advances in optical integrated circuits, where both Europe and Japan are investing heavily, is likely to completely reshape the \$300 billion semiconductor industry that today is largely dominated by U.S. companies (see Photonics). In this area and other fields of science that will underlie the innovation centers of the future, U.S. leadership or even competitiveness is at risk. Synthetic biology—the ability to redesign life in the lab—is another area that has huge potential to transform bio-manufacturing and food production and to create breakthroughs in healthcare—markets that might easily exceed the size of the technology market. But it is EU scientists that benefit from superior

facilities and dedicated funding and are leading the way (see Synthetic Biology). Research progress in many such fields increasingly depends on sophisticated modern laboratories and research instruments, the growing lack of which in the U.S. is contributing to a migration of top talent and research leadership overseas.

Some areas of research are so strategically important that for the U.S. to fall behind ought to be alarming. Yet Chinese leadership in supercomputing—its Tianhe-2 machine at the Chinese National University of Defense in Guangzhou has won top ranking for the third year in a row and can now do quadrillions of calculations per second—is just such a straw in the wind. Another is our apparent and growing vulnerability to cyberattacks of the type that have damaged Sony, major banks, large retailers, and other major companies. Ultimately, it will be basic research in areas such as photonics, cybersecurity, and quantum computing (where China is investing heavily) that determine leadership in secure information systems, in secure long distance communications, and in supercomputing (see Cybersecurity and Quantum Information Systems). Recent budget cuts have impacted U.S. efforts in all these areas. Also, technologies are now in view that could markedly improve the way we protect our soldiers and other war fighters while improving their effectiveness in combat (see Defense Technology).

It is not just areas of science with obvious applications that are important. Some observers have asked, "What good is it?" of the discovery of the Higgs boson (the particle referred to above, which fills a major gap in our understanding of the fundamental nature of matter). But it is useful to remember that similar comments might have been made when the double helix structure of DNA was first understood (many decades before the first biotech drug), when the first transistor emerged from research in solid state physics (many decades before the IT revolution), when radio waves were first discovered (long before radios or broadcast networks were even conceived of). We are a remarkably inventive species, and seem always to find ways to put new knowledge to work.

Other potential discoveries could have global impacts of a different kind. Astronomers have now identified hundreds of planets around other stars, and some of them are clearly Earth-like. Imagine what it would mean to our human perspective if we were to discover evidence of life on these planets—a signal that we are not alone in the universe—from observations of their planetary atmospheres, something that is potentially within the technical capability of space-based research within the next decade? Or if the next generation of space telescopes can discover the true nature of the mysterious "dark matter" and "dark energy" that appear to be the dominant constituents of the universe (see Space Exploration).

Do we want more efficient government, more market-friendly regulatory structures? Social and economic research is increasingly able to provide policymakers with useful guidance. Witness the way government has helped to create mobile and broadband markets by auctioning the wireless spectrum—complex, carefully-designed auctions based on insights from game theory and related research that have netted the federal government more than \$60 billion while catalyzing huge new industries and transformed the way we live and do business. Empowered by access to more government data and Big Data tools, such research could point the

way to still more efficient government (see Enabling Better Policy Decisions).

In the past, U.S. industry took a long term view of R&D and did fundamental research, activities associated with such entities as the now-diminished Bell Labs and Xerox Park. That's still the case in some other countries such as South Korea. Samsung, for example, spent decades of effort to develop the underlying science and manufacturing behind organic light-emitting diodes (OLEDs) before commercializing these into the now familiar, dramatic displays in TVs and many other digital devices. But today, as competitive pressures have increased, basic research has essentially disappeared from U.S. companies, leaving them dependent on federally-funded, university-based basic research to fuel innovation. This shift means that federal support of basic research is even more tightly coupled to national economic competitiveness. Moreover, there will always be circumstances when private investment lags—when the innovation creates a public good, such as clean air, for which an investor can't capture the value, or when the risk is too high, such as novel approaches to new antibiotic drugs, or when the technical complexity is so high that there is fundamental uncertainty as to the outcome, such as with quantum computing or fusion energy. For these cases, government funding is the only possible source to spur innovation.

This central role of federal research support means that sudden changes in funding levels such as the recent sequester can disrupt research efforts and cause long term damage, especially to the pipeline of scientific talent on which U.S. research leadership ultimately depends. In a survey of the effects of reduced research funding conducted by the Chronicle of Higher Education last year among 11,000 recipients of NIH and NSF research grants, nearly half have abandoned an area of investigation they considered critical to their lab's mission, and more than three quarters have fired or failed to hire graduate students and research fellows. Other evidence suggests that many of those affected switch careers, leaving basic research behind forever.

Despite these challenges, the potential benefits from expanding basic research summarized in these pages—an innovation dividend that could boost our economy, improve human lives, and strengthen the U.S. strategically—are truly inspiring. We hope you will find the information useful.

□ 1600

What this paper cites, in 2014, notable scientific advancements included landing of a manmade Earth object on a comet, discovery of a new fundamental particle which provided vital information on the origin of the universe, development of the world's fastest supercomputer, and a tremendous increase in plant biology that is discovering new and better ways to make global food requirements.

None of these, however, Mr. Chairman, were U.S.-led. So my amendment turns our attention, again, maybe to the obvious. Maybe if I say Alexander Bell, as we learned as children in school, everybody knew that he created the telephone.

George Washington Carver was associated with the many scientific discoveries out of a single peanut, someone that those of us, in this month of African American History, when they

would teach us African American History, we would all know George Washington Carver, that we had a real role model that was a scientist and that generated probably thousands of scientists, people of African American heritage and beyond.

So I want my amendment to emphasize that we want the long list of innovation to be on our side and to continue the tradition and trajectory that we have had of basic research that then applies to all levels to create opportunities of work and genius that is here in this country.

I ask my colleagues to support my amendment.

I thank Chairman SESSIONS and Ranking Member SLAUGHTER for making three Jackson Lee Amendments in order for consideration under H.R. 3293, the "Scientific Research in the National Interest Act."

My thanks and appreciation to Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member JOHNSON's staff for working with my staff on drafting this amendment.

Jackson Lee Amendment No. 4—adds to the list of goals in the national interest—the conduct of basic research that follow well established protocols and scientific methods.

The scientific method—it is what happens every day and can lead to basic research experiments conducted by scientists.

Basic research is the foundation of tomorrow's innovations.

The Jackson Lee Amendment will help ensure that the nature of basic research is preserved because without basic research the United States will be dependent on others to make and reap the tremendous economic rewards from new discoveries.

Applied science depends on a well-grounded understanding of the basic research that leads to discovery.

I call my colleagues attention to a groundbreaking report by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology entitled "The Future Postponed: Why Declining Investment in Basic Research Threatens a U.S. Innovation Deficit."

For much of our history, the United States' industries took a long term view of research and development and did fundamental research, activities associated with basic research at Bell Labs and Xerox Park.

Today, as competitive pressures have increased, basic research has essentially disappeared from U.S. companies, leaving them dependent upon federally-funded, university-based basic research to fuel innovation.

In 2014, notable scientific advancements included:

1. landing of a man made earth object on a comet;
2. discovery of a new fundamental particle, which provided vital information on the origin of the universe; development of the world's fastest supercomputer; and
3. a tremendous increase in plant biology that is discovering new and better ways to meet global food requirements.

These are wonderful accomplishments, but none of them were U.S. led.

The first two were European in origin and the second two were accomplished by China.

China landed the Jade Rabbit, its first lunar probe on the moon, and on Sunday North

Korea launched a long range rocket that put a satellite into space that flew over the location of the Super Bowl.

The Jackson Lee Amendment is intended to strengthen the nation's commitment to basic research so that the United States remains preeminent in the field of discovery.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, though I do not oppose the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I support this amendment by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), her second amendment that we are accepting on this side of the aisle.

I believe this amendment, in combination with the previous amendment, aims to ensure that the National Science Foundation grants fund research that meets the highest standards so taxpayer dollars are not wasted on frivolous grants or poorly designed research proposals.

This amendment recognizes the National Science Foundation's basic research mission and endorses applying the bill's national interest standards and criteria to National Science Foundation's basic research grants.

I thank the gentlewoman for her amendment, and I support it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman for supporting this amendment, and I thank the ranking member for supporting it.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, let me say that, in addition to following protocol, we must invest funds, money, in basic research.

But I also want to take note of something that I have watched over the years, and I have added amendments, and I have seen the growth.

One of my first acts on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee was to utilize laboratory tools or equipment that were no longer needed by the Federal Government in its national science lab to give them to middle schools and high schools so that they would have access to this kind of equipment. Many of us know that there are schools all throughout America who are deficient in science labs. I see them in my district. I hear about them.

I think the other important point is that, over the years, we have expanded the research collaboration to Historically Black Colleges, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Native American-Serving, rural, and colleges that serve the economically disadvantaged.

Those are good things because we don't know where the genius is America and how many people may come up with outstanding research. So I hope that we do focus on how important basic research is.

I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time. The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MS. DELBENE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in part B of House Report 114-420.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 6, insert " , including computer science and information technology sectors," after "workforce".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Chair, I rise to offer this amendment to ensure the National Science Foundation can continue investing in the development of an American workforce that is globally competitive in computer science and information technology. This has been a bipartisan goal in the past, and I am hopeful everyone in this Chamber will be able to support it.

Computing technology has become an integral part of our lives, transforming our society and our Nation's economy. Nowhere is this clearer than in the Puget Sound region. I have the honor of representing Washington's First District, which has some of the world's leading software companies and technology innovators.

But the same can be seen across the country. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there will be roughly 10 million STEM jobs by 2020 and, of those jobs, half are expected to be in computing and information technology. That is nearly 5 million good-paying jobs. But unless we step up our game, our country won't have enough computer science graduates to fill those positions.

Today, there continues to be a substantial shortage of Americans with the skills needed to fill computing jobs, and too few of our students are being given the opportunity to learn computer science, both at the K-12 level and in college. What is worse, dramatic disparities remain for girls and students of color.

Last year, less than 25 percent of students taking the AP Computer Science exam were girls, while less than 15 percent were African American or Latino.

To remain economically competitive, we need to make smart investments now to address these disparities and ensure we have a strong 21st century

workforce in the decades to come. Thankfully, NSF supports vital research and development projects to help prepare the next generation to compete in STEM jobs, something we all agree is an important goal.

My amendment simply clarifies that, under the legislation, NSF can also invest in projects aimed at developing an American workforce that is globally competitive in computing and information technology, sectors that are seeing enormous growth here at home and around the globe.

If we want our students to be prepared for the digital economy, NSF must be able to fund projects that support the teaching and learning of essential computer science skills like coding, programming, designing, and debugging. My amendment will do just that. It will ensure we are looking forward and preparing students for the college degrees and careers of the future.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I claim time in opposition to the amendment, but I do not oppose it.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I accept the gentlewoman's amendment. It clarifies that it is in the national interest to fund grants that support the development of an American STEM workforce that is globally competitive and that includes computer science and the information technology sectors.

In October, the President signed into law the STEM Education Act, a bill that I introduced with my colleague Ms. ESTY, which expands the definition of STEM to include computer science. This amendment reinforces that new Federal definition of STEM. It is a perfecting amendment to the bill, and I welcome it.

I agree with my colleague that it is in the national interest to support creating training a STEM workforce which includes computer science, and I support her amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. DELBENE. I want to thank the chairman for his support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MS. DELBENE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in part B of House Report 114-420.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 5, after line 3, add the following:

(e) CLARIFICATION.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to impact Federal funding for research grants or cooperative agreements awarded by the National Science Foundation prior to the date of enactment of this Act.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Chair, I rise to offer an important amendment for scientists across the country who are engaged in ongoing research funded by the National Science Foundation.

As everyone in this Chamber knows, research and innovation are central to American competitiveness and driving our national economy. Each year, investments in research through NSF help us push the boundaries of scientific knowledge, support new industries, and address the challenges facing our society.

I don't think anyone would deny that funding for NSF has overwhelmingly benefited our country. It is also key to our country's economic growth. Funding new explorations in science and technology is how we stay on the cutting edge of research; it is how we continue to compete globally in the 21st century economy.

That is why I have serious concerns about the implications of the underlying legislation, which needlessly inserts a layer of political review into the scientific research process. To remain a world leader, we need to ensure scientists are exploring transformative new ideas and frontiers based on the merits of their research, not the subjective opinions of politicians in Congress.

Unfortunately, those subjective opinions are exactly what is being injected into the process under this legislation; and what is worse, it has the potential to put ongoing research at risk. By changing the rules about how NSF funding is awarded, scientists across the country may rightfully be concerned about how this legislation affects the important work that they are doing today.

As someone who started her career in research, I can tell you firsthand it is incredibly important that you have the certainty to see a project through to the end. Starting and stopping research is highly detrimental.

We should provide scientists the long-term visibility to know their ongoing research can be completed without interference from politicians, and that is precisely what my amendment does. My amendment simply clarifies that the underlying legislation does not impact any grant funding that has already been awarded by the NSF. It is critical that we pass it to ensure ongoing research is not disrupted by this unfortunate bill.

Mr. Chairman, research isn't a spigot you can turn on and off. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this commonsense amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, though I do not oppose the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I accept the gentlewoman's amendment. It clarifies that the new requirements in the bill do not apply to grants that have already been awarded by the National Science Foundation. I agree that the bill is not intended to be retroactive.

In January 2015, NSF began to implement new internal guidelines that promote accountability and transparency. These guidelines are compatible with this bill, but the implementation of them is a work in progress. I will continue to communicate with NSF about how they implement their internal guidelines, but agree that this bill will only apply to future grants, once enacted.

So, Mr. Chairman, I support the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. DELBENE. I thank the chairman for his support of the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Texas) having assumed the chair, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3293) to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1645

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro

tempore (Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia) at 4 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2017, COMMON SENSE NUTRITION DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM FEBRUARY 15, 2016, THROUGH FEBRUARY 22, 2016

Mr. BURGESS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-421) on the resolution (H. Res. 611) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2017) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A, and providing for proceedings during the period from February 15, 2016, through February 22, 2016, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 609 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3293.

Will the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BLUM) kindly take the chair.

□ 1647

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3293) to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest, with Mr. BLUM (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, amendment No. 6 printed in part B of House Report 114-420, offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE), had been disposed of.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MS. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON OF TEXAS

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, the unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 181, noes 235, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 68]

AYES—181

Adams	Frankel (FL)	Murphy (FL)
Aguilar	Fudge	Nadler
Ashford	Gabbard	Napolitano
Bass	Galleo	Neal
Beatty	Garamendi	Nolan
Becerra	Graham	Norcross
Bera	Grayson	O'Rourke
Beyer	Green, Al	Pallone
Bishop (GA)	Green, Gene	Pascrell
Blumenauer	Grijalva	Payne
Bonamici	Gutiérrez	Pelosi
Boyle, Brendan F.	Hahn	Perlmutter
Brady (PA)	Hanna	Peters
Brown (FL)	Hastings	Pingree
Brownley (CA)	Heck (WA)	Polis
Butterfield	Higgins	Price (NC)
Capps	Himes	Rangel
Capuano	Hinojosa	Rice (NY)
Cárdenas	Honda	Ros-Lehtinen
Carney	Hoyer	Roybal-Allard
Carson (IN)	Huffman	Ruiz
Cartwright	Israël	Ruppersberger
Castor (FL)	Jackson Lee	Rush
Chu, Judy	Jeffries	Ryan (OH)
Cicilline	Johnson (GA)	Sánchez, Linda T.
Clark (MA)	Johnson, E. B.	Sarbanes
Clarke (NY)	Kaptur	Schakowsky
Clay	Keating	Schiff
Cleaver	Kennedy	Schrader
Clyburn	Kildee	Scott (VA)
Cohen	Kilmer	Scott, David
Connolly	Kind	Serrano
Conyers	Kirkpatrick	Sewell (AL)
Cooper	Kuster	Sherman
Courtney	Langevin	Sires
Crowley	Larsen (WA)	Slaughter
Cuellar	Larson (CT)	Speier
Cummings	Lawrence	Swalwell (CA)
Curbelo (FL)	Lee	Takai
Davis (CA)	Levin	Takano
Davis, Danny	Lewis	Thompson (CA)
DeFazio	Lieu, Ted	Thompson (MS)
DeGette	Loeb sack	Titus
Delaney	Loftgren	Tonko
DeLauro	Lowenthal	Torres
DeBene	Lowe	Tsongas
DeSaulnier	Lujan Grisham	Van Hollen
Deutch	(NM)	Vargas
Dingell	Luján, Ben Ray	Veasey
Doggett	(NM)	Vela
Dold	Lynch	Velázquez
Doyle, Michael F.	Maloney	Vielosky
Edwards	Carolyn	Walz
Ellison	Maloney, Sean	Wasserman
Engel	Matsui	Schultz
Eshoo	McCollum	Waters, Maxine
Esty	McDermott	Watson Coleman
Farr	McGovern	Welch
Fattah	McNerney	Wilson (FL)
Foster	Meeks	Yarmuth
	Meng	
	Moore	
	Moulton	

NOES—235

Abraham	Brooks (IN)	Crawford
Aderholt	Buchanan	Crenshaw
Allen	Buck	Culberson
Amash	Bucshon	Davis, Rodney
Amodei	Burgess	Denham
Babin	Byrne	Dent
Barletta	Calvert	DeSantis
Barr	Carter (GA)	DesJarlais
Barton	Carter (TX)	Diaz-Balart
Benishek	Chabot	Donovan
Bilirakis	Chaffetz	Duffy
Bishop (MI)	Clawson (FL)	Duncan (SC)
Bishop (UT)	Coffman	Duncan (TN)
Black	Cole	Ellmers (NC)
Blackburn	Collins (GA)	Emmer (MN)
Blum	Collins (NY)	Farenthold
Bost	Comstock	Fitzpatrick
Boustany	Conaway	Fleischmann
Brady (TX)	Cook	Fleming
Brat	Costa	Flores
Bridenstine	Costello (PA)	Forbes
Brooks (AL)	Cramer	Fortenberry

Foxx	Lucas	Rooney (FL)
Franks (AZ)	Luetkemeyer	Roskam
Frelinghuysen	Lummis	Ross
Garrett	MacArthur	Rothfus
Gibbs	Marchant	Rouzer
Gibson	Marino	Royce
Gohmert	Massie	Russell
Goodlatte	McCarthy	Salmon
Gosar	McCaul	Sanford
Granger	McClintock	Scalise
Graves (LA)	McHenry	Schweikert
Graves (MO)	McKinley	Scott, Austin
Griffith	McMorris	Sensenbrenner
Grothman	Rodgers	Sessions
Guinta	McSally	Shuster
Guthrie	Meadows	Simpson
Hallone	Meehan	Sinema
Harper	Messer	Smith (MO)
Harris	Mica	Smith (NE)
Hartzler	Miller (FL)	Smith (NJ)
Heck (NV)	Miller (MI)	Smith (TX)
Hensarling	Mooney (WV)	Stefanik
Hice, Jody B.	Moolenaar	Stewart
Hill	Mulvaney	Stivers
Holding	Murphy (PA)	Stutzman
Huelskamp	Neugebauer	Thompson (PA)
Hultgren	Newhouse	Thornberry
Hunter	Noem	Tiberi
Hurd (TX)	Nugent	Tipton
Hurt (VA)	Nunes	Trott
Issa	Olson	Turner
Jenkins (KS)	Palazzo	Upton
Jenkins (WV)	Palmer	Valadao
Johnson (OH)	Paulsen	Wagner
Johnson, Sam	Pearce	Walberg
Jolly	Perry	Walden
Jones	Peterson	Walker
Jordan	Pittenger	Walorski
Joyce	Pitts	Walters, Mimi
Katko	Poe (TX)	Weber (TX)
Kelly (MS)	Poliquin	Webster (FL)
Kelly (PA)	Pompeo	Wenstrup
King (IA)	Posey	Westerman
King (NY)	Price, Tom	Whitfield
Kinzing (IL)	Ratcliffe	Williams
Kline	Reed	Wilson (SC)
Knight	Reichert	Wittman
Labrador	Renacci	Womack
LaHood	Ribble	Woodall
LaMalfa	Rice (SC)	Yoder
Lamborn	Rigell	Yoho
Lance	Roby	Young (AK)
Latta	Roe (TN)	Young (IA)
LoBiondo	Rogers (AL)	Young (IN)
Loftis	Rogers (KY)	Zeldin
Loudermilk	Rohrabacher	Zinke
Love	Rokita	

NOT VOTING—17

Castro (TX)	Hudson	Richmond
Duckworth	Huizenga (MI)	Sanchez, Loretta
Fincher	Kelly (IL)	Shimkus
Gowdy	Lipinski	Smith (WA)
Graves (GA)	Mullin	Westmoreland
Herrera Beutler	Quigley	

□ 1708

Messrs. SENSENBRENNER and NUGENT changed their vote from "aye" to "no."

Messrs. ASHFORD and PETERS changed their vote from "no" to "aye." So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. BOST). There being no further amendment, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia) having assumed the chair, Mr. BOST, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3293) to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that

serves that national interest, and, pursuant to House Resolution 609, he reported the bill back to the House with sundry amendments adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole? If not, the Chair will put them en gros.

The amendments were agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. EDWARDS. I am opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Edwards moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3293 to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendments:

Page 4, line 13, strike "or".

Page 4, line 15, strike the period and insert "or".

Page 4, after line 15, insert the following:

(H) increased understanding of the causes and prevention of gun violence.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill. It will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

H.R. 3293, the deceptively entitled Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, represents an effort by the majority to overrule expert scientists in deciding which scientific grants the Federal scientific agency should fund. What this really translates to, Mr. Speaker, is that these are areas that some politicians do not want to fund because they don't believe in scientists.

Just a week ago, 26-year-old NeShante Davis, a second grade teacher in Fort Washington, and her 2-year-old daughter, Chloe, were gunned down because of child support. We have a gun violence problem in the United States.

According to The American Journal of Medicine, compared to other rich nations, Americans are 25 times more likely to be violently killed with a firearm, 6 times more likely to be accidentally killed with a gun, 8 times more likely to commit suicide using a firearm, and 10 times more likely to die from a gun death overall.

To address this, Americans deserve the facts and Congress needs the

breadth and the data for the epidemic. Using the public health approach, we have reduced smoking among Americans from 43 percent, at the time of the first Surgeon General's report in 1964, to 18 percent.

□ 1715

Since the 1970s, using the public health approach, we have reduced deaths from motor vehicle crashes by more than 70 percent. In 1970, there were over 55,000 deaths from motor vehicle crashes per year. Today there are around 30,000.

So what does the public health approach yield? Well, the essence is this: define the problem, including its magnitude, nature, and distribution in the population; define the cause or risk and protective factors for the problem. What are the characteristics to prevent the problem?

For example, educating people about the risk of guns that come with gun ownership and how to reduce that risk and develop widely implemented programs using proven strategies to prevent the problem, public health can help solve this problem.

At this time, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL), my colleague and cosponsor of the motion.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. I thank the gentlewoman from Maryland for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, on every block in every community across America, people are asking what is the Federal Government doing to keep our community safe from gun violence. They are asking for good reason.

Nearly 11,000 Americans were victims of homicide by firearm in 2014. There was nearly one mass shooting for each day of the year in 2015, according to The New York Times. With these stats, are we doing enough? Can we do more?

Our motion to recommit answers this question by endeavoring to understand the causes of gun violence and learning how we can curb it. As Members of Congress, we have no higher obligation than to protect those we represent.

I urge all Members to live up to that responsibility. Help do all we can to reduce gun violence. Pass this motion to recommit.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, using the public health approach, we have now eradicated smallpox, eliminated polio in most countries, reduced motor vehicle deaths by 70 percent, and reduced smoking rates by over half.

We can do something about gun violence, and we have an obligation to do it today. Just think if we were able to do the same thing to address the gun violence epidemic.

This is a small and yet powerful step with research—just research—that could lead to significantly reducing the number of Americans killed by firearms.

All we want to do is look at the problem. All we want to do is measure the magnitude. All we want to do is find solutions for NeShante Davis, 26 years old, and her 2-year-old daughter, Chloe, gunned down—gunned down.

In every single community across this country, we can do this by enabling the National Science Foundation to just look into the issue and give us some answers so that we can find solutions. We owe it to NeShante. We owe it to Chloe. We owe it to the American people.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to treat this like the epidemic that it is. End gun violence in this country.

I urge my colleagues to support my commonsense motion.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I oppose the motion to recommit.

H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, is a bipartisan bill that ensures the grant process at the National Science Foundation is transparent and accountable to the American people.

America's future economic growth and national security depend on innovation. Public and private investments in research and development fuel the economy, create jobs, and lead to new technologies that benefit Americans' daily lives.

NSF invests about \$6 billion of taxpayers' funds every year on research projects and related activities. Unfortunately, in recent years, the Federal Government has awarded too many grants that few Americans would consider to be in the national interest.

Only one out of five grant proposals are approved. We cannot fund every worthy proposal, much less frivolous ones like \$516,000 to create a video game called "Relive Prom Night."

The legislation before us reaffirms in law that every NSF grant must support research that is in the national interest.

The 1950 enabling legislation that created the NSF set forth the Foundation's mission and cited the national interest as the foundation for public support and dissemination of basic scientific research.

The Science in the National Interest Act reaffirms and restores this crucial mission and requires the NSF grants meet at least one of seven criteria that demonstrate it is in the national interest. This will add transparency, accountability, and credibility to the NSF and its grant process.

Opponents of this bill must think they know better than the NSF Director. Director Cordova testified before

the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee that the policy in H.R. 3293 is “compatible with the NSF’s internal guidelines.” This legislation makes that standard clear, explicit, and permanent.

Scientists still make the decisions. They just do not get a blank check signed by the taxpayer. They need to be accountable to the American people by showing their proposals are in the national interest.

The National Science Foundation has supported and continues to support basic research into the causes and prevention of crime and mass violence. NSF-funded research has included studies of violent impulse behavior, cultural and social factors affecting predisposition to violence, the links between mental disorders and violent behavior, parenting and parental influences over their children’s disposition toward violent behavior, and patterns of crime and violence in American cities.

There is no need for this motion to recommit. In fact, it is an inappropriate earmark. For those reasons, I urge my colleagues to reject the motion to recommit and to support the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit. The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 177, noes 241, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 69]

AYES—177

Adams	Carney	Davis, Danny
Aguilar	Carson (IN)	DeFazio
Ashford	Cartwright	DeGette
Bass	Castor (FL)	Delaney
Beatty	Chu, Judy	DeLauro
Becerra	Cicilline	DeBene
Bera	Clark (MA)	DeSaulnier
Beyer	Clarke (NY)	Deutch
Blumenauer	Clay	Dingell
Bonamici	Cleaver	Doggett
Boyle, Brendan	Clyburn	Doyle, Michael
F.	Cohen	F.
Brady (PA)	Connolly	Edwards
Brown (FL)	Conyers	Ellison
Brownley (CA)	Cooper	Engel
Bustos	Courtney	Eshoo
Butterfield	Crowley	Esty
Capps	Cuellar	Farr
Capuano	Cummings	Fattah
Cárdenas	Davis (CA)	Foster

Frankel (FL)	Lowenthal	Ruppersberger
Fudge	Lowey	Rush
Gabbard	Lujan Grisham	Ryan (OH)
Gallego	(NM)	Sánchez, Linda
Garamendi	Luján, Ben Ray	T.
Graham	(NM)	Sarbanes
Grayson	Lynch	Schakowsky
Green, Al	Maloney,	Schiff
Green, Gene	Carolyn	Scott (VA)
Grijalva	Maloney, Sean	Scott, David
Gutiérrez	Massie	Serrano
Hahn	Matsui	Sewell (AL)
Hastings	McCollum	Sherman
Heck (WA)	McDermott	Sinema
Higgins	McGovern	Sires
Himes	McNerney	Slaughter
Hinojosa	Meeks	Speier
Honda	Meng	Swalwell (CA)
Hoyer	Moore	Takai
Huffman	Moulton	Takano
Israel	Murphy (FL)	Thompson (CA)
Jackson Lee	Nadler	Thompson (MS)
Jeffries	Napolitano	Titus
Johnson (GA)	Neal	Tonko
Johnson, E. B.	Nolan	Torres
Kaptur	Norcross	Tsongas
Keating	O'Rourke	Van Hollen
Kennedy	Pallone	Vargas
Kildee	Pascrell	Veasey
Kilmer	Payne	Vela
Kind	Pelosi	Velázquez
Kirkpatrick	Perlmutter	Visclosky
Kuster	Peters	Walz
Larson (CT)	Pingree	Wasserman
Lawrence	Pocan	Schultz
Lee	Polis	Price (NC)
Levin	Levin	Rangel
Lewis	Lieu, Ted	Rice (NY)
Lipinski	Lipinski	Richmond
Loebach	Loebach	Roybal-Allard
Lofgren	Lofgren	Ruiz

NOES—241

Dent	Jenkins (WV)
DeSantis	Johnson (OH)
DesJarlais	Johnson, Sam
Diaz-Balart	Jolly
Dold	Jones
Donovan	Jordan
Duffy	Joyce
Duncan (SC)	Katko
Duncan (TN)	Kelly (MS)
Ellmers (NC)	Kelly (PA)
Emmer (MN)	King (IA)
Farenthold	King (NY)
Fitzpatrick	Kinzing (IL)
Fleischmann	Kline
Fleming	Knight
Flores	Labrador
Forbes	LaHood
Fortenberry	LaMalfa
Fox	Lamborn
Franks (AZ)	Lance
Frelinghuysen	Langevin
Garrett	Larsen (WA)
Gibbs	Latta
Gibson	LoBiondo
Gohmert	Long
Goodlatte	Loudermilk
Gosar	Love
Granger	Lucas
Graves (LA)	Luetkemeyer
Graves (MO)	Lummis
Griffith	MacArthur
Grothman	Marchant
Guinta	Marino
Guthrie	McCarthy
Hanna	McCaul
Hardy	McClintock
Harper	McHenry
Harris	McKinley
Hartzer	McMorris
Heck (NV)	Rodgers
Hensarling	McSally
Hice, Jody B.	Meadows
Hill	Meehan
Holding	Messer
Huelskamp	Mica
Hultgren	Miller (MI)
Hunter	Moolenaar
Hurd (TX)	Mooney (WV)
Hurt (VA)	Mulvaney
Issa	Murphy (PA)
Jenkins (KS)	Neugebauer

Newhouse	Rokita	Tiberi
Noem	Rooney (FL)	Tipton
Nugent	Ros-Lehtinen	Trott
Nunes	Roskam	Turner
Olson	Ross	Upton
Palazzo	Rothfus	Valadao
Palmer	Rouzer	Wagner
Paulsen	Royce	Walberg
Pearce	Russell	Walden
Perry	Salmon	Walker
Peterson	Sanford	Walorski
Pittenger	Scalise	Walters, Mimi
Pitts	Schrader	Weber (TX)
Poe (TX)	Schweikert	Webster (FL)
Poliquin	Scott, Austin	Wenstrup
Pompeo	Sensenbrenner	Westerman
Posey	Sessions	Whitfield
Price, Tom	Shimkus	Williams
Ratcliffe	Shuster	Wilson (SC)
Reed	Simpson	Wittman
Reichert	Smith (MO)	Womack
Renacci	Smith (NE)	Woodall
Ribble	Smith (NJ)	Yoder
Rice (SC)	Smith (TX)	Yoho
Rigell	Stefanik	Young (AK)
Roby	Stewart	Young (IA)
Roe (TN)	Stivers	Young (IN)
Rogers (AL)	Stutzman	Zeldin
Rogers (KY)	Thompson (PA)	Zinke
Rohrabacher	Thornberry	

NOT VOTING—15

Castro (TX)	Herrera Beutler	Mullin
Duckworth	Hudson	Quigley
Fincher	Huizenga (MI)	Sanchez, Loretta
Gowdy	Kelly (IL)	Smith (WA)
Graves (GA)	Miller (FL)	Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1727

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on roll-call No. 69, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 236, noes 178, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 70]

AYES—236

Abraham	Boustany	Cole
Aderholt	Brady (TX)	Collins (GA)
Allen	Brat	Collins (NY)
Amash	Bridenstine	Comstock
Amodei	Brooks (IN)	Conaway
Ashford	Buchanan	Cook
Babin	Buck	Costa
Barletta	Bucshon	Costello (PA)
Barr	Burgess	Cramer
Barton	Byrne	Crawford
Benishek	Calvert	Crenshaw
Bilirakis	Carter (GA)	Cuellar
Bishop (MI)	Carter (TX)	Culberson
Bishop (UT)	Chabot	Davis, Rodney
Black	Chaffetz	Denham
Blackburn	Clawson (FL)	Dent
Bost	Coffman	DeSantis

DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foss
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline

Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell

Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—178

Adams
Aguilar
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn

Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)

Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kirkpatrick
Kuster

Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler

Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Ros-Lehtinen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)

Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—19

Blum
Brooks (AL)
Castro (TX)
Duckworth
Fincher
Gowdy
Graves (GA)

Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Kelly (IL)
Kind
Massie
Mullin

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas) (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1733

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 70 on H.R. 3293, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I was absent today to attend the funeral of a family member. Had I been present, on rollcall No. 68, I would have voted "no," on rollcall No. 69, I would have voted "no," and on rollcall No. 70, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 68 on the Eddie Bernice Johnson Amendment for consideration of H.R. 3293—Scientific Research in the National Interest Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 69 on the Motion to recommit H.R. 3293—Scientific Research in the National Interest Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 70 on the final passage of H.R. 3293—Scientific Research in the National Interest Act. I am not recorded because I was

absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER FOR A CEREMONY AS PART OF THE COMMEMORATION OF THE DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE OF VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of House Concurrent Resolution 111, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MACARTHUR). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 111

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR HOLOCAUST DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY.

Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used on May 5, 2016, for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust. Physical preparations for the conduct of the ceremony shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

UNITED STATES-JORDAN DEFENSE COOPERATION ACT OF 2015

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 907) to improve defense cooperation between the United States and Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, with the Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) As of January 22, 2015, the United States Government has provided \$3,046,343,000 in assistance to respond to the Syria humanitarian crisis, of which nearly \$467,000,000 has been provided to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

(2) As of January 2015, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, there were 621,937 registered Syrian refugees in Jordan and 83.8 percent of whom lived outside refugee camps.

(3) In 2000, the United States and Jordan signed a free-trade agreement that went into force in 2001.

(4) In 1996, the United States granted Jordan major non-NATO ally status.

(5) Jordan is suffering from the Syrian refugee crisis and the threat of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

(6) The Government of Jordan was elected as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for a 2-year term ending in December 2015.

(7) Enhanced support for defense cooperation with Jordan is important to the national security of the United States, including through creation of a status in law for Jordan similar to the countries in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Japan, Australia, the Republic of Korea, Israel, and New Zealand, with respect to consideration by Congress of foreign military sales to Jordan.

(8) The Colorado National Guard's relationship with the Jordanian military provides a significant benefit to both the United States and Jordan.

(9) Jordanian pilot Moaz al-Kasasbeh was brutally murdered by ISIL.

(10) On February 3, 2015, Secretary of State John Kerry and Jordanian Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh signed a new Memorandum of Understanding that reflects the intention to increase United States assistance to the Government of Jordan from \$660,000,000 to \$1,000,000,000 for each of the years 2015 through 2017.

(11) On December 5, 2014, in an interview on CBS This Morning, Jordanian King Abdullah II stated—

(A) in reference to ISIL, "This is a Muslim problem. We need to take ownership of this. We need to stand up and say what is wrong"; and

(B) "This is our war. This is a war inside Islam. So we have to own up to it. We have to take the lead. We have to start fighting back."

SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It should be the policy of the United States—

(1) to support the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in its response to the Syrian refugee crisis;

(2) to provide necessary assistance to alleviate the domestic burden to provide basic needs for the assimilated Syrian refugees;

(3) to cooperate with Jordan to combat the terrorist threat from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or other terrorist organizations; and

(4) to help secure the border between Jordan and its neighbors Syria and Iraq.

SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) expeditious consideration of certifications of letters of offer to sell defense articles, defense services, design and construction services, and major defense equipment to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan under section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2776(b)) is fully consistent with United States security and foreign policy interests and the objectives of world peace and security;

(2) Congress welcomes the statement of King Abdullah II quoted in section (2)(11); and

(3) it is in the interest of peace and stability for regional members of the Global Coalition to Combat ISIL to continue their commitment to, and increase their involvement in, addressing the threat posed by ISIL.

SEC. 5. ENHANCED DEFENSE COOPERATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—During the 3-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan shall be

treated as if it were a country listed in the provisions of law described in subsection (b) for purposes of applying and administering such provisions of law.

(b) ARMS EXPORT CONTROL ACT.—The provisions of law described in this subsection are—

(1) subsections (b)(2), (d)(2)(B), (d)(3)(A)(i), and (d)(5) of section 3 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2753);

(2) subsections (e)(2)(A), (h)(1)(A), and (h)(2) of section 21 of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2761);

(3) subsections (b)(1), (b)(2), (b)(6), (c), and (d)(2)(A) of section 36 of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2776);

(4) section 62(c)(1) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2796a(c)(1)); and

(5) section 63(a)(2) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2796b(a)(2)).

SEC. 6. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.

Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary of State is authorized to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to increase economic support funds, military cooperation, including joint military exercises, personnel exchanges, support for international peacekeeping missions, and enhanced strategic dialogue.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

JUDICIAL REDRESS ACT OF 2015

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 1428) to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

On page 3, strike line 6 and all that follows through page 4 line 21, and insert:

(d) DESIGNATION OF COVERED COUNTRY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General may, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of Homeland Security, designate a foreign country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, as a "covered country" for purposes of this section if—

(A)(i) the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, has entered into an agreement with the United States that provides for appropriate privacy protections for information shared for the purpose of preventing, investigating, detecting, or prosecuting criminal offenses; or

(ii) the Attorney General has determined that the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organi-

zation, has effectively shared information with the United States for the purpose of preventing, investigating, detecting, or prosecuting criminal offenses and has appropriate privacy protections for such shared information;

(B) the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, permits the transfer of personal data for commercial purposes between the territory of that country or regional economic organization and the territory of the United States, through an agreement with the United States or otherwise; and

(C) the Attorney General has certified that the policies regarding the transfer of personal data for commercial purposes and related actions of the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, do not materially impede the national security interests of the United States.

(2) REMOVAL OF DESIGNATION.—The Attorney General may, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of Homeland Security, revoke the designation of a foreign country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, as a "covered country" if the Attorney General determines that such designated "covered country"—

(A) is not complying with the agreement described under paragraph (1)(A)(i);

(B) no longer meets the requirements for designation under paragraph (1)(A)(ii);

(C) fails to meet the requirements under paragraph (1)(B);

(D) no longer meets the requirements for certification under paragraph (1)(C); or

(E) impedes the transfer of information (for purposes of reporting or preventing unlawful activity) to the United States by a private entity or person.

Mr. GOODLATTE (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the reading be dispensed with.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NO VETERAN DIES ALONE

(Ms. MCSALLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, it has been said that no veteran dies alone. Yesterday, southern Arizona proved that true in an amazing way.

Recently, Sierra Vista resident Sergeant First Class Sidney D. Cochran passed away at the age of 93. He served 20 years in the U.S. Army, serving in both World War II and Korea, but died without any family to attend his funeral. A call went out at the end of last week on social media to encourage anyone to attend his service. Over 300 people came out to show their respects.

The Sierra Vista Herald reported that American Legion Riders escorted Sergeant Cochran to the cemetery,

where members of the Tucson-based Patriot Guard Riders were waiting to greet him. Fort Huachuca's Honor Guard carried him to his final resting place, and an Arizona National Guard helicopter conducted a flyover. The manager of the cemetery remarked that she had never seen a service like that before.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud everyone in my district who took the time to give Sergeant Cochran the honor he deserved. Southern Arizona is unique for so many reasons, and not least of all is the amazing way our community shows appreciation for our veterans and their service.

CYBERSECURITY NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the President announced his Cybersecurity National Action Plan in conjunction with his 2017 budget proposal. This proposal starts with a much-needed investment in Federal cybersecurity: a 35 percent increase in spending anchored by a \$3.1 billion revolving fund designed to kick-start the modernization of outdated government IT systems—something that is sorely needed.

The Action Plan is notable for its emphasis on centralizing Federal cybersecurity, something I have long called for. While the CISO created under the plan does not have all authorities I think the position requires, it is certainly a step in the right direction.

The plan also makes needed investments in workforce development, including the very successful CyberCorps program, and charters a Presidential commission to do more long-range planning in the domain.

I commend the President's effort, which reflects an appropriately strategic adjustment to the breach of Office of Personnel Management systems last year; however, I hope we will leverage this increased attention to address the challenges of tomorrow, not just those of yesterday.

IRAN VIOLATES INTERNATIONAL LAW

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it was a routine exercise, sailing from Kuwait to Bahrain through the Persian Gulf, until, allegedly, the navigation system failed on one of the two U.S. gunboats. Mysteriously, the boats lost communication.

Next, 10 American sailors surrendered and were captured by Iran. They

were led off the boat at gunpoint and held hostage. Iran, unsurprisingly, violated Article 13 of the Geneva Convention by failing to protect our sailors from "insults and public curiosity."

Here is a poster of our sailors surrendering to the small boat of Iranians. The bottom photograph apparently shows arms taken off the two American boats. I assume the Iranians kept those.

Iran's Supreme Leader has awarded victory medals to its navy commanders for capturing the Americans.

International law states that anyone can have innocent passage through a state's territorial waters, as long as it is nonthreatening, continuous, and expeditious.

Iran claimed the Americans were sent to spy. These claims turned out to be delusional. Iran acted without consequences, and the U.S. did not act at all.

Many questions remain. Where was the effective air cover for the Navy? Why did the sailors "give up the ship"? Who gave the order to surrender?

The Navy needs to let the American public know how two American boats were confiscated by the Iranians and why it happened.

And that is just the way it is.

FLINT WATER CRISIS

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, in Michigan, thousands of young children were poisoned because Governor Snyder used a contaminated water source to cut costs. Last year, in my State of New Jersey, over 3,000 children under 6 years old were afflicted with dangerous levels of lead, according to a new report.

Four of the communities I represent in Congress—Irvington, East Orange, Newark, and Jersey City—have dangerous lead levels. At the same time, our runaway Governor continues to roll back protections for clean water.

It is a national disgrace that children in New Jersey, Michigan, and other U.S. States are being poisoned by lead in the year 2016. Many of these children will suffer irreparable harm, never reaching their full potential, because of the neglect and indifference of their leaders.

We have a moral obligation to protect the health and well-being of our communities, especially our children. Let's meet it.

□ 1745

SUPPORTING THE DOLPHINS CANCER CHALLENGE AND SYLVESTER COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge south Floridians to join me at the Dolphins Cancer Challenge on Saturday, February 20.

The Dolphins Cancer Challenge raises money for the University of Miami's Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center to help "tackle cancer"—to the tune of \$11.5 million since its inception in 2010.

This event was inspired by Jim "Mad Dog" Mandich, whom we see pictured here, whom we tragically lost to cancer nearly 5 years ago.

A champion both on and off the field, the "Mad Dog" was a key contributor for the still-perfect and still-peerless, undefeated 1972 Miami Dolphins.

But Jim was perhaps best known and loved for his broadcasting work, where he cheered our own Dolphins with his patented "Alright Miami."

So please ride, run, or walk with me at the Dolphins Cancer Challenge to help support Sylvester's innovative cancer care.

MANMADE DISASTER IN FLINT, MICHIGAN

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my colleagues in decrying this man-made disaster that is affecting the residents in the city of Flint, Michigan.

Every day we learn more about how the Governor and Michigan public officials made decisions that sacrificed the health and futures of the Flint residents in order to save a few dollars. That is just plain wrong. The people of Flint deserve better. We cannot stand silent while Americans, while children, are poisoned.

Flint is a majority African American city, and the average household income is just \$24,834—that is a year—which is barely half of Michigan's average household income. Would the same decisions have been made had this been in an affluent community? I doubt it.

Earlier today, this House passed the bipartisan Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act, but we can and must do more to prevent this from ever happening again.

Our response must be comprehensive and urgent. It is a state of emergency that requires Members of Congress to find all of the Federal resources possible to demonstrate that we are really and truly our brothers' and sisters' keeper.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S FY 2017 BUDGET AND CRUSHING DEBT

(Mr. ROTHFUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, this is the cover of President Obama's last budget proposal. Whether or not the administration intended it, it is a fitting and appropriate cover because it symbolizes the mountain of debt President Obama will leave behind.

His latest budget proposal increases spending by a record-breaking 4.9 percent, or \$2.5 trillion over the next decade. The President's budget leaves our children and grandchildren burdened with an unfathomable mountain of debt, regulations, and taxes; and like every other budget he has presented, it never balances. This budget is reckless and unconscionable.

When President Obama took office on January 20, 2009, the national debt was \$10.6 trillion; yet Mr. Obama has increased the national debt to \$19 trillion, and this budget would increase our national debt to \$27.4 trillion over the next decade—more than twice the debt when he first took office.

This cover will be part of the Archives of the United States. It will be a fitting historical record for the mountains of debt it represents.

DATA COLLECTION

(Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, data collection affects countless Americans and touches many parts of our lives. Data collection is very personal and may include your location, photos, messages, and many of the things that make up who we are; yet we lack basic rights for data collected on mobile devices.

This week, I introduced a pair of bills to safeguard consumer privacy:

H.R. 4517, the APPS Act, will bolster consumer privacy by requiring app developers to maintain privacy policies, obtain consent from consumers before collecting data, and securely maintain the data they collect.

H.R. 4516, the Data Act, would re-create transparency and control for consumers over their personal data and provide consumers with the tools to correct the record and minimize collection.

Privacy is an issue that should unite us, not drive us apart. It is past time for our laws to reflect this reality through commonsense rules for data collection, transparency, and use.

CONGRATULATING PENNSYLVANIA STATE REPRESENTATIVE GENE DIGIROLAMO FOR RECEIVING THE 2016 DR. NATHAN DAVIS AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING GOVERNMENT SERVICE

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate State Representative Gene DiGirolamo, of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, who will be honored this month with the American Medical Association's 2016 Dr. Nathan Davis Award for Outstanding Government Service, which is named for its founder.

Representative DiGirolamo's dedication to the betterment of public health through advocacy and legislative work in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives earned him this prestigious award. He is presently serving in his 11th term in office and third term as chairman of the House Human Services Committee.

Representative DiGirolamo steadfastly continues his advocacy of issues related to drug and alcohol treatment and prevention, physical and intellectual disabilities, and individuals with mental illness. Additionally, he wrote legislation that increased funding for vital rehabilitation centers, while establishing a separate cabinet agency for the important effort that streamlined drug and alcohol treatment services in Pennsylvania.

Representative DiGirolamo has provided leadership to his associates and constituents and set an example for others to follow, and I am honored to call him my friend.

Congratulations, Gene.

PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK BEACH REPLENISHMENT

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week I joined my colleagues—Representative MIKE KELLY from Pennsylvania's Third Congressional District, along with Pennsylvania Senators PAT TOOMEY and BOB CASEY, JR.—in sending a letter to the Assistant Secretary of the Army. In that letter, we requested that Presque Isle State Park remain a high-priority project for the Army Corps of Engineers' budget for the fiscal year 2016.

Presque Isle State Park is located along 7 miles of Lake Erie's shoreline. The park's beaches require proper care and nourishment every single year to fight their constant erosion.

More than 4 million people visit Presque Isle State Park each year, making it Pennsylvania's most visited State park. The park is woven into the social fabric of the region and is a highly important part of northwestern Pennsylvania's economy.

It is my hope that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will continue to support replenishment of this vital resource for the Erie region, preserving these beaches for future generations.

FUTURE FORUM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, we are here for another Future Forum discussion, and tonight our topic is restoring our democracy, campaign finance, and voting rights.

Americans agree, our voting system and our political system is broken, and the integrity of our democracy is at stake.

Future Forum is a House Democratic Caucus group consisting of 17 of our youngest members who have gone across the country to 11 cities, now, talking to young people about their democracy and what they care about.

We were just in Dallas this past Friday, hosted in the Dallas/Fort Worth area by Congressman MARC VEASEY, as well as being joined by Congressman RUBEN GALLEGO of Phoenix.

Today we are following up on what we heard in Dallas and what we have heard in many of the cities before it, which is, for all the issues facing millennials, many of them understand that, at the root of the problem is the influence of outside money in politics and access to the ballot box.

Joining us tonight is one of the leaders in the House on the issue of money and politics, Congressman JOHN SARBANES of Maryland. He is the lead sponsor of the Government By the People Act.

Also we will be joined by Congressman KILMER, from the Seattle area, and Delegate PLASKETT, from the Virgin Islands.

So I am going to first ask Congressman SARBANES this question, which we have heard from so many millennials across the country: What can we do to restore their faith in their government?

I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES).

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me thank the gentleman, Congressman SWALWELL, of the Future Forum, for convening us around issues here in the Chamber and out in the country that are particularly important and critical for the next generation out there, and what we can do to bring their interests in, bring them into the political town square, if you will, and get the benefit of their voices.

The gentleman is absolutely right to point to the challenge, the problem we have. Many young people, many Americans of all ages these days feel that their voice really isn't accounted for here in Washington. Their sense is that there is kind of an insider game being played, that big money and special interests hold particular sway in this place, and the voice of everyday Americans, average citizens, just doesn't have a place.

That has led to cynicism, it has led to anger, it has led to frustration, and

it has led to a lot of people deciding to exit the political arena.

It doesn't mean they are not passionate about things. That is clearly the case. You see a lot of young people who are focused on climate change, on the economy, on jobs, on issues that are important to them. They have just kind of given up that maybe Washington and Congress are the places where important decisions and progress can be made on those issues.

So the challenge for us is: How do we bring people back? How do we get them back into the conversation so we can benefit from what a pluralistic democratic society is all about, which is, you get people in there, you tussle around, you put your views out, you reach a compromise, and then you move forward? That is what progress is all about.

I think one of the critical ways to address this is we have got to look at re-vamping the way we fund campaigns in this country. So the gentleman is right to call attention to that, and we have a lot of leadership here in the House that is focused on what we can do to kind of restore the voices of everyday Americans.

I appreciate your citing the Government By the People Act, which is reform legislation that we have introduced in this Congress. We have almost 160 cosponsors, including, I think, everybody who is going to speak this evening as part of the Future Forum.

The idea there is just to basically go build a different way of funding campaigns that puts everyday citizens back at the center, so they are the linchpin, they are the driver, where small donations can earn matching funds and help to power the campaign of Members of Congress and candidates out there who want to run and become part of this place. There will be a place for candidates to turn to support their campaigns other than to the special interests and the big money crowd.

We can build a system like that that is viable, that puts everyday citizens at the center of it. And I think if we do that, young people and people, frankly, of all ages and stripes are going to decide they want to step back into the political space because they will feel appreciated again, like their voice matters.

□ 1800

So I look forward to the discussion tonight, and I want to thank you for your work on the Future Forum and particularly calling attention tonight to this issue of money and politics, how we address it, and how we bring the voices of everyday citizens back into the mix into the people's House.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. I want to again thank my colleague from the Baltimore area in Maryland.

I want to ask Congressman KILMER. The Future Forum went to Seattle. We

visited college campuses in the Tacoma and Seattle area. We went to a couple of the big businesses in your area with a millennial workforce.

We heard in Tacoma the same thing that we heard when we went to the Manchester, New Hampshire, area and the same thing that we heard in the Dallas area, which is that millennials just think that the system is rigged and there is no reason to participate. The numbers show that. Roughly 22 percent of the eligible millennials showed up to vote in 2014.

What are you hearing in the Seattle area about this issue?

Mr. KILMER. I think that is pretty consistent with what we hear in our neck of the woods. You saw in the last election season two-thirds of Americans cast a no-confidence vote by not voting at all, and those numbers are even worse when it comes to millennial voters.

I think as Mr. SARBANES said, it is not that they don't care, there are a lot of things that they care about. But it is, I think, out of a fair belief that there is too much money, too many deep pockets, and too many special interests that are driving our democracy.

This week Politico came out with a report that the 100 biggest donors of the 2016 cycle have spent \$195 million. That is more than the combined total of 2 million small donors. So I think it is fair to say that millennial voters see that dynamic and believe that their voice is getting drowned out in the process.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. If you look at this chart here, 158 families gave nearly 50 percent of the early 2016 donations. How does that make you feel?

If you are a part of the largest generation America has ever known, 80 million people, the most diverse generation America has ever known, how does it make you feel when 158 families are contributing over 50 percent?

Mr. KILMER. I think it drives the importance of some of the change that we are talking about here tonight. Certainly, the Government By the People Act is a key part of that, trying to get the deep pockets and special interest influence away and actually empower the everyday American and millennial voters.

There are other things we have to do as well. You see this problem exacerbated by the Citizens United decision. Many of us are cosponsors of a constitutional amendment to undo that Supreme Court decision.

You have seen efforts focused on trying to at least shine a bright light on where some of this dark money is coming from. There is a bill called the DISCLOSE Act that at least tries to focus on that issue.

Then the other thing that I have worked on is trying to put the teeth back into the watchdog of our cam-

paign finance system. So, after Watergate, you saw the Federal Election Commission established. That was really meant to be the watchdog to make sure people weren't violating campaign finance law and that they were playing by the rules.

Unfortunately, as time has passed, the Federal Election Commission has almost become as dysfunctional as the United States Congress. The consequence of that is people are playing fast and loose with the rules.

You see the rise of super-PACs and this whole question of coordination, particularly in the Presidential campaigns, and it is a real problem. So we put forward a bill that is called the Restoring Integrity to America's Elections Act. Very simply, it tries to put teeth back into the Federal Election Commission.

So there are all sorts of things that we have got to do on this front to try to reduce the role of money in our politics and to try to restore the people's power back.

Because, if you look at some the extraordinary things that have happened in this country, whether it be the civil rights movement or advances made in environmental protection or any number of things, they have happened when everyday Americans, citizens, are able to take hold of their government and to actually make a difference in their government.

I think each of us is trying to do that, certainly from a policy standpoint. Next week I am doing seven townhall meetings in my district to try to make sure that everyday Americans have a voice in their democracy.

But you look at charts like that and I think it makes it very hard for people to feel any sense of impact and efficacy and feel like their voice is being heard. I think it is an important conversation for us to be having because we need to change that.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Your proposals to have reforms with more teeth are quite popular across the country. I don't know if you knew this, but it has strong support across a cross-section of the electorate.

For example, majorities of Democratic voters, 72 percent women and 84 percent men, support small donor reforms. Independent voters, 60 percent of the women polled and 66 percent of the men polled supported it. Among Republican voters, 57 percent of the women supported it, and 53 percent of the men have supported small donor reforms.

So I want to ask Congressman SARBANES—and then I see we are now joined by Congressman VEASEY as well—how has money and politics also worked to disenfranchise voters? Because Congressman VEASEY and I heard in the Dallas/Fort Worth area about how voting laws that have been put in place have made it actually quite hard

to show up and vote. We heard about the purging of people from the voter rolls.

What is the connection there when you have outside interests drowning out voices, putting in who they want as policymakers, and then the effect on the rules that go into place as far as how we govern our election?

Mr. SARBANES. You can talk about the effect on the rules. You can just also talk about the effect on the enthusiasm for voting, period.

If people are convinced that money calls the shots, then they are going to look at voting as just being asked to come out on election day and decide which of two people to send to Washington to work for somebody else.

Look at the issue of access to the ballot box and protecting access to the ballot box. Last year I had the opportunity with many Members of Congress to go down to Selma with JOHN LEWIS and remember the foot soldiers from 50 years ago who fought for the right to vote.

We talked about protecting access to the ballot box. But just as important is protecting the ballot box' opportunity to get to Washington without being hijacked along the way.

Because that undermines the franchise, too. People bleed and sweat to get to the ballot box. You have to make sure that ballot box is preserved on its way to Washington.

So on one side of the coin, you have the right to vote, which is sacrosanct in our country. On the other side of the coin, you have the right to have your vote mean something. That is where we have to address the undue influence that money has.

Two other real quick points before I yield back.

One is—and this is important, I think, to millennials, young people, and the next generation—this question about what we do with money in politics. It is not just about putting rules in place. Rules are important.

You have got to have disclosure and transparency. You have to have non-coordination rules so the super-PACs can't talk to the candidates. You want to try and get a constitutional amendment to put limits on what the big money players can do. But rules are putting a referee on the field of the democracy to blow the whistle when the big money crowd gets out of hand.

We need the rules, but we also need power. We need to figure out a way to get Americans out of the bleachers and onto the field of their own democracy. That is what small donor matching systems of public financing are all about.

So it is about rules, but it is also about power. I think young people are leaving a lot of power on the table that they can take back to give themselves a voice in their democracy again, and they will be at the center of that kind

of reform. So that is why it is so critical to push forward with all of these different measures.

Then the last thing I just wanted to point out is one of the things that happens is young people want to run for office. They want to get into the game. They want to enter politics. They want to come into the political arena.

But, unfortunately, there is something called the money primary or the green primary where, if you can't find a lot of people that can raise a lot of money for you, then you have no way to be viable as a candidate. So then you don't even put your hat into the ring.

One of the things that will happen if we can create systems of small donor public financing across the country—and we are starting to see that in places like Seattle, Maine, Arizona, Connecticut, New York City, and so forth—is that people who before could never imagine running because they couldn't raise the money because there is a system that can lift them up, they will put their hat in the ring, they will run, they will compete, they will win, and they will serve.

It will change the composition not just of Congress, but of State legislatures all across the country. That is the promise of small donor reform. Then we can bring young people in here. Then we can get the benefit of their wisdom not just as donors and not just as small donors, but as candidates and public servants.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Thank you again, Congressman SARBANES, for your work.

I want to empower young people across America right now, #FutureForum. There is a poll right now: Do you believe Congress should vote to update campaign finance rules? We have had over 100 responses since just posting it. Ninety percent of the people say yes.

Congressman VEASEY, we were in Dallas on Friday. We talked to hundreds of young people about what issues they care about, especially access to the ballot box.

What did you hear in Dallas?

Mr. VEASEY. Absolutely, Representative SWALWELL. I appreciate you taking your time to come out to Dallas/Fort Worth.

All the kids that were there, the college campus, the young professionals that we spoke to, the business leaders that we spoke to, really appreciated the fact that you and others in Congress are leading the effort to engage young people and to engage millennials.

They make up such a large portion of our population. They are going to continue to make up a very large portion of our population. We need to engage them to find out what it is they are thinking.

One of the things that we heard when we were in the metroplex, as we like to

call Dallas/Fort Worth, is that young people feel like voting is not necessarily easy, that some of the barriers that have been put up recently in place have made it a lot harder for young people to exercise their right to vote.

One of the young people that we met talked about the fact that they had missed one election cycle, they went to go and vote, and they found out that they had been suspended from the voter file, that they had been actually purged.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. I remember that woman. How does she feel about that?

Mr. VEASEY. It was very discouraging for her. It makes it seem as if the system is rigged against her, and she didn't understand why that happened. That was really unfortunate.

One of the other things that I am aware of—because I am actually a plaintiff in a lawsuit to roll back the Texas voter ID law—is a lot of our young people, when they go to college, get IDs from their university. At a lot of our State universities, they will get IDs.

These IDs are good if they need to identify themselves to a campus police officer. If they need to be able to use the ID to get on a plane or anything like that, these kids can use these college IDs.

But under the Texas voter ID law, a lot of our young people, if they go back home to vote in their home counties and they show their student ID card—a student ID card, again, that is issued by the State of Texas—they cannot vote. They will be given a provisional ballot. It won't count.

When young people hear things like that, it really discourages them from voting. So we need to do everything we can to engage young people.

One of the things that I hear, Representative SWALWELL, from a lot of young people is that—for instance, the young lady that we met that was purged from the voter roll—if there were same-day registration—actually, same-day registration actually encourages young people to participate in voting.

But a lot of States, like the one that I live in, won't do things like that. They won't take that initiative. They won't take that extra effort to engage young people.

It is no wonder that so many of our young people feel like the system is really rigged against them, that, if they vote, their vote really won't count. It is really, really unfortunate.

I would really think that, in the wake of the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, there is really no better time to assure young voters that they can play a pivotal role in our democracy and to continue to urge them, despite what a lot of States like mine are doing, to really discourage them from voting and discriminate against

them, that they will continue to take part in help shaping America. The best way how you can do that is by voting.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. We talked to a lot of innovative young people in Dallas. If I have learned anything about young people—and I remember being up in Manhattan with Congressman ISRAEL and Congresswoman GRACE MENG.

We were at a district co-workspace. The complaint we often heard there was just about how darn hard it is to get to the polls and why is it on a Tuesday. Why is it so inconvenient.

I want to have Delegate PLASKETT speak to us on voting rights as well, but in a moment I'm going to have STEVE ISRAEL talk to us about weekend elections because people on Twitter right now are asking: Why can't we have votes on the weekend?

Delegate PLASKETT, can you talk to us a little bit just about voting rights with respect to the Virgin Islands, but also what you are hearing among young people.

Ms. PLASKETT. Thank you so much for putting this together for us to be able to speak to the American people and speak to this body about voting rights, its importance, and the difficulties, that many groups are feeling disenfranchised from the voting system.

The Voting Rights Act is probably one of the most important pieces of legislation that this Congress has put forward. It was passed in 1965 to prohibit discrimination in voting.

According to the Department of Justice, the Voting Rights Act itself has been called the single most effective piece of civil rights legislation. That was back in 2009 when they said that.

The Department of Justice has had a history of blocking racial gerrymandering, which was covered in section 4 of the act. In 2006, the Voting Rights Act was reaffirmed by an act of this Congress.

The Senate voted for it 98-0, and the House voted 390-33 in favor of the Voting Rights Act, which lets us know that this is a fundamental right that most Americans believe.

□ 1815

But there are still these barriers that many groups feel. I know, Congressman SWALWELL, you have gone around the country. You have heard from young people, you have heard from poor people, you have heard from those who live in rural areas, the difficulty they have in exercising this fundamental right.

In the Virgin Islands, we are facing an even greater constitutional issue that we are bringing court cases to the United States about. Many years ago, Congress decided that the right to vote was not a fundamental right for people that were living in the territories.

Under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizen Absentee Voting Act, if you

live in the United States in any of the 50 States, if you decide to move to Paris, if you decide to move to Timbuktu, you can still vote. But if you decide that you are going to live in one of the United States territories, you have given up that right to vote for your President in your Federal election. In places like Guam, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, we have the highest veteran rate per capita in the United States. In the Virgin Islands, we have the highest casualty rate per capita of people who have volunteered to serve this country, but cannot vote for their Commander in Chief.

We are bringing case law—and I am part of an effort—to ensure that people who decide to live in the Virgin Islands, who are from the Virgin Islands, can retain that right to exercise their voice in our Federal elections and not something that we are fighting for right now.

This goes along with many of the other what we believe to be historic discrimination that has gone on. There is an enormous amount of racial gerrymandering that is happening in this country. The great Mr. JOHN LEWIS, our colleague, has issued H.R. 12, I believe it is, which is a bill to expand voting rights and the ability for people to vote.

I know that as you go around this country and you speak with people, Representative SWALWELL, you will hear about the difficulties, particularly those people who are discriminated against in many ways, from their ability to vote.

One of the things that I recall writing about when I was in law school was individuals who have been incarcerated and the ability that they no longer have to vote. We know that in the Black community there is a disproportionate amount of our young men and women who are incarcerated and then have lost their right to vote. The difficulties they have reinstating that right and that ability to vote absolutely excludes not only their dignity and their ability to voice their opinions, but they are feeling part of the American Dream, feeling included in this American mission. What message are we saying to them when they need to be reintegrated back into this country and to be productive citizens that they can work, we want them to work, we want them to do everything that they are supposed to do, but they cannot have that fundamental right to vote.

These are the things that I am glad you are speaking about tonight and that you are making the American public available to. I don't know what the Twitter feed is working on right now, but I am hoping that people will tweet about this and will get this word out and will really create an echo chamber of young people, and even

those who are not young, who are concerned about millennials and concerned about the next generation being able to be a part of the American process.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. I thank Delegate PLASKETT. That was so eloquently said.

On Twitter right now under the #futureforum, people are speaking about their democracy and their right to access the polls. Anna Little-Sana tweeted: Election day should be a Federal holiday! Kel tweeted: Elections on Saturdays sounds like the easiest and least controversial solution.

Congressman ISRAEL, what if someone introduced the Weekend Voting Act? Wait, someone has, and he is here.

Mr. ISRAEL. What a coincidence.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Tell us about that.

Mr. ISRAEL. What a coincidence this is.

I want to thank my friend from California for his leadership in the Future Forum, traveling the country, engaging young people and millennials on the critical issue of participating in government. I don't qualify as a millennial.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. It is a mind-set.

Mr. ISRAEL. I am slightly older than most of the audiences that you engage. But I used to be a millennial. I used to be a young person. I grew up in Levittown, New York, on Long Island. I remember going to public school at Gardiners Avenue Elementary School and being taught civics, being taught what it takes to be a good citizen, and what our responsibilities and obligations were.

The principal responsibility and the principal obligation of a good citizen was voting. You could vote to the left, you could vote to the right, but vote. Now we are falling further and further behind on voting because it has become harder and harder.

There is a particular Republican candidate who talks about how we have to make America great again. Do you know what we are not so great at? We are not so great at voting. In fact, we are falling further and further behind the rest of the industrialized world. We are falling further and further behind most democracies in our voting participation.

Why is that well? One reason is because we reserve one day of the year to vote in Federal elections, and that is Tuesday. I don't know if my friend knows—here is a little history quiz, a little pop quiz, to put him on the spot: Why do we vote on that Tuesday? Do you have any idea why we vote on that Tuesday?

Mr. SWALWELL of California. I don't have the slightest clue, no. Why do we?

Mr. ISRAEL. Here is the answer. In 1845, Congress decided that voting day

would be on Tuesday in November. Why? Because at the time we were living in a mostly agrarian society, we were a farm economy, and Sunday was the Lord's day. The polling places were usually in the county seat, so Monday was the day that you traveled to the county seat. You got to your county seat on Tuesday, you cast your vote, you returned on Wednesday, and you farmed on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. That may have made sense in 1845, but it doesn't make the same sense in 2016.

As a result of reserving this one Tuesday as voting day, most Americans report that they didn't vote because they just couldn't vote on Tuesday. Some people have two jobs, three jobs, and they are raising families. As important as it is to be a good citizen and to cast their vote, they are finding it harder and harder.

The solution is very simple. I am going to make another quick comment. The solution is very simple. Allow people to vote on weekends. Designate Saturday and Sunday for voting. You can do it on a Saturday; you can do it on a Sunday. But we ought to designate weekend voting.

There are other democracies in the world, other nations in the world, that have weekend voting, and their voting participation is much higher than ours.

If there is one thing the government should do to make it more convenient for middle class citizens and working families, it is make it more convenient to vote, and we can do that on weekends.

Let me make one other point if I could. I made a decision that I would not run for reelection. My decision was based on a broad range of personal issues and personal considerations, personal desires, to do other things. I have been here for 16 years. It is time to pass the torch.

But I will tell you what. One of the factors was that I could not stand to spend one more day asking one more donor for one more dollar.

We have a system that used to be dysfunctional. Now it is not dysfunctional. It is just beyond broken. It is a system that tells people around the country that their voices are drowned out. There is a sense—particularly among the young people that you have engaged across this country—that the only way you get heard in this place is if you have a super-PAC or a registered lobbyist with you. Most middle class families and most young people can't afford a super-PAC or a registered lobbyist.

I am concerned that we have a majority right now that has made Congress a gated community. We need to bring down those gates. The way to bring down those gates is to pass campaign finance reform; it is to pass the DISCLOSE Act, which Democrats passed when we had the majority, requiring

that people know who are funding elections; that we pass weekend voting so it is easier for people to cast their votes and choose their democracy, so that their democracy is not chosen by literally a few hundred families, by passing something that our colleague, JOHN SARBANES, talked about earlier: citizen-funded elections.

If you want a stake in democracy and if you want to own democracy, you should have a share in that democracy. We ought to be encouraging citizen-funded elections, which are being done in States across the country—Republican states, Democratic States. They are embracing citizen-funded elections. We should be doing the same thing.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. You wrote a New York Times op-ed on this that was very frank, very passionate, and I think, for a lot of people, very disturbing to hear how much time Members of Congress have to spend fundraising.

I just want to ask you as you start your parting tour, which I am very sad to see, but have you met a single colleague in this Chamber on either side—left or right—who told you that they came here because they enjoyed raising money, or that that is the most enjoyable part, or anywhere close to the most enjoyable part of their job?

Mr. ISRAEL. No. In fact, I did write a piece in the New York Times that went viral. I received responses on both sides of this aisle—on both sides—people saying: You are right, we spend too much time in call time. Instead of thinking about issues, instead of thinking about a robust foreign policy that is going to defeat our enemies, we spend too much time trying to figure out a robust fundraising policy to get reelected. Both sides of the aisle said that.

Not one of our colleagues enjoy fundraising. But, in my view, there is only one party who is willing to do something about it. Pass the DISCLOSE Act, support campaign finance reform, demand transparency.

The only way we are going to take this government back and make America great again is to engage voters across the spectrum by lowering the barriers that exist in this place. That is going to require the DISCLOSE Act, citizen-funded elections, greater transparency, and weekend voting.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. That is right. Both sides from my experience acknowledge this problem, but only the majority has the ability to bring this up for a vote on these reforms.

I always have the sense that we can all smell the burning and the smoke in this House, but the fire alarm is on this side of the Chamber. Until our colleagues are willing to pull it and bring these issues to this floor, we are going to see millennials continue to think that the system is rigged. It is not going to be any surprise when they

show up again at 20 to 25 percent at the polls.

In your district in Long Island, young people, what do they think when they see all this money in politics, that they are the largest generation in America, yet 158 families contributed over 50 percent so far in the 2016 Presidential cycle? What do you hear from them as far as whether that makes them want to engage or participate?

Mr. ISRAEL. I am very fortunate because I represent a district in New York that is blessed with universities and colleges. We have a wonderful infrastructure of university and college campuses, and I toured those campuses and heard what you have heard: Congressman, my voice doesn't count. Congressman, why should I vote when it makes no difference? Congressman, why should I get involved in a campaign when my \$20 contribution, or my \$3 contribution, gets drowned out by one billionaire who is writing checks for millions of dollars for the candidate that he supports?

I have said to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, it is bad for all of us when an entire generation gives up on us. That is just bad for democracy. That is bad for trying to accomplish anything.

I have also said—and people understand this, I believe, intuitively—no matter what issue is important to you, no matter what it is—more investments in education or infrastructure or national security or your paycheck or the environment—no matter what it is, it is all rooted in a system that doesn't allow progress on those issues because it is rigged against progress on those issues.

People say: Well, what can we do? What is the one thing we can do to get our voice back? Get this Congress to pass fundamental and meaningful campaign reform and we will make progress on every other issue.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. I will never forget at one of our townhalls when we were in the Boston area. The students were listing their concerns from climate change and the inaction they have seen there, to student loan debt and how it has them in financial quicksand. To my surprise—and then I ended up seeing this on every campus we visited—this particular student said: But, yeah, you are not going to solve any of that because the system is rigged. As long as that is the perception, which we experience as our own reality, we won't see progress on those issues.

We owe it to that generation. It is sad for you to acknowledge that a whole generation is about to give up on us until we change the way that we not only have rules for money and politics, but the way that we govern and represent our constituents, not outside corporate interests.

We have a Future Forum event coming up in Denver. It is going to be in

April, hosted by Congresswoman DeGETTE and Congressman POLIS.

I will give you, Congressman ISRAEL, the last word on this evening's Future Forum focusing on voting rights and campaign financial reform.

□ 1830

Mr. ISRAEL. Again, I thank the gentleman so much for his leadership.

If you would allow an aging 57-year-old to attend the Future Forum meetings, I would be happy to do so. I will bring my crutch, my cane, and all of the other things that I need.

On a serious note, I really do want to commend you for the work that you are doing, for the engagement. Through this engagement, you are giving people hope. You are letting people know that there are people who are listening to them. You go to those events without a super-PAC. You go to those events without billionaire donors. You are representing the best that the grassroots has to offer. I want to thank you for that.

Leave people with a sense of hope. For as long as we are talking on this floor about these issues, there is hope that something will be done on this floor on these issues, and the middle class and young people and millennials will make progress again.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

AMERICA'S MANDATORY AND DISCRETIONARY SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, we are actually doing something a little different tonight. We have brought about 15 to 20—what we will call—boards. If we were in a more electronic age, they would be PowerPoints.

We will have a couple of our brothers and sisters here, hopefully, from the Republican side to help us walk through some of these numbers and what they actually mean. We want to talk about what is really going on fiscally, mathwise. I am sure it was riveting reading for Members of this body; but 3 weeks ago, on a Wednesday—so 3 weeks ago today—the CBO issued a new report. When you go through the numbers of the reality of what is going on, it is devastating.

The reality is that, unless this body engages in activities and policy and we have a President who is willing to work with us who dramatically improves economic growth and not just for a year but for the next couple of decades, there is not enough revenue to cover the entitlement promises we have made. I know that is sort of inflam-

matory to say, but we are going to actually walk through a series of the boards and sort of explain what is really going on.

For someone who is actually out there who may have an interest in understanding what is happening, this is the CBO report from 3 weeks ago. What makes this one so different from any other report that has happened is that we have two major entitlement programs that run out of money—that go bankrupt—within the 10-year window.

For years, you would see people walk up to these microphones and say: A decade or two from now, such and such is going to happen—30 years, 25 years from now. It is no longer decades. It is now. We are going to show you a couple of portions of the data where, in 20 months, Social Security itself goes negative, meaning the interest income that we pay ourselves—and we pay ourselves 3.1 percent in interest income from the money that the general fund has reached over and taken out of the Social Security trust fund, and the tax revenues from Social Security do not cover the money going out the door. This was not supposed to happen.

When I first got here 5 years ago, it was a decade away. Then, in some of the reports, it was 5 years. Now it is 20 months away.

We need to understand, when we talk about the desperate need for economic growth, it is jobs; it is people's futures; it is their retirements; it is also the ability to support and pay for and finance the promises this government has made—the earned benefits and—let's face it—some of the unearned benefits that are out there and our ability to pay for them. So let's actually walk through some of the boards and sort of explain where we are. This is really, really important, and you are going to hear me say that over and over as we do this.

This is the 2016 budget as we have it today. Do you see what is in blue—that bluish purple? That is what we call mandatory spending. That is Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, interest on the debt, veterans' benefits, ObamaCare—the new healthcare law—and a handful of other poverty support programs, but it is mandatory. It is all formula driven. You will notice it is 70 percent of our spending in the fiscal year we are in—this year. The red—that 30 percent—is what we call discretionary. That is what we get to vote on around here. Half of that discretionary is defense. When you hear politicians or public policy analysts or budget analysts talk, if they are not talking about the mandatory spending, they are missing, basically, three-quarters of our spending. Understand its rate of growth is squeezing out everything else.

If you are someone out there who cares about healthcare research or education or the parks, the resources for

those activities in this government are shrinking and shrinking and getting squeezed and getting squeezed, and it is because of the movement of mandatory spending.

We have this thing called baby boomers. The fact of the matter is that baby boomers began to retire about 3 years ago, and there are about—what?—76 million of them who will retire in an 18-year period, and they do consume tremendous amounts of resources that we have failed to set aside for their futures.

Mr. Speaker, I just changed the boards. As we continue, the board that is up right now, for those folks who would be interested, is actually where the money is going today. My friend from Pennsylvania and I are going to talk through some of the mechanics here; but Social Security today is 22 percent of the spending; Medicare is 17; Medicaid is nine; other spending—that would be Section 8, SNAP, and other things that are mandatory spending that are in the formula—is another 17 percent.

Mr. PERRY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend from Arizona.

When I start my townhall meetings, I always start with our fiscal situation because people ask me—and I imagine it is the same in your district—what is wrong with you people in Washington? Why can't you get along? What is all the bickering about? That slide is instructive because I explain to them that nearly 70 percent of the budget we don't discuss at all, and it keeps getting smaller—the things that they kind of associate with the Federal Government—because, in their minds, these other things, the things you talked about—Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, care for our veterans, the ACA—all just happens automatically, and they think about—oh, I don't know—the IRS, the Park Service, the military. I keep telling them that it gets smaller, and so we squabble more over this diminishing pie.

I just need you to clarify something. So you say it is formula driven. That makes sense to you, and it makes sense to me.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Yes.

Mr. PERRY. But can you make that easy for a layman?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. You and I have both had this experience because we talked about it earlier. You get asked at our townhalls and at other gatherings: Why do you fight with each other? It is like other families—it is about the money.

When I stand here and say it is formula driven, what happens is, when you turn 65, you are eligible for certain earned benefits. When you turn 67, there are certain earned benefits. If

you fall below a certain income, there are certain things you can receive. They are based on a formula whether it be your age, whether it be your income, whether it be your military service. That formula becomes sort of sacrosanct around here, and there is an inability to say, if we do these tweaks, we can preserve this benefit for future generations or even, as you are going to see in some of these numbers—and I don't know if you have had this experience in your townhalls where the political class before us used to say, "This is for your grandkids." Then, after a few years, it was for your kids—and now?

Mr. PERRY. It is for my mother, who is already on Social Security, and it is definitely for me and for anybody who thinks he may collect Social Security, understanding that, when we say "entitlements," that is not meant to be you are entitled to it. Do you know why you are entitled to it?—because the government forced you to pay into it. They forced you to invest when it comes to Social Security, right? They forced you to invest. It might not be a good investment, but you must invest. It is important, and I think you are going to talk about this a little bit in the future of how that investment is going.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. As we do this, we probably should make the distinction between an earned benefit and an entitlement and those, but, for right now, we are going to somewhat refer to them as "mandatory spending."

Mr. PERRY. Sure.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. We could actually break down all of the programs, but this is already a little geeky as it is because we are going to be talking about numbers that are in the billions and trillions, and people's eyes glaze over when you talk about that. It means zeros. Yet what is really, really important here is understanding the pattern of what is going on and how quickly these numbers are eroding.

One of the reasons for this board here is, as we talk about this Congressional Budget Office report, some of the erosion in our fiscal situation is because of our lack of economic growth and of our failure to reform, repair, preserve a lot of these very programs we are talking about.

There is this slide here. This is 2026. Understand, in 9 years, mandatory spending, earned benefits, and other types of entitlements are going to have increased over those 9 years 83 percent in spending. What you and I get to vote on of military and other discretionary—the Park Service, the EPA, education, health, medical research—that will have grown 22 percent. That is over 10 years. So think of this. What we would consider discretionary will grow about what we expect inflation to be, and that is how it has been budgeted. It is meant to basically be flat on

purchasing power but where the entitlements grow dramatically.

Mr. PERRY. Because of the formula.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Formula and—we have to be brutally honest—demonstrations.

Mr. PERRY. Right, and the population growth for those people who will be receiving benefits.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Yes.

Look, this isn't a sinister plot. I can remember, back in 1981 or in 1982, sitting in a statistics class, and the professor at that time was actually showing how much money had to be set aside because the baby boomers eventually were going to turn 65. Though, as you have found here in Congress, it is almost as if we have just recently discovered that.

Mr. PERRY. We have a tendency in Congress—quite honestly, we have a tendency as Americans—with our domestic and foreign policy, to just pretend that these things aren't happening.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Yes.

There are a number of times you and I have folks who come to our offices or to our townhalls who have great ideas, and they desperately want some more resources for this research project or for this activity or for this infrastructure or for this and that. You try to explain—okay—this board here talks about the next 9 years; so from this budget year—where we are right now working on the 2017 budget—for the next 9 years. I know that seems like a long time, but the average over that time—76 percent of all of the spending, three-quarters of all of the spending—is going to be in those mandatory: the formula, the entitlements, the earned benefits. Only 24 percent of the spending is going to be in the military or in other activities of government.

As we go back to make that circle again, why do we fuss with each other around here? It is about the money when you have someone standing in front of you and he is not talking about the need to do two things. Now, they are big things. One is to dramatically adopt policy that grows the economy. We are not going to make it under this current growth rate. This Obama economy is just killing us. Number two, we are going to have to be honest about the benefits that we provide and the formulas underlying them. There may be some creative things we can do, but as the political class, we have got to stop being terrified to talk about it.

Mr. PERRY. What are the consequences of not doing that?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Oh, we are going to get to that slide.

Do you plan to live more than 9 years?

Mr. PERRY. I sure hope so. My kids hope so.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. You are incredibly fit. Understand, I am going to

show you some slides under the new projections by the CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, that came out 3 weeks ago.

□ 1845

Mr. Speaker, Social Security, the trust fund has about 14 years, but Medicare part A is gone in about 9 years. You are going to see Social Security disability may have only about 58 months, and that trust fund is gone again. So understand how fast these things are eroding.

Look, we are going through a lot of data and a lot of slides. I know you and I and a couple of other Members, we are going to be putting this deck of slides on our Web sites. For anyone that is actually interested in the fiscal sanity and health of this country, this is the ability to take a look at them, analyze them, give us suggestions, and give us creativity.

This one right here, so, in 2026, think of this: only 22 percent of the spending will be in what you and I get to vote on. Half of that is going to be defense; half of that is going to be nondefense.

Oh, and by the way, the one good thing I can tell you about we are getting from the slow-growth economy right now is we have reprojected our interest rate. Because if I had shown this slide a few months ago, we were expecting trillion-dollars-plus interest. Now, we only expect a much lower mean interest rate 9 years from now. So only 12 percent of our spending will be interest coverage.

Think of that. Interest will be greater than defense in 9 years. Interest will be greater than all discretionary spending in 9 years—and substantially so. So the growth you are going to see here is functionally in Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, interest on the debt, and some of the other programs. This is where we are at.

You try having a conversation with our constituents and say these are big numbers, they are huge programs. You have got to move away from some of the political folklore.

We should actually, as we go through these—because I have a couple of spots. How many times have you been at your townhall meeting and someone raises their hand? Some of the suggestions they have to save money are wonderful, but they are tiny.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. They want to cut something.

Why do you spend money on—I don't know. They call them Obama funds. Or why do you spend money on foreign aid? If we just cut that, we don't have to pay for people to hate us. They will hate us for free. It all sounds all well and good, except you can cut all that completely and—I think you will show at some point—it won't make a dent. It won't even begin to make a dent.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, those of us on the right who are more conservative—we have our folks who are guilty of this, and, heaven knows, I see it from our friends on the left—where we hold up a shiny object and pretend like this would take care of this fiscal cliff that is no longer very far in the future. It is here. We say, oh, if we would just adjust this on foreign aid, we would be fine. Anyone who says something like that, they don't own a calculator.

So the slide next to us right now—and the gentleman and I were working on this earlier today. I thank the gentleman and his staff for their willingness to sit there and, shall we say, geek out with calculators, budgets, and actuarial tables.

One of the things that has happened—about every 3 months, I do one of these presentations. If someone were ever to go back a few years when we did the very first one, parts of these numbers have actually gotten much worse. Even though we are supposedly out of the recession and we are supposed to be in a healthier economy, as we keep being told from the other side, the fiscal, the financial shape of the country is worse.

How is that possible?

Mr. Speaker, I am going to make the argument that when we do examine what we were telling folks our financial situation was in the future, it is actually much worse. In 2011 we said, hey, when we finally get to that year 2016, we are going to have 3.3 percent GDP. Then we had a couple of crazy ones that said, in 2012 and '13, you are going to be at 4½ or 4.4 percent GDP growth. You are going to be blowing the wheels off.

Then in 2014, it started to come down. Well, you are going to be at 3.4 percent GDP growth. The problem is that the latest update on our numbers, we are down to 2.3 percent GDP growth. So we are half of what we were telling the public we were going to have just a couple of years ago.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. More importantly, for this illustration, it is as important that we were telling the public—because the CBO projection told us that it was going to be 4.5, 4.4, but we were basing all our estimates on those numbers. We are basing our estimates on those numbers, and those numbers turned out to be true to the point that it is not even 2.3. It is more like 2.1, currently. It is even less than that.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. As you know, the first quarter of this budget year—because budget years aren't the same as calendar years—came in at 0.7. So we didn't even make a full percentage point of gross domestic product growth.

Once again, this is geeky and people's eyes are glazing over. Why this is im-

portant is because that economic growth is what helps create the jobs and the trade and the velocity in the economy, and that velocity ends up creating the tax revenues and the revenues that get paid into Medicare, get paid into Social Security, help us pay and cover our promises.

What happens if you keep saying the check is out the door but you don't have the revenues? That is why it is important to pay attention to what we do in tax policy over this coming year, what we do in regulatory policy over this coming year, when we start to take on those factors that grow the economy.

I would think this would be both our friends from the left, who thought somehow we could regulate ourselves into prosperity, would see the folly of their policies and see it in the numbers and be willing to come our direction. Because do they care about saving Social Security? Do they care about saving Medicare? Do they care about saving Social Security disability? If they truly care, we have got to do something about economic growth.

I want to switch up a couple of the boards and just sort of walk through some of the different numbers here and have this make more sense. Do you have the table that actually shows the change from 2022 to 2018?

Remember, the last board I was showing you that was talking about, hey, here is what happens when we miss all these GDP numbers? This is why, on occasion, I desperately wish more of our brothers and sisters around this body would grab a CBO like this and actually read it and highlight it and pull out their calculators and look at it again. Yes, you are going to fall asleep two or three times when you do it, but you will understand how incredibly important some of the policy sets are we are making here.

This was just from when the trust funds' actuaries did their report this last summer. We will just go down to the bottom line because that is the punch line.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, would the gentleman from Arizona confirm for the audience or explain what OASI and DI mean?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. When you see something that says OASI, that means "Old Age, Survivors Insurance." That is Social Security. That is Social Security.

DI, think of it is as Social Security disability.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. You lose your job from unemployment, but you get hurt and you can't work?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. A permanent injury that changes your ability to support yourself.

As you know, this last fall, fall of 2015, it was to be out of money right now.

We bailed it out, but we bailed it out in a fairly dodgy fashion. Let's be brutally honest. We reached over into big Social Security, took \$114 billion and handed it over here. All we bought was 5 years of fiscal survivability.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. So you took \$114 billion out of OASI, which is the big Social Security?

We took it out of that and put it into disability insurance because disability was going to be bankrupt while we stand here today?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Right. Right now.

My calculations are we shortened the life of Social Security's trust fund by about 13 months when we did that. I don't think you voted for it. I don't think I did. I know I didn't. Now we have to deal with the realities of what that meant.

As we were looking before, what happens when you are not achieving the economic growth that is required? All of a sudden, you see numbers like this. And this is stunning. When you are talking about a huge trust fund, this should not be happening.

This is to give you a sense of how dramatic the problem is out there in this economy. I know we are happy talking. It is an election year and President Obama needs to sort of tell a story of how wonderful it is, but it isn't showing up on the map.

So this last August, the trustees of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security—they all do their individual reports. The Social Security trustee said interest income and tax revenues would cover the payments going out the door on Social Security until 2022, except for the small problem of, somehow between August and 3 weeks ago when we got this new updated report, it is down to 2018. Now, all of a sudden, Social Security goes negative, meaning it doesn't have enough revenues to cover its obligations.

So the way we were doing the math is, in 20 to 22 months, Social Security is going to have to start reaching over and cash in some of its bonds. We pay ourselves 3.1 percent interest in the washing machine where the general fund has reached over to the Social Security trust fund, taken the money, and loaned it to our debt.

This is devastating. If any of you have ever been in business or finance, when you start to use up principal, you are in real trouble.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. So we lost 4 years. What caused losing 4 years?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. It is a combination of economy, growth rate, reaching over and taking \$114 billion out to

shore up Social Security disability, and our recalculation of what future GDP is.

Just for the fun of it, can I talk my friend from South Carolina into joining us, A, because it is always entertaining when you get behind a microphone, and, B, you have no hesitation to correct me when I get math wrong.

I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. MULVANEY. Well, anything for fun, Mr. SCHWEIKERT.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from South Carolina and I have talked about these charts before, and the reality of this should terrify people how fast these numbers are eroding. Where is the conversation? Why isn't it a headline? Why isn't it on business news every night?

If I came to you and said you just lost 4 years of actuarial soundness on a trust fund that today is \$2.8 trillion, you have got to understand the scale we are talking about.

I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. MULVANEY. The real frustrating thing about it, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, is that the demographic group that you would hope would be engaged in this topic isn't. When you go home and you and I and Mr. PERRY talk to our folks back home, who is most interested in Social Security? The folks who are already at or near retirement.

You have got another graph, by the way, that shows who really should be interested in this because you have got the first year outgoing exceeds income, including interest. On another graph, you show when the trust fund goes to zero for Social Security.

The last time I had the CBO run the numbers, it was roughly 2032. In fact, it was July of 2032. Why do I remember this? It is the month that I turn 65 years old. It should be our generation. It should be the people in their thirties, forties, and fifties who are demanding that we make this a topic of conversation, and they don't.

They are not demanding it right now in the Presidential election. They are not demanding it in their congressional elections. They are more concerned about other things that I get the importance, as Mr. PERRY does, of national defense and immigration. I get all that.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. How do you and I and Mr. PERRY help the public understand these numbers in the background are driving much of our policy here, much of the fussing here, but yet it is not part of the Presidential campaign, and this is no longer about your grandkids? This no longer about your kids. It is about you retire—you turn 65 in what year?

I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. MULVANEY. 2032.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. You will be happy to know that my math is Social Security will have been emptied out 2 years before you retire. I mean, it is 14 years from now. So these are just critical.

I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. MULVANEY. Yet it is not our generation. It is Mr. BUCK's generation, the gentleman from Colorado, the older generation, the next generation who is paying closer attention to it.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I am not going there.

Let's walk through a couple of the other trust funds because I know this is really exciting, but this is important. This is the 10,000-pound gorilla in the room. So often those of us, as Members of Congress, we get behind these microphones and we do the shiny object type of discussion.

This is it. This is going to decide what our military capability is because it is what we can afford. This is going to decide what money we have for medical research and education. This is it. These numbers are incredibly important. If this doesn't drive us this year to start moving forward on tax reform, on regulatory reform, things that will start to kick-start economic growth, these numbers are devastating.

□ 1900

Let's do a little quick discussion about Medicare part A. If I came to you right now and said: "Hey, what was so devastating in this Congressional Budget Office report? What should have scared you out of your mind?", in here it basically for the very first time said one of the major trust funds is out of money in the 10-year window.

Mr. PERRY. Ten years.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Look at this. If you plan to be around 9 years from now, Medicare part A, what covers your hospital, those types of section in Medicare, it is gone. The trust fund is gone.

So all of a sudden now are we willing to do what Speaker RYAN has talked about for years, premium support, some way to reform the way we price and cost and the benefits we receive and how we allocate them and price theory, you know, sort of thinking like an economist, but things that make sure you get your earned benefit, but we also make it sustainable?

It is no longer a theoretical conversation for decades from now. It is in 9 years. So if you plan to live for 9 more years, understand, Medicare part A, the trust fund, is gone.

In our calculations in our office, it could be 30 percent cut in what is able to be paid out. How many medical professionals are willing to see you when you come in and say that you need your cataract done, you need a heart valve, you need this and, oh, by the way, the hospital is only going to be

paid 30 percent less what it gets today? Are they still going to see you? Do you understand the wall we are going to be putting our seniors in? This happens in 9 years.

How many Presidential candidates have you seen or heard talk about this?

Mr. PERRY. I haven't seen any talk about that.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. So now let's talk about the other trust fund that was in the Congressional Budget Office report, something we shored up this last fall. You remember how we did it? We reached over and grabbed \$114 billion out of Social Security, old-age survivors, and moved it over to Social Security disability.

In the discussions around here, people were happy. They were applauding. I thought we had fixed it for years. Remember there were going to be some reforms and some of these things? Well, these numbers are with the reforms and with the money, and it is gone in 58 months.

MICK, I am going to make you stand up again because you were one of the most articulate in talking about the scale of reforms we had. Both were just, in the modern economy, were there ways we could help our brothers and sisters who are on Social Security disability move back into at least some economic participation and not have them hit a cliff where all of a sudden their benefits are cut off.

It might cost us a little bit for a couple years, but in the future it would become more sustainable. We didn't do it. Now we are back on the treadmill again.

Mr. MULVANEY. I have got a question for you. While we are preparing that question, if the young man could put up the previous graph below, that one that shows the status of the Medicare trust fund.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. It is stunning to think, in 9 years, Social Security disability—

Mr. MULVANEY. Put them so we can see both of them at the same time, please.

That is stunning. So between 2021 and 2025, we are going to have the Social Security disability fund go broke—

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Yes.

Mr. MULVANEY. And Medicare part A go broke.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Correct.

Mr. MULVANEY. Last time we fixed the Social Security disability—I am making the air quotations when I say fixed disability—by robbing from old-age retirement.

Where are we going to rob from the next time when we have both Medicare and Social Security disability going bust within a couple of months of each other?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Look, the ultimate driver for all of these trust funds, for everything around us, would be incredibly robust economic growth. Math problem.

Mr. MULVANEY. What are the assumptions on this, by the way?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Oh, no. We are working on those tables because it turns out to be much more complicated. A couple years ago, when we were pretending we would hit 2016 and be at 4½ percent GDP growth, if you hit that number and could hold it, we were going to be okay.

Mr. MULVANEY. How many times, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, have we held 4½ percent growth for, say, a decade?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. I don't think it has ever been done, ever.

Mr. MULVANEY. I think that is a fair assumption.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. In this environment, in the fourth quarter of last year, which is the first quarter of our fiscal year, we were at, what, 0.7?

Mr. MULVANEY. As this year stands, it looks like now, when they revise the last quarter's numbers, which they will do here shortly, 2015 will be the tenth year in a row without 3 percent growth in the American economy.

If that turns out to be the case and we go 10 years without 3 percent growth during any of that decade, it will be the first time in the history of the Nation that that has happened.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. And then you try to have the conversation with our friends from the left saying: You don't think the regulatory state affects us? You don't think raising taxes has slowed down the economy?

There is some actual great literature—and we are working on it for a future presentation—that says, for the tax hikes that the President demanded a couple years ago that this body did, for every dollar of new revenues that came in, a dollar was lost in economic growth.

It got us nothing. It basically slowed down our economic growth into the future, ultimately costing us billions. In a couple of these programs, if you really lay it out over 30 years, it could be in the trillions.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. SCHWEIKERT, I see you brought up the graph for the Social Security trust fund. Have you explained what the nature of the trust fund is?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. No, I haven't. I may let you do that. Let me just pitch what this one means.

In 2011, when I first got here and I started this project in our office, we actually set up a little team in our office we call the ideas shop. We actually grind out these numbers all the time, and we watch them like a hawk.

We actually do something fun. When the trustee reports come out, we sit there with our yellow highlighters and read them as a group. The amazing thing is I have almost no staff turnover, which I can't figure out why they stay.

I hear some of my staff laughing in the background.

Mr. MULVANEY. No. That is us, actually.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. In 2011, this was the chart. I just want you to look. What is the direction? The trust fund was supposed to grow and grow and grow up until 2021.

There was going to be more money there every year. This is what we were telling ourselves, telling the public, telling the financial markets just 5 years ago.

Now take a look when we look at the new budget projection. And understand we went from saying these trust funds are going to grow.

So when you and I first got here, I think the Social Security trust fund was supposed to survive to 2038, and now we have taken 8 or 9 years off that. This is the new number that just came out in the report, that, in 22 months, it starts to go negative and we start to dip into the principal balance.

In 14 years—and you will see that in the next chart because in the next one I take it beyond the 10-year projection because we had to do our own calculations for the final 4 because they only give you 10 years when they do the projections—in 14 years, the trust fund is gone.

Look, I know you have talked about how the trust fund works.

Mr. MULVANEY. Yeah. The trust fund is actually fairly simple. A lot of people think that it doesn't exist. They think it is a myth. It is real.

What it represents is the accumulated excess collections that Social Security has made over the years. I tell people that the last time we really had a major overhaul of Social Security was back in the 1980s.

Ever since then, we have taken more money in every month in Social Security taxes, FICA, than we have paid out in benefits.

So if you take \$100 in in a particular month and only spend \$80, you have \$20 left over. That is the money that goes into the trust fund. It is essentially a savings account.

Now, when people say, oh, it doesn't really exist, you have stolen money from it, and it is not there, that is not true. You can't keep \$20, real paper money, in an account someplace, in a desk. That would be foolish.

What we do is we invest in the only thing the Social Security Administration is allowed to invest in, which is U.S. treasuries. There is actually in excess of \$2 trillion in the trust fund.

The trust fund exists. It is in a drawer in West Virginia in a building named after Senator Byrd, as most of the buildings are in West Virginia. It is full of treasuries.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Actually, General Perry and I were talking about that. You don't mind me calling you that, do you?

Mr. PERRY. Carry on.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Our official military expert. It was helicopters, wasn't it?

Mr. PERRY. Indeed.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. We were talking about earlier that my calculations are that, as of right now today, it is a little under \$2.8 trillion of special Treasury notes that have been given from the Treasury to the Social Security trust fund because that cash has been moved over here.

And the revenues that go into Social Security are a combination of the FICA taxes. And would you believe we pay ourselves 3.1 percent interest?

Mr. MULVANEY. Wow.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. It took us a while to find that number.

Mr. MULVANEY. Do we actually pay that or we assume that?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. No. No. Technically, we are paying ourselves. So that is part of the revenue into Social Security right now and the Medicare trust fund and all the three big trust funds. We are paying ourselves 3.1 percent, which is actually greater than a 10-year T-bill substantially.

Mr. MULVANEY. That is a great investment right now. Yeah.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. So we are actually paying ourselves a SPIF, and we are still burning through our cash. That is why this board is up, to show you how devastatingly different the number is from just this last August, how fast the numbers have moved.

But even if we go back to 2011, when we were doing these floor presentations, we thought we were talking 2038. You would have been 65-plus for a few years.

Mr. MULVANEY. Could have been at Mr. BUCK's age.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Yeah. I am not going there.

Sorry to the Speaker. We don't mean to be teasing you. Well, actually, we do. We are just afraid of it.

But this is really important. So if there is someone out there, whether you are on the right or the left, and you actually care about getting your earned benefits, you need to start demanding your elected officials to take it seriously.

Number one is: What are you going to do to get this economy to grow? Because that becomes the most powerful thing to fix these numbers.

These numbers are rotten and horrible because now we are projecting long-term GDP around 2.2, 2.5. When you start looking at numbers in there, it doesn't work. The math just doesn't work for us.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. SCHWEIKERT, there is an ad campaign on television right now that speaks to this. I think it was on during the Super Bowl.

It shows a very dramatic bridge scene and the bridge slowly fades into decay, and it says: This is what will happen to our economy. This is what will happen to our infrastructure because of entitlement spending.

Some folks don't like that term, but we use it here for Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and so forth.

It says: Demand of the Presidential candidates what their plan is to solve this problem. Call or write your Member of Congress and demand what their plan is.

I have gotten one call. Have you gotten any?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Oh, it is amazing.

Mr. MULVANEY. How many people have called your office to say: Mr. SCHWEIKERT, what is your plan for fixing this?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. I think it is zero. And I have actually had this experience and I think Mr. PERRY, my friend from Pennsylvania, had this experience where we have held budget townhalls and we have held well over a hundred in our district over the last couple years.

We walk through the numbers and then have a discussion about it. I have had an individual go to the microphone and basically use a curse word and then say: I don't care about my grandkids. I want every dime.

Part of the audience laughed. Part of the audience was terrified.

Maybe that was a more interesting discussion when it really was about your great-grandkids or your grandkids or your kids.

You have to understand that the erosion of these numbers, substantially because of the growth of participation, utilization of the benefits, and the horrible economic growth, is no longer future generations. This is us, particularly you. I didn't realize you were so old.

Mr. MULVANEY. It happens.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Can you see that date on this particular slide? I know you have eagle eyes from flying those helicopters. Our number is 2030, 2031. Right in there the Social Security trust fund is gone.

Mr. MULVANEY. And so what happens on that date?

Mr. PERRY. The only thing you have left to pay is from incoming revenues from taxes. So your benefits are decreased by that whatever that amount is at that time. So it probably fluctuates probably somewhere between 25 and 30 percent.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. In some ways, it is actually more complicated, which I wasn't going to go there, but let's do it for the fun of it.

The Social Security revenues will be subject to the whims of the economy. So you might have 1 month where you are able to pay out more and the next month you are paying out less because of the whims.

You also no longer have the interest revenue. If I handed you \$2.8 trillion today and paid you 3.1 percent, that is what is going into the trust fund today. That is all gone. The interest revenues are gone.

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This is a double whammy we are talking about. That is why you never,

ever, ever want to get anywhere near these numbers. You fix it long before. Because every day we wait, it gets harder to deal with. Remember, my calculations are that in about 22 months we start to move into principal balance. We start eating our seed corn. And then, every day, the calculations get more difficult.

Mr. MULVANEY. You talked about how every day we wait, it gets harder to do. I remember giving a presentation similar to this at a retirement community in my neighborhood. It was back during one of the first Ryan budgets when we had actually talked about raising the benefit age slowly by a couple of months.

There was a gentleman there who was in his late fifties. He said: Look, I don't want to work another 2 or 3 years. I said: Sir, we are not asking you to do that. He said: What are you asking me? I said: I am asking you to work an extra month. I am asking me to work an extra year. I am asking my triplets to work an extra 2, but I am only asking you to work an extra month. Can't you do that? He said: Of course, I can do that. Will that fix things? I said: That will go a long way towards fixing things.

He got angry that it was that easy and nobody had explained it to him. I said: You are going to get even angrier. If we had done it 20 years ago, it would be a week. If we wait another 20 years, you can never fix it.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. You no longer can say 20 years or a couple of decades. It is 14 years now.

I am the proud father of an infant. If you do the calculations, when she reaches her peak earning years, her tax rates will be double what I pay. And that is already done. We have already done that to our children.

You have got to understand the scale of what we have done. Doesn't she have the right to participate in some of the same earned benefits that we should have earned and hopefully will be there because we are going to find a way to fix them?

It is not like the left gets behind television cameras and screams at us or puts up television commercials of a PAUL RYAN look-alike pushing grandma off the cliff. That is political rhetoric. They are basically pulling a scam on you. This is math.

I know we get folks in—I don't know if you have ever had them at your townhalls—saying: It doesn't feel right. But I don't have a feelings button on my calculator. I have said that over and over to try to make the point that if you want us to protect your retirement future, you have got to demand that we step up and do it. It can be done by a series of little things.

The reality is that Social Security is easy to fix. You can create a little smorgasbord of policy. Some might be aged, some might be folks with certain

assets and opting out. There are a whole series of creative things to do. You give some optionality to young people. Because those who now are going to live in sort of the "gig" economy have the ability to put in 50 cents every time they have a transaction or by using the technology of these supercomputers we all carry in our pocket.

Mr. PERRY. Many of your constituents hear, from time to time, whether it is the President, people on the other side—and, frankly, people on our side—say that we are reducing the deficits. They hear this.

If they don't come to your townhall meeting, they say: Well, the deficit is smaller, right? So that is good. What is all this hara-kiri about Social Security and debt. What is all the histrionics?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. We are going to get to that in a second, because you have to understand how much the deficit has gone up this year. We have a slide somewhere here that is going to tell us that.

May I ask the Speaker how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUCK). The gentleman from Arizona has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Let's actually run through these. Let's use our last 12 minutes and get exactly to your point of where we are at and what has been going on.

I put this one up specially for my friends who had fussed and wailed and complained about this thing called sequestration and how it was the end of the world. Basically, western civilization was going to be collapsed to its knees.

What you see is that the red is sequestration and the green is discretionary spending without sequestration. If you see the blue bars there, that is mandatory spending. That is Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the new healthcare law, interest on the debt, and other transfer programs. It explodes off the charts.

If our friends who complained about sequestration so much cared, they would have talked about mandatory spending: the entitlements. But if you look at the differential between that red and green, it is tiny. The fact of the matter is, this year and next year it is actually gone.

Mr. PERRY. I don't think you can completely explain the green part of sequestration. As you can see, it moves above the red line on occasion about 2017.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Basically, let's look at 2016 and 2017. There is no sequestration. We increased our spending. We blew up the sequestration caps this last fall and last year.

Mr. PERRY. We wanted to spend more money.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. So the one thing that was holding us back on discretionary spending is gone, but under the

law, it actually comes back in 2018. So that little tiny differential you see on that chart between the red and the green is sequestration.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. SCHWEIKERT, would you like to wager a guess as to the likelihood of that reduction staying in law is?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. It has got to enrage us that if you really cared about the country, you would have the two conversations we are demanding: one, your willingness to change the Tax Code and the regulatory code—the things that help grow the economy—and; two, how are you going to deal with the mandatory spending—the entitlements—that are blowing off the charts?

Mr. PERRY. But the bigger point of this slide, if you will, is that even with sequestration, you can see that, first of all, it is not different from the normal program spending. It has absolutely nothing to do with the huge portion of spending which is mandatory that eclipses everything we do, regardless.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. MULVANEY and I have been having a running conversation about how we put together a budget for this coming year. One of the discussions that we have been trying to calculate is, okay, they blew up some of the spending caps last year. It is what it is. But if they had paid for that increased spending with reforms in entitlements, that is something that goes on and on and on and multiplies out into the future.

Actually, it does a little bit to help our future and save the entitlements. It has sort of a multiplier effect because it lives in perpetuity. It is fascinating, because some of us are trying to pitch that idea of give us a few things that we know actually have a multiplier effect in the future as a way to start to deal with these numbers.

I put this chart up. This is last year. We are going to do this real quickly. I will have it on the Web site, and I will ask both of you if you are willing to do it, too.

You are at your town hall. You have a group walking into your office demanding more money. You have got to understand that happens all day long. Every 15 minutes, there is another meeting of another group that wants more money.

I will get groups that will come in and say: We want more money. If you would just get rid of foreign aid, we will be just fine. Then you pull this board out and say, Okay, you see the little red line there? That is every dime of the State Department's budget. That is military foreign aid, foreign aid to Israel, humanitarian foreign aid, food aid, and all the embassies and their staff, and this and that.

It doesn't do anything. It is great rhetoric. It is a shiny object. It does not do anything, unless you are talking about Social Security, Medicare, Med-

icaid, other welfare programs, ObamaCare, interest on the debt.

Understand that we are incredibly lucky. Interest on the debt this year was supposed to be somewhere in the \$600 billion range. Our projection for the 2016 budget is maybe about \$260 billion. We have been really lucky.

Mr. PERRY. It is the only benefit of a weak economy.

Mr. MULVANEY. It is also the benefit of a totally accommodating Federal Reserve, who sets the price of interest through things like quantitative easing, which is nothing more than printing money. They have unnaturally depressed rates.

Depressed interest rates is nothing more than the cost of money. One of the direct beneficiaries of that has been this body. It has been much easier for us to run of these huge deficits—which is the annual debt—and the overall debt, simply because it is essentially been free money for the last 6 or 7 years.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. MULVANEY, would you agree that the cheap money, the artificial liquidity, has kept Congress from doing what it knew it had to do in reforming the entitlement programs?

Mr. MULVANEY. There is no question. At \$16 trillion of debt, roughly, which is the public debt now, you are talking about interest rates below 2 percent.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. If you really want to get geeky, it is getting shorter because they are going shorter on what they call the weighted daily average.

Mr. MULVANEY. The 40-year rolling average is about 6 percent. That is what money ordinarily costs the United States of America. It is about 6 percent if you look at it over a generational length of time.

If we simply regress to the mean and end up with money costing us about 6 percent, you are talking about more than \$1 trillion a year in just interest payments.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. It is coming.

This goes back to what my friend from Pennsylvania was commenting on. What do we look like in the year we are in right now? Functionally, we are going to be borrowing about \$545 billion this year. This was supposed to be one of the good years. Understand that the inflection doesn't happen until 2018, when the debt starts to explode. This was one of the good years.

Do you understand what \$545 billion is? No one does. That is a lot of zeroes. It is \$1.493 billion a day. It is \$62 million a hour. But, think of this. My favorite one is that it is \$1 million a minute. It is \$17,000 a second. And understand this goes up in 9 years. It basically triples. This triples in 9 years. So, we are borrowing \$17,000 a second, and that number triples in 9 years. I threw these together because I figured we would have a little bit of fun here.

So, we are holding a townhall. We get some of the groups that come in and fuss at us and say: Well, I saw somewhere on some news article that said you should get rid of subsidies for fossil fuels.

First off, it is depreciation, just like every business has, but let's say you took away that depreciation from the production of natural gas and oil. You took it all away.

If we are borrowing, functionally, \$1.5 billion every single day, and you took it all away, it would buy you 12 minutes and 41 seconds of borrowing coverage a day. There are 1,440 minutes in a day, and you just came up with a way to cover 13 minutes. It shows you how fake many of these rhetorical things are that we hear from the political class, particularly the left.

Let's actually take the next step. What about green energy? Did you know green energy has three times the subsidies of fossil fuels?

Let's say you took every dime of the \$36.7 million day that green energy gets. That buys you almost 35 minutes a day. There are 1,440 minutes in a day. We took care of 12 minutes by getting rid of the tax deductions and depreciation for fossil fuels. You got rid of 35 minutes and 24 seconds if you got rid of it all for renewables.

My point is, much of the rhetorical things we hear from the President, from our friends on the left, are completely frauds, mathematically. We have to understand something very, very simple. We are borrowing more than half a trillion dollars this year. In 20 months, the debt starts to explode.

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Mr. MULVANEY, when you have actually been in front of some of your audiences in South Carolina, have you ever shown them the chart that this year and next year were supposed to be the good years? It was supposed to be fairly flat, and then it explodes.

Mr. MULVANEY. Actually, I have been showing them that chart since you and I arrived in 2011 because the number has not changed significantly. When you and I arrived and served on the Budget Committee together in 2011, we could have told people roughly what the deficit would have been this year. The projections have not changed.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. And what happened between last August and now that all of a sudden—remember, last year, the deficit was about \$150 billion lower than this, than we are going to run this year. Multiple things happened:

We didn't come close to the economic growth we had built and modeled.

The movement of our citizens into certain programs has been greater than expected, and fewer velocity.

We say unemployment is this, but when we actually look at the actual tax revenues coming from it, there is a

disconnect. There is something horribly wrong there. So there is something wrong in economic growth.

And then we blew up many of the sequestration caps last year.

Well, ultimately, we went from, I think we had a \$420 billion, \$430 billion deficit last year, which was still stunning, and now we are going to be \$545 billion.

Look, these are big numbers. It makes your brain hurt. They are uncomfortable. But what you have to appreciate, it is stunning, and it gets dramatically worse in 20 months. We hit what was called the inflection.

I remember reading about this a decade or two decades ago. It is when the baby boom population has been moved in to retirement. And the spiking years are moving in, and they are starting to receive their earned benefits. Then we start adding a couple of hundred billion dollars every year in new borrowing, and it blows off the chart.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 757. An Act to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HUDSON (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of illness.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2109. An Act to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, February 11, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4289. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1429; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-246-AD; Amendment 39-18382; AD 2016-02-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4290. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2014-1045; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-031-AD; Amendment 39-18372; AD 2016-01-13] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4291. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0447; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-019-AD; Amendment 39-18368; AD 2016-01-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4292. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-2967; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-072-AD; Amendment 39-18376; AD 2016-01-16] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4293. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1990; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-027-AD; Amendment 39-18364; AD 2016-01-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4294. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1427; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-203-AD; Amendment 39-18380; AD 2016-02-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4295. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2015-8695; Directorate Identifier 2015-

SW-042-AD; Amendment 39-18365; AD 2016-01-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4296. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0081; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-170-AD; Amendment 39-18371; AD 2016-01-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4297. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1991; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-251-AD; Amendment 39-18381; AD 2016-02-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4298. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0678; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-207-AD; Amendment 39-18367; AD 2016-01-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4299. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1984; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-022-AD; Amendment 39-18363; AD 2016-01-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4300. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-8433; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-194-AD; Amendment 39-18366; AD 2016-01-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4301. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1275; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-070-AD; Amendment 39-18354; AD 2015-26-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4302. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1981; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-204-

AD; Amendment 39-18362; AD 2016-01-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4303. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Piper Aircraft, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-4213; Directorate Identifier 2015-CE-022-AD; Amendment 39-18359; AD 2016-01-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4304. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2014-1049; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-110-AD; Amendment 39-18361; AD 2016-01-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4305. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1422; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-125-AD; Amendment 39-18370; AD 2016-01-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4306. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1990; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-027-AD; Amendment 39-18364; AD 2016-01-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4307. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Services B.V. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1982; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-108-AD; Amendment 39-18353; AD 2015-26-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4308. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0937; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-024-AD; Amendment 39-18348; AD 2015-25-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk

for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BURGESS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 611. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2017) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A, and providing for proceedings during the period from February 15, 2016, through February 22, 2016 (Rept. 114-421). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. DOLD (for himself and Mr. VARGAS):

H.R. 4514. A bill to authorize State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CALVERT (for himself and Mr. COOK):

H.R. 4515. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to increase the maximum penalty for mail theft; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 4516. A bill to require data brokers to establish procedures to ensure the accuracy of collected personal information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Mr. BARTON, Mr. CHABOT, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 4517. A bill to provide for greater transparency in and user control over the treatment of data collected by mobile applications and to enhance the security of such data; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. EMMER of Minnesota (for himself, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. MULVANEY, and Mr. WILLIAMS):

H.R. 4518. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to lower the corporate rate of income tax to the OECD average, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 4519. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide a five-year extension of the special survivor indemnity allowance provided to widows and widowers of deceased members of the uniformed services affected by required Survivor Benefit Plan annuity offset for dependency and indemnity compensation received under section 1311(a) of title 38, United States Code; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. NEWHOUSE (for himself, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. WELCH, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. ROUZER, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. BENISHEK, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRIS-

HAM of New Mexico, Mr. YOHIO, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. CLAY, Mr. LAMALFA, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. VELA, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. WALZ, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. COSTA, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. BOST, Mr. ASHFORD, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. POCAN, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. KIND, Mr. DENHAM, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Ms. GRAHAM, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. HURD of Texas, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. PEARCE, and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia):

H.R. 4520. A bill to posthumously award a Congressional gold medal to Justin Smith Morrill, United States Senator of the State of Vermont, in recognition of his lasting contributions to higher education opportunity for all Americans; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. THOMPSON of California (for himself, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. BERA, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. COHEN, Mr. COLE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. COOK, Mr. COOPER, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. CROWLEY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DENT, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. ESTY, Mr. FARR, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. SHIMKUS, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. TIBERI, Ms. TITUS, Mr. TONKO, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. WALZ, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. HIMES, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KILMER, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LEWIS, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. NEAL, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LATTI, Ms. LEE, Mr. LOBIONDO, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. MENG, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mrs. NAPOLITANO,

Mr. NOLAN, Mr. NUNES, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. POLIS, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. VELA, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. BASS, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. HAHN, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. KIND, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. VISCLOSKEY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. WELCH, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. KILDEE, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. HOYER, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi):

H.R. 4521. A bill to transfer recreational management authority for Lake Berryessa in the State of California from the Bureau of Reclamation to the Bureau of Land Management, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. SALMON, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. MICA, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. KLINE, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. YOHIO):

H.R. 4522. A bill to amend the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987 with respect to certain prohibitions regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization under that Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. COFFMAN (for himself, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. ROHRABACHER):

H.R. 4523. A bill to repeal the Military Selective Service Act, and thereby terminate the registration requirements of such Act and eliminate civilian local boards, civilian appeal boards, and similar local agencies of the Selective Service System; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CROWLEY (for himself and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida):

H.R. 4524. A bill to amend the Social Security Act to provide for mandatory funding, to ensure that the families that have infants and toddlers, have a family income of not more than 200 percent of the applicable Federal poverty guideline, and need child care have access to high-quality infant and toddler child care by the end of fiscal year 2026, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 4525. A bill to make a supplemental appropriation for the Public Health Emergency Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida (for herself, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. QUIGLEY,

Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia):

H.R. 4526. A bill to amend the Restore Online Shoppers' Confidence Act to protect consumers from deceptive practices with respect to online booking of hotel reservations and to direct the Federal Trade Commission to conduct a study with respect to online shopping for hotel reservations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KILMER (for himself and Mr. RUSSELL):

H.R. 4527. A bill to temporarily authorize recently retired members of the armed forces to be appointed to certain civil service positions, require the Secretary of Defense to issue certain notifications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. TED LIEU of California (for himself, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Ms. DELBENE, and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan):

H.R. 4528. A bill to preempt State data security vulnerability mandates and decryption requirements; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 4529. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to provide for an annual increase in the contribution and benefit base, to exclude a certain number of childcare years from the benefit computation formula, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. POLIS (for himself and Mr. AMODEI):

H.R. 4530. A bill to implement integrity measures to strengthen the EB-5 Regional Center Program in order to promote and reform foreign capital investment and job creation in American communities; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SABLAN:

H.R. 4531. A bill to approve an agreement between the United States and the Republic of Palau, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. STEWART (for himself, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. CHAFFETZ, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah):

H. Con. Res. 114. Concurrent resolution expressing concern over the disappearance of David Sneddon, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representa-

tives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. DOLD:

H.R. 4514.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. CALVERT:

H.R. 4515.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress).

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia:

H.R. 4516.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia:

H.R. 4517.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. EMMER of Minnesota:

H.R. 4518.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads: "The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States."

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 4519.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution

By Mr. NEWHOUSE:

H.R. 4520.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. THOMPSON of California:

H.R. 4521.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Sec I

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN:

H.R. 4522.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution

By Mr. COFFMAN:

H.R. 4523.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution (Clauses 12, 13, 14, 16, and 18), which grants Congress the power to raise and support an Army; to provide and maintain a Navy; to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces; to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia; and to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the foregoing powers.

By Mr. CROWLEY:

H.R. 4524.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 4525.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida:

H.R. 4526.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 3 and 18 of the U.S. Constitution, respectively giving Congress the authority to regulate interstate commerce and to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying into execution the powers of Congress.

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 4527.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. TED LIEU of California:

H.R. 4528.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 4529.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The General Welfare Clause of Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. POLIS:

H.R. 4530.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. SABLAN:

H.R. 4531.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Under Article I, section 8 of the Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 27: Mr. THORNBERRY.
H.R. 188: Mrs. BUSTOS and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 191: Mr. FLORES and Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 267: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 347: Mr. PEARCE.
H.R. 467: Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 662: Mr. FITZPATRICK and Mr. HULTGREN.
H.R. 699: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 700: Ms. DEGETTE and Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 745: Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 814: Mr. MCCAUL and Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 845: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H.R. 863: Mr. REED.
H.R. 921: Mr. BUCHANAN.
H.R. 939: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 1062: Mr. KIND.
H.R. 1142: Mrs. TORRES.
H.R. 1193: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 1284: Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 1391: Mr. DEFazio.
H.R. 1397: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 1475: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 1552: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 1608: Mr. DONOVAN and Mr. PITTINGER.
H.R. 1736: Mrs. WAGNER.
H.R. 1769: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 1887: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 2144: Mr. PEARCE.
H.R. 2148: Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 2228: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 2236: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 2300: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
H.R. 2330: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 2400: Mr. TROTT.
H.R. 2411: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 2418: Mr. REED.
H.R. 2449: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 2515: Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. MULLIN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.
H.R. 2631: Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 2680: Ms. DUCKWORTH and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 2698: Mr. PEARCE.
H.R. 2715: Mr. HASTINGS and Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 2737: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. PALLONE.
H.R. 2802: Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 2823: Ms. MENG.
H.R. 2992: Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. UPTON, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. YODER, and Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 3099: Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Ms. STEFANIK, and Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 3142: Mr. SCHIFF and Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 3180: Mr. REED, Miss RICE of New York, and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 3229: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 3283: Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 3323: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 3326: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 3355: Mr. HOLDING.
H.R. 3365: Mr. NORCROSS and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 3381: Mr. SARBANES, Mr. WALBERG, and Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H.R. 3406: Ms. DELBENE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. MEEKS.
H.R. 3516: Mr. LATTI.
H.R. 3635: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 3706: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. GIBSON, and Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 3782: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 3805: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 3880: Mr. LATTI.
H.R. 3892: Mr. POSEY, Mr. JOYCE, and Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 3913: Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. DEFazio.
H.R. 3917: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. WENSTRUP, and Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 3920: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 3947: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 3948: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 3949: Ms. PLASKETT.
H.R. 3952: Mr. GROTHMAN and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 3956: Mr. RANGEL and Mrs. ROBY.
H.R. 3970: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 3986: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 4007: Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 4013: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 4076: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 4087: Mr. JOLLY.
H.R. 4126: Mr. FORBES and Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 4137: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 4144: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 4176: Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 4184: Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 4212: Mr. WELCH and Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 4219: Mr. LONG.
H.R. 4229: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 4235: Mr. TAKANO and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

H.R. 4247: Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 4262: Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia.
H.R. 4263: Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 4266: Ms. BORDALLO and Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 4281: Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 4320: Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 4336: Mr. GOODLATTE and Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 4342: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 4344: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
H.R. 4352: Mr. ASHFORD, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. CARNEY, and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 4355: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 4364: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4365: Mr. PETERSON and Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 4380: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 4400: Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. FATTAH, and Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 4420: Mr. RENACCI, Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Mr. GOWDY, and Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 4428: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H.R. 4430: Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4435: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 4436: Mr. JOLLY.
H.R. 4438: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 4442: Mr. HINOJOSA and Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 4446: Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Mr. WILLIAMS.
H.R. 4447: Ms. BORDALLO and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 4461: Mrs. ROBY.
H.R. 4470: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. ELLISON, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 4475: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 4502: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
H.J. Res. 9: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
H. Con. Res. 50: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H. Con. Res. 75: Mr. BABIN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. HECK of Nevada.
H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. LATTI and Mr. BUCSHON.
H. Con. Res. 101: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
H. Con. Res. 105: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
H. Con. Res. 110: Mr. VEASEY.
H. Res. 148: Mr. ENGEL and Mr. ROSKAM.
H. Res. 318: Mr. VEASEY.
H. Res. 454: Mr. GOHMERT.
H. Res. 548: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
H. Res. 569: Mr. NOLAN.
H. Res. 571: Mr. GIBSON, Mr. LAMBORN, Ms. GRANGER, and Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.
H. Res. 582: Mrs. BLACK, Mr. MESSER, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H. Res. 588: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. BABIN.
H. Res. 593: Mr. MCNERNEY and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H. Res. 597: Mr. VEASEY.
H. Res. 610: Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, and Mr. DESAULNIER.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MRS. MCMORRIS RODGERS	sure Act of 2015, by Representative MCMOR-	marks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff
The Manager's amendment to be offered to	RIS RODGERS of Washington, or a designee,	benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.
H.R. 2017, Common Sense Nutrition Disclo-	does not contain any congressional ear-	

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

STANDING TOGETHER

HON. E. SCOTT RIGELL

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. RIGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to submit a statement on behalf of my constituent, Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman. Rabbi Zoberman is the Founding Rabbi of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Rabbi Zoberman asked me to submit the following remarks:

Our one God of life's precious blessings in a precarious world who created us to be one family, gloriously diverse and gratefully united, so movingly manifest in our beloved Hampton Roads and in this our Standing Together for our sake as well as Heaven's.

I am proudly holding my Jewish people's most sacred possession, the Torah Scroll. This one from Brno, Czech Republic, has acquired an added dimension of the sacred. A survivor of the Shoah, Holocaust, number 526 of the Czech Memorial Scrolls, it lost its original congregation and community in the Kingdom of the Night. Hatred of the "other" consumed eleven million innocent lives of Jews and Gentiles. The towering Torah's teachings of loving-kindness, is the very foundation of the three great monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Joined by the three great Eastern religions they have served as humanity's conscience and civilization's journey forward.

We are taught in the Torah's ineradicable lessons begrudged by humanity's enemies, burning the Torah and its people that each human being is equally though uniquely created in the Divine image, that we should love our neighbors as we love ourselves. We are reminded time and again that we, who were rejected and enslaved in Pharaoh's Egypt, ought to embrace the stranger, namely the "other" and the refugee, as members of God's family and our own.

The Exodus' soaring saga of liberation uplifted Dr. King—whose celebration we just observed—to remind America to live up to the Pilgrims' vision of fleeing refugees, walking in the shoes of the Biblical Israelites while yearning for a new land free from the persecution of the "other." Freedom of and from religion has allowed America to flourish like no other nation, immeasurably benefitting from the greatest human diversity anywhere. Diversity is divine.

We must remember the Jewish refugees, including so many children, fleeing Nazism, who were denied entry to these promising shores. In 1939, the SS St. Louis ship, with its desperate human cargo from Hamburg, Germany, was tragically turned away. I address you from the midst of the children in Europe's Displaced Persons Camps following World War II and the Holocaust. There I spent my formative early childhood, there my family along with a multitude of uprooted survivors and homeless refugees on the run, gradually learned to believe again in human goodness and renew our trust in God after such heavy genocidal losses.

Today's refugees too are knocking on the door of "the land of the free and the home of the brave." The Syrian ones, the most vulnerable, are heroically escaping their genocidal regime. They too are in displaced persons camps with their children's bodies washed ashore on European beaches. How can we remain silent? Those allowed to enter following a most careful vetting process, will become along with their progeny, patriotic and tax-paying Americans. Steve Jobs' biological father was a Syrian immigrant. Refugees and immigrants keep alive the American dream for us all, ensuring that America may ever be a blessing.

We reassure our dear Muslim neighbors, colleagues, and friends, which we unreservedly appreciate their indispensable contributions without which we would be diminished. Barbaric ISIS targets them too and they fight it with fellow Americans. We all stand together in the ark of survival with a shared future and fate. Indeed, we mutually and joyfully are our sisters and brothers' keepers. We cannot be separated. Let us be mindful of the danger of poisonous demagoguery to our enviable American democracy and inclusive way of life, as well as to our ethical standing. Words and lives do matter. Words and lives are inextricably connected.

Let us reaffirm in this grand gathering the infinite value of each and every one of us. Both our differences and commonalities are precious to our common Creator. They should be the same for us. Finally, let us pledge to never ever abandon our deepest mooring and most sacred proposition that God's divinity and human dignity are indivisible. Shalom, Salaam, Peace.

HONORING CARNEY CAMPION

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Carney Campion, who passed away in San Rafael, California, in December of last year. An executive with the Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District for over two decades, Mr. Campion was a devoted civil servant, a respected and accessible manager, and an ardent advocate for improving public transit.

A lifelong Californian, Mr. Campion was born in Santa Rosa in 1928, and graduated from UC Berkeley in 1950 with a degree in Personnel and Public Administration. He held management roles with the Redwood Region Conservation Council and the Redwood Empire Association before joining the Golden Gate Bridge District. In 1998, at the age of 70, he retired from his general manager role, a position he held for 15 years. Following his retirement, he remained active throughout Marin County, including with the Marin County Cultural Services Commission and the Marin County Fair.

Mr. Campion was a measured leader navigating an often chaotic environment. During his tenure, he oversaw expansion in ferry, bus and rail services, labor negotiations, a seismic retrofit of the Golden Gate Bridge, and other transportation modernization efforts. He is remembered by staff as a genuine, thoughtful leader dedicated to improving services for residents and visitors across the Bay Area.

Mr. Campion's leadership has impacted countless lives throughout our region, with effects that can still be felt today, more than 15 years after his retirement. It is therefore appropriate that we pay tribute to Mr. Campion today and express our deepest condolences to his surviving wife, Kathryn, six children, 21 grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

CONGRATULATING DAN FOUST, SR. FOR HIS LIFETIME DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Mr. Dan Foust, Sr. He is receiving the 2015 Lifetime Distinguished Service Award in the Cultural category from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Foust has been a lifelong dedicated volunteer in the community. His membership with the St. Charles Lions Club started over twenty-seven years ago. During his time as a member he was instrumental in establishing and completing the McNair Park Braille Trail. In 2001, Mr. Foust, branched off from the St. Charles Lions club and chartered the First Capitol Lions club. From his many years of service during his time as a Lions member, Mr. Foust has received the highest honor a Lions member can—the Melvin Jones Fellowship award.

The German Chapter of the St. Charles Sister Cities has benefited from Mr. Foust's membership for over twenty years. His fundraising efforts have allowed the St. Charles Sister Cities to expand the number of student exchanges from two students to four. This club allows students from Germany and Ireland to experience life in the St. Charles area. Through this program students are able to foster mutual understanding, friendship, and goodwill through cultural, social, business, and educational exchanges.

In 2011, Mr. Foust started his Chairmanship position of the St. Charles Oktoberfest Festival. Under his leadership, this event has grown to over 100,000 attendees annually. This festival brings in funds to various groups in the area: First Capitol Lions Club, St. Peters Lions Club, Lake St. Louis Lions Club,

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Jonesburg Lions Club, Sister Cities of St. Charles, the St. Charles Jaycees, and many more groups.

Other areas that Mr. Foust has served include: a twenty-five year membership with the St. Charles Parks Foundation, a twenty year membership with the St. Charles Raccoon Conservation Club, and serving in local government for sixteen years. He also served as a former director of the St. Charles County Municipal League.

Mr. Foust enjoys time with his wife of thirty-six years, Carla and his four children—Carrie, Dan Jr., Justin, and Jason. His world is made brighter by his 16 grandchildren and will welcome his first great-grandchild in June of this year.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Mr. Dan Foust, Sr. on this Lifetime Distinguished Service Award in the Cultural category from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

CONGRATULATING JOSHUA GILMER ON HIS ACCEPTANCE TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD 2015 SUMMER PROGRAM

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate University of Missouri student Joshua Gilmer on his acceptance to, and completion of, the U.S. Department of State's Critical Language Scholarship award (CLS) 2015 summer program.

Joshua, a graduate of Nixa High School in Nixa, Missouri, was one of just 550 out of about 5,500 applicants to be selected to receive admittance to the CLS program this year. This scholarship is a prestigious award, which offers a fully immersive language experience and cultural exchange to 13 countries around the world. The program is aimed at training the next generation of U.S. Citizens to gain an enriched cultural knowledge of other countries and to be well equipped for careers in diplomacy, international business, and other globalized industries.

Through the program, Joshua completed an Intermediate Russian language course in Vladimir, Russia. His time overseas was spent fostering not only his language skills, but his knowledge of and ability to relate to Russian culture. In the rapidly globalizing world, a cultural understanding of other countries is a key to continued American success in foreign affairs.

Mr. Speaker, Joshua Gilmer is now well-equipped with this new knowledge to broaden the horizons of his peers here in the U.S. I am proud to know that young people like Joshua from Missouri's Seventh Congressional District will one day help guide America's global economic interests, and urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating him on this achievement.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$19,000,235,912,585.65. We've added \$8,373,358,863,672.57 to our debt in 7 years. This is over \$8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to state that I was unable to vote on Tuesday, February 9, 2016 due to community events held that evening in our district in Houston and Harris County, Texas.

If I had the opportunity to vote, I would have voted "Yea" on H.R. 3036, legislation to designate the National September 11 Memorial located at the World Trade Center in New York City, New York, as a national memorial.

CONGRATULATING DON BOSCHERT, JR. FOR HIS LIFETIME DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Mr. Don Boschert, Jr. He is receiving the 2015 Citizen of the Year Award from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Boschert has called St. Charles County home his entire life. Since 1978, he has been an Investment Representative with Edward Jones in St. Charles.

During Mr. Boschert's time with Edward Jones, he has been recognized as a leader and was therefore named Regional Leader of St. Charles and Lincoln Counties from 1998 through 2004, and from 2001 through 2004, he served as a General Partner. Under his leadership, Edward Jones was able to expand from 19 branch offices to 50 branch offices. Mr. Boschert currently serves as a limited Partner for Edward Jones along with working with his son, Greg, in the heart of St. Charles.

The commitment that Mr. Boschert shows to the projects and programs of the chamber continue to make the organization stronger. In 1991, he served as President of the St. Charles Chamber of Commerce and also

served as Chairman of the St. Charles County Convention Center and Sports Facilities for 3 years. In addition to those office positions, Don has served as President of the St. Charles Rotary, St. Peters Rotary, and United Services. He has held board positions with Crime Stoppers and the Academy of the Sacred Heart Golf Outing Committee.

His volunteering spirit also positively affects the Boys & Girls Club of St. Charles and the Child Welfare Allocation Panel for the United Way where he has served as a board member. The River City Rascals benefited from his leadership where he was a Limited Partner from 1997–2006.

For 33 years, Don and his wife, Jennie, have enjoyed life together in the St. Charles area.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Mr. Don Boschert, Jr. on this 2015 Citizen of the Year award from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

CONGRATULATING ZACH MOORE ON HIS SELECTION TO THE HIGH SCHOOL HONORS PERFORMANCE SERIES

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Zach Moore, a senior trombone player at Glendale High School in Springfield, Missouri, on being selected to perform in the High School Honors Performance Series at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

Starting in 2009, The High School Honors Performance Series was established to showcase the most talented high school performers in the country. To be considered for inclusion in this series, Moore underwent a competitive application process which required a written recommendation from an instructor and his submitting an audition tape. The various different ensembles on display at the series are conducted by renowned conductors, who will challenge Zach to perform to the best of his abilities.

Zach has assembled a truly admirable body of work playing the trombone, earning a Bass Trombone slot in the All-State Orchestra this year as well as first chair trombone honors in the All-District Honor Band. He has played with the U.S. Army All-American Marching Band at the halftime show of the U.S. Army All-American Bowl, a testament to his ability to perform at a high level in front of a large audience. Zach has been described as an incredibly hard worker who is both dedicated to his art and exceptionally talented.

Mr. Speaker, Zach Moore deserves our congratulations on his selection to the High School Honors Performance Series. I urge my colleagues to join me in extending congratulations to Zach on his achievements, which make him an example of the outstanding talent Missouri's Seventh Congressional District has to offer.

RECOGNIZING MS. NICOLE
STEINER

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Nicole Steiner for being selected as one of Colorado's top two youth volunteers in the 21st Annual National Awards Program by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. She was selected for this honor because of her exceptional acts of volunteerism.

Ms. Steiner is a senior at Legend High School in Parker, Colorado. To date, she has raised over \$40,000 worth of games, puzzles, and books for a variety of organizations and individuals. In 2014 she founded "A Game for You", which collects games, puzzles, and books that are donated to various organizations. Over 5,500 individuals have received a gift because of her efforts. It is the ingenuity and hard work Ms. Steiner embodies daily that makes America exceptional. She has shown true leadership in her community.

As the recipient of this award, Ms. Steiner will receive a \$1,000 stipend, engraved medallions, and a trip to Washington, D.C. On behalf of the 4th Congressional District of Colorado, I extend my best wishes to Ms. Steiner.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Ms. Nicole Steiner for her accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF ST. MARY'S
SCHOOL

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to recognize St. Mary's School in Lee, Massachusetts on their 130th anniversary. Since its inception, the hard work of the teachers and students has made St. Mary's School a model of success in the region.

In the mid-1880s, Jane Sedgwick, a member of a wealthy family in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, wanted to open a parochial school in Western Massachusetts after a massive influx of Irish immigrants into the area. After 25 years of work and determination, Pope Leo XIII finally gave Jane his personal blessing to building the school that would be affiliated with St. Mary's Church in Lee. Five years later, the school was built and they welcomed nuns from St. Joseph's of Chambers, France to teach students grades 1 through 8.

For 72 years, the old school located on Academy Street served the parish of St. Mary's until a boom in the population of Lee following World War II. The pastor at St. Mary's Church at the time, Father Jeremiah Murphy, labored tirelessly to get the funds needed to ensure they could build a big enough building for all the students. In 1957, all of Father Murphy's dreams came together and a new school was constructed just up the road from where the old school stood. Since then, the current building has added new

wings to the building to accommodate a library and computer labs to better educate their students. Today, St. Mary's School has all the new forms of technology to help a new generation of students get excited about learning.

Mr. Speaker, for the past 130 years, St. Mary's School's curriculum may have changed, but their ideals and their high educational standards have always remained the same. With small class sizes, teachers are able to give important individual attention to ensure every student can excel. The school's motto, "Education with a Plus," speaks volumes to their dedication to math and the sciences, as well as the moral teachings that comes along with a Catholic education. I want to commend all the teachers and staff of St. Mary's School on all the success they have had over the past century in shaping the young minds of Berkshire County. I wish them all the best with their future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING DONNA
GASTREICH FOR HER LIFETIME
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Ms. Donna Gastreich. She is receiving the 2015 Chamber Champion Award from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Gastreich is a pivotal part of the chamber by the way she passionately serves the community. In the past several years, Ms. Gastreich has worked with various committees: Tech Communications and the Ambassadors. She is also involved with the annual Golf Tournament.

Her commitment to planning Santa's North Pole Dash, the annual 5K run, is evident from her willingness to visit the businesses on Main Street that will be affected by the race. Once Ms. Gastreich has gathered the necessary information, she reports to staff so appropriate modifications can be made for the race day. Ms. Gastreich is a positive voice for the chamber and the programs they provide.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Ms. Donna Gastreich on this 2015 Chamber Champion Award from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

HONORING STEVE WATSON AS THE
2015 KRAFT HEINZ HERO

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Steve Watson of Suffolk, Virginia. For the past five years, Steve—a 31-year employee of the Planter's peanut plant in Suffolk—and his wife Patricia have selflessly led an effort to help ensure nearly 100 local stu-

dents have the supplies they need for the school year ahead. Annually, Steve and Patricia hold a back-to-school cookout that includes donating backpacks filled with school supplies for children in their neighborhood.

On Thursday, February 11, 2016, Steve will be recognized as the 2015 Kraft Heinz Hero, an award which is given to the Kraft Heinz employee who demonstrates upstanding values and community excellence. Over 40,000 employees worldwide were eligible to be nominated for this award, and I am proud to recognize Steve for receiving this prestigious honor.

Steve Watson is a beloved pillar in the Suffolk community. When he is not manning the Bar-b-que, Steve can be found cooking and serving meals at his church for those in need, assisting the elderly with maintenance and home repairs and donating his time and money to wherever community help is needed.

I salute Steve and Patricia for their efforts to give back to the students and families of Suffolk and commend Steve on receiving this tremendous award.

TRIBUTE TO PETER PELLETT

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Peter Pellett of Atlantic, Iowa for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. Peter is a member of Boy Scout Troop 366, Omaha, Nebraska and the Soaring Eagle District of the Mid-America Council.

The Eagle Scout designation is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about five percent of Boy Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained over the past century.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. Peter's Eagle Project was rehabilitating the infield for the Benson Little League Park in Omaha, Nebraska. The work ethic Peter has shown in his Eagle Project and every other project leading up to his Eagle Scout rank speaks volumes of his commitment to serving a cause greater than himself and assisting his community.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent Peter in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him on obtaining the Eagle Scout ranking, and in wishing him nothing but continued success in his future education and career.

CONGRATULATING MERLE SCHNEIDER FOR HIS LIFETIME DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Mr. Merle Schneider. He is receiving the Lifetime Distinguished Service Award in the Humanitarian category from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Schneider is well known for his entertaining style of auctioneering and emceeing for charity events in the St. Louis area. His self-taught auctioneering skills have benefited numerous organizations for their trivia nights, dinner auctions, and most recently for events honoring our veterans.

For the past 30 years, during the Christmas season, Mr. Schneider plays the part of Santa and brings joy to many children as he hands out candy canes and teddy bears. Santa Merle also annually appears at events for Toys for Tots, St. Louis Crisis Nursery, and also provides opportunities for photos with children while listening to their Christmas wishes. Numerous organizations have benefited from Mr. Schneider's emcee skills, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, the Duchesne High School Foresight Dinner Auction, Foodbank of St. Louis, Volunteers in Medicine, and Giant Steps for Autism.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Mr. Merle Schneider on this Lifetime Distinguished Service Award in the Humanitarian category from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

RECOGNIZING MS. RILEY HOLCOMB

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Riley Holcomb for being selected as one of Colorado's Distinguished Finalists in the 21st Annual National Awards Program by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. She was selected for this honor due to her exceptional acts of volunteerism.

Ms. Holcomb is a seventh-grade student at Altona Middle School in Longmont, Colorado. She was originally inspired to make a difference when her aunt passed away from kidney cancer. Over the past four years, Ms. Holcomb founded a Relay for Life team which has raised over \$18,000 for the American Cancer Society. It is the ingenuity and hard work Ms. Holcomb embodies daily that makes America exceptional. She has shown true leadership in her community.

As the recipient of this award, she will receive an engraved bronze medallion. On behalf of the 4th Congressional District of Colorado, I extend my best wishes to Ms. Holcomb.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Ms. Riley Holcomb for her accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LIFE OF MRS. KAY BEARD

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Kay Beard for her lifetime of distinguished service to our county and our state. Kay's commitment to our community has enriched the lives of so many and helped guide many of today's leaders in our region towards greater success.

Kay was born in Detroit in 1921 and had a reputation as a proud and feisty Irish American. In 1946, Kay married the late Jerry Beard after he returned from World War II and together, they raised five children. With her strong focus on family and community, Kay became more involved in politics joining Citizens for Educational Freedom and eventually running unsuccessfully for State Representative. Undeterred, Kay kept at it and in 1978 was appointed to the Wayne County Commission where she was then elected to fifteen consecutive terms, until her retirement in 2008. During that time, Kay developed a reputation as an outspoken force to be reckoned with in Wayne County Government. She cared deeply about serving the constituents of her district, and did so with distinction for thirty years.

Kay was a beloved mother of five, grandmother of three, sister, and a loving wife to her late husband Jerry. Kay was deeply involved in a wide array of community initiatives including the United Way Community Services Board, the Blue Cross Senior Advisory Council, the National Council for School-to-Work Opportunities, and was a founding member of Hospices of Michigan, just to name a few. She did this work because it was good for the community and in doing so; she set an example for what it meant to be a committed public servant of the highest order.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor Mrs. Kay Beard for her lifetime of service to our community. I considered her a friend and a role model, and while her service to us will be remembered, her loss will be felt for a long time to come.

CONGRATULATING RANDY SCHILLING FOR HIS LIFETIME DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Mr. Randy Schilling. He is receiving the Lifetime Distinguished Service Award in the Civic category from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Schilling started his commitment to revitalizing Main Street St. Charles in 1992. As founder of Quilogy, Randy made the decision to set up his business on South Main and also purchase five additional buildings on South Main which he ended up renovating.

The dedication to preserving the historical aspect of Main Street St. Charles continues to this day. Mr. Schilling successfully modifies historic buildings on Historic Main Street for modern business purposes. The projects he has spearheaded have shown the importance of supporting the maintenance of these historic structures.

One of Mr. Schilling's recent projects is his purchase and renovation of the old Post Office located on South Main Street. This 10,000 square foot office space will allow regional startups with affordable workspace for mentors, potential investors, programming, education resources, and a community of local entrepreneurs.

As a native of St. Charles, Mr. Schilling has witnessed where St. Charles began and where it is going. He graduated in 1985 from the University of Missouri with a major in Electrical Engineering. Once he completed his undergraduate degree, he received his MBA in 1989 from the University of Illinois in Springfield, IL.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Mr. Randy Schilling on this Lifetime Distinguished Service Award in the Civic category from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

RECOGNIZING TAIWAN'S PEACE INITIATIVE ROADMAP

HON. SCOTT DesJARLAIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the efforts that our close partner and ally Taiwan has made in support of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

Last year, Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou proposed the South China Sea Peace Initiative, reiterating their government's long-standing position of shelving disputes and promoting joint resource development in these contested waters. On January 28, 2016, President Ma further proposed "the South China Sea Peace Initiative Roadmap" during his visit to Taiping Island in the Spratly of the South China Sea. The content of the Peace Initiative Roadmap is stated as below:

"1. "Yes" to cooperation, "no" to confrontation: A cooperation and development mechanism that contributes to peace and prosperity in the South China Sea should first be established, and sovereignty disputes should be set aside for future resolution through peaceful means.

2. "Yes" to sharing, "no" to monopolizing: A cooperation and development mechanism should ensure equal participation and resource sharing among all parties concerned in the region in order to avoid undermining the rights and interests of any party.

3. "Yes" to pragmatism, "no" to intransigence: The initial focus should be on aspects which are beneficial to all parties concerned and on which consensus can be easily achieved; various cooperation items should be pragmatically and gradually promoted so as to avoid missing out on cooperation opportunities as a result of any party insisting on its position.

The viable path consists of shelving disputes, integrated planning, and zonal development. The two essential elaborations are: First, all parties concerned in the region should be included in the consultation mechanism for this initiative so that they can engage in cooperation and negotiations on integrated planning for the South China Sea. Second, the cooperation and consultation mechanism proposed in this initiative should be a provisional arrangement of a practical nature, and should not undermine the position of any party concerned or jeopardize or hamper the reaching of a final agreement on the South China Sea."

The Taiwan government has reaffirmed its commitment to uphold the freedom of navigation and overflight, and has actively worked to promote peace and prosperity throughout the South China Sea region. I urge my colleagues to join me in working with our Taiwanese partners to promote our common interests and find a viable path to maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea.

RECOGNIZING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOUTH LAKE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND THE RETIREMENT OF RAY SAN FRATELLO

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize the 20th anniversary of the South Lake Chamber of Commerce, and the retirement of Ray San Fratello. On December 31, 2015, Mr. San Fratello retired as President of South Lake Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. San Fratello has led the South Lake Chamber of Commerce for the past 12 years after 13 years with the Genesee County Chamber of Commerce in upstate New York. Under his leadership, the South Lake Chamber of Commerce has experienced tremendous growth with the largest membership in Lake County. He has received much recognition for his efforts including the 2013 Florida Association of Chamber Professionals, Chamber Professional of the Year.

During the past century, the South Lake Chamber of Commerce has been through many phases of growth and change to create the longstanding history and tradition of successful business organization. Formed more than 20 years ago, the South Lake Chamber's footprint has expanded to Clermont, Minneola, Groveland, Mascotte, Monteverde, and Four Corners. The original Board of Trade, established in 1895, created a new vision of community and business development for South Lake County. One century later in 1995, the Clermont-Minneola and Groveland-Mascotte Chambers united for the betterment of South Lake. Today, after 20 years, the South Lake Chamber of Commerce continues to foster a spirit of cooperation and progress among the area's business community.

The excellence with which the South Lake Chamber of Commerce and Mr. San Fratello

serve South Lake County's business community and enterprises is evident from their history and recognition. I commend them for their many achievements and I am pleased to congratulate them on the celebration of their 20th anniversary. My sincerest wishes and congratulations to Mr. San Fratello and his family on his retirement.

KEEPING AMERICA STRONG IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation to approve a 15-year extension of the United States' Compact of Free Association with the Republic of Palau.

President Ronald Reagan, recognizing the importance of the Western Pacific to U.S. security interests, first negotiated the Compact with Palau. President Reagan's prescience of the need to maintain strategic denial to the military of other nations in the land, air, and sea of Palau—an area the size of Texas—is apparent now more than ever.

Yet we in Congress have failed to maintain the commitment that President Reagan established with Palau. The 1986 Compact provided for annual economic assistance. In 2010, the U.S. and Palau agreed to an extension of this Compact assistance and agreed that funding should gradually taper off over the succeeding 15 years. In 2012, Chairman Donald Manzullo of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific introduced the necessary legislation to approve the extension. Hearings and markup were held, but no further action ensued.

It is true that Congress has continued to provide financial assistance to Palau per the terms of the extension agreement—but only on an installment basis, year-by-year. No long-term commitment to our ally has been forthcoming. Yet, the Republic of Palau continues to send its citizens to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. Palau votes with the United States in the United Nations 95 percent of the time. And Palau's keystone geographic position in the defensive "second island chain" in the Western Pacific has not altered.

Our failure to follow through on a negotiated agreement with a key ally not only leaves Palau uncertain about America's commitment. It leaves any nation that receives an assurance from the United States wondering whether America is good for its word.

So, it is time to renew the effort here in Congress to affirm the alliance that President Reagan began. The legislation I am introducing approves the extension of the Compact of Free Association with the Republic of Palau. This legislation will help maintain the American presence that we acquired at great cost in the bloody battles of World War II and will bulwark America's position in the Western Pacific in the years ahead.

COMMEMORATING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH IN PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the historic St. Joseph Catholic Church in Pensacola, Florida.

St. Joseph parish of Pensacola traces its roots back to 1891, as an outgrowth of St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church and to the pastorship of Reverend Robert Fullerton. Although it was founded as the first African-American church in the Diocese of Mobile, St. Joseph Catholic Church cared not only for the religious needs of the Pensacola African-American community, but the church also served individuals from diverse backgrounds who wished to worship at the church. Whether in its original two-story wooden building or its current Gothic Revival style structure adorned with stained-glass windows and completed in 1894, the multi-cultural parish family has been blessed by the Word of God for 125 years.

During that time, the church underwent structural and pastoral changes, operated Maryall Negro Missions and four mission chapels, Our Lady of Fatima Mission School, a grammar school, at one point the only Catholic African-American high school in the state of Florida, St. Joseph orphanage that opened its doors to homeless African-American boys, and Our Lady of Angels Maternity Hospital for African-American women, as well as St. Joseph Cemetery. Today St. Joseph's ministry continues to care for the Pensacola community through the Our Lady of Angels Free Clinic, which serves the homeless and needy individuals throughout the area; the Caring and Sharing Outreach, which provides food and clothing; and the St. Joseph Soup Kitchen, which serves free meals to the homeless.

One constant thread throughout its storied history, however, is the parish's strong faith in God. It is through their strength and that of the local community, guided by the Holy Spirit, that the church has not only stayed together, but has also grown strong through hardship. Whether faced with the Jim Crow laws or the natural disasters like Hurricane Ivan, which devastated the entire Gulf Coast in 2004, nothing could tear apart the bonds of this community. When faced with adversity, the congregation continually emerged stronger and remains today as a pillar in the Northwest Florida community, full of humility and compassion—the characteristics exhibited by its namesake thousands of years ago.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to honor St. Joseph Catholic Church of Pensacola, its leadership and its congregants for 125 years of faithful service to God. For over a century St. Joseph's has been an integral part of the Pensacola community, my wife Vicki and I thank them for their dedication to the people of Northwest Florida and pray for their continued success. May God grant St. Joseph parish many more years to come and may His blessings continue to shine down on them.

INTRODUCTION OF THE JUSTIN
SMITH MORRILL CONGRES-
SIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce my legislation, the Justin Smith Morrill Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2016. This legislation would honor a true American hero by posthumously awarding the Honorable Justin Smith Morrill with the Congressional Gold Medal. Mr. Morrill was elected to six terms in the U.S. House of Representatives and six terms in the United States Senate, making him the longest serving Member of Congress in the 19th Century. During his tenure, he chaired the House Committee on Ways and Means, the Senate Committee on Finance, and the Senate Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds. As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Buildings and Grounds, he served as the principle advocate for financing and constructing the Thomas Jefferson Building of the Library of Congress and planned the location of the U.S. Supreme Court Building. He also raised funds to complete the unfinished Washington Monument and advocated for the Smithsonian Institution throughout his service in Congress.

However, his greatest achievement was authoring the Morrill Act of 1862, which created the land-grant university system. Today, land-grant and other public universities award nearly 1 million degrees annually and perform more than \$37 billion in research. Additionally, almost 30 years later, Senator Morrill authored the Morrill Act of 1890, which created historically black land-grant universities.

Justin Smith Morrill is a man who has provided generations and millions of Americans—especially those from working class families—with access to higher education throughout the nation. His achievements have inspired American history, values, and culture and will be recognized and honored by generations to come. For these reasons, and many others, I urge all members to join me in supporting this commonsense legislation, which will honor this great American hero with the Congressional Gold Medal.

TRIBUTE TO NICK PELLETT

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Nick Pellett of Atlantic, Iowa for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. Nick is a member of Boy Scout Troop 366, Omaha, Nebraska and the Soaring Eagle District of the Mid-America Council.

The Eagle Scout designation is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about five percent of Boy Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained over the past century.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. Nick's Eagle Project was coordinating the painting of dugouts, backstop, restroom facility, and the snack shack for the Benson Little League Park in Omaha, Nebraska. The work ethic Nick has shown in his Eagle Project and every other project leading up to his Eagle Scout rank speaks volumes of his commitment to serving a cause greater than himself and assisting his community.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent Nick in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him on obtaining the Eagle Scout ranking, and I wish him nothing but continued success in his future education and career.

HONORING THE LIFE OF
MR. JAMES SPEDDING

HON. CHRIS COLLINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of New York's 27th Congressional District, Mr. James Spedding. Mr. Spedding honorably served his country, his family, and his community until his recent passing on January 22, 2016.

Jim was born in Lockport, NY on April 2, 1929, to parents John Carl and Blanch. After graduating from Lockport High School in 1947, Jim was eager to serve his country; and, in 1948 he enlisted in the United States Air Force. Jim proudly served his country until 1969, when he retired from the Air Force as a Chief Master Sergeant. During his service, Jim traveled to Texas, Mississippi, Korea, New York and California—but Jim's travels did not hold him back from pursuing higher education. During his 21 years of service, Jim earned degrees from Foothill College and the University of Nebraska, and graduate degrees from Chapman University and the University of Southern California. After returning home to his friends, family, and his beautiful wife, Helen, Jim worked for Harrison Radiator Division, GMC until officially retiring in 1989. After spending 41 years serving his country and his family, Jim spent the next 26 years serving his community. Working closely with the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Base, the AARP Income Tax Program, the NYS Office for the Aging, the Dale Association, and the Sisters Hospital, Jim demonstrated how important it is for members of our community to live their life committed to helping those in need.

As I reflect on the impact Jim Spedding had on those around him, I am proud to say he was able to leave his three wonderful children, three grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and all of his nieces and nephews with a proud example of how to live.

THANK YOU PETER

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, having been in the United States Marine Corps my whole life, I learned a valuable lesson; always surround yourself with loyal people. For me, I'm lucky to have the best staff on Capitol Hill—all of them have become part of my family.

It's nostalgic that I come to the floor today to personally thank Peter Rescigno who will be leaving my office at the end of this week. Peter has been with me since I was elected as the Representative for California's Eighth Congressional District three years ago and has become a fixture of Longworth 1222. As he prepares to leave for New York, I can't thank him enough for the counsel and dedication he has provided to me and the constituents of California's Eighth Congressional District.

A joke I always share with people is when I hired Peter, I also needed to hire a translator. You know, being from New York, he speaks so fast and you can never understand a single word he says. Don't let that fool you, Peter is one of the most talented people I've ever met—his dedication and loyalty stops at nothing. He always has a smile on and deals with anything and everything you throw his way. Trust me; I've thrown some unexpected things his way—he's never let me down.

For this Marine, who's seen change all too frequently, this goodbye is one of the hardest.

Peter, as you prepare to leave for New York, I want you to know that thanks for this Congressman will never be enough. I'll always be grateful for your help and most importantly your friendship. I'm excited to hear about the great things you'll accomplish.

Make me proud, you always know where to find me.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD L. HANNA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 64 on H.R. 3036, I am not recorded because I was absent for personal reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted Aye.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, on February 9, 2016 I was absent for recorded vote Number 64.

I would like to reflect how I would have voted if I were here: on Roll Call Number 64 I would have proudly voted yes, expressing my support for the National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, February 11, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY 23

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of the Interior.

SD-366

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of State.

SD-419

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine the Department of Energy atomic energy defense activities and programs in review of the defense authorization request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

FEBRUARY 25

1:30 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the Tribal Law and Order Act 5 years later, focusing on the next steps to improve justice systems in Indian communities.

SH-216

MARCH 2

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission.

SR-253

MARCH 3

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment

To hold hearings to examine regulatory reforms to improve equity market structure.

SD-538

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Energy.

SD-366

MARCH 8

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Forest Service.

SD-366

MARCH 9

2 p.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the enforcement of the antitrust laws.

SD-226

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Thursday, February 11, 2016

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LOUDERMILK).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 11, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BARRY LOUDERMILK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF DOUG RICHARDSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. JOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a gentleman who has dedicated his life to serving our Nation, a true American hero from the State of Florida, Mr. Doug Richardson. Mr. Richardson is retiring from the United States Special Operations Command after 50 years of government service.

Mr. Richardson currently serves as a defense intelligence senior leader and as the program executive officer for Surveillance, Reconnaissance, and Exploitation at USSOCOM. A West Point graduate, Mr. Richardson distinguished himself throughout his military career, retiring as a colonel from Active Duty in the United States Army in 1993 and then continuing his service to USSOCOM as a civilian.

Perhaps the best example of Doug's integrity and courage is recorded in his Silver Star Medal citation, which was awarded to Doug for his heroism in combat during the Vietnam war. On June 18, 1969, while serving as an adviser with the 4th Cavalry Regiment of

the Army of the Republic of Vietnam, then-Captain Richardson accompanied a small armored infantry team moving to break through a very determined enemy force to rescue the crewmen of a downed United States Army helicopter. As the unit approached the village, it came under intense rocket-propelled grenade and automatic weapons fire from very well-concealed positions. The area was also known to be heavily mined and set with traps.

As the attempts of the Vietnamese to reach the helicopter were continually repulsed by enemy counterattacks, Captain Richardson dismounted his track, rallied a small force of Vietnamese soldiers, and then led them to the helicopter through enemy fire, exhorting his comrades to vigorously engage the enemy. Disregarding his personal safety and armed with only a pistol, Captain Richardson led his men through the mined area and into an assault on the enemy positions.

Following his example, the soldiers, though at a tactical disadvantage, pressed the attack vigorously and ultimately broke the resistance and secured the helicopter. Despite a hail of small-arms fire and hand grenades directed at his position, Doug continued his search for the survivors until he had found the remains of all U.S. crewmembers and then remained to extract the bodies of his fallen comrades from the wreckage. As a result of Captain Richardson's valiant display of battlefield courage, the Vietnamese force was able to hold the area from a tenacious enemy and return the fallen soldiers to allied control.

Mr. Speaker, USSOCOM will miss Doug Richardson's leadership. As a Nation, let us recognize his valiant service. I ask that this body join me in honoring and congratulating Mr. Doug Richardson on a most honorable and truly heroic career.

FREE PUERTO RICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I come with a humble message from the Puerto Rican people to the House of Representatives: Free Puerto Rico.

Free Puerto Rico so that she can solve the problem of her crushing debt without being handcuffed by Congress. Free Puerto Rico so that her hospitals can stay open for sick moms and dads and her schools stay open for children. Nobody should fear that their house

will burn down because the firemen have not been paid.

So far the response to Puerto Rico's debt crisis from Washington—the only place that Puerto Rico is forced to rely on—has been very little, and greedy bondholders and hedge fund managers only care about Puerto Rico as a wager, a way to make money whether Puerto Rico sinks or swims.

Right now, Puerto Rico needs serious, sustained attention from Washington to find a path forward such that Puerto Rico is neither absolved of her obligations nor mortally wounded by them. Mr. Speaker, here is what it comes down to: when the U.S. Supreme Court said that Puerto Rico belongs to but is not a part of the United States, the responsibility to care for her and her people came along with that judgment.

Congress must act responsibly for the fact that we expect Puerto Rico to pay its obligation, but we force her to play by a particular set of rules. Puerto Rico cannot declare bankruptcy because Congress passed a law saying that she could not. Puerto Rico is under the choke hold of the Jones Act, a law passed right here in this room, without any consultation with the Puerto Rican people, that says, by law, Puerto Rico cannot shop around for the best deal on shipping. No. They must buy the most expensive, which means double the import costs and an estimated \$500 million extra on Puerto Rico's food bill alone.

When it comes to producing for themselves, a large chunk of the best agricultural land—the land that sustains and feeds a nation—is taken away from them for U.S. military bases. Thirteen percent of the land is gone.

Puerto Rico is a tropical island, but a lot of its fruit and vegetables and almost all of its food is imported. We must allow Puerto Rico to create an agricultural economy, allowing Puerto Ricans to feed themselves. The economy produces goods the people do not consume, and the people consume goods that they do not produce.

Even when the U.S. is caught red-handed stealing water from Puerto Rico's freshwater supply—not paying a dime for it—what happens? The U.S. Government is not held responsible or made to pay. When the military bombs and pollutes Vieques and Culebra, does the U.S. Government feel any obligation to restore it? Not really.

So, Mr. Speaker, when Congress talks about Puerto Rico's debt, I say we look at the totality of the debt—the part

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

owed to Puerto Rico, not just the part Puerto Rico owes to Wall Street. Every soldier she has sent to war, every time the U.S. has stepped in to override her courts and her government, these debts add up but are not accounted for.

Now, what is the solution that everyone in Washington is lining up behind? A Federal control board. Imagine that. An island that cannot determine its own destiny. It has to play an economic game with a stacked deck and all the rules rigged against her. What is the solution in Washington? Take away what little autonomy they have left.

If Congress were smart, we would find a way to get out of the way. Free Puerto Rico's people to unleash their inherent, hardworking character, spirit, and dedication. Free Puerto Ricans to work and toil and build and create. Free Puerto Rico so that she can build a sustainable economy that keeps her people at home in the land of their birth and their heritage.

We cannot get sidetracked by seeing Puerto Rico's economic health exclusively through the lens of food stamps, Medicaid, government programs, and further dependency on Washington. We must make the conversation about jobs for Puerto Ricans, jobs that build the economy, the tax base, and the self-sufficiency of the island.

Mr. Speaker, Puerto Rico's problems were a long time in the making, but I have utter confidence in Puerto Ricans' ability to solve them if we in the Congress begin to listen to them, work with them, and recognize them as equal partners.

We must free Puerto Rico so that the Puerto Rican people can free themselves.

KURDISH PESHMERGA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the important efforts made by the Kurds and the Peshmerga in the fight against ISIS.

Secretary of Defense Ash Carter said last December: "The Kurdish Peshmerga have been exactly what we have been looking for in this whole fight in Iraq and Syria, namely a capable and motivated force that we can enable."

As you know, Mr. Speaker, we need to do more to combat ISIS on the ground and also to help our allies who are willing to join us in this effort. ISIS is a brutal evil, and it is one of the greatest threats to both our national security and to the security of our allies in the region.

We continue to read reports of ISIS raping women, beheading captives, and brutally torturing their prisoners; and ISIS' alleged use of chemical weapons against the Kurds in Iraq and Syria re-

affirms the danger posed by this terrorist group. During the conflict against ISIS, the Kurds tell me that at least 1,600 Peshmerga forces have died and thousands more have been wounded, and we see some of these pictures here on this graphic.

We are thankful to all of the members of the Peshmerga who are fighting to eradicate the evil of ISIS, including several all-women units who are proud to fight for their people's freedom. These are the hardships that they all endure.

Unfortunately, the Peshmerga still don't have the proper weapons, the proper equipment—most of which is over 30 years old—and they are still running low on ammunition. In fact, the Peshmerga are using captured ISIS tanks to roll through minefields, while ISIS is using American equipment that they have picked up after overturning Mosul.

I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the legislation introduced by the chairman and ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, which would authorize the direct provision of weapons to the Peshmerga, a bill which our committee passed unanimously in December.

The Peshmerga have already proven to be one of the most capable forces on the battlefield, and making sure that they are strong, making sure that they are well-equipped is crucial to defeating the ISIS threat that confronts us all. The Peshmerga are continuing to fight despite not being paid for months, with uncertain logistical backup, and with inadequate weapons and equipment—three strikes against them.

The Peshmerga need our help, and we must get them what they need in order to have them continue to be successful. The Peshmerga provides safe havens for Muslims, Christians, Yazidis, and people of any religious minority who have been oppressed. According to the Kurds, about 300,000 Syrian refugees and 1.5 million internally displaced persons are in the Kurdistan region, where there is a growing humanitarian crisis.

I will turn to the other poster that I have, Mr. Speaker, their fighting forces.

The burden of war and the responsibility of caring for 1.8 million additional people have pushed the Kurdistan region's economy to the brink of collapse. My friend, Igor Pasternak, recently briefed me on his visit to the Black Tiger Peshmerga base south of Mosul on the ISIS front line, and he introduced me to the Kurdistan Regional Government's representative to the U.S., Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman.

Ms. Rahman's parents were sentenced to death by Saddam Hussein because they refused to bow down to his tyranny, and instead they fought for Kurdish liberation and for human

rights. Her parents lived to see Saddam's downfall, and her father continued his leadership role in the Kurdish region's struggle before being tragically assassinated by Islamic extremists in 2004.

In the Iraq city of Erbil, Sami Abdul Rahman Park honors Ms. Rahman's father and, more importantly, recognizes the immense oppression suffered by the Kurdish people.

I am pleased that KRG Representative Rahman is in the gallery today.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to announce that I will soon be introducing a resolution to honor the brave men and women of the Peshmerga and their families who are fighting bravely against the brutal evil of ISIS and to stand with the Kurdish people as they continue to endure great hardships during this war.

God bless each and every one of them.

□ 1015

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, since 1970, more Americans have been killed from domestic gun violence than all the Americans killed in every war going back to the American Revolution.

If all the victims of gun violence since 1970 were put on a wall like the Vietnam Memorial, it would contain 1.5 million names and stretch 2½ miles, 25 times the length of the Vietnam Memorial.

I have had enough of Congress' failure to lead. So each month that we are in session, I am going to speak the name of every person killed in a mass shooting in this country. I will also create my own memorial wall in the hallway outside my office.

Here are the stories of some of the victims of the 18 mass shootings in January of this year. There have been so many people last month affected by mass shootings that I don't have the time to list those who were injured, just those who were murdered.

David Washington, age 24, Eneida Branch, age 31, and Angelica Guadalupe Castro, age 23, who were shot and killed in a house on January 6 in Lakeland, Florida.

Antoine Bell, age 17, was shot and killed while helping a woman with car trouble on January 7 in Memphis, Tennessee.

Raymon Blount, age 29, was shot and killed while standing on the street on January 8 in Chicago, Illinois.

Ira Brown, age 20, was shot and killed on January 11 during a home robbery in Wilmington, Delaware.

Joshua Steven Morrison, age 18, was killed near a house party January 17 in Gloucester County, Virginia.

Randy Peterson, age 64, was a bank president shot and killed during a robbery on January 21 in Eufaula, Oklahoma.

Kevin McGrath, Sr., age 47, and Shanna McGrath, age 42, were killed at their family home on January 23 in Crestview, Florida. Elbert L. Merrick, age 22, was killed outside the home on the road.

Jason and Jacob McLemore, a father and son, age 44 and 17, were killed at the gun store they owned in a dispute over a \$25 service fee. This was on January 23 in Pearl River County, Mississippi.

Cyjia Nicole Bell, age 16, Shujaa Jasiri Silver, age 19, were killed outside a liquor store on January 23 in Los Angeles, California.

An unidentified man was killed at a Mexican restaurant on January 25 in Perris, California.

James Quoc Tran, age 33, and Jeanine L. Zapata, age 45, were killed at a homeless encampment on January 26 in Seattle, Washington.

The Dooley family, including mother Lori, father Todd, son Landon, daughter Brooke, and grandmother Doris, were killed at their family home on January 27 in Chesapeake, Virginia. The shooter, their son, Cameron Dooley, committed suicide after murdering the family.

Andre Gray, age 42, and Tina Gray, age 42, were killed at their family home on January 29 in Caroline County, Virginia.

Sean Marquez, age 19, Jose Aguirre-Martinez, age 19, and Yovani Flores, age 16, were killed at a house party on January 30 in Glendale, Arizona. Sean Marquez died in his sister's arms.

Victor Mendoza, age 46, was shot and killed at a motorcycle show in Denver, Colorado, on January 30.

May the dead rest in peace and the wounded recover completely. It is time. It is time for Congress to end this bloodshed.

APRIL BROOKS' STORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the war on coal touches nearly every family in southern West Virginia. President Obama and his EPA regulations don't just close mines. They put families out of work.

Coal miners call it job scare. Every time miners go underground, they don't know, when they come up, if they will receive a WARN notice telling them that they are going to be laid off. Families worry about making ends meet or moving to find work someplace else.

Businesses that depend on coal are suffering, too. CSX recently announced it is closing its Huntington division

and moving its jobs to another State, in part because of the decline in coal shipments. Norfolk Southern in Bluefield is also moving jobs out of Bluefield, West Virginia.

Shops and restaurants are closing their doors, as families leave town and have less disposable income. Walmart in McDowell County has recently shut its doors, and the residents in the area have to drive to another State just to get groceries. The uncertainty can be paralyzing.

This is reality for so many of my constituents like April Brooks of Princeton in Mercer County. April writes me:

"My husband has worked in the mining industry for the last eleven years, and my dad was a coal miner for over thirty years.

"Like every family that depends on coal for a living, we live day to day worrying about what will happen tomorrow. You can't plan for the future because of the uncertainty.

"I went back to work several years ago so that we would have supplemental income in case of layoffs. We love our State, but how does one stay here and survive if the jobs aren't there?"

Mr. Speaker, President Obama's job-killing overregulations are having real consequences for real West Virginians. We need to pass policies that create jobs and ensure a future for all West Virginians, all West Virginia families, so they can stay and work and live in our great State.

CLEAN POWER PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of EPA's Clean Power Plan.

I am concerned that the Supreme Court ruling on the Clean Power Plan will significantly and unnecessarily delay the full implementation of this important action.

The longer we wait, the more expensive it will be to reduce greenhouse gas pollution and the less chance that we have to keep this world's warming below a safe threshold.

This week's Supreme Court decision only highlights Congress' inaction on the issue of climate change as well as the immediate and pressing need for action.

A damaged climate has a negative impact upon our Nation and on my southern California community. Changing weather patterns, more frequent droughts, worsening air quality, and sea level rise all cost us money and threaten the well-being of our families and our neighbors.

We all want the world to be safe, to be a healthy place to raise our families

and to grow our economy. Now America has the opportunity to lead the world in making our environment safe and healthy, both now and into the future.

We can do this by increasing our use of local, renewable energy sources, investing in research and development to bring about the next generation of clean and efficient energy systems, and assisting communities both here and abroad in adapting to the inevitable changes that are caused by the damages that have already been done to the climate.

Reducing emissions from our power sector is a foundational action in this endeavor. This is an achievable endeavor.

America's innovation has given us spaceflight, the Internet, cures to disease once thought to be incurable. Our innovation and our leadership is paving the way for a cleaner, safer world, and many States have already determined how they can meet their goals and reduce carbon pollution.

Cities and electric utilities in my district have taken the extraordinary steps in increasing efficiency and sustainable practices to reduce their carbon footprint.

My State of California is on track to exceed its carbon pollution reduction goals under the Clean Power Plan. California implemented the first statewide carbon trading system and has set ambitious targets for increasing renewable energy, increased efficiency, and decreased petroleum usage.

America's leadership like this will save us money and create jobs, but if we delay, the costs will be higher to us and especially to our children and grandchildren.

We are not doing this alone. Because greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide spread around the world, no country is immune to the damaged climate. No country can fix this problem alone.

Representatives of over 200 nations recently gathered in Paris and agreed on an international agreement to lower greenhouse gas emissions and develop strategies to adapt to changing climate.

This contribution from the world's biggest polluters, including China and India, represents 90 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions.

These international contributions demonstrate how seriously the world is taking its moral responsibility to care for our common home, our families, and our neighbors.

This roadmap for the world reduces climate-damaging greenhouse gas emissions, increases investments in clean energy development and deployment, and assists the most vulnerable communities in adapting to climate change.

But the United States has to do its part. This pause on the Clean Power Plan slows down the progress we have

been making and puts U.S. leadership on climate in question.

I am deeply troubled by the Supreme Court's decision, but I am optimistic that the Clean Power Plan will ultimately be upheld.

By acting to reduce carbon pollution, we will create more opportunity today and a better future tomorrow for all of us.

IN RECOGNITION OF ADMIRAL ROBERT SHUMAKER ON THE 51ST ANNIVERSARY OF HIS IMPRISONMENT DURING THE VIETNAM WAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, today, February 11, a day that for at least me, and I know many other families around our country, is a very dark day.

February 11, 1965, flying off of the USS *Coral Sea*, a young lieutenant commander, Robert Harper Shumaker, was prepared to do a bombing run over North Vietnam.

Taking anti-aircraft fire, he was shot down over North Vietnam. He ejected from his F-8 Crusader 35 feet above the ground, broke his back upon impact, and was immediately captured.

Over the next 8 years, 8 years and a day, he spent time in the Hoa Lo Prison, a prison that we now know as the Hanoi Hilton, one that he was able to name the Hanoi Hilton.

He was considered to be the great communicator because, while he was in captivity, he and a few others devised a tap code system, a tap code system with five rows and five columns that enabled American POWs to communicate with one another to be able to let them know that they were thinking of each other, to be able to make sure that they were exercising the most important muscle in captivity, that is, their brains.

Over the course of those 8 years, Lieutenant Commander Shumaker was considered to be one of the top greatest threats to camp security.

He and 10 other POWs, commonly known as the Alcatraz 11, were taken out of the Hoa Lo Prison, brought over to a prison now known as Alcatraz, and put in solitary confinement.

These 11 heroes included James Stockdale; George Coker; Jeremiah Denton, who was a Senator from the great State of Alabama; Harry Jenkins; George McKnight; James Mulligan; Howard Rutledge; Ron Storz; Nels Tanner; and, Mr. Speaker, our colleague SAM JOHNSON of Texas, who was elected to this body in 1991 and has served with distinction ever since.

□ 1030

Many of the stories that we look back on came from these heroes about the efforts they made to resist their

captors. They were tortured day in and day out for information. Yet, day in and day out, they battled back.

For me, it is very important that we never forget. Fifty-one years after February 11, 1965, I am honored to be able to rise in this body to remember Robert Harper Shumaker for his valiant efforts and heroism. He is near and dear to my heart, Mr. Speaker. He is my uncle. When my wife and I had our first child, we decided we would name her after him, in the hopes that she would have a little bit of the courage, a little bit of the intelligence, and the stick-to-itiveness that Admiral Shumaker has.

The good news, Mr. Speaker, is that February 12, 1973, 591 POWs started their return home. Bob Shumaker, the Alcatraz 11, and many others were on that C-141 that flew out of Hanoi. I am proud to say that they returned home with honor, which was absolutely critical not only for them, but for all of the POWs. It is imperative that we in the United States Congress never forget their sacrifice and heroism.

For me, from now, until as long as I am able to serve in this body, on February 11, I will rise and recognize the heroism of our POWs and say: You will never be forgotten. We will always remember the sacrifice and the heroism that you all have given to our Nation.

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, from the moment I arrived in Congress, I have been working to rebuild and renew America. Our great country, sadly, is falling apart as it falls behind the rest of the world. The American Society of Civil Engineers rates our infrastructure as failing.

I have worked to develop a plan, a vision for infrastructure for this century because people have forgotten our history and are woefully uninformed about the nature of the challenge we face and the opportunities to do it right.

This doesn't need to be a partisan fight in Congress. Indeed, infrastructure used to be much more central to our mission in Congress, dating back to the postal roads mandated by the Constitution to President Eisenhower's interstate freeway system.

I welcome the administration's proposal for an oil fee to invest in green infrastructure. I truly believe that President Obama is committed to investing in infrastructure. He understands its value, and he has worked to include some infrastructure investment in the Recovery Act. I think we all know that it actually should have been much larger than it was; but, nonetheless, was very helpful.

The President has proposed things Congress after Congress that would fund a grander vision. Unfortunately, in the context of this Congress, they were not realistic. They had no chance of passing, probably regardless of who has control, given the nature of those proposals.

Nonetheless, I welcome the administration's proposal for a \$10 per barrel fee on oil to finance green infrastructure because of the timing at this point of incredibly low gas prices, flirting with \$1 a gallon, high oil production, a swollen inventory. Thirty dollars per barrel has become the benchmark.

Unfortunately, the new proposal was launched, as near as I can tell, without consultation with people in either party or the organizations that deal with infrastructure. It was not met with organized support on behalf of the vast array of individuals and organizations who are deeply committed to rebuilding and renewing America. It simply begs the question: Why not just raise the gas tax?

The proposal I have introduced to raise the gas tax was widely supported by business, labor, professions, local government, environmentalists; indeed, it was supported by the widest collection of interest groups supporting any major initiative before Congress. When you get the truckers and AAA both saying, "Raise taxes on motorists and truck drivers," that is a signal.

The proposal does not have the gaps associated with an oil fee that would impose challenges on consumers of oil, like school buses or home heating, and it does provoke the petroleum industry, which has accepted reasonable gas taxes, but would oppose an oil fee.

This is, however, an opportunity for us to revisit the need for investment in infrastructure, now that the administration has signaled its comfort with raising taxes on people who make under \$250,000 a year. The oil fee would be the equivalent of 20 to 25 cents a gallon—far more than the model proposal I had to phase in a 15-cent per gallon increase over 3 years.

Maybe we can reengage the conversation about raising the gas tax. After 24 years, we might follow the lead of President Reagan, who led an effort to raise the gas tax in 1983. After we raise the gas tax, we should index it and then abolish it and replace it with a more sustainable mechanism for funding transportation in the future.

I appreciate the administration starting this conversation related to infrastructure finance. Maybe we can have a broader effort to work cooperatively on an issue that is gaining traction at the State level around the country. Over a dozen States have raised their gas tax, including a number of red Republican States.

This will be something that meets the needs of America now—and in the future—and I hope it is time for us to refocus on it.

PROPOSED CRUDE OIL FEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, at this time of year, we are starting to work on budgets in Washington, D.C.

The President recently proposed his eighth budget. If we want to give credit to the President, he is consistent. He believes that we are just one tax increase, one regulation, one more government program away from prosperity in America. But the reality is, Americans in my district are struggling. They are struggling to be able to maintain the jobs they have. Far too many Americans are struggling to be able to find a job.

One area where we have had an opportunity to be able to provide good-paying jobs has been in responsible energy development in this country. Today, I would like to be able to speak to some of the deeply flawed logic by the Obama administration in trying to eliminate the use of fossil fuels in America.

Mr. Speaker, over the last year and a half, despite the administration's best attempts to stifle production, one of the few areas of the economy that has provided some financial relief to the poor and middle class has been the low price of energy. The cause of this has been the result of American productivity and American ingenuity driving down the costs, making it more affordable for people.

It is a surprise to no one then that, with his latest budget proposal, the President is trying in earnest to take the little savings Americans have welcomed into their wallets and now feed it back to Big Government.

Effectively, what the President is stating is that government—Washington—needs those resources more than the American people do.

Two days ago, the President presented a budget that included a \$10 per barrel tax on crude oil. His budget stated that if tax would result in \$319 billion in revenues that would be used to fund transportation infrastructure, "reduce America's reliance on oil," and ensure "electric cars and other alternatives to oil-based vehicles have the technology and charging infrastructure they need."

I believe we need to be clear. I firmly back the notion that we need to have an all-of-the-above strategy. That is highlighted in the bill I have introduced in this Congress, Planning for American Energy Act, which literally calls for all of the above. It explicitly states as such.

Those resources and technologies are only part of what should be a multi-pronged strategy. If true energy independence is our goal, we cannot simply price ourselves out of using traditional energy resources and transportation fuels. Yet, that is unmistakably exactly what the President is proposing.

So, while cheap energy is one of the few things keeping the economy out of a nose dive into a further deep recession, the President proposes a tax cut on crude oil—whether produced domestically or abroad—that will cut directly into already low revenues, and will undoubtedly be passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices at the pump.

An additional \$10 per barrel will be a significant sum, even with a healthy commodity price, but on the day that the President submitted his proposal, the spot price for a barrel of oil was just under \$30. Given that our oil and gas energy sector is already struggling mightily with this downswing in price, what exactly does the President hope to accomplish by wresting away a third of that sum? The economic impacts of this policy on an industry that is already struggling would be extremely harmful.

Now, I assume that when we envision who the industry is, the picture comes to mind of large, multinational corporations. Make no mistake: they, too, will feel the impacts. But the brunt of an ill-conceived policy, such as what the President has put forward, will fall squarely on the shoulders of small- and medium-sized companies that make up the backbone of our domestic oil and gas industry.

It will also fall squarely on the many contractors who work in those companies. They are geologists, engineers, construction companies, well servicing companies, and the hospitality industry. They are the many hardworking Americans working to provide for their families and working to provide the rest of us with an invaluable resource that we too often take for granted.

The President wishes to move us away from oil as a transportation fuel, so he pursues a purely ideological strategy to force it, never mind who is trampled in the process.

The President wishes, instead, to pursue electric vehicle sales, which, in 2015, accounted for less than 1 percent of the total car sales in the country. Yet, he takes measures to halt coal leasing and bludgeon coal-fired power plants into nonexistence. Coal, of course, is the single largest source of electricity in the United States.

These two incoherent policy pursuits are a perfect demonstration of the complete lack of vision this administration has when it comes to achieving actual energy independence.

Let's stand up for the American consumer and American jobs and reject the President's budget proposals.

RECOGNIZING ABIT MASSEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Abit Massey.

Last week, Mr. Massey was awarded one of the highest honors that anyone can receive from the University of Georgia. On January 27, Mr. Massey was awarded the University of Georgia President's Medal for extraordinary contributions to students in academic programs, the advancement of research, and for inspiring community leaders to enhance Georgians' quality of life.

Mr. Massey graduated from the University of Georgia in 1949, and received his Juris Doctorate from Emory University. For almost 50 years, he was executive director of the Georgia Poultry Federation, known to many as the dean of the poultry industry. Before joining the Georgia Poultry Federation, he was head of the Georgia Department of Commerce, where he created the first Welcome Center in Georgia. He has received numerous awards for his service to the State of Georgia.

But Mr. Massey would argue that his greatest accomplishment would be his family. Mr. Massey, along with his wife, Kayanne, who was a former Miss Georgia, have more than 18 family members who attended the University of Georgia, and the Massey family was named the University of Georgia Alumni Association Family of the Year in 2014.

I commend Mr. Massey for his commitment to Georgia, and I congratulate him for receiving this distinguished award.

RECOGNIZING MS. FRANKIE QUIMBY AND THE ASSOCIATION FOR CULTURAL EQUITY

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Frankie Quimby and the Association for Cultural Equity.

Ms. Quimby, the oldest of 13 children, was born and raised on the Georgia Sea Islands and descended from slaves of the Hopeton and Altama Plantations in Glynn County. She, along with her family, make up the Georgia Sea Island Singers, who have continued to preserve the rich traditions of African American culture, customs, and the songs of the Gullah language. In fact, the Quimby family is one of only a few families who can trace their ancestry back to a specific spot in Africa on the Niger River.

□ 1045

In fact, the Quimby family is one of only a few families who can trace their ancestry back to a specific spot in Africa on the Niger River.

Along with the Association for Cultural Equity, whose mission is to facilitate cultural equity through preservation, publication, and repatriation of music, dance, and spoken word, the Quimby family has been able to continue to preserve the rich heritage of their African American culture throughout the Georgia Sea Islands because people living in the area have been able to retain pure versions of

games and songs brought over from African centuries ago.

I commend Ms. Frankie Quimby, the Quimby family, and the Association for Cultural Equity for preserving this rich history of Georgia's heritage.

STEPHEN ELMO WEEKS

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of Stephen Elmo Weeks, who passed away on January 17, 2016.

Born on December 6, 1919, Elmo, as his friends called him, graduated from Savannah High School in 1940. Upon graduation, Elmo attended the Georgia Institute of Technology before heading off to war in 1942, where he was stationed at a German POW camp in Opelika, Alabama.

Upon his return to Savannah, he joined the family business, Fox & Weeks funeral home, and soon became actively involved as a founding board member for the Savannah Christian Preparatory School.

Mr. Weeks was actively engaged with numerous organizations in the Savannah area, including the Savannah Junior Chamber of Commerce, the Kiwanis Club, and his church and my church, Wesley Monumental United Methodist Church.

He was also a man who recognized and enjoyed the great outdoors. As an avid boater, he spent a significant amount of time on the water, teaching his children, his grandchildren, and his great-grandchildren about life's lessons.

Whether it was having lunch at the Oglethorpe Club with his close friends or his continued involvement with the funeral home into his late eighties, Elmo was a committed and devoted man who always put his friends and family first.

Elmo, your love and service to your family and community will be missed.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF JIM MONAGHAN

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of Jim Monaghan and his dedication to Tybee Island, Georgia.

Born in New York City in 1927, Mr. Monaghan arrived in Savannah by sailboat in 1982 with his wife, Anne Merchant Monaghan. Soon after their arrival in Savannah, they moved to Tybee Island.

Over the years, Mr. Monaghan served Tybee Island with enthusiasm. He served on the Tybee Island City Council, volunteered at the Tybee lighthouse, and delivered stuffed animals to nursing home residents.

He was a board member and former president of the Tybee Island Republican Club. A true gentleman with an uplifting spirit and a warm smile, Mr. Monaghan rarely missed the club's dinner meetings, always enjoying the social atmosphere and meeting new guests.

Mr. Monaghan passed away last week at the age of 88. He is survived by his

two children, Mr. James C. "Tripp" Monaghan III, and Mrs. Shane Sturm.

I am honored to celebrate the life, the generosity, and the character of Jim Monaghan. He will truly be missed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 48 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

God of mercy, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We thank You that we are a nation fashioned out of diverse peoples and cultures, brought forth on this continent in a way not unlike the ancient people of Israel. As out of a desert, You led our American ancestors to this promised land, where they declared their independence and constituted a new nation founded upon inalienable rights given to us by You, our Creator.

Bless our Nation with wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, and bless the Members of this people's House. Renew in us Your Spirit that we may affirm our freedoms by actions proven beyond words.

Bless us this day and every day. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL OF THE FARM CREDIT SYSTEM

(Ms. STEFANIK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the centennial of the Farm Credit System.

One hundred years ago, the Farm Credit System began its mission to provide American agriculture with a steady hand and dependability, which they needed to provide for our Nation.

Throughout its history, the Farm Credit System has helped our farmers through the Great Depression, the agriculture crisis of the 1980s, and even the market collapse of 2008.

This deep-rooted understanding of our Nation's complex agribusiness industry and the people who work tirelessly to send products to market is what makes the Farm Credit System so critical to our producers and their future success.

This dedication to my district in upstate New York and to American agriculture across this great Nation is why I am proud to stand on the House floor today and honor the Farm Credit System on its centennial.

WE MUST NOT WEAKEN AVIATION SAFETY STANDARDS

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, in 2010 Congress passed landmark aviation safety legislation. The provisions of this law reflected the recommendations of the National Transportation Safety Board, which tragically were given urgency after the crash of Continental flight 3407 near Buffalo, New York.

The families of those who were lost in the crash turned their grief into purpose and led a relentless and heroic campaign to pass this law.

Years later—at this very moment, in fact—the families are across the street at a committee markup of the FAA authorization bill, amid rumors that regional airlines might encourage amendments to water down these safety reforms.

I want the families to know that they are not alone. The western New York congressional delegation will fight alongside them and against any attempt to weaken aviation safety standards.

Tomorrow marks the seventh anniversary of the crash. I call on this House not to forget it.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET IGNORES FISCAL REALITIES

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, President Obama released his budget for fiscal year 2017. Some might call this proposal a vision for the future of the country. Well, I am here to tell you the President's vision for America ignores our fiscal realities and the magnitude of the problems we face.

The national debt is nearly \$19 trillion. Our country is in the middle of a fiscal crisis driven by reckless borrowing and runaway government spending, and President Obama once again offers us a budget filled with untenable tax hikes that never balances.

Something has to change or the legacy we leave to our children and grandchildren will be a crushing debt burden and a weaker nation.

Washington has a moral obligation to the American people to present a responsible budget that reins in wasteful Federal overspending and guarantees accountability for the use of taxpayer dollars. House Republicans will continue to do all we can to make this vision a reality.

IN RECOGNITION OF EVA HAMLIN MILLER

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Madam Speaker, I rise today during Black History Month to recognize my mentor and friend, fellow artist and teacher, the late Eva Hamlin Miller.

Eva Miller dedicated her life to her art and her students, encouraging us to pursue our artistic goals. From the 1930s Harlem street scenes to stained glass windows in North Carolina, Mrs. Miller's artistic talents, range, and precision were phenomenal.

She was a pioneering voice for African American art, curating one of the first regional shows of African American art in the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh and founding the African American Atelier with me 25 years ago, an art gallery focusing on African American art and artists located in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Eva Miller possessed an unwavering dedication to students, as a teacher at Tuskegee Institute, Bennett College, Winston-Salem State University, and North Carolina A&T.

Her legacy continues to live on, not only through her work but through the many students she taught and inspired.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to ad-

dress the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today as co-chair of the bipartisan Career and Technical Education Caucus to recognize February as National Career and Technical Education Month.

Career and technical education programs play a key role in closing our Nation's skill gap by preparing students of all ages for the 21st century workforce and jobs. That is why I was encouraged by the inclusion of career and technical education center provisions in the recently passed Every Student Succeeds Act.

Not only does the ESSA provide much-needed flexibility to States and local education agencies, it also encourages businesses to get involved with their local schools. More schools will be able to use Federal funds to provide academic credit for apprenticeships and strengthen their career counseling programs.

This was a result of bipartisan legislation I introduced with the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), my colleague and friend, aimed at informing school counselors of local labor market conditions so that they can best guide the decisionmaking process of their students.

It is my hope that this and other Federal education policies will provide support to schools, businesses, and community organizations in Pennsylvania's Fifth District and across the country as they work to prepare our students for the future.

I look forward to working toward improving and reauthorizing the Perkins Act for career and technical education training.

IN RECOGNITION OF CTE MONTH

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, as co-chairs of the Congressional Career and Technical Education Caucus, I am pleased to join the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON), my good friend, in recognition of CTE Month.

Across the country, students are using CTE programs to seek out career pathways, hone 21st century skills, and find good jobs. Unfortunately, while demand has increased for CTE, Federal funding has been reduced from its high level in 2010 of \$1.3 billion.

It is time, Madam Speaker, that we reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act to deliver student-centered education that provides the right skills for successful careers. We have the opportunity to remake Perkins in a way that works for the new economy in the 21st century. I urge my colleagues to seize this chance.

As Rhode Island's Governor, Gina Raimondo, has put it aptly, it is time to invest in skills that matter and work that pays.

RETURNING TO A FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE NATION

(Mr. EMMER of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the need to control our Nation's debt.

Due to a rapid and unsustainable expansion of the Federal Government, the Obama administration has racked up \$8 trillion in new debt, pushing the national debt to more than \$19 trillion. If we continue down this reckless path, the Congressional Budget Office projects a return to \$1 trillion annual deficits by 2022.

Today, the House of Representatives is working toward returning to a more fiscally responsible nation by voting on the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. This legislation will begin to restore fiscal discipline by requiring the U.S. Treasury Secretary to appear before Congress at least 21 days before hitting the debt ceiling to present the administration's plans to reduce the national debt.

While more work needs to be done, this legislation is one step closer to financial sanity and security.

I want to thank Representative MARCHANT for his hard work on this bill. I urge all my colleagues to support it.

THE NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY STRATEGY

(Mr. RUPPERSBERGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the national cybersecurity strategy included in the President's budget proposal for fiscal year 2017.

This is a solid framework that includes a 35 percent increase for cyber and a new high-level official focused solely on implementing a cyber strategy across the entire Federal Government.

Cyber hackers are costing American companies billions of dollars in intellectual property every year. Terrorists, like ISIS, organized criminals, and even state actors, such as Iran and North Korea, are honing their cyber skills, which could put our country at critical risk, including infrastructure shutdowns.

For years, I have advocated for a Cabinet-level cyber position with budget authority because the cyber threat is so severe. This new official should have real authority to drive change across the Federal Government.

We must also continue working on issues still unaddressed, such as the insider threat posed by people within the

government. An example of that is Edward Snowden, who gave stolen American information to Russia and China.

This is especially critical in the wake of a data breach affecting more than 22 million current, former, and prospective Federal employees last June.

I urge my colleagues to support this priority.

CHILDREN'S BEREAVEMENT CENTER

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the Children's Bereavement Center, an organization located in my congressional district that has been providing support and lifting spirits for so many south Florida families after facing a tragic loss.

Founded in 1999, the Children's Bereavement Center offers free peer support groups and serves as an outstanding resource for children, parents, and caregivers, providing them with the aid they so desperately need while experiencing the hardship of losing a loved one, a tragedy that some families may one day experience.

When dealing with loss, it is often the grieving children who are affected the most. This wonderful organization has made it its mission to assist students at Miami-Dade County public schools, having helped over 1,300 children just this past year alone.

I am so thankful for the noble endeavor that the Children's Bereavement Center has undertaken so that adults and children can find a way to find peace and move forward with their lives.

CALIFORNIA'S DEVASTATING DROUGHT

(Mr. COSTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the current status of California's devastating drought.

I urge the California State and Federal agencies to maximize the pumping of water in the delta to the allowable legal limits.

As a result of State and Federal agencies' inability to operate at the most flexible range available under the Biological Opinions of the Endangered Species Act, over 44,000 acre-feet of water has been lost just this last week during these El Nino conditions, and over 131,000 acre-feet of water has been lost this year, water that could be used to grow crops and to feed people. This is morally wrong.

Congress must pass legislation to provide relief for the people of the San Joaquin Valley and California. Senator

FEINSTEIN's introduction of water legislation is a critical step. I urge the Senate to pass her legislation so we can enter into negotiations with the House-passed bill, which I strongly support.

Time is of the essence. Every day of delay only results in further losses of the vital water that is necessary for the people of the valley and the people of California. Californians need to use this water during these times of El Nino conditions.

I urge that we do the right thing.

□ 1215

LITTORAL COMBAT SHIP

(Mr. BYRNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my disappointment with the President's budget request.

I am especially concerned about the President's proposal to cut the Littoral Combat Ship program. These ships are built, in part, by Austal USA in my home district.

I have seen these ships being built, I have talked to the Navy leadership, and I have visited with the sailors who are actually working on these vessels. They all support the LCS and the vital role it plays in the Navy's fleet. In fact, just last year, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus said: "We have a need, a demonstrated need, for 52 of these small surface combatants."

Cutting the LCS program, along with failing to include an additional Expeditionary Fast Transport ship, would be a tremendous mistake as it relates to maintaining the workforce base that we have worked so hard to build up along the Gulf Coast.

So I have a message for the 4,000 people who work at the Austal shipyard in Mobile: This proposal from a lameduck Secretary of Defense and a lameduck President will not stand.

I will fight every day to make sure that our Navy has the resources they want and need to protect our Nation and keep sea lanes open. The LCS is a critical part of that mission.

CONGRATULATING YOLANDA ADAMS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great enthusiasm to honor and salute Yolanda Adams, an enormous and wonderful talent of gospel music, and to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Yolanda Adams Morning Show.

Many know that I introduced legislation to make September Gospel Music Heritage Month in order to honor the many talented Americans who enjoy

singing, writing, and providing inspiration through gospel music. Elvis Presley won his first Grammy with gospel music.

I remember young Yolanda Adams singing in a church in Houston, and the inspiration she gave even then. She was a young teacher who worked until she finally knew that her talent was worthy of presenting it to the American people.

Yolanda Adams rose to fame as one of gospel music's greats, making her debut in 1988. I remember her song, "Just as I Am." Since then, Yolanda has been wowing gospel audiences. She has been before the President of the United States and all over the world, but yet she is a humble person.

Following her illustrious music career, she began the Yolanda Adams Morning Show. These shows often don't last, but her spirit has guided it forward. She connects with listeners, bringing them warm and inspirational messages. Her music and growth has been wonderful.

Mr. Speaker, Yolanda's co-hosts, Anthony Valary and Marcus D. Wiley, give love and camaraderie every morning. They make it not just a morning show, but a celebration of friends and family.

I am delighted to stand here today to call Yolanda Adams an American treasure. She is a native daughter of Houston, and someone who understands God's blessings, but is not selfish. She provides those blessings to others through her musical genius.

Congratulations to Yolanda Adams for 10 years of the Yolanda Adams Morning Show.

TRIBUTE TO SUSAN JORDAN

(Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life and legacy of Susan Jordan, the beloved principal of Amy Beverland Elementary School, who served the Lawrence, Indiana, community for 22 years as an educator.

In January, when a bus accidentally lost control, Principal Jordan put herself between her students and the bus, saving their lives and losing her own. I am extraordinarily moved by her heroic sacrifice and the incredible outpouring of love and support from her students, fellow teachers, and the greater Lawrence community.

Principal Jordan was known for her warmth and her passion for her students to achieve their very best. At the start of every school day, she stopped by each classroom to welcome and encourage her students. Under her leadership, Amy Beverland Elementary was named a Four Star School by the Indiana Department of Education, its designation for excellence.

On behalf of Indiana's Fifth Congressional District, I offer my deepest sympathy to Principal Jordan's family and friends, the students who were injured, the Lawrence Township community, and all Hoosiers who mourn her loss and cherish her memory.

REMEMBERING FLIGHT 3407

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak today about Flight 3407 that crashed in Buffalo, New York, 7 years ago tomorrow.

This plane crashed inside of the runway on an icy February night. We learned that the pilot and the copilot had never been trained at all on flying into an icy situation. The young woman who was the copilot had flown in the night before from Seattle. She was paid so little—around \$13,000 a year—that she could not afford a motel room to sleep, so she slept on the floor somewhere. On the black box, you could hear them yawning before the crash.

In that plane crash were two of the best musicians in the United States, a woman who knew more about Rwanda and its problems than anybody else, and one of the most extraordinary anthropologists in the world. They died because these pilots had no idea of how to fly in those conditions.

Colgan Air, their owner, was trying to take some responsibility.

We have worked with the families of the people who died on that plane. They have selflessly come down here for 7 years, and we have finally gotten some regulation through the FAA of how much training they had to have, that at least the pilot or the copilot had to have some hours of flying time behind them that would be of some use.

Now, we are facing an FAA bill here today, where they are trying to undo those safety regulations. It absolutely applies to every last one of us in the United States.

For goodness sake, I implore my colleagues not to let it happen, that those regulations would be weakened and, once more, we would be flying people who are living on subsistence wages, unable to really cope with the weather or the elements.

We deserve better than that in this century.

PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

(Mr. LUCAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, the President submitted his final annual budget proposal to Congress this week. It was my hope that the President would have used this opportunity to progress an

agenda that reflects our Nation's needs. Unfortunately, it seems to be exactly the opposite.

The President's proposed budget is supposed to serve as a blueprint for our Nation's prosperity. Sadly, his plan offers an unrealistic way forward. Currently, our national debt stands at over \$19 trillion. If the President got his way, that number would rise to \$27 trillion over the next decade.

The President has chosen to ignore the facts. If Americans have to balance their checkbooks and live within their means, so should the Federal Government. To pay for his spending, the President hopes to raise taxes and institute a \$10 per barrel levy on an already anemic oil industry.

I believe my constituents deserve better than that from the President, and we should work together to ensure certainty, not uncertainty, in today's challenging environment.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, we are a Nation of immigrants and a Nation of laws. When those two come into conflict, the responsibility for addressing it belongs in this body, the United States Congress.

We are a compassionate people. We need to unite families. We need to provide a pathway to citizenship. We need to make sure that companies in America have access to the talented employee pool that they need.

We are also a Nation of laws. We need to get serious about our border security. We need employment verification and real penalties for those who violate our laws.

It is past time for Congress to act on immigration reform. I renew my call for Congress to restore the rule of law and recognize that our Nation of immigrants must also be a moral Nation, leading the way for the next great generation of Americans to take their place alongside us as leaders of American industry, civil society, and even in this very body itself.

CRISIS AT OUR OWN BORDER

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, along with other members of the Border Caucus, I traveled to the lower Rio Grande Valley sector of the United States border.

Mr. Speaker, the flood of illegal immigrants across the southern border has proven to be a mounting American crisis, greatly impacting Texas families.

You simply cannot understand the magnitude of the problem in the lower Rio Grande Valley unless you see it for yourself. It is impossible to understand the characteristics of this ever-changing region and why it is so difficult to manage. That is why I make regular visits to the border.

President Obama missed an opportunity when he refused Governor Perry's request to come to the border while he was in Texas in July 2014. I would renew that call for our executive to come to the border.

The United States, as a Nation, has a sovereign right and responsibility to define and defend its borders. In order for this problem to be improved, the executive must travel to the border and have the will to make this a priority and get it done.

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH

(Mr. DOLD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize February as Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

One in three teens will experience some form of abuse in a dating relationship. As a father of three young children, I recognize that this is not a partisan problem, but rather a violation of basic human rights that demands immediate action. I believe it is our collective responsibility as mentors, leaders, and even parents, to find a way to protect our youth and to prevent them from dating abuse.

While current Federal law prohibits someone from purchasing a handgun if they are convicted of abusing someone they live with, unfortunately, victims who have been abused by a current or former dating partner are not protected.

Abuse of a dating partner is unacceptable as domestic abuse, plain and simple, which is why I introduced the Zero Tolerance for Domestic Abusers Act with my good friend, Congresswoman DEBBIE DINGELL. I encourage all of my colleagues to support this important bipartisan effort.

In the meantime, we can make a difference by encouraging our schools, community-based organizations, parents, and teens to come together to combat teen dating violence.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 28, 114th Congress, and the order of

the House of January 6, 2015, of the following Members on the part of the House to the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies:

Mr. RYAN, Wisconsin
Mr. MCCARTHY, California
Ms. PELOSI, California

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order at any time through the legislative day of February 12, 2016, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules, as though under clause 1 of rule XV, relating to the bill (H.R. 757) to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2017, COMMON SENSE NUTRITION DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM FEBRUARY 15, 2016, THROUGH FEBRUARY 22, 2016

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 611 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 611

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2017) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report,

may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. On any legislative day during the period from February 15, 2016, through February 22, 2016—

(a) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and

(b) the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

SEC. 3. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

SEC. 4. The Committee on the Judiciary may, at any time before 5 p.m. on Tuesday, February 16, 2016, file a report to accompany H.R. 3624.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

□ 1230

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 611 provides for a rule to consider a commonsense, bipartisan piece of legislation that will fix a problem that was wholly created by the intransigence of the bureaucrats at the Food and Drug Administration. This important bill amends the difficultly drafted Affordable Care Act, which rigidly mandated that food establishments provide physical notices of the nutritional value of every food item that they offer.

Perhaps this is a noble endeavor in theory, until one considers that the in-

flexible rule put out by the Food and Drug Administration makes no allowances for establishments that allow for multiple variations of their offerings. This could mean that a pizza chain, for example, would have to provide calorie counts for every possible different type of pizza combination that one could order, a mandate that would result in a pizza place needing to literally wallpaper their establishment, and perhaps the establishment next door, with all of the different scenarios for personalized pizzas.

The rule provides for 1 hour of debate. It is equally divided between the majority and the minority of the Energy and Commerce Committee. The Committee on Rules made in order every amendment that was submitted to the committee to be considered, two Democratic amendments and one bipartisan offering. Finally, the rule affords the minority the customary motion to recommit, a final opportunity to amend the bill should the minority choose to exercise this option.

Mr. Speaker, the issue before us today in the underlying bill is not about whether restaurants should provide their customers with nutritional information; the issue is fundamentally one of the proper role of government. Since President Obama moved into the White House and NANCY PELOSI and HARRY REID served as his stewards in the 110th Congress, the Democrats have drummed a steady beat toward expanding the role of government in every direction in our lives.

H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act, is bipartisan legislation introduced by Representatives CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS and LORETTA SANCHEZ to fix the Food and Drug Administration's unworkable implementation of the menu labeling law. The Food and Drug Administration's regulatory framework is not just cumbersome for the food industry, it also impedes a business' ability to provide meaningful information that customers can use to make nutrition decisions.

The Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act is critical to avoid harming consumer choice, harming jobs, and harming small business. The Federal Government should not presume to know how restaurants, supermarkets, cafes, convenience stores, and entertainment venues can best serve their customers and run their businesses, yet the Food and Drug Administration has done exactly that.

For years now, many restaurants and retail food establishments have disclosed caloric information to their customers. This industry expertise should have been instructive to the Food and Drug Administration as it developed the Federal regulation. In fact, the Food and Drug Administration took 3½ years before finalizing a rule that virtually ignores serious concerns

raised about the harm of an overly prescriptive, one-size-fits-all approach.

Not only did the FDA disregard the input of consumers and industry experts, it also extended the scope of the regulation far beyond what anyone could have imagined when they voted for this bill in March of 2010. If the Food and Drug Administration is allowed to implement the rule as it stands, the Office of Management and Budget has determined it will require more than 14 million—14 million—compliance hours, in addition to costs exceeding \$1 billion. Even the Food and Drug Administration acknowledged that initial compliance will cost almost \$400 million, with recurring costs as high as \$150 million per year. Likely, the actual costs for the private sector will far exceed those estimates.

Perhaps even more concerning than the costs, food service establishments. Food service establishments are going to face Federal criminal penalties for even the slightest failure to comply with the framework envisioned by the Food and Drug Administration.

Under section 403(a)(1) of the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, food labeling must be truthful and not misleading. Food labeling that does not meet the Food and Drug Administration's standard for "truthful and nonmisleading" is deemed "misbranded." Under the U.S. Code, introducing misbranded food into commerce is a prohibited act, and the liable party shall be imprisoned for up to 1 year, fined not more than \$1,000, or both.

Food to which these menu labeling requirements apply is deemed misbranded if the Food and Drug Administration's rule requirements are not met. It is not necessary that the person intentionally mislead customers. Under the Food and Drug Administration's framework, merely adding an extra slice of pepperoni will render the calorie content on the menu misleading, and your chef is now a criminal.

People say that the Food and Drug Administration won't put people in jail over this, so I don't think there should be an issue in saying just that, that people will not be put in jail for an extra slice of pepperoni. I don't think there is a problem with codifying that in statute. I think it will give great reassurance to food preparers in the industry.

The Food and Drug Administration's regulation is applicable to restaurants and similar establishments that sell ready-to-eat food that are part of chains with at least 20 stores. This would include bakeries, cafeterias, coffee shops, convenience stores, delis, entertainment venues, food service vendors, fast-food take-out or delivery establishments, grocery stores, confectionery stores, quick service restaurants, and table service restaurants.

Although stores may be part of a nationwide chain, there is substantial

variation between regional locations. For example, convenience stores noted in their testimony that, unlike a McDonald's or a doughnut shop that have the same format everywhere they go, many convenience stores have different layouts based upon region, so coming up with a uniform standard would, in fact, be challenging. This means that all chains will incur individual costs for nutritional analysis and for menu labeling for each location, not just one time done at the national level.

Under the rule, the definition of a menu is applied broadly to mean any writing a customer uses to place an order. This approach would include everything from in-store menu boards to print advertising in the form of door hangers or circulars or online advertising. The rule requires that each menu item have a clearly visible calorie count, including separate calorie information for variable menu items such as toppings or flavor additives.

Pizza chains estimate that there are over 30 million combinations available to customers; and the calorie content for each option couldn't fit on any menu board that I have ever seen. Grocers estimate that the rule would include hundreds of items in stores that are offered subject to availability and demand, things such as fresh produce, baked goods, seafood, making it virtually impossible to have accurate menu boards without changing them on a nearly constant basis. Many of these businesses would likely stop offering the range of options that are currently available because it would simply cost too much to comply.

Clearly, the Food and Drug Administration's regulation does not provide a workable framework for businesses. This rule should be about ensuring customers are provided with accurate, trustworthy nutrition information to help inform their decisions, all the while, enabling small businesses the ability to comply.

Representative MCMORRIS RODGERS' bill is carefully constructed to create transparency for consumers, while maintaining the flexibility necessary for all regulated businesses to be in compliance. The Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act will establish a more reasonable standard for Federal regulation by applying nutritional disclosure requirements to establishments that derive more than 50 percent of their total revenue from the sale of food.

The bill also ensures that inadvertent human error will not subject a local franchise owner to crippling fines or possibly imprisonment. Nutritional information could be provided by a remote access menu for food establishments where the majority of orders are placed by customers off premises. Establishments with self-serve food may comply with the requirements for res-

taurants or place signs with nutritional information adjacent to each food item, and the bill clarifies that advertisements are not menus.

Yesterday, during the Rules Committee hearing, Ranking Member PALLONE testified that it is important that consumers have information at the point of purchase. I disagree with this point. Consumers should have the information when they are placing their order.

A menu board may work for some businesses where customers order at the counter where they also pay; but for something like a pizza restaurant where most people are ordering online or over the telephone, having the calorie information when they pick up their order actually won't be helpful to the consumer when they are actually making the decisions. This is an example of how the Food and Drug Administration did not consider the array of business types included in this rule, and this is why a legislative solution not only is necessary, but it is required.

The food retail sector employs millions of Americans, and it provides access to affordable, healthy options. The Federal Government must not impose arbitrary regulations that will cause unnecessary harm to businesses and customers. The businesses impacted by this rule widely support providing customers with the nutritional information to better inform their food decisions, but they want to do it in a practical and commonsense way.

□ 1245

This legislation provides clear guidance to small business owners, ensuring compliance and at the same time delivering that critical information.

I encourage all of my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule and vote "yes" on the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me the time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule. This is one of the strangest debates we have had in my time in the House here on the floor of the House. We are actually literally debating the fine print of menus in chain restaurants.

Frankly, I think the American people want to see this body address the real issues that they care about every day. They want our body to fix our broken immigration system and secure our borders. They want us to raise the minimum wage and make college more affordable. They want to make sure that Americans are safe and secure in their homes and that we can ensure for the next generation of Americans the same promise that our last generation has enjoyed in this country.

We know it is becoming even harder and harder for Americans to stay and thrive in the middle class, burdened with more and more college debt and with medical bills. It is time to improve that and make sure that we can restore a robust economy that works for all Americans.

The finer points of exactly the font size on menus is, of course, best left to the executive agencies. It is a complete waste of Congress' time. There is a 400-page guidance from the FDA, and Congress is now going into that through this bill and literally doing things like adjusting font size and changing definitions. What a bizarre way to spend not only an hour for this rule debate but time for the actual bill debate, amendments, and the vote. I wonder how much taxpayer time we are spending on menu font size, which I don't even know why we are even talking about that. How bizarre.

The Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act is advertised as a response to what some perceive to be FDA regulations they don't like. Fine. Elect a different President. There actually will be a different President. One of the things this bill ironically does is delays these rules until there is a new President.

So, I don't know, will Members of this body like rules better that are set by President Trump or President Sanders or President Clinton? I don't even think the topics come up in their campaign on what font size they want on menus and where they want the calories listed. I haven't heard it from any of my constituents.

Generally, people want information about calories and how much they are getting. They want to know that, if they are getting a hamburger, it might make a difference if the smaller one is 300 calories and the bigger one is 500; maybe if I am watching my weight, I will order the smaller one.

That is generally what people want. These rules generally do that. But here we are using hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars changing a few things and saying, by the way, we want President Trump or Sanders to do this instead of President Obama.

I mean, why? The American people should be outraged. The American people look at Congress, and what do we have, like I think a 6 percent approval rating. Six percent of the American people are saying right on? Six percent of the American people want us to discuss exactly where it says how many calories your hamburger has at your fast-food restaurant? Maybe those 6 percent checked the wrong box on that congressional approval poll. But at least 94 percent of the American people think we ought to be doing something else, and so do I.

I think we should be working to balance the budget. I think that we should fix our broken immigration system and restore our borders. I think that we

should grow the American economy, find a sustainable way to invest in infrastructure, find a way to provide a boost to the renewable energies economy, boost American exports in manufacturing, raise the minimum wage, make health care more affordable, and build upon the improvements of the Affordable Care Act.

But no, no. The Republican majority has decided we are going to spend the rest of the day today and tomorrow debating where and how on menus—and not even all restaurants, just some restaurants, with restaurants on all sides of this issue, by the way—that it says how many calories are in your hamburger.

While some say that they don't like the regulations, the reality is this bill actually delays and waters down the transparency that the American people want. Honestly, my constituents have not called about this. I don't think many of them care that much about where it says how many calories are in their burger. But to the extent they think about it, they just want transparency. They want to see it. So do I as a consumer, by the way.

When we work late nights here in D.C., I will order online from a delivery service. They will bring the food to my home. Sometimes I will go into their storefront, and sometimes those stores are chain stores that are under this.

Now, as a consumer, I like to see the calories at all those locations. What this bill would actually do is prevent that from happening. It would say, look, Mr. Store Owner or Ms. Store Owner of a Restaurant Franchise Chain That Delivers, you get 60 percent of your business at your door that comes in, 40 percent of your business is delivery, so you don't have to tell your delivery customers on your Web site how many calories are in that burger. If I am one of their delivery customers, I lose out on that transparency because of the measures in this bill.

And the converse, what if 60 percent of their food is delivery food and 40 percent are walk-in customers? Now you are saying that if I choose to go there, walk-in customers, sure, maybe the calorie thing is somewhere, maybe it is tucked under a magazine dispenser or it is on some back wall in the restroom, but it is not right there on the menu where I can actually see how many calories are in the item of my choice.

The American people like our labeling. They like transparency. You go to the supermarket, every item, you pick it up, there is a label that tells you the calories, and it tells you the ingredients. People like that for restaurants. They certainly don't like Congress trying to modify the fine print on the font size on 400 pages of thoughtful rules around exactly how this should be done and punting it to the next President, whom we don't even know who that is

going to be, to start a whole new rule-making process about something that is very simple.

People want to see how many calories are in what they eat. It is a very simple concept—very simple. People like it. People don't want us wasting time on it. Let's not waste time on it. Let's discuss the things people care about.

But, no, we are forced to, under this rule, spend even more time—and time is money. Time is money, not just of opportunity cost, but we could be talking about ending our budget deficit and restoring order to our border. We could be doing that. Not just the opportunity cost but actual cost. It costs money to keep this body up and running. We are paying our staffs, the lights are on, hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayer money to discuss exactly where and how the number of calories on your hamburger will be listed when there already are over 400 pages of rules which work and are still being fine tuned.

We had great testimony from the ranking member on the Energy and Commerce Committee, FRANK PALLONE, yesterday in our Rules Committee. He said that there are ongoing discussions with FDA, and they are well aware of some of these issues that can be improved.

Congress is best setting these broad directions, like the broad direction which I support which Congress actually did. This was part of the Affordable Care Act. If it were a separate vote, I would have been proud to support it too. We said chain restaurants need to label caloric intake. That is great. That is a broad direction. The details of exactly how to do it need to be figured out on the implementation side.

I can only imagine, if Congress got this involved with every single thing, this country would grind to a halt. Nothing could ever occur. No permit would ever be granted. No approval would ever occur of anything. It is simply the wrong way to run the largest, wealthiest, most democratic, and most free nation on the face of the Earth by grinding the country to a halt over Congress—the Congress of the United States—setting font sizes on restaurant menus. What the heck are we doing? It is a wonder that 6 percent of people, Mr. Speaker, approve of this Congress. I think they checked the wrong box.

The whole point of this labeling measure included in the Affordable Care Act was to empower consumers to make healthier decisions about the food they eat by simply allowing them to know what is in it. That is the broad direction set by Congress, making sure that we have a public health impact. We need a certain level of standardization so consumers can compare nutritional information on restaurants, just as we do on packages in stores.

If companies that make packaged foods had free rein to invent serving sizes on nutrition labels, or to put the labels on the inside of the container instead of the outside where you can't really see it, would anybody in this body argue that those labels were no longer serving the public good for which they were introduced?

This is the same thing. This is the same thing as putting a label on the inside of a jar, rather than the outside, to game the system. It seems to me like an effort to deprive the American people of information they want to see. You don't improve Federal standards by making them unenforceable in a court of law. You make them irrelevant by making them unenforceable in a court of law.

Mr. Speaker, I am one of these people who wants to know what is in their food. Many of my constituents are too. I am proud to represent the Second Congressional District of Colorado, one of the fittest congressional districts in this Nation, one of the districts with the lowest obesity rates, and a district in which people pride themselves on nutrition, healthy lifestyles, and exercise. I am proud to be a representative of that district. My constituents want to know what they eat. Menu labeling, which has been implemented in five States and dozens of cities since 2006, empowers consumers to make healthy decisions and know what they eat, which has never been more important.

We all know that obesity and diabetes are on the rise. Last year, almost half of American adults had diabetes or pre-diabetes. Medical costs are in the hundreds of billions to treat these diseases and growing. Eating well is the most significant thing that a person can do as a preventative health measure to prevent themselves from developing these diet-related illnesses, including obesity and heart disease.

As it stands now, nutrition information is already available on pre-packaged foods. So when I cook at home, I know exactly what ingredients are going into the meal I feed myself and my kids. It is right on the label. But when I go out to eat, I don't have the advantage of that same information.

In 2015, for the first time ever, Americans spent more money at restaurants than on groceries. Let me say that again: Americans spent more money at restaurants than on groceries for the first time in 2015. That is a big deal. An important part of the nutritional content that gives us sustenance comes from restaurants, and the American people want that same level of transparency at their restaurants.

With this particular bill, Congress would be moving away from the broad direction that it gave the FDA to basically micromanage over 400 pages of exactly, in what instances, where, and how labels need to appear to the detriment of transparency and access.

As my friend from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) mentioned in the Rules Committee, the FDA solicited significant feedback from stakeholders over many years, both during the negotiations of the Affordable Care Act and, of course, over the course of developing a final rule. They have delayed implementation for 2 years already to give restaurants and the retail food community more time. I am talking about printing things. How overly generous can you get?

With this bill, the Republicans are seeking 2 more years of delay. It is important to point out it has already been delayed 2 years. Again, this is a typical example of why the American people are so frustrated with Congress. This is a bill that will effectively grind things to a halt. Grind what to a halt? Telling you how many calories are in your hamburger, something that people want to know. That is what it will grind to a halt. To what end? To no end. It is a bizarre, unusual waste of time for Congress to be even debating this.

If this bill were to pass and be signed into law—which it won't be because, of course, the President does not support this bill—it would postpone regulations for another 2 years, leaving an entirely new structure about exactly how the caloric intake on your menus is portrayed to the next President of the United States. Let's get this done.

Under this bill, the menu labeling provision would go into effect, at the earliest, in 2018 and would be significantly watered down. Why is Congress sticking our noses in over 400 pages of rulemaking regarding this issue? If we have issues with the FDA, bring them up appropriately in oversight hearings of the FDA. At most, legislatively, perhaps a funding restriction amendment in an appropriations process to run a particular aspect of this regulation that a majority of this body doesn't like might be a legislative way to spend 10 minutes on it and resolve it. Ten minutes. Maybe the American people would think it reasonable to spend 10 minutes.

They don't think it is reasonable to discuss this for 2 days. Hamburger calories for 2 days and exactly what font size and where it appears? What is going on here, Mr. Speaker? This is simply an inappropriate way, a shockingly out-of-touch way, for Congress to spend its time.

My colleagues who support this bill have said that it builds flexibility for compliance. They say that it can help clarify nutrition information. I don't agree with those remarks, but I am more concerned with the provision of micromanaging the way that bills this Congress have already passed are implemented.

I am worried this bill would make the provision of nutrition information more confusing for several reasons. In

fact, I think that is part of the nefarious goal of this bill.

Where are caloric counts supposed to be displayed? This bill would allow the restaurant or retail establishment to publish this information on one menu board, and not necessarily at the point of sale. So instead of on the menu at the point of sale, they can stick it in the bathroom. They can stick it in the bathroom. If you don't go to the bathroom, you won't see how many calories are in your burger. That is what they could do under this rule. Who the heck wants that?

As Mr. PALLONE pointed out yesterday, H.R. 2017 allows retailers to publish nutrition information in the format that receives the majority of their customers, whether it was in person or online.

□ 1300

Just because I order food delivered to my home, I might not get to know how many calories are in my family's dinner. Or conversely, if other people order delivery and I go into a restaurant, I might not get to know how many calories are in a meal that I am feeding my family.

I don't see why we don't just publish the information in the store, on take-out menus, and online. They have it, they know it, print it. It is easy. Do it. People want to see it. It is transparency. It is like letting prepackaged goods put their label on the inside of the package where nobody can see it rather than the outside. Or people buy things, if you buy your packaged goods online—and some people do—saying: Oh, it is on the Web site, so it doesn't need to be on the label. If you go in the store, you don't get to know what is in this product.

The businesses that are required to implement these regulations aren't even corner delis or mom and pop shops. This isn't about them. This is about restaurants with more than 20 locations. The FDA has exempted any business smaller than that.

In fact, the rulemaking has many exceptions already, including exemptions for specialty items, for temporary menus, for custom orders, and for daily specials. All exempt. They had a thoughtful process. They talked to restaurant owners. I haven't heard any complaints from my district about it, and people generally support the overall direction of transparency.

I am especially concerned with how this bill would eliminate mechanisms for enforcement by removing a provision requiring businesses to provide documentation of compliance. It means that it would be essentially impossible for businesses to be accountable for whether they are even complying with regulations. It would make these regulations in paper only, in name only. There would be no meaningful enforcement mechanism. If this bill were to

become law, which it won't, it would effectively gut those transparency requirements.

The bill also prohibits civil lawsuits against businesses that attempt to deceive customers or circumvent the labeling process. If companies are willingly lying about what is in their products, in the calories and the nutritional content, of course, they should be liable for that—of course.

Should a company intentionally mislead with confusing labels, customers need a way to fight back. Instead, this bill calls for complete indemnity, and makes any labeling initiative meaningless because there is simply no reason to comply.

This bill allows restaurants to essentially invent their own nutritional information by using deceptive serving sizes and hide that information in bathrooms or on walls where consumers won't even see it, and not put it online or only put it online and not at the restaurant.

At the same time, if somehow customers are able to discern that an establishment is lying, it strips away the enforcement mechanism and civil liability from that.

What a colossal waste of time for the United States Congress to descend to the level of whether calories should be displayed in bathrooms, or on walls, or on menus in restaurants with more than 20 chains, when this Nation is in crisis and needs a responsible Congress to balance the budget and needs a responsible Congress to secure our borders and replace our broken immigration system with one that works.

It needs a responsible Congress to ensure the safety and security of the American people, it needs a responsible Congress to find a sustainable way to invest in infrastructure and growth, and it does not need a Congress to micromanage the font size of menus.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER), a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this is just another example of excessive burdens placed on small businesses from Federal regulations.

The proposed menu labeling requirements by the FDA, which come from a provision of ObamaCare, will require restaurants, grocery stores, gas stations, and even movie theaters and miniature golf courses to list the number of calories in food and drinks they sell.

Thousands of small businesses will have to absorb the cost of providing new menu displays and calorie information. As a former small business owner, I can tell you this is money small businesses cannot afford.

Ultimately, the group that will pay the price for these new regulations is the American consumer through increased food and drink costs at their local restaurants and grocery stores.

Several large chain stores have welcomed these new regulations. I wonder why. They know that their small business competitors can't afford to purchase new menus and signs, placing them at a disadvantage to the larger chain companies.

I find it ironic that this administration that champions itself a small business advocate, continues to place additional burdens on small businesses at the advantage of larger corporations.

H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015 remedies this glaring conflict and removes the unnecessary and expensive red tape so small business owners can continue to compete and grow our economy.

I encourage my colleagues to support small businesses by supporting this legislation.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

First of all, none of what we are even talking about applies to small businesses.

I have friends that own restaurants in Colorado in Boulder and Fort Collins. I have a friend that has three restaurants and another one has one restaurant. I actually used to own a part of a restaurant. I don't recommend that business to anybody. It is a tough business. This bill doesn't apply to any of those people. We are talking about businesses with over 20 restaurants. We are talking about the big guys.

I think that is why, for instance, the National Restaurant Association isn't even in favor of this bill. They represent many of the restaurants that feel that this is a step forward. They want their customers to know what is in their food because, guess what, when you know what is in your food, you are more likely to dine out.

The fact that restaurants have surpassed grocery stores for meals just shows the importance of restaurants to the American people. People want to know what is in their food. This bill would impede that. It is Congress micromanaging the fine print of a thoroughly vetted and negotiated rule-making process that has already been delayed 2 years—it is Congress delaying it another 2 years—saying somehow this issue of exactly where in restaurants it displays the calories is so important that President Obama can't be trusted with it, we have to trust President Trump or President Clinton or President Sanders. That is what this body is effectively saying. It is a colossal waste of this body's time. It is time for Congress to focus on issues that matter to the American people.

That is what I hear about. I think it is what my colleagues hear about when we have townhalls when we are out and

about in our districts. I haven't heard a single constituent—we are not even talking one—who said that they want the number of calories on the menu items to be harder to see or posted in less places at restaurants—zero. I have heard from literally zero constituents that they want this.

I have heard from several that they like knowing what is in their food. I think that most constituents—who I haven't heard from at all on this issue—are just utterly dismayed that Congress is spending a day and a half even debating this. How bizarre this is when there are real life bread and butter issues that they face—putting food on their table, paying their rent, paying their college loans, replacing their car that burnt out, making sure they don't lose their job, and having to work a second job to make ends meet and make their mortgage. That is what people are facing out there.

The fact that what this Congress is debating is so far removed from that dinner table talk at a family's house is why this Congress has such a dismal approval rating, which will continue to get worse as long as we debate these kinds of bills.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN), a valuable member of the House Agriculture Committee.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman, and I appreciate this time.

Yes, this country does have major problems, and certainly regulation is one of them. In fact, I just spent over an hour and a half of my time talking with the administrator of the EPA about the economic impact of that agency.

This is just another example of this government reaching out to require businesses to do things that, frankly, cost money and cost the economy. Every American deserves the opportunity at a good job, and we must grow this economy. That is why I am speaking today in support of H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act.

This bill protects American small businesses from unnecessary costs and regulations, which, again, is the big problem we have with growing the economy. Mainly those in the restaurant and food industries are affected by this, establishing one-size-fits-all nutritional disclosure requirements.

As a small business owner for over 40 years, I know just how daunting new regulations are. New regulations mean more money spent and countless hours of compliance.

It is estimated that if this regulation is implemented, it could cost American businesses \$1 billion to comply and 500,000 hours of paper. This is a serious issue. American small businesses do

not have that kind of time, nor do they have that kind of money.

During a time of slow economic growth, we should not make it harder for Americans to start and stay in business. As we have seen in just about every industry, one-size-fits-all approaches do not work.

I am proud to cosponsor this bill, and encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 2017. This bill is common sense. It is in the name.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, instead of trying to water down transparency and preventive health measures, we should be focusing on what we can actively do to make this country healthier, happier, and safer, like investing in child nutrition, an issue that has broad bipartisan support. In fact, just a couple of weeks ago, the Senate Agriculture Committee passed a bipartisan rewrite of the Child Nutrition Act, and there is widespread support for reauthorizing key child nutrition policies, like the Summer Food Service Program, which really helps some of our most at-risk families ensure that kids are at school ready to learn because they have had their nutritional needs met.

By some estimates, as few as 18 percent of students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch during the school year also receive a summer meal. We can do better. The time of year should never dictate whether or not a child goes hungry in this country.

A bipartisan group of Senators agree, and they have offered an innovative solution to the issue in the bipartisan Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act. The House and our Education and the Workforce Committee should focus on issues like summer meals, which actually make a difference for families, rather than trying to prevent calorie information from being displayed large enough or in the right place where people can actually see it. God forbid.

We also should be focusing on policies like the Farm to School Program, which provide support for our local farmers and at the same time give kids the healthy meals that they need.

Educating our next generation about eating well while simultaneously introducing them to the values of farmers and growing food in our culture and on our land is a double win.

It would be great if Congress could roll up our sleeves and get to work on issues that the American people care about, rather than debating how to hide calorie information from consumers. We should be discussing how to make better nutritional information available to more people, how to feed more kids that go hungry, how to improve our public health, and, of course, the big issues that we actually hear about, securing our borders, making sure the American people are safe and

secure, investing in infrastructure, and growing our economy. That is what this body should be focused on.

I was told by my staff person that zero constituents of mine have called or written in asking me to support this bill. Three have written in opposed to this bill. The rest of them—792,000 of them—don't think we should be debating this bill. They haven't opined on it, and they continue to grow disillusioned with a Congress that is debating for a day and a half how to best hide nutritional information from them rather than improve the quality of schools, make college more affordable, make sure that they can afford their mortgage, and do something about the fact that it is getting harder and harder to get by in our country every day.

Mr. Speaker, national standards are important. They create something that consumers can recognize and can understand. Nutritional labeling standards on menus promote consistency and increased transparency. Standards make compliance easier and less costly. By engaging stakeholders in dialogue, the FDA has tried to accommodate retailers that will be affected by this bill, and worked to put this feedback into the final bill.

□ 1315

Sadly, Members of this body have responded, instead, by preemptively introducing legislation that would not only weaken the guidelines but would delay them for 2 additional years on top of the 2 years that they have already been delayed. This bill would create more confusion than it addresses. It undermines the effectiveness of the regulation by limiting a consumer's recourse for action in civil court, and it does not make consumers and the American people any healthier.

For all of these reasons and more, prominent healthcare groups across the spectrum oppose this legislation, including the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists, the American Public Health Association, the National Physicians Alliance, the Public Health Institute, doctors, and public health advocates.

I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 2017 as well. Menu labeling provides the necessary information to make healthy choices when eating out. Easy access to accurate information about the foods we eat serves our Nation's public health.

By rejecting this rule, Congress will be sending the message to the rank and file on both sides of the aisle, who, hopefully, will join me in opposing this rule and in bringing this down, that Congress should have priorities that the American people have in that we need to get Congress to work on dealing with the bread-and-butter issues that concern American families every day of the week, every hour of the day.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up a bill to help prevent mass shootings by promoting research into the causes of gun violence, making it easier to identify and treat those most prone to committing heinous acts.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PAULSEN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to bring down this rule and restore the faith of the American people and this institution and defeat the previous question. Vote "no" on the rule.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The simple truth is the faith of the American people does not hinge upon the fact that we will jail a chef for an inadvertent mistake made at a pizza restaurant.

Let me take just a few minutes to recap some of the history of the Affordable Care Act and, perhaps, a lesson in civics at the same time.

I am just a simple country doctor. My understanding of how a bill became law was, perhaps, relegated to the video "Schoolhouse Rock!" that I saw many years ago as a child with how a bill becomes law: You are just a bill on Capitol Hill. You go to committee. You get out of committee. You come to the floor. You go to the Senate. You go to a conference committee. You come back. You get voted on, and you are on your way. But, as Paul Harvey said, then there is "the rest of the story."

So let's examine the process for a moment.

We have the Affordable Care Act. Here is a bill that was sort of bumped around on Capitol Hill for a little over a year's time. Finally, it did get passed into law. We had a section in the Affordable Care Act, section 4205. Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not recall which special interest wanted section 4205 placed into the Affordable Care Act. I feel fairly certain that there was a special interest that did want this language in the bill, because the entirety of the Affordable Care Act was, essentially, written by one special interest or another. Yet here is a section that was in the Affordable Care Act, that was duly voted on by the House and the Senate, and that passed in March of 2010. I voted "no"—let me be very clear on that—as did every Republican who was in the House of Representatives at the time.

Section 4205 is not a terribly long section, and it is not terribly difficult to read. Section 4205 goes on for, perhaps, four pages, and it talks about nutritional labeling. Nutritional labeling,

in and of itself, is not a bad thing; but because of the way the law is written, after its passage, it was then handed off to a Federal agency—a Federal agency that is composed not of elected Members of Congress, not of anyone who is directly accountable to any single American constituent anywhere, but the Federal agency sits down and goes about the work of interpreting what Congress intended when it passed the law and how we are going to make this work in and amongst all of the other Federal rulings and regulations that are out there.

The Food and Drug Administration sat down to go about the task of writing the rules and regulations that would govern this one section of the Affordable Care Act—this four-page section in the Affordable Care Act. They, indeed, published their work in the Federal Register on Monday, December 1, 2014. Since we are talking about font size anyway, it is 100 pages of very small font writing, three columns per page; so there is a lot of stuff here—it is pretty dense.

You have heard me mention that I am concerned about the fact that a hidden, inadvertent addition of a single slice of pepperoni on a pizza could send someone to jail for a year. That, actually, is not covered in the remarks in the Federal Register; so let me save people some time if they want to read about where the penalties arise. The penalties arise because, as a consequence of the language in the Federal Register, a law known as the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, is amended as a result of this work.

The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, section 403, reads:

A food shall be deemed to be misbranded if its labeling is false or misleading in any particular.

That is pretty broad.

Now, if the food is misbranded, that then invokes a second part under the “prohibited acts” in the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

Under section 331:

The following acts and the causing thereof are prohibitive: the introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of any food, drug, device, tobacco product, or cosmetic that is adulterated or misbranded.

We go back to the word “misbranded.”

A food shall be deemed to be misbranded if its labeling is false or misleading in any particular.

Now we come to a food that has been misbranded and the penalty for such an act when we get to the section of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, section 303, under Penalties:

(a) Violation of section 331 of this title:

Any person who violates a provision of section 331 of this title shall be imprisoned for not more than 1 year or fined not more than \$1,000 or both.

Therein, Mr. Speaker, is the problem with the Affordable Care Act, as writ-

ten and then interpreted and as it applies to existing law in the United States Code.

I would think that menu labeling, as a matter of course, is a marketing aspect. If you know that your restaurant is putting out food labeling that is accurate and upon which you can depend, great, as I may be more likely to go to such a facility; but, there, it is a voluntary choice. It goes from voluntary to compulsory under the language of the Affordable Care Act. Therein is the problem. That is the problem that Representative McMORRIS RODGERS sought to correct of the inadvertent addition of a single food item in food that is prepared in a restaurant that has more than 20 facilities.

Think of a name brand pizza place. You may have a local franchise in your town. If you go there on a Friday night and if the calorie count is not identical to what has been posted on the menu board and someone checks, that chef could be imprisoned for a year. That is the reason that, indeed, constituents have written and that restaurant owners have written. They asked Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS, and she responded to their requests, and that is why we have a bill in front of us today.

The rule that is under consideration right now provides for the consideration of an important fix to a harmfully crafted law and to a poorly written regulation.

I applaud my fellow Energy and Commerce Committee member CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS for her work and for doing all she could to bring all stakeholders together to craft a workable compromise.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on the rule and “yes” on the underlying bill.

The material previously referred to by Mr. POLIS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 611 OFFERED BY
MR. POLIS OF COLORADO

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 5. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3926) to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for better understanding of the epidemic of gun violence, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without inter-

vening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 6. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3926.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as “a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.” To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that “the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition” in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: “The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.”

The Republican majority may say “the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.” But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: “Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.”

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled “Amending Special Rules” states: “a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.” (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: “Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous

question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. BURGESS. I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 644) "An Act to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes."

DEBT MANAGEMENT AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2015

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on H.R. 3442, the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 609 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3442.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1326

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3442) to provide further means of accountability of the United States debt and promote fiscal responsibility, with Mr. BYRNE in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased to speak in support of H.R. 3442, the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. I would also like to thank Mr. MARCHANT of Texas for his leadership on this legislation.

H.R. 3442 was considered by the Committee on Ways and Means in September of 2015, and it was passed with strong support. It is also highly relevant.

I have just come from our second hearing on the 2017 budget. Anything we can do to add clarity and stability to our budget and debt process is extremely helpful. The amount of debt this country currently owes is staggering—\$19 trillion and growing. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the debt will reach \$29 trillion in 2026.

Let's be clear about why this is happening. It is not because Americans aren't taxed enough; it is because Washington has a spending problem. As we look to the future, revenues will remain half a percentage point above their historical average as a share of the economy. Meanwhile, spending will rise from 21 percent of the share of the economy today to 23 percent in 2026, both of which are far above the historical average of 19.9 percent.

When Republicans took the House in 2010, this government borrowed 40 cents for every dollar it spent, and, today, it is 14 cents; but that is not good enough, because, under the current law baseline, it will go up to 21 cents per dollar in 2026. At this rate, if left unchecked, deficits will rise from over \$500 billion this year to nearly \$1.4 trillion in 2026. Congress needs to address this and consider real solutions to lowering the debt and bringing sustainability to our Federal Government. We can't do that if we don't have a debt management system that is consistent, transparent, and accountable.

The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act would create a system that allows Congress to make informed decisions about the debt ceiling and consider changes before it becomes a crisis.

This bill would require the Secretary of the Treasury to report to Congress before the statutory debt limit ceiling is hit so that legislators have the information they need when considering the debt limit. That reporting would include the current State of the national debt as well as future debt projections and the administration's plans to meet future obligations.

The Secretary would also report proposals of the President's on how to reduce the debt in the short, medium, and long term and any proposals to improve the debt-to-GDP ratio.

Finally, the administration would have to submit a progress report if it requests multiple debt limit increases so that Congress and the American people can finally get information about the progress that is being made.

□ 1330

This legislation will also make the Secretary's reports available online so everyone in America can access this important information.

We are at a time when serious decisions must be made about how to grow the economy and stop the increase in the national debt. We can't do that if we don't have the necessary information. So this means that we need to be on the same page about the drivers of our debt and to have an open discussion about our intention to reduce the debt.

This bill would take a process that has become, I think, chaotic and difficult for everyone and instead create a system—a good, smart, open system—that provides a consistent framework.

As others have said, the national debt is a shared responsibility, and we need to focus on ways to address it and move forward sensibly. The current path we are on just isn't sustainable. It will require all of us, both in the legislative and executive branch, to work together to find solutions.

The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act is an important step in improving this process. It not only provides clarity and transparency, but it also creates accountability and establishes a framework to discuss options and ideas on how to reduce this national debt.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The chairman said this bill came out with strong support and it is relevant. Now, the vote in the committee—this was many, many months ago—was strictly partisan, and this bill is really a diversion. It was marked up at the same time as that Pay China First Act. Does anybody remember that irresponsible legislation that came to the floor that was passed by the Republicans and died the death legislatively it deserved?

So here we are with this bill, part of a two-package bill, that also is going nowhere. It is worse than that, because it is really a diversion, a diversion from what we really should be talking about. It requires the Treasury Department to provide to Congress information on the debt limit that we already receive, distracting from Republicans' repeated recklessness about default and reinforcing the false belief that the

debt limit is a tool for managing the debt.

House Republicans refused to invite OMB Director Shaun Donovan to Capitol Hill this week to testify on the President's budget—an unprecedented action. We asked this morning in the Ways and Means Committee: Why did neither the House nor the Senate controlled by Republicans invite the OMB Director? Well, the chairman of the Budget Committee was there at the time and said something like: We don't have time.

That is really shameful. We are debating this bill together, which would require the Treasury Secretary to provide a report and come testify before Congress on the very debt reduction proposals they are refusing to hear about now, including from the Budget Director. If nothing else, Republicans are proving they are consistent with their inconsistency.

If we were to request from Treasury a new report related to the debt limit, it should focus on the dire consequences of default. It should provide detailed information on the veterans who would not get the benefits they earned. It should tell how many doctors and hospitals who treat Medicare patients won't be paid for care they already provided. It should enumerate the Pell grants we will not pay to students who rely on them to pay for college. And it should explain and enumerate the catastrophic consequences of default to our economy.

That is the kind of information Congress might need the next time we debate the debt limit if Republicans once again propose default instead of responsible action. Instead, Republicans are insisting on a report that would distract from the danger of default and do nothing to help reduce the debt.

If the real goal is debt reduction, as I said, Republicans should welcome OMB Director Donovan to explain the administration's ideas, and then they should sit down with Democrats and take bipartisan action now, as we did during the Clinton administration, when bipartisan legislation generated record budget surpluses.

So the Republicans, I guess, are trying to divert the focus from their inability to take action to reduce the deficit and instead blame Treasury and the administration.

The administration has issued a Statement of Administration Policy. They indicate, if the President were presented with H.R. 3442, his advisers would recommend he veto this bill.

Let me close by just saying how unfortunate it is to bring up this effort to obscure the problem instead of acting on legislation that is so badly needed, including addressing inversions that are going on one after another in this country. This, I think, demonstrates the total failure of Republicans to face up to what we are now facing. We

should be acting on that instead of this bill.

Well, this is going to have the same fate as the Pay China First Act, such a terrible mistake it was. It is going nowhere. It will be strictly partisan.

So I say to the Republicans in this House, you talk about common ground; instead you bring forth something that essentially is a sham, and you can't stand together on what is essentially a sham.

Mr. PASCRELL, a distinguished member of our committee, at this point will control the remainder of the time on our side.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. COLLINS of New York). The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member and the chairman and, of course, my good friend from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT).

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This week, the President sent his fiscal year 2017 budget to Congress and released it to the American people. His budget included numerous proposals to reduce the deficit by \$2.9 trillion and grow our economy. In fact, under President Obama's leadership, we have seen deficits shrink to stark lows, the smallest it has been in 7 years.

However, the chairman of the House Budget Committee has refused to hold a hearing on the President's budget with the Office of Management and Budget. This is the first time in 40 years that the President's budget will not be granted a hearing. We separate the powers, but we never separate respect.

Ignoring the fact that the President just sent deficit reduction proposals to Congress, rebuffing the OMB Director's request to testify, the House has instead gone to consider legislation that requires the administration to submit deficit reduction proposals and come and testify about the debt limit and the deficit. Something doesn't quite add up here.

I have tremendous respect for the sponsor of this bill. I think he is acting in good faith—I think it is logical, but I don't think it is true; not everything logical is true, you know—the author of the bill and my colleague on the Ways and Means Committee. But I believe this legislation misses the forest for the trees.

When nearing the debt limit, the most important thing for Congress to know is the catastrophic consequences of a default, yet this bill makes no mention of such a report. Instead, the legislation before us today asks the Treasury Department to report to Congress on things that Congress is most equipped to know. So they are asking us to hear what we already should know.

The drivers and composition of future debt—that is us—and how the

United States will meet its debt obligations, that is what is important to us and that is what is important to the American people.

Just a reminder of our constitutional roles: the Congress has the responsibility to enact spending and revenue measures; the Treasury Department, part of the executive branch, executes the laws that we enact—not vice versa. They can't spend money that we haven't authorized.

This bill would create new statutory requirements for the Treasury Department that are unnecessary and duplicative. The Secretary of the Treasury regularly corresponds with the Budget Committee about the debt limit and provides regular updates about the status of our ability to meet our debt obligations.

If I might add just at this point, we know what the Constitution says about the debt limit. The 14th Amendment is very clear, section 4:

"The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions . . . shall not be questioned."

That is what the Constitution—you know, we refer to the "we," constitutionalists, only when it suits our purpose and supports our arguments. I think we should look at the Constitution as a document which affects everybody at any time in any place within our borders.

Now, the Treasury provides us with the following: the budget, the Mid-Session Review—in fact, it is online; the Daily Treasury Statement, online; the Monthly Treasury Statement, online; the Monthly Statement of the Public Debt, online; the Schedule of Federal Debt and the Financial Report of the United States Government—all of which, I am saying again, are available on the Internet.

At the time this legislation was brought before the Ways and Means Committee in September of 2015, Republicans were considering a default on the full faith and credit of the United States. A default would have catastrophic consequences, including a collapse of world credit markets and a destruction of job markets.

Should Congress fail to raise the debt limit, the Treasury will not be able to pay veterans' benefits, pay doctors, pay hospitals, take care of Medicare patients, pay salaries to our troops or Pell grants to students who need them. These are expenditures that have already been authorized by the Congress, but if we don't act on the debt limit, we simply can't pay them. We can't.

Fortunately, we were able to come together. We worked together, believe it or not. We suspended the debt limit through March of 2017. The report triggered by this bill, H.R. 3442, will be wholly duplicative of information Congress has already received from the

Treasury Department, the Office of Management and Budget. So much for government efficiency.

Well, I believe, my good friend from Texas, what we can and should do is come together in a bipartisan manner on a budget—what we can and we should do. But I believe that we will instead see a deeply partisan and ideological budget for my good friends on the other side that has no chance of garnering any Democratic support. I hope that is not the motivation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

I would like to thank the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee for his consideration and his speaking on the bill today and commend my colleague from New Jersey. We had a very lively discussion about this bill in the Rules Committee. Over the years, my colleague and I have been able to disagree very agreeably, and I trust that today will continue in that spirit.

□ 1345

Mr. Chairman, I introduced the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act because Congress and the administration need to focus on finding debt reduction solutions.

There is rarely a time that I appear in my district at a townhall meeting or even a gathering of just a few people where the subject of the debt of the United States of America is not the focal point of the discussion. I never go through a public meeting where someone doesn't raise their hand and say: What is Congress doing about the national debt?

When we began to contemplate this bill a couple years ago, we began to think about how we could put into law a process where Congress would not solve the debt problem, but we would begin a process where the committees of jurisdiction would have a full report from the Treasury and the Secretary of the Treasury about where we were with the debt and the plans of the administration and what they would do to reduce that debt.

When this bill was passed out of the Committee on Ways and Means in September, the national debt was \$18.1 trillion. Now it is over \$19 trillion. Debt held by the public is now roughly 74 percent of the economy's annual output. It is also a higher percentage than at any point in American history except for a very brief period around World War II. If current law remains unchanged, the Congressional Budget Office predicts that Federal debt held by the public will exceed 100 percent of GDP in 25 years. This is unsustainable.

Everyone knows that the national debt is increasing, but the existing strategy for dealing with the debt limit only fuels conflict and fiscal irresponsibility. This creates disruption and

uncertainty, and it erodes the confidence in the American leadership and economy.

Five times in the last 5 years, the Treasury Department has had to employ extraordinary measures to avoid reaching the debt limit. These maneuvers are supposed to be a last resort. They were only employed six other times between the 1980s and 2011. Extraordinary measures have become the new normal, just like record levels of debt.

The goal of H.R. 3442 is to establish a new debt limit process that is more transparent, accountable, and timely. This legislation would allow Congress and the American people to take an early and accurate look at the debt and the statutory debt limit before it is reached, not after the press release that it has been reached is released.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished minority whip.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chair, the gentleman from Texas says he gets asked all the time about the national debt. He can give a very simple answer—because the Congress keeps spending money and not paying for it. That is how you incur debt; you buy things and you don't pay for them. They can be all sorts of things. They can be Social Security, they can be Medicare, they can be battleships, they can be health care, they can be roads, they can be bridges. If you don't pay for them—it shouldn't be any surprise—you incur debt.

Who spends money in the United States of America? The Congress. Under the Constitution, we are the ones who spend money. I say to my friend from Texas, he might also say, Well, when you create \$800 billion-plus of new debt by cutting taxes and not paying for them, you have less revenue, but you don't cut buying stuff, you have more debt. \$800-plus billion in December. I didn't vote for that bill because we didn't pay for it.

Now, I have been in office a long time. It is easy and takes no courage to cut taxes, no courage whatsoever. What takes courage is buying things—and if people want them—saying, we need to pay for them. We need to pay for them so our children don't pay for them, so our grandchildren don't pay for them because, guess what, they are going to have their challenges in their time, national security challenges, natural disasters like Katrina or Sandy challenges, Ebola, AIDS, health crises. They are going to have to have resources, and we are spending them.

I have been here sometime, longer I think than the gentleman from Texas, longer than my friend from New Jersey. There is one person in America who can stop spending in its tracks. I have been here 36 years. No President

in the 36 years that I have served has had a veto overridden of a bill that spent too much money. Not one. Not one Republican President, not one Democratic President. So a President can stop spending in its tracks.

Under Ronald Reagan, we increased the national debt 189 percent. It was less than a trillion dollars when I came to the Congress of the United States. It was increased under Ronald Reagan 189 percent, the largest of any President.

Under George Bush, in 4 years, it was increased 55 percent; under Bill Clinton, in 8 years, 36 percent. But guess what, during the last 4 years, we had a balanced budget, the only time in the lifetime of anybody in this body that we have had 4 years of balanced budgets.

Now, my Republican friends will say, well, we were in charge of the Congress. For the last 6 years you were. But you were in charge of the House, the Senate, and the Presidency under George W. Bush, and the budget deficit was increased 87 percent.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. PASCRELL. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chair, the President says he is going to veto this bill, but the irony is—and the chairman sits on the floor—the Director of the Office of Management and Budget has submitted a budget on behalf of the administration to respond exactly to the questions that this bill wants to ask.

For the first time in 41 years, the administration has been refused the opportunity to testify, which The Washington Post called, gratuitously, contemptuous. And then my friends have the audacity to bring a bill on the floor in the same week and ask the Secretary of the Treasury to come down and testify, talk about the debt when we know darn well why the debt is what it is.

It is our responsibility, because we incur it, to make sure that we pay our debt. That is our moral responsibility, as well as our constitutional responsibility. This is politics at its most contemptuous level. It is to pretend that somehow the President is responsible.

My friends, we ought to reject this bill not because of the bill itself, but we get this information, as has been so often said. We already get this information. You don't need the Secretary of the Treasury to come down here and give it to us. He testifies before the Committee on Ways and Means; he testifies before other committees.

Let's reject this bill because it is phony, not because substantively we don't need this information. We have it. It is redundant. It does what my friends on the Republican side so often say, we ought to not have redundant things.

Mr. Chair, I appreciate the fact that my time has expired. This bill ought to expire with it.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK), who serves on the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on the Budget.

Mrs. BLACK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chair, our Nation is \$19 trillion in debt. That is more than \$58,000 for every man, woman, and child. Now, Tennesseans know that mounting debt burden in Washington is not just an economic concern.

This is a national security issue and it is a moral issue, one that the President is willfully choosing to ignore. His latest budget would cause our debt to spike to more than \$27 trillion over the next 10 years, and when the government maxes out its credit cards to pay for this runaway spending, the Obama administration routinely insists on a so-called clean debt limit hike, a blank check with no strings attached.

Mr. Chair, our constituents deserve better than that. They expect the Congress would assert its role as a coequal branch of government and leverage these opportunities to demand real cuts and to engage the administration in an honest conversation about Washington's spending addiction.

And that is why I support the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. This commonsense piece of legislation would require that the administration come to here—yes, the people's House—before any potential debt limit increase and testify about the drivers of our debt and a plan to fix it. The Treasury Department would then be required to post this information on their Web site so that the American people can see the facts for themselves. After all, it is their money that we are spending.

Mr. Chair, this is about injecting some basic accountability into a budgeting process. Taxpayers and the next generation of Americans who will inherit this debt burden that we are accumulating today are owed at least that much.

I urge a "yes" vote on the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act.

Mr. PASCRELL. How much time is remaining, Mr. Chair?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey has 15 minutes remaining.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, I just want to remind the young lady from the other side of the aisle, my good friend, that everything she has asked for is pertinent and important, but it is already on the Internet.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), a distinguished member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. DOGGETT. Amnesia. Amnesia, Mr. Chair, once again pervades this Republican Conference. Where were these great deficit hawks 2 months ago when they had an opportunity to vote on in-

creasing the national debt? They were there raising their hand "aye" in favor of hiking the national debt. Today, they come forward with the audacity to say let's solve the runaway national debt problem; we want another government report to do it.

Yes, at Christmastime, these deficit hawks went on a spending spree right here in this House. Not a spending spree to provide more educational opportunity for our children, not a spending spree to provide more medical research dollars for our scientists and physicians, not a spending spree to do something about our crumbling roads or to build a competitive infrastructure, but a spending spree with tax expenditures from the Tax Code to stuff every silk stocking they could find. Anyone who had a powerful lobby, they were here to get an expanded or extended tax cut.

Here is what was said 2 months ago, and I quote:

"Budgeting in this country has pretty much become a joke. Members of Congress give heartfelt speeches"—the same kind we are hearing today—"about being responsible. . . . And then time and time again, they cast votes that add billions and even trillions of dollars to the debt. The rampant hypocrisy is quite galling."

"How can lawmakers claim that their budget will achieve balance when they just passed a deficit-financed tax deal that blows a big hole in the budget?"

Those weren't the words of a Democrat. Those weren't the words of a progressive institution. They were the words of Maya MacGuineas, the president of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, a bipartisan organization. On their board is Mitch Daniels, Alan Simpson, and a host of Republicans.

That final bill that they voted for 2 months ago added \$830 billion to the national debt over the next 10 years, as they borrowed money from abroad to give it to Wall Street and other special interests. It will cost us about \$2 trillion over the next two decades.

One of the biggest items in that budget was a giveaway to Wall Street banks, the same Wall Street banks that helped bring this country to its knees in the economic crisis. Yet they came in and they got a tax break in order to encourage shipping more jobs overseas, which is what that particular tax break does.

They come back to us today, having added to the debt so much. Never seeing a tax break for a special interest that they didn't like—to borrow from Will Rogers—they come to us today and say give us a report, give us another speech.

When we had the Treasury Secretary in front of our committee all morning, our Republican chairman was candid. He was cordial, but he was candid in

saying that everything that the Treasury Secretary was offering was dead on arrival, would never see the light of day.

This is a wasted endeavor that ought to be rejected.

□ 1400

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), the chairman of the Oversight Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Chairman, Mr. MARCHANT has gotten people's attention this afternoon. I am really surprised at how lively and engaged our friends are on the other side of the aisle.

So, it begs the question: What is so provocative about this bill? What is so provocative and incendiary? Apparently, having the administration come with a plan, as it relates to the debt, is a provocation.

I don't think our friends on the other side of the aisle have to take the bait. In fact, the ranking member said it came out with only Republican votes. If I were a Democrat, I wouldn't admit that it only came out with Republican votes. I would be trying to claim credit for this.

Why? Because I come from the State of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, let me tell you what happens when you avoid problems. The State of Illinois has avoided problems year after year after year. My home State now has a \$100 billion unfunded pension liability. That is a fact. Illinois has a crisis.

What Mr. MARCHANT is proposing is very simple and very clear. If this is provocative, I don't know how to deal with it. It requires the administration to lay out a proposal to reduce the debt in the short term: 1 to 2 years.

The criticism of the administration's current budget is that it never balances. Ever. Think about that. Hello. Never. There is never a balance.

So, what he is saying is they have got to come in and show how they are going to deal with this. Short-term, medium-term, understanding its relationship debt to GDP; all of these things are so important.

We are told: Hey, go to the Internet. That is where your information is. No; what we need is for the administration to understand the information on the Internet—if that is where it is—and come in and present it in a cogent and clear way.

Yes, Congress has the primary responsibility. Yes, the House Republicans have articulated a view that says we can balance this, we can deal with these programs, and we can deal with these cost drivers. We have been met time and time again by a stiff arm from the President of the United States, who has now redefined the concept of balance. Balance used to mean one plus one equals two. Now the administration says that balance is—

what was their latest vernacular—long-term fiscal sustainability. That is ridiculous.

Representative MARCHANT needs to be congratulated. This is a great idea. We ought to be celebrating this. If I were a Democrat, I wouldn't admit to voting against it.

I urge passage of the bill.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just heard something from my good friend from Illinois that bears repeating, which is to have the administration come and testify on their deficit plan.

The President's budget includes \$2.9 trillion in deficit reduction. You have refused a visit from the administration to discuss it. How is that for provocation?

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. TOM PRICE), chairman of the Budget Committee.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I thank Mr. MARCHANT, my good friend, for introducing this legislation.

Before I address the legislation, I want to talk very briefly about the President's budget.

The President has, indeed, introduced a budget. It raises over \$3 trillion over a 10-year period of time. It increases spending. It increases the interest payments on the debt so that they approach \$1 trillion at the end of 10 years.

We thought it was appropriate to save the President the embarrassment of bringing him before our committee, because when you put that budget on the floor, which we have done in the past, the President gets two votes from his own party. Just two. So we thought it was appropriate to save the President that embarrassment.

I want to commend my friend, Mr. MARCHANT from Texas, for introducing this legislation, H.R. 3442, today. This is really a simple and straightforward piece of legislation. The bill enhances accountability, reduces potentially disruptive risks to our economy, and would help Congress reach real debt reduction solutions that the American people so clearly desire and deserve.

Under this act, as we approach any debt limit, the administration would have to appear before Congress and provide testimony on what is driving that national debt so that we know that they actually appreciate the drivers of that debt; relate a clear, unambiguous series of proposals on deficit and debt reduction, which they don't do—by the way, the President's budget never balances—and update Congress on progress being made toward debt reduction, which is a principle that we believe and the American people believe is important, but, apparently, this administration does not.

As Budget chairman, I can tell you there is nothing more troubling than the ever-increasing spending that happens around here, especially in the automatic programs. That is why I am heartened that this bill would require the administration to project the fiscal health and the long-term sustainability of major programs like Medicare and Social Security, that, by the way, are going broke unless something is done.

This bill will help further educate the American people on the dire need to save and strengthen and secure these programs. Our budget—the proposal that we put forward—has proposed positive solutions. We need the administration to be a cooperative partner in getting solutions enacted. Forcing them to confront these challenges will be helpful. This bill will do that.

It is pretty simple, Mr. Chairman. House Republicans have been proposing action our Nation needs to take in order to get spending under control and reduce our debt. It seems only fitting and proper that the administration should have to do the same. That is why I am urging a "yes" vote on this bill.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I just heard something very interesting. When I hear things interesting, I like to repeat them.

So, we are going to save the President the embarrassment. The ranking member, SANDY LEVIN, mentioned that. He said today that is less than a lame excuse: to save the President embarrassment.

You should be embarrassed balancing the budget on the money from the Affordable Care Act, which you have recommended we destroy. How is that for embarrassment?

I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, the issue of the Nation's deficit is a real concern, but let's be honest: the issue of the country's deficits are of greater concern to our constituents at home than they appear to be to many people in this Chamber.

Our constituents understand and support some government spending is necessary to keep our country going strong. Our constituents understand that some debt is needed. Like government, they incur debts, too: a mortgage, a car loan, a student loan, credit card debt, a small business loan. They also get alarmed when they see deficits that are too high.

So, that is why it is the job of Congress and the President to develop a budget and raise and spend the necessary revenue to operate the government while also meeting the demands of our constituents.

This week, President Obama submitted his budget plan to the Congress for review. Within that budget is a plan to sensibly cut the Nation's deficit by \$2.9 trillion.

I think there are some good ideas in the budget. Maybe others disagree. But Congress should at least discuss it. Yet, earlier this week, they refused to allow the White House to come to Congress and discuss the budget and the deficit.

We are spending time and taxpayer money to debate a bill to mandate the White House come to Congress and discuss the budget and the deficit when, earlier this week, these same folks refused to allow the White House to come to Congress and discuss the budget and the deficit.

It is a telling action by my Republican colleagues, as they want to look like defenders of the taxpayers' money by demanding answers on how to reduce the deficit—which is a good thing—while blocking the ability for us to actually get any answers on how to reduce the deficit.

Because they refuse to invite the White House Budget Director to discuss the budget, let me share with you a few things that White House officials would have said if they were invited to speak before the Congress on the budget and the deficit.

Do you remember the \$800 billion TARP funds paid to the Nation's largest banks by the Bush administration? The banks have repaid the money—with interest—under President Obama.

Those trillion-dollar annual deficits that started under President Bush's administration, in part due to the TARP fund and in part due to the Republican recession of 2007–2009, are gone.

More Americans are working now than ever in the history of the United States, with private businesses adding over 14 million jobs under the policies of Democrats. One of those policies was supporting the U.S. auto industry. When my Republican friends wanted to destroy and bankrupt Detroit, Democrats voted to save the U.S. auto industry. Today, the American car industry is on fire and has added over 645,000 American jobs since 2009.

Now, Republicans will argue they are pushing forward to eliminate annual deficits and not increase the debt. But that simply is not true. The Republican budget, while theoretically balancing in 10 years, increases the national debt by \$3 trillion in that time period, which necessitates an increase in the debt ceiling. Therefore, Republicans, despite their claims and their rhetoric, have to increase the debt ceiling or risk the U.S. being in default.

So, Republicans claiming they won't raise the debt ceiling are either not being honest about raising the debt ceiling, not being honest about their budget, or they want the U.S. to not pay its bills and be in default. Which is it?

Additionally, the Republican budget eliminates \$5.5 trillion in spending on programs like student loans, unemployment insurance, child support programs, as well as Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. PASCRELL. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. CROWLEY. At least they detail these cuts, such as ending Medicare as you know it.

Even more sinister, their budget—which every one of them brags about supporting—includes \$1.1 trillion in spending cuts that are not even detailed, except to say they will go after retirement programs for Federal employees, military personnel, and veterans. They very cleverly hid those cuts in a footnote in their budget.

I am wondering on what page of their phony budget they create unicorns, because everything else in their so-called budget is one big, giant fairy tale.

So, Mr. Chairman, let's not fool the American people. They know what exactly is going on here.

They want to have it both ways: they want to call the White House on the carpet and say they want to discuss the Nation's deficit, and, at the same time, this very week, give the Budget Director an invitation to come before the Congress and talk about the budget and the deficit.

The American people are asking: What is going on? They know exactly what you are doing. Once again, you are using rhetoric, but not addressing the real problems of everyday Americans.

Mr. Chairman, we need to get down to the American people's business and get the answers we need and that they demand.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I think a careful review of the bill will reflect that this bill's effective date will be 2017.

While I cannot say with any certainty who the President will be or which party it will be, I would remind the House that this bill puts the responsibility on the administration, regardless of which party holds the White House, and it is an ongoing responsibility that will further the discussion and collaborative nature of our solutions to this debt.

□ 1415

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BRAT).

Mr. BRAT. I thank the gentleman from Texas very much.

Mr. Chair, I had some prepared remarks, but the opposition just brought up rhetoric and unicorns in the same sentence, and so I feel obliged to respond with a couple of preliminary remarks. I will just make four.

The rhetoric is easy to come by in this city, but the facts are very clear. I have never seen a Democrat budget that has been smaller than a Republican budget. Every year they turn in a budget that is significantly bigger than ours. That is just fact number one.

Fact number two, our budget balances in 10 years. I have never seen, in my history here, a Democrat budget that balances in any time horizon—and we are talking about the debt.

Point number three, we are talking about the President and his commitment to fiscal sanity. I have never heard the current President mention our unfunded liability problem, which is in the \$100 trillion range. That is the most serious number and economic challenge our country faces. I have never heard our President bring that up as a problem to solve.

And finally, when it comes to fiscal restraint on the other side, the winner of the New Hampshire primary on the opposition side is calling for 90 percent tax rates and free everything.

So, when it comes to rhetoric, those are just four simple facts I offer to the other side when it comes to fiscal responsibility.

I want to move forward and commend Representative MARCHANT for putting this bill forward. This country desperately needs to have an honest conversation about our fiscal problems, the full range, from the debt of \$19 trillion to the unfunded liabilities at \$100 trillion. Total outstanding public debt exceeds \$19 trillion. We just passed that this week or so. The unfunded liabilities are multiples of that.

Deficits are exploding, in the \$500 billion range per year. Deficits by 2026 will be about \$1 trillion a year. That will bring the total debt to about \$30 trillion in a decade. All of this is on the backs of our children. If we continue on the path of the status quo, we will end in a debt crisis as China is in now.

That is why I support this bill, because it advances the dialogue exactly when Presidential leadership is most needed, when the debt limit looms. Having leadership from a responsible President could make a world of difference.

Of course, talking isn't the end goal. Talk must spur action. These problems get harder to solve the longer we wait.

According to CBO's 2015 long-term budget outlook, if we wait 10 years, the costs will be nearly one-third greater as a percentage of GDP, and even larger in dollar terms. That is why it is so important we address this critical issue head-on now.

It is also getting harder to address the drivers of debt. Annual spending bills cover only 30 percent of Federal spending, and it will be 22 percent in 10 years.

The rest of Federal spending is on autopilot. Back in 1966, autopilot consumed 34 percent of Federal revenues.

By 2026, autopilot spending is on track to be 98.7 percent of revenue in a vastly larger economy.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MARCHANT. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. BRAT. Some say it is all demographics. That is a narrow view. As society changes, our institutions have to keep up. That is what we are trying to do in this bill.

We cannot continue to ignore the looming fiscal debt crisis until it becomes catastrophic. Let's address it now while we can still make meaningful reforms. I thank Congressman MARCHANT for taking steps in that direction by proposing this bill.

Let's come together, pass this bill, and continue with the reforms that will make the economic outlook for our children and for future generations greater and brighter. Our fellow citizens expect no less.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey has 6 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Texas has 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS), who is a member—a distinguished member, at that—of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3442, and I do so because the bill imposes burdens on Treasury that are totally unnecessary and will do absolutely nothing to improve our national debt.

It is Congress that makes spending and revenue decisions, and it is Congress' responsibility to raise the debt limit, when needed, to enable Treasury to fulfill the debt obligations that we have made. If you owe, you pay.

Rather than wasting our time on a redundant report by Treasury that does nothing to grow the economy, we should focus our time on creating jobs and strengthening families.

I can think of many things that we could be talking about: raising the minimum wage, creating summer jobs for youth, creating jobs through infrastructure development, supporting businesses to hire more workers, and increasing grant aid to families so that they can afford college.

Although our economy has demonstrated some solid labor market trends, we know that there are still individuals who are not benefiting from the tremendous economic recovery that we are experiencing.

For example, the University of Illinois at Chicago just completed a study that showed that half the African American males in the city of Chicago

between the ages of 20–24 are not working and not in school. And we could be using this time—our time—to figure out ways to bring these individuals into the labor market so that they become productive citizens, rather than reviewing another report that tells us nothing that we don't already know.

So I oppose the legislation not because it is such bad legislation, but it is just a waste of our time, energy, and effort. We need to be figuring out ways to solve problems.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, at this time I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RENACCI), one of my colleagues on the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. RENACCI. I thank the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3442, the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2015.

This bill isn't about budgets. I have listened today. It is about a process, a process to keep our eye on the debt by all Members of Congress. Americans want us paying attention to our national debt.

Our collective debt has now surpassed \$19 trillion, which is \$58,000 per American. Sadly, these numbers are only a tip of the iceberg as they don't include, as my colleague from Virginia (Mr. BRAT) indicated, tens of trillions of dollars of unfunded liabilities stemming from some of our entitlement programs.

To me, this is inexcusable. We need an accurate accounting of our country's financial health, and this legislation is a sorely needed first step only, a first step to start the dialogue in finding a solution to this growing problem.

H.R. 3442 will require the Secretary of the Treasury to provide a report to Congress prior to the debt reaching the statutory limit. The report must include historic, current, and projected levels of debt, the drivers and composition of future debt, and how the United States will meet the debt obligations if the debt limit is raised.

As someone who has spent nearly 30 years in the business world, I know the importance of leveraging debt to grow a business and, in this case, to move the government forward. I understand that sometimes we have to borrow. But if I showed up to a bank without an explanation and plan to repay my obligations, I would be laughed out of the building. If I told the bank, "The financial statements are on the Internet," "I have sent them to you already," or, "You already have them," the laughing would stop and the debt would be called.

Why should raising the national debt limit be any different? The Treasury should have to present a plan to Congress.

This straightforward legislation is not divisive. It will apply to both Dem-

ocrat and Republican administrations. It will not even affect the current administration.

Let me be very clear. Our debt is not a Democrat or Republican problem. This is an American problem.

As I travel throughout my district in Ohio, I hear from my constituents regarding their concerns about the direction of our country and what we are leaving our children and grandchildren. Congress must work together to put our national debt back on a sustainable path. That is what this legislation starts the process of doing.

I would like to commend Mr. MARCHANT for his leadership on this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to join me in support.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL).

Mr. WOODALL. I thank my friend from Texas for bringing this bill to the House.

I confess, Mr. Chairman, I have served on the Budget Committee since I arrived in this House 5 years ago, and I have listened to testimony on every single budget the President has submitted to this Congress. Among all the calls of the redundancy of this legislation, I want to just encourage my colleagues to read the five short pages that are this bill. It says this:

Not more than 60 days and not less than 21 days before the debt ceiling is to be raised, the Secretary of the Treasury shall submit the following: a detailed explanation of proposals of the President to reduce the public debt in the short-term, which is the next fiscal year; the medium term, the next 3 to 5 years; and the long term, the next 10 years.

Five years I have served in this institution; five budgets of this President I have looked at. Not one reduced the debt by one penny this year, next year, 10 years from now, or 100 years from now. This is not redundant.

What Mr. MARCHANT is asking of not this President, but the next President, whoever he or she may be, is to not promise the American people everything on their children's credit card, that if you are going to come to the American people and ask for a credit line increase on America's credit card, you ought to offer at least some semblance of a plan for paying the bill back.

I have heard the charge of hypocrisy here on the House floor. Again, I serve on the House Budget Committee. Every single year, this House, Republicans and Democrats, pass budgets that balance. Every single year, this House, Republicans and Democrats, pass budgets that plan not just to pay back a penny of debt, but all of the debt.

We can't expect less from our next President. We have to expect more. Republican or Democrat, the next President, before coming to ask for the debt ceiling to be increased, should come

with a plan for eventually paying that debt back.

Mr. Chairman, it is embarrassing to me that a clean debt ceiling increase is part of the national parlance. I have got seventh, eighth and ninth graders back home who know what a clean debt ceiling is.

We should never have a clean debt ceiling increase. We should never raise the American people's credit line without a plan for paying it back. Not once, Mr. Chairman, have we considered a bill on the floor of this House that has the requirement that Mr. MARCHANT is proposing today.

The burden will fall on us to implement it, but leadership falls to the White House as well. Don't come and ask the American people for more money until you come with a plan for eventually balancing the books. That is not too much to ask, Mr. Chairman. In fact, it is too little to ask, but it is a fantastic first start.

I ask all of my colleagues to support this bill.

□ 1430

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman on the other side has no more speakers, I am prepared to close.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to close.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PASCRELL. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, from a few speakers today on the other side, I have heard "Apocalypse Now." Both sides of the aisle, I think, want to get to a day when we balance the budget. We did it several years in a row at the end of the Clinton administration.

I believe my friends on the other side of the aisle are well-intentioned in drafting this legislation. I believe they wanted to focus attention on the ways to address our debt and deficit. I agree. I believe that instead of toying with default—because that sends a horrible, horrible message to the world economy—we should do our job as Members and discuss real, long-term solutions to our budgetary challenges.

In fact, I think my good friend from Texas would agree we had an outstanding discussion in the Rules Committee because I never heard that discussion on the floor of the House. Maybe I missed it. I don't know; did I miss it?

Our discretionary spending, which we use to make critical investments in the infrastructure, education, and laying a foundation for our Nation's future for our kids and our grandkids' economic growth, that discretionary spending is at the lowest level since 1940. Even the gentleman from Virginia, who started to refer to it anyway, said a few moments ago, only talked about 30 percent discretionary money. But it was wrong what he said. We have not done anything to our insurance programs or entitlements.

The Affordable Care Act here rears its head again, extending Medicare for 12 more years. I think that is a pretty big deal in talking about one of these mandatory costs that we have, 12 years more because of the Affordable Care Act.

By the way, if you get rid of the Affordable Care Act, what are you going to do with the people who don't have insurance anymore? What are you going to do about the 12 years we have extended for Medicare? Perhaps that is all in this phantom budget we have out there.

Cost increases moving forward will be driven by mandatory programs—you know it, and I know it—like Social Security and Medicare, mostly due to an aging population. We started to address this problem with the Affordable Care Act. We have a long ways to go.

Many Members of this body have reasonable proposals to address the growing cost of health care and Social Security on both sides of the aisle. So I believe we would be better served working together and debating together than sitting here today talking about another report that tells us what we already know.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for the continued debate on the bill. This bill is very simple. The bill does not try to talk about the past. It doesn't try to address the Reagan administration or the Clinton administration or the Bush administration or the Obama administration.

It tries to look forward and say that the Secretary of the Treasury, 21 to 60 days before he announces that we will reach the debt ceiling—in this case, next year it will be March of 2017, so about this time next year—if this bill is made law, the Secretary of the Treasury will appear before the Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee—they could meet jointly—and give a plan from the administration on what the administration intends to do about the national debt.

It is important to know what the intentions of the current administration are about the national debt. The report will first provide a detailed accounting of the state of the national debt. It would include the composition and trajectory of the debt as well as the administration's plans to meet the obligations in the event that Congress agrees to raise the debt.

Second, it would just say here is the administration's proposal to reduce the debt in the short term, the medium term, and the long term. The answer from the administration may very well be we have no intention whatsoever of addressing the debt in the short term,

the medium term, or the long term. If that is what the Treasury Secretary wants to report to Congress, that could be his report.

Third, if the administration requests subsequent debt-limit increases, the Secretary would be required to provide a progress report on prior debt reduction proposals.

Finally, the bill would require the Treasury to put all these documents online so the American people can read the report for themselves.

The Nation owes \$19 trillion. The debt is growing every second. Addressing the debt is a shared responsibility, and we should use all available tools to manage this responsibility.

This type of process is not new. In fact, today, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve is appearing before the Senate and earlier this week appeared before the House. Under the Humphrey-Hawkins Act, it required the Federal Reserve Chairman to appear before Congress to give a statement on monetary policy. I don't think it is too much to ask for one meeting a year for the Secretary of the Treasury to come to Congress and state his or her opinion and view about the national debt and the administration's plan on how it plans to reduce the debt.

In fact, this bill would be a simple, first step to addressing that problem. I urge the House to pass this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3442

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY REPORT TO CONGRESS BEFORE REACHING DEBT LIMIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 31 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"§ 3131. Report before reaching debt limit

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Not more than sixty days and not less than twenty-one days prior to any date on which the Secretary of the Treasury anticipates the public debt will reach the limit specified under section 3101, as modified by section 3101A, the Secretary shall appear before the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate, to submit the information described under subsection (b).

"(b) INFORMATION REQUIRED TO BE PRESENTED.—In an appearance described under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit the following:

"(1) DEBT REPORT.—A report on the state of the public debt, including—

"(A) the historical levels of the debt, current amount and composition of the debt, and future projections of the debt;

"(B) the drivers and composition of future debt; and

"(C) how, if the debt limit is raised, the United States will meet debt obligations, including principal and interest.

"(2) STATEMENT OF INTENT.—A detailed explanation of—

"(A) proposals of the President to reduce the public debt in the short term (the current and following fiscal year), medium term (approximately three to five fiscal years), and long term (approximately ten fiscal years), and proposals of the President to adjust the debt-to-gross domestic product ratio;

"(B) the impact an increased debt limit will have on future Government spending, debt service, and the position of the United States dollar as the international reserve currency; and

"(C) projections of fiscal health and sustainability of major direct-spending entitlement programs (including Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid).

"(3) PROGRESS REPORT.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—A detailed report on the progress of implementing all proposals of the President described under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2).

"(B) EXCEPTION.—The report described under this paragraph shall only be submitted if a Secretary has already appeared at least once pursuant to this section during any term of office for a particular President.

"(c) PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall place on the homepage of the Department of the Treasury a link to a webpage that shall serve as a repository of information made available to the public for at least 6 months following the date of release of the relevant information, including:

"(1) The debt report submitted under subsection (b)(1).

"(2) The detailed explanation submitted under subsection (b)(2).

"(3) The progress report submitted under subsection (b)(3).

"(4) Such other information as the Secretary reasonably believes is necessary or helpful to the public in understanding the statutory debt limit, Government debt, and the reports and explanations described under paragraphs (1), (2), and (3)."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of analysis for chapter 31 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3130 the following:

"3131. Report before reaching debt limit."

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in part A of House Report 114-420. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. GRIJALVA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part A of House Report 114-420.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, after line 3, insert the following:
“(B) the historical levels of Federal revenue, including corporate and individual Federal income taxes as a percent of the gross domestic product;”.

Page 4, line 4, strike “(B)” and insert “(C)”.

Page 4, line 6, strike “(C)” and insert “(D)”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, my amendment simply asks that, in the spirit of this bill and the context of examining the debt, we take a look at Federal revenue trends, which are a critical part of the conversation we are having. Specifically, this amendment asks Treasury to include in their report the historical levels of Federal revenue, including information on corporate and individual Federal income taxes.

While we may disagree on the merits of the underlying bill, I hope that we can agree that it is important to have a complete picture of the Federal budget when looking at debt and deficit issues. When we look closer at our current revenue policies, a fuller picture emerges. This picture could change our perspective on the need to cut programs that Americans hold so high and, instead, raise questions about the need to close loopholes that prevent us from investing in areas of the budget that support the middle class and working families.

Here are a few reasons that we may want to consider changes to this conversation:

Corporations used to contribute \$1 out of every \$3 in Federal revenue. Today, it is \$1 out of every \$10. At the same time, corporations are more profitable than almost ever before.

American taxpayers are losing about \$90 billion every year due to offshore tax loopholes.

In the 1950s, corporate taxes were about 6 percent of the economy. Today, they are 1.9 percent.

All in all, Federal revenue contributed by corporate taxes has dropped by two-thirds over the last six decades.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment would also allow Treasury to look at individual tax rates so that we can examine if the wealthy are really paying their fair share. Currently, many tax loopholes are reserved for wealthy Americans. These tax giveaways are leaving the middle class to pick up their tab.

Some multimillionaires and billionaires are paying a lower effective tax rate than the average American family. This is wrong. Hard work should never be taxed at a higher rate than making money off Wall Street.

Our Tax Code is full of tax loopholes and tax breaks benefiting big corporations and the rich. When they don't pay their fair share of the taxes, the rest of us pick up the tab. American families end up paying higher taxes or getting fewer services, and the country goes deeper into debt.

If corporations and the rich paid their fair share, then the economy will work better for everyone. Instead of making seniors pay more for Medicare or cutting Social Security benefits, we should close loopholes that allow large corporations to hide profits offshore. Instead of cutting funding for repairing our roads and bridges, we should end huge tax subsidies to oil and gas companies making record profits. Instead of cutting funding for teachers and firefighters, we should ask multimillionaires and billionaires to pay at least as high a tax rate as those public servants pay.

America's richest corporations should not be able to dodge fair taxes to pay lower rates than middle class families.

It is time to address corporate tax dodging and invest in America again. If we close these tax loopholes for corporations that ship jobs overseas and hide profits offshore, we can raise billions of dollars to invest in America. We could make our classrooms less crowded, improve roads and bridges, and provide more security for the American people.

Unfortunately, the bill we are voting on today leaves out this entire conversation and, instead, offers false choices of austerity or default.

Please, I hope my colleagues will join me in asking for a fuller picture of our tax policies by supporting this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition, although I am not opposed to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, this amendment to H.R. 3442 brings very valuable information and transparency to the debt-limit process. The amendment offered by Mr. GRIJALVA would strengthen the legislation by requiring the administration to report additional information on Federal taxes and revenue.

However, I will note that revenues are above their historical average as a share of GDP, so the problem surrounding the unsustainable trajectory of our national debt isn't that Americans are not taxed enough; it is that Washington spends too much.

With that said, I support the text of the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. HUELSKAMP

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part A of House Report 114-420.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 5, strike “and”.

Page 4, line 8, strike the period and insert “; and”.

Page 4, after line 8, insert the following:

“(D) any reduction measures the Secretary intends to take to fund Federal Government obligations if the debt limit is not raised, including—

“(i) notifying the Congress when the limit has been reached; and

“(ii) notifying the Congress when the Secretary has begun taking such measures and specifying which measures are currently being used.”.

Page 4, line 21, strike “and”.

Page 4, line 25, strike the period and insert “; and”.

Page 4, after line 25, insert the following:

“(D) the plan of the President for each week that the debt of the United States Government is at the statutory limit, to publicly disclose, on the website of the Department of the Treasury, the following:

“(i) All reduction measures currently being used by the Secretary to avoid defaulting on obligations of the Government.

“(ii) With respect to each reduction measure, whether or not such measure is currently being used—

“(I) the total dollar amount of such measure that has been used; and

“(II) the total dollar amount of such measure that the Secretary estimates is still available for use.

“(iii) The date on which the Secretary estimates that all reduction measures will be exhausted, and the Government will begin defaulting on its obligations.”.

Page 6, after line 2, insert the following:

“(d) REDUCTION MEASURES DEFINED.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘reduction measures’ means each of the following:

“(1) Directing or approving the issuance of debt by the Federal Financing Bank for the purpose of entering into an exchange transaction for debt that is subject to the limit under this section.

“(2) Suspending investments in the Government Securities Investment Fund of the Thrift Savings Fund.

“(3) Suspending investments in the stabilization fund established under section 5302 of title 31, United States Code.

“(4) Suspending new investments in the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund or the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund.

“(5) Selling or redeeming securities, obligations, or other invested assets of the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund or the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund before maturity.

“(6) Such other measures as the Secretary determines appropriate.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to offer this amendment on a very important bill, and I appreciate the work of the gentleman from Texas. I believe the bill is necessary. My amendment, hopefully, will provide some additional information.

As we know, Congress has the authority to set the debt limit. The President, through the Secretary of the Treasury, however, has the apparent authority to set the date to which all the cable networks peg their doomsday countdown clocks. We saw this firsthand in 2011 and 2013.

Even if receipts, expenditures, or use of extraordinary measures change their internal projections of the exhaustion date, Treasury is not required in any way to provide regular, independently verifiable updates to Congress or the American people. Instead, the elected officials charged with making the ultimate decision on increasing the Nation's maxed-out credit card are expected to simply take Treasury's word for it—sometimes months after an initial estimate.

My proposed amendment is very simple. It would require that Treasury provide a weekly reporting of the extraordinary measures and the projected exhaustion date per our Nation's debt limit.

□ 1445

It is a matter of transparency. But it is also exactly the information we need as Members of Congress to fulfill our constitutional responsibility on this issue.

Consider just how long the use of extraordinary measures lasted in 2015. They were originally utilized on March 15, yet the Treasury set November 3 as the date of exhaustion—over 7 months later. That creates, I believe, a lot of uncertainty, and Treasury continues to control the entire process. Transparency is always a better policy.

Mr. Chairman, to further illustrate why this is needed, just last week, a report was issued by the House Financial Services Committee that found that apparently the Department misled Congress regarding their capabilities and plans concerning debt payments back in 2011 and 2013.

Without going into too much detail, the findings of the report, I believe, are clear. The Treasury did not report to Congress the specific actions they could take once the debt limit is reached.

I urge the House to support my amendment to help ensure the American people and Congress are equipped to make informed judgments on this critical issue of the Federal debt limit.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, Democrats don't want to default. We believe we should get our deficits under control now and not at the moment of default.

I believe my Republican colleagues continue to run from deadline to deadline, creating great anxiety. I don't know if you all noticed how the markets are reacting today with the situation in Europe and in China. We are not doing so well, yet we continue this notion of bringing back before the people, before the world, the notion that we will have a default someday and we will prioritize the payment of default, creating the notion or the idea that somehow the U.S. Government might even default on its bills someday. That in and of itself is very destabilizing, and we will have an amendment coming up a little later on this afternoon.

In fact, this President—our President—has a proposal in his budget to cut an additional \$3 trillion from our Nation's deficit on top of the \$4 trillion in deficit reduction that has already been enacted into law. In fact, this President—President Obama—cut the \$1 trillion Bush deficit in half—in more than half—in 4½ years.

America is moving forward. But the underlying issue is the Republicans are afraid that if they allow the White House to come here to the Hill in the form of a budget director to testify on the budget, these pesky little facts will become more commonly known to the American people.

I only have last year's Republican budget to go by—I wait with bated breath for the 2016 budget to come out—but all I have is the 2015 budget. Although there is some transparency that would make cuts in order to balance the budget—they make cuts in Social Security, they make cuts in Medicare, they make cuts in Medicaid and other health—they would entirely eliminate the Affordable Care Act. We all know what complications come with that—no pre-screening; if you are under 26, you would no longer have your parents' insurance; those who already have preexisting conditions would be discriminated against by insurance companies. We know all the bad things that you all want to see come to fruition.

But then you also have another less transparent line that says: other mandatory cuts, to the tune of \$1.1 trillion. You don't spell out what that means. But I would imagine—and I have to assume—it would mean making mandatory cuts to our veterans, to military personnel, and to Federal employees, just to name a few. To get \$1.1 trillion in additional cuts, those are where the cuts would come from.

That may be your platform—you want to make cuts in veterans, in mili-

tary personnel, and in Federal employees. Those are cuts you are going to propose. You should just make it more transparent. The American people are looking for transparency. They want the debate. We know the cuts you are ready to propose right now in terms of Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act.

Let's be honest, you want to cut military and Federal employee pensions, but you are not spelling it out here. I wonder how the folks nearby in Virginia or in Maryland feel about the cuts you want to make in Federal employee pensions. You don't actually spell it out in your budget. You call it "other mandatory cuts."

The American people should assume what that means. We are just trying to give a little more transparency to what your cuts actually mean. They mean cuts to military and Federal employee pensions. Just a little honesty, just a little transparency. That is what the American people are looking for.

Democrats oppose the GOP plans of threatening default or the Pay China First Act bill, which means no Social Security checks, if that were to go into effect, no doctor reimbursements from serving Medicare patients, and it calls into question the paying of our troops. What it really does, though, is it calls into question what we have prided ourselves on as Americans, and that is that we pay our debts. We don't even create the suspicion.

Alexander Hamilton is rolling in his grave today because you are even creating the suspicion that you would not pay the American people's debts. We have an obligation to do our work, to do our business, not for shenanigans, but to get the people's work done. Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that this bill doesn't really further or advance getting the people's work done. It is just creating more bureaucracy and more time on the floor taking up more precious time in debate, but that is where we are at.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT).

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

This amendment that Mr. HUELSKAMP has offered requires the administration to report on extraordinary measures on a weekly basis so that Congress will have the most up-to-date information available.

I can tell you that at the very heart of this bill, as I began to put it together a couple of years ago, was the very fact that through a press release the Secretary of Treasury could come out and pick some date out of midair and say we were going to reach the debt ceiling. Then we would go month after month after month not knowing whether he would come out again with

another press release that says: Well, it will be next week.

It is my opinion—and I agree with Mr. HUELSKAMP—that the Secretary of Treasury needs to inform Congress what extraordinary measures he or she is using that week to extend the debt limit deadline.

It is a great amendment, and it adds to the bill.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate support from the gentleman from Texas, I appreciate support from the Ways and Means Committee, and I certainly appreciate the comments across the aisle of the need for transparency.

We are an information vacuum on this issue as Members of Congress and the American people. This simply requires a weekly report so folks outside of the Department of Treasury know what is happening with our Nation's credit line.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. NEWHOUSE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part A of House Report 114-420.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 5, strike "and".

Page 4, line 8, strike the period and insert "; and".

Page 4, after line 8, insert the following:

"(D) if the President recommends that Congress adopt, in general, a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States to help control the accumulation of future debt."

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chairman, it is very fitting today that we are considering this bill. It is the same week that the President released the final budget of his administration—a budget that would add nearly \$2.6 trillion to our national debt over the next 5 years. In fact, this President has never submitted a budget to Congress that would balance.

Few Americans may realize this, but just last week, our national debt reached \$19 trillion—Mr. Chairman, \$19 trillion. When the President came into office in 2009, the debt stood at \$10.6 trillion. That is nearly doubling our national debt in just 7 years' time.

Mr. Chairman, we are on a high-speed train, careening towards a fiscal cliff.

Soon it may be too late to slow this train down.

If I could, in the name of all that is fiscally sane, I would enact an amendment to the Constitution right now requiring us to balance our budget. But, unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, our Constitution requires two-thirds of our colleagues here in Congress to approve that amendment, which history and previous votes on constitutional amendments have shown is a very difficult bar to reach. While this measure may not be the balanced budget amendment that our country desperately needs and deserves, it will help draw a very clear line of distinction in the sand.

Mr. Chairman, the amendment that my colleagues from Virginia and Ohio and Alabama and I are offering would simply require the President to tell the American people whether or not they support a balanced budget amendment when he or she asks for a debt ceiling increase. It is as simple as that. This is about transparency and about being open with the American people about where you stand on this very critical issue.

It would provide a very clear contrast if the President asked to raise the debt ceiling by trillions of dollars in this case, but offers no support for a measure that would put an end to our Nation's debt problems for good.

Make no mistake, time is quickly coming when our Nation will have to make the decision if we want to restore the fiscal health of our Nation to a state of stability and prosperity for future generations, or go down the same road of nations like Greece that have been shattered by their debt woes. When that day comes, the American people deserve to know who is standing where.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia). The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I have three children. I hate it when they come to me on Sunday night and say: Dad, I have a paper due tomorrow, can you help me out with it? In many respects that is how I feel my Republican colleagues are treating government today. They are like children that need to be forced to do their homework, forced to do their job, and they are doing it always at the last minute.

In many respects, some of the amendments we are talking about today are memorializing the notion of running government from deadline to deadline. We really shouldn't be doing that. You don't make good judgments. I dare say that my children's papers aren't as good when they wait until the last minute to do them, and I suspect that maybe we don't run government when we go from deadline to deadline. We

shouldn't run our government this way.

Democrats have taken the action to lower the deficit and restore the economy. Democrats don't want to default. I believe we should get our deficit under control now and not the moment of default. I know I may sound a little bit like the gentleman running for President, Mr. RUBIO, because I am going to be repeating myself a little bit here, but I think some of the facts bear repeating.

That is where the President again has proposed \$3 trillion in deficit reduction on top of the \$4 trillion in deficit reduction that has already been enacted into law. Again, this President cut the \$1 trillion Bush deficits by more than half in just 4½ years.

America is moving forward. America doesn't need to be great again. We already are great. We have the ability to deal with our fiscal problems if we stop doing it from deadline to deadline and address them in a smart and healthy way.

The underlying issue is Republicans are afraid that if they are allowed to bring the White House again here before us today to testify on their budget that they have proposed, that again pesky facts will get in the way. I will just point them out again.

□ 1500

We have a little yellow line going through it here.

Other mandatory cuts in the Republican budget are to the tune of \$1.1 trillion. Again, I don't know exactly what they are, but I can only assume that those cuts are to the military personnel's and veterans' pensions and to Federal employees' pensions.

I don't know how many fellow employees who live in the Virginia area, for instance, are paying attention to the debate today or how many of those who live in Maryland are paying attention to the debate today. I suspect, if they are, they are a little concerned about this one line that is highlighted, because it would include, under the Republican budget for 2016, mandatory cuts to veterans', to military personnel's, and to Federal employees' pensions. I just think we need to be more open about what those cuts would be to balance the Republican budget.

Mr. Chairman, I have nothing personal against the person who is offering the amendment. Again, I just think it further moves forward this notion that we are going to continue to operate the government deadline to deadline. The American people are sick and tired of the government's operating in this way. They want a more thoughtful government. This is not an answer to that.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT).

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, this amendment offered by Mr. NEWHOUSE would absolutely strengthen H.R. 3442.

By requiring the Secretary of the Treasury to report to Congress information on the debt ceiling, the President recommends that the Congress adopt a balanced budget amendment. This would add more clarity to the process. Therefore, I recommend to the Members that they vote "yes."

Mr. NEWHOUSE. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chair, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chair, once again, I would suggest that my Republican colleagues need to be more clear, more transparent.

The gentleman just mentioned transparency. The Republican budget is begging for transparency. The American people want to know exactly what is meant by "other mandatory cuts to the tune of \$1.1 trillion." Where do those cuts end up being made? Again, I can only suggest it is to veterans', to military personnel's, and to Federal employees' pensions.

People living in the greater Metropolitan Washington, D.C., area, those who live down by Norfolk, Virginia, and other heavy military as well as governmental personnel areas, have to question—and I hope they are questioning—what the Republicans mean by those mandatory cuts. I believe it means veterans', military personnel's, and Federal employees' pensions will be cut if the Republican budget is enacted into law.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chairman, in closing, this is a very simple amendment that just requires the administration to state whether or not it would recommend that Congress adopt a balanced budget when it asks for a debt ceiling increase. Our national debt is one of the biggest threats that exists to our Nation. The American people need to know where the administration is and where Congress is on this important issue.

When the President ran in 2008, he promised that his administration would be the most transparent administration yet. This helps him keep that promise. Today, it is all about transparency—letting people know where we stand.

I ask my colleagues to vote "yes" on this important amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MS. KELLY OF ILLINOIS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part A of House Report 114-420.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 5, strike "and".

Page 4, line 8, strike the period and insert "and".

Page 4, after line 8, insert the following:

"(D) an economic forecast of the negative consequences of failing to raise the debt limit, including costs associated with public health and safety."

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Chair, my amendment is simple. It merely expands the report the Treasury Secretary must submit per the underlying bill to include an analysis of the economic costs of failing to raise the debt limit, especially with regard to the costs to our Nation's public health and safety.

I agree with my friends on the other side of the aisle that misguided deficit spending poses a serious risk to our Nation's long-term financial stability. It is crucial that we get our fiscal house in order. Simply raising the debt limit without discussing strategic ways to increase revenues and cut costs is unacceptable. Equally unacceptable is not acknowledging the serious short- and long-term costs of failing to raise the debt limit, causing the country to enter into default.

Federal tax dollars fund a variety of programs in every single one of our congressional districts, programs that are essential to the continued well-being of our constituents. Seniors rely on Social Security checks and on Medicare reimbursements. Veterans depend on their much-needed VA benefits. State and municipal police forces receive funding through Department of Justice grants. Our Nation's hospitals receive Federal tax dollars.

It is not an exaggeration to say, if the United States of America defaulted on its loan obligations and if it could not pay its bills for expenses already incurred, the health and safety of its citizens would be put at risk. If America were to enter into default, what would happen? Would the Social Security Administration be able to cut checks? How many Americans would be unable to obtain essential medications? Would the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the TSA, or State and local police units furlough agents and officers? How many fewer cops would be on the beat to keep our communities safe?

All too often, our debates in Washington about the national debt and deficit are not grounded in reality. We simply analyze economic concepts in the abstract, but our decisions and our debates have real, immediate, and lasting impacts on the daily lives of our constituents.

If we are going to engage in a discussion on the pros and cons of raising the debt ceiling, let's keep in mind the real, on-the-ground consequences that the decisions will have on everyday Americans.

If we are going to require the Treasury Secretary to report on the costs of the growing national debt, let's be fair and require that the report discuss the immediate and lasting costs of failing to raise the debt ceiling on our Nation's public health and safety.

The bill's author, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT), stated his goal was to have a comprehensive discussion of the debt ceiling. A comprehensive discussion must include not only the long-term costs of continued deficit spending, but the short-term costs of default, as well as its far-reaching ripple effects.

This amendment is one of common sense and is intellectually honest and fair. It would have zero budgetary impact, and it would ensure the report is as meaningful as possible; so I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentlewoman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, this amendment would require the administration to speculate on the impact of default on our Federal debt. It doesn't call for any specific report. It doesn't call for any specific numbers.

It is not the point of H.R. 3442 to speculate. H.R. 3442 is a sensible step in creating a process to consider the debt limit with information and transparency. I do not feel like this amendment gives any support to that priority.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. DUFFY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in part A of House Report 114-420.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 21, strike “and”.

Page 4, line 25, strike the period and insert “; and”.

Page 4, after line 25, add the following:

“(D) whether the Administration acknowledges that it is technologically capable of paying only principal and interest on the national debt, as opposed to other obligations, in the event that the debt limit, as specified under section 3101, is reached.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. DUFFY. I thank the gentleman from Texas for all of his good work on this legislation.

Mr. Chairman, as all of us know in this institution and around the country, we are \$19 trillion in debt. We borrow around \$3.8 billion a day, and we spend about \$250 billion a year to service our debt. One of the tools that we have in this Congress is the debt limit in order to get the administration to help reform the way we spend.

In 2011, Congress challenged President Obama. When he asked to have an increase in the debt limit, we said let's have a decrease in how much money we spend. As a political fight played out, the administration promised that chaos would ensue across the global markets if the debt limit were reached, and it also said that any proposal that would prioritize payments through the Treasury for principal and interest on our debt could not be taken seriously. Mr. MCCLINTOCK had a bill that would have done just that.

The Committee on Financial Services, the committee on which I serve, did an investigation, and we found that, though they said Mr. MCCLINTOCK's bill could not be taken seriously, they actually had a plan to do just what Mr. MCCLINTOCK had recommended, which is, if the debt limit is reached, prioritize payments. They weren't being honest with the American people, because what they wanted to do was to use the argument of chaos to put pressure on Republicans to cave and not demand that we reform the way that we spend.

My amendment here today is very simple. All it says is let's make sure that the Treasury comes clean and tells the American people whether it can pay principal and interest before other obligations so that America does not default on its debt. It is very simple. No one here wants to hit the debt limit, and no one wants us to be the next Greece or Puerto Rico, but that is going to take working together in order to make sure we have budgets that balance at some point in the future.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, as I read it, this amendment requires the Treasury to notify Congress about which obligations it would be able to pay were Congress to choose to default and prioritize debt as a vision in the Pay China First bill, which the House has twice passed on a party-line vote.

First, a bill that plans for default sends a very disturbing signal to the world economy. Here is what we have with us: the gentleman, apparently, through the Speaker and the sponsor of this bill, in good faith, wants to pay China first before vets, before Medicare payments, before salaries for our troops, et cetera. The gentleman wants to pay China first. Of all of the people lined up who are going to get paid, the gentleman wants to pay China first. Excuse me for repeating myself.

The intent of the amendment is to accuse the Treasury of deceiving Congress about its ability to prioritize debt payments. The Treasury does not currently have the capability to prioritize between types of payments in the event it does not have enough cash on hand to pay all of the bills due on a particular date. That is how it works.

□ 1515

In such an event, Treasury would likely hold all of its bills until it has enough cash on hand to pay those bills. This would repeat daily in a cascading fashion. The result would be disastrous, a first-time immediate default on U.S. credit.

Let me repeat the 14th Amendment. It is clear, simple, and concise. The 14th Amendment to the Constitution, section 4, says:

“The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law”—that is us—“including debts incurred for payment of pensions . . . shall not be questioned.”

I think that to even entertain the idea of default is counterproductive. To entertain the idea sends a real message to the financial markets all over the world, including our own. I think that is a disturbing thing. I don't think you want it, and I don't think we want it.

Now, when you look at how the debt was incurred, when you look at that graph about what contributed to this \$19 trillion, zillion, gabillion dollars, you are talking about, it could be very interesting in case of history—history is important here. History 101—what contributed to that debt: two wars unpaid for, two tax cuts in 2001 and 2003 unpaid for, plan B Medicare prescription drugs unpaid for.

Look, we passed legislation on this floor. We are all culpable here, Demo-

crats and Republicans. So when you stand up and pontificate—you don't have to be in a Presidential election either—and you pontificate about those guys simply want to tax and spend, you have short memories. You have selective memories. We have that at times, too, ourselves on our side.

Well, you are talking about something pretty darn fundamental, and that is the budget, and that is the deficit of this country. This is an absolutely unnecessary amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY).

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I remind the gentleman from New Jersey that there is no such thing as a gazillion dollars. Having said that, we are talking real money here. We are talking trillions of dollars in debt, no doubt.

I think the gentleman made reference, as well, to the Constitution and spelled out that we shouldn't even hint at the notion of not paying our debt; yet that is exactly what this amendment would do, similar to legislation that passed here last year and the year before that that would suggest that maybe the United States won't pay its bills. That is not going to happen.

Even in your own budget, you would raise the debt ceiling by \$3 trillion in order to pass your budget. So you know you are going to raise—if you had your druthers, you would raise the debt ceiling as well.

I think the gentleman from Wisconsin also had to understand that these are debts that are already owed, not future debts. They are debts we already owe that we have to pay back to make sure the world understands the U.S. pays its debts.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman from New Jersey has expired.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chairman, I would just note that this bill guarantees that we pay our debt. That is exactly what this bill does. So I would note that the Democrats are making the argument for me.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, the law that established the Treasury Department already instructs it to manage the revenue to support the public credit. This already includes prioritizing payments to assure the national debt is always honored, as the Constitution commands. Without this, a stalemate on the debt could endanger the Nation's credit.

Well, during recent debates over raising the debt limit, the Treasury Department denied that it can prioritize to preserve the Nation's credit. Thanks to the Financial Services Committee's investigation, we now know this was a deliberate and calculated lie told to increase pressure on Congress. Emails revealed that Federal Reserve officials

were incredulous and appalled that the administration would make such statements because they ran a severe risk of panicking credit markets.

This amendment simply requires that, when we approach the debt limit, the Treasury Department tells Congress and the public what it is actually preparing to do to assure this Nation's creditors that their loans to this government are completely secure.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER), someone who has worked very hard on this issue as well.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of this important amendment.

Frankly, the opposition to this amendment is baffling. During the debt ceiling debate last year, the administration repeatedly told Congress and the American people that, if we don't raise the debt ceiling, we would default on our Nation's bills, that the seniors would miss their Social Security checks, that interest on the debt would go unpaid, and that it would all bring the U.S. economy to its knees. This, as it turns out, wasn't true.

Contrary to their posturing, recently exposed documents have shown that the administration was planning to prioritize payments in the event the debt ceiling was reached, the very thing they told us they couldn't do. This is beyond partisan politics. It is fear-mongering.

Very simply, my colleague's amendment requires this administration and future administrations to acknowledge their ability to prioritize payments after hitting the debt limit. It is a good idea.

I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. DUFFY. May I ask the chairman how much time I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Wisconsin has 5 seconds remaining.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chairman, I would just note that \$800 billion from ObamaCare to Medicare came from Democrats; \$250 billion a year in interest goes to China.

Let's balance the budget. I would love to see the Democrats' plan to balance.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. MESSER

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in part A of House Report 114-420.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 21, strike "and".

Page 4, line 25, strike the period and insert "; and".

Page 4, after line 25, insert the following:

"(D) any extraordinary measures the Secretary intends to take to fund Federal government obligations if the debt limit is not raised, a projection of how long such extraordinary measures will fund the Federal government, and a projection of the administrative cost of taking such extraordinary measures."

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT) for his great work on this important bill, a bill that seeks to make the administration accountable for the out-of-control national debt which others have said just hit a staggering \$19 trillion.

Mr. Chairman, like the underlying legislation, the amendment I am offering today holds this administration and future administrations accountable, too. Many don't realize the enormous power Congress has given to the Treasury Department to use so-called extraordinary measures when we are about to hit the debt ceiling.

To pay our bills and delay hitting the debt limit, Treasury has the authority to take more than \$350 billion out of government accounts, including government worker pension and retirement accounts. This is an incredible power, shifting around hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars and dodging the limit Congress has placed on borrowing.

Our Constitution says that Congress, not the administration, has the power of the purse. So these extraordinary measures, which in effect enable the Department to run up bills or IOUs beyond the debt limit, should be transparent. Congress and the American people have the right to know what Treasury is doing with our money. At present, it is astonishing how little transparency the Department is statutorily obligated to provide.

Very simply, my amendment requires the Treasury to report on what extraordinary measures it intends to use if the debt limit is not lifted. It requires them to project how long such measures will fund the Federal Government so Congress and the American people know well before we near the limit how long those measures will last.

It requires the Treasury Department to estimate the administrative costs

associated with taking any extraordinary measures. If moving all this money around costs additional money, we should all know about it.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, we are talking about brinksmanship once again. I think this is a very unhealthy debate we are having because this is the not the way we should be running government anyway, from deadline to deadline.

As I mentioned earlier, we should be sitting down and working these issues out and not having the world on the precipice of seeing the Nation default. No good will come of it, and absolutely no good comes from talking about it because it will never happen. We will not do it. We will not allow our country to default.

They continue to talk this way because it is the way they are running government, whether it is the government shutdown or the debt limit or the highway trust fund or the Export-Import Bank or the FAA, which we are going to be taking up soon. I am sure that that will go to the last second before we will ever actually act. They will probably do a delay and do it a little later on in the year because that is the way we operate around here. It is unfortunate.

Mr. Chairman, I point out there is a reason why the President has proposed a \$3 trillion cut in the deficit on top of the \$4 trillion that has already been enacted into law. It is to lower the national debt. We are working toward it. In fact, this President cut the trillion-dollar Bush deficit in half in less than 4½ years.

One last time, I want to point out that we see the Republican budget. We understand the clarity in terms of the cuts you would make to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act.

There is one portion here, "other mandatory cuts," and I suspect we know what they are as well. They are cuts to veterans', military personnel's, and Federal employees' pensions—veterans' pensions, military personnel's pensions, and Federal employees' pensions.

I suspect people who live around Richmond, Virginia, or down by Norfolk would be very concerned about those cuts you may propose, as well as those folks who live in Virginia and Maryland surrounding Washington, D.C. A lot of Federal employees work around here. I know there are a lot of military employees as well. I think they are concerned about their pensions, the ones that you want to cut in the Federal Republican budget.

Mr. Chairman, I am just looking for a little more transparency.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman from Indiana for introducing the amendment. I know it is in good faith.

I am looking at my favorite chart since I have been here about what causes the public debt. I hear all of these folks talking about it—in both parties running for President—about the public debt, and I don't know what public debt they are talking about, to be very frank with you.

Let me tell you what the public debt is all about that we are talking about: \$19 trillion and rising. Most of the debt that we carry from year to year—and we have to pay interest on that debt, as you well know—comes from either the tax cuts of 2001 and 2003 combined with the two wars we never paid for. I mean, those are the facts. I didn't make them up.

So we have very little in the discretionary part of the budget. It is only 30 percent of the total budget. We do have a solution to part of the problem in that we extended Medicare for one of those mandatory costs for 12 years. That is what the ACA did.

I am telling you we ought to learn what the facts are, and then maybe we would reduce the number of bills as well as the amendments.

The Acting CHAIR. All Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chairman, with all due respect to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, their arguments seem to be summarized this way: that somehow if we just would all go bury our head in the sand that we would be better off.

I mean, the reality is this: our Nation does have a \$19 trillion debt. The reality is that every time this Congress had set a debt limit for our spending, we have breached that debt limit and had to raise another one. The reality is, as we have approached these debt limits in recent years, the Department of the Treasury has taken what they call extraordinary measures, doing it under the law to try to lengthen the amount of time until we hit that debt limit.

This amendment is really a very modest one. All the amendment says is, if the Department of the Treasury is going to take extraordinary measures to avoid the limit on debt that has been set by Congress, that they ought to tell us all what they are doing. They ought to define what it is. They ought to define how much time we are going to buy with these extraordinary measures, and they ought to tell us what it

costs as we juggle all this money around. Because when you start juggling money around, as everybody knows in their own life and in their own bills they have to pay, it costs money. That is all this amendment does.

□ 1530

That is all this amendment does. All this amendment does is make sure that as we approach the next debt limit and the Department of the Treasury takes the next extraordinary measures—we can bury our head in the sand and say it won't happen, but our entire Nation's history says it will—that we ought to define what they are going to do. They ought to tell us, tell the American people. They ought to explain how much time that buys, and they ought to say how much it costs. I hope my colleagues can support that.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, the gentleman speaks of burying one's head in the sand. I think an example of that is not asking the OMB Director to come up to the Hill to talk to the Congress about the President's budget.

As I mentioned before, the President's budget proposed \$3 trillion in additional cuts to the Federal deficit. I may not agree with all the cuts the President is proposing, but I think it is a healthy thing for the President's representative, the Director of the OMB, to come before the Congress and speak about that; yet the other side of the aisle has refused to allow the OMB Director to come speak to the Congress to talk about these issues.

So there is hypocrisy and then there is hypocrisy. Talk about putting your head in the sand. There is not enough sand for you all to put your heads in.

The facts are the facts. Reductions are taking place. Accept it. They may not be pretty. The President is proposing them. At least listen to him before you totally disregard it before he has an opportunity to speak to you all. That is what has happened.

Again, I know what the Republican budget says. It says cuts to veterans' pensions, military pensions, as well as to Federal employee pensions. That is what your budget does. Be honest about it. You talk about Social Security cuts. You make a lot of cuts, but at least talk about the other miscellaneous mandatory cuts, which really hurt people. I am not going to support that. You all may. It is in your budget. I am not going to support that. Democrats are not going to support that. You all may support that, but you have to respond to your constituents when you force these cuts down their throats.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is reminded that all remarks are to be addressed to the Chair.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chair, how much time is remaining on my side?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chairman, this debate is a remarkable one. There is only one group here that has a budget that balances. For the fifth or sixth or seventh year in a row, we will be submitting a budget that balances.

The gentleman speaks of the President's budget. The President is going to have the unique historical legacy of having never offered a budget that balances, ever. This one doesn't. His others haven't. The truth is that, when the President's prior budgets have been put on this floor, they have received virtually no votes, like my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. That is the truth.

Again, back to this very simple amendment. All it does is say, when the Department of Treasury uses extraordinary measures, they should be clear with the American people about what they are doing, how much time that buys us, and what it costs. It is a commonsense amendment. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. GRIJALVA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 7 printed in part A of House Report 114-420.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 21, strike "and".

Page 4, after line 25, insert the following:

"(D) projections of earnings of individuals, including salary and wages by decile, and

"(E) projections of consumer spending and the impacts of such projections on gross domestic product."

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, my amendment requires the Treasury Secretary's report to also include individual salary and wage information as well as projections of consumer spending and the impact of spending cuts on the gross domestic product.

Stagnant American wages in recent decades are, without a question, the country's most central economic challenge, and the issue of wealth and income inequality continues to be a persistent strain on our economy and, indeed, our society. Raising wages is the

key in strengthening the middle class, reducing income inequality, and moving families out of poverty.

I am offering this amendment because we have to start getting realistic about the priorities of the American people.

When Americans sit around their dinner tables, their number one discussion is not about the national debt. Their number one concern and discussion is providing for their families and how they are managing their own budgets. Many are seeing that, while costs are rising, their paychecks are not. Everyday items are becoming unaffordable, and workers are sick and tired of working full time and still struggling to get by.

Since 1979, the vast majority of American workers have seen their hourly wages stagnate or, indeed, decline. From 1973 to 2013, hourly compensation of a typical production worker rose just 9 percent, while productivity increased 74 percent. In short, people are working harder and harder, and their paychecks are getting smaller and smaller.

America now has more wealth and income inequality than any major developed country on Earth, and the gap between the very rich and everyone else is wider than at anytime since the 1920s. Shrinking American paychecks are the root cause of rising income inequality, and a host of issues have come with that.

Wages drive our economy and consumer spending amounts to more than two-thirds of U.S. economic activity. A rise in consumer spending would provide a needed boost to the U.S. GDP. It is time to stop suppressing wages through policy choices that are slanted toward helping the wealthy. It is time to recognize that our decisions have a direct impact on a person's paycheck.

Any report attempting to look at long-term fiscal issues of this country must examine why 58 percent of all new income since the Wall Street crash has gone to the top 1 percent. We should be considering how every decision will impact a family's income, and the fact that the underlying bill does not include information on wages is an injustice to struggling American families.

I urge you to support this amendment and show the American people that the Members of Congress are not just fighting for policies that protect the wealthy but, indeed, for policies that protect us all.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, the goal of the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act is to create a

sound process for considering the Federal debt limit. This amendment is not focused on that goal and, instead, asks for the administration to speculate about unrelated and impractical issues such as projection of wages at various percentiles. Instead, we should be spending our time focused on the drivers of our debt and how to come up with a credible solution to slow the trajectory of our debt.

I oppose this amendment and ask that Members vote "no."

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, the bill overall is a push to continue to deal only with austerity as a plausible budgetary policy for this country. We can see what that austerity only has done to our country so far. This is how we ended up with sequestration. This is how we stifled GDP growth and harmed our overall economic recovery.

The best way to address our long-term debt is to maximize our economic potential. We can't cut our way to prosperity. Instead, we should focus on protecting American workers and families so that they have the wealth necessary to make our economy grow and prosper again.

Mr. Chairman, I urge a "yes" vote on the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in part A of House Report 114-420.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk made in order under the rule.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 21, strike "and".

Page 4, line 25, strike the period and insert "; and".

Page 4, after line 25, insert the following:

"(D) how delayed action by Congress to raise the debt limit and the threat of default impacts the economy, including, but not limited to, the impact on the gross domestic product (GDP), interest rates, employment, household wealth, and retirement assets."

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of my amendment to help Congress better understand how the mere threat of default would impact our economy.

The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act gathers information from the Treasury about our Nation's debt but omits critical details; namely, the consequences for the country when my friends in the majority play a game of chicken with the full faith and credit of the United States.

When the majority threatened the default in 2011, it was American families who paid the price. Household wealth fell by \$2.4 trillion. Consumer and business confidence plunged. The S&P 500 dropped 17 percent, \$800 billion in retirement assets were wiped out, and our credit rating was downgraded, all thanks to Republicans threatening to force an unprecedented default on America's debt.

If the extreme wing of the Republican Party is going to hold the economy hostage over the debt limit, they should at least understand the damage they are causing. My amendment requires the Treasury to include in its report to Congress the impact that the threat of default and congressional delay would have on the economy.

The report would include the estimated effect on the gross domestic product, interest rates, employment, household wealth, and retirement assets. Honestly, I hope we never have to see this impact assessment produced. I hope we never again have to convince Republicans that raising the debt limit is a basic responsibility of Congress, not a bargaining chip. But their record says otherwise.

The next time Republicans seek to score political points and push a radical agenda by threatening not to pay America's bills, I want the public to understand the cost of that threat. I think we will find pretty quickly that the American people have no appetite for petty politics when it comes to the debt limit. I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act focuses on creating a process of transparency and accountability to deal with the debt ceiling. This bill gets Congress, the administration, and the public on the same page about why we continually find ourselves in this position. Raising the debt limit without any plan to get our debt under control in the future is not a plan.

This amendment does not advance that goal. Instead, it goes in the opposite direction and attempts to focus

our attention on the potential effects of brinksmanship.

I urge Members to vote “no” on this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, my amendment does address the issue at hand. It does address the threat, just the mere threat of brinksmanship with paying our Nation's bills. History has shown that just the mere threat of defaulting on our bills has brought about damaging consequences to our economy and to the welfare of our people.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in part A of House Report 114-420 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 4 by Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

Amendment No. 5 by Mr. DUFFY of Wisconsin.

Amendment No. 7 by Mr. GRIJALVA of Arizona.

Amendment No. 8 by Mr. TAKANO of California.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MS. KELLY OF ILLINOIS

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 184, noes 234, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 71]

AYES—184

Adams	Ashford	Beatty
Aguilar	Bass	Becerra

Bera	Gibson	Napolitano
Beyer	Graham	Neal
Bishop (GA)	Grayson	Nolan
Blumenauer	Green, Al	Norcross
Boyle, Brendan F.	Green, Gene	O'Rourke
Brady (PA)	Grijalva	Pascarell
Brown (FL)	Gutiérrez	Payne
Brownley (CA)	Hahn	Pelosi
Bustos	Hastings	Perlmutter
Butterfield	Heck (WA)	Peters
Capps	Higgins	Peterson
Capuano	Himes	Pingree
Cárdenas	Hinojosa	Polis
Carney	Honda	Price (NC)
Carson (IN)	Hoyer	Quigley
Cartwright	Huffman	Rangel
Castor (FL)	Israel	Rice (NY)
Chu, Judy	Jackson Lee	Richmond
Cicilline	Jeffries	Roybal-Allard
Clark (MA)	Johnson (GA)	Ruiz
Clarke (NY)	Johnson, E. B.	Ruppersberger
Clay	Jolly	Rush
Cleaver	Kaptur	Ryan (OH)
Clyburn	Katko	Sánchez, Linda T.
Connolly	Keating	Sanchez, Loretta
Conyers	Kelly (IL)	Sarbanes
Cooper	Kennedy	Schakowsky
Costa	Kildee	Schiff
Costello (PA)	Kilmer	Schrader
Courtney	Kind	Scott (VA)
Crowley	Kirkpatrick	Scott, David
Cuellar	Kuster	Serrano
Cummings	Langevin	Sewell (AL)
Davis (CA)	Larsen (WA)	Sherman
Davis, Danny	Larson (CT)	Sinema
DeFazio	Lawrence	Sires
DeGette	Lee	Slaughter
DeLaney	Levin	Speier
DeLauro	Lewis	Swalwell (CA)
DeBene	Lipinski	Takai
Dent	Loebach	Takano
DeSaulnier	Lofgren	Thompson (CA)
Deutch	Lowenthal	Thompson (MS)
Dingell	Lowe	Titus
Doggett	Lujan Grisham	Tonko
Doyle, Michael F.	(NM)	Torres
Duckworth	Lujan, Ben Ray	Tsongas
Edwards	(NM)	Van Hollen
Ellison	Lynch	Vargas
Engel	Maloney	Veasey
Eshoo	Carolin	Vela
Esty	Maloney, Sean	Velázquez
Farr	Matsui	Visclosky
Fattah	McCollum	Walz
Foster	McDermott	Waters, Maxine
Frankel (FL)	McGovern	Watson Coleman
Fudge	McNerney	Welch
Gabbard	Meeks	Wilson (FL)
Gallego	Meng	Yarmuth
Garamendi	Moulton	
	Murphy (FL)	
	Nadler	

NOES—234

Abraham	Chabot	Flores
Aderholt	Chaffetz	Forbes
Allen	Clawson (FL)	Fortenberry
Amash	Coffman	Fox
Amodei	Cole	Franks (AZ)
Babin	Collins (GA)	Frelinghuysen
Barletta	Collins (NY)	Garrett
Barr	Comstock	Gibbs
Barton	Conaway	Gohmert
Benishek	Cook	Goodlatte
Bilirakis	Cramer	Gosar
Bishop (MI)	Crawford	Gowdy
Bishop (UT)	Crenshaw	Granger
Black	Culberson	Graves (GA)
Blackburn	Curbelo (FL)	Graves (LA)
Blum	Davis, Rodney	Graves (MO)
Bost	Denham	Griffith
Boustany	DeSantis	Grothman
Brady (TX)	DesJarlais	Guinta
Brat	Diaz-Balart	Guthrie
Bridenstine	Dold	Hanna
Brooks (AL)	Donovan	Hardy
Brooks (IN)	Duffy	Harper
Buchanan	Duncan (SC)	Harris
Buck	Duncan (TN)	Hartzer
Bucshon	Ellmers (NC)	Heck (NV)
Burgess	Emmer (MN)	Hensarling
Byrne	Farenthold	Hice, Jody B.
Calvert	Fitzpatrick	Hill
Carter (GA)	Fleischmann	Holding
Carter (TX)	Fleming	Huelskamp

Hultgren	Miller (FL)	Schweikert
Hunter	Miller (MI)	Scott, Austin
Hurd (TX)	Moolenaar	Sensenbrenner
Hurt (VA)	Mooney (WV)	Sessions
Issa	Mullin	Shimkus
Jenkins (KS)	Mulvaney	Shuster
Jenkins (WV)	Murphy (PA)	Simpson
Johnson (OH)	Neugebauer	Smith (MO)
Johnson, Sam	Newhouse	Smith (NE)
Jones	Noem	Smith (NJ)
Jordan	Nugent	Smith (TX)
Joyce	Nunes	Stefanik
Kelly (MS)	Olson	Stewart
Kelly (PA)	Palazzo	Stivers
King (IA)	Palmer	Stutzman
King (NY)	Paulsen	Thompson (PA)
Kinzing (IL)	Pearce	Thornberry
Kline	Perry	Tiberi
Knight	Pittenger	Tipton
Labrador	Pitts	Trott
LaHood	Poe (TX)	Turner
LaMalfa	Poliquin	Upton
Lamborn	Pompeo	Valadao
Lance	Posey	Wagner
Latta	Price, Tom	Walberg
LoBiondo	Ratcliffe	Walden
Long	Reichert	Walker
Loudermilk	Renacci	Walorski
Love	Ribble	Walters, Mimi
Lucas	Rice (SC)	Weber (TX)
Luetkemeyer	Rigell	Webster (FL)
Lummis	Roby	Wenstrup
MacArthur	Roe (TN)	Westerman
Marchant	Rogers (AL)	Whitfield
Marino	Rogers (KY)	Williams
Massie	Rohrabacher	Wilson (SC)
McCarthy	Rokita	Wittman
McCaul	Rooney (FL)	Womack
McClintock	Ros-Lehtinen	Woodall
McHenry	Roskam	Yoder
McKinley	Ross	Yoho
McMorris	Rothfus	Young (AK)
Rodgers	Rouzer	Young (IA)
McSally	Royce	Young (IN)
Meadows	Russell	Zeldin
Meehan	Salmon	Zinke
Messer	Sanford	
Mica	Scalise	

NOT VOTING—15

Bonamici	Huizenga (MI)	Smith (WA)
Castro (TX)	Lieu, Ted	Wasserman
Cohen	Moore	Schultz
Fincher	Pallone	Westmoreland
Herrera Beutler	Pocan	
Hudson	Reed	

□ 1605

Messrs. GOHMERT and HUELSKAMP changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

Messrs. KATKO, MCNERNEY, and DOGGETT changed their vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was rejected. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. DUFFY

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 240, noes 176, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 72]

AYES—240

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishkek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)

Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Machant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen

Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—176

Adams
Aguilar
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer

Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano

Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)

Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer

Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Payne
Pelosi

Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sánchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—17

Bonamici
Brat
Castro (TX)
Cohen
Fincher
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Lieue, Ted
Moore
Pallone
Pascarell

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1610

Mr. BUCHANAN changed his vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. BRAT. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 72, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

Stated against:

Mr. PASCARELL. Mr. Chair, during the rollcall vote No. 72 on the Duffy Amendment, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. GRIJALVA

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 171, noes 245, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 73]

AYES—171

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge

Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng

Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sánchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—245

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishkek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost

Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz

Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney

Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)

NOT VOTING—17

Bonamici
Castro (TX)
Cohen
Davis, Danny
Fincher
Herrera Beutler

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting Chair (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1613

So the amendment was rejected.
The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished
business is the demand for a recorded
vote on the amendment offered by the
gentleman from California (Mr.
TAKANO) on which further proceedings
were postponed and on which the noes
prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the
amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amend-
ment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote
has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-
minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic de-
vice, and there were—ayes 190, noes 227,
not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 74]

AYES—190

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Dent
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fortenberry
Foster
Frankel (FL)

NOES—227

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pascarella
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schradler
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
LoBlundo
Loebach
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Miller (MI)

Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schneider
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—16

Bonamici
Castro (TX)
Cohen
Fincher
Herrera Beutler
Hudson

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting Chair (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1618

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois
changed his vote from “no” to “aye.”
So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR. There being no
further amendments, under the rule,
the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose;
and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CAR-
TER of Georgia) having assumed the
chair, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia,

Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3442) to provide further means of accountability of the United States debt and promote fiscal responsibility, and, pursuant to House Resolution 609, he reported the bill back to the House with sundry amendments adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the Chair will put them en gros.

The amendments were agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. DOGGETT. I am.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Doggett moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3442 to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendments:

Page 4, strike line 22 and all that follows through line 25 and insert the following:

“(C) an analysis of the following:

“(i) Long-term revenue lost from tax avoidance and evasion resulting from tax loopholes exploited by businesses, including corporate inversions, base erosion, unlimited deferral of foreign earnings, and loopholes that encourage the offshoring of jobs and profits.

“(ii) Long-term revenue lost from tax avoidance and evasion resulting from tax loopholes abused by the wealthy, including carried interest, estate tax rules, capital gains rates, and deductions and exemptions that widen income and wealth inequality among individuals.

“(iii) Long-term revenue lost due to unfair policies in the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, including those specified in paragraphs (1) and (2), which contribute to growing tax avoidance and evasion by American businesses and individuals who are increasingly more discouraged by corporations and wealthy individuals not being required to pay their fair share of taxes.

“(iv)) Long-term revenue lost due to unfair policies in the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 which harm middle-class workers and families and the long-term revenue effect of a shrinking middle class.”

Page 5, line 16, strike “information, including” and all that follows through line 2 on page 6 and insert “information.”

Mr. MARCHANT (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, to address a problem that has impacted our country for generations, some of our problem-solving colleagues have devised a surefire remedy. They are demanding another government report. Instead of actually voting to prevent more debt when they had the opportunity, they want a report.

Approval of this motion will not kill the report, it will not kill the bill, nor will it send it back to committee. Rather, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended, but it will be a more complete report that more completely describes the problem with which we are dealing.

Some of my Republican colleagues have a near insatiable desire for tax cuts that don't pay for themselves. They don't mind borrowing from foreign sources to provide more tax preferences to Wall Street or the privileged few. This motion would simply expose the cost of this false ideology. It would add a requirement that the public just find out how much these special-interest tax loopholes cost.

Specifically, this report would be expanded to include inversions. These are schemes by which some multinational corporations are renouncing their American charter, their American citizenship, in order to dodge taxes, while continuing to remain in America and claim the benefits of being American, paid for by their business competitors and other taxpayers. We have had a recent string of these inversions, which are really perversions of our Tax Code by those who refuse to pay their fair share of the cost of national security and other vital services.

American corporation Johnson Controls, for example, has announced its intent to merge with Tyco. Tyco was once an American citizen, before it became a citizen of Bermuda, before it switched to become a citizen of Ireland—all the while being managed in New Jersey. And Pfizer, the largest pharmaceutical company, is seeking the luck of the Irish—the Irish taxes, that is—but it certainly refuses to charge Americans lower, more reasonable Irish pharmaceutical costs.

These are the same companies that are insulted by the notion that they ought to pay a higher rate on their earnings than the people who clean up the boardroom at night.

The Republican chairman of a Houston oil services company wrote me a long time ago rejecting this notion as unfair and unpatriotic.

He said:

We are proud of our country, and we are willing to pay U.S. taxes to receive

the wonderful benefits of U.S. citizenship. My strongly held view is that if companies want to be headquartered in some tax haven, then the management should give up their U.S. citizenship and move there.

I agree. But that is not what happens. With our current tax loopholes, they don't have to move much more than a mailbox and few staff members.

Since the U.S. Supreme Court thinks that corporations are people for many other purposes, I agree with former Secretary Hillary Clinton's proposal to treat these charter-changing corporations as individuals like the super rich individuals who turn in passports and leave America. Apply an exit tax to previous profits that these corporations want to take out of the country.

There is much more that the Treasury Department can and should do now, since what it has done so far under existing legal authority has not accomplished very much.

Today, let's just get a report about it, about a giant rip-off of America. Corporations which are shipping their jobs and profits overseas while paying their lobbyists and their chief executive officers more than they pay the United States Treasury in taxes in any given year have made a pretty good investment for themselves, but it is not too great for the rest of us. They could not do it without enablers in this Congress.

American companies who stay in America and contribute to building American manufacturing in America deserve to have a level playing field. They help keep us secure at home and abroad, and they deserve to be treated fairly. In order to create more opportunity for all, we need more responsibility from all. Let's at least get a report about it.

That is all that this motion to recommit does is to ask for a report to go along with the report that they are seeking from the Treasury Department to tell us what is happening, how our middle class—our working Americans—are having to pay more because some others won't pay their fair share.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge the House to reject this motion to recommit and adopt the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. It is a commonsense solution to Washington's debt-crisis mentality.

H.R. 3442 creates a process to bring transparency, responsibility, and consistency to the debt management process. Regardless of whether a person supports raising the debt ceiling or

not, everyone should support a process that gives us more information to make an educated decision.

□ 1630

The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act requires the administration to report on the state of the national debt before the debt ceiling is reached. It also requires the administration to make recommendations and report information about how to reduce the debt and how America can meet its future obligations.

This accountability will give Congress the information it needs when considering the debt limit. All of this information will be made public online.

H.R. 3442 is a strong first step to move government away from its current crisis approach and changes the focus into coming up with solutions for our debt problem. I am a firm believer in H.R. 3442.

I urge all Members to reject this motion to recommit, and support the legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of H.R. 3442, if ordered; ordering the previous question on House Resolution 611; and adoption of the House Resolution 611, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 179, noes 238, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 75]

AYES—179

Adams	Cicilline	Doyle, Michael
Aguilar	Clark (MA)	F.
Ashford	Clarke (NY)	Duckworth
Bass	Clay	Edwards
Beatty	Cleaver	Ellison
Becerra	Clyburn	Engel
Bera	Connolly	Eshoo
Beyer	Conyers	Esty
Bishop (GA)	Cooper	Farr
Blumenauer	Costa	Fattah
Boyle, Brendan	Courtney	Poster
F.	Crowley	Frankel (FL)
Brady (PA)	Cuellar	Fudge
Brown (FL)	Cummings	Gabbard
Brownley (CA)	Davis (CA)	Galleo
Bustos	Davis, Danny	Garamendi
Butterfield	DeFazio	Graham
Capps	DeGette	Grayson
Capuano	Delaney	Green, Al
Cárdenas	DeLauro	Green, Gene
Carney	DelBene	Grijalva
Carson (IN)	DeSaulnier	Gutiérrez
Cartwright	Deutch	Hahn
Castor (FL)	Dingell	Hastings
Chu, Judy	Doggett	Heck (WA)

Higgins	Lynch	Sánchez, Linda
Himes	Maloney,	T.
Hinojosa	Carolyn	Sanchez, Loretta
Honda	Maloney, Sean	Sarbanes
Hoyer	Matsui	Schakowsky
Huffman	McCollum	Schiff
Israel	McDermott	Scott (VA)
Jackson Lee	McGovern	Scott, David
Jeffries	McNerney	Serrano
Johnson (GA)	Meeks	Sewell (AL)
Johnson, E. B.	Meng	Sherman
Jones	Moulton	Sinema
Kaptur	Murphy (FL)	Sires
Keating	Nadler	Slaughter
Kelly (IL)	Napolitano	Speier
Kennedy	Neal	Swalwell (CA)
Kildee	Nolan	Takai
Kilmer	Norcross	Takano
Kind	O'Rourke	Thompson (CA)
Kirkpatrick	Pascarell	Thompson (MS)
Kuster	Payne	Titus
Langevin	Pelosi	Tonko
Larsen (WA)	Perlmutter	Torres
Larson (CT)	Peters	Tsongas
Lawrence	Peterson	Van Hollen
Lee	Pingree	Vargas
Levin	Polis	Veasey
Lewis	Price (NC)	Vela
Lipinski	Quigley	Velázquez
Loeb sack	Rangel	Visclosky
Lofgren	Rice (NY)	Walz
Lowenthal	Richmond	Waters, Maxine
Lowe y	Roybal-Allard	Watson Coleman
Lujan Grisham	Ruiz	Welch
(NM)	Ruppersberger	Wilson (FL)
Luján, Ben Ray	Rush	Yarmuth
(NM)	Ryan (OH)	

NOES—238

Abraham	Duncan (SC)	King (NY)
Aderholt	Duncan (TN)	Kinzinger (IL)
Allen	Ellmers (NC)	Kline
Amash	Emmer (MN)	Knight
Amodei	Farenthold	Labrador
Babin	Fitzpatrick	LaHood
Barletta	Fleischmann	LaMalfa
Barr	Fleming	Lamborn
Barton	Flores	Lance
Benishek	Forbes	Latta
Bilirakis	Fortenberry	LoBiondo
Bishop (MI)	Foxo	Long
Bishop (UT)	Franks (AZ)	Loudermilk
Black	Frelinghuysen	Love
Blackburn	Garrett	Lucas
Blum	Gibbs	Luetkemeyer
Bost	Gibson	Lummis
Boustany	Gohmert	MacArthur
Brady (TX)	Goodlatte	Marchant
Brat	Gosar	Marino
Bridenstine	Gowdy	Massie
Brooks (AL)	Granger	McCarthy
Brooks (IN)	Graves (GA)	McCauley
Buchanan	Graves (LA)	McClintock
Buck	Graves (MO)	McHenry
Bucshon	Griffith	McKinley
Burgess	Grothman	McMorris
Byrne	Guinta	Rodgers
Calvert	Guthrie	McSally
Carter (GA)	Hanna	Meadows
Carter (TX)	Hardy	Meehan
Chabot	Harper	Messer
Chaffetz	Harris	Mica
Clawson (FL)	Hartzler	Miller (FL)
Coffman	Heck (NV)	Miller (MI)
Cole	Hensarling	Moolenaar
Collins (GA)	Hice, Jody B.	Mooney (WV)
Collins (NY)	Hill	Mullin
Comstock	Holding	Mulvaney
Conaway	Huelskamp	Murphy (PA)
Cook	Hultgren	Neugebauer
Costello (PA)	Hunter	Newhouse
Cramer	Hurd (TX)	Noem
Crawford	Hurt (VA)	Nugent
Crenshaw	Issa	Nunes
Culberson	Jenkins (KS)	Olson
Curbelo (FL)	Jenkins (WV)	Palazzo
Davis, Rodney	Johnson (OH)	Palmer
Denham	Johnson, Sam	Paulsen
Dent	Jolly	Pearce
DeSantis	Jordan	Perry
DesJarlais	Joyce	Pittenger
Diaz-Balart	Katko	Pitts
Dold	Kelly (MS)	Poe (TX)
Donovan	Kelly (PA)	Poliquin
Duffy	King (IA)	Pompeo

Posey	Schrader	Wagner
Price, Tom	Schweikert	Walberg
Ratcliffe	Scott, Austin	Walden
Reichert	Sensenbrenner	Walker
Renacci	Sessions	Walorski
Ribble	Shimkus	Walters, Mimi
Rice (SC)	Shuster	Weber (TX)
Rigell	Simpson	Webster (FL)
Roby	Smith (MO)	Wenstrup
Roe (TN)	Smith (NE)	Westerman
Rogers (AL)	Smith (NJ)	Whitfield
Rogers (KY)	Smith (TX)	Williams
Rohrabacher	Stefanik	Wilson (SC)
Rokita	Stewart	Wittman
Rooney (FL)	Stivers	Womack
Ros-Lehtinen	Stutzman	Woodall
Ross	Thompson (PA)	Yoder
Rothfus	Thornberry	Yoho
Rouzer	Tiberi	Young (AK)
Royce	Tipton	Young (IA)
Russell	Trott	Young (IN)
Salmon	Turner	Zeldin
Sanford	Upton	Zinke
Scalise	Valadao	

NOT VOTING—16

Bonamici	Huizenga (MI)	Roskam
Castro (TX)	Lieu, Ted	Smith (WA)
Cohen	Moore	Wasserman
Fincher	Pallone	Schultz
Herrera Beutler	Pocan	Westmoreland
Hudson	Reed	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1636

Mr. POMPEO changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 267, noes 151, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 76]

AYES—267

Abraham	Brooks (AL)	Cramer
Aderholt	Brooks (IN)	Crawford
Aguilar	Brownley (CA)	Crenshaw
Allen	Buchanan	Cuellar
Amash	Buck	Culberson
Amodei	Bucshon	Curbelo (FL)
Ashford	Burgess	Davis, Rodney
Babin	Bustos	Delaney
Barletta	Byrne	Denham
Barr	Calvert	Dent
Barton	Carney	DeSantis
Benishek	Carter (GA)	DesJarlais
Bera	Carter (TX)	Diaz-Balart
Bilirakis	Chabot	Dold
Bishop (GA)	Chaffetz	Donovan
Bishop (MI)	Clawson (FL)	Duckworth
Bishop (UT)	Coffman	Duffy
Black	Cole	Duncan (SC)
Blackburn	Collins (GA)	Duncan (TN)
Blum	Collins (NY)	Ellmers (NC)
Blumenauer	Comstock	Emmer (MN)
Bost	Conaway	Esty
Boustany	Cook	Farenthold
Brady (TX)	Cooper	Fitzpatrick
Brat	Costa	Fleischmann
Bridenstine	Costello (PA)	Fleming

Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Himes
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta

Lipinski
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Robby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita

NOES—151

Adams
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Beyer
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Ciilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)

Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Ruiz
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schraeder
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Torres
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vela
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

Lujan Grisham (NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
Pascrell
Payne

Bonamici
Castro (TX)
Cohen
Fincher
Herrera Beutler
Hudson

Pelosi
Perlmutter
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman

NOT VOTING—15

Huizenga (MI)
Lie, Ted
Moore
Pallone
Pocan
Reed

Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Viscosky
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Smith (WA)
Wasserman
Schultz
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1642

Mr. DOGGETT changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1017, COMMON SENSE NUTRITION DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM FEBRUARY 15, 2016, THROUGH FEBRUARY 22, 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 611) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1017) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A, and providing for proceedings during the period from February 15, 2016, through February 22, 2016, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 237, nays 178, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 77]

YEAS—237

Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce

NAYS—178

Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Ciilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver

Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallo
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel

Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter

Peters
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—18

Bonamici
Buchanan
Castro (TX)
Cohen
Fincher
Fortenberry
Herrera Beutler

Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Joyce
Lieu, Ted
Moore
Pallone
Pocan

Reed
Smith (WA)
Wasserman
Schultz
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1649

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 237, noes 174, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 78]

AYES—237

Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Davis, Rodney
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaull
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Forbes
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith

NOES—174

Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardenas
Carney

Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn

Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallo
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries

Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters

Peterson
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—22

Amodei
Bonamici
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Castro (TX)
Chaffetz
Cohen
Fincher

Fleming
Fortenberry
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Joyce
Lieu, Ted
Moore

Pallone
Pocan
Reed
Smith (WA)
Wasserman
Schultz
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1655

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 71 on the Kelly of Illinois Amendment to H.R. 3442—Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 72 on the Duffy Amendment to H.R. 3442—Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 73 on the Grijalva Amendment No. 7 to H.R.

3442—Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 74 on the Takano Amendment to H.R. 3442—Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 75 on the Motion to recommit H.R. 3442—Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 76 on the final passage of H.R. 3442—Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 77 on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2017. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 78 on H. Res. 611—Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2017—Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 3442, DEBT MANAGEMENT AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2015

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Clerk be authorized to make technical corrections in the engrossment of H.R. 3442, to include corrections in spelling, punctuation, section numbering and cross-referencing, and the insertion of appropriate headings.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to correct the RECORD regarding my vote during yesterday's consideration of the Democratic motion to recommit on H.R. 3293, rollcall 69. While my vote was recorded as “no,” it was my intention to vote “aye,” as I strongly support scientific research into causes and the prevention of gun violence.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H. RES. 571

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H. Res. 571.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

NATIONAL COURT REPORTING AND CAPTIONING WEEK

(Mr. GUINTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of National Court Reporting and Captioning Week, which is taking place next week.

Court reporters and captioners are highly specialized professionals who record our most important public events and provide vital closed-captioning services to nearly 48 million Americans.

My own parents met in court reporting school and went on to start a small, successful business. The training is rigorous. Certification requires one's ability to type at a rate of 225 words per minutes. A court reporter is transcribing this very moment in Congress.

The New Hampshire Court Reporters Association recently celebrated its 30th anniversary, but the profession's history in the United States extends much further. Because of court reporters, we have an accurate record of the first days of our country as our Founding Fathers drafted the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

I would like to thank court reporters and captioners for their service, enabling public participation in our democracy—a cornerstone of representative government in the United States.

□ 1700

TRIBUTE TO SANFORD “MAN MAN” HARLING III

(Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Sanford Harling III, a widely known and well-loved 12-year-old from Norristown, Pennsylvania, affectionately known as “Man Man.”

Sanford tragically died after he selflessly dove back into the flames of his own burning home to rescue his father, who was bedridden while recovering from hip surgery. Unbeknownst to Man Man, his father had already escaped through a second-story window.

Although this courageous 12-year-old never reemerged from the smoldering ruins of his home, his memory now resonates well beyond his community thanks to this remarkable act of heroism.

While the honor and recognition that Sanford deserves cannot return him to the embrace of his family, perhaps his shining example will inspire other

deeds of lifesaving bravery and devotion. He will be forever remembered in our community and our country as a hero.

I offer my deepest sympathies to the Harling family and to everyone who knew and cherished this young man's character.

SUPREME COURT STAY ON CLEAN POWER PLAN

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, every day hardworking American families are living with greater burdens placed upon them by their own Federal Government. As our constituents struggle to pay their bills and realize the American Dream, they do so under a weight of taxes and burdensome regulations from Washington.

This week, the working guy or gal actually got a reprieve from one of these costly burdens when the Supreme Court placed a stay on President Obama's so-called Clean Power Plan. The \$480 billion plan—yes, that is billion, with a B—would increase electric rates for millions of Americans. In Kansas, electric utility rates may spike by 30 percent.

At townhall meetings with constituents, I rarely have a constituent come up and ask for a 30 percent increase in their electric rates, yet Washington will make Americans foot the bill once again.

What do we get for the \$408 billion in hidden taxes and higher electric utility rates? A potential one one-hundredth of a degree reduction in global temperatures.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the Supreme Court for placing a hold on this Big Government tax on my constituents. Finally, a win for the little guy.

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SURVEILLANCE ACT SECTION 702 AND SPYING BY NSA

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the NSA is using a loophole in the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act to spy on Americans without a warrant. Under section 702 of FISA, government agents may seize information from databases on suspected foreign terrorists.

While seizing the information on these terrorists, NSA also seizes data on Americans without a warrant, data that includes emails, texts, and voice communication. This is an unlawful interpretation of FISA.

It was never the intent of Congress that section 702 would be used to create databases of information that would

later be searched for information on American citizens without a search warrant and without that individual's knowledge.

I have introduced legislation that would prohibit warrantless searches of government databases for information that pertains to U.S. citizens.

The NSA has and will continue to violate the constitutional protections guaranteed to every American unless Congress acts. Until we fix this and make the law clear, citizens will never be sure or safe that their private conversations are secure from the eyes and spies of government.

The Bill of Rights cannot be trampled upon in the name of national security, whether the NSA likes it or not.

And that is just the way it is.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

(Mr. WILLIAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to bring attention to the recent outstanding achievements of the University of Texas at Austin. This public university, which I represent, has continued to fulfill the Texas Constitution's mandate that UT be a "university of the first class."

I regularly meet with President Greg Fenves and Chancellor Admiral William McRaven. I would like to praise them for their continued dedication to upholding the core values of UT—particularly the students' and faculty's cutting-edge research and development of new technologies.

A top public university, UT has conducted \$650 million worth of innovative scientific and scholarly research. In the past few years, the Cockrell School of Engineering has invented new technologies, including a device that will improve physical therapy for patients recovering from spinal cord injuries.

The Dell Medical School, under the leadership of neurologist Dean Clay Johnston, is planning to reinvent medical education and healthcare thinking. They are transforming the way we learn about health.

The students at UT are taught by some of the most brilliant minds in the country. More than 200 members of the National Academies and 12 National Medal of Science recipients serve as UT professors.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the University of Texas at Austin on these impressive accomplishments. Our country is proud of Texas' flagship university. What starts at the University of Texas truly does change the world.

I say, "Hook 'em."

In God we trust.

HONORING CLAIRE BENTON

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Claire Benton of Minnetonka for earning the Congressional Award Silver Medal. The Congressional Award is given by Congress to recognize initiative, service, and achievement in young people.

In order to earn the Silver Medal, Claire needed to complete over 400 hours in voluntary public service, personal development, physical fitness, and expedition/exploration. Claire served her community by volunteering at her local public library and spending time as a counselor at an adventure camp. She also reached the physical fitness goals by participating in cardiovascular and endurance activities that helped her increase her running distance from 8 miles to 20.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Award was established in 1979 in order to inspire young people like Claire and recognize their efforts to better themselves. Claire's hard work and dedication inspire other young people to become future leaders in service to their community.

Congratulations, Claire.

SUPREME COURT REJECTS EXECUTIVE OVERREACH

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we saw the Supreme Court reject yet another of President Obama's executive overreaches.

The President's effort to unilaterally micromanage electrical power plants across the Nation, without any legal authority to do so, would drive up energy costs in virtually every community and nearly half a trillion dollars in additional costs.

In just the last few months, Federal courts have rejected the President's amnesty plan, his EPA's waters of the U.S. power grab, and now his power plant regulation. The message of these decisions is clear: the President should abandon his efforts to end-run around Congress, which in nearly every case have been found to violate the law, and work with Congress, the people's House, to address the issues facing our Nation.

JOB LOSSES IN THE COAL INDUSTRY

(Mr. ROTHFUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of some recently laid-off coal miners from Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

For 7 years, President Obama has been targeting their jobs and, in the

process, sacrificing the families and communities who depend on those jobs. The Obama Administration is using the EPA to conjure up regulations to all but eliminate a major part of the energy industry in western Pennsylvania.

What do you say to a hardworking, middle class dad, who has a wife, three kids, and a mortgage, whose livelihood has been taken away? This particular dad's job is but one of 40,000 jobs that have been lost in coal country. This assault on good, family-sustaining jobs is one of the reasons the average family income has never fully recovered from the Great Recession.

Yesterday, Fed Chair Janet Yellen testified about headwinds facing the economy. I suggest there are a number of manmade anthropogenic—to borrow a phrase—headwinds, and the EPA's regulatory assault is one of them.

Sacrificing the livelihood of hardworking Americans for some personal political philosophy is unconscionable. I will continue to fight against the President's war on middle class jobs.

HONORING REPRESENTATIVE MICHAEL GARVER "MIKE" OXLEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mr. CHABOT. I include in the RECORD two eulogies that many of us actually heard personally given in Findlay, Ohio, when we attended a very wonderful service for our colleague, Mike Oxley, recently. These two specific eulogies are from his son, Elvis, and from Jim Conzelman, who is his long-time devoted chief of staff.

[Jan. 5, 2016]

EULOGY OF MIKE OXLEY

O-H-I-O

My name is Michael Chadd Elvis Oxley, son of Patricia and Mike, husband to Jennifer, and father to Maximus Garver Oxley. I stand before you this afternoon to mourn the loss of and celebrate the life of my father.

As the joke goes, "How do you know if someone is vegan or does Cross Fit?" They'll tell you.

Bob Hope

Beachboy Al Jardine

Orville & Wilbur Wright

General William Tecumseh Sherman

Archie Griffin

Wendy's

Cooper Tire

Marathon Petroleum

Kroger

Victoria's Secret

You may have heard of these, they're from Ohio. And so was one Michael Garver Oxley.

Everyone in this church knows, on average, between 300–500 direct or indirect accounts of where my father's golf ball landed, what club was implemented at the time, and the associated weather conditions, so I won't focus on that today.

Looking back now, I see how supremely fortunate I am to have had Mike Oxley as my father. I can go to YouTube, LexisNexis or the Hancock County Historical Museum Oxley Government Center, click a button and see my father in action again. 99% do not have that beautiful blessing, and for that privilege I am thankful and humbled.

However, if I may make one request of you when you have a chance: I want your personal stories. Not for attribution, not for publication. I want the insider view into my father from your perspective. I want meat. For instance, a member of the Real Miami staff reached out to me and said how charmed she was that rather than sitting at the big donor table, Dad sat with the staff to ask them about their Miami experience, and it touched her heart. A former Member shared with me yesterday that Dad politely brokered a meeting between him and a Committee Chair so that a public flare up would soon be quelled and that closure could be reached on an important issue.

I know all too well where Dad's ball landed, or how the press statements were presented. I selfishly want this living history to be the very marrow on which I can chew when I miss him the most. I want more in a time when I have less.

When my father was, so we thought, in his final days in October, Dad pulled me close and reminded me that I tended to get things wrong the first time, but the second time I got them right. He told me he loved me and was proud of me, which is all I could have ever asked for.

My father and I had grown closer in my 30s once I had found the love of my life, earned my MBA, and started my own business—all things I did right the second time—our relationship elevated to a much higher level.

The next day Dad awoke and decided it was time to have cataract surgery. By that afternoon, with renewed ability to clearly see his Grandson and Buckeye football, Dad had a new zeal for life and a new inspiration to get better. Thank you, Dr. Harry, for extending my father's quality and quantity of life.

Quote: "When the New York Giants, a team you would give your right arm to beat, and vice versa, sends you a gift—that's something. When everybody down to the groundskeepers and those boys in white coats remember you with trophies—that's something. When you have a wonderful mother-in-law who takes sides with you in squabbles with her own daughter—that's something. When you have a father and a mother who work all their lives so you can have an education and build your body—it's a blessing. When you have a wife who has been a tower of strength and shown more courage than you dreamed existed—that's the finest I know."

"So I close in saying that I might have been given a bad break, but I've got an awful lot to live for."

Most of you may not know that quote because it is the third stanza after a much more memorable, pithy truth:

"Fans, for the past two weeks you have been reading about the bad break I got. Yet today I consider myself the luckiest man on

the face of this earth. I have been in ballparks for seventeen years and have never received anything but kindness and encouragement from you fans."—Lou Gehrig July 4, 1939.

To me, there could be no more fitting parallel to Dad on so many levels.

Dad's Bucket List was largely accomplished:

Retired the Roll Call Trophy

Visited most continents multiple times

Propelled significant legislation in telecom reform, brownfield cleanup, spectrum auction, fractions to decimals, terrorism risk insurance, and anti-fraud.

Mentored hundreds of aspiring politicians on both sides of the aisle.

Raised countless funds for charities and fellow candidates.

Rode an ostrich in Ohio, a camel in Egypt, and Air Force One with Reagan.

Fostered the love of golf in his grandson.

And shared all of these experiences with his life partner of 44 years.

He did everything he could to enjoy one last reunion, one last round of golf, and one last embrace of his family. It was that fighting spirit for which he was known in life as he will be in death.

I am so thankful for this outpouring of love and affection and on behalf of the Oxley family we sincerely appreciate you celebrating Dad's life today. This will not be easy for any of us for a while, but I know we will regularly convene over martinis (see thrus) in order to help one another through this. That would be Dad's will.

On the night before he passed, my father texted me "Are you awake?" which indicated he wanted me to check in on him. This was a simple request to fulfill and I did. Retrospectively, I look at that one layer deeper. "Awake" in the ancient Greek is "Gregorio" and it takes on a more metaphysical definition—conscious, active, focused, vigilant.

Thanks to you, Dad, I am awake. I am very awake.

Good afternoon friends and family of Team Oxley!

I am Jim Conzelman and had the honor serving as Mike Oxley's Chief of Staff from August of 1981 to January of 2007.

Pat, Chadd, Jennifer thank you from all of us for sharing "The Ox" with us for so many wonderful years.

Over the past couple of days, notes have poured in regarding the passing of our friend Mike Oxley. Allow me to read a couple of them to you.

"He was a dear friend, one of the true good guys . . . a rarity in this town, a man of integrity, a great American!" It goes on and on. Heartfelt notes that mean so much to this family.

Simply put, Mike was an extraordinary human being. He was comfortable in his own skin. I remember once Mike telling the staff they could schedule him in any event in the district, "just do not put me in blue jeans and boots and send me to a farm to talk AG issues. That dog won't hunt."

If you were to look at our office photo album, you would see Mike on many a farm in Ohio's Fourth Congressional District wearing slacks, white shirt with rolled up sleeves talking substantive AG issues with farmers. Mike was very comfortable. He was not a phony, it came through and they loved him. You can understand why.

He enjoyed people and respected them as human beings. In all the years I have known Mike I never heard him talk down or poorly about another person. This was especially

true with his colleagues in the House. It just wasn't in his DNA to tear someone else down to make himself look better. He was as comfortable talking to friends and neighbors as he was to colleagues in the House, the Senate and even the President of the United States.

Mike won in a special election in 1981. President Reagan invited him to come to the White House to meet and have a photo op in the Oval Office. Over breakfast he told son Chadd that he was going to meet the President. Chadd, ever the capitalist, gave Mike his autograph book and asked him to have the President sign it with just his name.

The meeting went very well, but ran way over schedule because of Mike's ability to connect with the President. He almost forgot to have the book signed but at the last minute remembered. That night at dinner Chadd was given his book back. To Chadd with best wishes Ronald Reagan. Chadd was not happy. "Dad I only wanted the President's name. Now with mine on the page it has decreased value if I want to sell it later."

Mike also connected with President George H. W. Bush. He talked to the President, then Vice President to come out to Ohio to do a political event. After the dinner speech, the Vice President and Mrs. Bush mingled with Mike and Pat's friends. The Oxleys had been asked to ride with the Bushes in the motorcade and return to Washington with them on Air Force 2. The Secret Service Agent had strict instructions . . . when the VP departs you must be with him. As time went by, Mrs. Bush left the room, Pat Oxley left the room, the Vice President left the room. Mike was engaged in conversation with friends and became totally engrossed in the conversation. Nothing else mattered to him at that time than talking to his friends. I told him . . . "sir you must leave."

"In just a minute", Mike replied. "No Mike NOW." He ran out catching the just as the motorcade pulling out. But that was the way Mike was. When he was talking to you, you were the most important person in the room and you knew it.

Another amazing attribute of Mike's was his optimistic outlook on life. Most of this optimism was due to his beautiful bride, Pat Oxley. Pat you never get enough credit for being the only one that kept Mike ever optimistic and grounded. Thank you PAT for all that you did.

Do you realize how difficult it was to be an upbeat Republican in 70s and 80s? House Republican's got beat ALL the time . . . in committee, on the floor of the House and even on the field with the Republican Congressional Baseball team.

But Mike was always the optimist. He knew we would eventually win and was always looking for opportunities that would help others in our great country . . . such as distant learning, telemedicine, saving Marathon Oil in his hometown of Findlay from a hostile takeover, keeping the Abrahams M-1 Tank in Lima from being mothballed and of course making corporate governance stronger with his signature Sarbanes Oxley legislation.

With each of these endeavors, Mike always came prepared. At any hearing, any markup, any meeting he always knew his facts and what to say and when to say it. Mike always made a point, but never at anyone's expense. He would show up on time or early to meetings because it was a right thing to do. You would usually find him chatting with staff or witnesses and would stay to the bitter end of a meeting or hearing long after most had left. He would look you straight in

the eye and regale you with stories of that 4 letter word . . . golf, or baseball talking about his beloved Detroit Tigers or basketball in the House gym and beating Congressman Ed Markey, now Senator Markey in the free throw contest. It should be noted Mike never told us when Ed beat him in the contest.

He was always prepared with the follow up . . . returning phone calls, and thanking folks for their hard work. Many here today have legislative red-lines they worked on with a personal thank you note from Mike. One former staffer told me, "I was a nobody and he thanked me. I will treasure this forever."

All of these Oxley attributes set an example whether it was professional or personal he always did the right thing.

Mike loved his family. First decision after being elected to Congress was moving Pat and Chadd to DC.

If you look at the official portrait Mike insisted on having the family photo in it. This was PJ and PM (pre Jennifer Oxley and pre Max Oxley). If he was Chairman today, I know he would have figured out a way to have their likeness photo shopped . . . No artist shopped in.

All in all future politicians will go to campaign school to study and learn the Oxley Model.

Treating people as human beings and with respect. Being optimistic and looking for opportunities to leave this world a better place than you found it.

Being prepared to engage with life . . . showing up on time, thanking everyone, communicating face to face with people.

Setting an example by always doing the right thing.

HOPE . . . This is why he was a great Congressman, great Chairman and a great friend to all of us.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said that the important thing is "not length of life, but depth of life." From his family to his friends to his accomplishments, I can't think of a person who led a deeper, fuller, richer life than Mike Oxley.

You all know Mike loved music . . . music of the 50s 60s 70s . . . 80s not so much. He could identify all the artists and could sing all of the lyrics. He was seldom wrong. Allow me to close with a song that was #1 in 1973 that written and sung by the late John Denver. It goes like this—

Sunshine on my shoulders makes me happy,
Sunshine in my eyes can make me cry.
Sunshine on the water looks so lovely,
Sunshine almost always makes me high.
If I had a day that I could give you,
I'd give to you the day just like today.
If I had a song that I could sing for you,
I'd sing a song to make you feel this way.
If I had a tale that I could tell you,
I'd tell a tale sure to make you smile.
If I had a wish I could wish for you,
I'd make a wish for sunshine for you all the while.

Thank you Mike for touching our lives and making the sun shine on all of us.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mike Oxley, who served in this body for 25 years and who, sadly, passed away from lung cancer on January 1 of this year. Today would have been Mike's 72nd birthday, and he will be missed by those of us who had the pleasure and the honor of knowing him. I served with Mike in this House for 12 years, from 1995 to

2007, and I will always remember that time very fondly.

Mike Oxley was a lot of things: an attorney, an investigator, a leader, a competitor, an avid golfer, and so many more things. He was dedicated to serving his community and serving the people of the State of Ohio and the people of our entire country.

Mike graduated from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, in 1966. Speaker RYAN, my son, and many other distinguished people are graduates of Miami University in Oxford. Mike graduated with a degree in political science and obtained his law degree from Ohio State University.

Following law school, Mike was a special agent with the FBI, working primarily in Washington, Boston, and New York. In that position, he learned a number of investigative skills that he would later use here in Congress.

After his time with the FBI, Mike returned to Ohio and began a private law practice, but he was called to service once again when he was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives in 1972. He served in the Ohio House until 1981, when he was elected to Congress in a special election to fill a vacancy upon the death of Congressman Tennyson Guyer. Mike would represent the people of Ohio's Fourth Congressional District for the next 25 years.

Upon his retirement from Congress in 2007, Mike continued to find ways to serve our Nation when he was in the private sector. He was a member of the board of trustees for the University of Findlay. He remained active at his alma mater, Miami University. Most recently, he was a senior adviser on the board of directors of NASDAQ OMX Group, Inc.

After being diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer, a type of lung cancer usually affecting nonsmokers like Mike, he joined the board of directors of the Lung Cancer Alliance. He would dedicate much of his remaining time in fighting lung cancer, including serving as chairman of the Lung Cancer Alliance board, beginning in 2014.

Mike was a very good man. He really was. He was a family man. In fact, his wife, Pat; his son, Elvis; his grandson, Max; and other families members; as well as his chief of staff, Jim Conzelman, are with us in the gallery this evening.

As they know, he loved life. He had a very infectious laugh. He was a golf enthusiast. He loved sports of all sorts and regularly played pickup basketball with other Members.

For many who served with him, we will never forget his dedication to the congressional baseball team and the baseball game. He viewed the game as a chance for Members from both sides of the aisle to put aside their differences and engage in a friendly contest of America's pastime, all while raising money for charitable causes.

But that didn't mean he didn't want to win. He did.

In fact, he was so dedicated to the game that he was always trying to recruit new players to improve the Republican's prospects on the diamond. Not surprisingly, in the eight games that Ox managed the Republican team, we beat the Democrats seven times. We have gone downhill from there.

At times, though, Mike's competitive streak may have gotten the best of him. In the 1994 game, Ox was playing first base when then-Representative, now-Senator SHERROD BROWN was racing to beat out a ground ball. As Ox reached for an errant throw, the two men collided and Mike broke his arm. You would think that might discourage him from playing in the future, but the very next year there was Ox taking the field again and leading the Republican team.

That is who Mike Oxley was: a true competitor who never backed down from a challenge. Yet he approached challenges, whether it was the congressional baseball team or a divisive fight here on the House floor, with a positive, optimistic demeanor, a smile on his face, and usually a kind word for those in the opposition. Put another way, he would disagree without being disagreeable, which is an admirable trait and an invaluable skill in all areas of life.

Here is what I will remember most about Mike Oxley: he was a friend, a colleague, and, more importantly, he was a decent, genuine family man who was gracious and well-liked by everyone who had the pleasure of serving with him.

He will be missed.

□ 1715

To Mike's wife, Pat, his son Elvis, his grandson Max, and the entire Oxley family, please know that those of us who knew Mike are saddened by your loss, but we appreciate the time you allowed us to spend with him here in the United States Congress. You are in our thoughts and our prayers. God bless all of you.

There are many other Members who will be sharing some of their remembrances here during this Special Order. I would like at this point to turn to one of our colleagues also from Ohio who was a very, very good friend of Mike Oxley and just a great American himself, the gentleman from the great State of Ohio (Mr. TIBERI).

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, how significant and beautiful that today, the day of Mike Oxley's birth, we celebrate his glorious and beautiful life. Thank you, Pat. Thank you, Chadd Elvis. Thank you, Jennifer and grandson Max. Thanks to all of you for sharing Mike Oxley with us, as Mr. CHABOT said: It was really a special, special honor.

I met the Ox when I was a senior in college, a congressional staffer for then

Congressman John Kasich. I got asked to help staff an event that Congressman Oxley and Congressman Kasich did here in Washington, D.C. It was called a Washington Fly-In. Here this Congressman by the name of Mike Oxley met me and was as nice to me as he was to his colleagues at this fly-in, as a young guy who came in for this event from Ohio.

Ironically that 15 years later—we didn't know—that I would be his colleague. He treated me the same then, the same throughout the time that I knew Mike. The way that he treated people was kind of inspirational for a really important guy. He led in that way, too. His staff treated people, whether they be here in Washington or back in Ohio, with the same type of respect that their boss treated people.

After that election in 2000, we had a freshman orientation. I replaced the man that I had worked for in the 1980s and early 1990s, John Kasich. I was at this freshman orientation filling out this form for committee assignments.

Another Congressman from our delegation, who seemed to be the chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, came up to me and said: Well, you know, just fill out that form and put Financial Services, a brand-new committee to be chaired by Mike Oxley, and Education and Workforce, a committee that is going to be chaired by me, as your committees because that is what you are going to get.

I said to then Congressman Boehner, well, Committee on Financial Services sounds really good, Committee on Education and the Workforce not so much.

So I filled out my form, and I put Committee on Financial Services among some other committees. I excluded Education and the Workforce. About 10 days later, I got my committee assignments, Committee on Financial Services and Committee on Education and the Workforce.

I told my new chairman, Mike Oxley, the story. I said: Was this thing wired? In his glorious, special way, he got that grin, and he just laughed, as Mike Oxley often did. He was such a cheerful guy. He was a special chairman.

I didn't realize then how lucky I was to have Mike Oxley as a chairman for 6 years on this brand-new committee. Every year that went by, more and more Members wanted to be on this committee. It was obviously an important committee, but they also wanted to be on a committee chaired by Mike Oxley. His disposition was great, but he also was such a team guy. It was just in his blood that he wanted to get things done, and he wanted to help the team, the team being our Republican Conference, the team being the Congress, the team being members of the Committee on Financial Services.

I remember one day we were doing a delegation meeting, and during the meeting Mike said: I am going to do an

event for one of the members of our Committee on Financial Services. If you have nothing going on, why don't you join me? I am driving. We get into his car, and out blares Beach Boys music, which obviously was one of Mike's favorites.

As we are listening to the song, I am thinking how ironic, this makes so much sense. It made sense then; it makes sense now, going back to a simpler time. Mike was pretty simple in how he was a Congressman and how he was a chairman. It wasn't about him. It was never about him. That is why he was such a great mentor.

It was about moving the issues forward. He put newer members or subcommittee chairmen in charge of issues. He helped us through it. When the light shone, he ignored it. He shared it, he put us out in front. It was about the team.

As Mr. CHABOT mentioned, he was a great manager for the congressional baseball team for the Republicans. He was a manager as our chairman. He was a great manager as our chairman. We learned a lot. We learned a lot from Mike Oxley—not just members of the committee, but staff members, so many people who have come through this building, who have come through the Rayburn Building. He was a mentor.

He made a lot of people who touched his life better. He made me better as a Member of Congress. He made me better as a person, and I appreciate that, Pat. We thank you for having you share him with us. God bless you all.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman. We greatly appreciate the gentleman's comments here this evening.

I now yield to another gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS).

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a fellow Ohioan who had distinguished service in this body for 25 years and made a huge difference for everyday Americans for 25 years. Today would be his birthday, Congressman Mike Oxley, Chairman Mike Oxley, who made a huge difference.

I did not have the honor of serving with Congressman Oxley, but what I did have was a chance to meet him and have him be an adviser and a mentor. When I got here and got on the Committee on Financial Services, a committee that he was formerly the chairman of, he took me under his wing. He introduced me to hundreds of people. He helped me find my way here. He helped make sure I got on the path to being a good legislator. He did that, not really knowing me before that.

He became a great friend, a great mentor, and a great adviser. I am really thankful that he was willing to share his time and energy and talents with a guy like me. I want to thank his wife, Pat, his son Chadd, and all the whole Oxley family for letting him share his life, even after he left Con-

gress, with folks who were coming in brand new, trying to make a difference.

He will be remembered as somebody who made a difference for all Americans who wanted to figure out how to make sure they could invest their life savings and not be taken advantage of. Obviously, the famous bill that bears his name was part of a bipartisan response to the Enron crisis. He deserves the credit for saving our financial system and making sure it was safe and sound in the future for all Americans.

He would always take on tough issues. He would always work with people across the aisle. That is who he was and what he did. He served the people of his district proudly, and he worked to bring people together. He was loyal, optimistic, and pragmatic. Even though he was a strong Republican, he would work with Republicans and Democrats to get things done. I think there is a lot that we could all emulate from Mike Oxley's service. We could learn a lot today and in the future.

My thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Pat, and the entire Oxley family during this difficult time. Even during his time when he had lung cancer, he was optimistic and happy and helping other people. I know he has got to be a tough guy to lose and not have around every day because he brightened everybody's day. I know I miss him, and I know you will miss him, and America misses Mike Oxley, and they should.

I hope that in saying good-bye today, we can honor his incredible legacy that he left and the difference he made for America into the future. I just want to remember Mike Oxley as the incredible patriot and friend and mentor that he was and say Godspeed, Mike Oxley.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman. This is a bipartisan evening, so I would now like to yield to our colleague, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DAVID SCOTT).

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise to say some words for a very, very, very good man, Mike Oxley. When I came to Congress in the year of 2002, I was assigned to the Committee on Financial Services, and that is where I met Mike Oxley. Our lives intertwined. He was a tremendous help to me on that committee as I was breaking in.

I am very delighted, and it opened my eyes to a world which I was only dimly aware when he asked if I would join him as one of the Members to travel to Scotland and to Europe and to be able to visit and to sit with other bankers and financial people to learn the importance of finance, to learn how it is important for the United States to stay totally in front and to maintain our financial system as the most powerful system in the world.

In order to do that, you have to get across the world and talk with other financial systems. I found out, and it

took me going over there to the Bank of Scotland to realize why Mike Oxley wanted to do that, because very few people knew—and I didn't know—that the Royal Bank of Scotland was the fifth largest bank in the United States. To go to Europe and to meet with the finance ministers in Europe, in Brussels, in Paris, and the reason for that was because there was the emerging markets of derivatives and swaps, which was just a burgeoning part of the economy. Now it is an \$800 trillion piece of the world's economy.

I went and learned so much there. We went to make sure that the United States had what would be seen as equivalency, to be able to deal with these other nations and their financial systems and banking systems. Then to come back, and roughly 8, 9 years later, and I am sitting now as the ranking member on the subcommittee in Congress that deals with derivatives and swaps. Quite honestly, ladies and gentlemen, when I went with Mike Oxley, I did not know what a derivative was.

Now, Mike and I became friends. When you travel with people, you get to know them, you get to share things with them. I came back, and Mike Oxley comes to me one day. I am wondering what this is about.

He said: David, I have got to see you; David, I have got to see you.

I said: Mike, what is it? What is it?

He said: I heard that your brother-in-law is home run king Hank Aaron. Can I meet him?

Everybody knows that Mike Oxley loved baseball. He loved baseball I am sure almost as much as he loved politics. I know his family knows how much he loved baseball.

I said: Sure, sure.

It was a great evening when Hank came back up. I had dinner, and I invited Mike Oxley to join me and his guests with me and my wife and Hank Aaron, my wife's brother, for dinner at The Capital Grille. Ladies and gentlemen, what an evening that was. I mean, to be there and to hear Mike Oxley and home run king Hank Aaron talk baseball, two great Americans loving America's pastime.

I remember at one point Mike Oxley said: Hank, can I ask you a question?

So Hank said: Sure.

He said: Who was the toughest pitcher who ever pitched against you?

Hank said: All of them, all of them.

Mike said: All of them, all of them.

We would carry that story many times in our conversations.

He said: Oh, man, I will never forget that, when Hank said "All of them."

A great man. You know, we all live a life. There are three things that we all are going to see on that gravestone: the year we were born and the year we died, but then there is that other thing. There is that dash in the middle, and the question in everybody's life is,

what did you do with your dash, that period from when you were born to when the Lord calls you home.

□ 1730

Mike Oxley did a tremendous amount. One of the things he did was touch my life. Mike Oxley helped me. Mike Oxley was my friend.

I know everybody joins me in saying from the bottom of our hearts to the family, to this Congress, to the people of America: We thank God for sending Mike Oxley our way.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank Mr. SCOTT for his tribute to our colleague and friend, Mike Oxley.

I learned something here this evening. I did not know that I had Mr. SCOTT's brother-in-law's picture up on my wall. He was here in Washington 15 years ago or so, and I was like a kid meeting one of his heroes. I got a picture with him, and it is hanging on my wall.

I yield to my colleague also from Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, to Pat and Elvis, again, you have heard such great tributes not only at the funeral not too many weeks back, but this last week in the memorial service in Findlay, and with the Members here tonight.

I will go back. I can remember Mike's first race that he ran for the Ohio General Assembly. I was in high school at the time. I used to drive my dad around the district, so we would run into each other quite often while we were campaigning.

I know that one of my aunts from Putnam County thought that Mike was just about perfect. She used to rave about Mike all the time. That is the type of person he was. He had an infectious smile, a great laugh, and he could connect with people.

As you have heard from many of the folks speaking here tonight, that is what made Mike such a great individual. He knew how to reach out and touch people and how to get those people to work together and make things actually work.

One of the times I will never forget is back in 1981, after Tenny Guyer passed away, the election was taking place that summer. I was studying for the bar at the same time, but I can still remember everything that was going on. They were tough times. Having gone through a special election myself, I know what those things are like. Mike was one of those kinds of individuals that things didn't affect him; he just went into it and got things done.

One of the things I mentioned just last week at the memorial service is what my dad taught me years ago. There are two types of people that get into public service. There are folks that want to be politicians and there are folks that want to be true public servants.

He said to always remember what the difference between a politician and a

public servant is. A politician is a person who goes out there and sees how much they can take from the people they represent for their own benefit, while a public servant sees how much they can give of themselves back to the people they represent. That was Mike. He was that true, dedicated public servant.

With redistricting over the years, I have several of the counties that Mike represented. I can tell you that when I am out, it is quite often that I have people come up to me and tell me about something that Mike did for them. I don't care if it was Social Security, a veteran's case, or Medicare, you name it, people remember those things because Mike was out there. He was a very caring person because, again, he never forgot the folks back home.

When you talk about the folks back home, Mike never forgot his roots in Findlay, Hancock County. Hancock county is my dad's home county. There are great people that live there.

Mike and Pat were very, very generous to the University of Findlay and one of the buildings there. Mike, as the chairman mentioned, served on the Board of Trustees. He was very, very influential with his service. He gave of his time. He wanted to make sure he left things better than he found them. He did this with helping Miami University, his alma mater, and with the Findlay-Hancock Community Foundation, where Mike and Pat were so generous in establishing a scholarship.

One of the things I would really like to talk about is that one of the things Mike really believed in was the Hancock Historical Society. They established the Mike Oxley Government Center. I remember the day the Center was dedicated not more than 2 years ago. Then-Speaker Boehner came up. It is one of those things that I think people need to go and see.

Again, Mike truly wanted to leave things better than he found them. He also believed the best way to do that is to educate our kids. There is an interactive center where people can go in—especially children—and learn about their government.

Mike said this is the greatest form of government that the world has ever seen. To make sure you have that government go on to the next generation, you have to make sure that the children and those students know what to do when they become adults. Sometimes it is too late once they become adults and don't learn these things.

At the Oxley Government Center, it is in perpetuity now. The children in Hancock will have that opportunity to learn about the greatest form of government the world has ever created and make sure that it does continue on. He really, truly believed that our children are our future.

To get into it again, as my dad said, you want to make sure that you are a

true public servant, to give of yourself not 90 percent, not 100 percent, but 110 percent. That is what Mike did.

Again, that legacy is going to continue on because the people back home will never forget it. As I am out in the district that Mike represented, as I said, I hear it from his former constituents. It is not that they just like Mike, they loved him.

Again, Pat and Elvis, from the bottom of our hearts Marcia and I offer our deepest sympathies. The world was a much better place because Mike Oxley was in it.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman from Ohio for his very nice remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida, Dr. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I thank Mr. CHABOT for his leadership on this issue.

It is funny that the gentleman should call me Dr. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, because I do have my doctorate from the University of Miami. One of the rivalries that I enjoyed with Mike Oxley is that he would wear this obnoxious Miami shirt whenever we were at the Congressional Baseball Team practice. I said: That is the fake Miami. I would wear my University of Miami T-shirt and he would remind me all the time that Miami University was the first.

I am so pleased and so honored to be part of this Special Order that has been organized by my dear friend, Mr. CHABOT of Ohio—he really is; we have such similar backgrounds—in remembrance of a colleague and a dear friend, the late Congressman Mike Oxley. I am not from Ohio. As you heard, I am from Florida.

Mike and I served together here in the people's House for over 15 years. When I got here in 1989, Mike had already been serving for a few years, and I looked upon him with great respect. He was a man who was driven by his commitment to his constituents. I was always very impressed with that.

He served his great State of Ohio and our Nation with great dedication, integrity, and efficiency. These were qualities that were seen in his work throughout his years of service in the United States Congress.

As chair, as we heard, of the Financial Services Committee, Mike was known to reach across the aisle. You have heard speaker after speaker talk about how bipartisan he was in ensuring that every American could prosper.

He worked on bills ranging from the interest of the financial sector to the improvement of commerce to the enhancement of emergency management always with the consumer—always with the American people in mind. It was during his tenure that we were able to pass bills like the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act that allows consumers access to free credit reports, which reduces identity theft.

Mike Oxley was a born leader, a natural leader. He was coauthor of a bill

that sought to fight corporate fraud. We thank him for that. He was guided by the principle of economic prosperity and what made America great. His legislative record and legacy speak for themselves.

He was a kind man. He was good to all of the Members. That is why so many of us are here saying good things about him. He deserves that and more. He was enthusiastic about public service. He had a work ethic that is sorely missed in the people's House.

I had a special relationship with Mike because, as I pointed out, he was a player and then manager of the Congressional Baseball Game, which I foolishly joined many years back when I was younger and thinner and fitter.

Encouraged by Mike, I actually became the first woman to get on base in this traditional game. Mike made sure that this charity—it really is a charity game—was able to generate thousands of dollars for various charities around this great town.

Though Mike is no longer with us, we should not be mourning the loss of a life, but celebrating an extraordinary life lived. May Mike's memory live forever in our hearts and in our minds.

Mr. CHABOT is doing the same thing that Mike Oxley would do by leading this great tribute to a Member of Congress. I thank Mr. CHABOT for his leadership.

And I thank Mike. I know that you are enjoying a good, cold beer and a great baseball game in heaven.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentlewoman very much for her very nice remarks this evening.

I yield to another Buckeye, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN), chairman of the Freedom Caucus and a dear colleague of ours.

Mr. JORDAN. Normally, I don't have prepared remarks when I come to the floor, but I thought when you are honoring someone like former Congressman Michael G. Oxley, it is best to have them in written form.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues from Ohio and across the Nation in paying tribute to former Congressman Michael G. Oxley, who passed away at the beginning of the year after a battle with lung cancer. I thank my colleague from Cincinnati, Mr. CHABOT, for putting together this Special Order on what would have been his 72nd birthday.

Mike was one of the finest and most respected public servants Ohio has ever known. He was tireless in his promotion of his hometown of Findlay and all of Ohio's Fourth Congressional District: its people, businesses, and institutions.

His work on behalf of Lima's Joint Systems Manufacturing Center, commonly known as the Tank Plant, helped preserve that vital facility and its skilled workforce for a long, long time, ensuring that it remains open

today to make the armaments that our Armed Forces need to keep our great country safe.

I am grateful to my colleagues who have already spoken about some of Mike's many accomplishments. I want to share something perhaps lesser known about this individual: his longtime connection to Buckeye Boys State, a week-long educational exercise for high school boys hosted by the American Legion of Ohio.

Mike attended this program as a young man, and always said that it helped prepare him for a career in public service. From 1978 through 2006, he was the keynote speaker at the graduation ceremony—an event that he often said was one of his favorites of the year.

In these speeches, he encouraged Boys Staters to develop a clear vision, set high goals, work hard, and act with integrity at all times. These life lessons, no doubt, inspired the many thousands of young men who have had the privilege of attending Boys State during that timeframe. Mike took great pride in being inducted into the Buckeye Boys State Hall of Fame, an honor shared by a select few, among them being Neil Armstrong.

Of course, the titles Mike held most dear were of husband, father, and grandfather. Our prayers continue to go out to his family. I know they are joining us here today. We offer them our sincerest condolences at this difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, we remain grateful that decent men like Mike Oxley are willing to commit their lives to public service and to inspire others to do the same.

□ 1745

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS).

Mr. LUCAS. I thank Chairman CHABOT for the opportunity to visit this day about our friend and old colleague.

Mr. Speaker, I came to this body in May of 1994 in a special election; and I can't remember whether it was that day or the next day or the day after, but that is when I met Mike.

He had a way of charming and disarming you, a way of being warm. Mike, from that very first moment, referenced me as "Big Frank." Now, I am not sure whether he was representing height or girth, but that was his affectionate term.

He noted to me in that first conversation we had that he, too, had been a "special election baby" and that I was pursuing the route that he pursued, not coming in as a part of a big class, but coming in by myself, as he had done in 1981, getting to know the Members, working the way to the committee that I would want to be on, as he had done.

He had a very open-arms sort of a fashion. Now, I will confess that, even

at that point, I understood in those days, as a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, an E&C guy, the unique nature of that committee. But he was always kind and warm to me.

And when, as the result of a great compromise—actually, a statement, when we became a part of the majority then not that many months later—because Mike had served in the minority from 1981 until we became the majority in 1995, in January. He had served in the minority. He understood both sides of the perspective.

Ultimately, in the great compromise of 2001, when he came to be chairman of what used to be the Banking and Urban Affairs Committee, the Financial Services Committee, and brought substantial new jurisdictions to the committee, Mike made a huge difference.

Suddenly, it went from the committee that Members wanted off of to one of those committees that everyone wanted to be on. Suddenly, it became a committee of action that wasn't just a constant battle over whether Karl Marx or Adam Smith was right, but a committee that made a difference.

And the way he worked with both Republicans and Democrats, the way he addressed the crises that we dealt with—Sarbanes-Oxley being a major example of a piece of reform legislation that no one ever thought would occur; that was Mike Oxley.

As my friends have said before and my friends will say after me, an amazing fellow, a charming personality, a kind of individual that I would describe as an old-school Member of Congress, an old-school chairman.

What do I mean by that? Someone who cared about this place and cared about the Members. Sometimes that is absent now in what we do. But he cared about the institution, and he cared about the membership. He cared about the country, and it was demonstrated in his work product.

I am a better person, a better Member of Congress, for having served with Mike from the day I walked in here in 1994 until his retirement at the end of 2006, a better Member.

I think this place is better for him having been a Member.

The only regret I have is that there are not more Mike Oxleys out there; there are not more Mike Oxleys out there. But, you know, his legacy, I think, should lead all of us to try and emulate the way he conducted himself, the way he focused, the way he worked. If we do that, then his spirit will live on.

Again, Chairman CHABOT, thank you for the opportunity to come and visit about my friend and the fellow that I served with for half of his career in Congress.

And to the family, thank you for having shared him with us for all those years, all those years. Thank you.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for his tremendous remarks here this evening. And we really do appreciate his recollection of his time shared up here with Mike.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN).

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio especially for taking the time to organize this very appropriate tribute to Mike Oxley.

Do you ever get one of those people that you walk into a room and you make eye contact, and you just get a smile on your face? That was Mike Oxley.

It was just that moment which, that sense of fun was part of that original contact. And I can remember it as fresh today, the first time I met Mike Oxley.

But it wasn't as a Member of Congress that I really became aware of Mike Oxley. It was some years ago, in a previous time, when I had been a United States attorney serving in the Department of Justice.

It was a very serious time for our country because it was in the immediate aftermath of the Enron crisis, one in which Americans all over the country, and many small investors, began to have a concern about the integrity of the very institutions which they had entrusted some of their resources.

As a member of the United States Attorney's Office, I was appointed by the President to be sitting with other U.S. attorneys and a number of cabinet members on something called the Corporate Fraud Task Force. It was the group, under the auspices of Michael Chertoff, which was responsible for initiating the investigations and the prosecutions into those who had committed the corporate misdeeds.

But, at the same time, we were aware that while we were going backwards and looking at conduct that had taken place, the real challenge was moving forward. How do you instill a sense of confidence back in the very institutions which people have relied on for their economic confidence?

It was a guy on a committee here in Washington, D.C., who understood the essence of what this was all about. And it wasn't a huge, 2,000-page bill with all kinds of regulations en gros; it was a bill that was built on a very simple principle.

I think, in many ways, it reflected who Mike Oxley was, from his days as an FBI agent, but somebody who knew that, when you were in a position of power or responsibility, you had that responsibility to those below you, and your obligation and your word needed to be connected with that.

And when it really drilled down it, that was the essence of what Sarbanes-Oxley was all about, the idea that you would certify, if you were the fiduciary, that you knew the accuracy but,

really, the underlying integrity of that information because it represented the little people.

So when I came to see Mike Oxley for the first time, and it was by the good fortune to be part of something called the Ripon Society, and his former chief of staff, Jim Conzelman, runs that program. And I was invited in, as a young freshman Representative, to become part of this organization which has a tremendous purpose.

You see a guy named Mike Oxley for the first time. You know of him, but you have never really met him. And I think about that reputation. Gee, this guy is a pretty important guy. What it is going to be like?

But he is the kind of guy that sits you down and says: Hey, why don't you sit here and have a cup of coffee with me. And it's a funny story about a golf game he may have had, a couple of observations about some of the things you might be thinking about as a young Member of Congress, and an arm around your shoulder and says: If you ever need me, let me know. I'm happy to be there for you.

Anytime I ever saw Mike Oxley from that point forward, it was that same sense, a little smile, probably a little story about his last round of golf, and always a warm feeling.

Mike is going to leave quite a legacy. But when you think about what it stands for, the two things that I saw in him in the very end, first and most significantly, the work that he had done with that bill which will not only bear his name moving forward but will forever leave that sense of responsibility and integrity associated with our fiduciary responsibilities in that financial space.

But it was also this powerful guy, Mike Oxley, who used that influence that he had, after he had contracted cancer, to turn that into a positive and make that a part of his mission in life, to use that influence he had to gather other people around him who were powerful and wealthy and, otherwise, to focus on moving forward with finding the way that we can continue to treat and ultimately cure those with cancer.

It is a tremendous legacy and one in which I would hope any one of us, as one of my previous colleagues had said, we wish that we could fill that dash between the beginning of life and the end of life with such fullness, with such integrity and such fun.

Thank you, Mike, for what you did for all of us.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman for his very poignant remarks this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON). And one of the things that JOE BARTON is known for—he is known for many, many things around here—but one of the things he is known for was when Mike Oxley was no longer the coach of the

baseball team, he turned over the reins to JOE BARTON.

Mr. BARTON. I thank the gentleman. I appreciate being one of the eulogists for Mike Oxley.

I am going to go at this a little bit differently than the other speakers. I am going to talk about Mike Oxley as the baseball player and manager of the Republican baseball team.

I didn't get here until 1985. I assume that Mike immediately became the starting first baseman for the Republican baseball team when he got elected in the special election.

The photograph to my left shows the baseball team from 1992. And in his beloved Cincinnati Reds uniform, next to some skinny kid from Texas, is Mike Oxley. Carl Purcell of Michigan was our manager. I was on that team. Mike was on that team. Dan Schaefer of Colorado, who later became the manager; Jack Fields; Jim Nussle; Governor John Kasich, who is now running for President; CHRIS SMITH, who is still in the House; Rick Santorum, who later became a Senator and a Presidential candidate; Dean Gallo. And the skinny guy on the very left is the current chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, FRED UPTON.

Mike was a hard-hitting first baseman. He was a very good player. And my favorite story on the baseball team, we were playing out in Virginia at the old Four Mile Run Park, and we weren't playing in the fancy Nationals Stadium like we are today.

Mike was in his customary position at first base. I was the pitcher. They hit a pop fly down the first base line. And the Democratic runner who had hit the fly was running to first base, and he ran into Mike.

Mike fell to the ground. He didn't catch the pop fly, and he began writhing around on the ground, holding his wrist.

You know, we have to be honest. Mike was known as somewhat of a jokester and a prankster, and I thought he was kidding. I didn't think he had hurt himself. So I went over and kind of kicked him in the ribs and said, get up, let's get going. He said: No, no. I'm hurt. I'm hurt.

They took him to the bench, and we finished the inning. Even when we got over onto the bench, he was still holding his wrist. And I kidded him again. I said: Mike, come on. You have got to get back in the game.

Well, they took him to the emergency room; and, as his wife, Pat, knows, he had broken his wrist. He actually broke his wrist. So from then on, I never kidded him about things like that.

When Dan Schaefer, who was the manager right before Mike Oxley, retired, the tradition on the baseball team is that the current manager picks the next manager.

□ 1800

So Dan Schaefer called Mike and me into his office and said: Which one of you two wants to become the next manager?

We both said that we wanted to become the next manager. Mike had seniority on me by 2 years—maybe 3 years.

I said: Well, I will be the assistant coach, and, Mike, you can be the manager if that is the way Dan wants to do it.

Mike looked at me, and he said: I will only do it one time.

I said: Okay.

Well, that one time turned out to be about 12 years. He was the manager for 12 years. Every year he would say to me: Joe, this is the last one, the last one.

But about the time he became manager, we became the majority. We elected a bunch of really good baseball players: J.C. Watts, who had been an all-American quarterback at Oklahoma; Steve Largent, who was in the NFL Hall of Fame; Chip Pickering; Zach Wamp—really good players. So we won 10 or 11 games in a row against the Democrats, and Mike enjoyed being the winner. So as those guys began to retire, Mike decided that it might be time to turn it over.

I have right here the last trophy that the Republicans won. It is true that we actually used to win baseball games. We have lost six in a row. But when Mike was the manager, we won, I think, 10 or 11 in a row. The trophy is in my office. There is Mike Oxley, the manager, and JOE BARTON, who is the assistant coach, the last trophy that the Republicans won.

He was a great manager, he was a great player, and he was a great guy.

Now I want to switch over from his baseball career to his legislative career. He is remembered as the chairman of what we now call the Financial Services Committee. Before that, Mike was on the Energy and Commerce Committee. When the Republicans took the majority in 1995, Tom Bliley became the chairman. Mike Oxley became one of his subcommittee chairmen, one of the Energy and Commerce subcommittee chairmen. I served on Energy and Commerce with Mike Oxley.

He was an excellent subcommittee chairman. He did his homework. As has been pointed out, he was very bipartisan. He worked with the others, the Democrats, on the other side of the aisle.

After Tom Bliley retired, we term-limited our chairmen to three terms or 6 years. So in 2001, we had to pick a new chairman for Energy and Commerce. Billy Tauzin had been on the committee as a Democrat. He had switched parties and was a Republican. So the top two contenders to be chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee were Mike Oxley of Ohio, long-

time Republican, excellent legislator, and Billy Tauzin of Louisiana, who had been a Democrat and then became a Republican.

It was a pretty hotly contested race. It divided the committee. It divided the House. I was on the steering committee at the time representing Texas. It was a close vote. Billy Tauzin was picked to be chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee; but because of the esteem and respect that Mike Oxley was held in—he had served on what was called the Banking Committee, but he had never been a subcommittee chairman—he was elevated to be chairman of the Banking Committee and given the securities jurisdiction that had long been at Energy and Commerce, renamed the committee the Financial Services Committee, and he became the chairman of the Financial Services Committee and did just an outstanding job there. Sarbanes-Oxley is probably the most notable legislative achievement in his tenure as chairman.

He was a great person and a good friend. I never saw him down or unhappy. He was great on the floor, he was great in committee, and he was a super guy on the baseball field.

After he retired, he continued to frequently come by and visit when we were practicing. When he became ill, he kept a very, very upbeat demeanor. The last time I talked to him on the telephone was right before he passed, and by that time he couldn't speak—or he couldn't speak very well. He could just whisper.

He said: I appreciate you calling.

I told him I loved him.

I really respect Mike Oxley. He helped me a lot as a young Congressman. We had a lot of fun on the baseball team. He was a great legislator. His family should be very proud of him. He will be missed. We will also honor him.

Hopefully this summer, if he is looking down from Heaven, he will watch us beat the Democrats, and we will finally begin the Oxley winning tradition again in the charity baseball game.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman very much for his remarks.

There are so many Members that have had an opportunity to speak here this evening. We only had an hour, unfortunately, and we would like to go on a lot longer, but our hour is nearly up.

So let me just conclude by saying to Mike's family—his wife, Pat; his son, Elvis; and to his grandson, Max, whom he loved so much; and to all his family, including Jim Conzelman, his chief of staff, who was actually, let's face it, family, and to all the other family members—I think you all know by the testimony, the reflections, and the personal stories that you heard here this evening that Mike really was a beloved figure in this House, the people's

House. He will be missed. He will be long remembered. We know that you all love him very dearly, and we loved him too.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues from Ohio and across the nation in paying tribute to former Congressman Michael G. Oxley, who passed away at the beginning of the year after a long battle against lung cancer. I thank my colleague from Cincinnati, Mr. CHABOT, for putting together this special order in Mike's honor on what would have been his 72nd birthday.

Mike was a friend, mentor, and one of the finest and most respected public servants Ohio has ever known. He was tireless in his promotion of his hometown of Findlay and all of Ohio's Fourth Congressional Districts—its people, businesses, and institutions. His work on behalf of Lima's Joint Systems Manufacturing Center (commonly known as the Lima Army Tank Plant during most of Mike's time in office) helped preserve that vital facility and its skilled workforce throughout the 1980s and 1990s, ensuring that it remains open today to make the armaments that our armed forces need to keep our nation safe.

I am grateful to my colleagues who have already spoken about some of Mike's many accomplishments. I want to share something perhaps lesser known about him: his longtime connection to Buckeye Boys State, a weeklong educational exercise for high school boys hosted by the American Legion Department of Ohio. Mike attended this program as a young man and always said that it helped prepare him for a career in public service. From 1986 through 2006, he was the keynote speaker at the annual Boys State graduation ceremony—an event that he often said was one of his favorites of the year. In these speeches, he encouraged Boys Staters to develop a clear vision, set high goals, work hard, and act with integrity at all times. These life lessons no doubt inspired the many thousands of young men who attended Boys State during that time.

Mike took great pride in being inducted into the Buckeye Boys State Hall of Fame—an honor shared by a select few, among them Neil Armstrong. Of course, the titles he held most dear were those of husband, father, and grandfather. Our continued prayers go out to Mike's wife, Pat; their son, Chadd; daughter-in-law, Jennifer; and grandson, Max. We offer them our sincerest condolences at this difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, we remain grateful that decent men like Mike Oxley are willing to commit their lives to public service and to inspire others to do so.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life and legacy of former Congressman Mike Oxley from Ohio.

I had the pleasure of serving with Congressman Oxley on the House Financial Services Committee. Under his leadership as Chairman, the Committee pursued a pro-growth economic agenda, protected American consumers, and conducted robust oversight of Washington's regulatory agencies.

Congressman Oxley was a true American patriot that dedicated his life to public service

and helping his constituents in Ohio. His passion for America was profound. This legislative body and the institution of Congress became a better place because of his service and legacy.

I ask my colleagues to join me in sending our thoughts and prayers to the Oxley family. May God Bless the Oxley's and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and in remembrance of former Representative Mike Oxley.

As a valued member of this Chamber, Representative Oxley represented Ohio's Fourth District for over twenty-five years and served as Chairman of the Financial Services Committee. As only a freshman Member of Congress on his committee, Chairman Oxley met with me and helped me pass the Life Insurance Fairness for Travelers (LIFT) Act, which prohibited discrimination by life insurance companies based on travel to Israel and other countries without an actuarial analysis of risk. It was one of the first bills I passed in Congress, and his respect and inclusion of the minority Members of our committee taught me that things could indeed get done across the aisle. It is a lesson I have not forgotten.

Many remember Representative Oxley for his tireless efforts in passing the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. This law was and continues to ensure our confidence in public corporations and financial reporting in the private sector.

However, more than his legislative accomplishments, I remember him for his involvement in the Congressional Baseball Game—an annual tradition that brings Members of both parties together for a good cause.

No matter what he was involved in, Chairman Oxley was a fair and decent man who ensured all Members felt respected. As a cancer survivor, his loss to cancer is even more heartbreaking and makes me more determined to fight to defeat this deadly disease. Mike Oxley's work, integrity and passion for public service bettered both the Congress and our nation.

It is with great pleasure that I honor Representative Oxley.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Congressman Mike Oxley, who dedicated his career to protecting average citizens from special interests.

During his 25 year tenure in the House of Representatives, and as Chairman of the Financial Services Committee, he tirelessly led investigations of major corporations like Enron. Congressman Oxley's 2002 Sarbanes-Oxley Act reformed corporate oversight in this country.

Congressman Oxley also worked on telecom issues in Congress; helping usher in policies that support our current mobile economy. He helped sponsor legislation to authorize the first ever spectrum auctions, an issue that continues to drive innovation today.

Congressman Oxley also dedicated his life to our country by serving as a FBI agent before being elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Most of all, Congressman Oxley was a wonderful colleague working hard with both parties to represent his constituents in the best way possible. He will be greatly missed.

On a personal note, Mike and Pat and Bob and I were personal friends. We got to know each other "back in the day" when members of Congress saw each other socially.

Even though we came from different parties, it didn't make a difference when it came to friendship. At that time I was a Congressional spouse, so Pat and I got to know each other well and participated actively in Congressional spouse activities. Our sons also got to know each other when we took bipartisan trips to places like New York.

In fact, I remember one funny incident when the two families were together on a Congressional Arts Caucus trip to New York City. As we were riding around, touring on a bus, our sons Brian and Elvis, 10 years old at the time and dressed in their blue blazers, hopped off the bus and started walking down the street. Bob and Mike, alarmed, jumped off the bus and ran after them. They finally caught up with them and asked them what they were doing. The boys calmly replied and said that "they were all dressed up and ready to see the town!" We had such a laugh recalling those days in subsequent conversations.

When I think of Mike Oxley, I think of family and the joy he had with Pat and Elvis. We will all miss him.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to honor and remember former Representative Mike Oxley who we lost last month. Today would have been his 72nd birthday, so our presence here tonight is a wonderful way to commemorate his life of service. I remember Mike most for his big smile, which could be seen from across the Chamber, and his love for his wife Patricia and his son Chadd.

Mr. Oxley grew up understanding the importance of service to his country, which he carried out to the very end. He started his career working as a Federal Bureau of Investigations agent in Boston and New York City. He frequently noted this experience directed his Congressional decisions and that set him apart from other Members.

He returned to his hometown of Findlay—Flag City—in 1972 to begin his career in elected office when he won a seat in the Ohio House. For a decade he sharpened and honed his legislative expertise, serving him well for the next chapter of his life. In 1981, he won a special election to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

I remember Mike relished working with his fellow Ohio delegation, especially the late Representative Paul Gillmor. Mr. Oxley dedicated his years of federal service to reforming our banking and financial laws. As the Chairman of the Committee on Financial Services, from 2001 to 2006, Ox demonstrated his leadership of Congress' response during very troublesome financial times following the tech bubble struggles of the early 2000s, Wall Street turmoil that followed the 9/11 attacks and corporate scandals including Enron. While Mr. Oxley and I were often on opposite sides, I will always remember him as jovial, collegial, and someone who had a great passion for public service.

I was proud to work with him on the Base Realignment and Closure Commission as we stopped a Pentagon recommendation to reduce the size of the Joint Systems Manufacturing Center in Lima. This effort saved the

jobs of 750 people who continue to manufacture tanks and sections of armored vehicles, including the best Army tank in the world, the Abrams.

I was saddened when I learned that Mr. Oxley had been diagnosed with lung cancer. In his fight against cancer, he demonstrated his true spirit, and his eternal dedication to service by joining the Lung Cancer Alliance in 2010. Always fighting for others even amidst his own battle, he became the Board Chairman in January of 2014.

It was an honor and privilege to serve with him and to pay tribute to his life. May his soul rest in peace and may his family be comforted by the memories they share of their times together and the joy he brought to living.

VOTING RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, before I start, let me extend my condolences to those who are mourning the death of our former Congressman. That was 60 minutes' worth of very, very nice tribute.

As I am sure all of my colleagues are aware, we are now in primary election season. This year the American people will elect a new President of the United States. Unfortunately, there is a great possibility that hundreds of thousands of Americans will be barred from casting their vote because of this body's failure to act.

In 2012, I watched, horrified, as voters were forced to stand in outrageous lines at their polling places. Meanwhile, States across the country have set up new barriers to voting, cutting back on early voting hours, and adding difficult new identification hurdles that limit young people and communities of color more than anyone else—and this as we call ourselves the model of democracy for the whole world to follow.

Instead of embracing every possible opportunity to improve and facilitate one of the cornerstones of our democracy, we are allowing it to crumble. There is quite a bit to fix, yet Congress isn't willing to do anything about it.

Mr. Speaker, our States have wildly different voting systems. Early voting is allowed some places but not others, same-day registration is offered in one State but not in the next. I can think

of few better tasks for Congress to take on than to set standards for Federal elections, at a minimum, and to provide the biggest possible opportunity for our constituents to pick the people that represent them.

We have Americans that have made mistakes in their pasts but have completed their sentences for nonviolent convictions. They have put in their effort to change and have come back to society as tax-paying, law-abiding citizens. Unfortunately, we ban millions of these Americans from the ballot box despite their rehabilitation. It seems to me that Congress should get involved in offering individuals like those one of the most fundamental rights that we have as Americans—but we are not.

Mr. Speaker, there is also a conversation for this body to have about technology. Smartphones and other mobile devices have fingerprint sensors. I can wave a key fob over a terminal and pay for lunch without swiping a credit card or even signing my name. I acknowledge that there are very real challenges we face in bringing technology to the ballot box, but we should be talking about how we can use digital advances to expand access instead of trying to manufacture excuses to limit access.

Right there alone, there are three steps we could take on voting rights in our Nation.

Unfortunately, we can't even begin these discussions because we seem to have traveled back to a dark place in our Nation's history when it was both legal and common to limit access to polling places. Despite so many opportunities to move forward, we are rolling backward.

Since 2010, 22 States have passed laws that make it more difficult for Americans to vote, most commonly in the form of voter ID laws that disproportionately impact communities of color, women, seniors, students, and low-income individuals.

Unfortunately, the Voting Rights Act, which had previously curtailed these dangerous restrictions, was gutted in 2013 by the Supreme Court. In the so-called first-in-the-nation primary held this week in New Hampshire, voters encountered new ID laws for the first time, a law that allowed poll workers to vouch for voters without approved IDs and gives them the leeway to discriminate against some voters while validating others. Laws like the one in New Hampshire were passed to protect elections from voting fraud—a specter that Republicans have used time and again to scare Americans into thinking that some dark figure is hijacking their election, a notion that has been discredited and disproved time and again.

Between 2002 and 2005, the Department of Justice made prosecuting voter fraud a top priority. In that timeframe, hundreds of millions of

votes were cast; yet only 38 cases were brought to trial, and then only one involved impersonation fraud, which is what photo ID laws protect against.

More recently, a professor at the Loyola University Law School has tracked every allegation of voter fraud since 2000 and has found just 31 cases—just 31 cases—of impersonation. That is 31 ballots out of more than 1 billion that have been cast. The fact of the matter is the kind of intentional shady voter fraud these laws were based on simply did not exist.

Mr. Speaker, of the many tasks this body has, protecting the right to vote, the foundation that built our democracy, the right for which countless Americans have fought over the course of a more than 200-year history, protecting, expanding, and strengthening that right seems like it should be one of our greatest priorities.

I hope that my colleagues can begin to see that also and to join me and many of my colleagues on the Democratic Caucus in taking action that will facilitate, expand, and provide opportunities for every eligible person who can vote to be able to vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

VOTING RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I am delighted to follow the gentlewoman from New Jersey, focusing on the Congressional Progressive Caucus' commitment to ensuring every American can vote.

Might I add that we have worked together with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, we have worked together with the Congressional Black Caucus, and we have worked together with the Democratic Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage the entire House to be committed to the very values of this Nation. This should not be a Republican or Democratic issue, of which it has become. We stand here as Democrats arguing for the empowerment of voters all over the Nation, yet legislative initiatives have been introduced by members of the Judiciary Committee and others. I have joined a number of those legislative initiatives, and these initiatives cannot be heard and cannot be voted on.

The American people need to know that. There is no other reason than the Republican majority does not want to have empowered voters.

This is unlike what we did in years past. I have had the privilege of being on the House Judiciary Committee for a number of years, and the most powerful and moving experience was—and there have been many experiences on

the House Judiciary Committee—when all of us came together to help write the restoration or reauthorization of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

□ 1815

It was a very emotional and tearful moment. It was a moment of great extensiveness—15,000 pages of testimony; many, many, many witnesses; individuals explaining how precious it is to vote; but, more importantly, how not having protection for the vote can, therefore, disallow them to vote.

I guess the most provocative experience was a Republican President being joined by Republican and Democratic Members on a joyful sunny day signing the legislation that reauthorized the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Mind you, Mr. Speaker, that bill exhibits, if you will, the pain and suffering of so many who marched and marched and marched and marched. Not only did they march, they died, like Jimmie Lee Jackson. Or our own colleague from Georgia, JOHN LEWIS, who reminds us every day of the fear and feeling of being beaten near to death in his march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama.

He also reminds us how precious the right to vote is. When Dr. Martin Luther King, who refused to give up or give out or give in, marched again, and they made it—with so many people from all backgrounds and all over the Nation—to Montgomery, Alabama, on that fateful trip back, everyone was celebrating that they had marched for the Voting Rights Act, that they had gotten through without violence—attributable, of course, to a Texas President by the name of Lyndon Baines Johnson.

When a wonderful, wonderful lady—whose children I had the privilege of meeting—was driving back some foot soldiers, whom we will honor shortly at the leadership of TERRI SEWELL, when they were driving back and Viola Liuzzo was behind the wheel, lo and behold, somebody violently took a gun and killed her.

Voting has never been easy. Voting rights has never been easy. A lot of blood was shed.

It baffles me why we are faced with a situation where the United States Supreme Court eliminated section 5—not an illegal provision, but a provision that somebody disliked because, I believe, it empowered voters.

What the Congress was tasked to do by the Court, which I think incorrectly and wrongly ignored 15,000 pages of testimony, ignored tens upon tens of witnesses in a meticulous rewriting of the Voting Rights Act to prove that it was still necessary, in a skewed deliberation, the Supreme Court decided to reject it, indicating that it was long passe.

And, of course, some brilliant legislators used the example: because we have

eliminated polio because of the vaccination, is it appropriate to get rid of the vaccination?

No, it is not, Mr. Speaker.

So with that skewed and, if I might use the term, weird reasoning, we are left holding the bag and the door is open to the kinds of laws, such as voter ID laws, that spread across America like a contagious disease because we did not have the protection of section 5, which the idea of section 5 was a preclearance for men and women of good will to look and determine whether or not a procedure was going to block individuals from voting.

Of course, the voter ID law from Texas sprung up. You will soon hear from the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY), my dear friend and colleague, because he was, in fact, the leader on the lawsuit.

Let me say that that terrible law blocked a lot of people from voting.

I want to remind people that the day of August 6, 1965, in the presence of such luminaries as the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, Whitney Young of the National Urban League, James Forman of the Congress of Racial Equality, A. Philip Randolph, JOHN LEWIS, Robert Kennedy, Hubert Humphrey, and Everett Dirksen—mind you, a lady was missing, but, in the event, many women were foot soldiers.

The point was made on the Voting Rights Act:

The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison men because they are different from other men.

In this instance, I would modify it and say “women.”

When the voting ID law—because of the misgivings of the State of Texas and its legislature—was put in place, there were 80 counties at least in Texas that did not have a Department of Public Safety office for individuals to be able to register or to be able to get an ID. That is a tragedy. Each moment there is something coming out of Texas that wants to, in essence, put down the rights of individuals to vote.

One case that should be brought to our attention is a case before the Supreme Court that indicates a group of petitioners who don't like the fact that you represent a population of people. So they want to characterize and get a definition of what a person means, and they want to make that person be an eligible voter.

So, in essence, a sick person laying in a bed who needs health care and needs to be represented is not an eligible voter. Or a senior citizen that has gotten so old and feeble that they may not have been registered because of their illness and their feebleness, but they need to be represented. Or it may be a child—Hispanic, African American, Anglo, or Asian—who is not at the age

of voting and they are not an eligible voter. Or, as I know they are focusing on, is hardworking individuals who happen to be immigrants and they are not yet eligible to vote.

And this case is brought primarily to make sure that those people who need to be represented to the extent that they are taxpayers but are not yet status, they will not be counted.

This case is not anything to do with voter fraud. These people are not trying to vote. They are just trying to survive. But you are telling me that they are human beings, and this case is suggesting that they cannot be represented.

This is the devastating impact of not having voter protection in section 5.

So I rise today to ensure that it is heard throughout the land: We can pass voter restoration, voter advancement. We can pass fixing the Voting Rights Act and restoring section 5.

There are many people in this Congress who previously were here when we stood with President Bush, a Republican, and Republicans and Democrats 98-1, 98-2 in the Senate, massive support in the House, to restore the Voting Rights Act.

Let me ask the question, Mr. Speaker: Why now? Why are we struggling in this Presidential year not to allow people to vote?

Let me close my remarks because we could go on with—how should I say it—the irony and, as well, the wrongness of not passing legislation. But let me say this in closing:

Redistricting is a result of the Voting Rights Act. Those of us in Texas are still in litigation—for 20 years some of us—on the question of redistricting and making fair districts where all people are represented.

And the gerrymandering that has been done, that disallows and disenfranchises whole chunks of minorities, disallowing them from voting for the person of their choice, do you know what it brings about? It brings about this House in the majority—good friends of mine—having the sheer gall to deny the President's representative of the Office of Management and Budget to present the President's budget. In its 41-year history, that has never happened.

But because we have these districts that are drawn, not representing the vast numbers of people who should be able to hear the President's statement about his budget, by having his representative, the OMB Director, come before Congress and speak about what the President is trying to do: reducing the deficit, providing for education, protecting health care, job creation, economic security, universal access to child care, education for all, year-long Pell Grants, all of that, and a national security for peace—we can't hear from the OMB Director because of the skewed redistricting that allows for

the majority to be so overwhelmingly in charge that they would deny the normal processes of government.

The Voting Rights Act and the empowerment of voters is crucial and a fair redrawing of lines to let all of the people be heard and all of the voters be able to speak. That is why I am on the floor today.

I am looking forward to reasonable people coming together and fostering legislation that answers the constitutional call that we all are created equal with certain unalienable rights—the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—which is embodied in the vote of the American people.

Ms. SHEILA JACKSON LEE. I am pleased to join my colleagues of the Congressional Progressive Caucus in this important Special Order on voting rights protection and expansion for every American.

I would like to thank Congresswoman BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN for convening this evening's Special Order and for her dedicated leadership on critical issues impacting children and families, including this evening's topic of voting rights.

Fifty-one years ago, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and because of that law, I stand before you as Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, the first African American woman Ranking Member of the U.S. House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.

We are here today not just to commemorate the landmark achievement of 51 years ago but to redouble and rededicate our efforts to the work that remains to be done to protect the right of all Americans to vote free from discrimination and the injustices that prevent them from exercising this most fundamental right of citizenship.

On August 6, 1965, in the Rotunda of the Capitol and in the presence of such luminaries as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; Roy Wilkins of the NAACP; Whitney Young of the National Urban League; James Foreman of the Congress of Racial Equality; A. Philip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; JOHN LEWIS of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee; Senators Robert Kennedy, Hubert Humphrey, and Everett Dirksen; President Johnson said before signing the Voting Rights Act, in: "The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison men because they are different from other men."

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was critical to preventing brazen voter discrimination violations that historically left millions of African Americans disenfranchised.

In 1940, for example, there were less than 30,000 African Americans registered to vote in Texas and only about 3% of African Americans living in the South were registered to vote.

Poll taxes, literacy tests, and threats of violence were the major causes of these racially discriminatory results.

After passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, which prohibited these discriminatory practices, registration and electoral participa-

tion steadily increased to the point that by 2012, more than 1.2 million African Americans living in Texas were registered to vote.

In 1964, the year before the Voting Rights Act became law, there were approximately 300 African-Americans in public office, including just three in Congress.

Few, if any, black elected officials were elected anywhere in the South.

Because of the Voting Rights Act, as of 2013 there are more than 9,100 black elected officials, including 43 members of Congress, the largest number ever.

The Voting Rights Act opened the political process for many of the approximately 6,000 Latino public officials that have been elected and appointed nationwide, including 263 at the state or federal level, 27 of whom serve in Congress.

Native Americans, Asians and others who have historically encountered harsh barriers to full political participation also have benefited greatly.

The crown jewel of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is Section 5, which requires that states and localities with a chronic record of discrimination in voting practices secure federal approval before making any changes to voting processes.

Section 5 protects minority voting rights where voter discrimination has historically been the worst.

Since 1982, Section 5 has stopped more than 1,000 discriminatory voting changes in their tracks, including 107 discriminatory changes right here in Texas.

And it is a source of eternal pride to all of us in Houston, that in pursuit of extending the full measure of citizenship to all Americans that in 1975, Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, who also represented this historic 18th Congressional District of Texas, introduced, and the Congress adopted, what are now Sections 4(f)(3) and 4(f)(4) of the Voting Rights Act, which extended the protections of Section 4(a) and Section 5 to language minorities.

Barbara Jordan championed this reform because as she stated during the floor debate on the 1975 reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act: "There are Mexican-American people in the State of Texas who have been denied the right to vote; who have been impeded in their efforts to register and vote; who have not had encouragement from those election officials because they are brown people[.]

"So, the state of Texas, if we approve [the Jordan language included in the bill], would be brought within the coverage of this Act for the first time."

We must remain ever vigilant and oppose all schemes that will abridge or dilute the precious right to vote.

And we are here today to remind the nation that the right to vote—that "powerful instrument that can break down the walls of injustice"—is facing grave threats.

The threat stems from the decision issued in June 2013 by the Supreme Court in *Shelby County v. Holder*, 570 U.S. 193 (2013), which invalidated Section 4(b) of the VRA, and paralyzed the application of the VRA's Section 5 preclearance requirements.

Earlier this week, the Maryland Senate voted to override Governor Larry Hogan's veto of a bill that allows formerly incarcerated indi-

viduals to register to vote after they are released from prison.

Also, the Iowa Supreme Court will also be considering amending laws to grant the right to vote those who have been incarcerated in the past.

Amending this legislation is important for the population because it will help in the reintegration of these individuals, and secure their right to vote.

In light of this, there is still progress in the fight to restore the right to vote.

According to the Supreme Court majority, the reason for striking down Section 4(b): "Times change."

Now, the Court was right; times have changed. But what the Court did not fully appreciate is that the positive changes it cited are due almost entirely to the existence and vigorous enforcement of the Voting Rights Act.

And that is why the Voting Rights Act is still needed.

Let me put it this way: in the same way that the vaccine invented by Dr. Jonas Salk in 1953 eradicated the crippling effects but did not eliminate the cause of polio, the Voting Rights Act succeeded in stymieing the practices that resulted in the wholesale disenfranchisement of African Americans and language minorities but did eliminate them entirely.

The Voting Rights Act is needed as much today to prevent another epidemic of voting disenfranchisement as Dr. Salk's vaccine is still needed to prevent another polio epidemic.

However, officials in some states, notably Texas and North Carolina, seemed to regard the Shelby decision as a green light and rushed to implement election laws, policies, and practices that could never pass muster under the Section 5 preclearance regime.

We all remember the Voter ID law passed in Texas in 2011, which required every registered voter to present a valid government-issued photo ID on the day of polling in order to vote.

The Justice Department blocked the law in March of 2012, and it was Section 5 that prohibited it from going into effect.

At least it did until the Shelby decision because on the very same day that *Shelby County v. Holder* was decided officials in Texas announced they would immediately implement the Photo ID law, and other election laws, policies, and practices that could never pass muster under the Section 5 preclearance regime.

The Texas Photo ID law was challenged in federal court and thankfully, just yesterday, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit upheld the decision of U.S. District Court Judge Nelva Gonzales Ramos that Texas' strict voter identification law discriminated against blacks and Hispanics and violated the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

To take another example, last year, Councilwoman Pat Van Houte, who serves on the Pasadena, Texas City Council was forcibly ejected by armed officers at the direction of Pasadena Mayor Johnny Isbell at a council meeting to consider a controversial redistricting plan.

The Pasadena redistricting plan is one of the first to be implemented in the aftermath of the *Shelby v. Holder* decision.

Pushed through by Mayor Isbell and narrowly passed by the voters, the redistricting

plan switches two of the city's eight council seats from single member district to at-large.

Thus, the effect of the plan is to dilute the voting power of the poorer, predominantly Hispanic residents of the Pasadena's north side who opposed the change, and to increase the voting power of residents in the wealthier, whiter south side who supported it.

This shameful episode is a reminder that the Voting Rights Act protected not only right to vote in federal elections but also applied to state and local jurisdictions as well.

For example, Section 5 subjected to preclearance and could have blocked the Texas Education Administration (TEA) from closing the North Forest Independent School District (NFISD) and disbanding its locally elected school board comprised of 7 African American members.

Once freed by the Shelby County decision from having to pass muster under Section 5, however, TEA directed the annexation of the NFISD by HISD and dissolved the school board, thus diluting the ability of the African American and Hispanic community residents served by NFISD to influence the decisions affecting the education opportunities of their children.

Protecting voting rights and combating voter suppression schemes are two of the critical challenges facing our great democracy.

Without safeguards to ensure that all citizens have equal access to the polls, more injustices are likely to occur and the voices of millions silenced.

Those of us who cherish the right to vote justifiably are skeptical of Voter ID laws because we understand how these laws, like poll taxes and literacy tests, can be used to impede or negate the ability of seniors, racial and language minorities, and young people to cast their votes.

Consider the demographic groups who lack a government issued ID: African Americans: 25%; Asian Americans: 20%; Hispanic Americans: 19%; Young people, aged 18–24: 18%; Persons with incomes less than \$35,000: 15%.

Voter ID laws are just one of the means that can be used to abridge or suppress the right to vote. Others include:

1. Curtailing or Eliminating Early Voting
2. Ending Same-Day Registration
3. Not counting provisional ballots cast in the wrong precinct on Election Day will not count.
4. Eliminating Teenage Pre-Registration
5. Shortened Poll Hours
6. Lessening the standards governing voter challenges to vigilantes like the King Street Patriots to cause trouble at the polls.

Today, I call upon House Speaker RYAN to bring legislation intended to protect the right to vote of all Americans to the floor for debate and vote.

Specifically, I call for the passage of the bipartisan Voting Rights Amendments Act, (H.R. 3899 and H.R. 885) of which I am an original co-sponsor, which repairs the damage done to the Voting Rights Act by the Supreme Court decision.

This legislation replaces the old 'static' coverage formula with a new dynamic coverage formula, or 'rolling trigger,' which effectively gives the legislation nationwide reach because

any state and any jurisdiction in any state potentially is subject to being covered if the requisite number of violations are found to have been committed.

Alternatively, I call upon the Speaker to let the House debate and vote on the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2015 (H.R. 2867), a bill that provides even greater federal oversight of jurisdictions which have a history of voter suppression and protects vulnerable communities from discriminatory voting practices.

Second, I call for the passage of H.R. 12, the Voter Empower Act of 2015, legislation I have co-sponsored that protects voters from suppression, deception, and other forms of disenfranchisement by modernizing voter registration, promoting access to voting for individuals with disabilities, and protecting the ability of individuals to exercise the right to vote in elections for federal office.

Before concluding there is one other point I would like to stress.

In his address to the nation before signing the Voting Rights Act of 1965, President Johnson said: "Presidents and Congresses, laws and lawsuits can open the doors to the polling places and open the doors to the wondrous rewards which await the wise use of the ballot.

"But only the individual Negro, and all others who have been denied the right to vote, can really walk through those doors, and can use that right, and can transform the vote into an instrument of justice and fulfillment."

In other words, political power—and the justice, opportunity, inclusion, and fulfillment it provides—comes not from the right to vote but in the exercise of that right.

And that means it is the civic obligation of every citizen to both register and vote in every election, state and local as well as federal.

Because if we can register and vote, but fail to do so, we are guilty of voluntary voter suppression, the most effective method of disenfranchisement ever devised.

And in recent years, we have not been doing a very good job of exercising our civic responsibility to register, vote, and make our voices heard.

In the last two mayoral elections in Houston, barely 10 percent of city residents bothered to cast ballots (12% in 2011 and 13% in 2013); in many district-level elections, turnout rates were less than 10 percent.

For millions of Americans, the right to vote protected by the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is sacred treasure, earned by the sweat and toil and tears and blood of ordinary Americans who showed the world it was possible to accomplish extraordinary things.

As we are approaching the 51st anniversary of that landmark law, let us rededicate ourselves to honoring those who won for us this precious right by remaining vigilant and fighting against both the efforts of others to abridge or suppress the right to vote and our own apathy in exercising this sacred right.

I yield back the balance of my time.

VOTING RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY) is recognized for the re-

mainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), who represents the Houston and Harris County area, who does such a great job of speaking out on these issues.

Representative JACKSON LEE and really the entire delegation down there—Representatives GENE GREEN and AL GREEN, along with Representative JACKSON LEE—do a great job of keeping this on the forefront of Texans' minds and on the United States' mind.

Texas is such a large State that oftentimes, legislation that is passed out of Texas has an impact on the rest of the Nation. It does seem that much of the discriminatory laws regarding redistricting and regarding voter suppression, like the voter ID bill, sadly, has emanated from our State.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you just how bad it is in our State. This is going to be really hard for some people to believe. But in the State of Texas, if a young person on a college campus were to find themselves their freshman year lost on the campus, or if they were to find themselves in a little bit of trouble on campus, they would be able to show their student ID to the proper law enforcement official, who is a police officer recognized by the State of Texas, on the campus to identify themselves. That ID works for them to be able to legally identify themselves.

In the State of Texas today, that same young person would not be able to show that same student ID at the voting place, at the voting booth, to be able to cast a vote. If you bring your concealed handgun license in, then you can cast a vote. The student will be given a provisional ballot that wouldn't count, and the person with a concealed handgun license would be able to cast a legal ballot.

Who is that really going to hurt? You have so many young people, particularly young people that don't come from wealthy families, whose parents really struggle to send them to college. They don't have cars in college, so they don't have their driver's license. They really rely on their student identification for everything that they do.

In the State of Texas, they absolutely cannot use that ID.

There are many things about the Texas voter ID law, to be honest with you, I really don't like. I became a plaintiff in the suit to try to scale back what I consider a very egregious act against voters in the State of Texas.

I was very delighted that back in July, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit actually upheld a lower court's decision that the Texas voter ID law had a discriminatory effect on minority voters and violated section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

I hope this means that the proper action will be taken to do something to

scale back this law and the impact that it is having on people that simply want to exercise their suffrage, people that simply want to be able to vote. We take it for granted that you can simply vote. But this Texas voter ID law, and many laws from my time in the State legislature that were proposed—luckily, some of them advanced—would really roll back the clock on individuals that want to exercise their right to vote.

I will tell you what I have done in the meantime is joined as an original cosponsor of the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2015 that restores the right and advances the voting rights that were provided to us in 1965 by providing a modern day coverage test which will protect our communities from these types of discriminatory practices.

I will tell you, I am very proud to join with TERRI SEWELL, with Representative JUDY CHU, with Representative LINDA SÁNCHEZ, and, of course, with Representative JOHN LEWIS, who understands probably more than anyone in this body what discriminatory laws can do to affect a community.

□ 1830

This bill, Mr. Speaker, provides coverage for 13 States upon enactment: Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Arkansas, Arizona, California, New York, and Virginia. I am a very proud Texan—I love everything about our State—but, unfortunately, we have been at the forefront of discrimination against voters, and Texas is included in this legislation as well. This new geographic formula is based on current conditions and on a 25-year look-back provision.

I hope that we will be able to work together in a bipartisan manner to protect not just some of our voters but to protect every single voter in the United States who would like to cast a ballot. It doesn't matter if a voter is poor and was not able to go and renew his driver's license so that his driver's license may be 61 days expired. It doesn't matter if it is a student whose parents are just putting every little bit of money that they have to get him through college, and, because of that, his only ID is his student identification card, and he would like to use that. We need to be able to make it easier for individuals to vote in our State.

Everybody wants people to be able to lawfully vote, too. We ought to be able to work together in order to pass strong voting rights laws that protect all of our citizens, because we certainly don't want to discourage anyone from voting, and we certainly don't want to look like we are going backwards from where we once were, back in the 1960s.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

IN HONOR OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE ON ITS 107TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PALMER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be here tonight as a proud member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, known as the NAACP.

I am a member, and I am a life member, and I believe that the NAACP has had a profound impact upon my life. Hence, tonight, I am going to talk about the NAACP as I am also the person who is the sponsor of the original NAACP resolution for 2016. In doing this, I want to praise the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the NAACP, on this, its 107th anniversary.

This resolution has 24 cosponsors. I thank all of them. I also thank the whip for allowing us this time to talk about the NAACP and to extoll many of its virtues. I thank all of the leadership for the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, this is the 11th time that we have introduced a resolution to honor the NAACP. It is the oldest civil rights organization in the United States of America. We introduced it first in 2006, and it was passed in the House by a voice vote and in the Senate by unanimous consent. When it passed in the House in 2006, it did not do so because of our help alone—"our help" meaning the Congressional Black Caucus. I want you to know, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, who was the chairperson of the Judiciary Committee at the time, was there to help us get this amendment passed. I have talked on the floor about the White side of Black history. Mr. SENSENBRENNER would be a part of that history because, if not for his presence, I assure you we would not have passed this resolution in 2006.

We went on to pass it in 2007, and it passed in the House with a vote of 410-0. In 2008, it passed in the House of Representatives by 403-0; in 2009, by 424-0; in 2010, by 421-0. In 2010, of course, and thereafter, we stopped passing resolutions on the floor of the House; although, we may still present them and talk about them on the floor of the House. So, tonight, this is what we will do.

I would like to mention the mission of the NAACP, which is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of all persons—not just of Black people, not just of people of color, but of all people. The NAACP also desires to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination. These are lofty and noble goals because we understand that we have had much racial hatred and much racial discrimination in this country, and the NAACP took it upon itself to eliminate as much of it as possible. It has done a good job, I might add.

Let's look at a little bit of the history of the NAACP.

Back on February 12, 1909, a group of people decided that it was going to do something about the lynchings that were taking place in this country. Literally, in this country, between 1889 and 1918, thousands of African Americans were lynched—thousands. Lynching was done with mob violence. People were taken to trees, and they were lynched. It was done, a good many times, with impunity. No one was ever prosecuted. It was a grave injustice, and there were people in this country who decided that they were going to do something about this injustice. Among the people who met initially were Mary White Ovington, Oswald Garrison Villard, William English Walling, and Ida Wells-Barnett. These persons met and issued a clarion call. Some 60 persons answered that call. Hence, the NAACP was born.

The NAACP did not have its first African American as an executive secretary until 1920. It is important for us to note that many of the Founders of the NAACP—in fact, most of them—were not of African ancestry. The first executive secretaries of the organization were all persons who were of European ancestry. In fact, the first five executive secretaries were White. They were not Black. In 1934, the NAACP had its first Black board chairperson—Louis T. Wright. Dr. Wright became chairperson after the NAACP had had a good number of White chairpersons. So the NAACP has never been and is not now an organization for Blacks only. The NAACP has always stood for an integrated society and has been an integrated organization since its inception.

In 1954, the NAACP, under the leadership and counsel of the Honorable Thurgood Marshall, who became a Justice of the Supreme Court, won the lawsuit of *Brown v. Board of Education*. This was a giant leap forward for us because this lawsuit integrated, to a certain extent, schools throughout the country. The word that was appropriately used at the time was "desegregated." These schools were ordered to be desegregated with all deliberate speed, and all deliberate speed can sometimes take a lot longer than one might expect. A good many years later, there are still those who would contend

that we have not fully integrated our school systems across the length and breadth of the country.

In 1955, an NAACP member, the Honorable Rosa Parks, an African American lady, decided that she was going to take a stand, and she took that stand by taking a seat. She took a seat on a bus. In so doing, she ignited a spark that started a civil rights movement. By the way, there are many people who contend that she did this because she was tired. Well, she may have been tired, but she did it because she wanted to take a stand. She was tired of society's relegating her to the back of the bus, and she took a stand against it. Hence, we had the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which lasted more than a year. At the end of that boycott, the bus line—the transportation system—was integrated in Alabama and, of course, later on throughout the country.

An interesting note on this point about the integration and desegregation of bus lines. There was a three-judge panel that actually heard the litigation associated with this transportation issue. On that three-judge panel, there were judges who had a great debate about this; but there was one Frank M. Johnson, a Federal district court judge, who took the position that we could apply the Brown decision to public transportation. This was the very first time it was done was under the leadership of that three-judge panel and by the Honorable Frank M. Johnson.

Again, I point these things out because it is important to note that there were others who were there with the NAACP to help us along the way. Frank M. Johnson, by the way, was a Republican appointee who was appointed by President Eisenhower, and he went on to help us to integrate schools throughout the South and integrate the Department of Public Safety. He went on to help us with the facilitation of voting rights acts and with the implementation of laws that prohibited persons from discriminating against persons in workplace environments. He really played a significant role as did many other persons who were associated with the NAACP in a vicarious way, because I don't have evidence of his having been a member.

I want to move forward, if I may next, to 2008. I move forward to 2008 because this is when the NAACP supported the passage of the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act of 2007. There are many unsolved cases in the history of this country with reference to things that happened to African Americans. The NAACP pushed for and supported legislation such that we can have the opportunity to bring some of the dastards to justice who have caused great harm to people who were doing no harm to anyone. The NAACP has fought for this.

In 2009, the NAACP celebrated its centennial anniversary, and the theme at that time was "Bold Dreams and Big Victories"—obviously, a good theme because the NAACP has won many big victories.

In 2012, the NAACP supported the Smart and Safe campaign, which brought attention to the overpopulated prisons and mass incarceration in this country. People who study these issues are well aware that, in this country, we have an overpopulation of persons who are incarcerated. Much of this has to do with mandatory sentencing laws. Much of it has to do with laws that allow persons who are convicted of one type of offense, with drugs, to receive a harsher penalty—cocaine, for example. Then, if you have crack cocaine, you will get a stiffer penalty as opposed to its being some other type of cocaine.

The point is that these harsh sentencing laws have caused a good many people to be incarcerated who, quite frankly, should not be incarcerated for as long as they are incarcerated. Some of these "three strikes and you are out" laws have also caused persons to go to prison for a minor offense because it happened to be the third offense; so the NAACP is fighting against this.

The NAACP wants a just society. The NAACP believes that people who commit crimes ought to be punished, but that they ought to be punished in a fair and just way. Hence, the NAACP has supported trying to do what it can to help us with the overpopulation in prisons due to unjust laws.

The NAACP joined the lawsuit challenging the Texas strict voter ID law. In Texas—and you heard colleagues earlier tonight talk about this—we have one of the most draconian photo ID laws in the country. It is one that requires people who have been voting all of their lives—who have a history of voting, where a person at the polling place knows who you are if you show up to vote—to present a photo ID. The interesting thing about it is, if you vote by mail, you don't have to do this, and most of the fraud that takes place probably takes place by mail because you don't have the same identification process. I find it onerous that we, in Texas, would be subjected to this type of law, and, of course, we are doing what we can to get it properly disposed of. The NAACP is part of the effort to make sure this is done.

□ 1845

In 2014, the NAACP was a leader in the effort to strengthen the Voting Rights Act. The Voting Rights Act, as has been explained by colleagues prior to my taking the podium, has had section 4 eviscerated and, as a result, section 5 has been emasculated.

Section 4 was the section of the Voting Rights Act that brought certain places in the country under the pur-

view of the Voting Rights Act. Section 5 is the section, then, that imposes the standards that have to be adhered to. Well, you can't have a strong section 5 if you don't have a section 4 to outline, to specify, to delineate the actual areas that are to be covered by the Voting Rights Act.

The NAACP is still working with us to help us get a strong Voting Rights Act so that people who have been disenfranchised, people who have been discriminated against will have the right to vote in this, the United States of America.

In 2015, the NAACP, after the death of Trayvon Martin, advocated for the arrest of his killer. The NAACP never said that he had to go to jail, but the belief was that, under the circumstances that existed at the time, the perpetrator should be prosecuted. There should, at least, be a trial. There should be an opportunity for the world to understand what happened to Trayvon Martin.

As a result, there was a trial. There was a finding. The NAACP was at the forefront, a part of the avant guard, if you will, to make sure that Trayvon Martin received justice. A trial is what ultimately occurred. I would daresay that, but for the NAACP and many other persons of goodwill, this would not have taken place.

Finally, I want to point out that the NAACP has also ventured into what is happening in Flint, Michigan. This is some serious business that we have to take care of in Michigan. In Flint, Michigan, we have a circumstance wherein children, among others, but children have been poisoned. This was not at the hands of some major corporation that was doing something that was inappropriate. It was not at the hands of a civilian, some person who just decided he was going to do something ugly. It was not at the hands of some person associated with some sort of terrorist organization.

This was done by the government, at the hands of the government. Children have been poisoned at the hands of the government. That is an important point for us to digest because one does not expect that one would be poisoned by consuming the elixir of life, water, in this country. Especially, one would not assume this given that this country has some of the best technology and filtration systems in the world. In fact, there are none better than ours.

One would not expect that in a city wherein the water was fine before the hand of the government was imposed upon citizens, such that they couldn't make the choice themselves as to how they were going to regulate their water. A special person was put in charge at the hands of the State government, the Governor having the authority to appoint a person who literally took control of the city and, in so doing, caused great harm to befall young people, children, if you will.

When this happens, we have a duty, a responsibility, and an obligation to take immediate action to not only bring people to justice who would do this, but also to impose a just system such that persons who had been harmed can be made whole to the extent that people can be made whole. I say this because, truth be told, you cannot make these persons completely whole. All of the intelligence that we are receiving indicates that once you receive lead poisoning, you don't recover totally and completely. There will be some residue, and this can go on for years and years and years.

So the NAACP went there immediately and made it clear that it expected action and had a 15-point plan. I will say more about the 15-point plan as time permits because I want to honor my colleague, the Honorable CHAKA FATTAH, if he is available at this time. Given that he is on his way, I will continue.

The 15-point plan has 15 priorities that are listed, and I will go through these priorities rather quickly. They are, one, the emergency financial manager law must be repealed. This is the law that I spoke of earlier that allowed for the Governor to impose upon the citizens of Flint, Michigan, this emergency financial manager.

Much of this was done unfortunately under the auspices of saving money—some persons have said that we are talking about \$100 a day—saving some small amount of money so that some person who holds public office could stand before the public and say: I saved you money. I saved you money. Look at what I have done.

Well, look at what you have done: You have changed the lives of innocent people forever in an effort to save a little bit of money and hold yourself out as a person who is cutting the budget, who is saving money for the taxpayers.

There are times when tax dollars are used effectively and efficaciously, and what they were doing with the water prior to this cut was a pretty good example of how things that are doing well can be corrected such that harm is placed upon people. I regret that it happened, but I am proud however that the NAACP is there to help us with this process of making people whole.

The second part of the plan would require water distribution that is currently being done by the National Guard to be done by local people. The National Guard does a good job, and I salute the National Guard for what they are doing. The truth is that local people need work, and this would provide them the opportunity to work and to be a part of the water distribution process. There is all of the good sense in the world in working out a system so that we can pay people who need work to help themselves by distributing water in their communities.

The third point is access to fresh fruits, vegetables, and other food

items. Because to a certain extent, this is a food desert area in some parts of Flint, Michigan. As a result, there is a desire to make sure that all persons can have access to fresh fruits and fresh vegetables—good, clean, whole-some food.

Number four, all Flint citizens must be provided free home inspections. There are many homes that have not been properly inspected. The water source that leads into the home has to be inspected, the lines, and this should be done at no cost to all citizens. The NAACP stands for this. My belief is that this will happen, but I am proud that the NAACP voiced a concern that it should happen.

I mentioned the Honorable CHAKA FATTAH from Pennsylvania's Second Congressional District.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH) with the notion that I will reclaim time that he may not utilize.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from the Lone Star State. He is a good friend, and I know that we have had an occasion to work together on water systems in Texas in my role as a member of the Appropriations Committee. We were able to work successfully on aiding communities that needed access to clean, safe water.

We had a hearing yesterday on the Hill on Flint in which we heard from the mayor and a host of other people. It is a circumstance in which, I think, we should have the utmost urgency and that the Army Corps should move aggressively. I would even hope that the President would take action, if necessary, to nationalize the Guard to make sure that people in Flint get water.

I am rising today in honor of the birth of the NAACP. This is the most loved, most hated, the largest, the oldest, the boldest civil rights organization ever created. It has been at the forefront of efforts to have our Nation become the more perfect Union that the Founders had envisioned.

At every point, it has agitated, both in the streets and in the suites, to make changes. Here on the Hill, there is not an organization that has more consistently let their voice be heard on a whole range of issues. So I rise to thank those who have been a part thereof and who will continue to be.

The local NAACP in Philadelphia had an antiviolenace march all the way across a major thoroughfare in our city, 52nd Street. It was great to see an organization that obviously has a lot of sophistication, but it also has the touch at the neighborhood level to reach out to people and to have people understand that individual responsibility to make communities safer is as important as public policy initiatives that might be generated in halls of the legislature like here.

So I want to thank the NAACP for all it has done. We hosted the National

Convention in Philadelphia. I had a chance to open up the convention and to fly in with the President when he came to address our criminal justice reform.

We have so much to do in our country. And we have the understanding that in order to do complicated work, we need organizations to do it. It is difficult for individuals themselves to achieve a lot, but when working together, we can achieve almost anything.

We are in a range of dates here of import. Just the other day, we acknowledged the announcement date in which President Barack Obama announced he was going to run for President. Yesterday was the day that Nelson Mandela walked free from a prison cell in Robben Island for over two decades.

So February 12th is when people of different ethnic backgrounds, different racial backgrounds got together—people like Ida B. Wells and W.E.B. DuBois got together and said that there was going to be an effort to put together a membership-based organization, rooted in neighborhoods, rooted in individuals who would come together in their local communities and who would fight on a variety of levels—on the policy level, in the courts, and also work in neighborhoods at a neighborhood level to improve the lives of people of our country, particularly people who had been disproportionately ill-served by government institutions and people of color in our country who had to work for years, in fact, centuries without a paycheck and who were prohibited by law to do basic things like marry, or own a home, or own land, who had to bear the brunt of a criminal justice system that, even to this day, is yet to be perfected.

So we have a history, but it is made better because of the NAACP. So I wanted to come and thank my colleague for holding this Special Order here on the House floor. I don't usually speak in Special Orders. I think, over my 20 years, it is a very unusual thing, but I came today because the NAACP has laid the foundation under which so much of the progress we have made as a country has been made possible.

I look forward to an opportunity to continue to work with him on issues of importance to his State, to our country, and to this world.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. I thank the gentleman especially for taking to the floor tonight and sharing his views on the NAACP. I also especially thank him for the good work that he has done in the Congress of the United States of America. He has served his constituents well, and he should be saluted.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that if we did not have the NAACP, we would have to create it. That is just how vital it is to the American system of justice. It is not an official arm of the American system of justice, but it is an aid

to justice in this country such that people expect the NAACP to be there under certain circumstances and in certain places.

This gets us back to Flint. People expected the NAACP to be there, and the NAACP was there. As I continue, Mr. Speaker, permit me to ask how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in consuming this time, let me continue to point out some of the things that the NAACP has within its 15-point priority plan.

□ 1900

Number five is that all Flint residents must be provided federally funded replacements for their damaged systems and appliances. What they are saying and what the NAACP is saying is simply this: There are some appliances that have been so damaged that they cannot continue to use these appliances. As a result, they have to be replaced. These are people not of great means, and any help that they can get to maintain a good quality of life should be afforded them.

The NAACP has indicated that fairness and justice must be examined in rate hikes and in continued billing for poisonous water.

I heard Mr. CUMMINGS make this point at a hearing. He made the point that people are still paying water bills for water that they can't drink. That was at the hearing. I am not sure what the situation is now. My understanding is that persons are still getting water in bottles, but are they still paying their water bills?

The NAACP believes that fairness and justice must be examined in terms of the rate hikes that have taken place and the continued billing of persons for water that they cannot use because the State made a mistake.

The NAACP believes that pro bono legal advice should be made available to all. With this, I think that we can expect and hope that the various bar associations would step up to the plate and help persons who are in need of legal advice. This is something that lawyers do eleemosynary quite often. I

would hope that lawyers would move in and help persons, but if they don't move in and help persons, I think we have got a responsibility—we have done this in the past with funds that have gone to legal aid societies—to do something so that people who need some legal advice and some legal assistance can receive that advice and that assistance.

Mr. Speaker, I will just say this: Thank you for the time. I want to always celebrate the NAACP and all of its great victories.

I yield back the balance of my time. Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate the 107th anniversary of the NAACP, an organization dedicated to eradicating racism and injustice in the United States. Since its founding in 1909, the NAACP has been a constant voice in the fight for civil rights. But, unlike other organizations, its original battlefield was the courtroom.

The founders of the NAACP were smart. They understood that in order to combat ignorance, you must first change the laws that foster it.

One of their first actions was to lobby against Jim Crow lynching laws. Though their efforts were unsuccessful, they turned the nation's attention to the ongoing mistreatment of Blacks in the 1920s and '30s.

In 1954, the NAACP played a pivotal role in the historic landmark case, *Brown v. Board of Education*. A team of NAACP lawyers joined Thurgood Marshall in a series of legal battles that would lead to segregation in public education being ruled unconstitutional.

The organization was then instrumental in the passage of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts of 1965.

Since its inception, the NAACP has been our champion, and its expertise is now needed more than ever.

We are at a critical point in our nation's history, where strategic, collaborative efforts are best to move our country forward. Like the NAACP, we must be catalysts for change, not the cause of division.

The anniversary of the NAACP's founding reminds us what can be done when we work together. We all must play a role in the advancement of our communities.

To quote NAACP member Ms. Rosa Parks, "Racism is still with us. But it is up to us to prepare our children for what they have to meet, and, hopefully, we shall overcome." As a nation, we must reject discrimination in any

form and give all children a chance to succeed in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

To the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the NAACP, my sincerest gratitude for all you have done to shape American history and ensure all of us have an opportunity to fully participate in the American dream. Thank you for being there in the streets, on college campuses, and at the courthouse. Our communities are indebted to you for the vision in 1909, and the 107 years dedicated to righting the wrongs of our nation's past. Thank you for persevering and changing the face of America.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HUDSON (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and for the balance of the week on account of illness.

Ms. BONAMICI (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and February 12 on account of official business in district.

Mr. PALLONE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and February 12 on account of responsibilities related to the passing of father.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on February 10, 2016, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 3033. To require the President's annual budget request to Congress each year to include a line item for the Research in Disabilities Education program of the National Science Foundation and to require the National Science Foundation to conduct research on dyslexia.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, February 12, 2016, at 9 a.m.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the fourth quarter of 2015, pursuant to Public Law 95-384, are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return. ☐

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Robert B. Aderholt	10/10	10/11	Spain		356.48		(³)				
	10/11	10/13	France		963.60		(³)				
	10/13	10/16	United Kingdom		1,488.72		(³)				
	10/16	10/17	Norway		197.56		(³)				
Jennifer Hing	10/13	10/15	Spain		756.73						
	10/15	10/17	Germany		611.29						
Commercial airfare							2,856.70				
Rental Cars							258.24				
Staffdel Costs									222.91		
Megan Milam	10/13	10/15	Spain		756.73						
	10/15	10/17	Germany		611.29						
Commercial airfare							2,457.40				
Taxi							94.16				
Rental Cars							258.24				
Staffdel Costs									222.91		
Cornell Teague	10/13	10/15	Spain		524.99						
	10/15	10/17	Germany		611.29						
Commercial airfare							2,379.40				
Taxi							62.17				
Rental Cars							258.24				
Staffdel Costs									222.91		
Collin Lee	10/13	10/15	Spain		756.73						
	10/15	10/17	Germany		611.29						
Commercial airfare							2,652.40				
Taxi							46.94				
Rental Cars							258.24				
Staffdel Costs									222.91		
Hon. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger	10/12	10/14	Europe		975.00						
	10/14	10/15	Europe		228.34						
	10/15	10/17	Europe		219.28						
Commercial airfare							10,461.00				
Delegation Costs									71.93		
Hon. Rodney P. Frelinghuysen	12/12	12/13	Jordan		355.41						
	12/13	12/14	Germany		255.58						
Commercial airfare							744.35				
BG Wright	12/12	12/13	Jordan		355.41						
	12/13	12/14	Germany		255.58						
Commercial airfare							744.35				
Hon. David G. Valadao	12/23	12/25	Kuwait		210.00						
	12/25	12/25	Iraq								
Commercial airfare							14,205.20				
Hon. Kay Granger	12/29	12/30	Costa Rica		237.20				3,637.75		
Commercial airfare							1,549.82				
Hon. Henry Cuellar	12/29	12/30	Costa Rica		237.20				3,637.75		
Commercial airfare							781.42				
Clelia Alvarado	12/29	12/30	Costa Rica		477.00				3,637.75		
Commercial airfare							778.59				
Committee total					12,052.70		40,846.86		11,876.82		64,776.38

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.³ Military air transportation.

HON. HAROLD ROGERS, Chairman, Jan. 29, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
CODEL—Goodlatte											
Hon. Frederica Wilson	10/24	10/25	Haiti		261.00		394.10				655.10
Committee total					261.00		394.10				655.10

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. JOHN KLINE, Chairman, Jan. 27, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Billy Long	10/10	10/11	Spain		380.50		(³)				380.50
	10/11	10/13	France		1,183.00						1,183.00
	10/13	10/16	England		1,377.60						1,377.60
	10/16	10/17	Norway		275.40						275.40
Hon. David McKinley	10/12	10/14	China		947.66		17,757.03		6,597.72		25,302.41
	10/15	10/18	India		738.36				2,423.23		3,161.59
Mary Neumayr	10/12	10/14	China		947.66		17,757.03				18,704.69
	10/15	10/18	India		738.36						738.36
David Redl	10/17	10/20	Ireland		791.20		2,223.40				3,014.60
Charlotte Savercool	10/17	10/20	Ireland		791.20		2,223.40				3,014.60
David Goldman	10/17	10/20	Ireland		791.20		2,223.40				3,014.60
Ben Lieberman	11/1	11/5	United Arab Emirates		2,459.80		7,718.20		5.60		10,183.60
Hon. Marsha Blackburn	11/5	11/7	Brazil		518.00		11,621.76		1,937.00		14,076.76
	11/8	11/9	Argentina		566.41				842.43		1,408.84
	11/10	11/11	Chile		295.36				1,965.04		2,260.40
Hon. Tony Cárdenas	11/5	11/7	Brazil		518.00		11,289.76				11,807.76
	11/8	11/9	Argentina		566.41						566.41

February 11, 2016

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE, Vol. 162, Pt. 2

1789

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Jerry McNeerney	11/10	11/11	Chile		295.36						295.36
	11/5	11/7	Brazil		518.00		12,229.46				12,747.46
	11/8	11/9	Argentina		566.41						566.41
Paul Nagle	11/10	11/11	Chile		295.36						295.36
	11/5	11/7	Brazil		518.00		11,750.26				12,268.26
	11/8	11/9	Argentina		566.41						566.41
Hon. Robert Latta	11/10	11/11	Chile		295.36						295.36
	11/5	11/7	Brazil		361.00		12,539.76				12,900.76
	11/8	11/9	Argentina		324.41						324.41
Hon. Bill Flores	11/10	11/11	Chile		179.36						179.36
	11/19	11/20	Egypt		267.00		17,128.05				17,395.05
	11/21	11/22	Afghanistan		24.00		(³)				24.00
	11/23	11/25	Saudi Arabia		459.33						459.33
Tom Hassenboehler	12/5	12/14	France		2,684.00		1,157.90		2,973.00		6,814.90
Mary Neumayr	12/5	12/5	France		4,688.00		1,121.90				5,809.90
Peter Spencer	12/5	12/14	France		4,688.00		1,121.90				5,809.90
Tiffany Guarascio	12/3	12/13	France		3,221.00		1,121.70				4,342.70
Eric Kessler	12/5	12/13	France		4,151.00		1,121.70				5,272.70
Committee total					37,988.12		132,106.61		16,744.02		186,838.75

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.³ Military air transportation.

HON. FRED UPTON, Chairman, Jan. 29, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Jeb Hensarling	10/10	10/11	Germany		191.49		(³)		1,500.00		1,691.49
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,452.73		(³)		23,665.00		25,117.73
	10/14	10/17	England		1,885.11		(³)		29,084.00		30,969.11
Hon. Randy Neugebauer	10/10	10/11	Germany		191.48		(³)				191.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,272.73		(³)				1,272.73
	10/14	10/17	England		1,743.13		(³)				1,743.13
Hon. Blaine Luetkemeyer	10/10	10/11	Germany		191.49		(³)				191.49
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,322.73		(³)				1,322.73
	10/14	10/17	England		1,841.26		(³)				1,841.26
Hon. Bill Huizenga	10/10	10/11	Germany		217.00		(³)				217.00
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,442.00		(³)				1,442.00
	10/14	10/17	England		2,005.00		(³)				2,005.00
Hon. Sean Duffy	10/10	10/11	Germany		221.49		(³)				221.49
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,427.73		(³)				1,427.73
	10/14	10/17	England		2,035.07		(³)				2,035.07
Hon. Emanuel Cleaver	10/10	10/11	Germany		237.00		(³)				237.00
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,530.00		(³)				1,530.00
	10/14	10/17	England		2,085.00		(³)				2,085.00
Hon. John Delaney	10/13	10/14	Switzerland		452.35		(³)				452.35
	10/14	10/17	England		1,778.56		(³)				1,778.56
Kirsten Mork	10/10	10/11	Germany		201.48		(³)				201.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,521.00		(³)				1,521.00
	10/14	10/17	England		1,991.86		(³)				1,991.86
Kevin Edgar	10/10	10/11	Germany		156.48		(³)				156.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,417.72		(³)				1,417.72
	10/14	10/17	England		1,910.54		(³)				1,910.54
Brian Johnson	10/10	10/11	Germany		146.48		(³)				146.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,312.72		(³)				1,312.72
	10/14	10/17	England		1,820.40		(³)				1,820.40
David Popp	10/10	10/11	Germany		146.48		(³)				146.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,312.72		(³)				1,312.72
	10/14	10/17	England		1,789.13		(³)				1,789.13
Rosemary Keech	10/10	10/11	Germany		166.48		(³)				166.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,500.22		(³)				1,500.22
	10/14	10/17	England		1,929.07		(³)				1,929.07
Kristofor Erickson	10/10	10/11	Germany		161.48		(³)				161.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,437.72		(³)				1,437.72
	10/14	10/17	England		1,918.93		(³)				1,918.93
Hon. Maxine Waters	10/19	10/19	Haiti				1,158.98				1,158.98
Hon. French Hill	11/6	11/7	UAE		332.00						332.00
	11/7	11/9	Afghanistan								
	11/9	11/11	UAE		798.00		14,204.94				15,002.94
Joseph Pinder	11/8	11/10	Japan		659.00						659.00
	11/10	11/13	Korea		1,032.00		1,445.40				2,477.40
Hon. Robert Pittenger	11/20	11/21	Egypt		267.00						267.00
	11/21	11/23	Afghanistan		12.00						12.00
	11/23	11/24	Saudi Arabia		368.00		17,128.05				17,496.05
Committee total					47,832.26		33,937.37		54,249.00		136,018.63

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.³ Military air transportation.

HON. JEB HENSARLING, Chairman, Jan. 29, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Dana Rohrabacher	11/20	11/21	France		473.36		20,763.80				21,237.16

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015—
Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
	11/21	11/23	Egypt		534.00						534.00
	11/23	11/24	United Arab Emirates		500.48				310.39		810.87
	11/24	11/25	Japan		251.90						251.90
Hon. Tulsi Gabbard	11/20	11/21	France		473.36		10,372.50				10,845.86
	11/21	11/23	Egypt		534.00						534.00
	11/23	11/24	United Arab Emirates		500.48						500.48
	11/24	11/25	Japan		251.90						251.90
Paul Behrends	11/20	11/21	France		473.36		25,565.80				26,039.16
	11/21	11/23	Egypt		534.00						534.00
	11/23	11/24	United Arab Emirates		500.48						500.48
	11/24	11/25	Japan		251.90						251.90
Philip Bednarczyk	11/20	11/21	France		480.00		5,912.80				6,392.80
	11/21	11/23	Egypt		442.00						442.00
Hon. Eliot Engel	11/6	11/7	Bosnia-Herzegovina		169.28		12,633.10				12,802.38
	11/7	11/9	Germany		563.44						563.44
	11/9	11/10	Austria		332.65						332.65
Kyle Parker	11/6	11/7	Bosnia-Herzegovina		169.28		3,966.00				4,135.28
	11/7	11/9	Germany		563.44						563.44
	11/9	11/10	Austria		332.65						332.65
Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen	11/6	11/7	United Arab Emirates		400.00		8,694.20		2,167.00		11,261.20
	11/7	11/9	Afghanistan				(³)				
	11/9	11/11	United Arab Emirates		706.00						706.00
Hon. Theodore Yoho	11/6	11/7	United Arab Emirates		402.00		13,085.20				13,487.20
	11/7	11/9	Afghanistan								
	11/9	11/11	United Arab Emirates		754.00						754.00
Edward Acevedo	11/6	11/7	United Arab Emirates		424.00		8,694.20				9,118.20
	11/7	11/9	Afghanistan								
	11/9	11/11	United Arab Emirates		782.00						782.00
Casey Kustin	11/6	11/7	United Arab Emirates		452.00		8,694.20				9,146.20
	11/7	11/9	Afghanistan								
	11/9	11/11	United Arab Emirates		854.00						854.00
Kristen Marquardt	10/10	10/12	Saudi Arabia		943.50		4,167.90				5,111.40
	10/12	10/13	Jordan		360.00						360.00
	10/13	10/16	Lebanon		213.00						213.00
Mark Iozzi	10/10	10/12	Saudi Arabia		945.00		4,541.60				5,486.00
	10/12	10/13	Jordan		350.00						350.00
	10/13	10/16	Lebanon		215.00						215.00
	10/11	10/13	Jordan		610.82		3,717.20				4,328.02
	10/13	10/16	Lebanon		75.00						75.00
Joan Condon	10/11	10/13	Jordan		610.82		3,632.90				4,243.72
	10/13	10/16	Lebanon		225.00						225.00
Matthew Zweig	11/8	11/10	Japan		657.93		1,298.50				1,956.43
	11/10	11/13	South Korea		1,032.26						1,032.26
Edmund Rice	11/8	11/10	Japan		657.93		1,445.50				2,103.43
	11/10	11/13	South Korea		1,032.26						1,032.26
Hunter Strupp	11/8	11/10	Japan		647.90		1,298.50				1,946.40
	11/10	11/13	South Korea		1,022.26						1,022.26
Scott Cullinane	10/12	10/14	Austria		656.18		2,225.00				2,881.18
	10/14	10/17	Germany		844.21						844.21
Philip Bednarczyk	10/12	10/14	Austria		676.18		2,498.10				3,174.28
	10/14	10/17	Germany		859.21						859.21
Kristen Marquardt	10/30	11/1	Bahrain		792.00		10,542.26				11,334.26
Hon. Reid Ribble	10/30	10/31	Guatemala		302.79		(³)				302.79
	10/31	11/1	Honduras		180.86		(³)				180.86
Edward Acevedo	10/11	10/14	Israel		2,025.00		4,598.26				6,623.26
	10/15	10/17	Switzerland		906.00						906.00
Golan Rodgers	10/11	10/14	Israel		2,072.00		3,378.26				5,450.26
	10/15	10/17	Switzerland		934.00						934.00
Piero Tozzi	10/11	10/14	Israel		2,022.29		4,598.26				6,620.55
	10/15	10/17	Switzerland		924.00						924.00
Sadaf Khan	10/11	10/14	Israel		2,065.00		4,598.46				6,663.46
	10/15	10/17	Switzerland		926.00						926.00
Amy Chang	11/7	11/9	Burma		683.00		8,059.10				8,742.10
Nilmini Rubin	11/8	11/13	Brazil		967.48		4,842.52				5,810.00
Hon. Dana Rohrabacher	11/6	11/8	Turkey		1,155.85		11,466.00				12,621.85
	11/8	11/10	Germany		401.86				1,063.24		1,465.10
	11/7	11/7	Iraq				(³)				
Paul Behrends	11/6	11/8	Turkey		1,155.85		10,910.00				12,065.85
	11/8	11/10	Germany		401.86						401.86
	11/7	11/7	Iraq				(³)				
Worku Gachou	11/9	11/10	Germany		219.00		7,513.72				7,732.72
	11/11	11/13	Djibouti		534.95						534.95
Lesley Warner	11/9	11/10	Germany		229.00		7,478.72				7,708.51
	11/11	11/13	Djibouti		559.27						559.27
Amy Porter	11/7	11/10	Malaysia		704.48		11,517.18				12,221.66
	11/10	11/12	Burma		666.00						666.00
Janice Kaguyutan	11/6	11/9	Burma		999.00		13,869.70				14,868.70
	11/9	11/10	Malaysia		227.00						227.00
	11/10	11/12	Burma		671.00						671.00
Peter Freeman	11/7	11/10	Malaysia		684.48		11,517.18				12,201.66
	11/10	11/12	Burma		651.00						651.00
Douglas Anderson	11/7	11/10	Malaysia		693.73		11,517.18				12,210.91
	11/10	11/12	Burma		648.00						648.00
Brian Skretny	12/6	12/13	France		3,632.40		1,529.80				5,162.20
Hon. Lee Zeldin	12/23	12/25	Kuwait		724.47		14,176.20				14,900.67
	12/25	12/25	Iraq								
Hon. David Cicilline	12/23	12/25	Kuwait								
	12/25	12/25	Iraq		724.47		14,176.20				14,900.67
Committee total					56,225.10		299,496.00		3,540.63		359,261.73

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

³ Military air transportation.

February 11, 2016

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE, Vol. 162, Pt. 2

1791

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
B. Shields	11/9	11/10	Croatia		279.00		9,339.50 *				9,618.50
	11/10	11/12	Serbia		567.00						567.00
	11/12	11/14	Germany		561.00						561.00
M. Taylor	11/8	11/9	Bulgaria		252.42		12,597.90 *				12,850.32
	11/9	11/10	Croatia		279.00						279.00
	11/10	11/12	Serbia		527.00						527.00
	11/12	11/14	Germany		561.00						561.00
A. Northrop	11/8	11/9	Bulgaria		252.42		12,597.90 *				12,850.32
	11/9	11/10	Croatia		279.00						279.00
	11/10	11/12	Serbia		527.00						527.00
	11/12	11/14	Germany		561.00						561.00
Committee total					4,645.84		34,535.30				39,181.14

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

* Airfare inclusive of multiple legs of trip.

HON. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL, Chairman, Jan. 20, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return. ☐¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER, Chairman, Jan. 14, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Steve Chabot	11/11	11/12	Brazil		393.00		893.21				
	11/12	11/13	Panama		272.00						
	11/13	11/14	Ecuador		297.00						
	11/14	11/15	Peru		353.00						
	11/10	11/15					10,632.30				
Kevin Fitzpatrick	11/11	11/12	Brazil		393.00		893.21				
	11/12	11/13	Panama		272.00						
	11/13	11/14	Ecuador		297.00						
	11/14	11/15	Peru		353.00						
	11/10	11/15					10,102.70				
Committee total					2,630.00		22,521.42				25,151.42

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. STEVE CHABOT, Chairman, Jan. 28, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return. ☐¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. JEFF MILLER, Chairman, Feb. 1, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Michael Ellis	10/15	10/17	Africa		230.00						230.00
Commercial airfare							27,379.60				27,379.60
Damon Nelson	10/15	10/17	Africa		230.00						230.00
Commercial airfare							27,379.60				27,379.60
Hon. Adam Schiff	10/11	10/13	Asia		651.50						651.50
	10/14	10/16	Asia		715.75				70.95		786.70
Commercial airfare							21,988.60				21,988.60
Michael Bahar	10/11	10/13	Asia		651.50						651.50
	10/14	10/16	Asia		715.75				70.95		786.70
Commercial airfare							12,960.20				12,960.20
Timothy Bergreen	10/11	10/13	Asia		651.50						651.50

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Commercial airfare	10/14	10/16	Asia		715.75				70.95		786.70
Hon. Eric Swalwell	10/12	10/14	Europe		975.00		16,824.40				16,824.40
	10/14	10/15	Europe		228.33				19.00		994.00
	10/15	10/17	Europe		219.28				11.38		239.71
Commercial airfare			Europe				12,344.10		41.55		260.83
Linda Cohen	10/12	10/14	Europe		975.00				19.00		12,344.10
	10/14	10/15	Europe		228.33				11.38		994.00
	10/15	10/17	Europe		219.28				41.55		239.71
Commercial airfare			Europe				17,541.10				260.83
Hon. Michael Pompeo	11/7	11/11	Asia		300.00				8,430.48		17,541.10
	11/11	11/14	Asia		2,040.00				6,868.39		8,730.48
Commercial airfare			Asia				19,069.42				8,908.39
Geoffrey Kahn	11/7	11/11	Asia		300.00				8,430.49		19,069.42
	11/11	11/12	Asia		1,043.00				6,868.39		8,730.49
Commercial airfare			Asia				19,417.42				7,911.39
Hon. Michael Quigley	11/9	11/11	Europe		679.48						19,417.42
	11/12	11/12	Europe		253.00						679.48
	11/12	11/13	Europe		324.48						253.00
Commercial airfare			Europe				210.60				535.08
Rheanne Wirkkala	11/9	11/11	Europe		551.13		24,455.50				24,455.50
	11/12	11/12	Europe		253.00						551.13
	11/12	11/13	Europe		324.48						253.00
Commercial airfare			Europe				210.60				535.08
Lisa Major	11/9	11/11	Europe		551.13		18,152.90				18,152.90
	11/12	11/12	Europe		253.00						551.13
	11/12	11/13	Europe		324.49						253.00
Commercial airfare			Europe				210.60				535.09
Diane Rinaldo	11/9	11/11	South America		716.00		22,228.70				22,228.70
	11/12	11/12	South America		350.50						716.00
	11/12	11/13	North America		242.00				472.00		1,379.59
Commercial airfare			North America				4,637.59				714.00
Andrew House	11/9	11/11	South America		716.00						4,637.59
	11/12	11/12	South America		350.50						716.00
	11/12	11/13	North America		242.00				472.00		1,379.59
Commercial airfare			North America				4,622.59				714.00
Jeffrey Shockey	11/10	11/11	Europe		131.00						4,622.59
	11/11	11/13	Asia		710.82						131.00
Commercial airfare			Asia				13,800.40				710.82
Chelsey Campbell	11/10	11/11	Europe		131.00						13,800.40
	11/11	11/13	Asia		710.82						131.00
Commercial airfare			Asia				13,800.40				710.82
Damon Nelson	11/10	11/11	Europe		131.00						13,800.40
	11/11	11/13	Asia		710.82						131.00
Commercial airfare			Asia				13,800.40				710.82
Jacob Crisp	11/10	11/11	Europe		131.00						13,800.40
	11/11	11/13	Asia		710.82						131.00
Commercial airfare			Asia				13,800.40				710.82
Timothy Bergreen	11/10	11/11	Europe		131.00						13,800.40
	11/11	11/13	Asia		710.82						131.00
Commercial airfare			Asia				13,800.40				710.82
Hon. Devin Nunes	12/12	12/13	Asia		355.41		744.35				13,800.40
	12/13	12/14	Europe		255.58						744.35
Douglas Presley	12/12	12/13	Asia		355.41				(³)		1,099.76
	12/13	12/14	Europe		255.58						744.35
Wells Bennett	12/20	12/21	Asia		476.00						255.58
	12/21	12/23	Asia		610.00				32.76		508.76
Commercial airfare			Asia				15,358.10		513.66		1,123.66
Committee total					23,738.24		337,540.50		32,444.88		15,358.10

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

* In accordance with title 22, United States Code, Section 1754(b)(2), information as would identify the foreign countries in which Committee Members and staff have traveled is omitted.

³ Military air transportation.

HON. DEVIN NUNES, Chairman, Jan. 29, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE 2012 TERRORIST ATTACK IN BENGHAZI, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Lynn A. Westmoreland	11/20	11/22	Germany		653.76		12,680.10				13,333.86
	11/23	11/24	Italy		977.28				290.63		1,267.91
J. Mac Tolar	11/20	11/22	Germany		653.76		12,057.30				12,711.06
	11/23	11/24	Italy		977.28						977.28
Committee total					3,262.08		24,737.40		290.63		28,290.11

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. TREY GOWDY, Chairman, Jan. 28, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Erika Schlager	9/20	10/4	Poland	Zloty	4,036.00		2,484.00				6,520.00

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Mischa Thompson	9/27	10/3	Austria	Euro							
			Poland	Zloty	1,719.00		3,749.00				5,468.00
			Brussels	Euro							
	11/15	11/20	Austria	Euro	2,256.00		1,360.90				3,616.90
Paul Massaro	10/16	10/24	Israel	Shekel	2,086.00		2,731.96				4,817.96
			Jordan								
Orest Deychakiwsky	10/7	10/13	Belarus	Ruble	855.00		3,681.90				4,536.90
Shelly Han	10/27	11/4	Azerbaijan	Manat	2,052.00		3,917.40				5,969.40
Janice Helwig	10/1	12/31	Austria	Euro	29,484.00		7,886.70				37,370.70
	10/29	11/2	Turkey	Lira	1,552.00		1,249.20				2,801.20
	11/30	12/4	Serbia	Dinar	1,740.00		997.80				2,737.80
Nathaniel Hurd	12/4	12/13	Italy	Euro	931.79		1,816.30				2,748.09
Jonas Wechsler	11/30	12/4	Serbia	Dinar	1,020.00		3,100.00				4,120.00
Committee total					47,731.79		32,975.16				80,706.95

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, Chairman, Feb. 1, 2016.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4309. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3140; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-063-AD; Amendment 39-18385; AD 2016-02-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4310. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Limited [Docket No.: FAA-2016-2068; Directorate Identifier 2016-SW-002-AD; Amendment 39-18387; AD 2016-02-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4311. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2016-2069; Directorate Identifier 2015-SW-070-AD; Amendment 39-18386; AD 2015-22-51] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4312. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; MD Helicopters Inc. [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1998; Directorate Identifier 2014-SW-035-AD; Amendment 39-18379; AD 2016-01-19] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4313. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH

(Previously Eurocopter Deutschland GmbH) Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0669; Directorate Identifier 2013-SW-038-AD; Amendment 39-18373; AD 2016-01-14] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4314. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1935; Directorate Identifier 2014-SW-008-AD; Amendment 39-18374; AD 2016-01-15] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4315. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH (Previously Eurocopter Deutschland GmbH) (Airbus Helicopters) [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0577; Directorate Identifier 2013-SW-042-AD; Amendment 39-18375; AD 2015-12-09 R1] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4316. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1987; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-240-AD; Amendment 39-18377; AD 2016-01-17] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4317. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2015-6823; Directorate Identifier 2015-NE-38-AD; Amendment 39-18360; AD 2015-27-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4318. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of

Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0824; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-191-AD; Amendment 39-18378; AD 2016-01-18] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4319. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1281; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-241-AD; Amendment 39-18346; AD 2015-25-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4320. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D Airspace; Denver, CO [Docket No.: FAA-2015-6753; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ANM-29] received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4321. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of United States Area Navigation (RNAV) Route Q-35, Western United States [Docket No.: FAA-2013-6001; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ANM-10] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4322. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Boise, ID [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3674; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ANM-18] received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4323. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; El Paso, TX [Docket No.: FAA-

2014-1074; Airspace Docket No.: 14-ASW-10] received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4324. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Revocation of Class E Airspace; Chico, CA [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3899; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AWP-14] February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4325. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following New York Towns; Elmira, NY; Ithaca, NY; Poughkeepsie, NY [Docket No.: FAA-2015-4514; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AEA-9] received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4326. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revocation and Establishment of Class E Airspace; Bowman, ND [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1834; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AGL-8] received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4327. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of VOR Federal Airway V-443; North Central United States [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7611; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AGL-20] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4328. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31056; Amdt. No.: 3678] received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. GOODLATTE (for himself, Mr. KLINE, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. HURT of Virginia, Mr. GRIFFITH, and Mr. PETERSON):

H.R. 4532. A bill to provide for a safe harbor for reports to potential employers by current or former employers of violent behavior or threats thereof by employees; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CUMMINGS (for himself and Mr. HINOJOSA):

H.R. 4533. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to make technical improvements to the Net Price Calculator sys-

tem so that prospective students may have a more accurate understanding of the true cost of college; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. GIBSON (for himself, Mr. TURNER, Mr. WALZ, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. ZELDIN, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. ZINKE, and Mr. MOULTON):

H.R. 4534. A bill to recognize the importance of the land forces of the United States Armed Forces and to revise the fiscal year 2016 end-strength levels for these Land Forces and specify new permanent active duty end strength minimum levels, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. HONDA, Ms. LEE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. DESAULNIER, and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H.R. 4535. A bill to prohibit drilling in the outer Continental Shelf, to prohibit coal leases on Federal land, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TIBERI (for himself, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. TURNER, Mr. LATTA, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. WENSTRUP, and Mr. CHABOT):

H.R. 4536. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the unlawful disposal of fetal remains, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARTER of Texas (for himself, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. BABIN, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. MEADOWS, Ms. GRANGER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. BARTON, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. COOK, Mr. BOST, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. McCAUL, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. FORBES, Mr. PALMER, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. MARINO, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. COLE, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. OLSON, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. FLORES, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. PALAZZO):

H.R. 4537. A bill to prohibit the use of military installations to house aliens who do not have a lawful immigration status or are undergoing removal proceedings in the United States; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. SINEMA (for herself, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. MULVANEY, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida):

H.R. 4538. A bill to provide immunity from suit for certain individuals who disclose potential examples of financial exploitation of senior citizens, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. SCOTT of Virginia (for himself, Mr. RIGELL, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. FORBES, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. BEYER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. LEE, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. BASS, Ms. FUDGE, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. EDWARDS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. MOORE, Mr. RUSH, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. HONDA, and Ms. MCCOLLUM):

H.R. 4539. A bill to establish the 400 Years of African-American History Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ADERHOLT:

H.R. 4540. A bill to provide clarity regarding States' ability to manage the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) and to provide States with funding to treat drug addiction in the SNAP population; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 4541. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals providing adult education the same above-the-line deduction as is allowed for expenses of elementary and secondary school teachers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FUDGE (for herself, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. KILDEE, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Ms. KAPTUR):

H.R. 4542. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to establish a low-income sewer and water assistance pilot program; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. NORTON:

H.R. 4543. A bill to establish the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. PERRY:

H.R. 4544. A bill to repeal section 115 of the Clean Air Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4545. A bill to expand the Big Laurel Branch Wilderness and Sampson Mountain Wilderness in the Cherokee National Forest in the State of Tennessee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROSS (for himself and Ms. CASTOR of Florida):

H.R. 4546. A bill to require the Commissioner of Social Security to issue uniform

standards for the method for truncation of Social Security account numbers in order to protect such numbers from being used in the perpetration of fraud or identity theft and to provide for a prohibition on the display to the general public on the Internet of Social Security account numbers by State and local governments and private entities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHWEIKERT (for himself, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. ROUZER, and Mr. BURGESS):

H.R. 4547. A bill to amend the Illegal Immigration and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to complete the required 700-mile southwest border fencing by December 31, 2017, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 4548. A bill to amend the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 to clarify that employees of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China are to be treated as covered employees for purposes of such Act; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. WALDEN (for himself, Mr. HURD of Texas, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Mr. KILMER):

H.R. 4549. A bill to require the Transportation Security Administration to conduct security screening at certain airports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. WEBER of Texas (for himself, Mr. YOH, Mr. BABIN, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PALMER, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. OLSON, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. ROHRBACHER, and Mr. BARTON):

H.R. 4550. A bill to permit qualified law enforcement officers, qualified retired law enforcement officers, and persons not prohibited by State law from carrying a concealed firearm to carry a firearm, and to discharge a firearm in defense of self or others, in a school zone; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TAKAI (for himself and Ms. GABBARD):

H. Con. Res. 115. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha I; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. HONDA, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. POCAN):

H. Res. 612. A resolution expressing support for designation of February 12, 2016 as "National No One Eats Alone Day"; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS (for herself, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. MESSER, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. BARR, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. ROSS, Mr. STEWART, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. PALMER, Mr. BUCK, Mr. HILL, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. HARDY, Mr. LAHOOD, and Mr. MULLIN):

H. Res. 613. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the restoration of authority of the American people and the separation of powers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER (for himself, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. POLIS, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. BUCK, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. COFFMAN):

H. Res. 614. A resolution honoring the Denver Broncos on their victory in Super Bowl 50; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. GOODLATTE:

H.R. 4532.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, of the Constitution, which grants Congress the power to provide for uniform laws that remove barriers to trade and facilitate commerce nationwide; and Article I, Section 8, Clause 9; Article III, Section 1, Clause 1; and Article III, Section 2, Clause 2 of the Constitution, which grant Congress authority over federal courts.

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H.R. 4533.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. GIBSON:

H.R. 4534.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress "to provide for the common Defence", "to raise and support Armies", and "to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces" as enumerated in Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 4535.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2: The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

By Mr. TIBERI:

H.R. 4536.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

the Supreme Court's Commerce Clause precedents and under the Constitution's grants of powers to Congress under the Equal Protection, Due Process, and Enforcement Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment.

By Mr. CARTER of Texas:

H.R. 4537.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 "provide for the common Defense"

By Ms. SINEMA:

H.R. 4538.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3; Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. SCOTT of Virginia:

H.R. 4539.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. ADERHOLT:

H.R. 4540.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 4541.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Amendment XVI to the Constitution of the United States: The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

By Ms. FUDGE:

H.R. 4542.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 3, the Commerce Clause.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4543.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. PERRY:

H.R. 4544.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4545.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2: The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States, or of any particular state.

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 4546.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8: The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States;

By Mr. SCHWEIKERT:

H.R. 4547.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 4548.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, particularly Clause 18.

By Mr. WALDEN:

H.R. 4549.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution, "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

By Mr. WEBER of Texas:

H.R. 4550.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under the Second Amendment of the Constitution.

"A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 27: Mr. GOWDY, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. SIMPSON.

H.R. 169: Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 244: Mr. BABIN.

H.R. 267: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 430: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 472: Mr. ABRAHAM.

H.R. 581: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 664: Mr. DELANEY and Mr. AMASH.

H.R. 699: Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 711: Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 799: Mr. GIBSON and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 836: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 865: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 911: Mr. ABRAHAM.

H.R. 953: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. KATKO, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 969: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H.R. 1089: Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 1095: Mr. FARR, Mr. MARINO, and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1197: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 1215: Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 1221: Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 1258: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 1399: Mr. FARR.

H.R. 1538: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 1545: Mr. VELA, Mr. DUFFY, and Mr. ABRAHAM.

H.R. 1559: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 1632: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. DENHAM, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 1666: Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 1671: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia and Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 1854: Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 2058: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GROTHMAN, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2367: Mr. TAKANO and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 2403: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 2404: Mr. NORCROSS.

H.R. 2515: Mr. GOWDY.

H.R. 2646: Mr. POLIQUIN.

H.R. 2858: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 2957: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 2962: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H.R. 3071: Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. KEATING, and Mrs. DINGELL.

H.R. 3084: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 3209: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 3223: Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. LAHOOD, and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 3225: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 3235: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 3299: Mr. WALDEN.

H.R. 3326: Mr. KATKO.

H.R. 3515: Mr. LUTKEMEYER.

H.R. 3516: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.

H.R. 3520: Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 3565: Mr. COSTA and Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 3619: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 3652: Mr. NORCROSS.

H.R. 3706: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 3742: Mr. BRAT, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 3765: Mr. AMODEI.

H.R. 3779: Mr. HONDA and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 3861: Mr. HURT of Virginia and Mr. TIPTON.

H.R. 3886: Mr. DESAULNIER and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 3915: Mr. WALDEN.

H.R. 3919: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 3926: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 4007: Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 4019: Mr. BEYER.

H.R. 4057: Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 4087: Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.

H.R. 4177: Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 4213: Mr. CROWLEY.

H.R. 4219: Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 4220: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 4230: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 4247: Mr. HECK of Nevada and Mrs. BLACK.

H.R. 4248: Mr. MULVANEY.

H.R. 4262: Mr. BABIN.

H.R. 4264: Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H.R. 4335: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.

H.R. 4371: Mr. CARTER of Georgia and Mr. GOWDY.

H.R. 4376: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 4377: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 4381: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 4390: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 4399: Mr. FARR, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts and Mr. ENGEL.

H.R. 4400: Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H.R. 4405: Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 4415: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 4420: Mr. LATTA, Mr. GIBBS, and Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 4428: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 4431: Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 4434: Ms. CLARKE of New York.

H.R. 4436: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 4454: Mrs. RADEWAGEN.

H.R. 4456: Mr. COLE.

H.R. 4469: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 4477: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 4479: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. DELANEY, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 4480: Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. POCAN, and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 4481: Ms. MOORE and Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 4486: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. GIBBS, and Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 4490: Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 4498: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 4505: Mr. LAHOOD.

H.R. 4513: Mr. GIBSON, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 4521: Mr. ELLISON, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. JONES, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. RUSH, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Mr. HANNA.

H.J. Res. 22: Mr. KIND.

H.J. Res. 55: Mr. MARINO, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. SALMON, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. BUCK, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. BLUM, Mr. STIVERS, and Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H. Con. Res. 19: Mr. BOUSTANY.

H. Con. Res. 75: Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. BUCSHON.

H. Res. 148: Mr. CONNOLLY and Mr. CLAWSON of Florida.

H. Res. 445: Mr. RIGELL.

H. Res. 469: Mr. KLINE.

H. Res. 564: Mr. BOST.

H. Res. 571: Mr. POLIQUIN.

H. Res. 591: Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. CARNEY, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. BYRNE, and Mr. COURTNEY.

H. Res. 600: Mr. DELANEY, Mr. BUCSHON, and Miss RICE of New York.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H. Res. 571: Ms. Granger.

SENATE—Thursday, February 11, 2016

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our helper, we sing Your praises and will not keep silent. You clothe us with gladness, and Your favor is for a lifetime.

Bless our lawmakers and hear them when they pray. As our Senators lift their fervent prayers, empower them to meet the challenges of our time. May they always seek You while You may be found, calling upon You while You are near. Lord, when great waters overflow them, protect and preserve them with Your great strength. Be for them a hiding place, and surround them with songs of deliverance.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

INTERNET TAX FREEDOM FOREVER ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the Internet is a resource used daily by Americans of all ages all across our country. Students use it to research school projects and papers. Entrepreneurs use it to help run their businesses and come up with new ideas. Families use it to manage their busy schedules and stay in touch with their relatives. It is important that they be able to do this without the worry that their Internet access is being taxed.

Congress first voted to ban taxes on Internet access back in 1998, but it was only a temporary ban. Congress has since held that vote eight additional times—eight extensions of the Internet tax moratorium over these years. Today we have an opportunity to make it permanent.

The Internet Tax Freedom Act is a commonsense, bipartisan piece of legis-

lation with 51 cosponsors. I appreciate the diligent work by the Republican Senator from South Dakota and the Democratic Senator from Oregon and, of course, the many efforts of our colleague from Utah to move this legislation. I look forward to supporting it today.

WAR ON TERROR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate joined together to overwhelmingly pass bipartisan legislation that will further isolate North Korea in response to its policy of aggression. It was necessary because our Nation faces a daunting array of threats and challenges from all across the globe. Our next Commander in Chief, regardless of political party, will face similar challenges upon taking office.

We see terrorist threats from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, from Al Qaeda, and from both of their respective affiliates. For example, the terrorist group that grew from Al Qaeda in Iraq, ISIL, is now not only capable of launching infantry assaults, suicide bomber attacks, and raids initiated by the detonation of IEDs, it is also working hard to radicalize individuals over the Internet and is determined to keep attacking Westerners right here where they live.

We see threats to stability in Afghanistan from Taliban forces and the Haqqani Network. For example, just this week we learned that additional U.S. forces will be needed to reinforce the Afghan National Security Forces in Helmand Province. We have a determined partner in President Ghani, and General Campbell has testified that we need to maintain a sufficient force posture to both train and advise them and also conduct counterterrorism operations.

We see challenges from countries looking to aggressively expand their influence, such as China and Russia and Iran, while, of course, diminishing our influence. For example, Russia is rebuilding its conventional and nuclear forces while launching cyber attacks, conducting espionage, and propping up paramilitary forces like we see in Ukraine. China is rebuilding and modernizing its conventional and nuclear forces, as it masters the tactics of low-intensity conflict designed to coerce our allies without provoking an overwhelming response from us.

The challenges we face today are very great. They are likely to be even greater tomorrow. All of this comes at a time when America must rebuild

both its conventional and nuclear forces.

Clearly, the next Commander in Chief is going to take office confronting a complex and varied array of threats. After 7 years of the Obama administration delaying action in the War on Terror, the next administration will need to return to the fight and to restore our role in the world. We want to work with our next President, regardless of party, to do the things we know are needed to help protect our country, but that incoming leader also needs our help now, and we should take action now in this year of transition.

The Secretary of Defense last week announced two aspects of this—first, a defense budget request that emphasizes the weapons systems needed to balance against China's anti-access and area denial weapons and plans and a regional security initiative designed to resist Russian encroachment in Eastern Europe.

General Dunford has talked about the acute threat represented by ISIL in Libya and the need to take action against this group. Other defense officials have recently focused on the need to rebuild the nuclear triad too.

It is clear what needs to be done. For instance, we know that our nuclear forces must be modernized to deter countries such as Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea. We know that our conventional forces must be modernized to both balance against and contain their regional aspirations. We know that our Special Operations and Marine expeditionary units must be maintained and equipped to conduct counterterrorism and regional response. That means providing sufficient sealift and naval platforms and carrier air wings to keep amphibious-ready groups and carrier battle groups on station rather than withdrawing our presence at the very moment allies are questioning our commitment to traditional alliances. It means that our regional combatant commanders need sufficient force levels to protect our interests.

We know the commander of Central Command must have the assets needed to assure our moderate Sunni allies, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, and help them resist Iran's efforts to intimidate neighbors.

In the Pacific, we know we must undertake a sustained buildup of naval air and expeditionary capabilities and work closely with Japan, South Korea, and other regional partners if we want to lead within the region and deter China's belligerent policies.

We know that the authorities our intelligence and counterterror forces

need to defeat ISIL must also be renewed and restored.

We know that we must return to capturing, interrogating, and targeting the enemy in a way that allows us to defeat terrorist networks.

It is clear that the Obama administration has failed to lead in sustaining the force and in meeting these strategic objectives. We have seen that the administration's efforts to employ Special Operations Forces to train and equip units in Yemen, Syria, and Iraq have proven insufficient to generate the combat power that is needed to defeat the enemy.

The economy of force strategy set forth in the President's West Point speech has failed. National security policies that were for too long focused on campaign promises made back in 2008, such as the effort to close Guantanamo, to withdraw from Iraq and Afghanistan based on arbitrary deadlines, and to end the War on Terror and take away the CIA's detention and interrogation capabilities and remake it into a Cold War clandestine service, are finally giving way to geopolitical reality today.

The fact that current members of the Obama administration are now recognizing the threat and the need to rebuild the force should inspire all of us to get started now—this year, not next year. I think we should be doing all we can today to ready the force for the challenges ahead and to lay the groundwork for the next President regardless of party. Passing the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act yesterday was a positive step, but we must also ensure that the United States does not withdraw from our alliance and forward presence.

With sustained bipartisan cooperation, we can pass a national defense authorization act at levels that will allow us to modernize the force and execute current operations against ISIL and in Afghanistan while meeting our commitments to keep the force ready. With sustained bipartisan cooperation, we can pass Defense appropriations at adequate levels to train and equip and sustain the best military in the world. Doing what is required will necessitate a sustained effort, but we can begin now, if colleagues are willing to work with us in this year of transition. Let's work together to keep our country safe.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CUSTOMS BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Customs bill is another in a series of missed opportunities and half-measures that have characterized this Con-

gress. The legislation we are going to vote on today, the conference report on Customs, misses the opportunity to take strong action against currency manipulation. The bill we sent out of here had strong currency manipulation language in it; it is not there anymore.

It throws up unnecessary hurdles to agreements on climate change. It basically says that any agreements the United States makes cannot take climate into consideration—on any of those agreements.

No one that I know of opposes the legislation that is stuck inside this Customs conference report dealing with taxation on the Internet. We all support that. But the sad part about this is the manipulation to get it in this bill. It did not start in either House; it was just airdropped into the conference report. The reason it was done that way is everyone knew that if this matter was brought up—the Internet Tax Fairness Act—as part of it, we always had marketplace fairness. That was part of the deal. They went together. But the manipulation took place.

This most important piece of legislation dealing with helping States—States are struggling. It does not matter which States they are, they are struggling. What we have are the brick-and-mortar places that can't compete with online merchandising. Someone who has a brick-and-mortar store—someone will walk in, see something they like, and then they will walk out, go to the computer, and buy it online. They pay no taxes. That is unfair to the brick-and-mortar stores and small businesses across America. It would help States remarkably if people who buy on the Internet would have to pay the same taxes as someone who buys in a brick-and-mortar store.

But in an effort to protect a number of Senators—one in particular—this matter was stuck in this bill. We have just a few States that don't have a sales tax. One of those Senators is up for reelection. She has a very tough election, and anyone who understands politics a little bit understands that this was done as a result of trying to protect her.

But as Senator DURBIN, the person who has pushed this marketplace fairness more than anyone else—except perhaps for Senator ENZI and LAMAR ALEXANDER—knows, what has been done is unfair. But they have been told this matter will be brought up before the end of the year. So I don't know what solace that should give the Senator who is worried about the marketplace fairness passing because it would seem to me that the vote we had here earlier was 69 votes, and it will pass again. The Speaker has told me that he is going to bring up marketplace fairness on the House side. So we are going to vote on it before the end of the year. It is going to be the law anyway.

It is too bad small businesses have to wait again for 6 months or 8 months to get this done.

The Customs bill does not do enough to enforce our trade agreements or protect American workers, and I will oppose it.

BUDGET AND DEFENSE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to make a few comments on the statements of the Republican leader, my friend. It is obvious that he has been reading the press and perhaps talking to some people on the House side. These people have created so many problems.

This right, right, rightwing in the House of Representatives is now saying that what we did, having a 2-year budget, they want to change. They want to take money away from the middle class and give it to defense.

I supported the North Korea sanctions. It is a good piece of legislation. I supported what we did in December. It was good legislation. But we decided that the military, as strong as it is, should remain strong but that we should give some equal footing to the middle class, and we did that.

Now my friend the Republican leader is obviously trying to pave the way to increase defense funding and go against the middle class.

I am pleased he said some nice things about the Secretary of Defense, but it is very clear in his statement that he wants—obviously, he didn't say so, but it is pretty clear to anyone listening to him—ground troops. The Special Forces are not enough. He wants more, and the American people don't want more ground troops.

He also said it is too bad—I am paraphrasing what he said—that we are going to take away the ability to have enhanced interrogation. That is waterboarding and all that other stuff that doesn't work.

JOHN MCCAIN was on the floor yesterday. Now if there is anyone in the world who should have some understanding about torture, he should. He was tortured not once but multiple times when he was a prisoner of war in Vietnam. He came yesterday—I have heard him before—and said: Torture doesn't work. We do better without torture.

But again, that is what the Republican leader is talking about.

I would remind those listening that President Obama has done a great deal to keep America safe and secure. There is no better example of that—there was a lot of talk previously about Osama bin Laden—than that Osama bin Laden is dead. It was done on President Obama's watch, at his direction.

FAIR DAY IN COURT FOR KIDS ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for the last 2 years our great country has faced a

humanitarian crisis arising from Central America. Thousands and thousands of migrants, mainly women and children, have fled to our border and to other countries in the region to escape the growing violence in the region.

Most of these women and children come from the so-called Northern Triangle countries—El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras—where crime and lawlessness have overrun the people. And that is an understatement.

El Salvador is the murder capital of the world. There isn't a close second. There are more murders per capita than in any nation on the planet. El Salvador's murder rate is 26 times higher than the United States.

Among El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, El Salvador beats them all for a murder rate, but the other two countries, Honduras and Guatemala, are third and seventh. In these countries, the rates for female homicide are unbelievably high. Again, El Salvador ranks No. 1 for female homicides. As I have indicated, we have Honduras, which is third, and Guatemala is seventh.

That is why you see these women and children fleeing—fleeing for their lives. It is not just murder that these desperate people are trying to escape. People in these countries are imperiled by high rates of human trafficking, drug trafficking, sexual assaults, and widespread corruption.

It is an understatement to say that these places aren't safe to live. These refugees in our hemisphere are seeking protection. They are escaping to neighborhood countries, desperate to find someplace to go to hide, someplace to find sanctuary. Many make the trek through Mexico to our southern border, and it is a long ways. What they do to get to our border is really quite unbelievable.

What do they do when they get to our border? They don't sneak in; they don't try to find a boat to go across the Rio Grande. These little kids throw up their arms and say in the best way they can: I am here; do something to help me.

That is how desperate they feel—desperate to feel safe, to feel some protection. They are refugees in every sense of the word.

In January the State Department announced that it would start a refugee program in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala after “concluding that the epidemic of violence by international criminal gangs in the three countries had reached crisis proportions and required a broader, regional response.”

I applaud Secretary Kerry and his team for making this humane and principled decision. It is a good first step, and it will help people apply for refugee status at home so they don't have to make a trip through Mexico and other extremely dangerous places.

But for those who have already reached our border seeking asylum, we

must ensure that they are treated fairly, with respect. These refugees should have help in making their asylum request. That means they should have some legal representation.

Under current U.S. law, there is no right to appointed counsel in non-criminal immigration removal proceedings, even if the person in question is a baby, a child. Think about that. These children who don't speak English and are in a new country are unreasonably expected to represent themselves in a tribunal.

Approximately 70 percent of women and children and 50 percent of unaccompanied children who enter the United States don't have a lawyer when standing before a judge in deportation proceedings. It sounds hard to be true, but it is.

There is an organization called Kids in Need of Defense, or KIND. It is a wonderful organization. I admire it. It is incredible. This nonprofit organization is trying to help these children. Their executive director watched as a 5-year-old girl was brought before an immigration judge.

The little girl was clutching a doll. She was so short she could barely see over the table to the microphone. She sat there before a robed immigration judge, with a trial attorney from the Department of Homeland Security on the other side of the chamber, in effect, saying: Send her back.

She was unable to answer any questions that the judge asked her except for the name of her doll: “Baby Baby Doll.” That was the name of her doll. But this is the worst part. This small child was expected to make a case of why she should be granted asylum under U.S. immigration laws.

KIND matched her with an attorney from a major law firm who successfully helped her win her case. KIND is doing a wonderful job, but they are so short-handed.

Immigration law is a complex area of law, and it should not be a place where toddlers are placed in this situation. Children without attorneys are much more vulnerable than adults. So 9 out of 10 children without attorneys are ordered deported.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, a majority of recently arrived unaccompanied children are eligible for legal protection that would allow them to lawfully remain in the United States, but they can't access these protections because they don't have anyone to tell them what the protections are. They can't access these protections without an attorney to represent them in court or even to ensure they receive proper notice of their hearings. Children with attorneys are five times more likely to be granted protection.

Picture this little girl. This little girl represents thousands of children who have been abused in many different

ways. They have seen their parents murdered, humiliated, and hurt. Her name is Angela. This little kid is 9 years old—a sweet little thing, 9 years old. She arrived at our southern border fleeing from the murder capital of the world, El Salvador.

She is one of the fortunate kids. Kids in Need of Defense, the nonprofit group I mentioned, provided her with legal representation. She was granted legal immigration status.

So look at this picture. I have looked at it many, many times. I took this home with me last night.

Think of all the children, kids her age and younger—she is 9 years old—all who don't have representation. Think of a child like this standing alone in a court of law with a language barrier on top of it. This isn't how we should treat refugees. It is certainly not how we should treat children fleeing violence.

Today I am introducing the Fair Day in Court for Kids Act. That is the name of my legislation. My legislation would mandate that the government appoint a counsel, a lawyer, to help these kids, unaccompanied children, and other vulnerable individuals such as those who are victims of abuse, torture, and violence. My legislation would also require the Department of Homeland Security to make legal orientation programs available to all detention centers so people know their rights and responsibilities.

Deportation means death to some of these people, and I am not being overly dramatic. A study documents 83 people who had been deported from this Northern Triangle who were subsequently murdered—83. Given the life-and-death consequences of deportation in this region, we must ensure that we are not putting asylum-seeking women and children in harm's way. We can do this by making sure that these desperate women and children have a lawyer.

The humanitarian crisis at our doorstep demands that we, as Americans, affirm our fundamental values of protection and due process, especially for children. The Fair Day in Court for Kids Act will uphold these most basic American virtues and values which we hold dear.

Protecting children—children like Angela—isn't a partisan issue. This is something I hope we can all agree on.

So I urge my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, to support this legislation.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE
ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2015—
CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Conference report to accompany H.R. 644, a bill to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 10:30 a.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today the Senate is poised to take a major step forward in advancing a robust agenda for international trade that better reflects the realities of the 21st century global economy. It provides real benefits for our country.

Later today, the Senate will vote on and hopefully pass the conference report for H.R. 644, the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015, legislation that we originally passed last May.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator WYDEN follow my remarks in this matter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. I am coauthor of this legislation, and many of the provisions in this conference report have been in the works for several years. I also chaired the conference committee that was charged with reconciling the differences between the Senate-passed and House-passed versions of this bill.

In my view, the committee was a huge success. I believe our report represents a strong bipartisan, bicameral agreement to address a number of trade policy priorities.

I want to talk about some of the specifics of this legislation, which most of us generally refer to as the "Customs bill." Once this bill is signed into law—and I hope it will be in short order—it will enact policies designed to achieve three main goals.

The first goal is to facilitate and streamline the flow of legitimate trade into and out of the United States. The bill makes a number of changes to reduce bureaucracy and improve consultation among executive agencies, Congress, and the private sector. These changes will facilitate trade and improve our competitiveness by reducing unnecessary burdens and delays created by our overly bureaucratic system, which, in turn, will help create jobs and grow our economy.

The second major goal of the Customs bill is to improve enforcement of our trade laws. It does so in a number of ways. For example, the bill establishes a new, improved process at CBP

for dealing with evasion of our anti-dumping and countervailing duties laws and provides clear direction and robust rules for identifying and addressing currency manipulation on the part of our trading partners. It also includes dramatic improvements to better protect U.S. intellectual property rights. This has been a high priority for me, as most of my colleagues know, and it is a high priority for my people in the State of Utah, whose economy is highly dependent on strong intellectual property rights. Combined, these enforcement provisions will provide greater protection for American workers and consumers and help ensure that foreign competitors will not have unfair advantages in the global marketplace.

The third major goal of the Customs conference report is to strengthen the trade promotion authority statute that we enacted last year, reflecting various priorities and concerns from Members of both parties. For example, the bill clearly and strongly reaffirms that trade agreements should not include—and TPA procedures should not be used dealing with respect to—immigration policy or greenhouse gas emissions. It also creates a new negotiating objective to remove barriers facing American fishermen who export into foreign markets, and it provides important procedures related to the reporting of human trafficking.

While this Customs bill was specifically designed to address these three policy goals, it goes further to address other priorities as well. For example, the bill will combat politically motivated boycotts, divestments, and sanctions against Israel, bolstering our already strong economic ties with one of our most important strategic allies. And it provides trade preferences for Nepal in order to provide economic recovery in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake last year.

Before I conclude, I do want to note that a number of my colleagues, as well as businesses and job creators around the country, were hoping that the conference report on the Customs bill would include a reauthorization of the miscellaneous tariff bills, or MTBs. I want to make clear that I support MTBs and want to get them passed. That is why they were included in the original Senate-passed version of the Customs bill. There are, of course, some procedural concerns that complicate the MTBs, particularly over in the House, which have made it difficult to reach a workable compromise. However, the conference report does include a strong sense-of-Congress statement reaffirming our shared commitment to advancing MTB legislation in a process that provides robust consultation and is consistent with both House and Senate rules.

I also want to reaffirm my personal commitment as chairman of the Sen-

ate Finance Committee to work with my colleagues to find a path forward on MTBs that will work for those on both sides of the Capitol. Needless to say, I am very pleased with how this conference report turned out.

I have many people I want to thank, and I will thank them once the bill gets done. For now, I specifically want to thank the vice chair of the conference committee, Chairman KEVIN BRADY, for his work on both the committee itself and on the substance of the report.

I also want to thank the ranking member of the Finance Committee, Senator WYDEN, for his efforts to ensure passage of this conference report. It is a pleasure to work with Senator WYDEN, and we have very much been able to work in a bipartisan way as we worked on this committee together.

Last spring, Republicans and Democrats on the Finance Committee came together to draft and report four major pieces of legislation, three of which have already been signed into law. That, of course, included our TPA bill, a bill to renew important trade preferences programs, and another bill to reauthorize the Trade Adjustment Assistance program. The fourth was our Customs bill, the one we will hopefully pass today.

These four bills represented the priorities of Members throughout the Senate and on both sides of the aisle. Collectively, they will shape the policy landscape on trade—not just here in the United States but around the world as well—for years to come. Perhaps more importantly, they also represent what is possible when Members of both parties work together to achieve common goals.

Of those four bills, the Customs bill is the only one that hasn't been enacted into law. I am cautiously optimistic that we will rectify that later today. I am hoping that, just like the three other trade bills, the Customs bill will pass with broad, bipartisan support.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote later today to advance the Customs bill to the President's desk and to put in place these much-needed reforms.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a list of supporters of the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE
ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2015
LIST OF SUPPORTERS

Airforwarders Association, Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking, Aluminum Extruders Council (AEC), American Apparel & Footwear Association, American Association of Exporters and Importers, American Cable Association, American Chemistry Council, American Commitment, American Consumer Institute, American Honey Producers Association, American Iron and Steel Institute

(AIS), American Petroleum Institute, American Trucking Association, American Wire Producers Association, Americans for Tax Reform, Association of Global Automakers, BACM, California Fresh Garlic Producers Association, Canadian/American Border Trade Alliance, Cargo Airline Association, Christopher Ranch, Center for Freedom and Prosperity, Center for Individual Freedom, Citizens Against Government Waste, Coalition to Enforce Antidumping & Countervailing Duty Orders, Coalition of Services Industries, Committee to Support U.S. Trade Laws, Competitive Carriers Association, Competitive Enterprise Institute.

COMPTEL, Computing Technology Industry Association, Consumer Action, Copper & Brass Fabricators Council, Council for Citizens Against Government Waste, Crawfish Processors Alliance, CTIA—The Wireless Association, Digital Liberty, Discovery Institute, Etsy, Express Delivery and Logistics Association, Fashion Accessories Shippers Association, Footwear Distributors & Retailers of America, Foreign Trade Association, Freedom Works, The Garlic Company, Garment Association Nepal, Gemini Shippers Association, Global Automakers, Heartland Institute, Hispanic Heritage Foundation, Hispanic Leadership Fund, Hispanic Technology & Telecommunications Council, Independent Women's Forum, Independent Women's Voice, Information Technology & Innovation Foundation, Institute for Policy Innovation, Institute of Makers of Explosives, International Trade Surety Association, The Internet Association.

ITTA—The Voice of Mid-Size Communications Companies, Jeffersonian Project, Latino Coalition, Leggett & Platt Inc., LessGovernment.org, LULAC, Madery Bridge Associates, Media Freedom, Monterey Mushrooms, Inc., Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council, Municipal Castings Association, National Association of Black County Officials, National Association of Chemical Distributors, National Association of Foreign-Trade Zones, National Association of Manufacturers, National Association of Neighborhoods, National Black Caucus of State Legislators, National Black Chamber of Commerce, National Cable & Telecommunications Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Caucus of the Black Aged, National Coalition for Black Civic Participation, National Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association of America, National Foreign Trade Council, National Hispanic Council on Aging, National Industrial Transportation League, National Organization of Black County Officials, National Puerto Rican Coalition, National Retail Federation, National Tank Truck Carriers, National Taxpayers Union.

NOBEL Women, Nucor Corporation, Outdoor Industry Association, R Street Institute, Reusable Industrial Packaging Association, Semiconductor Industry Association, SER—Jobs for Progress, Sioux Honey Association, Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council, Spice World, Inc./Valley Garlic, Taxpayers Protection Alliance, TechFreedom, Technology Councils of North America, Travel Goods Association, United Spinal Association, U.S. Black Chamber, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Fashion Industry Association, U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute, U.S. Internet Service Provider Association, United States Council for International Business, United States Telecom Association, University of British Columbia Fisheries Centre, UPS, Vessey & Company, Women Impacting Public Policy.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I yield the floor to the distinguished Senator from Oregon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I thank Chairman HATCH for his good work and his very gracious comments.

I note our colleagues have been very patient, so I ask unanimous consent that following my remarks, Senator ALEXANDER be recognized for 7 minutes and, immediately after Senator ALEXANDER, Senator STABENOW be recognized for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Colleagues, this bill is about coming down hard on the trade cheats who are ripping off American jobs.

The truth is, past trade policies were often too old, too slow, or too weak for our country to fight back. This legislation says those days are over. The legislation ushers in a new day and a fresh, modern approach—a tougher approach—to enforcing trade laws that start moving our Nation to a policy that I call getting trade done right. It is about creating tough trade enforcement policies, seeing them through, and standing up to anybody who tries to get around them. No matter how a Senator chooses to vote on a particular new trade agreement, I hope that stronger trade enforcement and fighting back against the trade cheats would be a priority for every Senator.

The reality is, the amount of cheating that is going on is staggering. It takes your breath away. We saw it a couple of years ago when we set up a sting operation and in effect invited the cheaters to have at it. We were deluged with those who wanted to skirt the laws, use shell games, sophisticated schemes, and fraudulent records to evade duties. You would smile at some of the inventiveness involved if we didn't see how painful it was for the American companies getting ripped off this way.

One of the most common schemes—one of the biggest loopholes involves something called merchandise laundering. In effect, when a company gets busted for violating the trade laws, the countervailing duty laws, in effect they go to another country and slap a label on it and are able to skirt the laws. Because his companies that make honey were victims of this, at one point Senator SCHUMER, my colleague on the Finance Committee, said: What is going on is honey laundering, but it is not very sweet for the people who are getting ripped off. That is what we seek to change.

I could thank a lot of colleagues of both political parties for their good work here, but I just want to single out a few on our side. I know Senator HATCH is going to say more about colleagues on his side.

I particularly want to praise Senator BROWN. Senator BROWN led the fight repeatedly to close outlandish loopholes that allow products made with slave and child labor to be imported into the United States. What the old law basically says is that economics trumped human rights—that if there was an economic reason for using slave and child labor, you could do it. We have closed that loophole. There was bipartisan support for it, and I commend Senator BROWN for this.

Senator STABENOW made a successful effort to have a more coordinated approach so that the left hand and the right hand would know what was being done in terms of trade enforcement. We now have a trade enforcement center that is going to do that.

Senator CANTWELL worked to ensure that we have an important new trust fund—a trust fund for trade enforcement. It ought to be a priority to lock in all of the funds necessary to help protect our workers and businesses.

Senator SHAHEEN led the fight in order to ensure that smaller businesses had a bigger seat at the table in terms of the effort to reach new markets. I commend her for it.

Senator BENNET in particular did very good work with respect to trade enforcement in the environmental area. The package directs the trade negotiators to act against illegal fishing and the trade of stolen timber—something the Senator from Arkansas and I know a great deal about. I am also very pleased because Senator BENNET and others worked hard to ensure that this legislation goes further than ever before to fight the currency manipulators and stop them from undercutting our workers and our businesses.

At the end of the day, Democrats and Republicans came together. There were spirited debates about trade agreements and whether to pass new ones. What this is all about is just the opposite—just the opposite—of a new trade agreement. This is about making sure we get tough and enforce the laws on the books for what we already have. There shouldn't be any dispute about that, and, certainly in the Finance Committee, Democrats and Republicans were united.

Finally, I want to make one last point. I am glad the distinguished Senator from Tennessee is on the floor. I am very pleased that there has been an agreement with the majority leader, the Senator from Tennessee, and the senior Senator from Illinois so that the ideas Senator ALEXANDER wants are going to get heard on the floor of the Senate. His interests are going to be heard and discussed fully. I want to assure him that there aren't going to be any kind of procedural delays and objections when that is done. He is going to have a chance to have his concerns heard and a vote on them, based on what I have been told about the agreement with the majority leader.

In this bill, there is a chance for the Congress to finish the job of something I think is also important, and that is to say on a permanent basis—a permanent basis—we are not going to have regressive taxes on Internet access and discrimination, particularly against working families for whom, if there were regressive taxes on working families who rely on Internet access to get information about education and employment opportunities, we would harm those families at a time when they are already walking on an economic tightrope, balancing their food bill against their fuel bills and rent bill against energy costs. We shouldn't have regressive taxes on Internet access. With this legislation, we can ensure that will not happen. It has been a bipartisan effort for nearly 20 years, and with this we can say no to those regressive taxes as a result of the work that was done. As I noted, the concerns Senator ALEXANDER wishes to raise are going to be heard in the future as well.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Oregon for his courtesy this morning. I appreciate the senator's remarks on allowing our different points of view to come to the floor and let's vote on it. He is speaking, of course, about the Marketplace Fairness Act, which is a 12-page bill which represents a two-word issue: States' rights.

The Majority Leader has said we'll have the ability to vote on that sometime before the end of the year. It is a bipartisan bill. It passed the Senate 2 years ago with 69 votes. It recognizes that States have the right to decide for themselves whether to collect their State sales taxes from all of the people who owe the taxes or some of the people who owe the taxes. It would allow States to do that if they simplify tax administration and exempt small online sellers from collection requirements. It would create a pathway for States and localities across the country to begin collecting an estimated \$23 billion annually in uncollected taxes—taxes that are already owed. They can then use that money to balance their budget, to reduce other taxes, to pay for vital services.

I don't think Tennessee or any other State should have to play “Mother, may I?” with the Federal Government when deciding whether to collect, or not collect, a State tax that is already owed.

I can say to our friends on both sides of the aisle, the States are not going to put up with this for very much longer. If Congress continues to be an obstacle to States making their own decisions about their tax structures, governors are going to be suing companies around the country and say, if you are going to sell in our State, you are going to col-

lect the tax that everybody owes. At that point, all those businesses are going to run to us and say: Please pass the Marketplace Fairness Act.

I don't think we get any wiser about flying to Washington—one hour in my case—every week than the Governor and the legislature about what our tax structure ought to be. We don't like an income tax in Tennessee, so we have a sales tax. We don't need any incentives from Washington to force us to pass an income tax in Tennessee.

Let me say a word about the vote today. I ask the chair, since I noticed the Senator from Michigan is on the floor, to please let me know when all but 30 seconds has expired.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be so notified.

Mr. ALEXANDER. As far as the vote today goes, this distinguished body seems to have developed a case of amnesia. We seem to have forgotten what happened in 1994. 300 Republicans stood on the steps of the Capitol with the Contract with America and said: If we break our contract, throw us out.

One goal of that contract was to stop Washington from imposing unfunded mandates on States. One of my most vivid memories is Senator Bob Dole running around the country with a copy of the Constitution and reading the Tenth Amendment to Governors. The Tenth Amendment says: “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States. . . .”

He said that. I was there. We were both running for President at the time. The Tenth Amendment was the heart and soul of the Contract with America. Senator Dole was good to his word. The first bill in the Senate after the Republican Revolution in 1994 was a bill prohibiting unfunded mandates. Republicans opposed unfunded mandates then. They should oppose them today. According to the Republican conference rules, “The Senate Republican Conference believes that Congress should not create new federal unfunded mandates on state and local governments.”

However, today the vote we are about to cast breaks that promise. The Customs bill has a provision that permanently extends the so-called Internet Tax Freedom Act. It prohibits State and local governments from taxing access to the Internet. It tells seven States that are currently collecting a tax that they can't continue to collect. These seven States will lose \$100 million in 2020 and several hundred million each year after that.

This was not even considered by the House or the Senate when they passed the bill. It was airdropped in violation of rule XXVIII, so the vote we are casting today, a “yes” vote, violates the Contract with America, violates the Senate Republican rules, and violates the Senate's rules.

I will agree there may be a Federal interest in not taxing Internet access. I agreed with that in the 1990s. Maybe for the first three years there should have been a moratorium when the Internet came along, but where will it end? If you tell States they can't tax access to the Internet, you can also tell them they can't tax access to telephones or food or gas because all of those are important to interstate commerce. It is wrong for Washington to be telling States what their tax structure ought to be. We are not any wiser than the Governor of Tennessee. We're not any wiser than the State legislature in Tennessee. We should leave those decisions to them.

That is my objection to the bill today. Instead of voting to oppose another unfunded mandate that tells States what not to do, Congress should consider passing the Marketplace Fairness Act later this year. We should not fall into this bad habit that existed before the Republican revolution of 1994, of assuming that just because we were elected to come to Washington, suddenly we are wiser than all the Governors and all of the legislatures. They are not quite as wise, we are saying. We ought not to be telling them what to do about their tax structure. We ought to leave that to them as the Senate Republican rules say, as the Contract with America said, and as the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution says. Let States do their job, and let us do our job.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Michigan.

FLINT, MICHIGAN, WATER CRISIS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first, I commend my friend and colleague from Tennessee and share his feelings about passing the Marketplace Fairness Act. I hope we are going to see that happen as soon as possible.

I am joined on the floor by my dear friend and colleague from Michigan. We are united in speaking out about the urgent crisis in Flint.

If you will let me know when I have consumed 6 minutes, please.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be so notified.

Ms. STABENOW. Over the last couple of weeks, we have been negotiating and negotiating with the chair of the Energy Committee, the ranking member, and with other colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I want to particularly thank our ranking member who has stood with us day after day in the effort to make sure we can get some help for the children and the families of Flint. I thank our colleagues on this side of the aisle for standing with us as well.

We have been looking for an opportunity, a way to come together to help a group of Americans. That is what we do in the Senate. When someone has a crisis, we work together, State by

State, to step up and be able to provide some assistance as Americans.

I have had the honor and pleasure to negotiate a number of bipartisan agreements while I have been here almost 16 years, working with colleagues to pass a very complicated farm bill, working on many different issues together across the aisle. I know that when you want to get things done, you can. It is just a matter of having the will to do it. When you don't want to get things done, you come to the floor and attack the people you are supposed to be negotiating with and you negotiate in the press. Unfortunately, that is what we have seen in recent days. That is why we are so deeply concerned about the fact that there is not the resolve to come together to be able to help the children of Flint, the families of Flint, and then move on with the Energy bill that there is bipartisan interest in passing.

Every time we have thought we had an agreement, we changed things to reflect a proposal, a structure from the majority on the Energy Committee, and every time we think we have something, the rug has been pulled out from under us after hours and hours of work. Frankly, I feel like Charlie Brown when Lucy is pulling the football away time after time. That is exactly what has been happening.

We have had one exception though. I want to give a real thank-you and shout-out to Senator INHOFE because we spent all last weekend putting together a bipartisan, fully paid-for proposal that not only will help the families and children of Flint but create the opportunity for colleagues across the country to get help with water infrastructure projects.

There are multiple areas. We have them in Michigan, other areas outside of Flint. They are not devastated like Flint is with their entire system corroded, the children poisoned, and the water system shut down, but there are multiple issues around water. We joined together with the distinguished chair of the EPW and have come together in good faith with a proposal we can't get a vote on, unfortunately. We cannot get the willingness to put before us where we could vote together on something that would address Flint but also help others.

I thank Senator INHOFE, and we are going to continue to work with him to get that proposal or some other comprehensive proposal in front of us.

It has also been extremely disappointing, though, to see Republican leadership come to the floor, colleagues who have had millions, in fact, billions of dollars funneled to their States for various emergencies over the years, come and tell us that what is happening on lead poisoning for these children, what is happening in Flint where you can't drink the water today, yesterday, the day before, 18 months

and longer now, tomorrow, the next day, where you have to bathe these babies in bottled water, brush your teeth in bottled water, try to figure out how to take a shower in bottled water, that this is a local issue.

Right now we have a fully funded Federal Disaster Relief Fund that we passed last year in the omnibus—fully funded, billions of dollars. Over the years it has paid for a water main break in Boston, a chemical spill in West Virginia, a fertilizer plant explosion in West Texas.

Local issue? State issue? I am not sure why that was Federal, necessarily. Right now there is somewhere between \$6 billion and \$7 billion sitting in an account to respond to disasters, and we are only asking for a very small amount of those funds, to see and recognize and respect and care about the children and families of Flint, MI, a small withdrawal from that account to help children who have been poisoned by lead—9,000 children under the age of 6. Some parts of the city lead exposure is so high. It is higher than a toxic waste dump. How would we feel if this were our children, our grandchildren? I know how I would feel.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has consumed 6 minutes.

Ms. STABENOW. I thank the Presiding Officer.

I am going to take 1 additional minute to emphasize the fact that yesterday our colleague from Texas said we are too optimistic trying to get help, while at the same time the President was signing a Federal disaster declaration allowing additional Federal aid for 25 counties in Texas.

Since 2005, we have sent \$9.75 billion to Texas, including \$1 billion that I got in the farm bill on livestock disaster assistance, which is not a major issue in the State of Michigan, but it is for other colleagues, and \$1 billion has gone to someone who said: We, as a group, should not care about Flint, MI.

Let me just say, I think the folks in Flint deserve their money back. They have been paying to help Americans across this country, and now they don't have the dignity or respect to be able to have some small assistance to stop the poisoning and to create some dignity and respect for these families and help for these children.

This child is an American too. We are not going to stop. We will negotiate in good faith. We will continue to do that, but we are not going to stop until we recognize, support, and help the families of Flint.

Mr. President, I would like to yield the remainder of my time to my friend from Michigan, Senator PETERS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I wish to thank Senator STABENOW for her leadership on this issue and I share her frustration. We have been together,

standing up, fighting to bring resources to Flint to deal with this absolutely catastrophic situation in Flint, MI. We have reached out to our Republican colleagues. We have had some very positive conversations, but as we have those positive conversations, as the Senator said in her comments, it seems as if it unravels right when we are very close to making it a reality. As a new Member of this body, I am completely at a loss for understanding why that is. Why is it that Members of the Senate can't step up for all Americans who are suffering?

As you mentioned in the disaster fund, we have a disaster fund that is designed specifically for events like we have seen in Flint. You mentioned the West Texas explosion. We have had water main breaks in Massachusetts, a Caribbean oil corporation refinery explosion in Puerto Rico, a bridge collapse in Minneapolis, a chemical spill in West Virginia. The list goes on and on. When we have had some sort of tragedy around this country, the U.S. Senate steps up and says: We are compassionate. This is not a Democratic or Republican issue. This is about the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time for debate has expired.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 2 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, we need to do that as well. We have pay-fors for the disaster fund. We identified and came forward with a pay-for that would end a tax loophole—a tax benefit—for golf courses where wealthy individuals can give an easement to a golf course and donate land. If we eliminate that—in fact, some Republicans have argued for the very elimination of this tax deduction—it will help to pay for the infrastructure and it will help to pay for the children of Flint.

I know some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to protect those wealthy donors and their golf courses, but I believe the children of Flint are more important. I believe the people of Flint are more important. The fact that they have been poisoned by lead—something that creates irreparable damage to their brains—is something that will impact their lives forever.

How can you look into the face of the children of Flint knowing they have this brain damage as a result of this catastrophic situation and yet say no to a disaster fund to pay for it, say no to closing a tax break for wealthy folks who are giving land to golf courses? How can you put golf course easements ahead of the children of Flint? We need to stand up as a body and understand that this is a crisis of unimaginable proportions, and we can do better. The

United States can do better. The Congress can do better.

The fact that we are not coming together to do this is why people have such disdain for this body—the Senate and the House—because they think that in times of crisis, we pick and choose whom we help. Let's not pick and choose whom we help. Let's help everybody. Let's help the people of Flint. Let's help the children of Flint and show that we are a compassionate country and that we do not pick and choose. Everybody should get our support.

I hope we can come together and compromise. We need to take some of these pay-fors and do what is necessary to address this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, if the Senator will yield for a question, I wish to ask the Senators from Michigan whether they were aware that the Governor has made a request of the Michigan Legislature for at least \$195 million to help the families and the community of Flint?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time for debate has expired.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 2 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I just want to ask the Senators from Michigan whether they are aware of the request that the Governor has made to address the crisis that they have identified in Flint and whether they feel like that money, the \$195 million, would be applied to the same problem they have identified.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, if I may respond to that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. The Governor of Michigan sent a letter to the President asking for close to \$800 million in disaster assistance to deal with all of the issues we are talking about. What we have been working to do is ask for Federal help for about 25 percent of that, with the balance of it being paid for by the State of Michigan.

The State of Michigan certainly has incredible culpability related to this matter. We understand they are addressing this issue, and it is about time that they did that. It does not take the place of our helping the people of Flint and helping to solve this issue as much as any other issue we have talked about today.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I know all time has expired. I yield the floor, and we will continue this discussion at some other time.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, an act to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, Pat Roberts, Roy Blunt, Chuck Grassley, Shelley Moore Capito, Richard Burr, Mike Crapo, Thad Cochran, John Thune, John Hoeven, Tim Scott, Lisa Murkowski, Rob Portman, Kelly Ayotte, Tom Cotton, Orrin G. Hatch.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, an act to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 73, nays 22, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 21 Leg.]

YEAS—73

Ayotte	Feinstein	Murphy
Barrasso	Fischer	Murray
Bennet	Flake	Nelson
Blumenthal	Gardner	Paul
Blunt	Grassley	Perdue
Booker	Hatch	Peters
Boozman	Heitkamp	Portman
Burr	Heller	Risch
Cantwell	Hoeven	Roberts
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cardin	Isakson	Scott
Carper	Johnson	Sessions
Casey	Kaine	Shaheen
Cassidy	King	Shelby
Coats	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Lankford	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Tillis
Corker	Lee	Toomey
Cornyn	Manchin	Vitter
Cotton	McCain	Warner
Crapo	McConnell	Wicker
Daines	Merkley	Wyden
Donnelly	Moran	
Ernst	Murkowski	

NAYS—22

Alexander	Heinrich	Rounds
Baldwin	Hirono	Schatz
Boxer	Markey	Schumer
Brown	McCaskill	Udall
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Enzi	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Franken	Reed	
Gillibrand	Reid	

NOT VOTING—5

Cruz	Rubio	Sullivan
Graham	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 73, the nays are 22.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I would like to announce for our colleagues that we expect the Chair to put the question to the body on adoption of the conference report once we are finished with speakers, which will be around noon; then there will be another vote at 1:45 p.m. this afternoon on an Iowa district judge before leaving for the recess.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Thank you, Madam President, for your recognition.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 365; that the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination and, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. On behalf of Senator RUBIO, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. UDALL. Madam President, this is about the nomination of Roberta Jacobson to be Ambassador to Mexico. This is one of the critical positions with one of our Nation's largest trading partners. It has now been vacant for over half a year.

Important work is left undone. We also have in this individual, Roberta Jacobson, a highly qualified career nominee. She is ready to serve. She has solid support on both sides of the aisle. There is no doubt in this Senator's mind—and I think many Senators' minds—that we need a strong Ambassador in Mexico City to represent our interests.

Mexico is working with us to stop those who cross our southern border illegally. Mexico is our third largest trading partner. One million American citizens live in Mexico. It is our top tourist destination with millions of U.S. visitors going to Mexico every year. There is a lot of work to be done on combatting illegal drug trade, including the trafficking of illegal

opioids, reforming the judiciary, and creating economic opportunities on both sides of the border. That is something we are working on together, and we are working together to address immigration issues while cracking down on deadly border violence.

In New Mexico, we know the importance of this position and this partnership with Mexico. My State shares a border with Mexico; we also share a cultural heritage and trade that grow with Mexico every year. Exports from New Mexico to Mexico have soared from over \$70 million 15 years ago to \$1.5 billion a year now. Over 36,000 jobs in my State depend on U.S.-Mexico trade. Arizona, California, and Texas also share similar and deep relations with the Mexican people, and not confirming this nominee harms those States as well.

Let me just say a word about Roberta Jacobson. She is a dedicated public servant. The LA Times has called Roberta Jacobson "among the most qualified people ever to be tapped to represent the U.S. in Mexico." Roberta has worked on the Merida Initiative to fight drug trafficking and organized crime in Mexico. She has served ably as Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere Affairs at the State Department.

Last year the President reestablished diplomatic relations with Cuba. After over 50 years of a failed policy with Cuba, Roberta helped negotiate this historic shift, giving the United States an opportunity to engage with the Cuban people. Time and again she did her job and she did it very well. She was approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee with bipartisan support. This was weeks ago, and still we wait for this nomination to come to the floor and get a vote.

It is hard to explain to my constituents that we do not have an ambassador to Mexico because a few Senators disagree with the President's policy on Cuba. They don't understand it. The folks back home don't understand it, and neither do I. This is not just the President's team, this is our team. This is America's team working on trade, on security, moving our economy, and moving all of us forward.

We need an ambassador in Mexico City. Roberta Jacobson is more qualified to serve than anybody that has been put up in many, many years. I know we have an objective now, but I would urge my colleagues to sort this out and bring it to the floor, and I would ask the leadership to make this a priority.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I rise today in strong support of the conference report to accompany the Trade Facilitation and Trade Customs con-

ference report on which we just had a cloture vote. I was very pleased to see 73 U.S. Senators vote in favor of proceeding to and getting a final vote on the conference report. It is important because this legislation represents the most significant update to our trade enforcement policies in over a decade, and its passage today and enactment into law will demonstrate yet again that this Congress is working in a bipartisan manner.

This bill is important for a lot of reasons. First and foremost, this legislation is about trade enforcement. This bill gives the U.S. Customs and Border Protection new tools to combat unfair trade practices, thus protecting American jobs and American workers. These enforcement provisions are important to a wide range of American manufacturers, which is why the National Association of Manufacturers and the American Iron and Steel Institute strongly support this bill. In fact, there are approximately 100 organizations and businesses that have expressed public support for this bill. For any Senator who has manufacturing in his or her State, supporting this conference report should be a no-brainer.

These enforcement provisions are important to many other sectors of the economy as well. Take honey producers, for example, who in my home State make South Dakota one of the top honey-producing States in the Nation. Back in 2011, I was the ranking member of the Trade Subcommittee of the Finance Committee, and Senator WYDEN was the chairman of that subcommittee. We held a hearing on the topic of how America can better enforce our trade laws, and we heard testimony from Richard Adey, a well-known honey producer in my home State of South Dakota about the problem of honey laundering. Simply put, honey laundering is the practice of unscrupulous honey producers in China using third-party countries to circumvent tariffs on dumped Chinese honey. Over the past decade this has been a major problem, costing U.S. honey producers hundreds of millions of dollars in lost revenue.

As one example of this practice, consider Malaysia, a nation with the capacity to produce about 45,000 pounds of honey annually. Get this: Malaysia has exported as much as 37 million pounds of honey to the United States in a year—well beyond its production capacity. Clearly this honey is not coming from Malaysia. It is Chinese honey being transshipped through that nation.

The legislation we are considering today is finally going to give customs the tools it needs to help crack down on this practice. This will not only benefit honey producers in my State, it will benefit farmers all across the country whose crops depend upon bees for pollination and will benefit Amer-

ican consumers who can buy American honey with confidence.

While this bill is about enforcing our trade laws, it is also about making it easier for American businesses to engage in trade. This is especially important to small businesses that may not always have the resources or the expertise to access foreign markets.

The conference report before us includes a provision that I authored with Ranking Member WYDEN that would update the so-called de minimis threshold for imports from \$200 per product to \$800 per product. The bill also includes an amendment that Senator BENNET and I offered at the Finance Committee, calling on our trading partners to follow our lead in this area. What this simply means is that if someone starts a small business selling goods on the Internet and he or she needs to import a component part in order to make a product, we are going to significantly reduce the paperwork and cost involved in doing so. This is the reason that online marketplaces such as Etsy and eBay, as well as express shippers like UPS and FedEx, are so supportive of this legislation. These companies understand what millions of American entrepreneurs understand: The Internet truly is the shipping lane of the 21st century.

This bill will empower more Americans to engage in global commerce both through the Internet and through more traditional means. This conference report will also help to ensure that access to the Internet, which is so important for global commerce, remains unencumbered.

This legislation includes a provision to make the existing ban on Internet access taxes permanent—something that Senator WYDEN and I have championed and a measure that has broad bipartisan support. The Internet Tax Freedom Act has been extended eight times since it was first enacted in 1998. As I mentioned earlier, the Internet is increasingly a gateway to economic opportunity, often in the form of accessing new markets abroad.

As the chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, one of my top priorities is expanding access to high-speed Internet from our inner cities to our most rural communities, and keeping access to the Internet unburdened by new taxes is an important step in that direction.

This Internet tax freedom provision is strongly supported by a broad spectrum of technology, cable, and telecom companies. It is also something that will benefit America's manufacturers. As the National Association of Manufacturers wrote recently in an op-ed supporting this bill: "The Internet has become a critical piece of infrastructure for manufacturers in the United States, and permanently extending the ban on state and local taxes on Internet access will continue to foster investment in broadband networks."

I was especially pleased that we were able to include a provision in the conference report granting States that already apply taxes on Internet access more than 4 years to adjust to the new law. I am confident this will give Congress the time necessary to address other important issues relating to Internet taxation.

Enactment of the permanent ITFA provision in this bill will clear the path for consideration of legislation empowering States when it comes to collecting sales taxes that are owed. I intend to continue to support efforts to ensure that we have a level playing field when it comes to the taxation of Internet commerce—something that is very important in my home State of South Dakota.

Last but certainly not least, I want to point out that this conference report includes provisions strongly in support of our ally, the State of Israel. Unfortunately, we have seen a disturbing trend in recent years where some nations are attempting to discriminate against Israeli-made goods for political reasons. This legislation creates a new principal trade-negotiating objective under trade promotion authority designed to discourage these unfair practices against Israel. Once this conference report becomes law, if a foreign nation proposes a new trade agreement with the United States, that nation will need to demonstrate that it does not have politically motivated discriminatory policies in place against our strongest ally in the Middle East.

I commend Senator CARDIN and others who worked diligently to update our trade laws with respect to harmful actions against the State of Israel. I am pleased that we are finally seeing these efforts come to fruition.

Enactment of this legislation into law will represent a win for American manufacturers and farmers, a win for American producers, who have been harmed by unfairly traded Chinese goods, a win for small business owners looking to engage in global commerce, a win for consumers who depend upon Internet access that is accessible and affordable, and a win for those of us who want to stand up and support the State of Israel when that nation is being unfairly targeted. But all of that will be at risk if we do not pass this conference report. The House of Representatives has been very clear that it will not take up this bill again. All the good things in this bill that I mentioned will die. They will not become law if we do not pass the conference report as it is. The House approved this conference report over a month and a half ago. It is past time that we do the same. Let's get this done today and send this bill to the President for his signature. Let's continue to work together on other issues that still need to be addressed.

I thank Finance Committee Chairman HATCH and Ranking Member

WYDEN for all of their hard work in getting us to this point. I hope the Senate will go on record—and I urge my colleagues to support this important trade enforcement legislation—in what I hope will be a very big and decisive vote.

This legislation is good for America. It demonstrates once again that the Senate takes seriously its responsibility to get results and get things done for the American people. It is good for our economy, it is good for jobs, and it is good for the overall health and vitality of our country.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I rise today to express my concerns with the Customs conference report. While I support the Customs provisions in this conference report, as well as the Internet tax moratorium, I cannot support the way these issues were merged in conference.

I have said for years that the Internet Tax Freedom Act should be paired with e-fairness legislation because I think it is reasonable to tell the States that when we take away their ability to tax Internet access, we are giving them the ability to collect the State and local sales and use taxes already owed on remote sales. It is beyond time for Congress to give States that right. Congress's failure to act has created a burden on our States and local governments, which are losing billions in tax revenue that they need for local responsibilities.

As a former mayor and State legislator, I understand how important sales tax revenue is to State and local governments for maintaining schools, fixing roads, and supporting local law enforcement, fire departments, and emergency management crews.

Congress's inaction on e-fairness legislation implicitly blesses a situation in which States may be forced to raise other taxes, such as income or property taxes, to offset the growing loss of sales tax revenue. In December, in-store sales were about the same as the year before, but Internet sales grew by about 40 percent.

To be clear, we are talking about a substantial loss in revenue. In 2012, States missed out on an estimated \$23 billion in uncollected but owed use taxes from all remote sales. About \$61 million of that would have gone to my home State of Wyoming. Those numbers increase every year as online sales increase. States missed the opportunity to collect an estimated \$26 bil-

lion in remote sales and use taxes in 2013. Wyoming lost an estimated \$81.2 million, so \$61 million to \$81 million.

Congress's failure to act is also hurting our local stores, which hire local people who support local events and help out in the community. The same stores that are required to collect State and local sales and use taxes while their online and catalog competitors are not.

As a former small business owner, I believe it is important to level the playing field for all retailers—in-store, catalog, and online—so an outdated rule for sales tax collection does not adversely impact small businesses and Main Street retailers. I have given the example before of a friend in Sheridan who has a camera store. He has people come in and look at some very expensive cameras and get all of the instructions and find out about all of the accessories. Then they just take a little picture of the bar code on that and order it online. The difference in price? The sales tax. He provides the service, but loses the sale, and it is because the sales tax is not collected online. That is not fair. I used to have a shoe store. The same thing is true. They can get the fit they need, the adjustments they need, and know exactly the shoe they want. Check the bar code online. What is the difference? The sales tax. It really hurts if they order it in front of you. Televisions, bicycles—there are all kinds of examples of this same sort of thing happening.

This issue also affects online stores. More and more States are successfully implementing their own laws to ensure they can collect these remote sales and use taxes. They are doing it piecemeal. This will create a patchwork of complicated, uniquely tailored, and incongruent laws for all businesses to comply with.

For many years I have worked with all interested parties to find a mutually agreeable way to solve this problem. But instead of taking up legislation that prevents taxation of Internet access and also helps State and local governments and businesses, we have a conference report before us that includes the Internet Tax Freedom Act, which was just dropped in without any separate vote or debate. The Senate has not considered it in the committee nor on the floor.

Instead of considering this inserted issue now, we should have combined it with legislation that restores States' sovereign right to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws. What I am proposing is not a tax on the Internet. I am opposed to that. Rather, e-fairness legislation would give States the option to collect their sales and use taxes already due on all purchases.

Unlike this airdropped Internet Tax Freedom Act provision, the Senate has overwhelmingly voted in support of e-fairness with a bipartisan group of 69

Senators supporting the Marketplace Fairness Act in the last Congress, and we were not even able to get a vote on our amendment.

I thank my colleagues who have worked so hard on this issue, especially Senators DURBIN, ALEXANDER, and HEITKAMP. I thank the businesses, the trade groups, the State and local governments, and all of the other stakeholders who have helped us educate offices about this issue. I thank the leader for listening to our concerns about this conference report. But ultimately I oppose the conference report because, while Congress should pass the Customs bill and this provision this year, Congress should also pass e-fairness legislation this year that allows States to collect the sales and use taxes they are owed for remote sales already.

I yield the floor.

AMENDING 19 U.S.C., SECTION 1501

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, the bill we will be voting on shortly contains a provision amending 19 U.S.C., section 1501, which relates to the liquidation of entries into the U.S. The provision in the conference report amending section 1501 is intended to ensure in cases where liquidation occurs by operation of law, the 90-day timeframe for the voluntary reliquidation of an entry by Customs and Border Protection begins on the date of the original liquidation.

I would ask my colleague, Senator WYDEN, the ranking member of the Finance Committee, if that is his understanding of this provision as well.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I agree with Senator HATCH. That is the intent of the provision amending 19 U.S.C., section 1501.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I am pleased to have been one of the conferees to H.R. 644, the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015.

There are many important provisions in this legislation, some of which I helped to draft.

There is one such provision that I particularly want to highlight. Honey producers in my State of South Dakota as well as producers of honey, crawfish, garlic, and mushrooms around the country, have suffered for 15 years because of unfair dumping from China. Senator WYDEN and I have worked together for 5 years to ensure that the trade laws were enforced in these cases.

Unfortunately, the latest struggles have been more with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, CBP, than with Chinese dumpers.

Duties collected on dumped imports and all interest on those duties from 2000 and 2007 were to be paid to the injured domestic producers to allow them to reinvest and rebuild. For reasons that defy simple explanation, CBP ignored the direction of the statute to pay all interest to producers and instead deducted some types of interest from payments to producers.

In effect, this practice amounted to forcing South Dakota honey producers to pay for the delays caused by Chinese dumpers, the U.S. insurance companies that posted bond for the duties, and in some cases of CBP itself. This practice defies the plain language of the statute and cost domestic producers tens of millions of dollars over the years.

During the Finance Committee markup of this legislation, Senator GRASSLEY, Senator NELSON, and I offered an amendment which is included in this conference report that corrects CBP's misreading of the law. This is an important victory for honey, crawfish, garlic, and mushroom that have suffered from Chinese dumping and CBP's unfounded practice.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I wish to support the trade enforcement conference report—legislation that will level the playing field for American businesses and help them reach foreign markets.

This bill is aimed at supporting American businesses in an increasingly global economy. It makes sure our economic competitors play by the rules and helps our small businesses sell their products to new markets overseas.

This bill passed the Senate 78-20 last March, with every single Member of the Democratic Caucus supporting it.

While I recognize that there were changes made in the conference committee, this legislation still contains critical mechanisms to ensure fair trade for American businesses and workers.

I believe that the United States can out-compete and out-innovate any economy in the world, but to do that, we need a level playing field, and that means making sure our competitors are playing by the rules.

This legislation contains some of the strongest trade enforcement provisions that we have seen in decades. It gives Federal authorities the tools they need to enforce U.S. trade laws at the border and hold our trading partners accountable. It includes the ENFORCE Act, a critical measure to ensure that businesses and workers harmed by unfair trade can have their claims investigated and resolved quickly. And it strengthens the Treasury Department's ability to address currency manipulation.

This bill also contains language I authored that makes sure that our small businesses are able to take advantage of new trade opportunities and reach new markets. Even though 95 percent of the world's customers live overseas, less than 1 percent of small- and medium-sized businesses in the United States sell to global markets. By comparison, more than 40 percent of large businesses sell their products overseas.

The conference report includes my small business trade amendment, which would help narrow that gap by

reauthorizing the successful State Trade and Export Promotion grant program, better known as the STEP program. STEP was created as a pilot program to help States work with small businesses to reach in the international marketplace, and just a few years in, it has been a great success. Already, the STEP Program has helped small businesses reach 85 country markets, resulting in over \$1.1 billion in export sales for a return on Federal taxpayer investment of 19:1. In reauthorizing this program, we are giving small businesses a real chance to expand their markets, grow their businesses, and create new jobs.

I want to thank Senate Finance Committee Chairman HATCH and Ranking Member WYDEN for working with me to include my small business trade amendment in the final bill.

The conference report before us today will keep American companies competitive. It will help small businesses sell overseas. And it will help drive innovation online.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and oppose efforts to prevent it from moving forward today.

(At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

● Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, as the final piece of the robust trade package that we completed last year, the Customs report that accompanies the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act allows authorities to aggressively enforce U.S. trade laws and provides enhanced authorities to protect obligations gained under international trade agreements and rights under U.S. intellectual property laws.

In my home State of Alaska, trade currently supports more than 90,000 jobs, which is more than one in five of all jobs in the State. Per capita, Alaska is one of the top exporters in the country. We are the top exporter of fish and seafood products in the Nation.

I worked hard to secure a provision in the Customs package that, for the first time, establishes a principal negotiating objective on fisheries that reduces or eliminates tariffs and non-tariff barriers, eliminates subsidies that distort trade, and opens new markets for American fish, seafood, and shellfish products around the globe.

With the global marketplace becoming more competitive and increasingly challenging, it is vital that the United States focus its efforts on maximizing our ability to export our goods and services abroad in order to create more opportunity and good-paying jobs for all Americans.●

Mr. ENZI. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING PHILIP ROCK

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, this morning at Old St. Patrick's Church in downtown Chicago, there was a funeral service for an extraordinary public servant, the late senate president Phil Rock.

On January 29, Illinois lost one of its most principled leaders and one of its finest public servants. He was a good friend of mine and a good friend of my wife's as well.

Before retiring from politics in 1993, Phil Rock represented Chicago's Oak Park and parts of the West Side of the city of Chicago. He spent 14 of those years as the longest serving Illinois Senate president. During part of that time, I had the opportunity to be by his side and to work as his senate parliamentarian.

People used to say Phil Rock was born a Catholic, a Democrat, and a Chicago Cubs fan, but not necessarily in that order. Phil was also a dedicated public servant.

Before Phil Rock became a public servant, he almost became a priest. He was born and lived much of his life in the Midway Park section of the Austin part of Chicago. He attended Quigley Preparatory Seminary and went on to the University of St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, IL. But instead of becoming a priest, he became a lawyer.

After graduating from Loyola Law School—newly married to his wife Sheila—he took a different path than his colleagues. He decided not to join a big law firm. He chose to enter public service. He worked for Illinois State attorney general Bill Clark in 1965, and by 1967 Phil was the chief of the Illinois Consumer Fraud Division. He chose to enter public service at a difficult time—the turbulent 1960s. The country was torn over the Vietnam war and many social issues. The 1968 Democratic Convention was a painful reflection of our Nation's troubles.

Instead of turning away from public service, at that time Phil Rock decided to dive in and make a difference. In 1970 he was elected to the Illinois State Senate, where he ascended quickly in both the Democratic Party and the State senate as an institution. Within a year he was elected Democratic State committeeman for the Sixth District. A couple years later he became assistant senate minority leader. In 1979 Phil Rock was chosen by his colleagues to be the senate president. At the time, Illinois was facing tough times. Illinois was hard hit by the national recession and some of the highest urban unemployment rates in the country. Once again, Phil did not waver. Through his

leadership, Phil helped guide the State through a storm of a recession.

Phil was a loyal and passionate Democrat, but he understood that compromise was always an important part of success. "Bipartisanship" wasn't a dirty word for Phil Rock; he worked with everybody. He just wanted to get things done for his constituents, as well as the people of the State. His word was his bond. When his allies made unreasonable demands, Phil was firm and said no.

When the day's legislative work was done, though, you could still find Phil presiding—usually over a barbecue pit near the State capitol. Legislators from both political parties came by; they wouldn't miss it. Phil would hand them a cold drink, and they would have a great evening together.

Hardly any of Phil's parties ended without Phil being requested to sing "Danny Boy," which he did in a spirited fashion. On St. Patrick's Day, you could always count on Phil Rock and his fellow State senator Bob Egan being close to a piano, singing great Irish tunes. The events were always bipartisan, with Democrats and Republicans coming together. This is a lesson in friendship and cooperation which all of us should remember today.

Phil leaves a proud legacy. He had a wonderful sense of fairness and a strong voice for the most vulnerable in communities across the State. Phil exemplified what Hubert Humphrey called "the moral test of government." He authored and passed more than 450 major pieces of legislation in his career. He earned dozens of awards from organizations across the State of Illinois, from Cairo to Zion.

Among his legislative accomplishments, Phil started Illinois's I-SEARCH Program for missing children, which provides State funding to provide information almost instantly to save those kids. He also championed laws for mandatory insurance for newborns and the State's original Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. One of his proudest achievements was sponsoring legislation for the Nation's first school for the deaf and blind in Glen Ellyn, which today has been named after him, the Philip J. Rock Center and School.

Phil passed away last month at the age of 78. His legacy shines brightly from Oak Park to Springfield and across our State. My wife Loretta and I want to offer our condolences to Phil's wife of more than 50 years, Sheila; their four kids, Kathleen, Meghan, Colleen, and John; and, of course, the grandkids.

Phil Rock was a tireless advocate for the little guy, he was a giant in Illinois politics, and he will be missed.

Madam President, last year I joined a bipartisan majority in the Senate to pass a Customs reauthorization bill. It was strong, it was meaningful, and it

really set out to modernize our Nation's customs system and strengthen the enforcement of U.S. trade laws.

One of the greatest concerns Americans have about trade and trade agreements is that when they are cheated on by other countries, we don't enforce them, and the losers are American businesses and employees. So I like that Customs bill. I like that version and the strong language on currency manipulation which has cost a lot of American jobs and hurt U.S. businesses. It strengthened our commitment to combat human trafficking around the world. It would allow us to safeguard our climate policies under future trade agreements.

The conference report that is back to us now and before the Senate at this moment is a much different bill. Let me say there are provisions of it that are good and important. I strongly support the ENFORCE Act. The provision would allow us to have a level playing field so that companies, such as Illinois companies, could ensure that other countries play by the same rules when it comes to trade. These strong anti-dumping rules are vital to prevent foreign companies from dumping cheap steel products and other goods that undercut domestic prices and put our companies out of business and employees out of work.

I recently had representatives of the steel industry come by my office, and they explained the dramatic increase in imports of steel product, particularly rebar from Turkey. They can't understand how Turkey can sell its rebar in the United States so cheaply, putting American businesses at a disadvantage. Turkey takes scrap metal from the United States and transports it across the ocean, transforms it there into rebar and steel, and ships it back to the United States—and they are still able to charge less.

The folks in the steel industry here say: We are ready for competition, but something else is going on here.

There is clearly a subsidy when it comes to Turkish steel. And the net result is that companies like Granite City Steel in Granite City, IL, and companies across the United States are being threatened.

Some countries are dumping their products in the United States. They are selling them for less than the cost of production to run American businesses out of business and to put our steelworkers out of work.

The ENFORCE Act puts some teeth into this process, and it is one of the sections in this bill I would wholeheartedly support if it were a separate piece of legislation. But that is not how bills are presented to us in the Senate. We are given an array of issues and topics in every bill, and we have to decide whether at the end of the day the bill is worth voting for even if there are provisions in it that we like and some that we hate.

The inclusion of this important legislation is not enough to overcome my concerns with the overall bill.

Unlike the Senate-passed bill, there was a provision airdropped into this bill at the last minute in conference that really creates a problem. It is called the Permanent Internet Tax Freedom Act. What it means is, with this legislation, we are by Federal law prohibiting State and local governments from imposing taxes on access to the Internet. Generically, I think that is a good thing to do, to encourage use of the Internet and not to create hardships on families, students, and individuals who use the Internet, but let's go into this conversation with our eyes wide open.

If you use a telephone to make a call to someone, you are likely going to face a tax from your State or local unit of government on telephone services. If, however, you do what my wife and I try to do every weekend and Skype your grandkids, you are using your computer for that conversation, and there is no tax on your use of that computer. Some people say, "Good. I didn't want to pay the tax." But remember, local and State taxes go to sustain critical services in communities.

What we are doing with this bill is prohibiting States and localities from, in most cases, imposing taxes on Internet services. So we are closing the door to State and local units of government raising revenue that they might view as reasonable and fair to sustain police protection, fire protection, and all the demands they face. That is the reality of this provision.

What we had hoped to do was, at the same time, say that State and local units of government could collect sales tax on Internet sales. Let me explain. More and more Americans are turning to the Internet to buy things, our family included. You go to the usual vendors on the Internet, and in some cases, if they decide to, those Internet retailers collect the local sales tax. So when I give my home address in Springfield, IL, they check the ZIP Code, and they decide that when I make the purchase, they will collect the sales tax on the Internet sale of a book, for example, and they will remit that amount to the treasury of the State of Illinois. But it is not required, and many Internet vendors do not collect the sales tax. So what happens? State and local units of government don't get the benefit of the sales tax from Internet purchases.

However, if I decided, instead of buying a book on the Internet, to buy it at a local bookstore in Chicago or Springfield, I would pay a sales tax. Well, people are learning this. As they learn this, they are changing their shopping habits.

A friend of mine, Chris Koos, is the mayor of Normal, IL. He is an extraordinary person beyond Normal, as far as

I am concerned. He is also a businessman as well as mayor. He has a business that sells bicycles and running shoes. He tells me people will literally come into his store and say: I need size 11 New Balance shoes. What do you have?

They bring out the running shoes, and people try them on, stand in front of the mirror, and say: Thanks a lot, Chris. I appreciate it.

They will then write down the number for the New Balance running shoes, go home, buy them on the Internet, and not pay a sales tax. Well, Chris is the loser. Here he is with a good, solid business in Normal, IL, that not only provides good service and good products but collects—as required by law—the sales tax on transactions, the sales tax going to the State and to the community to sustain basic services. So when people use his store as a showroom and then buy on the Internet and not pay the taxes, of course the State and the community lose.

What we had hoped to do was to put these two things together and say that if we are going to prohibit State and local units of government from imposing taxes on access to the Internet, at the same time, we will require Internet sellers and retailers, to collect sales taxes for purchases. That would be remitted back to the State and local government so at least there was some balance. It isn't as if we are closing the doors to State and local units of government for what they might have otherwise collected.

Unfortunately, only half of what I just described is included in this bill. The prohibition against State and local governments collecting taxes on Internet service is included, but sales conducted over the Internet is not included. That is unfortunate.

Initially, I opposed this bill and said that this was brought into it at the last minute, that it has nothing to do with customs whatsoever, and that it should never have been included. It is the kind of thing that I think gives us a bad name sometimes when it comes to the way we write bills. I opposed it. I then ended up deciding to talk to Republican Leader Senator McCONNELL. With his assurance that we will get a shot at calling the marketplace fairness or internet retail tax this year—either if it is sent from the House or if it originates in the Senate—I have dropped my opposition to the overall bill—although I will vote against it, I am not working against it—and the earlier rollcall indicated strong support.

With that in mind, I yield the floor and say that I will continue to oppose the Customs bill for the reasons stated, but I am happy that Senator McCONNELL and I have been able to reach an agreement on the path forward toward marketplace fairness or efairness.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, as we move toward final passage of the conference committee report on H.R. 644, the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act, I would like to take just a few minutes to reflect on how we got here and to thank the many individuals who made this moment possible.

This conference report concludes what has been an historic 13 months for trade legislation in the U.S. Senate. When I began my tenure as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee early last year, one of my foremost goals was to strengthen and modernize U.S. international trade institutions and policies. It was an audacious goal. After all, it is not like we had not tried before. Years of stagnation had enabled countless trade problems to accumulate, many of them crying for legislative resolution. Everyone agreed that something needed to be done, but again and again, our efforts were stopped. Well this Congress was different.

Working together in a bipartisan way, we were able to advance legislation to strengthen congressional oversight of trade negotiations through reauthorization of trade promotion authority, or TPA. I intend to vigorously employ TPA's new oversight tools in reviewing the Trans-Pacific Partnership that the Obama administration concluded in October and signed last week. While the verdict is still out on TPP, the efforts of the individuals who made that possible should not go unrecognized. So I would like to acknowledge the hard work of individuals such as Ambassador Mike Froman, former Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Wendy Cutler, and the Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, Barbara Weisel. Their tireless commitment to advancing the interests of the United States abroad deserves to be recognized and applauded.

I also would like to thank my staff, who worked behind the scenes to help negotiate and craft legislation that will serve our Nation for many years to come. I believe that the Senate Finance Committee leadership team of Chris Campbell, Mark Prater, and Jay Khosla is among the finest that I have had the pleasure to work with in my many years of Senate service. Our trade team, consisting of chief trade counsel Everett Eissenstat, Shane Warren, Douglas Petersen, Rebecca Eubank, Andrew Rollo, Kevin Rosenbaum, Paul Delaney, Greg Kalbaugh, and Kenneth Schmidt consistently demonstrated that teamwork, motivation, and drive can produce great results; and this bill we are considering here is no exception. I also would like to thank our outstanding speech and communications team, consisting of Bryan Hickman, Julia Lawless, Aaron Fobes, Amelia Breinig, and Joshua Blume; and of course, our fine tax

team, including Nick Wyatt, Eric Oman, Jim Lyons, and our chief economist, Jeff Wrase.

Bipartisanship was critical to all of our work over the past year, especially on trade. For their steadfast commitment and determination to our shared goal of producing strong, bipartisan legislation, I would like to recognize Senator WYDEN and his team: Josh Sheinkman, Mike Evans, Jayme White, Elissa Alben, Greta Peisch, Anderson Heiman, Tiffany Smith, and Todd Metcalf.

I also would like to thank Senator MCCONNELL and his staff: Sharon Soderstrom, Brendan Dunn, Terry Van Doren, and Hazen Marshall, who provided us with support and leadership throughout this process. Finally, let me thank my House colleagues, Speaker RYAN, Chairman Brady, and their staffs Austin Smythe, Joyce Meyer, Angela Ellard, Geoff Antell, Steve Claeys, Nasim Fussell, and Casey Higgins. On the Democratic staff, I would like to acknowledge the hard work and contributions of Ranking Member Sandy Levin and his staff, Jason Kearns, Beth Baltzan, Katherine Tai, and Keigan Mull.

Finally, this conference report would not have been possible without the excellent work done by Tom Barthold from the Joint Committee on Taxation, the Senate Legislative Counsel's office, especially Margaret Roth-Warren and Thomas Heywood, and the Congressional Budget Office, especially Teri Gullo, Ann Futrell, Susan Willie and Mark Grabowicz. The support of the legislative affairs staff at U.S. Customs and Border Protection also was essential for getting this conference report right, and I especially want to acknowledge John Pickel, Ned Leigh, and Kristin Isabelli.

I am proud of this conference report and pleased that we were able to pass it with a strong, bipartisan vote. It took many hands to bring us to this moment, and I am truly thankful for all of their hard work. This bill shows that, through persistence and hard work, we can accomplish great things.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I know of no further debate on the conference report.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the conference report?

Hearing none, the question occurs on agreeing to the conference report.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 75, nays 20, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 22 Leg.]

YEAS—75

Ayotte	Ernst	Moran
Baldwin	Feinstein	Murkowski
Barrasso	Fischer	Murphy
Bennet	Flake	Murray
Blumenthal	Gardner	Nelson
Blunt	Grassley	Paul
Booker	Hatch	Perdue
Boozman	Heitkamp	Peters
Burr	Heller	Portman
Cantwell	Hoeven	Risch
Capito	Inhofe	Roberts
Cardin	Isakson	Sasse
Carper	Johnson	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Cassidy	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Cochran	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Lankford	Tester
Cooms	Leahy	Thune
Corker	Lee	Tillis
Cornyn	Manchin	Toomey
Cotton	McCain	Vitter
Crapo	McCaskill	Warner
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Donnelly	Merkley	Wyden

NAYS—20

Alexander	Heinrich	Rounds
Boxer	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Markey	Schumer
Durbin	Menendez	Udall
Enzi	Mikulski	Warren
Franken	Reed	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Reid	

NOT VOTING—5

Cruz	Rubio	Sullivan
Graham	Sanders	

The conference report was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Thursday, February 11—that is today—at 1:30 p.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 361; that there be 15 minutes for debate on the nomination, equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that, if confirmed, the President

be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

(The remarks of Mr. LEAHY and Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 2544 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

CONGRATULATING THE DENVER BRONCOS ON THEIR SUPER BOWL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, after the very weighty and serious discussion that just preceded me, I come maybe with a little bit more lighthearted message for the Presiding Officer and my colleague, the senior Senator from Colorado, Mr. BENNET.

I think everybody knows here—the folks up in the gallery may know—that Denver is home of the Super Bowl 50 winners, the Denver Broncos. The Presiding Officer and I attended the Super Bowl on Sunday, and I am sure he agrees it was quite a treat.

God blessed us with beautiful weather, and the people of Santa Clara really made us feel welcome and at home. They did an amazing job. The Super Bowl organizers are to be commended for their attention to detail and the superb work they did to make us feel welcome. It was a fantastic experience for me. So I can only imagine, with the Presiding Officer having the winning team, how much fun it was for him.

I think it is safe to say that there are thousands in Colorado on a Rocky Mountain high this week, and I will bet there are even more who are really happy that the Broncos won the Super Bowl.

The Denver Broncos played a great game, and they defeated my Carolina Panthers. Both defenses played extraordinarily well, and the Broncos' offense did just enough to get the job done.

So to the Presiding Officer and Senator BENNET, I come to the Senate Chamber today to fulfill my wager to humbly offer my congratulations to the Super Bowl champion, the Denver Broncos, and to all their fans in your great State and, I would argue, across the Nation.

But before I talk about the beloved Panthers, I want to thank you for not accepting some of my maybe exuberant or overexuberant offers that I made as a possible friendly wager. And for C-SPAN viewers at home, you may want to avert your eyes.

I really don't think I would have looked very good in an orange beard with Broncos earrings. With all due respect to the Presiding Officer, you looked a lot like Papa Smurf with a blue beard. So a simple speech of congratulations is what I have to offer.

The truth is, I am deeply disappointed about the Panthers' loss. But it is also true that, unless the Broncos are playing my Panthers or my childhood team, the Miami Dolphins, I am usually pulling for the Broncos. The Broncos' organization, starting with the Bowlen family and Coach Kubiak, are toponotch and well respected in the NFL. Former greats such as John Elway, Terrell Davis, Shannon Sharpe, Ed—how could he wear so few pads and still survive—McCaffrey, and so many other members have made this team so much fun to watch over the years.

But then there is this guy, Peyton Manning, or "The Sheriff," as Coach Gruden nicknamed him back in 2009. I have been watching Peyton Manning since he was recruited to the University of Tennessee many years ago—a five-time NFL MVP and two-time Super Bowl winner on two different franchises. Next month, on March 24, he is going to be 40 years old, and he is playing at the top of his game. Peyton is an amazing athlete, but what really makes Peyton extraordinary is his character and his behavior on and off the field. He is a true gentleman, a great sport, and he is a scholar of the game.

I opted not to put up a graphic on the New England Patriots because anybody who knows me knows that I am not much of a fan of the New England Patriots, dating back to a December 1982 snowplow game.

But, in addition to all the other things Peyton Manning has done, he also led the Broncos to a victory over the Patriots in the AFC Championship, completely deflating Tom Brady's shot at another Super Bowl ring. That alone makes Peyton Manning a great American, in my book.

The Broncos and I do have something in common. We were both born in 1960. We are both 56 years old. They built a franchise that most fans expect to be in contention every year.

The Panthers, on the other hand, are young. They were born in 1995. They are 20 years old. They have already gone to the playoffs seven times. They have won two NFC Championships and been in the big game twice, and I believe that next year they have a good shot to be in contention.

So before I close, I thank owner Jerry Richardson, Coach Ron Rivera,

and the Carolina Panthers. Mr. Richardson is a pillar of our community, and Coach Rivera has developed a Super Bowl-caliber team: Cam Newton, the league MVP; Luke Kuechly, our defensive standout; a total of 10 Pro Bowlers this year; and a 17-to-2 season. It was fun to watch. The Super Bowl was fun to watch.

You know, I did grow a playoff beard. After we ended the playoff season, I proudly displayed it for weeks on the Senate floor, back in North Carolina, and at Levi Stadium on Super Bowl night.

But on Monday morning I got misty-eyed as I shaved it off in San Francisco. So with all apologies to Tony Bennett, I penned a poem based on one of his songs about that same city. I called it "I left my hair in San Francisco."

I left my hair in San Francisco
After the game, it haunted me
I'm cleanly shaven, quite sad and bare
While Broncos fans dance like Fred Astaire
The loveliness of Santa Clara seems somehow sad today
The glory of my Panthers' season is of another day
But I'm looking forward to next year's season
Because I expect a Super Bowl repeat for many good reasons

To Senator BENNET and to the Presiding Officer, congratulations on a great Super Bowl win for the Denver Broncos, and I look forward to many more games that our two teams may play in the future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I will be very brief. I have a longer set of remarks that I want to give next week celebrating the Broncos' victory, and I know our colleague from Wyoming is here.

But since the Presiding Officer is shackled to the desk and can't make remarks, I would say on his behalf how grateful the two of us are to the Senator from North Carolina for the graciousness of his remarks. I know how hard it must have been.

But to have the Senator not only make the remarks but provide original poetry at the end, is more than anybody could have expected. So through the Chair I thank the Senator for that.

I also want to say how proud we are of the Broncos and the Broncos organization, the Bowlen family, and the entire team for what they were able to pull off. I was able to watch it in my living room with my wife and daughters.

I congratulate, in particular, Von Miller, who is the MVP, and our defense, who played a game like no other defense I have ever seen.

Finally, I would simply say thank you to Peyton Manning for the example he has set for my children and for children all over our State—that what

matters is not how good you are or how skilled you are or how you act in the minute, but what matters is the patient decades of hard work a person is willing to put in to perfect their craft. That is what Peyton Manning has demonstrated. That is what he has shown. That is the value he has lived. I think he has made a huge difference, as I say, to the next generation of Coloradans.

We learned last week, as well, that this game, just like any game, is not about any one individual; it is about a team. We saw a team—the weaknesses and strengths—come together and win a game over a very, very tough organization in the Carolina Panthers.

(Mr. BARRASSO assumed the Chair.)

With that, I see my colleague from Colorado is now on the floor.

I yield the floor by saying: Go Broncos.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Wyoming for providing relief and the Presiding Officer for allowing me to make remarks.

I thank my freshman colleague from the great State of North Carolina for those kind words. I can only imagine if the Senator from Colorado, Mr. BENNET, and I had to give the same remarks had the outcome been different, that we could only be so gracious. So thank you very much for the congratulations to the Denver Broncos and, obviously, the Carolina Panthers. It was an exciting game that they were able to be a part of, and there will be many more years of success to both franchises, undoubtedly.

For those of you in Colorado who were able to watch the game, what an exciting time it was. We can remember the great teams led by John Elway—whether they played the Packers or the Falcons for the two Super Bowl victories—and now this exciting victory at Santa Clara as well. Also, a million people showed up in downtown Denver, CO, just a few short days ago to express their outpouring of support for the Denver Broncos. This has truly been an exciting time for the people of Colorado.

I am very pleased that Senator BENNET and I didn't have to grow a beard. Thank you, Senator TILLIS, from the great State of North Carolina.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from Wyoming.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, on Tuesday, President Obama released his budget for the next fiscal year. As usual, there was a lot of new spending the American people don't want and a lot of new taxes the American people can't afford.

It is interesting. Politico had a headline about the budget in Tuesday's

paper. It says "Obama launches liberal offensive in his final budget." A liberal offensive in his final budget. It called the budget "aggressively liberal." Well, one of the big, "aggressively liberal" things the President put in his budget is an enormous tax increase on gasoline. This tax would add over \$10 to the price of a barrel of oil. That equates to about 24 cents to a gallon of gasoline at the pump. This increase in tax would raise about \$319 billion over 10 years.

President Obama knows his budget has zero chance of becoming law, not just because Republicans won't vote for it; Democrats won't vote for it. Last year his budget was defeated by a vote of 98 to 1. Only one Member of his own party voted for his budget last year, and now Democrats in Congress are running away from this gas tax as fast as they can.

The problem is, this tax is about more than just the budget; this is a sign that the Obama administration is still committed to continuing its assault on energy production in this country—red, white, and blue energy.

The American people understand there are enormous national security implications to what the President is proposing in his budget. Right now there is fierce competition in the global energy markets. The OPEC cartel has a strategy to win that competition in the oil market. It has been pumping out oil at a pace that is intended to drive U.S. shale oil producers out of business. Then once the competition is gone, they will raise prices.

The best way for us to protect American interests is to make it easier and cheaper for energy producers to operate here in America. The worst thing we could do is to add to the cost of American oil by imposing this new tax of \$10 per barrel, 24 cents per gallon, but that is exactly what President Obama wants to do. He wants to raise taxes, and he wants to make it harder to produce American energy. President Obama's plan would actually help OPEC get what it wants. It would also put American energy producers at a competitive disadvantage with our adversaries in Iran and in Russia.

Just a few weeks ago, the Obama administration lifted economic sanctions on Iran's energy exports. This means that Iran can now export oil again. So how much oil are they going to export? According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, Iran right now has between 30 and 50 million barrels of oil sitting offshore in tankers today. Iran is planning to boost its oil exports to Europe and Asia by half a million barrels a day in the next few months. And it is not just oil; Iran is also the world's second largest producer of natural gas in terms of its resources. Right now, they are building a new export plant for liquefied natural gas that is about 40 percent complete, and

they are ready to start shipping natural gas to Europe within 2 years.

Russia is also a huge exporter of natural gas. That is one of the reasons Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine. It was to get control of the gas pipelines there. Now it appears that Gazprom is prepared to start a natural gas price war with the United States. Gazprom is, of course, the Russian gas company that is mostly owned by the government and controlled by Vladimir Putin. A price war would help them maintain their grip as being the biggest gas supplier in Europe, and it would discourage U.S. liquefied natural gas projects from ever being built.

What has the Obama administration done? The Obama administration has a documented history of delaying permits to American businesses that want to export our liquefied natural gas. Needless bureaucratic delays just deter energy production and producers from wanting to start these projects in the United States because it is so hard to get them approved, and that just drives up the cost. The administration's approach plays right into Vladimir Putin's hands.

This is not the time to add cost to American energy production. That will only help our adversaries more, and it will make our allies more dependent on energy—not from us but from places such as Russia and Iran and, of course, from other OPEC countries. This is not the time to shut down the production of American energy.

There are a lot of far-left, extreme environmentalists out there who want to make sure American energy resources are never used but stay in the ground. There are also a lot of Washington Democrats who are eager to give these environmental extremists everything they want—everything.

Last week in New Hampshire, Hillary Clinton was caught on tape promising one of these extremist supporters that the end of fossil fuel development on public land, she said, is "a done deal." The end of exploration of fossil fuels on public land is "a done deal." Well, it may be a done deal in her mind. It is also unrealistic, unwise, and unworkable. Take a look at it. Forty-one percent of America's coal production right now comes from public land; 22 percent of our crude oil comes from public land; 16 percent of our natural gas comes from public land; and Hillary Clinton, in her speech and her comments last Thursday in New Hampshire, said, in terms of any of that production, it is "a done deal."

I remind my colleagues that energy is the master resource. America needs energy for our economy to grow. We need those jobs. Where are we supposed to get our energy if we don't get it from public lands? We can't power America's manufacturing on wind alone.

Instead of building new barriers to American energy production, we should

be tearing down those barriers. The energy legislation we have been debating in this body actually includes ideas to help do that. One bipartisan idea in this legislation would help speed up the permitting process to export liquefied natural gas. It is bipartisan, with six Democratic cosponsors.

After all the environmental studies have been done, after everything has been approved, it then takes an average of another 7 months for this administration to say yes or no on the permits. That is after everything has already been approved. Why would it take 7 additional months to get a decision by the administration? The Energy Department should be able to say yes or no, and this legislation says they should be able to do it within 45 days. This is going to force Washington to do its job in an accountable and timely way. That will help make sure other countries have options for where to get their energy, other than the concerns we have about a dominance of Russia, a dominance of Iran, and a change of the balance of power internationally.

It is time for America's energy policies to help American energy producers compete and to help those jobs in our energy security at home. That is how we are going to build our economy, how we are going to create American jobs, and how we are going to strengthen our national security.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 7 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE "EL FARO"

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, late last year a cargo container ship carrying 33 men and women left Florida from the Port of Jacksonville en route to Puerto Rico. It typically sailed back and forth, carrying cargo to and from San Juan, Puerto Rico, but this time it sailed directly into the path of a hurricane.

Two days later the crew sent what would be its final communication, reporting that the ship's engines were disabled and the vessel was left drifting and tilting, with no power, straight into the path of the storm.

Subsequent to that, despite an exhaustive search and rescue attempt by the Coast Guard in the days that followed, the *El Faro* and her crew were never heard from again. Only in one

case, in desperately trying to do a search and rescue mission, did they find one decomposed body in a body-suit, but they could not find anybody else.

Since then, the National Transportation Safety Board—the agency charged with investigating the incident—has been working tirelessly to understand what happened. Why would the ship leave port when they knew there was a storm brewing and it was going to cross the path of where the ship was supposed to go?

Working with the U.S. Navy and the Coast Guard, investigators eventually found the ship's wreckage scattered at the bottom of the ocean east of the Bahama Islands in waters 15,000 feet deep. But what they didn't find that day was the ship's voyage data recorder, or what we typically refer to as the ship's black box, not unlike the black box we look for in the case of an aircraft incident that records all of the data.

Since we have no survivors, this data recorder is a key piece to getting the information to understand this puzzle of why that ship would sail right into the hurricane. It records and it stores all of the ship's communications. Finding it could shed light on what really happened onboard in those final hours. Despite the search team's exhaustive efforts to locate the data recorder amongst the scattered wreckage, they couldn't find it, and eventually they had to call off the search.

Earlier this year, this Senator wrote to the Chairman of the NTSB and urged him to go back and search again because finding the ship's data recorder is important for us to understand how these 33 human beings who have families back at home were lost. I am here to report that at this very minute, the NTSB is announcing that they are going back to do the search again. At this moment, the NTSB is saying it will resume the search for the ship's black box. This time it will do it with the help of even more sophisticated equipment to help investigators pinpoint the approximate location of the recorder and hopefully, if it is not among the wreckage of the ship, point to its location and pick it up off the ocean floor.

The NTSB's decision today—which I commend; and I thank the Chairman for continuing to keep after this—to search again for the data recorder is a critical step in our understanding of what went so tragically wrong that day. We owe it not only to the families of the lost mariners aboard the *El Faro* but to the future safety of all those who travel on the high seas. It is up to us to not only understand what happened but to do what we can to ensure that it doesn't happen in the future.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Leonard Terry Strand, of South Dakota, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Iowa.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 15 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today, as was just reported, we will vote on the nomination of Len Strand from Iowa. I am very pleased to be here to support him, just as I was here a few days ago to support Judge Ebinger from Iowa, who was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate on Monday, and I hope this person will likewise be unanimously approved.

I said this on the floor earlier this week, but for the benefit of my colleagues who didn't get a chance to hear that wonderful speech I gave, in my opinion, the Iowa nominees, Judge Ebinger and now Judge Strand, are the two best judicial candidates this President has nominated. Earlier this week I discussed the extensive selection process these nominees underwent. I will not go into those details again, but I will say that I am very pleased the process produced such a nominee as Judge Strand.

Judge Strand has deep Iowa roots. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Iowa in 1987 and his law degree from the University of Iowa College of Law in 1990. Upon graduation, he joined one of the most prestigious law firms in Iowa as an associate, where he specialized in employment law and commercial litigation.

During his time at the law firm, he received several awards, including "Super Lawyer" for Iowa and the Great Plains region for 6 years straight. During his time at the firm, he was very involved in his community. He has been a member of a wide range of organizations important to Iowa, all the way from the symphony orchestra, to the medical center, to the YMCA.

In 2012 Judge Strand was appointed as a magistrate judge for the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Iowa. In this capacity, he has handled hundreds of cases, which has prepared him well to be a Federal district judge, article III.

The ABA considers him—as you know the classifications—"unanimously well qualified" for this position.

As I did Monday for Judge Ebinger, I urge all my colleagues to support his nomination today, and we will be voting on it shortly.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today we will vote on the nomination of Leonard Strand to fill a judicial emergency vacancy in the Federal district court in the Northern District of Iowa. I will vote to support his nomination.

The next district court nominee pending after we return from the President's Day recess will be Waverly Crenshaw, an exceptional African-American nominee who is nominated to a judicial emergency vacancy in the Middle District of Tennessee. Mr. CRENSHAW has the support of his Republican home State Senators, Senators ALEXANDER and CORKER, and he was voice voted out of the Judiciary Committee last July. There is no reason to continue to delay the confirmation of such a qualified nominee who is urgently needed for Tennesseans to receive swift justice. I hope the Senators from Tennessee can convince their majority leader to schedule a vote for Mr. CRENSHAW as soon as we return from recess. I further hope that the majority leader will continue to regularly schedule judicial confirmation votes to ensure that our Federal judiciary is fully functioning.

Since Republicans took over the majority last January, they have allowed votes on just 15 nominees. In stark contrast, at this point in the last 2 years of the Bush Presidency in 2008, when Senate Democrats were in the majority, we had confirmed 40 judicial nominees. Senate Republicans' obstruction has resulted in judicial vacancies soaring across the country—rising by more than 75 percent. Judicial vacancies deemed to be "emergencies" by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts because caseloads in those courts are unmanageably high has nearly tripled in that time. Senate Democrats worked hard to reduce these judicial emergency vacancies to 12, but under Republican leadership, they have now risen to 32. There is an urgent need for the Senate to confirm highly qualified nominees who will get to work in Federal courthouses across the country where justice for too many Americans has been delayed. Judge Strand will fill just one of these emergency vacancies. There are dozens more to fill.

Judge Strand is an excellent judicial nominee who has served in our Federal judiciary since 2012 as a U.S. magistrate judge in the district court for the Northern District of Iowa. Prior to joining the bench, he spent over 20 years in private practice as a partner at the Cedar Rapids, IA, law firm Simmons Perrine Moyer Bergman PLC. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary unanimously rated

Judge Strand "Well Qualified" to serve on the Federal district court, its highest possible rating. He has the strong support of his home State Senators, Chairman GRASSLEY of the Judiciary Committee and Senator ERNST.

After today, 17 judicial nominees will remain pending on the Senate floor. These nominees are from Tennessee, Maryland, New Jersey, Nebraska, New York, California, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania. Many of these nominees will fill emergency vacancies, and nearly half of these nominees have Republican home State Senator support. Furthermore, there are another 15 judicial nominees pending in the Judiciary Committee from California, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Utah, and Wisconsin.

It is our constitutional duty as Senators to provide advice and consent on these judicial nominees. The Federal judiciary is dependent on us to fulfill this obligation, and the American people expect that we will do the jobs we have been elected to do in the U.S. Senate. This is why the demand from certain moneyed Washington interest groups that Republican Senators oppose the confirmation of any judicial nominee this year, regardless of a nominee's merit or qualifications, is so destructive. Not only would this require Senators to cede their role and judgement to outside political action committees, but refusing to confirm any judicial nominees for the rest of this year would also make the high number of vacancies in our Federal judiciary even worse. This would hurt the American people and weaken our justice system. We cannot allow this to happen.

In the first 5 weeks of this year, the Senate has voted on five judicial nominees. During this time, we have also debated and voted on legislation and confirmed executive nominees. There is no reason why the Republican majority cannot continue to hold confirmation votes on judicial nominees when we return. In 2008, when I was chairman of the committee with a Republican President, we worked to confirm judicial nominees as late as September of the Presidential election year. In fact, that year Senate Democrats confirmed 28 of President Bush's judicial nominees, 22 of these in the last 7 months of 2008. This includes the confirmation of 10 of President Bush's district court nominees pending on the Senate floor in a single day by unanimous consent on September 26, 2008.

I urge my fellow Senators to vote to confirm Judge Strand and look forward to continuing to work with my fellow Senators to ensure that we continue to vote on the remaining pending judicial nominees when we return from recess.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield back all time on this side, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Strand nomination?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 93, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 23 Ex.]

YEAS—93

Alexander	Fischer	Murphy
Ayotte	Flake	Murray
Baldwin	Franken	Nelson
Barrasso	Gardner	Paul
Bennet	Gillibrand	Perdue
Blumenthal	Grassley	Peters
Blunt	Hatch	Portman
Booker	Heinrich	Reed
Boozman	Heitkamp	Reid
Brown	Heller	Risch
Burr	Hirono	Roberts
Cantwell	Hoeven	Rounds
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cardin	Isakson	Schatz
Carper	Johnson	Schumer
Casey	Kaine	Scott
Cassidy	King	Sessions
Coats	Kirk	Shaheen
Cochran	Klobuchar	Shelby
Collins	Lankford	Stabenow
Coons	Leahy	Tester
Corker	Lee	Thune
Cornyn	Manchin	Tillis
Cotton	Markey	Toomey
Crapo	McCain	Udall
Daines	McCaskill	Vitter
Donnelly	McConnell	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Enzi	Merkley	Whitehouse
Ernst	Mikulski	Wicker
Feinstein	Murkowski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—7

Boxer	Moran	Sullivan
Cruz	Rubio	
Graham	Sanders	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 1169

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, soon Senator WHITEHOUSE and I will be offering a unanimous consent request. It is in regard to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act. It has an amendment at the desk. I introduced this measure last April with Senator WHITEHOUSE, and it has three main goals.

First, this measure would extend a federal law, known as the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, for 5 more years. The centerpiece of this 1974 law, which Congress last extended in 2002, is its core protections for youth.

There are four core protections. The first calls for States to avoid detaining youth for low-level status offenses. The second requires that juveniles be kept out of adult facilities, except in rare instances. The third ensures that juveniles will be kept separated from adult inmates whenever they are housed in adult facilities. The fourth calls for reducing disproportionate minority contact in State juvenile justice systems. States adhering to these four requirements receive yearly formula grants to support their juvenile justice systems.

Second, this legislation would make important updates to existing law in order to ensure that juvenile justice programs will yield the best possible estimates. The authorization for these programs expired in 2007, but they continue to receive appropriations. Nearly 14 years have elapsed since the last reauthorization, and the programs are long overdue for an update.

Third, this bill would promote greater accountability in government spending. The Judiciary Committee that I chair heard from multiple whistleblowers that reforms are urgently needed to restore the integrity of formula grant programs that are the centerpiece of our current juvenile justice law. The Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention administers this formula grant program.

This grant program would be continued for 5 more years under this bill, but the Justice Department would have to do much more oversight if this bill is enacted. This bill also calls for evidence-based programs to be accorded priority in funding. The goal is to ensure that scarce Federal resources for juvenile justice will be devoted mostly to the programs that research shows have the greatest merits and will yield the best results for these young people.

For years and years, I have been reading inspector general reports that

disclose shortcomings within the Justice Department, under both Republican Presidents and Democratic Presidents. Money is not being spent according to congressional intent, and it has not yielded the results we should be getting. That's why we want evidence-based programs to be accorded priority in funding.

A coalition of over 100 nonprofit organizations, led by the Campaign for Youth Justice and the Coalition for Juvenile Justice, worked closely with us on this bill's development. Others that have endorsed this measure include Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, Boys Town, Rights4Girls, the National Criminal Justice Association, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and the National District Attorneys Association. Senator WHITEHOUSE and I are very grateful for their support.

I also take this opportunity to thank our 15 cosponsors, who include not only numerous Judiciary Committee members but people off the committee, such as Senators BLUNT, RUBIO, ERNST, and other non-committee members. This bill is a truly bipartisan effort, and many Senators contributed provisions to strengthen this bill since we introduced it last April.

There are a few provisions of the bill that I especially want to highlight. First, as already mentioned, this bill calls for continued congressional support of existing grant programs that serve at-risk youth. It also incorporates new language, championed by the organization called Rights4Girls, which emphasizes Congress's support for efforts to reduce delinquency among girls. Experts tell us that many girls in the juvenile justice system today have experienced violence, trauma, and poverty.

Second, at the urging of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, this bill gives States 3 years to phase out the detention of children who have committed so-called status offenses. Status offenses are those that are low-level offenses, such as running away from home, underage tobacco use, curfew violations, or truancy, which wouldn't be crimes if committed by an adult and which would never result in an adult being jailed.

Most status offenders are boys, with one exception. Girls account for about 60 percent of the runaway cases. Many of these girls and boys come from broken homes, and many have experienced trauma or mental health issues in childhood. Research shows that detention tends to make mentally ill status offenders worse. Because some detention facilities are crowded, violent, or chaotic, they can be very dangerous places for the low-risk offender. It is very expensive to lock up status offenders who don't pose a public safety risk. Finally, experts say that the status offenders learn negative behavior

from high-risk offenders in detention, which greatly increases their risks of reoffending. Researchers call this peer deviancy training.

Third, the bill incorporates new provisions designed to rehabilitate and protect juveniles while they are in custody. It encourages screenings of boys and girls who may be exploited by human traffickers, as well as those with trauma, mental health, or substance abuse issues. It includes language, authored by Senators CORNYN AND SCHUMER, which would end the shackling of pregnant girls in detention. It calls for greater data collection, including reports on the use of isolation on juveniles in State or local detention facilities, and it includes language calling for States to ensure that juveniles will continue their education while in detention.

The measure we are seeking to pass today also includes a minor amendment at the request of Senator MURKOWSKI to ensure that the bill's definition of the phrase "Indian tribes" is the same as existing law. We also have added several new provisions to meet the better needs of tribal youth, who are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system. They include a requirement that the GAO report back to Congress on ways to improve prevention and treatment services, as well as provisions encouraging States to notify Indian tribes when tribal youth come into contact with their juvenile justice systems.

I am pleased to have had the opportunity to work so closely in such a bipartisan manner with Senator WHITEHOUSE, who I hope will speak shortly on these key reform provisions. I am pleased that we have revisited the authorization statute for some vitally important juvenile justice programs—a statute which is long overdue for an update to reflect the latest scientific research on what works with at-risk adolescents.

At this point, would the Presiding Officer recognize Senator WHITEHOUSE under the rules.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here to show support for my Judiciary Committee chairman's effort to move this measure by unanimous consent. He has described the bill in considerable detail, so I will not repeat his description of the bill.

From a point of view of process, I will say that this was a bill that came through Judiciary without a single voice of dissent. A great deal of bipartisan work was done to make sure it addressed new problems that young people face in all these different areas that the chairman described. It has a lot of enthusiasm and support in the Judiciary Committee. Indeed, it had such broad enthusiasm and support in the Judiciary Committee that we de-

cided that we would simply hotline the bill because there seemed to be no objection to it. "Hotline" means you ask unanimous consent and warn people you are going to ask unanimous consent, and anybody who wants to object has a chance to come to the floor and do so.

It is my understanding that there is one Senator of the 100 of us who wishes to do so, and so here we are going through that exercise. But it has completely cleared on our side and is ready for action.

I would say that it is quite broadly supported. This is the list of law enforcement support for it. As you can see even from a chair quite far away, this is a fairly considerable document with a substantial list of hundreds of folks from across the country who pledge their support to this bill in law enforcement.

I would add that from the State of Arkansas, the junior Senator from Arkansas is the Senator who is going to raise the one objection, I gather. The Arkansas State Advisory Group, the association called Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, and the official State Arkansas Division of Youth Services all support this bill.

On the list of law enforcement supporters that I showed you are the following law enforcement leaders from Arkansas who support this bill. Robert Alcon is the chief of police of the Mayflower Police Department, and he supports this bill. Steve Benton is the chief of police of the Ward Police Department; he supports this bill. Ray Coffman is the chief of police of the Judsonia Police Department; he supports this bill. Randy Harvey is the chief of police of the Lowell Police Department; he supports this bill. Mark Kizer is the chief of police of the Bryant Police Department; he supports this bill. Kirk Lane is the chief of police of the Benton Police Department; he supports this bill. Randy Reid is the chief of police of the Glenwood Police Department; he supports this bill. Montie Sims is the chief of police of the Dardanelle Police Department; he supports this bill. Obie Sims is the sheriff of the Lafayette County Sheriff's Office, and he supports this bill.

I would note that the senior Senator from Arkansas is not here to object to it.

I would hope that since the Governor of Arkansas has appointed a Youth Justice Reform Board, whose purpose is to "improve the overall effectiveness of the juvenile justice system" through evidence-based practices, the 3-year period that this bill gives for the implementation of this would give Arkansas plenty of time to accommodate itself. If there proves to be a problem, we can always come back to it later. In the meantime, this effort that is being undertaken under the leadership of the Governor of Arkansas is being done in

conjunction with the Arkansas Division of Youth Services, which supports this bill.

I would add one other thing, which is that the purpose of this bill is to prevent children from being locked up for something that no adult could be locked up for if they were to do it—truancy, not showing up for school, things like that.

In the event, however, that a child comes under the supervision of a court and the court directs that child to do certain things, if the child then fails to comply with the court order, judges have broad authority to enforce compliance with their orders. It is known as the contempt power. It is inherent in the judicial office. It can include fines; it can even include detention.

To be in violation of a court order is not, in my view or in the view of anybody else that I am aware of, a status offense. Therefore, in a particularly acute or difficult situation in which a judge feels the need to enforce compliance with his or her order, the contempt power inherent in the judiciary is not obviated or addressed in any way by this bill.

So for all those reasons, I will conclude by recalling the story of the conclusion of the Founders' work on the Constitution, when, at the end, Benjamin Franklin stood up and acknowledged that there had been various disagreements but that he would urge that each of the Members of that body doubt just for one moment their own infallibility and allow the measure to proceed.

In that spirit, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this is the opportunity we have been waiting for. I hope it is not objected to. If it is, we will have to take that into consideration and just hold the bill in the Senate.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 325, which is S. 1169; further, that the Grassley substitute amendment be agreed to; that the committee-reported substitute amendment, as amended, be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time; and that the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, first, I want to express my appreciation for the work Senator GRASSLEY, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and others have done in crafting the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. I agree with my colleagues—the bill improves the way we handle juvenile offenders. The bill properly focuses on rehabilitation and services that seek to turn juveniles

away from crime and provide help to at-risk youth. I support the vast majority of the bill, and I hope it ultimately passes into law. However, I would like to take more time to discuss one specific provision of the bill relating to juvenile status offenders and secure confinement.

Secure confinement is not and in my opinion should not be the preferred option for instances of alcohol possession, truancy, or other status offenses. In fact, current law bars judges from imposing secure confinement for initial status offenses. But I am concerned that the bill eliminates completely the ability for judges to order secure confinement for a short time in instances where a status offender flagrantly violates the judge's prior order for him to, say, enter into rehabilitation, counseling, or take part in other treatment services. In such narrow circumstances, it may be prudent to allow judges—often in consultation with the parents and attorneys involved—to have secure confinement as a means to enforce their own orders and to ensure that the juvenile receives the help he needs.

Currently, many States are developing an array of options for treating status offenders beyond secure confinement. Yet a majority of States do, in fact, still choose to retain the option for judges to order secure confinement in narrow circumstances.

Just last year, my State of Arkansas passed a new juvenile justice bill that sought to expand rehabilitation services for status offenders so the State could reduce the number who were subject to secure confinement, but in my State legislature's judgment, it chose to retain secure confinement as a last-resort option. I don't believe Congress should second-guess this choice. I have heard from Arkansians on this point, and I have raised it with the bill's sponsors.

A blanket Federal mandate that bans secure confinement in each and every circumstance may not be the best way forward. I submit we should continue to entrust States with the decision to retain it as a last-resort option and to allow judges on a case-by-case basis to use their discretion about the best course to enforce their prior orders. Therefore, with hopes we can resolve the issue promptly and pass this legislation, I regretfully object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, may I clarify one point?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, there are grants that the Federal Government makes to States to support their juvenile justice programs, and there are conditions that come with those grants. But I want to make sure that what is clear from the exchange is

that this is a condition for receiving these Federal grants, but there is no mandate of any kind. The State, if it wishes, is free not to receive the Federal grant money and not comply with those conditions. It may be a technical point, but I think it is one that is important to clarify.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I understand the point the Senator from Rhode Island makes. I would say it poses a Hobson's choice for many States.

I would also make note of his earlier comment about a court's inherent authority to enforce its previous order using its inherent power of contempt, which would include the ability to order secure confinement for a short period of time. Perhaps we can work together to include a proviso in the bill that would recognize that inherent authority, and this bill would not remove that inherent authority on the condition of accepting the grant.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Again, for the RECORD, I am the Senator from Rhode Island, not the Senator from Vermont.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I respect the Senator from Arkansas. In the short time he has been in the Senate, he has been an outstanding leader on very important issues. He is a good Senator. I have watched him over the period of time he has been in the Senate, and I think this is the first time I felt he was wrong. But he has his rights.

Juvenile judges are the ones who originally requested that Congress include a valid court order, or "VCO," exception in the Federal juvenile justice statute, and they now are asking us to repeal it. We accorded great weight to the opinion of the National Council of Family and Juvenile Court Judges because their members are the ones who invoke this exception.

As further noted this week by Elizabeth Pyke of the National Criminal Justice Association: "No one on the state government side is arguing to keep the VCO. . . . All agree that the VCO is the wrong tool to get a child's attention. Holding them in detention for a status offense is no longer considered the best practice for scaring a kid into going straight. . . . So parsing the language to allow judges to continue to use the VCO for punishment doesn't really make sense. And, again, no one in the states has argued for that."

Detaining status offenders is not good public policy. We don't support a further language change because locking up these adolescents will make them worse, expose them to violent offenders who have committed serious crimes, and increase the likelihood

they will become serious offenders themselves.

Remember that we are talking about juveniles who have committed infractions that would not be crimes if committed by adults. Curfew violations. Truancy. Underage tobacco use.

Status offenders often come from broken homes or homes with family conflicts. Many have had traumatic childhoods or suffer from mental health issues.

Strikingly, girls are 16 percent of the detained population but comprise 40 percent of status offenders. In the case of girls, the root cause for commission of a status offense may be severe forms of child abuse, including child sex trafficking.

In truancy cases, placing a status offender in detention only ensures that the juvenile will miss even more school without ever resolving the issue motivating the truancy. Even a brief time in detention may make it harder for the child to keep up with school work. Yet truancy is one of the status offenses that frequently results in a status offender's detention in Arkansas. We need to resolve the issues that lead these children to skip school so that they can succeed.

Judges have more effective and less costly tools at their disposal to ensure these juveniles' accountability. For example, they can suspend their driver's license; impose fines; send the juvenile to live with another family; order the juvenile into counseling. Judges also may ask parents to undergo counseling or take parenting classes.

Finally, as already noted, locking up status offenders costs the taxpayers a lot of money, even though these juveniles typically don't pose a public safety risk. In Arkansas, housing a child in detention costs hundreds of dollars per day. Community-based programs cost a lot less, but they ensure the judge receives periodic status updates and enable the judge to increase sanctions if the child remains unstable.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD some of the letters we have received in support of the bill's passage.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL CRIMINAL
JUSTICE ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, July 27, 2015.

Hon. CHARLES GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS GRASSLEY AND WHITEHOUSE: We are pleased to support S. 1169, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act (JJJPA) of 2015. Members of the National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) include the state, territorial and tribal chief executive officers of criminal justice agencies charged with managing federal, state, and tribal justice assist-

ance resources. About half of these administer the programs authorized by the JJJPA.

NCJA members applaud the goals of S. 1169 to preserve and strengthen the prevention, youth development and rehabilitation purposes of the JJJPA, and are committed to achieving the reforms envisioned by the bill. In particular, the bill focuses on employing evidence-based and promising practices to promote alternatives to detention and provide for the diversion from, and the safe and effective treatment for, youth in confinement. It also would further the progress we have made as a nation in keeping youth out of contact with adult offenders, from the time of arrest through confinement.

The promise of the JJJPA is federal support for innovative state approaches to reforming the juvenile justice system and improving the treatment of juveniles under the state's care. S. 1169 will add to states' responsibilities by substantially expanding the activities under the core requirements, increasing data collection, and potentially requiring states to establish new facilities to house youthful offenders and increase the number of facilities states are required to monitor. Yet, since the last reauthorization in 2002, funding for JJJPA programs has dropped by more than 60 percent. This means that the resources available to states for juvenile delinquency programming and compliance with the core requirements are substantially dropping at a time when the requirements on states are substantially increasing.

It is for this reason that NCJA members appreciate the flexibility and spirit of partnership embedded in the bill which will help all states reach a common standard of protection and service for children in the juvenile justice system even when resources are scarce.

NCJA members also believe the bill will help continue to rebuild the partnership between OJJDP and the state agencies responsible for carrying out the purposes of the Act. The bill includes new training and technical assistance opportunities for state agency administrators, offers a new opportunity for state agencies to partner with OJJDP in research and the sharing of best practices, and holds the promise of improving transparency.

We are effusive in our praise and thanks for Evelyn Fortier and Lara Quint. Throughout the bill development process, Evelyn and Lara have been thoughtful, professional, welcoming, patient, collaborative, and kind. They have listened to our concerns and worked hard to craft language that supports the role of the state administering agencies while keeping pressure on the states to strengthen our juvenile justice systems.

Thank you for your leadership, for your commitment to improving the outcomes for youth, and for supporting state efforts to prevent and reduce juvenile crime.

Sincerely,

JEANNE SMITH,
President.

ACT 4 JUVENILE JUSTICE,
Washington, DC, January 25, 2016.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRASSLEY AND SENATOR WHITEHOUSE: We, the undersigned—representing more than 200 national, state, and local organizations and hundreds of thousands of constituents—thank you for your

leadership in sponsoring S. 1169, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2015. The bill strengthens and updates the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJJPA), which has provided States and localities with federal standards and supports for improving juvenile justice and delinquency prevention practices and contributed to safeguards for youth, families and communities for more than 40 years, and we are grateful that you have made it a priority this Congress.

Despite a continuing decline in youth crime and delinquency, more than 60,000 young people are held in detention centers awaiting trial or confined by the courts in juvenile facilities in the U.S. For these confined youth, and the many more kids at-risk of involvement in the justice system, the JJJPA and programs it supports are critical. Youth who are locked up are separated from their families, and many witness violence. These youth struggle when they get out, trying to complete high school, get jobs, housing, or go to college. Aside from the human toll, the financial costs of maintaining large secure facilities have also made it vital to rethink juvenile justice in every community.

Premised on research-based understandings of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, S. 1169 reaffirms a national commitment to the rehabilitative purpose of the juvenile justice system; one that supports developmentally appropriate practices that treat as many youth as possible in their communities. It advances important improvements to the JJJPA, its core requirements and its central purposes, provides enhanced safeguards for youth in the system, increases community safety, and ensures progress toward racial fairness.

Since the last JJJPA reauthorization was approved in 2002, there have been many developments in the field of juvenile justice that significantly impact practitioners' work. S. 1169 recognizes and addresses many of these developments in several key ways. Specifically, we are pleased that the bill:

1. Strengthens the Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (DSO) core requirement by calling on states to phase-out use of the Valid Court Order Exception that currently causes non-offending youth/status offenders to be locked up.

2. Extends the adult Jail Removal and Sight and Sound Separation core requirements to apply to juveniles held pretrial, whether charged in juvenile or adult court.

3. Gives States and localities clear direction on the Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) protection to plan and implement approaches to ensure fairness and reduce racial and ethnic disparities, and to set measurable objectives for reduction of disparities in the system.

4. Encourages States to eliminate dangerous practices in confinement and to promote adoption of best practices and standards.

5. Recognizes the impact of exposure to violence and trauma on adolescent behavior and development.

6. Encourages investment in community-based alternatives to detention; encourages family engagement in design and delivery of treatment and services; improves screening, diversion, assessment, and treatment for mental health and substance abuse needs; allows for easier transfer of education credits for system-involved youth; and calls for a focus on the particular needs of girls either in the system or at risk of entering the justice system.

7. Promotes fairness by supporting State efforts to expand youth access to counsel and

encouraging programs that inform youth of opportunities to seal or expunge juvenile records once they have gotten their lives back on track.

8. Reauthorizes the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant (JABG) program which helps states and localities reduce juvenile offending by providing judges and other juvenile justice officials with a range of age/developmentally-appropriate options to both hold youth accountable and get them back on track so they are less likely to reoffend.

9. Encourages transparency, timeliness, public notice, and communication on the part of OJJDP, its agents and the States.

10. Increases accountability to ensure effective use of resources, to provide greater oversight of grant programs, and to ensure state compliance with federal standards.

Given the significant gains reflected in S. 1169, we are pleased to endorse the bill and look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues toward final passage in the 114th Congress.

HUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT FOR GIRLS,
Washington, DC, January 30, 2016.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRASSLEY: Rights4Girls is a human rights organization focused on gender-based violence against young women and girls here in the U.S. We write to thank you for your leadership and commitment to our youth in sponsoring the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act (JJDPRA) this Congress. We believe this bill strengthens the existing law by providing critical updates needed to protect youth, families, and communities.

We write to express our support for the JJDPRA, which has not been reauthorized in over a decade. Despite an overall decline in youth crime and delinquency, more than 60,000 children are held in detention centers across the United States. We also know that girls are now the fastest growing segment of the juvenile justice population, requiring a more gender-responsive lens when looking at issues related to delinquency and justice-involvement. The research shows that the vast majority of girls in the justice system enter with extensive histories of sexual and physical abuse. Nationally, over 70% of girls in the justice system report histories of sexual and physical violence, but in some states it can range anywhere from 80-93%. For youth and especially young girls in the system or at-risk of involvement in the system, the JJDPRA and the improvements in this year's language are vital.

For example, we know that each year more than 1,000 American children are arrested for prostitution, despite not being old enough to consent to sex and despite the existence of federal laws that define them as victims of trafficking. The JJDPRA protects child trafficking victims by providing for the screening of youth upon intake for child trafficking and promoting services and alternatives to detention for such victims. The JJDPRA will also grant greater protection for pregnant girls behind bars by restricting the use of shackles. Because shackles can greatly increase the likelihood of falls, the JJDPRA limits the use of restraints on pregnant girls in the system, which will better protect the life and health of both these young women as well as their unborn children. Another critical way in which the JJDPRA will benefit young girls is in phasing out the Valid Court Order (VCO) exception. Since girls are disproportionately charged with and detained

for status offenses, closing this loophole would particularly benefit girls—many of whom are arrested and detained using the VCO exception for offenses that are directly correlated with suffering abuse and trauma.

We are grateful for your commitment to this issue and to these youth. As a human rights organization dedicated to protecting the rights of vulnerable young women and girls, we urge the Senate to swiftly take up and pass this critical piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

RIGHTS4GIRLS,
Washington, DC.

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS,
Washington, DC, September 17, 2015.

TO ALL MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: We are members of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, a national organization of nearly 5,000 law enforcement leaders nationwide, including chiefs of police, sheriffs, prosecutors, and other law enforcement executives. We write to express our strong support for S. 1169, the bipartisan reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPRA). This reauthorization supports proven programs that can prevent youths from engaging in criminal activity or rehabilitate youths starting to offend. These programs provide a critical support for law enforcement and an important investment in those young people. We urge your support for this important reauthorization.

Recidivism remains a serious problem, draining law enforcement resources and damaging public safety. Past studies have shown that if a youth 14 years old or younger becomes a second-time offender, their likelihood of future run-ins with law enforcement spikes to 77 percent; and nationwide, almost half of youths who come before juvenile court (40 percent) will come before the court at least one more time. More needs to be done to ensure that if a youth offends, their first contact with the justice system is also their last.

The bipartisan Senate bill to reauthorize JJDPRA would provide federal support for evidence-based programs to combat youth recidivism. Many states have expanded the use of these intervention programs in recent years, and additional support through the JJDPRA reauthorization would help states continue this work. Research has shown that effective community-based intervention programs for youths and their families can significantly reduce the likelihood that the youth will get into trouble again. By reasserting family and personal responsibility, and coaching parents and children in the skills they will need to change the youths' behaviors, juvenile offenders are much more likely to engage in more pro-social behavior and avoid future run-ins with the law.

This reauthorization strengthens the evidence-based standard, ensuring the federal investment will go to programs that have demonstrated significant effectiveness. It also encourages continued growth in the anti-recidivism field by allowing a small portion of funds to go to promising programs, thus encouraging innovation and yielding the greatest results for the community.

A study of one intervention program that works with troubled youth and their families, Functional Family Therapy (FFT), found that youth whose families received FFT coaching were half as likely to be re-arrested as those whose families did not. Another study found FFT reduced subsequent out-of-home placements by three quarters. Further, because of the reduced costs associated with crime and contact with the justice

system, FFT was found to save the public \$27,000 per youth treated. Another intervention that works with the families of serious juvenile offenders, Multisystemic Therapy (MST), found juvenile offenders who had not received MST were 62 percent more likely to be arrested for another offense, and more than twice as likely to be arrested for a violent offense.

One effective, research-based program, Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) provides specially selected and trained foster parents for seriously troubled youth who cannot stay with their parents. While the youth are in foster care learning crucial skills, their parents are receiving coaching so they can continue the process of directing their children's behavior in more positive ways once the youths return home. In studies, MTFC has been shown to cut juvenile recidivism in half and save the public an average of \$9,000 for every juvenile treated. Each of these programs can be used successfully either in place of residential facilities, or as after-care upon leaving a facility.

As these programs help to reduce youth recidivism, there also needs to be a clear sense of the progress being made and areas for continued improvement. We support the National Recidivism Measure within this reauthorization that instructs the Administrator to establish a uniform measure of data collection that states can voluntarily adopt, or not, as another tool to evaluate data on juvenile recidivism. The option of measure some re-offending outcomes in the same way could help states compare results and share best practices.

Law enforcement nationwide remain committed to doing what is necessary to protect public safety, and we know that families and communities have an important role to play. We support the reauthorization of JJDPRA, which will provide support for family-centered and community-based interventions, like FFT, MST, and MTFC. This is a strategic investment in public safety. Changing the behavior of a teenager is more likely than changing the behavior of an adult career criminal. This not only benefits those youths, but also law enforcement, the taxpayer, and the community.

We urge Congress to pass the reauthorization of JJDPRA that will prioritize evidence-based programs to get troubled kids back on track and improve public safety.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I share in the mutual admiration for the Senator from Iowa, and I appreciate his work on this and many other pieces of legislation. I commit to work with both him and the Senator from Rhode Island to try to resolve this as promptly as possible so we can move this piece of legislation forward.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of my remarks, the Senator from Texas, Mr. CORNYN, be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, for the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina,

I went down to the Lower Ninth Ward. President Obama had a little convocation which I was privileged to be part of. I pointed out that his budget that year attempted to take the money that the Federal Government had committed, voted on by a majority of this Chamber, to share in the offshore revenue from Louisiana's coast, Texas's coast, and other Gulf Coast States, with those States.

I said: Mr. President, your budget is taking this money away.

If you look at the devastation wrought by Katrina, it was wrought because we lost our wetlands, which was a loss directly connected to the Federal Government's decision to channel the Mississippi River for the benefit of the rest of the country's economy, and also because the Army Corps of Engineers failed to build—and this has been established in court—levees to the degree that would protect the city of New Orleans.

The President clearly agreed. He said so. He looked at his budget man, Shaun Donovan, and said: Why would this be? We need this State to have that money.

I paraphrase, but it was essentially that. And he committed to taking care of that issue so that our State would not be confronted with the kind of disaster Katrina was. He did not want this to happen again.

On Tuesday the President released his fiscal year 2017 budget. Once more, despite his words, he proposed repealing existing revenue-sharing law, which would deny Louisiana and other Gulf Coast States billions. Louisiana will use this money on critical coastal restoration. By doing this, the President betrays the commitment he made in the Lower Ninth Ward. The President and some in this Chamber want to repeal a law that received bipartisan support, with over 70 Senators supporting the original legislation in 2006. By the way, it is also a law that anti-poverty and environmental organizations support.

I hold up a letter from Oxfam. Oxfam America states in this letter that "America's Gulf Coast is home to some of our nation's highest rates of poverty and greatest risks of natural hazards like sea level rise, hurricanes, flooding and coastal land loss."

Passage of amendment No. 3192—which, by the way, is my amendment to the Energy bill which brings more equity and revenue sharing—will provide new resources to address the glaring inequities facing these communities.

In response to the President's fiscal year 2016 budget, the Environmental Defense Fund, the National Wildlife Federation, the National Audubon Society, and the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation stated:

But we are disappointed by the budget's proposed diversion of critically needed and currently dedicated funding for coastal Louisiana and the Mississippi River Delta.

This proposed budget undercuts the Administration's previous commitments to restore critical economic infrastructure and ecosystems in the Mississippi River Delta, where we are losing 16 square miles of critical wetlands every year—a preventable coastal erosion crisis.

So if you are pro-environment and pro helping poverty-stricken communities, how can you not support revenue sharing for coastal States?

Coastal restoration is critical to Louisiana's economy and safety but also to America's economy. Every 38 minutes, Louisiana loses about a football field-sized chunk of land. I am presiding next. At the bottom of the hour, Louisiana will have lost another football field of land. This revenue sharing helps reverse that.

By the way, in Louisiana, our Constitution dedicates 100 percent of revenue from offshore energy production to restoring and rebuilding our coastal wetlands.

A strong coast protects families and businesses against storm surge. It prevents posters like this: "Why New Orleans Still Isn't Safe," and posters like this, and many other posters.

With our coasts so degraded—it puts Louisiana's economy in jeopardy, but it also puts America's energy and trade infrastructure in jeopardy. Most importantly, loss of coastal wetlands puts American lives in jeopardy.

Not only do we need to protect this revenue sharing as promised, but I and others feel we must increase that revenue sharing amount if we are to truly protect our coast.

Royalties to States from energy produced offshore is a fraction of what States that produce energy onshore receive. In fiscal year 2014, the Federal Government received \$4.6 billion—with a "b"—in royalties from energy production in the Gulf of Mexico. The coastal States that provide the energy infrastructure received \$3.4 million—with an "m"—so 0.7 percent of the royalties. In comparison, States that produce energy onshore—and I think the Presiding Officer's State is such—get 50 percent of those royalties. So 0.7; 50 percent—there is no equity there.

I have introduced a bipartisan amendment to the Senate's Energy bill that I hope we can keep working on to provide greater equity and revenue sharing for States that do host offshore energy production.

For decades, energy activities in the Gulf of Mexico have produced billions of barrels of oil and trillions of cubic feet of natural gas. Gulf of Mexico offshore oil production accounts for close to 20 percent of the U.S. crude oil production. Over 45 percent of total petroleum refining capacity in the United States is located along the gulf coast, as well as 51 percent of total natural gas processing plant capacity. The Gulf States provide the docks, roads, railroads, refineries, and other infrastructure that makes energy production possible to fuel America's economy.

On top of this, our waterways support trade throughout the country. Farm crops produced in the Upper Midwest pass through the lower Mississippi on their way to international markets. We need equitable revenue sharing to continue hosting these industries, ensuring that America continues to have a resilient domestic energy supply and access to the goods and services we need.

If the President is serious about protecting families, our environment, enhancing the resiliency of the gulf coast and improving the Nation's economic infrastructure, he should have worked with Congress to ensure that this never happens again.

I yield to the Senator from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

MENTAL HEALTH AND PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague and friend from Louisiana.

I want to talk a little bit about the work of the Senate Judiciary Committee because we have had a pretty extraordinary week this week in the committee under the leadership of the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY. We have been focusing our efforts on our criminal justice system and how it has been transformed in recent years because instead of just being law-and-order courts, our criminal justice system is dealing with everything from heroin addiction to opioid addiction, mental health challenges, and the recognition that eventually many of the people who are in our prisons will get out of prison, and we have become more focused on what we can do to help those who are willing to accept some help to be better prepared for a life on the outside and not reengage in this turnstile that sometimes our criminal justice system has become, where they get in jail or in prison, they get out, and then they automatically end up back in prison. That is not good for society, for public safety. It is not good for the taxpayer who has to pay for it, and it really is a squandering of human capital when some people—indeed, a significant number of people—are willing to accept that help to deal with their drug or alcohol issues, to learn a skill, and to turn their lives around.

We had a hearing yesterday that I want to make particular note of on a piece of legislation I have introduced called the Mental Health and Safe Communities Act. The Presiding Officer is well familiar with this and is sponsoring some important comprehensive mental health legislation himself, and we are working together to try to find common ground on that, but my legislation is designed specifically to address how do we equip law enforcement with the additional tools they

need in order to address the mental illness crises they find in their daily work and in our criminal justice system.

We made good progress, but the fact is I think most of us were shocked to realize our jails and prisons have become the de facto treatment centers for people with mental illness, and actually in most instances it is not diagnosed and not treated. People self-medicate with drugs or alcohol, exacerbating their problems, and we couldn't have had two better witnesses. One was the sheriff, Susan Pamerleau, from Bexar County, TX, San Antonio—my hometown—which has created a model program of how to divert people for treatment and to get them out of the criminal justice system and back on their feet but also to save tax dollars and make sure our jails and our criminal justice system is reserved for people who are bad actors and not just people who are suffering from a mental health crisis.

Today we considered and passed a bill called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, known as CARA. This is another example of bipartisan work being done in the Senate, which is back doing the people's work with some notable accomplishments.

More importantly, it addresses a real crisis in the country because we have all come to be aware of the fact that America is facing an epidemic of drug addiction, ranging from prescription drug painkillers to heroin, addiction that is ruining lives of Americans and taking the lives of far too many.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 47,000-plus Americans died from drug overdoses in 2014—47,055 Americans died from drug overdoses in 2014, more than any previous year on record and more than double the mortality record from the year 2000. That statistic cries out for further investigation and action. These 47,000-plus drug overdoses represent 150 percent more deaths than those caused by motor vehicles. I know we spend a lot of resources and a lot of time trying to improve safety for people on our highways driving cars down the road, but more than 150 percent more people died from drug overdoses than motor vehicles, and 61 percent of those deaths involved some type of opioid, including heroin.

Fortunately, this legislation begins to establish a strategy to address this problem head-on. The bill would expand prevention and education efforts to help people learn the dangers of becoming addicted to prescription medication and the dangers of even experimenting with a drug as powerful and addictive as heroin.

It would also reauthorize and expand Federal anti-heroin and anti-methamphetamine task forces, which are on the frontlines in the battle against drug trafficking organizations, many of

whom operate south of the Texas-Mexico border and import their poison into the United States.

This legislation would also promote treatment and recovery options for those struggling with deadly addictions and provide law enforcement and first responders the tools they need to help reverse overdoses as fast as possible by giving medication, which will actually restore people to health rather than see them die because of their overdoses.

This legislation is another example of the fight that I think we all share in common without regard to partisan affiliation. I want to particularly point out the leadership of the Senator from New Hampshire, Ms. AYOTTE, and the Senator from Ohio, Mr. PORTMAN, together with Senator WHITEHOUSE from Rhode Island, who have been leading the effort to make opioid addiction a national priority.

I hope there are other ways in the future we can consider strengthening the hand of those fighting on the supply side of the drug addiction battle. The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act primarily deals with the demand side, people who have become addicted to prescription drugs and heroin, but as I indicated a few moments ago, we have tons of heroin, methamphetamine, and other drugs being imported into the United States by transnational criminal organizations, otherwise known as cartels.

Earlier this week, the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, testified before the Armed Services Committee. He touched on how significant this problem is in Latin America and where many of the drugs sold in the United States are grown or manufactured. Director Clapper noted that the production of heroin in Mexico has been increasing steadily in response to U.S. demand. Other illicit substances, such as cocaine, have been increasing in volume as well, but while the production and importation through illicit networks into the United States has been growing, our efforts to interdict or intercept these drugs and keep them from landing on our shores has not been keeping up.

In 2014 alone, drug cartels successfully smuggled more than 250,000 pounds of heroin across our borders at a street value of about \$25 billion. We need to have a real conversation about the budget shortfalls that allow this to happen and how it is impeding our ability to choke off the flow of these illicit drugs coming into our country.

We have to do more to resource our military, particularly the Southern Command, which has as its area of responsibility Mexico and to the south, where many of these drugs transit. We need to provide those on the frontlines with the tools they need in order to combat and prevail over these transnational criminal organizations.

Let me give you a quick snapshot. U.S. Southern Command, which I mentioned a moment ago, is our geographic combatant command that has responsibility for this region, but it has been given zero ships needed to conduct countertrafficking missions in the Caribbean. Why is that?

Unfortunately, the Navy fleet is too small, and the Navy doesn't have enough ships to commit to this region in light of the growing array of national security threats around the globe. Even though the U.S. Coast Guard has stepped up and provided a variety of ships, their fleet also has limitations. It is aging and small.

Other nations have noticed our hands-off approach in this region and around the world. Just like the Middle East, our adversaries, like Russia, are happy to fill the power vacuum left by an America that they see in retreat. At least four times last year Russia had more naval ships in the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility than we did—four times. That is our backyard. What were those Russian ships doing there? Most likely they were conducting intelligence collection missions. This is simply unacceptable and an invitation to even further confrontation and perhaps even conflict. We have obvious national interests in this part of the world, and they include putting a stop to the trafficking of illegal drugs that end up poisoning and often killing Americans.

If we can't even accurately patrol the Caribbean with our own vessels, we clearly have a problem. Let me be clear. We are not asking or talking about multibillion-dollar aircraft carriers or ballistic missile submarines but rather smaller ships that can help launch and recover helicopters to help interdict the growing shipment of drugs in the region.

SOUTHCOM simply needs to be better resourced if it is going to make a dent in the rampant trafficking of drugs that ruin American lives once they reach our border. General Kelly, the former head of the Southern Command, has testified previously that too often his troops have to simply sit and watch the drugs come into the United States across the Caribbean because they simply don't have the resources to interdict it and to stop it.

While the men and women of SOUTHCOM's Joint Interagency Task Force South are doing yeoman's work in this area, they can't fully succeed in taking down the trafficking networks if we don't give them the resources to do so.

As we continue to work hard for the American people, I hope we will take a serious look at the shortfall in our military budgets for countertrafficking missions. We can't just look at the devastation wrought by heroin and prescription opioid abuse in the Northeast without looking at the supply of the

very heroin that is killing Americans and addicting them to a miserable existence, one that threatens not only their life and their families but our communities. We need to focus on the supply side and better equip the men and women tasked with the difficult job of protecting our country and our people from these transnational threats.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). The Senator from Washington.

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT BILL

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor this afternoon with my colleague from Maine, Senator COLLINS, to talk about an important national security measure that was passed in today's Customs bill that the conference report included and was voted out of the Senate. The Customs bill included an important provision that was authored by myself and Senator COLLINS in December of last year. Called S. 2430, the Travel Facilitation and Safety Act, it concerned how to improve biometric standards for visa waiver countries. Senator COLLINS and I focused on two things: increasing security standards for those visa waiver countries that we believe should use better biometrics and share that information and data, and improving security at our airports before people reach the United States, so we can know that we have done a thorough background check and evaluation.

Senator COLLINS and I want to stop potential terrorists before they board a plane bound for the United States.

I thank Secretary Jeh Johnson for working with us in December on S. 2430, and also for helping to get this included in the Customs bill.

What we want to do is expand the customs and border security efforts that exist here in the United States and, if you will, expand our border controls to overseas airports. After the Paris attacks reignited a national discussion about what to do to improve U.S. security, we wanted to make sure that we do something specifically for those individuals traveling from 38 visa waiver countries. These are countries for whose citizens we do not require a full background check on individuals prior to coming to the United States. I know the Senator from Maine understands commerce. From the perspective of my home State, I know that we appreciate the free flow of people and commerce. It is something we depend on for our economy, but our economy also depends on the security of a travel system to catch bad actors before they reach the shores of the United States.

Currently, manifests are checked by Homeland Security when passengers board a plane bound for the United States. Airline personnel perform some

checks as well, but when no U.S. visa is required for travel to the United States, there is less scrutiny on those travelers before they reach U.S. shores, when they go through customs.

This is something we sought to address. With an ever-changing security landscape around the world and the challenges that we face with ISIS, it is very important to continue to upgrade our security regime.

Earlier this week, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper warned that ISIS is likely to try to attack the United States this year, so we must continue to do everything we can to make our country safe. Two incidents highlight the need for expanding the border protection outside the United States of America.

One EU citizen, Mehdi Nemouche, was radicalized through multiple stints in prison. After he was released, he was able to cover his tracks and fly from the EU to Syria. He was able to carry out an attack on a Jewish museum when he came back to Brussels, even though he was on an EU watch list, because he was not placed under ongoing surveillance. Nothing in his travel through airports helped him to be deterred.

German officials notified the French of his appearance in Frankfurt after returning from several weeks in Southeast Asia, having since departed Syria. There was no record of his having traveled to Syria as an EU resident, so he was allowed to come back into Germany and travel through Europe's common border zone. It was from there he entered Belgium unchecked to carry out his attacks.

In addition, one of the masterminds behind the Paris attacks traveled back and forth between Belgium and Syria multiple times, even though he was known to French intelligence. His mobile phone was traced to Greece because of a call he made to an extremist group in Belgium. We don't know exactly how he crossed into Greece from Syria, but we do know that there are holes in the system that terrorists can exploit.

Senator COLLINS and I first started working on the issue of biometric standards and improving our security with visa waiver countries several years ago after the Rensselaer case, in which an individual from Algeria went to France and from France to Canada, making up a new identity every step of the way. He then made it to the U.S. border in Washington State at Port Angeles and made up a new identity as a Canadian citizen. Thank God a customs and border security agent was smart enough to realize something was amiss, and when they checked the trunk of the car, they found explosives that he had planned to use to blow up LAX.

Today's legislation makes sure our physical border checks are moved to

overseas airports so that U.S. law enforcement officials will be there on the ground to check for those people who are slipping through the European regime and may try to board an airplane bound for the United States of America.

It is very important that we continue to strengthen our security regime, and I believe there is more that we can do. Our bill, S. 2430, would have allowed Customs and Border Protection to expand preclearance operations at targeted airports where we are concerned that the U.S. has a full partnership. If you have traveled outside of the United States of America and then return, you are very well aware of what happens to you at Customs—something like what is depicted in this photo where somebody is asking you for your passport information and background. Many of these operations have continued to be improved, including at Dulles airport. Through a pilot program, they now have the latest and greatest biometric technology that allows for enhanced fingerprint identification, facial recognition pictures, and a variety of things that are making our air travel more secure. We would like to do the same thing at U.S. preclearance operations abroad, and we will keep working to do just that.

We would like to see customs and border operations, which is U.S. law enforcement on the ground, at partnership airports for places such as the United Kingdom, Spain, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, and Turkey, even though it is not a visa waiver country, because it is a transit point between Syria and Europe.

The language in the bill today shows that Congress supports efforts to strengthen the security of our border checks by stretching them overseas to these operations. Again, I appreciate Secretary Johnson's committed insight to constantly improving our border security. He and his agency have been working hard to constantly upgrade our security. He engaged in a conversation with Senator COLLINS and me last December on this legislation, and he has continued to help us get this language into the Customs bill that we just voted on.

I so appreciate Senator COLLINS' focus on this issue for many years as the head of the Homeland Security Committee. She has since turned that responsibility over to Senator JOHNSON, and he has also been focused on these issues. I just want to thank her for working with me on this legislation over several years. In 2010, we tried to improve the biometric standard for visa waiver countries and passed strong legislation out of the Senate. Unfortunately, it was watered down to a lesser standard. Yet it did start the efforts on more aggressive biometric travel infrastructure with our visa waiver partners.

In our bill, S. 2430, we try to set up new biometric pilot projects that will work with our partners overseas and test out the best biometrics we can use. That provision was not included today, but it's something we will keep working on.

We know ISIS has set up operations and is continuing to focus on these visa waiver countries, as well, like the U.K. and Belgium, and we know it is active in Turkey. Giving the best technologies and tools to our partner countries and working on counterintelligence is very important. Having trained U.S. law enforcement officials working with our partner airports is important for U.S. travelers, U.S. businesses, international commerce, and for travel and the airline industry in general. The fact that customs agents can conduct interviews, capture biometrics, and conduct behavioral analysis before travelers come to the United States of America helps improve the security of our system.

Customs and Border Patrol has announced they want to increase the number of these preclearance-screened travelers by a considerable percent by 2024. This will help us protect the ever-growing traveling population—and know that we are doing a better job before people reach the shores of the United States.

We know with a U.S. law enforcement presence overseas that we will increase security. Customs and Border Patrol turned away nearly 10,000 people seeking admission to the United States. That is 29 people per day. I am not saying all of these people were terrorists. Some had expired documents or otherwise inadmissible information, but the key fact is that preclearance worked. It worked in helping to prevent people that should not have been here from coming to the United States.

Existing U.S. Customs and preclearance operations have stopped some suspected terrorists from reaching our country, and that is why we are so glad we passed this legislation and hope that it will be moved throughout the process to the President's desk and quickly signed.

I also want to thank all of our colleagues and the managers of the legislation for including this in the bill. I thank all those who work at our U.S. border and U.S. Customs and Border Protection—like the person at the Washington State border who helped catch the Millennium Bomber, Ahmed Ressam, before he could harm Americans.

I again thank the Senator from Maine for her constant work with me on this issue and for her focus on U.S. security. She and I know this job is not done. She and I would go even further in this effort, but we are at least glad we are expanding our border controls to these overseas airports, making U.S. travel safer and protecting people by

not letting people come to the United States who pose a security threat.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, it is a great pleasure to join the Senator from Washington State, Ms. CANTWELL, in discussing some very important provisions that were included in the Customs conference report that the Senate acted on earlier this afternoon.

As Senators representing border States, we are particularly attuned to the security and economic consequences of our border security policies. When it comes to travel, our country's goals should be to let our friends in and to keep our enemies out. As the Senator from Washington so eloquently described, the best way for us to do that is to push out our borders.

Today, approximately 15 percent of travelers boarding an airplane destined for the United States do so only after fully clearing U.S. Customs and immigration inspections at 15 Department of Homeland Security preclearance facilities located in foreign airports. That is a start, but it doesn't go far enough. If we truly want to enhance our security, we need to advance the use of preclearance facilities in other foreign airports, and that is exactly what the Senator from Washington and I would do and what the Senate voted to do today. As Senator CANTWELL has described, it is something that we have long worked on together as a team for many years, and I am very pleased with the progress we can point to today.

Now, let me just briefly explain how preclearance works. Under the preclearance program, we station U.S. law enforcement officials overseas at foreign airports. There they can screen passengers at the point of departure to the United States rather than waiting for the passengers to arrive in the United States. Well, that makes all the sense in the world. It helps to prevent someone—a terrorist—from smuggling a bomb onto a plane. It helps make the no-fly list more effective. It helps Federal law enforcement to do a scan of other terrorist databases to see if a passenger is listed.

In addition, the unique biometric information of each passenger is also collected before the flight departs to our country rather than after it has arrived. Again, it is this concept of pushing back our borders so that more screening is done overseas. We are doing this more with cargo, also, that is shipped on those cargo ships coming into our ports. It makes all the sense in the world. The security feature is particularly important because biometric information is so much more difficult to fake than biographic information such as the name or a date of birth, which can easily, regrettably, be falsified. As a result of the pre-

clearance operations, threats to aviation security and to our country and its people can be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Accelerating the expansion of preclearance operations incurs minimal costs and great benefits. Instead, new preclearance operations overseas are often paid for by the foreign airport authorities in exchange for the opportunity to offer passengers an improved travel experience returning home.

Think of it, I say to my colleagues. When we come back from a long overseas flight and then we see that long line to go through Customs and immigration, wouldn't we rather do that on the front end of the flight when we are fresher and before that long flight home? This is advantageous for our foreign visitors, as well as increasing our security.

The conference report passed by the Senate today thus represents an important step forward in strengthening our security. It will help to strengthen the security of travel to the United States. It does not represent our entire bill.

The Cantwell-Collins bill also has enhanced information sharing between the United States and Europe regarding the identities of suspected terrorists. If our intelligence community can provide more information to European border authorities and they can use it in the screening of the more than 1 million migrants that are arriving in Europe, we simultaneously improve the security of Europe and of the United States.

The continued threat posed to aviation from terrorist groups like Al Qaeda, like ISIS, and so many others demands that we take immediate steps to improve our security, keeping our borders and our aviation industry safe but, most of all, keeping the American people safe. Today's vote on the Customs bill conference report is a significant step in the right direction.

I want to acknowledge the work of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, which is headed by our colleague Senator RON JOHNSON, as well as the Department of Homeland Security, headed by Secretary Jeh Johnson. Both of them have also worked hard on the preclearance issue.

I hope that our colleagues will join Senator CANTWELL and me as we continue the work we have been doing for the past 5 years on this issue. It is so important. As border State Senators, I think we are particularly sensitive to the fact that we want tourists, we want trade, we want people to come into this country, but we do not want lax border security to allow those who would do us harm to be able to enter this country.

Let me end where I began. Our goal is to keep our enemies out and invite our friends in when it comes to travel. I want to commend Senator CANTWELL

for her longstanding leadership on this issue. It has been a pleasure to work with her.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, this week the President unveiled his budget for fiscal year 2017, and it landed here in the Senate with a big thud.

This is not the first time that has happened. In fact, when the President's budget has been brought up for a vote by the 100 Members of the Senate, it has never received more than 1 vote. Both Democrats and Republicans have roundly rejected the President's proposals. Why? Overspending and over-taxation, driving us ever deeper into debt—nobody wants to put their name to that. Yet that is the situation we are in. We are in that situation because of the irresponsible policies that have been laid upon the American people and put into law by this President and by those who have supported him.

Despite numerous efforts over the past several years to address this ever-growing threat to our future, all of these efforts—some of them bipartisan, even—have been rejected by the President. They have failed due to the President's unwillingness to work with the Congress and to put us on a path to fiscal solvency.

Now, I have been a part of that effort now for the last 5 years. All of us throw our hands up in frustration as we watch the debt clock click away ever faster, as we watch the debt rising ever greater.

When the President took office, our national debt—the money we had to pay back—was \$10.6 trillion. It is almost impossible to describe what \$1 trillion is. Trust me; it is a lot of money. It was \$10.6 trillion. Today, it is over \$19 trillion—nearly double—just in the term of this President. And what have we done about it? Nothing. Some will say a little bit. We have touched on it a little bit, but it continues to rise.

The Congressional Budget Office, a nonpartisan organization that just does the numbers, has told us that in 10 years the debt will rise to well over \$27 trillion. The shocker is the amount of money that has to be spent in paying interest on the debt. Nobody is giving us this money for free. We have to pay interest on it because people want interest, and they want their principal

back. The interest on that, plus the mandatory spending—that is, automatic spending over which we have no control here unless we put reforms in place—will consume 99 percent of all the taxes and revenue that is coming in to pay for these programs. So that means we won't be building any roads; we won't be repairing any roads. That means we won't be providing research capabilities to the National Institutes of Health or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That means we won't have money for viable programs in the fields of education, commerce, and transportation. Ninety-nine percent is all revenue consumed by just these two items: the mandatory spending—which we have lost control over and refuse to take reform actions to address—and the interest that has to be paid.

Well, this is unsustainable. It will all come down with a crash. That is why the President's budget this year will be soundly rejected and will only receive one vote, if it gets that.

I am not giving up. I am looking at the major reforms that are necessary, even if we start today, even in an election year. I personally think the public is way ahead of us on this, and they will reward people who stand up and tell them the truth: Folks, we are going broke, and here are the numbers. This isn't political; these are pure numbers that come out of a neutral office. Nevertheless, we will see whether or not those who are running for office will take up the cause.

So I thought: Well, OK, we can't do the big stuff. Can we at least look at waste, fraud, and abuse? Can we not at least encourage my colleagues to take things that have been presented to us—examples of waste, fraud, and abuse by inspectors general, by the Congressional Budget Office, by the Government Accountability Office that looks into all the ways in which we spend money—can't we at least do that? So for the last 33 weeks, starting in the last session and moving into this session, I have been coming to the floor every week to highlight yet another documented example of waste, fraud, and abuse. This is the 33rd time.

Today, this one involves the sum of \$25 billion that has not been properly accounted for by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, which is part of the Department of Health and Human Services. I spoke with the Secretary this morning about it. There are 25 recommendations as to how the Department can address this matter, and she is committed to that. I know she has the right intent, and we will see if it can be accomplished.

In this particular case private sector contractors partner with the CMS, or the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, to provide any number of products and services to beneficiaries—those on Medicaid and Medicare. Fed-

eral agencies that administer the contracts are required to track the contracts' progress and costs and then close out these accounts once the contracts are finalized. There comes the rub. The regulations give a grace period of up to 20 months in order to close out a contract—to get everything closed down and so forth on these contracts. There is a handful of extensions where maybe it takes a little bit longer to do that. The timeframe or the grace period is intended to prevent improper payments and reduce the agency's financial risk and then close it out.

The inspector general looked at all this and said: Great idea, good regulation—but it is not happening. In December the Health and Human Services inspector general issued a report of the investigation into these terminated contracts. There are over 6,000 contracts that have been completed, but \$25 billion in funding is overdue—meaning that the accounts haven't been closed, which makes CMS vulnerable to improper payments.

Sadly, 15 percent of the completed contracts remained overdue for more than 10 years, even though the regulation states they have to be closed out within 20 months. It shows the ineptness of this bureaucracy. It shows the incompetence of this bureaucracy, the inability of this bureaucracy to manage taxpayers' money in an effective way, to perform functions in an effective and efficient way. It is shocking. It is shocking to have the inspector general come along and find that there are thousands of contracts that have been completed for years—some over 10 years—and they are still open. The cost of that is \$25 billion. Even worse, the system that CMS has in place to monitor the contracts hasn't been accessible to the bureau within HHS responsible for closing the contracts. It is just a complicated mess.

Once again, we have situations totaling about \$25 billion that could either be used for more necessary functions, returned to the taxpayer or not taken from the taxpayer in the first place. The bottom line is that these have been identified and action needs to be taken.

This Senator continues to add to an ever-growing amount of waste, fraud, and abuse totaling, since we have started, a grand total approaching \$156 billion.

Having exposed this, the first thing we ought to be doing before we begin talking about raising taxes, before talking about a program staying in place or not staying in place is going after the waste, fraud, and abuse and stopping this outrageous waste of money that is occurring.

The next time we are back in session, I will be back down here with more. They just keep pouring in. We keep finding these documents, finding this and that. It is unbelievable that we

have put ourselves in this situation and the ineffectiveness is out of control. It is no wonder the public no longer trusts us. If we can't get to this, how can we ever get to the reforms necessary to stop us from becoming insolvent?

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EVERY CHILD SUCCEEDS ACT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, last summer, by a vote of 81 to 17, the Senate passed a bill to fix No Child Left Behind. The House of Representatives had already passed their version. We had a conference report. We sent it to the President, and it was in December that President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Acts to fix No Child Left Behind. The President not only signed it in a large ceremony attended by parents, teachers, students, Governors, and people from all walks of life, the President said it was a "Christmas miracle." I think he said that for a couple of reasons. One, it was good news. Miracles are usually good news, and this was good news for 50 million children, 3.5 million teachers, and 100,000 public schools. They had waited 8 years for the U.S. Congress to fix the problems with No Child Left Behind. They knew it was difficult to do, and they looked forward to the result that we achieved because we achieved a consensus. There surely was a consensus if this was a law that everybody wanted fixed, but we also had a consensus about how to fix it.

People who don't usually agree in the education world said: We want to keep the tests. We want to keep the 17 federally required, State-designed tests between grades 3 and 12 so we can know how our children are doing, and we want to report that to the parents and the students, but we want to move the responsibility for our children and our schools out of Washington and back to the classroom teachers, back to the local school boards, back to the communities, and back to the Governors.

We heard that from the left, and we heard that from the right. We heard that from the Governors, and we heard that from the teachers unions. Because we all had that consensus, we were able to secure a vote of 81 to 17 here, and, as I often said last year, that is not that easy to do. Everyone is an expert on education. We have all had some education. It is like being in the Louisiana State University football stadium or

the University of Tennessee football stadium. The stands are filled with 80,000 or 100,000 people who know exactly what the next play to call is because they have all played a little football and they are usually ready to say what it is. So that is what we had to navigate, but we did. As the President said, it was a Christmas miracle and a gift for the children, the teachers, and the parents who care about our public schools.

The reason I am on the floor today is to put into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a letter to the Acting Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, John B. King, Jr. The letter is from a number of those in the coalition of educators and others who helped to pass the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter I am referring to at the conclusion of my remarks.

This is a letter from people who don't always work together. In fact, in their letter to the Acting Secretary of Education they say: "Mr. KING, although our organizations do not always agree, we are unified in our belief that ESSA is a historic opportunity to make a world-class 21st century education system. We are dedicated to working together at the national level to facilitate partnership among our members in States and districts to guarantee the success of this new law."

This letter comes from the National Governors Association, the School Superintendents Association, the National Education Association, and the American Federation of Teachers who all signed this letter. So did the National Conference of State Legislators, the National Association of State Boards of Education, the National School Boards Association, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the National Parent Teacher Association. I have racked my brain, and I can't think of any significant group in the State or local education world that hasn't signed this letter, except the Council of Chief State School Officers. I have no idea why they have not yet signed it because they were enthusiastically in support of our bill as well, so I hope they are also part of our coalition.

But here is the importance of this coalition. The coalition that sent this letter is the same coalition that supported passage of the bill. They know what I know and what Senator MURRAY of Washington State knows—who was the principal Democratic architect of the bill—that bill isn't worth the paper it is printed on unless it is implemented properly.

This bill makes a dramatic shift in policy for elementary and secondary education. The Wall Street Journal called it the largest devolution of

power from Washington to the States in a quarter of a century. They are right about that. Both the left and the right had grown tired of a national school board in Washington, in effect, telling teachers and school boards and Governors and legislators what to do about their children and what to do about their schools. Those decisions are best made by those closest to the children. We don't get any wiser by flying from Nashville to Washington each week. In fact, there are a lot of people back in Nashville who think we lose a little bit of our common sense when we come here. So this is important. This is what we usually don't see from Washington—taking large amounts of power and sending it back home where it belongs. That is what all of these organizations say about the new law. Their letter says:

ESSA replaces a top-down accountability and testing regime with an inclusive system based on collaborative State and local innovation. For this vision to become a reality, we must work together to closely honor congressional intent. ESSA is clear: Education decision-making now rests with states and districts, and the federal role is to support and inform those decisions.

Let me read that again:

Education decision-making now rests with states and districts, and the federal role is to support and inform those decisions.

That is what the Governors say. That is what the National Education Association says. That is what the American Federation of Teachers says. That is what the superintendents, the legislators, the State boards of education, the school boards, the principals, and the PTA say. And that is what the Senate said, that we are moving power out of Washington and back to the classroom, back to the community, back to the State. Our next year is going to be devoted to making sure that gets done. Our committee—of which the distinguished Senator from Louisiana is a member—will be having six hearings this year with the Department of Education and with many of the people whom I just mentioned to make sure the law is being implemented in the way Congress wrote it. The House of Representatives will do the same thing. Our objectives will be the same that are in this letter—working together to ensure a timely, fair transition to the new law; coordinate with Governors, State representatives, et cetera; promote State and local decision-making—in other words, make sure that what happens is what Congress said should happen.

I thank the National Governors Association especially, which took the lead in organizing this coalition. I thank each member of the coalition for organizing this coalition. I will be visiting with the Governors in a week, and I will be suggesting to the Governors—after I thank them for their support for the bill—that every single State organize a coalition just like the coalition represented in this letter.

In Tennessee, I think it would be a good idea if the Governor and the superintendent work together with the NEA, the AFT, the legislators, the State board of education, the school boards, the principals, and the PTA to make sure that in Tennessee, the responsibility for the children, the schools, the standards, and the progress is in the hands of those in whom we decided it ought to be vested. And we, at our level in Congress, will keep the spotlight on what is happening here.

There was not a piece of legislation more important that passed in the Congress last year. We got a lot of good things done in the last year, but nothing was more important than this, nothing was more difficult than this.

I have already mentioned Senator MURRAY, the Senator from Washington State, who was superb in working with both sides of the aisle to help get a result that had evaded the Senate for 8 years. I welcome the support of this coalition for the very same work we will be doing in the Senate. I hope every State will follow the example of these national organizations.

I look forward to a period of innovation and excellence that I am sure will be the result of this new era of accountability, responsibility, and opportunity placed in the hands of those who should have the responsibility for our children and our schools.

I thank the president, and I yield the floor.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

FEBRUARY 10, 2016.

JOHN B. KING, JR.,
Acting Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC.

DEAR ACTING SECRETARY KING: On behalf of states, school districts, educators and parents, we write to express our strong, shared commitment to making the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) a law that puts students first. We invite you to work with us to ensure that communities determine the best methods of educating our nation's children.

Although our organizations do not always agree, we are unified in our belief that ESSA is a historic opportunity to make a world-class 21 century education system. We are dedicated to working together at the national level to facilitate partnership among our members in states and districts to guarantee the success of this new law.

ESSA replaces a top-down accountability and testing regime with an inclusive system based on collaborative state and local innovation. For this vision to become a reality, we must work together to closely honor congressional intent. ESSA is clear: Education decision making now rests with states and districts, and the federal role is to support and inform those decisions.

In the coming months, our coalition—the State and Local ESSA Implementation Network—will: Work together to ensure a timely, fair transition to ESSA; Coordinate ESSA implementation by governors, state superintendents, school boards, state legislators, local superintendents, educators and parents; Promote state, local and school de-

cision-making during implementation; and Collaborate with a broader group of education stakeholders to provide guidance to the federal government on key implementation issues.

In ESSA, Congress recognizes states and schools as well-suited to provide a high-quality education to every child, regardless of their background. We have long prioritized lifting up those students who need help the most and our members stand ready to continue this work.

Our organizations look forward to a cooperative, collaborative and productive relationship with you and your staff throughout the implementation process.

Sincerely,

Scott D. Pattison, Executive Director/CEO, National Governors Association; William T. Pound, Executive Director, National Conference of State Legislatures; Kristen J. Amundson, Executive Director, National Association of State Boards of Education; Daniel A. Domenech, Executive Director, AASA: The School Superintendents Association; JoAnn D. Bartoletti, Executive Director, National Association of Secondary School Principals; Lily Eskelsen Garcia, President, National Education Association; Thomas J. Gentzel, Executive Director, National School Boards Association; Gail Connelly, Executive Director, National Association of Elementary School Principals; Randi Weingarten, President, American Federation of Teachers; Laura M. Bay, President, National PTA.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

COMMENDING STAFF ON TRADE POLICY LEGISLATION

MR. WYDEN. Mr. President, I wish to take a few minutes to thank our staff who did so much to address what I call the need for a fresh trade policy, for trade done right through the course of this year. Our staff and Senator HATCH's staff have put an enormous amount of sweat equity into this process. I would like to thank some of these terrific and dedicated individuals here this afternoon so that all of the Senate will get a sense of what they did.

Over the course of the last year and a half, with the support of Chairman HATCH, we were able to successfully conclude negotiations to introduce four major trade bills: the trade promotion authority legislation; the trade adjustment assistance legislation; the bill that passed overwhelmingly today, the Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act; and the trade preference program renewal and enhancement program. These staff leaders helped manage those bills in the Finance Committee, on the Senate floor, completed conference committee negotiations, and along the way, they did some awfully good work in terms of assembling a bipartisan coalition for this legislation.

In my view, the last year has arguably been the most productive in terms of trade policy in decades. In my view, these accomplishments are going to

make an enormous difference for American workers, American innovators, and our country's ability to compete in these tough global markets, and the stakes are just enormous. There are going to be 1 billion middle-class people in the developing world in 2025. Frankly, they are just crazy about America's goods and services. They like so much what we make, grow, and produce—whether it is airplanes, transportation equipment or our wonderful wine and cheese, our fruit, bicycles. The list just goes on and on.

I am going to be home this weekend for townhall meetings in rural Oregon. I often say that one out of five jobs in Oregon depends on international trade. Trade jobs often pay better than do nontrade jobs. If anybody is interested in a modern economic theory, I say we ought to do more to grow things here, to make things here, to add value to them here, and then ship them somewhere. With those trade-related jobs paying better, that ought to be a strategy that would win bipartisan support.

This work doesn't happen by osmosis. It happens because we have a terrific team of people behind these efforts. I would like to recognize the members of that team who have done so much to make this year successful.

Greta Peisch is our counsel. She put together the Customs components of the trade enforcement package. Her patience and her ability to work with staff, with industry, with all kinds of organizations—leaders representing workers, consumers—Greta Peisch creatively worked to try to address all concerns as responsibly as possible and what an impressive job Ms. Peisch has done.

Elissa Alben has done an extraordinary job in influencing the shape of the final Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement. She put in an awful lot of important and valuable exercises in negotiating TPA. Of course, these are the rules under which we conduct trade policy, and in my view she did superb work with the TPA amendments in the trade enforcement package.

Andy Heiman is our resident innovation adviser. His contributions have been crucial on Internet tax policy, on the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, trade preference, creating a new program for Nepal—an area where Senator FEINSTEIN has done an awful lot of good work—or improving the African Growth and Opportunity Act. Of course, that legislation involves several of our colleagues—Senator ISAKSON, Senator COONS, and others—who did very important work on those bills.

Jayne White is with me on the floor. He is our team leader. It would be hard to overstate the excellent work Mr. White has done. Over the last 2 years, his ideas, his patience, his leadership, and his ability to get a sense of where we needed to go for the future have been very valuable. My view is we

couldn't have had these exceptional accomplishments in this Congress on the trade issue without Mr. White.

Now, he is not here on the floor, but I want to say a word about Jeff Michels, our chief of staff. Jeff has been with me since I came to the Senate. I think it would be fair to say there is not a person in the Nation's Capitol who better understands the intersection, particularly on technology and innovation, between policy and politics. We would spend the entire afternoon if we were to talk about the good work Jeff Michels has done on these issues, but in particular, on the Internet tax freedom bill, Jeff Michels was there during those first days in 1998. Our former colleague from the other body, Chris Cox, was the sponsor on the Republican side of the aisle. I was the sponsor of the legislation in the Senate. I had pretty much just arrived in the Senate. We were struck by the idea that somebody might be trying to tax Internet access. If you tax Internet access, you are doing something that is extraordinarily regressive. What it means—for example, in the State of Louisiana—if somebody were to try to do this in one of our States that doesn't already have some kind of grandfathered arrangement, taxing Internet access means that you have new regressive taxes in America—taxes that are especially punitive to working families, families who are trying to use the Internet to find out about educational opportunities or employment or maybe they are using it to learn more about dealing with matters associated with raising children. We wouldn't have the Internet tax freedom legislation, in my view, without Jeff Michels.

In addition to the problem with the prospect of taxing Internet access, what we found back then is just out and out discrimination. For example, people would buy a paper snail mail and they wouldn't face a tax. Then they would buy the online edition of the very same publication, and they would face a tax for the online edition. We said: That seems pretty odd, even by Washington, DC standards. Let's ensure that there is, in effect, technological neutrality. So what the Internet tax freedom bill is all about is ensuring that there are no regressive taxes to hit working families hard on Internet access and that we don't reward discrimination against technology and innovation. That work would not have been possible without Jeff Michels.

Importantly, Joshua Sheinkman, who is the Democratic staff director, and Mike Evans, our chief counsel, did masterful work in navigating all the pitfalls and landmines of the Finance Committee, the Senate floor, and the other body in the Congress. Their leadership and their experience has been essential to our success on trade and all

other policy matters before the committee.

Before I wrap up, I want to note that none of this happens just coming from one side of the aisle. Chairman HATCH's trade team and senior staff were absolutely essential to the success of the last year and today. Specifically, I commend Everett Eissenstat, Douglas Peterson, Shane Warren, Andrew Rollow, Jay Khosla, Chris Campbell, the staff director of the Finance Committee, and Mark Prater, whom we have always been very proud of because he is an Oregonian. All of his friends still give me a hard time when we are working out in Southeast Portland at the gym. Mark Prater is a truly talented and thoughtful public servant, and we appreciate his leadership.

I would also like to thank a couple of others who have been very helpful in the leadership to work with us. Ayesha Khanna on the Democratic leader's staff and Brendan Dunn have been very helpful in terms of working closely with our team.

Finally, there are a couple of alums. These issues have gone on so long, I believe the Presiding Officer was probably practicing medicine when we started some of these battles. A number of alums have also contributed significantly to the work that was completed today.

Hun Quach and Ayesha Khanna started working on Customs legislation what seems like eons ago under Chairman Baucus, and Alan Treat helped lay the groundwork for the ENFORCE Act. The ENFORCE Act is really landmark legislation—landmark legislation that Alan Treat helped lay the groundwork for.

What we found when we set up a sting operation that demonstrated this is that trade cheats all over the world were basically laundering merchandise. They would get caught violating the trade laws in one jurisdiction, and they would just move to another, slap a label on the box, and off they would go. Alan Treat helped lay the groundwork to get the ENFORCE Act, which I think is going to be a landmark in our ability to get tough with the trade cheats and those who rip off American jobs.

So good policy doesn't just get created out of the ether, and it doesn't get advanced unless you have dedicated staff on both sides of the aisle. It doesn't happen just because a Senator has an election certificate. So I wanted to take just a few minutes this afternoon to make sure that the Senate understood that there were very capable staff on both sides of the aisle who gave up nights and weekends, family time, and a lot of opportunities they could have had to catch a movie or a game or go for a jog. It has led us to be able to introduce four major trade bills. So I thank them. They don't get thanked enough. They probably de-

serve a lot more praise than I have given them this afternoon, but at least what they have heard from me today is a start.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT BILL

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I stand before the Senate to talk about legislation that was marked up today in committee that deals with the opiate addiction crisis we have in this country.

Before I do that, and while my colleague is still on the floor, let me congratulate him and Senator HATCH, who is on the floor, for the legislation that was passed today that will now go to the President with regard to trade—and two provisions in particular: one that Senator WYDEN just talked about, which has to do with ensuring that when you get an order against an unfairly traded import from a country because it is dumped or because it is subsidized, that you can't just take that product and shift it to another location to evade the Customs duties. That is called the ENFORCE Act. It is going to make a huge difference. I introduced it with him originally, and it is legislation that will help Ohio steelworkers and steel companies in particular, but it helps everybody who goes through the long process—which is a little better, now thanks to the Level the Playing Field Act—to get an order against a product that is not being sold here fairly, to ensure that some country doesn't just move it to another jurisdiction. I thank Senator WYDEN for his hard work on that issue and ensuring that we can have a more level playing field. If it is level, we can compete and win, but when it is not level, it is impossible for our workers, our farmers, our service providers to be able to get a fair shake. So I thank the Senator from Oregon for that.

The other is the BDS legislation, which didn't get as much play on the floor today because there were so many other things in this legislation, but there are countries that have boycotts that divest from and put sanctions on Israel in an effort to delegitimize Israel. In this legislation, it provides that if countries want to do business with us and do trade with us, they cannot put in place these discriminatory policies as to Israel. I thank the chairman and ranking member for that as well. This is very important legislation for us to be able to ensure that we can continue to stand by our friends in Israel so they are not treated unfairly, but rather, where trade is involved, we can use our leverage to ensure that they can be able to be treated with the respect that other countries have around the world.

So those are two parts of the bill that I think are extremely important. I thank Senator WYDEN and Senator HATCH, who was on the floor a moment ago, for their hard work on that.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I now turn to the issue of opiate addiction.

I thank my colleagues again on the Judiciary Committee for reporting on legislation today, on a bipartisan basis—in fact, there wasn't a single "no" vote. It was reported out on a voice vote. Everybody in committee agreed to it. That doesn't happen very often. The reason it happened this way is that the legislation before the committee called CARA—the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act—is legislation that has been thoughtfully crafted, with Republicans and Democrats alike, really for the past 3 years.

We have had five conferences in Washington, DC, to put together the experts from all over the country. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE and I have lead this effort but also with Senator AYOTTE, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and others. What we have said is that we want to come up with legislation that will make a difference in our States and around the country to deal with what is sadly a growing crisis of people who are abusing prescription drugs, heroin, and this addiction problem is leading to not just a lot more people becoming addicted but people actually overdosing and dying.

In Ohio we lost over 2,400 fellow Ohioans last year to overdose deaths. It is now the No. 1 cause of death in America, accidental deaths in America. Now more people are dying from overdoses than they are from car accidents. So this is an issue that affects every single one of us. It has no ZIP Code. It is in our rural areas, it is in our suburban areas, and it is in the inner city. It is something that affects so many families.

When I am back home talking about this, it is hard for me to find a group I am meeting with that doesn't bring this up. Most recently I was in Ohio this past week talking with women who had been trafficked. They also were women who were given drugs and became addicted, and that dependency led to the kind of sex trafficking that they were involved with and their sense of being coerced and being compelled because of this drug addiction issue. They are now trying to work through that issue, God bless them. They are back with their families. They are back getting their lives back on track, but as they told me, Rob, going through this issue of the addiction and the treatment and the recovery is hard work because the grip of addiction from opioids—meaning prescription drugs and heroin—is very difficult to address.

That is why our legislation is so important, because it provides to State governments, to local governments, to nonprofits the tools they need to be able to have better treatment and better recovery programs, longer term recovery, but it also focuses on prevention and education to try to keep people out of the funnel of addiction. It also helps our law enforcement personnel. It gives them the ability to save lives through Narcan and naloxone, which is the drug that is a miracle drug to be applied when someone has an overdose. It is saving lives right and left in my State of Ohio and around the country.

Finally, our legislation helps to get the prescription drugs off of the bathroom shelves, to ensure that these prescription drugs which have been overprescribed over the years—there are too many prescription drugs out there—aren't going to be taken by somebody, often young people who get them, it gets them involved in this addiction issue, and then often they turn to heroin as a less expensive and more accessible alternative. Our legislation does that, and it also provides for a monitoring program for the prescription drug prescribing, so we know who is getting prescribed what, including across State lines, which is why it is very important to have Federal legislation in this regard. Until we get at this issue of prescription drugs, it is very hard to stop what is a growing crisis in our communities.

Can we turn the tide? Yes. I am absolutely convinced we can because I have seen the treatment programs that work. I have seen the prevention and education programs that work. I started my own anti-drug coalition in my hometown of Cincinnati, OH, about 22 years ago. Using proven techniques, we can make a difference and we have made a difference there. Unfortunately, most communities don't have that kind of a coalition, that kind of effort.

Our legislation will help to provide that. In treatment, most Americans who are suffering from addiction do not have access to treatment. This will provide more needed resources, not just money but also being sure that the money is going to evidence-based treatment and recovery that works, that has been proven to work, so we are not just throwing money at a problem, but we are setting up a framework for success.

The legislation is supported by many groups because it has been carefully crafted. It has been bipartisan or I would say nonpartisan. Over 120 groups have come in from around the country to support this legislation. Today I am happy to report that we have a new endorsement, and this one comes from the National Fraternal Order of Police. The FOP endorsed our legislation today, which is a tremendous boost to us.

Law enforcement around the country has been supportive. The doctors have been supportive. The nurses, first responders, those in recovery themselves, and of course experts from around the country who are involved in providing treatment and providing the prevention that is science-based, evidence-based know that if they have more support from the Federal Government, they can do more. They can leverage that at the local level to make a difference in our communities.

I am glad to hear that this legislation got reported out with such broad bipartisan support today and that everyone said this is good legislation and we need to move it forward because the next step is to get it to the floor of the Senate and to get it passed on the Senate floor and then get it over to the House where there is a companion bill. In other words, there are Democrats and Republicans working together in the House as well on this issue, understanding the urgency of addressing this crisis. They are ready go. If we send them the legislation, I believe that legislation can end up on the President's desk in short order, and we can begin to turn things around and change what is unfortunately a growing problem. It is a spreading problem. We can begin to reverse it, and through prevention and education keep people, particularly young people, from making bad choices and going down this route.

I have gone across the State holding roundtables on this over the year, but in the last month alone, I have met in Columbus, OH, Marion, OH, and in Cleveland, OH, with people who are directly affected. In Cleveland I toured the Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital. This is one of the great children's hospitals in America. There they have lots of specialists, particularly an issue that sadly is one that is affecting more and more of our hospitals; that is, drug-dependent babies. These are babies who are drug-addicted when they are born because their mothers used.

These are consequences of this addiction problem we talked about. They take these babies through withdrawal. These are babies, many of whom are born prematurely and can almost fit in the palm of your hand. These babies, God bless them, are getting the help they need to be able to withdraw from that addiction.

We don't know what the longer term health consequences might be, but we do know that many of these babies are now starting their life in a much healthier situation because of this special expertise that is being provided, but these hospitals are telling me this is an increasing problem. Every hospital in America needs to have this expertise now to deal with a situation that is hard to imagine, a baby who is born drug-addicted.

I also toured a community alternative sentencing center in Claremont,

OH, to see where a court is taking people who have been arrested for possession and instead of throwing them in jail is setting up an alternative program where they can get some of the treatment they need and get some of the life skills they need to get their life back on track. It is an intensive program that is working.

These are programs that are also supported by our legislation. Our legislation also deals with people who are in prison who have addiction problems, to be able to get them treatment, so when they get out of prison they don't fall back into a life of crime to support their addiction problem.

Most recently I was in Columbus, OH. I met with four women who were recovering addicts who had this addiction foisted upon them as part of human trafficking, sex trafficking. Their traffickers got them addicted to make them dependent. In one case, the woman told me she wasn't paid anything. She was just paid in terms of the drugs. Her trafficker kept her dependent because of that. These women were in a program where they had been given the opportunity to get into treatment, given the opportunity to be able to get their lives back together, but sadly a lot of people do not have that opportunity, not having access to treatment. Our legislation will be very important to do that.

The bill targets the very issues we know have to be addressed—keeping people away from these substances in the first place. Then, once they are addicted, if they become addicted, get them the treatment they need to begin to turn their lives around. For that longer term recovery, which we think is absolutely essential from the experience and the good science that is out there for successful programs, it is important that we have, in some cases, medication treatment as well that supports that.

It also says that we have to help our law enforcement more. I think that is one reason the Fraternal Order of Police, the national sheriffs' organizations, and others have supported this legislation with such wonderful statements, as I just talked about earlier, as we got today from the FOP.

This is an issue that will continue to be a serious problem in all of our communities unless we take these kinds of actions at the Federal level, the State level, and the local level. We have to work as a team with nonprofits, with people who are in the trenches dealing with this. If we do not, we will continue to see families torn apart. We will continue to see communities that are devastated, including by the crimes and other consequences of this, and we will continue to see Americans who are not able to fulfill their God-given abilities and destinies because of this drug addiction problem.

Today I am told that others who support this legislation would like to

spend more money in addition to the \$80 million that this program provides every year going forward. This is a well-crafted, well-thought-out framework of how to spend that money more effectively to be able to address the problem. I am for spending more money. If there are people who would like to spend more money on this issue of opiate addiction, I am for that. I think it is enough of a crisis that we should be funding more funds on it.

I will say something else. Let's get this bill moving. Let's get this bill to the floor. Let's get this bill passed. Let's get the House to pass the companion legislation. Let's get it to the President's desk. This is an urgent problem. We cannot wait. If people are going to offer other ideas, including more funding and funding that is an emergency, rather than in a way that is paid for, that may make it more difficult to move this bill forward because some people in this Chamber will not support that.

We now have a consensus on this bill. Let's not play politics with this bill and stop this bill. Let's move this bill forward. Right now we have on the floor of the Senate an energy bill. It includes energy efficiency provisions I have worked on for years. Yet it is being stopped by other issues, important issues. Around here we too often refuse to move forward on legislation where there is a consensus, where we know it is the right thing to do, because other issues come up, and sometimes it is other issues that are very important issues but ones that end up stopping the legislation and not allowing us to make progress for the people we represent.

I do support more funding. I support funding in this legislation. Over and above that, I support additional funding. The President's budget has a request for additional funding. I talked about that today in a hearing we had. I told the Secretary of Health and Human Services I would support some of these programs that have additional funding. Let's be sure it is well-spent, as it is in this legislation. Let's be sure we are not throwing money at a problem. Let's make sure we are making a difference in the lives of the people we represent, and let's be sure it doesn't derail this effort to get this legislation passed.

We are on a track now. It is bipartisan. It is bicameral. It has the President's general support. He hasn't specifically said he will endorse this bill, but his representatives—including the Secretary of Health and Human Services—today were very supportive of the direction we are moving.

It was reported out of a committee today in a total bipartisan way. It was unanimous. Again, that doesn't happen often around here. Let's address this issue now. Let's not sit back and play politics. Let's take the politics out of

this, as has been the case for the last few years.

SHELDON WHITEHOUSE has been my partner in this. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE and I don't agree on a lot of issues. He is more liberal. I am more conservative on some issues. We agree on this issue because we know the way it affects the communities we represent, the families we represent, and the people we represent. Let's move forward on this legislation. Let's get it to the floor. Let's get a vote. Let's start turning the tide. Let's start changing the dynamic on the ground where instead of us having this creeping problem of addiction and all of its horrible consequences that we begin to allow people to get their lives back together, to give them the opportunity to get their families back together, to be able to achieve the dreams they have for themselves and their families.

Mr. President, I yield back my time.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I compliment the distinguished Senator from Ohio on his remarks here today. He is one of the pillars of this Senate. He is one of the finest men I have served with in the whole time I have been in the U.S. Senate. He is on top of everything. His experiences outside of the Senate have been magnificent. Everybody, I think, has a very high opinion of him. Those who might express otherwise, deep down do. They know what a fine man he is. He is absolutely right on this issue. We need to do many things about it.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, having said that, during the 2008 Presidential campaign, one of the candidates criticized the outgoing President for adding \$4 trillion to the national debt. He called that increase not only irresponsible but even "unpatriotic." Barack Obama was that candidate. He won the election and took office with the Government Accountability Office warning the long-term fiscal outlook is "unsustainable."

The national debt on inauguration day 2009 was \$10.6 trillion, and it stands at \$19 trillion today. The national debt for American households has risen from \$93,000 to nearly \$160,000 since President Obama took office.

If a \$4 trillion increase is irresponsible and unpatriotic, what words describe an increase that is more than twice as large? The national debt crisis has been around for a long time, but we have never been in a more serious, perilous situation than we are today. One way to grasp the magnitude of the national debt is to compare it to the size of the economy, or the gross domestic product. In other words, we can compare what we owe to our ability to pay.

When President Obama took office, the national debt was 82 percent of

GDP. It is now 105 percent of GDP today, by far the largest increase in American history during a President's first 7 years. Economists tell us that the national debt above 90 percent of GDP for a sustained period of time will lead to substantially slower economic growth and higher interest rates.

The United States is now in the longest period in history with a national debt above that toxic 90-percent level. Not surprisingly, since the recession ended in June 2009, the national debt has grown more than twice as fast, and GDP has grown less than half as fast as during the same period after previous recessions. Some economists prefer to evaluate the national debt as a percentage of tax revenue; that is, comparing what we owe to what we earn. The national debt has risen from approximately 350 percent of Federal revenue when President Obama took office to 600 percent of Federal revenue today. But even that does not tell the whole story.

During the last several years of skyrocketing national debt, the interest rate on that debt has been nearly zero. If interest rates had been at the historical average, annual interest costs would be more than twice what they are today and on their way to consuming more than half of all Federal revenue. And now interest rates are starting to creep up. The Concord Coalition and the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget both anticipate that over the next decade interest payments on the national debt alone will approach \$1 trillion per year. That is interest against the national debt. By any of these measures, the national debt crisis is not only serious, it is worse than ever and much worse than when this President took office.

The Congressional Budget Office has a new budget, an economic outlook that projects the national debt rising by nearly \$10 trillion over the next decade. Looking beyond the next decade, CBO says that under current law, the national debt will explode to more than 150 percent of GDP, the highest level in American history. CBO also says that interest on the national debt is one of the engines driving the debt even higher. A national debt of this magnitude undercuts the economic growth necessary to minimize borrowing to fund the government. Rising interest costs for such a monstrous debt add to the debt on which more interest must then be paid.

In this new report, CBO again outlined some of the serious negative consequences of this national debt for the budget and the Nation. In addition to substantially higher interest payments, these include lower productivity and wages, less flexibility by lawmakers to respond to fiscal challenges, and an increased likelihood of a fiscal crisis. In addition to those problems, former Joint Chiefs of Staff

Chairman Michael Mullen and experts from the Heritage Foundation to the Brookings Institution warned that the national debt crisis is a serious threat to national security. It is no wonder that more than two-thirds of Americans say that their concern over the national debt is growing, and more than three-quarters of Americans say that the national debt should be among Congress's top three priorities.

The national debt was once a top priority. In fact, America's Founders were so determined to avoid debt that their commitment to fiscal balance was often called our unwritten fiscal constitution. President George Washington, for example, told Congress that the regular redemption of the public debt was the most urgent fiscal priority. That commitment is long gone. The Federal budget has been balanced in only a dozen of the last 80 years, and as I said earlier, we are in the longest period of American history with a debt above 90 percent of the GDP.

As its willpower failed, Congress has also tried to address the debt crisis by legislation. The first bill requiring a balanced budget was introduced in 1934, when the national debt was 40 percent of GDP, compared to today. Fifty years later, Congress enacted the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act. Since then, we have enacted multiple budget control acts and budget enforcement acts as the national debt climbed from 42 percent of GDP in 1985 to more than 100 percent of GDP today.

Good intentions will not balance the Nation's checkbook. Statutes that Congress can change or ignore will not keep our fiscal house in order. Neither willpower nor legislation will tackle this national debt crisis. Pretending otherwise is the fiscal equivalent of fiddling while Rome burns. In no other way, except by an amendment to the Constitution, can Congress be compelled to balance its budget in peacetime. Let me say that again. In no other way, except by an amendment to the Constitution, can Congress be compelled to balance its budget in peacetime. While I claim that as my firm conviction, I cannot claim authorship of those words. The Appropriations Committee expressed that principle in 1947 about a balanced budget amendment introduced by Senator Millard Tydings, a Democrat from Maryland. Everything that has happened since then has proved the truth of those words.

Year after year, decade after decade, we slide deeper in debt until today our economy is being suffocated. One definition of insanity is doing the same thing but expecting different results. If we keep doing what we have done, we will get more of what we have been getting. This would be a very different country, a freer and more productive country, if Congress had already proposed the only solution that exists—a

constitutional amendment that requires fiscal responsibility. The first balanced budget amendment was introduced in the House in 1936.

I introduced my first balanced budget amendment in June of 1979 during my first term in the U.S. Senate. Adjusted for inflation, the national debt then was \$2.6 trillion, or 32 percent of GDP. That share of GDP doubled by 1997, when the Senate came within one vote—one solitary vote—of passing a balanced budget amendment that I introduced. It rose to 95 percent when the Senate last voted on a balanced budget amendment in 2011 and is 105 percent of GDP today.

Since this crisis is already so grave and getting worse, and since the only way to tackle it is through the Constitution, we should propose a balanced budget amendment and let the American people decide to take this step. Congress, after all, cannot amend the Constitution. A requirement that Congress keep its fiscal house in order does not become part of the Constitution until it is approved by three-quarters of the States, or 38 States.

Article V of the Constitution also allows the States to apply for a convention to propose constitutional amendments. Concerned citizens have been working since the mid-1970s to reach the two-thirds threshold for calling such a convention to propose a balanced budget amendment. Since Congress has never called an article V convention, many questions remain unresolved, and theories remain untested regarding that method of proposing an amendment. I can assure my colleagues, however, that Congress's continued failure to propose a balanced budget amendment guarantees that our fellow citizens will continue working to force that course upon us.

I looked at dozens of polls conducted by major polling firms and national news organizations since I was first elected to the Senate. Three-quarters of Americans supported a balanced budget amendment in 1976, and three-quarters support it now. They believe even more strongly today what the Appropriations Committee said in 1947—that in no other way, except by a constitutional amendment, can Congress be compelled to balance its budget in peacetime. It will do no good to pretend that the national debt is not a fiscal Tsunami. It is. It will do no good to pretend that this ocean of debt is not already taking a serious toll on our country. It is. It will do no good to repeat the mantra that Congress can tackle the national debt crisis by itself. No one believes that anymore—not anyone. That emperor has no clothes. Perhaps some of my colleagues believe that all the polls over the last 40 years are wrong, that the American people are content watching the national debt swallow the economy.

Perhaps our fellow citizens are actually OK with slower economic growth,

a rising threat to national security, the greater likelihood of a fiscal crisis, and an unsustainable path to fiscal disaster. If that is what the American people actually believe, then they will decline to ratify a balanced budget amendment. So why not give it a chance?

Perhaps some of my colleagues believe that the Congressional Budget Office is wrong in its disturbing projections and dire warnings or that the Government Accountability Office is mistaken and the fiscal path we are on is sustainable after all or that the Concord Coalition and the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget are wrong about how national debt interest payments will continue to grow and add to the debt or that economists are wrong to warn about the impact of a sustained national debt of this magnitude. If my colleagues are convinced that everyone else is wrong and that our fiscal future is just fine and hunky-dory after all, then I still urge them to let the American decide. The Constitution belongs to the American people—not to the people here, although we are part of the American people.

President Obama once said that a \$4 trillion increase in the national debt is irresponsible and unpatriotic. This week he submitted a budget for fiscal year 2017 that reflects the same recycled misguided policies that have both added to the debt and have failed in Congress. On all of the budgets he submitted, there was only one vote for his budget. There was a bipartisan rejection in each case.

President Obama wants to expand a broken Medicaid system rather than reform it. He wants to impose higher taxes to prop up more government spending. He continues to turn a blind eye to the Nation's unsustainable entitlement programs that are propelling the national debt to unprecedented levels.

We all know the facts and the dangers about the national debt crisis. We all know that the American people are, if anything, more alarmed about this crisis than we are—certainly with the exception of myself. The only reason that Members of Congress have refused to give our fellow citizens a choice about adding a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution is that they know what that choice will be. I say with respect, but as strongly as I can, that this is not a legitimate basis for refusing to propose a balanced budget amendment. In our system of government, as Founder James Wilson once put it, the people are the masters of government. Only they have authority to set the rules for government. This choice must be theirs, not ours.

Here is the heart of the matter. First, the national debt crisis poses a significant and growing threat to the economic and national security of this country. In fact, we have never been in

such an extended, perilous period than we are right now. Second, Congress has tried and failed to address this crisis by either willpower or legislation and will do so only if the Constitution requires it. Third, the decision of whether to use the Constitution to require fiscal responsibility belongs to the American people, not to Congress. A balanced budget amendment would allow the American people to make that choice.

What are we afraid of? Are we afraid that we can't keep going on spending like this or that the American people might pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution? Yes, I think we are afraid of that, but we shouldn't be. We should be glad to have it in the Constitution itself. We could either take the responsibility we were elected for and propose a balanced budget amendment or the American people may do it for us.

The key to me is to pass a balanced budget constitutional amendment. I filed it, and it has a great number. It was filed right after we got into the Congress. It is an amendment that literally every one of us should support.

Let's get real about this national debt. Let's get real about helping our American people survive. Let's get real about having the greatest Nation on Earth continue to fight for liberty and freedom and independence and religious rights all over the world and all over this country. Let's get real about the future of our young people. Let's get real about being in the U.S. Senate and having an opportunity to form a real, solid approach to this, which would make all the difference in the world.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMBASSADOR NOMINATIONS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I am here today to speak about U.S. policy toward Iran.

I wish to mention first that we are continuing to work on the issue of State Department nominees. Of course, my focus has been on the Swedish and Norwegian Ambassadors from our country to those two countries. We have now gone for 867 days without a confirmed ambassador to Norway and 476 days since the President nominated an ambassador for Sweden.

I think we have made it very clear that nearly every Member in this Chamber does not have an issue with having a vote or even an issue with the qualifications of these nominees who

went through the Foreign Relations Committee without objection. Senator COTTON himself said: I believe both nominees are qualified. We have significant interest in Scandinavia. My hope is that both nominees receive a vote in the Senate sooner rather than later.

As we know, Senator CRUZ has had various issues not related to the nominees or our two strong allies, Norway and Sweden. We are hoping we can find a way forward so that he lifts his hold and we can continue to move forward with the 11th and 12th biggest investors in the United States of America, those countries, Norway and Sweden, being able to have Ambassadors like the rest of Europe. Every other major Nation has an ambassador.

I wish to thank Senator MCCONNELL and Senator REID and Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN for their work on this issue. I am hoping to get this done as soon as possible.

U.S. POLICY TOWARD IRAN

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, as I mentioned, I rise today to discuss U.S. policy toward Iran—an issue that is critical to our national security and the security of our allies. When we talk about our policy toward Iran, we must do so with our eyes wide open. The Iranian regime is one of the world's leading State sponsors of terrorism. It threatens Israel, it destabilizes the region, and it abuses human rights. That is why I have cosponsored the Iran Policy Oversight Act, a bill that allows Congress to move quickly to impose economic sanctions against Iran's terrorist activity. It expands military aid to Israel, and it ensures that agencies charged with monitoring Iran have the resources they need.

Preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon is one of the most important objectives of our national security policy. I have strongly advocated for and supported the economic sanctions that have brought Iran to the negotiating table over the last few years. Those sanctions resulted in a nuclear nonproliferation agreement between Iran and the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, and China.

The Iran nuclear agreement, as we have talked about many times on this floor—including my own words—is an imperfect but necessary tool to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon. In order for the agreement to work, of course, we must remember that simply trusting Iran to do the right thing is not an option. We must be vigilant in our monitoring and in our verification.

In my view, our national security strategy must focus on three things. This is overall: Protecting our citizens, eliminating threats to our national security, and never losing sight of our core American values. It is through this lens that we must approach Iran.

First of all, we must do all we can to keep our own citizens safe. We can't be naive. We cannot trust in the Iranian regime—and the Iranian regime continues to prove that is the case. Iran repeatedly violated the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1929 by testing ballistic missiles, most recently on October 10 and November 21 of 2015. The very next month, in December of 2015, Iran conducted a live fire exercise using unguided rockets near a U.S. aircraft carrier in international waters. Make no mistake, this was an intentional provocation.

Just last month Iran announced it flew a surveillance drone over a U.S. aircraft carrier. Afterwards, an Iranian Navy commander went on State TV and said the drone strike was a "sign of bravery" that "allowed our men to go so close to the warship and shoot such beautiful and accurate footage of the combat units of the foreign forces."

Iran flying military drones over our aircraft carriers means that we must respond.

We also have to keep in mind that Iran isn't just provoking our military. Iran also targets innocent civilians by funding terrorism around the world. Iran is the world's leading State sponsor of terrorism. Iran funds Hezbollah, a terrorist group that wreaks havoc in the Middle East. Recently Hezbollah was accused of recruiting five Palestinian men to attack Israelis using explosives. Luckily, the Israeli defense forces were able to stop the attack before anyone was hurt.

Iran also continues to defend Bashar al-Assad and attack U.S.-backed rebel forces in Syria. The United Nations estimates that Iran spends \$6 billion a year to fund Assad's government. What is Assad doing with that money? He buys barrel bombs to level entire Syrian towns. He pays for blockades to prevent food, medicine, and other critical supplies from reaching his own people. He is starving entire villages in northern Syria where children are starving and thousands of people have been forced to survive on grass because Assad and troops from Hezbollah will not let food and medicine get to them.

Iran is funding a government that is responsible for a civil war that has killed 250,000 people and displaced 11 million more. Again, we need to be at the top of our game when it comes to sanctions. The worst would be for a country that behaves in this manner and that disrespects international human rights to have access to a nuclear weapon, which is why many of us in this Chamber did support the agreement. While imperfect, we did support the Iranian nuclear agreement.

Our national security strategy also must focus on eliminating threats. We must demonstrate that the United States has the capability to stand up to Iran when it funds terror and seeks to destabilize the world.

Given Iran's history, we can anticipate that it will test the boundaries of international agreements, and we have to be ready to respond when it does so. That is why we must hold Iran accountable every step of the way. Imposing harsh sanctions against those responsible for Iran's ballistic missile program is a good start.

Iran's ballistic missile program is a threat to regional and global security. Any person or business involved in helping Iran obtain illicit weapons should be banned from doing business with the United States, have their assets and financial operations immediately frozen, and have their travel restricted. Minimizing the threat Iran poses also means working to ensure that the money flowing into Iran now that nuclear sanctions are lifted is not used to further destabilize the region and spread terrorism. We must monitor the flow of terrorist financing and use every tool available to punish bad actors who seek to do harm.

It is also known that Iran has a terrible human rights record. In fact, Iranian Americans and Iranians around the world will be the first people to tell you that 35 years of religious dictatorship has been a human rights nightmare for the people of Iran.

Recently, thousands of Iranians took to the streets of Paris to join a mass demonstration protesting President Ruhani's visit to Paris. Those protestors are demonstrating against things like Iran's policy to permit girls as young as 9 to boys as young as 15 to be sentenced to death. They protested Iran's continuing suppression of journalists and freedom of speech.

Beyond imprisoning journalists—and we do applaud the recent release of the Washington Post journalist. I was so honored to be at the opening recently at the Washington Post facility where he appeared and spoke. We learned how he was taken from his home in Iran at gunpoint, blindfolded, handcuffed, and thrown into solitary confinement for 18 months until recently his release was negotiated. Beyond imprisoning journalists, Iran arbitrarily jails human rights activists, and it oppresses religious minorities including Christians, Jews, and Sunni Muslims.

America has a long history of being an arbiter of peace and security around the world. In order to continue this legacy, we must hold Iran accountable for its human rights violations.

I sponsored the Iran Policy Oversight Act because it is a bill that does three important things to hold Iran accountable. First, it allows Congress to more quickly impose economic sanctions against Iran's terrorist activities. This is really important because the best way to stop terrorism is to cut off the financing for it. We should be doing everything in our power to better track terrorist financing so that we can stop the flow of money that funds suicide bombers and illicit weapons.

The United States and the international community have maintained sanctions against Iran for decades. I have voted to increase sanctions on Iran's oil imports and strengthen sanctions against human rights violators in Iran. Sanctions are a powerful tool, and Congress should exercise its authority to implement them as fast as possible against people who fund international terrorism.

Second, the bill also expands military aid to Israel. The United States plays a critical role in supporting Israel's defense. The United States and Israel have enjoyed a friendship based on values rooted in democracy, freedom, and mutual strategic goals. Protecting Israel—our most reliable ally in the Middle East, the beacon of democracy—against a hostile Iran is essential.

Third, the bill ensures that agencies charged with monitoring Iran have the resources they need. We cannot take Iran's word for it that they are obeying the rules. We need strong independent verification and monitoring. The United States and our European partners must fulfill our obligation to fund the international agencies responsible for that monitoring.

In order to protect our citizens, Congress must exercise its constitutional authority to enact legislation that expands oversight of the Iran nuclear agreement. We must also continue to work with the P5+1 to ensure that the agreement is strictly enforced. Iran must understand that we will not hesitate to snap back sanctions if it fails to comply with the rules. Sanctions were effective at getting Iran to the table, and they will continue to be a tool that allows the United States and our allies to minimize the threat posed by Iran.

Those of us who supported the Iran nuclear agreement have a special responsibility to ensure that it works. In fact, this whole Senate has a responsibility, regardless of whether Members supported it or not. It is in the best interest of our country. We cannot shirk from our duties and we must be vigilant. We owe it to the American people, to Israel, and to our allies. Our mission here is clear: We must protect our own citizens by exercising our authority to enact strong legislation to ensure that Iran does not cheat on its international commitments. Because we know from experience that Iran will test the international community, we must be ready to respond when it does.

Iran must know that if it violates the rules, the response will be certain, swift, and severe. We must also minimize the threat Iran poses to our citizens and the world by doing everything in our power to stop Iran from funding the world's terrorists.

Last year the world was shaken by a series of successful terrorist attacks on innocent civilians. The attacks in Paris, Lebanon, Mali, and San

Bernardino, right here in the United States, remind us that the victims of these massacres will never be limited to one nationality or one ethnicity or one religion.

It is critical that we take additional steps to stop countries like Iran from funding terrorism and destabilizing the world. Stopping Iran's support of terrorism protects us here at home, but it also helps millions of refugees fleeing Syria, the children that are starving in cities like Madaya, and the families fleeing mortar fire in Yemen. Our values of justice, democracy, and freedom for all demand nothing less.

Iran's recent behavior suggests that the United States needs to have the ability to snap back as soon as possible. We have to have the ability to impose sanctions. That is why I am supporting this bill. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the Veterans Choice Program and the challenges some of Indiana's veterans are experiencing with its implementation.

Our veterans have served our country and have sacrificed for our country every day. Some come home bearing physical or mental wounds. Some bear both. Serving also means being away from their families, who also sacrifice for us. Veterans have missed their sons' or daughters' first words, first steps, birthdays, little league games, holidays, and many other life milestones that we all treasure.

When our veterans first come home, they are met with the many challenges of settling back into everyday life, which can include stress from finances to reconnecting with their wife or husband and sons and daughters. Some, as mentioned, must deal with the physical and mental wounds of war.

All of our vets should be able to have peace of mind that they will be able to have a good-paying job and access to quality health care. Our veterans should not be burdened with wondering if or when they will be able to schedule a medical appointment.

While we can never fully repay our veterans or their families for their service and sacrifice, our country has a sacred responsibility to honor our veterans and to take care of them. Serving our veterans and making sure they receive the best care possible, whether for physical ailments or for mental health challenges, is something I take very seriously. We are committed to ensuring each and every one of them has access to quality care and the full range of benefits they have earned by their service.

Following gross mismanagement and misconduct at several VA medical centers nationally, in 2014 Congress passed the bipartisan Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act that was signed into law. The law established the Veterans Choice Program to help address the inadequate access to care that our vets were facing. The program is designed to enable veterans who can't see a VA doctor within 30 days or who live more than 40 miles from a VA facility to access a local non-VA provider using a Veterans Choice Card.

Unfortunately, there are repeated examples of the Veterans Choice Program coming up short. It is our responsibility as legislators to review, follow up, and ask questions about this program we helped to put in place to make sure it is working correctly and efficiently.

I stand here today to state that some Indiana veterans are experiencing problems with the Veterans Choice Program, and we must work to address these issues and to solve them.

There are two third-party vendors contracted to help the VA implement the Veterans Choice Program around the country and in Indiana—Health Net Federal Services, which covers most of our State, and TriWest, which extends into parts of southern Indiana. Instead of making Veterans Choice Program appointments directly with local hospitals, veterans must use Health Net Federal Services or TriWest. In recent weeks, our office has heard from Indiana veterans who are experiencing long wait times of up to 90 minutes on the phone and disconnected calls when they contact Health Net Federal Services.

I share the stories of some of these veterans and the struggles they have dealt with. Vietnam vet Daniel Vice from Marion, IN, had eye surgery through the Veterans Choice Program and had been told by Health Net that his postoperation appointments would also be covered. When he was at the eye doctor for his follow-up appointment, he learned that Health Net Federal Services had not sent over his paperwork. This meant that instead of being covered by the Veterans Choice Program, Dan would have to pay out of his own pocket. Dan contacted our office while at the doctor seeking help. Our case manager called Health Net only to be put on hold for 21 minutes before speaking to a supervisor. The company could not provide immediate answers but called back our staff a few hours later and said that Dan's paperwork had not been approved. We continue to work with Dan to get answers to solve this problem.

Veteran Robert Trowbridge, from South Bend, had surgery on his ankle almost 6 months ago and has yet to be scheduled for his post-op physical therapy. He called Health Net many times and was put on hold for 30 to 40 min-

utes each time he called. When he was able to reach a rep, he was told repeatedly that his paperwork was sent to be approved, only to find out 4 months later that there was a problem. He was later informed that his Social Security number was not attached to his file. Frustrated, Robert contacted our office for assistance.

Our staff experienced firsthand the frustrations and inadequate customer service that some of our vets like Robert face. One of our case managers called Health Net and it took 23 minutes into the conversation with a representative before the customer service rep even asked for the veteran's name. After calls with a representative, then a supervisor, and then a manager from Health Net Federal Services, we were finally able to work with the manager to resolve the issue for Robert.

What our veterans are going through to schedule appointments and access their benefits through the Veterans Choice Program is completely unacceptable. Our office continues to work to assist vets who experience difficulties.

I have called on Health Net Federal Services to get answers. We need to get to the bottom of this problem, and we need to ensure that all Hoosier veterans and all American veterans and their families receive the timely and quality care they deserve.

I will work nonstop to end this problem, and our office will continue to work nonstop to make sure we get to the bottom of the problems that our Hoosier veterans are having with the Veterans Choice Program. They gave too much to this country to be treated this way. We will solve these problems for Hoosier veterans and for every American veteran.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today to join the American people in celebrating Black History Month, but it should be noted that the immeasurable role African Americans have had in making the Nation the strong Nation that it is today could not be fully recognized in 1 short month. Black history is American history.

This February we highlight the titans of African-American history: Marylanders such as Harriet Ross Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and

Thurgood Marshall; icons, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Dr. Dorothy Height; and contemporary heroes, such as JOHN LEWIS and Mae Jemison.

We all celebrate the countless men and women whose names will never grace the history books or newspapers, those who fought each day for freedom and equality, those who pushed the limits of innovation, and those who endured and overcame hardships over the centuries.

As we celebrate, the struggle to ensure all Americans under the law are treated equally under the law rages on. I believe that as much as Black History Month is about reflecting on a rich past, it is also a time for all Americans to contemplate how to create a better future.

It is not enough simply to recognize the great contributions that African Americans have made, to honor those who have come before us; we must use Black History Month as a springboard to bring about positive change in America. I have a number of legislative priorities that relate directly to Black History Month and to building a better future.

I take pride in being from Baltimore for many years reasons. I know all my colleagues are familiar with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the NAACP for short. The NAACP celebrates its 107th anniversary on the 12th of month. The NAACP is headquartered in Baltimore City. The model of the NAACP is "One Nation Working Together, For Justice and Equality Everywhere." The motto is fitting because for the last 107 years, this is exactly what the NAACP and its more than half a million members have done. I have introduced legislation to honor the legacy of the civil rights champion, executive director of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Solicitor General, Supreme Court Justice, and Baltimorean Thurgood Marshall. The legislation would direct the National Park Service to determine the suitability of including his alma mater, Public School 103 in West Baltimore, as a national historic site.

The stories of Justice Thurgood Marshall reading the Constitution in the basement of P.S. 103 during detention typifies the American dream. Preserving P.S. 103 would not only be a fitting tribute to a great Marylander but also an enduring symbol of the importance of education in shaping civic-minded and great Americans. I understand that the legislation may be included in the Energy Policy Modernization Act that the Senate may consider again in the near future, and I hope the Senate will approve of this amendment.

I just mentioned education, and during Black History Month, I think there are few topics more important to pro-

moting equality than ensuring that all Americans have access to a high-quality, affordable education. In December of this past year, Congress enacted the Every Student Succeeds Act in a strong bipartisan manner. I hope the Members of this body can build on this momentum by confronting the pressing issues of college affordability and student debt.

I am a strong supporter of President Obama's America's College Promise proposal to provide 2 years of community college education tuition-free for responsible students. This proposal will allow students to earn the first 2 years of a 4-year degree or the critical skills necessary to enter the workforce without having to take on decades of debt before they even embark on their career.

While student debt is a critical problem for nearly 42 million Americans, paying for higher education can be especially difficult for African-American families. According to the Urban Institute, since the mid-2000s, African-American families on average have carried more student loan debt than White families. This is driven in large part by the growing share of African-American families who take on student debt. In 2013, 42 percent of African Americans ages 25 to 55 had student loan debt, compared with 28 percent of Whites. Because African-American families on average have less wealth and fewer private resources, they may be more likely to turn to loans to finance their education.

Education is the great equalizer in our society. As a nation, we cannot afford to price Americans of any race out of education and the opportunities a quality education provides.

The main higher education equalizer, the Federal Pell grant, provides its lowest share of college education costs since its enactment in 1965. As a result, more than 61 percent of the students who receive a Federal Pell grant award have to take out loans, compared to only 29 percent of their more affluent peers. With more than 60 percent of African-American undergraduate students utilizing the Federal Pell grant to pay for their education, this has placed an undue burden on African-American communities for decades. During Black History Month and beyond, I will continue to help support legislation to help ease the burden of paying for higher education.

In the last year, Baltimore and many cities across the United States have been inundated with news crews covering the deaths of unarmed Black men and women at the hands of police officers. Long before the unrest that gripped Baltimore last spring, I had introduced a number of bills seeking to empower communities and rebuild trust between the citizens and police departments. Events in Baltimore, Charleston, Cleveland, Chicago, and

many other places showed the urgent need for congressional action. That is why I introduced the BALTIMORE Act, which would help communities nationwide by building and lifting trust in order to multiply opportunities and racial equality.

The BALTIMORE Act is a package of legislation made up of bills that I have previously introduced, along with several new additions. Many provisions in the BALTIMORE Act enjoy bipartisan support. Title I of the BALTIMORE Act includes law enforcement performance provisions to help better train and equip law enforcement officers so they can better serve communities across the country.

The first provision contained within the BALTIMORE Act is the End Racial Profiling Act. The End Racial Profiling Act would end racial and discriminatory profiling by State and local law enforcement and require mandatory data collection and reporting. Think about this for a moment: In 2016 there is no national standard against law enforcement officers stopping someone merely because of his or her race. I am pleased that Maryland attorney general Brian Frosh recently issued guidelines prohibiting the use of discriminatory profiling by State and local law enforcement in Maryland. And the Attorney General of the United States has acted, but we need a national standard with the force of law that would prohibit the use of discriminatory profiling by any Federal, State, or local law enforcement officer.

The second provision deals with State and local accountability. It would require local law enforcement officials receiving Byrne JAG and COPS Hiring Program funds to submit officer training information to the Department of Justice. That information would include how officers are trained in the use of force, racial and ethnic bias, deescalating conflicts, and constructive engagement with the public.

The Police CAMERA Act would establish a pilot program to assist local law enforcement in purchasing or leasing body-worn cameras.

I am pleased that several provisions that are consistent with the BALTIMORE Act were included in the fiscal year 2016 appropriations measure enacted by Congress in December. The appropriations legislation directs the Department of Justice to swiftly devise and submit plans to improve training levels in use of force, identifying racial and ethnic bias, and conflict resolution for State and local law enforcement officers. It urges DOJ to partner with national law enforcement organizations to promote consistent standards for high-quality training and assessment and directs the agency to better collect State and local law enforcement data on the use of force.

I also want to mention that I introduced the Law Enforcement Trust and

Integrity Act, which would help local law enforcement agencies strengthen their department and combat officer misconduct.

The BALTIMORE Act deals with voting rights reform and civil rights restoration. The Democracy Restoration Act would make citizens who have returned from incarceration eligible to vote. At the State level, I was proud to see that the Maryland State Senate recently overturned our Governor's veto of a State statute expanding the right to vote for people who have served their time. I want to reduce recidivism and give people a stake in their communities. If you want to do that, they need to have a voice and a vote. The Democracy Restoration Act would also restore one's eligibility to serve on a Federal jury.

Congress should also enact legislation to restore the Voting Rights Act and reverse the damage done by the Supreme Court decisions that undermine the fundamental right to vote as Americans, to cast their votes for the Presidential primary elections of 2016.

The BALTIMORE Act also deals with sentencing reform. Over the years, sentencing in this country has been marred by racial disparities. The discrepancy between jail time for crack and powder cocaine users is only one such example. The RESET Act would reclassify specific low-level nonviolent drug possession felonies as misdemeanors and eliminate the aforementioned distinctions between crack and powder cocaine. I am pleased to be able to say that the sentencing reform is a bipartisan issue, and I look forward to working with any member who is willing to ensure that all Americans are treated equitably under the law. I hope the Senate will take up legislation to address some of these disparities in the very near future. Finally, the BALTIMORE Act addresses reentry and employment law reforms. I think this section is especially important because once someone has served his or her sentence, that person should be able to start anew and should get a fair shot to reenter the workforce.

I would be remiss if I did not mention Second Chance, Inc., a Baltimore non-profit that trains returning citizens in deconstruction, architectural salvage, and much more. I have had a chance to meet with the staff of Second Chance, and I can tell you that their reentry and job program should be a national model. I invite my colleagues to learn more about the good work that is being done only a short drive north of here.

I am pleased the administration has "banned the box" when it comes to the hiring of Federal contractors, so that ex-offenders get the second chance to rejoin our communities as productive and working members of society.

I am pleased the State of Maryland as well as Baltimore City, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County

have all "banned the box" in various forms, and I urge the private sector to follow suit. Helping ex-offenders find gainful employment is a win-win by reducing social services costs, increasing tax revenues, and making our communities safer.

Eliminating disparities in our justice system is critically important. It is just as important to eliminate disparities in the quality of health care available between groups of Americans. In Baltimore, living in certain African-American neighborhoods instead of a White neighborhood, separated by only a few miles, can shorten life expectancy by as much as 30 years—a full generation. That is unacceptable. As a Senator with a longstanding record of working to promote health equity, including my legislation establishing Offices of Minority Health throughout the Department of Health and Human Services and elevating the National Institutes of Health's National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities to an Institute, I will say we have made progress in shrinking disparities, but I am far from satisfied.

I am very encouraged to see that NIH received a \$2 billion increase in the fiscal year 2016 omnibus spending bill. That is very important. That is the largest increase NIH has received since 2003. The National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities received \$278 million. This is an increase of \$8.7 million over its fiscal year 2016 enacted level. Make no mistake, that money will help save lives.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, we have recently made health care coverage more accessible and affordable than it has been in decades. By reducing the number of uninsured Americans across the country, the ACA is working to address health inequalities. For instance, between 2013 and 2014, the percentage of uninsured African Americans fell by 6.8 percent. Also, because of the ACA, there is increased funding available for community health clinics, and 300,000 Marylanders, including more than 140,000 African Americans, are served by these clinics. Under the ACA preventive services, which are critical to the early detection and treatment of many diseases that disproportionately affect minorities, are now free for 76 million Americans, including 1.5 million Marylanders.

Some of what Congress can do to shrink disparities is not limited to health care policymaking. Recent events in Flint, MI, have brought to light the need to focus on environmental justice issues. Flint is a case study in what happens when environmental stewardship and water infrastructure needs are ignored. It is also an example of how pollution can hurt minority populations in a severe way. Flint's population is about 100,000 people. Roughly 56 percent are African American. The residents of Flint will

have to live with the complications of lead poisoning for the rest of their lives.

What disturbs me the most—both as a grandfather and a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee—is the very real possibility that children may have suffered irreversible damage to their developing brains from exposure to lead in drinking water. Exposure even to low levels of lead can profoundly affect children's behavior, growth rates, and their intelligence over time. I might point out that Freddie Gray, the person who was killed in Baltimore, had high levels of lead in his blood. Elevated levels in the bloodstream may cause learning disabilities and other developmental issues.

I wish to quote from an article in the New York Times, January 29 of this year:

Emails released by the office of [Michigan] Governor Rick Snyder last week referred to a resident who said she was told by a state nurse in January 2015, regarding her son's elevated blood level, "It is just a few IQ points. . . . It is not the end of the world."

It is a crisis when we deny a child his or her full potential by exposing them to lead. This crisis could have been avoided. It is going to affect an entire generation of children in Flint to varying degrees.

Sadly, Flint is not alone among the cities in which pollution is harming African Americans at disproportionately alarming rates. Nationally, African Americans are 20 percent more likely to have asthma versus non-Hispanic Whites. According to a study in the Annual Review of Public Health, many African-American children live in more heavily polluted areas. Living in urban centers increases one's exposure to traffic and industrial pollution, which promotes a greater sensitivity to allergens.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, Black History Month is about reflecting on a rich path but also a time for all Americans to contemplate how to create a better future. The Senate is capable of great things. Landmark bills like the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968 all passed through this Chamber. I call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in both Houses of Congress to transfer the good will and kind words of Black History Month into meaningful legislation to help African Americans and all Americans.

I presented only a small portion of my legislative priorities today. I know other Senators may have different ways of approaching some of these same challenges. In honor of the countless men and women who have contributed to making this country great, let us work together to get something done for the American people.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 443, Robert McKinnon Califf, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, of South Carolina, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Lamar Alexander, Bill Cassidy, Chuck Grassley, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Richard Burr, Tim Scott, Orrin G. Hatch, Michael B. Enzi, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Cory Gardner, Roger F. Wicker, Thom Tillis, Roy Blunt.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, at 5:30 p.m., on February 22, the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Califf nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

REMEMBERING PETTY OFFICER JOHN BALDWIN

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a World War II veteran and an American hero—PO3 John B. Baldwin. Petty Officer Baldwin was a member of the United States Navy Reserve and sailed on the USS *St. Louis*. Tragically, on February 14, 1944, he died as a result of enemy fire during the Battle of the Green Islands.

Petty Officer Baldwin's sister—Ms. Irene Baldwin Cox of Beaver, UT—recently informed me that her brother had earned prestigious military medals, which neither he nor his family ever received. As a result of John's dedicated service during the battle that besieged the USS *St. Louis*, he earned the Purple Heart, the World War II Victory Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal with two Bronze Star appurtenances, and a Combat Action Ribbon. Thankfully, the military has since verified John's medals and will soon present them to the Baldwin family.

As we approach the anniversary of this historic battle, we should remember the challenges Petty Officer Baldwin and his fellow soldiers faced on that fateful day. At dawn, American fighters sighted six Aichi D3A dive bombers, which approached the *St. Louis* and dropped six bombs, killing 23 sailors and wounding 20 more. Petty Officer Baldwin was among the fallen.

The Baldwin family has always been proud of John's service. We owe this family a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid. It is only fitting that we present John's siblings with the medals he earned for his heroism. I am grateful for the assistance of the USS *St. Louis* CL-49 Association and the National Personnel Records Center for helping me secure these medals for the Baldwin family.

I hold our Nation's veterans in the highest regard. Because of men and women like Petty Officer Baldwin, our Nation enjoys the full blessings of liberty. I am pleased that these medals have finally found their rightful home. May they ever serve as a testament to John's valor and his love of freedom.

This Valentine's Day, I intend to spend a moment reflecting on the bravery of our sailors who served aboard the USS *St. Louis*. Today I honor them for their courage, their selflessness, and their sacrifice.

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE EUGENE SILER, JR.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to recognize a celebrated Kentuckian who has received a great honor. Federal appeals court judge Eugene Siler, Jr., a fixture in his commu-

nity, who has served on the bench for over 40 years, has received the "Tri-County 2016 Leader of the Year" award from the Leadership Tri-County organization in Kentucky.

Leadership Tri-County focuses on civic, business, and community leadership in Laurel, Knox, and Whitley Counties in southeastern Kentucky. A nonprofit organization founded in 1987, it identifies potential, emerging, and current leaders from the three counties and nurtures their continued development.

Judge Siler is a native of Williamsburg and earned his bachelor of arts at Vanderbilt University. He has a law degree from the University of Virginia and has two graduate law degrees from the University of Virginia and Georgetown University.

Judge Siler served as an Active-Duty officer in the U.S. Navy from 1958 to 1960 and later retired as a commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve.

Judge Siler practiced law privately alongside his father in Williamsburg and was then elected Whitley County attorney, an office he held from 1965 to 1970. In 1970, he was appointed U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky by President Richard Nixon.

In 1975, he was appointed as a judge for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern and Western Districts of Kentucky by President Gerald Ford. In 1991, he was appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the sixth circuit by President George H.W. Bush.

Today Judge Siler is a senior judge on that court. He was awarded the "1992 Outstanding Judge of the Year Award" by the Kentucky Bar Association, and that same year, he was sent to Lithuania by the U.S. State Department to advise and assist the judiciary in that country as they transitioned from a communist to a democratic system. He also traveled to Albania at the behest of the U.S. Justice Department to advise that country's judges on ethics and discipline.

Judge Siler is married to the former Chris Minnich. They have two sons, Gene Siler III and Adam T. Siler. I am sure Judge Siler's family is proud of him for receiving this award and for all that he has accomplished. I want to thank him for his many years of public service, and I know my colleagues join me in congratulating Judge Siler on his receipt of the "Tri-County 2016 Leader of the Year" award.

An area newspaper, the News Journal, published an article about Judge Siler receiving his award.

I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the News Journal, Feb. 10, 2016]

WILLIAMSBURG NATIVE EUGENE SILER PICKED
AS LEADER OF THE YEAR

(By Mark White)

A federal judge and U.S. Navy veteran has been selected as Leadership Tri-County's 2016 Leader of the Year.

Eugene Siler Jr., a senior judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, said he was notified about a month ago that he was receiving the award.

"I was honored by it and humbled by it," Siler said Monday afternoon.

Leadership Tri-County is a non-profit organization established in 1987 as an educational program designed to identify potential, emerging, and current leaders from Knox, Laurel and Whitley counties and to nurture their continued development into the leaders our area needs now and in the future.

Past recipients of the Leader of the Year Award have included: Dr. James Taylor, U.S. Rep. Hal Rogers, U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell, Terry Forcht, Nelda Barton-Collings, Gene Huff and last year's winner Dr. Michael Colegrove.

"I know a lot of people who have gotten it before. I feel like I am in very good company, am pleased that they are giving it to me and I will do my best to live up to it," Siler said.

Siler, a Williamsburg native, served in the U.S. Navy on active duty from 1958 to 1960, and later retired as a commander in the U.S. Naval Reserves after 26 years of service.

He began his law practice in 1964 alongside his father. He served as Whitley County Attorney from 1965 until 1970 when President Richard Nixon appointed him as United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky.

In 1975, President Gerald R. Ford appointed Siler as a United States District Judge for the Eastern and Western Districts of Kentucky.

In September 1991, President George Bush appointed Siler to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

Siler will be honored during Leadership Tri-County's Leader of the Year Banquet, which will be held on Feb. 23 at the London Community Center.

There will be a reception at 5:30 p.m. followed by a dinner at 6 p.m.

During the banquet, there will be a memorial tribute to G.W. Griffin and Bill Brooks.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last Friday, America celebrated the 23rd anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act—landmark legislation that transformed American workplaces for the better.

I am deeply proud to have voted for this bill in 1993 when I served in the House of Representatives. This bipartisan legislation was a major victory for many working families, providing workers the ability to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for family needs.

This meant working parents could take care of their newborns without fear of losing their jobs and sources of income. Workers could care for an ailing family member or care for their own serious health conditions without having to worry about whether they would be able to come back to their careers.

Before the Family and Medical Leave Act, being a working parent meant having to choose between your job and taking care of yourself and your family. Today, thanks to this legislation, this attitude has changed for many families.

Since 1993, American workers have used the leave provided by the Family and Medical Leave Act more than 200 million times. This legislation has helped balance workplace demands with family needs for millions of hard-working men and women across the country. And there is no doubt that these are achievements we should all be proud of.

But we need to do more.

As families change, so should the laws designed to help them—our workforce, our economy, and our family responsibilities have changed dramatically over the past two decades. Women now make up half the workforce, and many families depend on two incomes. Family caregiving needs are on the rise, and both men and women provide critical care.

But according to a recent Department of Labor survey, only 60 percent of employees have access to FMLA leave—and 8 out of 10 eligible workers cannot afford to take leave when they need it.

For too many Americans, unpaid leave is not an option—it is unaffordable. Just 13 percent of the workforce has paid family leave through their employers, and less than 40 percent have personal medical leave through an employer-provided disability program.

It is clear that we need to do more to ensure families can earn the support they need. I am proud that both Senator MURRAY and Senator GILLIBRAND have stepped up and introduced legislation this Congress to address these shortcomings. I hope we will continue to see support for these bills and get more of my colleagues from across the aisle to talk about these concerns.

The reality is ensuring paid family and sick leave would help keep new parents and family caregivers in the workforce and boost their earnings and savings overtime. Studies have already shown that mothers who are able to take paid maternity leave are more likely to return to their jobs and stay in the workforce. That just means more money for families to spend and put back into our economy.

Expanding paid family and sick leave makes moral sense, and it makes economic sense. It is about time we get it done.

As we mark the anniversary of this groundbreaking legislation, I hope we take the time to recommit ourselves to the values that inspired this law. Let's continue to lead on this issue and expand paid family and health leave to cover more families.

I will continue to fight and protect the benefits provided by the Federal

and Medical Leave Act and help ensure fairer workplaces and healthier, more secure families.

RECOGNIZING HILL FARMSTEAD BREWERY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as a Vermonter, it is with great pride that I call to the Senate's attention the success of one of Vermont's fine businesses, Hill Farmstead Brewery, which was recently named the best brewer in the world by RateBeer for the second year in a row and for the third time in 4 years. The brewery's success is a testament to the hard work and dedication of founder and brewer Shaun Hill, whose philosophy revolves around brewing beer as an art rather than solely as a business. His drive to brew the best beer in the world has brought accolades and interviews in national publications from Vanity Fair to the New York Times; yet he remains staunchly opposed to following the path of most conventional breweries. Rather than focusing on boundless production, his business model gives value to what is created with integrity, grit, and perseverance.

Shaun's approach sets the Hill Farmstead Brewery apart from other, more commercial enterprises. Its location in Greensboro, VT, is situated in the Hill family's former dairy barn, surrounded by dirt roads and rolling hills. Despite its remote geography, beer lovers come from far and wide to experience the world-renowned beers, to take in the beautiful setting, and to buy some beer to take home. Because a visit to Hill Farmstead is a unique and intimate experience, it is no surprise that it is on the bucket list of beer lovers around the world.

As members of his team fill orders, it is not uncommon to see Shaun buzzing around the brewery, moving grain or stopping to talk with visitors. Even if they do not know it at the time, these visitors are taking with them something extremely special. Bottled with the beer is a taste of something greater: Vermont values, and a celebration of life, initiative, and hard work.

Experiencing dramatic growth in the last decade, the craft beers made at Vermont's 40 breweries have a reputation as being some of the best in the world. It is not uncommon for people to drive from New York City, Boston, or even Washington, DC, to spend a few hours or a weekend visiting Vermont breweries. So it is wonderful to watch an entrepreneur like Shaun, with such a passion for his work, grow his idea into a valued and sought after product from all over the country. While many Vermonters still feel the effects of a recovering economy, there are a lot of good things happening in our State thanks to people like him.

When Shaun opened his brewery 5 and a half years ago, he said his goal

was to brew the best beer in the world. Well, he achieved that goal and in an impressive short amount of time. Its consistent and exemplary performance over the years, combined with success in creating several phenomenal beers across various styles, have this brewery to shine above more than 22,500 other breweries worldwide. The distinct and nuanced beers pay homage to the art of brewing and to the ambition of their creator. They are a testament to the quality products produced in Vermont, by Vermonters.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION RESOURCES

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD a copy of my remarks last week to the National Council of Higher Education Resources.

The material follows:

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION RESOURCES

I was smiling a little bit when you said that I probably knew more than anybody in Congress about student loans. That is probably true, but that may not be saying very much. This is a complex subject. And although I have been in and around it for a long time, I still spend most of my time listening and learning from you and others who deal with how we help students take advantage of the tremendous opportunities they have in this country.

I'm sure some of you were up late last night watching politics. I went to bed early, but 20 years ago I was right in the middle of it. When you have the privilege of running for president, you find out that you spend most of your time hoping nobody says to you what they said to the late Mo Udall—the congressman from Arizona—when he was walking into a barbershop in New Hampshire and he stuck out his hand and said “I'm Mo Udall running for president,” and the barber says, “yeah I know, we were just laughing about that yesterday.”

I watched with interest the results this morning—my sideline view is that Marco Rubio is somebody to watch in the next week. Twenty years ago, about two weeks before the New Hampshire primary, I was at 10 percent in New Hampshire polls, and I came in third in Iowa as Marco did last night. 26% Dole 23% Buchanan and I got 18. That 18 was such a surprise I ended up on the cover of Time magazine and was in first in New Hampshire within the week. So things can change rapidly, and what happens in the 8 days between the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary should be very interesting—I have no idea what will happen.

I do think that 20 years ago it was said to be 3 out of Iowa, and 2 out of New Hampshire. And the financial limits on fundraising were such that it made that come true because you could only raise money from people up to \$1000 a person. You can imagine trying to raise millions of dollars at \$1000 per person. You can't start a business that way, you can't start a college that way and you can't have a presidential campaign that way. So it was 3 out of Iowa and 2 out of New Hampshire.

I think this time they are going to carry 4 out of New Hampshire. And one reason is because the rules have changed about fundraising. So hopefully more Americans will have a chance to participate in the system and will get a chance to run through the southern primaries and on into the convention. So it ought to be an interesting year.

I'd like to talk just a minute about higher education and some of the things that I hope we could do. Then I'll be glad to take up to 3 questions you'd like to ask me. I'll be glad and try to respond to them if there's something you want to say to me. First—thank you for the work you do to help students have a chance to participate in what still is the best system of colleges and universities in the world. We have millions of families every year who still fill out their student aid application forms. It's a large number.

Here is what our committee, which is the Senate's education committee, will be doing. As Ron said, for the last year our major priority was elementary and secondary education. We tackled fixing No Child Left Behind which was 7 years overdue, and filled with partisan problems. It's like higher education but even more so. In fact—with elementary and secondary education it's like going to a University of Tennessee football game—you've got 100,000 people in the stands and every single one of them played football and is an expert and knows what plays to call and usually wants to call it. Well it's the same thing with elementary and secondary education—you have 50 million students, and 3.5 million teachers and parents. And everybody has got an idea—whether it's transgender bathrooms—they all want to put it in the bill. But all these things could sink the bill in a minute. And I will compliment Senator Patty Murray of Washington because she and I worked together and we got a result and the president to sign the bill. Fundamentally, it was a major change because it basically says “sure we want to know how the students are doing so the federal government will require you to take 17 tests between the 3rd grade and senior year.”

Then you report that to see how the students are doing. And you disaggregate it so you can see if the African American kids or the white kids or the Latino kids are being left behind. But after that, the decisions about what to do about the results of the tests—if you're a 4th grade teacher in Franklin—that's your business. That's the state of Tennessee's business. So if you want the common core academic standard you can have it. If you don't want it then you don't have to have it. That's not anything the United States Secretary of Education is going to tell you. It's not going to tell you what the test should be, how to evaluate the test, what the accountability system should be and how to evaluate the teachers.

People assume that because I have been a big fan of evaluating teachers as Governor that I'll come up here and try to make everybody do it. It's just the reverse with me. I think people are fed up with Washington telling them so much about what to do—whether it's elementary and secondary education or in higher education. My goal with higher education is to try to deregulate it. Try to take the federal rules and regulations which just piled up through 8 different reauthorizations of the Higher Education Act, and simplify them and make them more fair. Several years ago I got an appropriations bill; a study for how to do that with research, and the head of the University of Texas at Austin, chancellor, former chancellor now, had them update me a report. I

asked the chancellor of Maryland and the chancellor at Vanderbilt to lead a group of higher education folks to recommend how we could make higher education more simple and effective: 59 recommendations. A few of them the Secretary himself can do. As many as we can, maybe 3 dozen of the rest of those, we hope to put in a piece of legislation that Sen. Mikulski and Bennet from the Democratic side, and Sen. Burr and from the Republican side will introduce. They all will help to save the time and money from this jungle of redtape the study would have.

Another simplification we would like to do is with the FAFSA. You know better than almost anybody that it's not necessary to have 108 questions. In fact we had testimony before our committee from people that come from many different directions that said basically you only need 2 questions. One was “the size of your family?” and one was “your amount of income.” Well, maybe we don't need only 2 questions, but we need a lot fewer questions. I mean you have 20 million families filling that out every year. That's an enormous savings of time and money. And if we simplify and demystify the forms to some degree more students will take advantage of the student aid enrollment. The president of Southwest Community College in Memphis told me he thinks he loses 1,500 students every year just from the complexity of the FAFSA. And so we are experimenting in a whole variety of ways. Parents and grandparents asking, “why do I have to give this info to the government again, they've already got it on my FAFSA?” Well, good question. Maybe all you need to do is give permission to the IRS to send it over and you fill out only a few questions. So, simplifying for FAFSA is another thing we have a bipartisan agreement on.

We'd like to reduce the number of student loans. I'd like to see a single undergraduate loan. I think students would be less likely to over borrow and less likely to make mistakes. And we could use the savings from that to provide another thing that I think would be helpful and that's the year-round Pell Grant. We have ridiculously complex student aid and student aid repayment terms. I saw the other day, Bernie Sanders had some person up there holding up a sign that said she had \$90K in student loans and she was paying half of her income to pay it off every year. Well, as an undergraduate loan she doesn't have to do that.

If she knew what the existing income-based repayment programs are, she wouldn't have to pay half of her income toward loans, she would only have to pay 10 or 15% of her income towards it. If she had been working for public service she might have it forgiven. After 20 to 25 years it would be forgiven. So there's a lot of misinformation about student loans and about repayment and our goal is to cut it down to two. To have a 10 year repayment plan and have an income based repayment plan. So you would have two choices.

Fundamentally, if students knew what their options were and that they were that simple to understand, we'd probably have a lot more students take advantage of those repayment plans and on the front end a lot more students going to college. There are other steps we'd like to take.

The ones I have just described have a lot of bipartisan agreement. We'd like to allow students to use their income from two years ago, called the prior-prior year, to use to fill out their financial aid forms. The administration agrees with us on that. Other areas where we may be able to have a bipartisan

agreement on in the Senate are campus safety and sexual assault, accreditation reform, giving institutions more authority to counsel students on how much to borrow as a way to reduce over borrowing. Having institutions have some skin in the game (or risk sharing) as a way to reduce over borrowing. So those are some of the areas where we should be able to have bipartisan support.

Now what can we actually get done this year?—My goal is as I've said to the group earlier, the tax payers will pay our salaries this year, and I think we ought to just continue to work. Our number one priority is oversight on the elementary and secondary education bill we passed last year. The bill's not worth the paper it's printed on unless it's implemented properly and I don't want the Department of Education granting back to itself all the decision making authority we pushed out of Washington and to the states and classroom teachers. So we're going to be watching that very closely and having a number of hearings.

Number two—we have a very important biomedical innovation research bill. There's never been a more important time for scientific research. The House has passed, the president's interested in precision medicine and cancer research. We have a genius, Francis Collins, heading the National Institutes of Health. We want to do our part. So that's going to take some time.

The third of three top priorities is reauthorization of Higher Education Act.

Maybe we can do it all this year. This year is challenging because it's not only an election year, it's a presidential election year. So we have some really interesting proposals on higher education from some of the candidates. You've heard those. And those could box things up in the Senate as we try to deal with them.

But we're going to go ahead and take some of these proposals that I've just described, and bring them through our committee, pass them in the House of Representatives, and look for opportunities to bring them to the Senate floor.

I'm really proud of what we did in elementary and secondary education. Because I think it's really good policy. It's carefully written, it was vetted by everybody who is involved in the education system, and I think it will govern elementary and secondary education for the next 15–20 years because it will be difficult to change.

I'd like to do the same thing for higher education. Over the last eight reauthorizations, the stack of regulations has gone like that. I'd like to start the stack of regulations going downward like that. I'd like your advice as we begin to do it.●

RECOGNIZING RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK DEBATE TEAM

● Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the Rutgers University-Newark debate team for celebrating its victory at the National Debate Tournament at the University of Missouri Kansas City, UMKC.

The Rutgers University-Newark debate team, founded in 2008, is sponsored by the School of Public Affairs and Administration and the Office of the Chancellor, Newark. They have competed in tournaments hosted by Harvard, the U.S. Military Academy, the U.S. Naval Academy, and James Madison University and outranked schools

such as Boston College, Dartmouth, and New York University. Director of debate, Christopher Kozak, has led the team to 3 consecutive years as the 1st-ranked team in the Northeast; and in the 2014–2015 year, the team was the 14th-ranked team nationally.

Since 2011, the Rutgers University-Newark debate team has hosted an ever-growing collegiate tournament every year and a high school tournament in collaboration with the Newark Debate Academy. They support debate from the elementary to high school level by offering internships as assistant coaches at many local schools. RU-N debate team has also participated in a series of public debates, including a debate I participated in about student debt hosted at Rutgers University-Newark.

From September 11 to 15, the Rutgers University-Newark debate team sent two teams to the Baby Jo Memorial Debate Tournament at UMKC, the first national-level debate tournament of the season. Programs from the University of Texas, University of Kansas, Oklahoma University, the University of Iowa, and others participated in the tournament as well.

The team of Nicole Nave and Devane Murphy won six of eight of their preliminary debates and were awarded 6th-place speaker and 11th-place speaker, respectively.

The Rutgers University-Newark debate team entered the elimination rounds as the seventh-ranked team and continued to the final round to face the first-ranked team in the Nation, UC Berkeley. By a 2-to-1 decision, the RU-N team defeated UC Berkeley to be crowned champion. Going into the 2015–2016 season, this means the Rutgers University-Newark team will be ranked the No. 1 team in the Nation.

I am proud to acknowledge this landmark achievement in the Rutgers University-Newark Debate Team's history and its efforts to support debate at all age levels.

Thank you.

TRIBUTE TO BEVERLY ANDERSON

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Beverly Anderson of Conrad, MT, for her incredible generosity and service to the people of her community. Beverly has a huge heart for helping those in need and has truly cared for those around her.

Beverly previously worked as an emergency dispatcher before taking on the many volunteer roles that she now serves in. She is head of her community's Salvation Army, serves at the food bank every Friday, and volunteers for the local abused spouses advocate groups, DFS and CASA.

She has a heart for children as well. Every week, she plans crafts and other afterschool activities for area students. Beverly prioritizes spending time help-

ing underprivileged children and, every year, coordinates local efforts to gather school supplies for those in need.

As a woman of faith, Beverly regularly takes individuals in recovery from drug abuse with her to church and out to lunch. She visits and prays for those who are sick and dying in her community and takes a special effort to cook food and provide encouragement for the bereaved families.

During the holiday season, Beverly is known to secretly shop for children of families in need and gathers people across town to participate in a "knock and drop" with presents. She also delivers turkey dinners to families at both Thanksgiving and Christmas. A proud parent of two soldiers, Beverly gladly promotes every veteran activity that takes place in her community and helps the VFW send gift boxes to soldiers every Christmas.

I am humbled by Beverly's heart for service and her selfless commitment to putting the needs of others before herself. She is truly a standout in her community and has made Montana a much better place. It is with deep gratitude that I honor her today.●

REMEMBERING JESSE DANNELS

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I would like to honor Jesse Dannels—a young man with a kind smile and a strong leader in all aspects of life, who was lost from us on February 7, 2016, at the age of 18.

Jesse came into this world on November 29, 1997, to Robert and Ruth Dannels of Chinook, MT. Jesse's motivation and happy spirit impacted everyone he met. His love for sports was evident in his swimming, football, track, and wrestling. He excelled at everything he did. His teammates were not only friends, but brothers. Jesse's willingness to always help others was inspiring. He was continually motivating others to do their best, and he was there to cheer them on. He will be missed by all who knew him.

Sugarbeeter Nation, I extend my condolences to Jesse's family, his football and wrestling brothers and coaches, to Chinook High School, and to the entire community of Chinook. May God rest his soul.●

TRIBUTE TO LARRY GIANCHETTA

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, Larry Gianchetta, the dean of the University of Montana School of Business, has announced that he will be retiring at the end of this school year. Dean Gianchetta has been a part of the University of Montana staff for 41 years and has served as dean of the School of Business for the past 30 years.

Dean Gianchetta has been an inspiration not only for his staff, but also for his students. Dean Gianchetta is an enthusiastic teacher who has instilled an

excitement for learning and a commitment to service in his staff and students. He created positive environment for his staff and students, making experiences at the University of Montana enjoyable for all.

Dean Gianchetta made sure the school of business could support students for generations to come through its scholarship program. He worked tirelessly to promote the University of Montana School of Business Administration name to gain the financial support needed to educate Montana's next generation of leaders. His dedication not only resulted in donations for the school's scholarship program, but also funding for new school buildings, including the Gallagher Business Building, which opened in 1996, and the Gilkey Center for Executive Education, which opened earlier this year.

One of Dean Gianchetta's most admired accomplishments is the founding of the American Indian Business Leaders. It began at the University of Montana and, today, has grown to be a national organization that includes 76 high schools, colleges, and universities. Dean Gianchetta has also helped the University of Montana develop new college majors in marketing and management, a minor in business program, and six certificates in several different areas.

Dean Larry Gianchetta does not boast about the accomplishments he has made while at the University of Montana School of Business, but they can be clearly seen not only on the University of Montana campus, but also throughout the country. I may be a Bobcat, but I recognize the tremendous impact this Grizzly has made on our State and our Nation. He will be greatly missed at the University of Montana, but I am confident that the legacy he's left will be carried on for years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MIRANDA CROSS AND KATE KROLICKI

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate two students, Miss Miranda Cross and Miss Kate Krolicki, who have gone above and beyond in their academic pursuits and were selected to represent the Silver State as delegates of the 54th annual United States Senate Youth Program, USSYP. This is an incredible accolade, recognizing the very best students across the Nation, and I extend my most sincere congratulations to these two Nevadans.

USSYP was created in 1962 to bring excellent students to our Nation's Capital to gain knowledge and insight on the three branches of government. Every year, this program brings 104 outstanding students to Washington, DC, for a weeklong program highlighting the Federal Government. Students also receive a \$5,000 under-

graduate college scholarship to encourage them to continue on in their scholastic pursuits. Students selected for the program generally fall in the top 1 percent academically within their State. Both Miss Krolicki and Miss Cross have excelled in their academic ambitions and are certainly deserving of the opportunity to attend this weeklong program.

Miss Cross is a student at Reno High School and serves on the Washoe County School District's student advisory board. She is a proud member of the Future Business Leaders of America, taking three State championship titles and serving as a national finalist. She is also the founder of Girls in STEM. Miss Cross is a role model to her peers, and I am thankful to have such an ambitious Nevadan representing our State at this prestigious event.

Miss Krolicki attends George Whittell High School and serves her peers in a number of student activities. She is president of her senior class, a member of the student issues committee, president of the National Honor Society and Key Club, and captain of the varsity soccer team. I am grateful that Miss Krolicki served the State of Nevada as an intern in my office last summer. She is truly an inspiration to her peers and future generations of Nevadans.

Both students are shining examples of what hard work and determination can accomplish. They should be proud of their selection in this competitive process. Today I ask my colleagues to join me and all Nevadans in congratulating both Miss Cross and Miss Krolicki in this achievement and in wishing them well as they represent Nevada at USSYP 2016.●

TRIBUTE TO TINA QUIGLEY

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Tina Quigley for all of her hard work and dedication to the State of Nevada. Ms. Quigley has gone above and beyond in her role with the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada, RTC, bringing efficient transportation methods to the region and driving economic development.

Ms. Quigley was raised in Petaluma, CA, and initially planned to have a career in aviation. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in aviation business and planning from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, she moved to Las Vegas and began working for former Clark County director of aviation Bob Broadbent at McCarran International Airport. Ms. Quigley began her career with RTC in 2005, accepting the position of deputy general manager. In 2012, she was selected to lead the commission as general manager.

Since accepting the position, Ms. Quigley has led numerous projects at RTC that have greatly benefitted the State. These projects have led to vast

improvements to the area's transit system, bringing greater accessibility to the local community and the many tourists traveling throughout the region. Under her leadership, RTC launched a transit pass program for university students and staff, eight new rapid transit and express bus routes, and a residential route. The commission has also added hundreds of new bus shelters, three transit terminals with commuter parking lots, and a platinum LEED-certified transit hub in Las Vegas. As a result of her successful initiatives, RTC was named one of the most efficient transit providers in the Nation.

She has also served as a voice to the Nevada legislature, advocating on behalf of southern Nevada's transportation and infrastructure needs. Recently, Ms. Quigley spearheaded work within the State to move forward on the future Interstate 11, I-11. I am proud to have led the way in Washington, DC, on legislation including the extension of I-11, which was signed into law. Developing critical infrastructure in our State is the first step toward long-term job growth and sustainability, and I am thankful to have Nevadans like Ms. Quigley working as an ally in the fight to complete this initiative.

Over the last decade, Ms. Quigley has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to bringing southern Nevada the transportation and infrastructure tools it needs. The Silver State is fortunate to have Ms. Quigley working to build a greater and more accessible Nevada. I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in thanking Ms. Quigley for her many contributions to our State. I wish her well as she continues her efforts to address southern Nevada's transportation needs.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:11 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3293. An act to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest.

H.R. 4470. An act to amend the Safe Water Drinking Act with respect to the requirements related to lead in drinking water, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 111. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust.

The message further announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 907) to improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The message also announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1428) to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3293. An act to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. COLLINS, from the Special Committee on Aging:

Special Report entitled "Fighting Fraud: U.S. Senate Aging Committee Identifies Top 10 Scams Targeting our Nation's Seniors" (Rept. No. 114-208).

By Mr. GRASSLEY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 483. A bill to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2540. A bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 2541. A bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to clarify provisions en-

acted by the Captive Wildlife Safety Act to further the conservation of prohibited wildlife species; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself and Mr. KING):

S. 2542. A bill to provide for alternative and updated certification requirements for participation under Medicaid State plans under title XIX of the Social Security Act in the case of certain facilities treating infants under one year of age with neonatal abstinence syndrome, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MANCHIN:

S. 2543. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to amend the mission statement of the Food and Drug Administration; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2544. A bill to increase public safety by punishing and deterring firearms trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 2545. A bill to modify the requirements of the Department of Veterans Affairs for reimbursing health care providers under section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. 2546. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require certain plans providing for nonqualified deferred compensation to require repayment of benefits to the employer in the event of extraordinary governmental assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 2547. A bill to increase the maximum penalty for unfair and deceptive practices relating to advertising of the costs of air transportation; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2548. A bill to establish the 400 Years of African-American History Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. ENZI, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. HATCH):

S. 2549. A bill to require the Transportation Security Administration to conduct security screening at certain airports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself, Mr. FLAKE, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2550. A bill to repeal the jury duty exemption for elected officials of the legislative branch; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COONS, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CASEY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2551. A bill to help prevent acts of genocide and mass atrocities, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States civilian capacities to prevent and mitigate such crises; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2552. A bill to amend section 875(c) of title 18, United States Code, to include an intent requirement; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 2553. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require multi-line telephone systems to have a default configuration that permits users to directly initiate a call to 9-1-1 without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 2554. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON):

S. 2555. A bill to provide opportunities for broadband investment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 2556. A bill to amend the Trade Act of 1974 to authorize a State to reimburse certain costs incurred by the State in providing training to workers after a petition for certification of eligibility for trade adjustment assistance has been filed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. HATCH):

S. 2557. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to repeal the suspension of eligibility for grants, loans, and work assistance for drug-related offenses; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 282

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 282, a bill to provide taxpayers with an annual report disclosing the cost and performance of Government programs and areas of duplication among them, and for other purposes.

S. 491

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 491, a bill to lift the trade embargo on Cuba.

S. 497

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to allow Americans to earn paid sick time so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families.

S. 498

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 498, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

S. 524

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Illinois

(Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

S. 843

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 843, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

S. 968

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 968, a bill to require the Commissioner of Social Security to revise the medical and evaluation criteria for determining disability in a person diagnosed with Huntington's Disease and to waive the 24-month waiting period for Medicare eligibility for individuals disabled by Huntington's Disease.

S. 1239

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1239, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act with respect to the ethanol waiver for the Reid vapor pressure limitations under that Act.

S. 1566

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1566, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to require group and individual health insurance coverage and group health plans to provide for coverage of oral anticancer drugs on terms no less favorable than the coverage provided for anticancer medications administered by a health care provider.

S. 1624

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1624, a bill to provide predictability and certainty in the tax law, create jobs, and encourage investment.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1913

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Arkansas

(Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1913, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish programs to prevent prescription drug abuse under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, a bill to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance.

S. 2218

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2218, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care.

S. 2248

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2248, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to coordinate Federal congenital heart disease research efforts and to improve public education and awareness of congenital heart disease, and for other purposes.

S. 2292

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2292, a bill to reform laws relating to small public housing agencies, and for other purposes.

S. 2373

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2373, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 2423

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2423, a bill making appro-

priations to address the heroin and opioid drug abuse epidemic for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

S. 2496

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2496, a bill to provide flexibility for the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to increase the total amount of general business loans that may be guaranteed under section 7(a) of the Small Business Act.

S. 2499

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2499, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve access to health care through expanded health savings accounts, and for other purposes.

S. 2517

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2517, a bill to require a report on United States strategy to combat terrorist use of social media, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 99

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 99, a resolution calling on the Government of Iran to follow through on repeated promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

S. RES. 368

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 368, a resolution supporting efforts by the Government of Colombia to pursue peace and the end of the country's enduring internal armed conflict and recognizing United States support for Colombia at the 15th anniversary of Plan Colombia.

AMENDMENT NO. 3069

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3069 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2540. A bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2540

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Fair Day in Court for Kids Act of 2016”.

SEC. 2. IMPROVING IMMIGRATION COURT EFFICIENCY AND REDUCING COSTS BY INCREASING ACCESS TO LEGAL INFORMATION.

(a) APPOINTMENT OF COUNSEL IN CERTAIN CASES; RIGHT TO REVIEW CERTAIN DOCUMENTS IN REMOVAL PROCEEDINGS.—Section 240(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1229a(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking “, at no expense to the Government,”; and

(ii) by striking the comma at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and (C) as subparagraphs (D) and (E), respectively;

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

“(B) the Attorney General may appoint or provide counsel, at Government expense, to aliens in immigration proceedings;

“(C) the alien shall, at the beginning of the proceedings or as expeditiously as possible, automatically receive a complete copy of all relevant documents in the possession of the Department of Homeland Security, including all documents (other than documents protected from disclosure by privilege, including national security information referred to in subparagraph (D), law enforcement sensitive information, and information prohibited from disclosure pursuant to any other provision of law) contained in the file maintained by the Government that includes information with respect to all transactions involving the alien during the immigration process (commonly referred to as an ‘A-file’), and all documents pertaining to the alien that the Department of Homeland Security has obtained or received from other government agencies, unless the alien waives the right to receive such documents by executing a knowing and voluntary written waiver in a language that he or she understands fluently;”;

(D) in subparagraph (D), as redesignated, by striking “, and” and inserting “; and”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(8) FAILURE TO PROVIDE ALIEN REQUIRED DOCUMENTS.—In the absence of a waiver under paragraph (4)(C), a removal proceeding may not proceed until the alien—

“(A) has received the documents as required under such paragraph; and

“(B) has been provided meaningful time to review and assess such documents.”.

(b) CLARIFICATION REGARDING THE AUTHORITY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO APPOINT COUNSEL TO ALIENS IN IMMIGRATION PROCEEDINGS.—Section 292 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1362) is amended—

(1) by striking “In any” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In any”;

(2) in subsection (a), as redesignated—

(A) by striking “(at no expense to the Government)”;

(B) by striking “he shall” and inserting “the person shall”;

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) ACCESS TO COUNSEL.—The Attorney General may appoint or provide counsel to aliens in any proceeding conducted under section 235, 236, 238, 240, or 241 or any other section of this Act. The Secretary of Homeland Security shall ensure that aliens have access to counsel inside all immigration detention and border facilities.”.

(c) APPOINTMENT OF COUNSEL FOR UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ALIENS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 292 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1362), as amended by subsection (b), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ALIENS.—Notwithstanding subsection (b), the Attorney General shall appoint counsel, at the expense of the Government if necessary, at the beginning of the proceedings or as expeditiously as possible, to represent in such proceedings any alien who has been determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security or the Attorney General to be—

“(1) an unaccompanied alien child (as defined in section 462(g) of the Homeland Security Act on 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279(g)));

“(2) a particularly vulnerable individual, such as—

“(A) a person with a disability; or

“(B) a victim of abuse, torture, or violence; or

“(3) an individual whose circumstances are such that the appointment of counsel is necessary to help ensure fair resolution and efficient adjudication of the proceedings.

“(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Executive Office of Immigration Review of the Department of Justice such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.”.

(2) RULEMAKING.—The Attorney General shall promulgate regulations to implement section 292(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as added by paragraph (1), in accordance with the requirements set forth in section 3006A of title 18, United States Code.

SEC. 3. ACCESS BY COUNSEL AND LEGAL ORIENTATION AT DETENTION FACILITIES.

(a) ACCESS TO COUNSEL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall facilitate access to counsel for all aliens detained in facilities under the supervision of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement or of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, including providing information to aliens in detention about legal services programs at detention facilities.

(b) ACCESS TO LEGAL ORIENTATION PROGRAMS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Attorney General, shall establish procedures to ensure that legal orientation programs are available for all detained aliens, including aliens

held in U.S. Customs and Border Protection facilities, to inform such aliens of the basic procedures of immigration hearings, their rights relating to those hearings under Federal immigration laws, information that may deter such aliens from filing frivolous legal claims, and any other information that the Attorney General considers appropriate, such as a contact list of potential legal resources and providers. Access to legal orientation programs shall not be limited by the alien’s current immigration status, prior immigration history, or potential for immigration relief.

(c) PILOT PROJECT FOR NONDETAINED ALIENS IN REMOVAL PROCEEDINGS.—The Attorney General shall develop and administer a 2-year pilot program at not fewer than 2 immigration courts to provide nondetained aliens with pending asylum claims access to legal information. At the conclusion of the pilot program, the Attorney General shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives that describes the extent to which nondetained aliens are provided with access to counsel.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Executive Office of Immigration Review of the Department of Justice such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 4. CASE MANAGEMENT PILOT PROGRAM TO INCREASE COURT APPEARANCE RATES.

(a) CONTRACT AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall establish a pilot program to increase the court appearance rates of aliens described in paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 292(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as added by section 2(c)(1), by contracting with nongovernmental, community-based organizations to provide appropriate case management services to such aliens.

(b) SCOPE OF SERVICES.—Case management services provided under subsection (a) shall include assisting aliens with—

(1) accessing legal counsel;

(2) complying with court-imposed deadlines and other legal obligations;

(3) procuring appropriate housing;

(4) enrolling their minor children in school; and

(5) acquiring health services, including, if needed, mental health services.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Homeland Security such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 5. REPORT ON ACCESS TO COUNSEL.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than December 31 of each year, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Attorney General, shall prepare and submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives regarding the extent to which aliens described in section 292(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as added by section 2(c)(1), have been provided access to counsel.

(b) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (a) shall include, for the immediately preceding 1-year period—

(1) the number and percentage of aliens described in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), respectively, of section 292(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as added by section 2(c)(1), who were represented by counsel, including information specifying—

(A) the stage of the legal process at which the alien was represented; and

(B) whether the alien was in government custody; and

(2) the number and percentage of aliens who received legal orientation presentations.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2544. A bill to increase public safety by punishing and deterring firearms trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I see my distinguished colleague from Maine on the floor. Both of us would like to speak about how for years law enforcement in Vermont and elsewhere have sought more effective tools to go after straw purchasers and gun traffickers. Straw purchasers are people who do not have a criminal record but who purchase firearms for other people, and all too often they enable violent criminals, drug traffickers, and terrorists to obtain guns and to circumvent the background check requirements of Federal law.

This Senator finds it frustrating. I am a gun owner. I go through background checks, but when I think of drug traffickers getting guns through a straw purchaser, that is wrong. In fact, they ship guns with impunity across State lines, not only from Vermont to other parts of New England but also along the Southwest border, allowing them to conduct illegal gun transactions in our cities and towns. Law enforcement officers who have tried to stop this have been hamstrung because under current law there is no Federal statute specifically prohibiting either the practice of straw purchasing or firearms trafficking. So today I am reintroducing legislation with the distinguished Senator from Maine, Ms. COLLINS, to plug those gaps in the law. The Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act of 2016 would make it a Federal crime to act as a straw purchaser of firearms or to illegally traffic firearms. It would also establish tough penalties for anyone who transfers a firearm when they have reasonable cause to believe it would be used in a drug transaction, crime or an act of terrorism. It will fix a loophole in the existing law and make it clear that it is a crime to smuggle firearms out of the United States just as it is a crime to smuggle firearms into the United States. This legislation answers the call from law enforcement to strengthen our investigative and prosecutorial tools to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and terrorists.

We have to do more to protect our communities. The heartbreaking reports of mass shootings have become all too common and no corner of our country is immune from the tragedies that accompany everyday gun violence—not even Vermont. Criminals in search of firearms exploit gaping loopholes in our gun laws, and they utilize straw purchasers and trafficking net-

works or unregulated gun markets. In addition, the rise in addiction to heroin and opioids in the Northeast has exposed a new so-called iron pipeline of firearms trafficking. We are seeing firearms serve as a currency. You can use a firearm to buy illegal drugs like heroin. Addicts are being directed to straw purchase firearms for dealers because dealers who have criminal backgrounds could not pass a background check. In Vermont, for example, Federal investigators are reporting increasing instances of straw purchasers buying guns for drug dealers or finding guns that were purchased in Vermont being trafficked to criminals in other States, such as New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, where the guns are traded for heroin or used in violent crimes.

This morning the Judiciary Committee approved bipartisan legislation that takes a comprehensive approach to dealing with heroin and opioid addiction. I fought to include provisions to help law enforcement and to provide assistance to rural communities like we have in Vermont. Passing a gun trafficking bill is another way we can keep our communities safe.

Remember, straw purchasing and gun trafficking is not just tied to drug trafficking. Even terrorists, like the suspected San Bernardino shooters, have utilized straw purchasers to acquire their guns. In the San Bernardino case, the prosecutors did not have the option of charging the friend of the terrorists with a straw purchasing offense. Instead, the only charge that was available against him for unlawfully purchasing the two rifles used in the mass shooting was a paperwork violation of making a false statement. This Senator has heard from many prosecutors, Republicans and Democrats alike, that these paperwork charges are wholly inadequate to deter or stop such dangerous conduct.

It is time to take action. Only Congress can fill the gap. Congress must not become so numb to tragedy after tragedy that we fail to fulfill our responsibility to legislate. It is true that no one piece of legislation can prevent all criminals from acquiring firearms, and it certainly will not solve the epidemic of gun violence, but that is not an excuse for inaction.

I would hope all of us would agree that criminals and terrorists should not have guns and that we should investigate and prosecute the straw purchasers and gun traffickers who help criminals and terrorists get guns. Law enforcement officials have complained for years that they lack the statutory tools to effectively investigate and deter straw purchasers and gun traffickers. That is why this bill has such strong support from law enforcement groups such as the National Fraternal Order of Police, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Major

Cities Chiefs Association, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the National Tactical Officers Association, the National District Attorneys Association, and the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys. This bill builds on the progress we made last Congress when I worked with Senator DURBIN to introduce similar legislation. I want to acknowledge the tireless efforts of Senator DURBIN and others on this issue, and I am glad he is an original cosponsor of this important legislation.

As are many others, I am proud to be a responsible gun owner. I enjoy target shooting in the backyard of my farmhouse—with a nice safe backdrop I might add. I am deeply committed to the fundamental and individual rights afforded in the Second Amendment. I know Senator COLLINS shares my commitment to protecting those constitutional rights, but we also share a desire to go after violent criminals, drug traffickers, and terrorists. We do not want to hand guns to violent criminals, drug traffickers, and terrorists, and if they do get guns we want to make sure law enforcement officials arrest the people who gave them the guns to keep guns out of their hands. This legislation does just that.

Mr. President, I yield the floor to my good friend, the senior Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am very pleased to join my colleague from New England, Senator LEAHY, in introducing our bill, the Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act. Our bill would strengthen Federal law to make it easier for prosecutors to effectively go after gun traffickers while protecting fully the rights of the vast majority of gun owners who are law-abiding.

The practice of straw purchasing is intended to achieve one result, and that is to put a gun in the hands of criminals. Today traffickers target individuals who can lawfully purchase firearms and then use those weapons to commit crimes. They exploit weaknesses in Federal law that make prosecuting straw purchasers difficult and punishment for such a crime generally minimal.

The guns we are targeting in our bill are frequently sold and resold and trafficked across State lines, resulting in the proliferation of illegal firearms in our communities. This practice has fueled the violence across our southern border associated with the Mexican drug cartels; it has spurred gun violence in our cities; and it has contributed to the heroin crisis that is so devastating to our families and is undermining public safety in our communities.

Current Federal law makes preventing and prosecuting these offenses very difficult for law enforcement. Right now, a straw purchaser can only be prosecuted for lying on a Federal form. Essentially, that is treated as if

it were a paperwork violation. Our bill would create new, specific criminal offenses for straw purchasing and trafficking in firearms. Instead of a slap on the wrist, these crimes would be punishable for up to 15 years in prison for those who knowingly purchase a firearm for a prohibited person or had reason to believe they would use the firearm in a prohibited way. For those straw purchasers who know or have reasonable cause to believe that the firearm would be used to commit a crime of violence, that crime will be punishable for up to 25 years in prison.

It is not surprising that so many law enforcement groups have endorsed our commonsense proposal. It would provide them with an effective tool to fight the violence that too often goes hand in hand with drug trafficking. Straw purchasing and the trafficking of firearms puts guns directly into the hands of drug dealers and violent criminals who smuggle heroin into my State and so many other States. The heroin flooding our communities is reaching crisis proportions. In 2014, there were a record 208 overdose deaths in the State of Maine, including 57 caused by heroin, and the problem is only getting worse.

The problem of straw purchasing and drug and gun trafficking is directly linked to the heroin crisis. Law enforcement officers tell me they have seen a major influx of drug dealers coming from out of State, straight up I-95's "iron pipeline" and other interstate highways with direct ties to gangs in major cities and ready to sell or trade prescription opiates and heroin for guns.

Oftentimes drug dealers and gang members follow a similar pattern. They seek out and target addicts and they trade or sell them heroin for guns. These gang members with criminal records cross into Maine and approach these drug addicts to be their straw buyers because these addicts usually have clean records, so they can legally purchase the firearms these criminals are seeking. The addict exchanges the gun for heroin to support his or her drug dependency, and that cycle is repeated time and again. Those guns might be used in out-of-State crimes or resold at a profit.

Recently, I received a truly shocking briefing from Federal law enforcement officials about the cases in Maine that fit this pattern. Let me tell you about one. Gang members trafficked in crack cocaine and heroin between New Haven, CT, and Bangor, ME, where I live. They were later charged with acts of violence, including assault, armed robberies, attempted murder, and murder. Law enforcement's investigation revealed that they had gotten the firearms by trading narcotics for them in Bangor, ME. They then distributed these guns to other gang members.

The terrorist attack in San Bernardino, CA, is another tragic ex-

ample of how straw purchasing can lead to horrific crimes. In this case it is believed that the individual straw-purchased two assault rifles that were later used in the terrorist attack that killed 14 people. He has been charged with making a false statement in relation to the purchase of those firearms. Our bill, the Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act could have allowed law enforcement officials to charge this individual with straw purchasing and the trafficking of firearms rather than just a paperwork violation.

Our bill also strengthens existing laws that prohibit gun smuggling. Right now it is illegal for someone to smuggle a firearm into the United States with the intent to engage in drug trafficking or violent crime.

To combat the drug cartels operating across our southern border, we must also prohibit firearms from being trafficked out of the United States for these illegal purchases and purposes. In doing so, our bill would provide an important tool to combatting the trafficking organizations that are exporting firearms and ammunition from the United States and into Mexico, where they are used by drug cartels that are fueling the heroin crisis here at home.

According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, out of the nearly 105,000 firearms recovered in Mexico in the last 5 years, more than 73,000 were sourced to the United States. Similarly, a large percentage of guns used in crimes in our largest cities were trafficked across State lines.

Let me emphasize that our bill protects the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens. It protects legitimate, private gun sales and is drafted to avoid sweeping in innocent transactions and placing unnecessary burdens on lawful, private sales. It expressly exempts certain transactions that are allowed under current law, such as gifts, raffles or auctions. There is absolutely nothing in our bill that would, for example, prohibit a father from giving a hunting rifle to his daughter as a gift. Furthermore, our bill expressly prohibits the act from being used to establish a Federal firearms registry, which I strongly oppose.

This Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act takes guns out of the hands of criminals without infringing upon the constitutional rights of law-abiding citizens.

We have had many discussions in this Chamber, in our caucuses, and in our committees about the heroin crisis that is gripping far too many families and communities in States across the Nation, including the State of Maine.

We need to take a comprehensive approach that includes strengthening law enforcement, providing treatment, and increasing education and prevention efforts. This bill is one piece of the law enforcement puzzle as we seek to combat this terrible epidemic that is ruining so many lives.

I urge our colleagues to join Senator LEAHY and me in supporting our legislation.

By Mr. Kaine (for himself and Mr. Warner):

S. 2548. A bill to establish the 400 Years of African-American History Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. Kaine. Mr. President, today I am introducing the 400 Years of African American History Commission Act.

During my tenure as Governor of Virginia I presided over the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, VA, by the English colonists in 1604. Last year I attended the 450th anniversary of the founding of St. Augustine, FL, which celebrated Hispanic heritage. Both commemorations included activities sponsored by federal commissions, which were voted on and passed by Congress. In three years, in 2019, we will mark another key anniversary in American history. August 2019 will mark 400 years after the first documented arrival of Africans who came to English America by way of Point Comfort, Virginia. Although in 1619 slavery was not yet an institution the "20 and odd" Africans, as it was recorded, were the first recorded group of Africans to be sold as involuntary laborers or indentured servants in the colonies.

Having commemorated the English and Spanish heritage of our founding there is no reason it should be any different for the arrival and continuous presence of Africans and African Americans in the English settlements in 1619. There is no dispute that the beginning of African and African American presence in what is now the United States was both tragic and regrettable. Slavery as an institution broke up families, resulted in the deaths of thousands, and caused irreparable damage to our American psyche. Though we should never forget that period of stain on our history, slavery is not the only part of African American history. We must remember the whole story. African Americans have contributed to the economic, academic, social, cultural and moral well-being of this nation.

So today with my cosponsor Senator MARK WARNER, I introduce the 400 Years of African American History Commission Act, which would establish a commission that would plan programs and activities across the country to recognize the arrival and influence of African Americans since 1619. It is my hope the establishment of a "400th" commission would create an opportunity to bring continued national education about the significance the arrival of African Americans has made to the U.S., and the contributions that have been made since 1619. Additionally, the commission would create space to discuss race relations in

America and focus on dismantling the institutional systems that have adversely hindered African American progress.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COONS, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CASEY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2551. A bill to help prevent acts of genocide and mass atrocities, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States civilian capacities to prevent and mitigate such crises; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, on April 10, 2014, I introduced the Syrian War Crimes Accountability Act in this Chamber. Three days earlier, the world had marked the 20th anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, one of the most horrific events in modern history that unfolded as the world stood back and watched. At that time I noted that, “[u]nfortunately, we have not learned the lessons of the past. We must do better to not only see that sort of atrocities never again occur under our watch . . .” That statement was not only a reflection of my beliefs, but a promise to keep the issue of atrocity prevention in front of the Senate and the American people.

So today, under the heavy cloud of atrocities occurring in Syria, South Sudan, and elsewhere, I come to address this body again. I am here today not to look backward about actions not taken. I am here today to stress that our job, our responsibility, is to make sure the United States has the tools—diplomatic, political, economic, and legal—to take effective action before atrocities occur. Essential to this is authorizing the Atrocities Prevention Board, and ensuring that the United States Government has structures in place and the mechanisms at hand to better prevent and respond to potential atrocities.

President Obama, when he established the Atrocities Prevention Board in 2012, said that, “preventing genocide [is] an ‘achievable goal’ but one that require[s] a degree of governmental organization that matches the kind of methodical organization that accompanies mass killings”.

I am introducing the Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2016 to ensure that we do just that. I am joined in this effort by Senators TILLIS, MURPHY, MENENDEZ, SHAHEEN, BROWN, GILLIBRAND, BLUMENTHAL, COONS, MIKULSKI, MARKEY, MERKLEY, and BOXER. This bill authorizes the Board, which is a transparent, accountable, high-level, interagency board that includes representatives at the assistant secretary level or higher from departments and agencies across the U.S. Government.

The Board will meet monthly to oversee the development and implementation of atrocity prevention and response policy, and additionally address over the horizon potential atrocities through the use of a wide variety of tools, so that we can take effective action to prevent atrocities from occurring.

This bill gives our Foreign Service Officers the training they need to recognize patterns of escalation and early warning signs of potential atrocities and conflict. With this training, we will, over time, build atrocity prevention into the core skillset of our people on the ground. They will be equipped to see the warning signs, analyze the events, and engage early.

This bill also codifies the Complex Crises Fund, which has been a crucial tool to our ability to quickly respond to emerging crises overseas, including potential mass atrocities and conflict. We used the Complex Crises Fund in Tunisia during their Arab Spring and in Sri Lanka after its civil war. We’ve used it to respond quickly in Kenya and Cote d’Ivoire, where it has helped save lives.

Importantly, this bill builds greater transparency and accountability into the structure of the Atrocities Prevention Board. Civil society will have a say, and Congress will have a greater oversight role to make sure we are getting this right.

Mr. President, this is a good bill. It does good things, and places the United States on solid moral ground. But the moral argument alone is not enough. We must also remember that America’s security, and that of our allies, is affected when civilians are slaughtered. Our security is impacted when desperate refugees stream across borders. Our security is affected when perpetrators of extraordinary violence wreak havoc on regional stability, destroying communities, families, and livelihoods. We have seen groups like ISIS systematically targeting communities on the basis of their ethnicity or religious beliefs and practices, including Yezidi, Christian, and Turkmen populations, but over sixty years after the Holocaust, we still lack a comprehensive framework to prevent and respond to mass atrocities and genocide.

So, let this bill act as our framework, and also our call to action, so that when we use the phrase ‘never again’, we know that we are taking meaningful preventative action.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2552. A bill to amend section 875(c) of title 18, United States Code, to include an intent requirement; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Interstate Threats Clarification Act, which is a

necessary bill to clarify the “level of intent” required to convict someone for making threats to injure or kidnap another person.

I would like to thank Senators DURBIN, WHITEHOUSE, and KLOBUCHAR for cosponsoring the bill.

In June 2015, the Supreme Court issued a decision in *Elonis v. United States*, a case involving a man who was convicted for posting on Facebook “crude, degrading, and violent” threats against his co-workers, ex-wife, law enforcement personnel, and a kindergarten class.

The man started posting the violent and threatening posts after his wife of nearly 7 years left him and took with her their two young children.

The threats made over Facebook caused his ex-wife to feel “extremely afraid” for her life, leading her to obtain a restraining order against him.

But that did not stop the man, who then posted on Facebook to communicate to his ex-wife that she “[f]old up your [restraining order] and put it in your pocket / Is it thick enough to stop a bullet?”

That same month, he continued to make violent posts, including one that indicated that “[e]nough elementary schools in a ten mile radius to initiate the most heinous school shooting ever imagined / And hell hath no fury like a crazy man in a Kindergarten class.”

After viewing the posts, an FBI agent and another investigator visited the man at his home, where he was “polite but uncooperative.” After they left, he posted the following:

Little Agent lady stood so close
Took all the strength I had not to turn the
b**** ghost
Pull my knife, flick my wrist, and slit her
throat
Leave her bleedin’ from her jugular in the
arms of her partner.

The post went on to threaten what would happen if he was visited again by the agent, including the possible use of explosives.

Due to these threats and others, the man was convicted for making threats to inflict bodily harm under Section 875(c) of Title 18.

This law prohibits the transmission of a communication that contains a threat to injure or kidnap another person.

The man appealed, saying the lower court did not apply the correct level of intent for a conviction.

When the case reached the Supreme Court, the Court overturned the conviction.

The Court found that the law requires the government to prove some type of “wrongful” intent by the man—“negligence” was not enough for a criminal conviction under this law.

The Court’s opinion, however, left significant ambiguity regarding what the government must prove for a conviction under the statute.

The Supreme Court simply did not specify the exact “level of intent” required for a conviction.

Justice Alito highlighted the problem of the ambiguity in his partial dissent, stating, “[a]ttorneys and judges are left to guess” as to the level of intent required.

This ambiguity has left judges and prosecutors in the dark about what the law requires, and has raised concerns among domestic violence victims because prosecutors and judges may now be hesitant to fully enforce the law.

This is why Congressional action is necessary.

The Interstate Threats Clarification Act solves this ambiguity.

It clarifies that, under Section 875(c) of Title 18, the Government has three options to obtain a conviction. It can prove that a defendant either intended, had knowledge, or recklessly disregarded the risk, that the communication would be reasonably interpreted as a threat.

This is exactly what Justice Alito said would be sufficient in his opinion.

As Justice Alito stated when analyzing the statute in the context of the case, “[s]omeone who acts recklessly with respect to conveying a threat necessarily grasps that he is not engaged in innocent conduct.”

I agree.

Someone who posts violent and crude threats to harm or kidnap judges, domestic violence victims, vulnerable members of society, military personnel, and law enforcement personnel, must be held accountable for their reckless conduct.

This bill clarifies for judges and attorneys alike the proof required to convict those who make such threats to injure or kidnap such persons.

I also appreciate the work done by a coalition of domestic violence organizations that have worked with me on the bill, including the National Network to End Domestic Violence, the Domestic Violence Legal Empowerment and Appeals Project, the National Center for Victims of Crime, the American Association of University Women, Futures Without Violence, Jewish Women International, Legal Momentum, National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the National Domestic Violence Hotline, and the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence.

I also appreciate the strong support for the bill from law enforcement, including the National District Attorneys Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, and the Major Cities Chiefs Association.

This bill is necessary to clarify Federal law about criminal threats and ensure that those who send them are prosecuted. I urge my colleagues to support it.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3306. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. BLUMENTHAL) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 298, recognizing Connecticut’s Submarine Century, the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Naval Submarine Base New London, and Connecticut’s historic role in supporting the undersea capabilities of the United States.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3306. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. BLUMENTHAL) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 298, recognizing Connecticut’s Submarine Century, the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Naval Submarine Base New London, and Connecticut’s historic role in supporting the undersea capabilities of the United States; as follows:

In the second whereas clause in the preamble, strike “donated land and provided funding” and insert “gifted land”.

In the ninth whereas clause in the preamble, strike “Warfare” and insert “Warfighting”.

In the twelfth whereas clause of the preamble, strike “historic ship Nautilus” and insert “Historic Ship NAUTILUS (SSN 571)”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “The Semiannual Monetary Policy Report to the Congress.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “The President’s Budget for Fiscal Year 2017.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 10:15

a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Nominations.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL MANAGEMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Examining Agency Discretion in Setting and Enforcing Regulatory Fines and Penalties.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my Marine Corps fellow, Capt. Matt Dalton, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations under the Privileged section of the Executive Calendar: PN1039, PN1040.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nominations.

The legislative clerk read the nominations of Morton H. Halperin, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Corporation for a term

of two years; and Michael O. Johanns, of Nebraska, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Corporation for a term of three years.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Halperin and Johanns nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the Record; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of all nominations on the Secretary's desk in the Foreign Service; that the nominations be confirmed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the Record; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE

PN573-5 FOREIGN SERVICE nomination of Christopher Nairn Steel, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 10, 2015.

PN830 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (28) beginning Christopher Alexander, and ending Tipten Troidl, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 10, 2015.

PN1085 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (193) beginning Virginia Lynn Bennett, and ending Susan M. Cleary, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 19, 2016.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

TO ALLOW THE MIAMI TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA TO LEASE OR TRANSFER CERTAIN LANDS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 349, H.R. 487.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 487) to allow the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma to lease or transfer certain lands.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 487) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN TO FULFILL ITS PROMISES OF ASSISTANCE IN THE CASE OF ROBERT LEVINSON

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 365, S. Res. 99.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 99) calling on the Government of Iran to fulfill its promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment and an amendment to the preamble and an amendment to the title.

(Strike out all after the resolving clause and insert the part printed in italic.)

(Strike the preamble and insert the part printed in italic.)

S. RES. 99

Whereas United States citizen Robert Levinson is a retired agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), a resident of Coral Springs, Florida, the husband of Christine Levinson, and father of their seven children;

Whereas Robert Levinson traveled from Dubai, United Arab Emirates, to Kish Island, Iran, on March 8, 2007;

Whereas, after traveling to Kish Island and checking into the Hotel Maryam, Robert Levinson disappeared on March 9, 2007;

Whereas, in December 2007, Robert Levinson's wife, Christine, traveled to Kish Island to retrace Mr. Levinson's steps and met with officials of the Government of Iran who pledged to help in the investigation;

Whereas, for more than eight years, the United States Government has continually

pressed the Government of Iran to provide any information on the whereabouts of Robert Levinson and to help ensure his prompt and safe return to his family;

Whereas officials of the Government of Iran promised their continued assistance to the relatives of Robert Levinson during the visit of the family to the Islamic Republic of Iran in December 2007;

Whereas, in November 2010, the Levinson family received a video of Mr. Levinson in captivity, representing the first proof of life since his disappearance and providing some initial indications that he was being held somewhere in southwest Asia;

Whereas, in April 2011, the Levinson family received a series of pictures of Mr. Levinson, which provided further indications that he was being held somewhere in southwest Asia;

Whereas Secretary of State John Kerry stated on August 28, 2013, "The United States respectfully asks the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to work cooperatively with us in our efforts to help U.S. citizen Robert Levinson.";

Whereas, on September 28, 2013, during the first direct phone conversation between the heads of governments of the United States and Iran since 1979, President Barack Obama raised the case of Robert Levinson to President of Iran Hassan Rouhani and urged the President of Iran to help locate Mr. Levinson and reunite him with his family;

Whereas, on August 29, 2014, Secretary of State Kerry again stated that the United States "respectfully request[s] the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran work cooperatively with us to find Mr. Levinson and bring him home";

Whereas, on July 14, 2015, the Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, Germany, and Iran agreed to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action;

Whereas, on January 16, 2016, the Government of Iran released five United States citizens detained in Iran, Jason Rezaian of California, Saeed Abedini of Idaho, Amir Mirzaei Hekmati of Michigan, Matthew Trevithick of Massachusetts, and Nosratollah Khosravi-Roodsari;

Whereas, on January 17, 2016, President Obama stated that "even as we rejoice in the safe return of others, we will never forget about Bob," referring to Robert Levinson, and that "each and every day but especially today our hearts are with the Levinson family and we will never rest until their family is whole again";

Whereas, on January 19, 2016, White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest stated that the United States Government had "secured a commitment from the Iranians to use the channel that has now been opened to secure the release of those individuals that we know were being held by Iran. . .to try and gather information about Mr. Levinson's possible whereabouts";

Whereas, on November 26, 2013, Mr. Levinson became the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history; and

Whereas the Federal Bureau of Investigation has announced a \$5,000,000 reward for information leading to Mr. Levinson's safe return: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

That the Senate—

(1) recognizes that Robert Levinson is the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history;

(2) notes the repeated pledges by and renewed commitment of officials of the Government of Iran to provide their Government's assistance in the case of Robert Levinson;

(3) urges the Government of Iran, as a humanitarian gesture, to act on its promises to assist in the case of Robert Levinson and to immediately provide all available information from all entities of the Government of Iran regarding

the disappearance of Robert Levinson to the United States Government;

(4) urges the President and the allies of the United States to continue to raise with officials of the Government of Iran the case of Robert Levinson at every opportunity, notwithstanding ongoing and serious disagreements the United States Government has with the Government of Iran on a broad array of issues, including Iran's ballistic missile program, sponsorship of international terrorism, and human rights abuses; and

(5) expresses sympathy to the family of Robert Levinson for their anguish and expresses hope that their ordeal can be brought to an end in the near future.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment to the resolution be agreed to; the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to; the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; that the committee-reported title amendment be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 99), as amended, was agreed to.

The committee-reported amendment to the preamble in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The committee-reported title amendment was agreed to, as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: "A resolution calling on the Government of Iran to follow through on repeated promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history."

RECOGNIZING CONNECTICUT'S SUBMARINE CENTURY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 298 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 298) recognizing Connecticut's Submarine Century, the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Naval Submarine Base New London, and Connecticut's historic role in supporting the undersea capabilities of the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Senate proceed to vote on adoption of the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Hearing none, the question is on agreeing to the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 298) was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Blumenthal amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3306) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To make technical corrections in the preamble)

In the second whereas clause in the preamble, strike "donated land and provided funding" and insert "gifted land".

In the ninth whereas clause in the preamble, strike "Warfare" and insert "Warfighting".

In the twelfth whereas clause of the preamble, strike "historic ship Nautilus" and insert "Historic Ship NAUTILUS (SSN 571)".

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I finally ask unanimous consent that the preamble, as amended, be agreed to and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 298

Whereas, on March 2, 1867, Congress enacted a naval appropriations Act that authorized the Secretary of the Navy to "receive and accept a deed of gift, when offered by the State of Connecticut, of a tract of land with not less than one mile of shore front on the Thames River near New London, Connecticut, to be held by the United States for naval purposes";

Whereas the people of Connecticut and the towns and cities in the southeastern region of Connecticut subsequently gifted land to establish a military installation to fulfil the Nation's need for a naval facility on the Atlantic coast;

Whereas, on April 11, 1868, the Navy accepted the deed of gift of land from Connecticut to establish a naval yard and storage depot along the eastern shore of the Thames River in Groton, Connecticut;

Whereas, between 1868 and 1912, the New London Navy Yard supported a diverse range of missions, including berthing inactive Civil War era ironclad warships and serving as a coaling station for refueling naval ships traveling in New England waters;

Whereas Congress rejected the Navy's proposal to close New London Navy Yard in 1912, following an impassioned effort by Congressman Edwin W. Higgins, who stated that this "action proposed is not only unjust but unreasonable and unsound as a military proposition";

Whereas the outbreak of World War I and the enemy use of submarines to sink allied military and civilian ships in the Atlantic sparked a new focus on developing submarine capabilities in the United States;

Whereas October 18, 1915, marked the arrival at the New London Navy Yard of the submarines G-1, G-2, and G-4 under the care of the tender USS OZARK, soon followed by the arrival of submarines E-1, D-1, and D-3 under the care of the tender USS TONOPAH, and on November 1, 1915, the arrival of the first ship built as a submarine tender, the USS FULTON (AS-1);

Whereas, on June 21, 1916, Commander Yeates Stirling assumed the command of the newly designated Naval Submarine Base New London, the New London Submarine Flo-tilla, and the Submarine School;

Whereas in the 100 years since the arrival of the first submarines to the base, Naval Submarine Base New London has grown to occupy more than 680 acres along the east side of the Thames River, with more than 160 major facilities, 15 nuclear submarines, and more than 70 tenant commands and activities, including the Submarine Learning Center, Naval Submarine School, the Naval Submarine Medical Research Laboratory, the Naval Undersea Medical Institute, and the newly established Undersea Warfighting Development Center;

Whereas in addition to being the site of the first submarine base in the United States, Connecticut was home to the foremost submarine manufacturers of the time, the Lake Torpedo Boat Company in Bridgeport and the Electric Boat Company in Groton, which later became General Dynamics Electric Boat;

Whereas General Dynamics Electric Boat, its talented workforce, and its Connecticut-based and nationwide network of suppliers have delivered more than 200 submarines from its current location in Groton, Connecticut, including the first nuclear-powered submarine, the USS NAUTILUS (SSN 571), and nearly half of the nuclear submarines ever built by the United States;

Whereas the Submarine Force Library and Museum, located adjacent to Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton, Connecticut, is the only submarine museum operated by the United States Navy and today serves as the primary repository for artifacts, documents, and photographs relating to the bold and courageous history of the Submarine Force and highlights as its core exhibit the Historic Ship NAUTILUS (SSN 571) following her retirement from service;

Whereas reflecting the close ties between Connecticut and the Navy that began with the gift of land that established the base, the State of Connecticut has set aside \$40,000,000 in funding for critical infrastructure investments to support the mission of the base, including construction of a new dive locker building, expansion of the Submarine Learning Center, and modernization of energy infrastructure;

Whereas, on September 29, 2015, Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy designated October 2015 through October 2016 as Connecticut's Submarine Century, a year-long observance that celebrates 100 years of submarine activity in Connecticut, including the Town of Groton's distinction as the Submarine Capital of the World, to coincide with the centennial anniversary of the establishment of Naval Submarine Base New London and the Naval Submarine School;

Whereas Naval Submarine Base New London still proudly proclaims its motto of "The First and Finest"; and

Whereas Congressman Higgins' statement before Congress in 1912 that "Connecticut stands ready, as she always has, to bear her part of the burdens of the national defense" remains true today: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the longstanding dedication and contribution to the Navy and submarine force by the people of Connecticut, both through the initial deed of gift that established what would become Naval Submarine Base New London and through their ongoing commitment to support the mission of the base and the Navy personnel assigned to it;

(2) honors the submariners who have trained and served at Naval Submarine Base New London throughout its history in support of the Nation's security and undersea superiority;

(3) recognizes the contribution of the industry and workforce of Connecticut in designing, building, and sustaining the Navy's submarine fleet; and

(4) encourages the recognition of Connecticut's Submarine Century by Congress, the Navy, and the American people by honoring the contribution of the people of Connecticut to the defense of the United States and the important role of the submarine force in safeguarding the security of the United States for more than a century.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2016

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow, Friday, February 12; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator MARKEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

NOMINATION OF ROBERT CALIFF

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I am here to speak in opposition to the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf to be the head of the Food and Drug Administration.

I understand that Leader McCONNELL has asked that cloture be filed on Dr. Califf's nomination. I understand that. I appreciate it. But we need to have a debate in this country on opioids. While I am disappointed that the majority leader is taking this step, I am committed to continuing to work on this issue, and using Dr. Robert Califf's nomination is the means by which we can have a debate here on the floor of the Senate on these issues.

(Mr. McCONNELL assumed the Chair.)

I am here to speak about a public health epidemic that every year kills more people in the United States than gun violence or motor vehicle acci-

dents. What does this epidemic look like? Well, it looks like this: Last year 30,000 Americans died of an opioid overdose. More than 1,300 of those were from my home State of Massachusetts. In the city of Brockton, MA, last month, in January, in the span of 48 hours, 40 people overdosed on opioids. I will say that again. In Brockton, in 48 hours, 40 people overdosed on opioids.

Between 2000 and 2013, the rate of death from heroin overdoses nearly quadrupled. The United States is less than 5 percent of the world's population, but we consume 80 percent of the world's opioid pain killers. Drug overdoses are increasing the death rates of young adults in the United States to levels not experienced since the AIDS epidemic more than 20 years ago. These skyrocketing death rates make these young adults the first generation since the time of the Vietnam war to experience higher death rates in early adulthood than the generation that preceded it.

Let's compare what we did as a nation when we confronted other deadly epidemics. A bipartisan majority in Congress funded more than \$5 billion to respond to Ebola. We dispatched the medical community and public health experts. We built entire facilities to ensure we stopped the spread of the deadly virus. Today, the Obama administration is asking Congress for \$1.8 billion in emergency funding to fight the Zika virus. Imagine if we applied the same commitment, the same urgency, the same level of resources to the prescription drug and heroin epidemic.

Yet, despite this raging epidemic, one would think the Food and Drug Administration—the agency responsible for the safety of all prescription drugs in the United States—would welcome every bit of expert advice it can get from doctors and other public health professionals. In fact, the FDA's own rules call for it to establish an independent advisory committee of experts to assist the agency when it considers a question that is controversial or of great public interest, such as whether to allow a new addictive prescription painkiller to be marketed in the United States. Instead, the FDA has put a sign in its window: No Help Wanted. That is what this nomination of Dr. Robert Califf is all about.

The FDA began turning its back on advisory committees in 2013 when an advisory panel to review the powerful opioid painkiller Zohydro voted 11 to 2 against recommending its approval. But the agency approved the drug anyway, overruling the concerns voiced by experienced physicians on the panel. Those experts criticized the agency for ignoring the growing epidemic fueled by OxyContin—the heavily abused prescription painkiller the FDA first approved back in 1995. They warned about the growing dangers of addiction, of abuse and dependence associated with

this entire class of opioid painkillers. Justifiably, the FDA was lambasted for its decision to approve Zohydro by public health experts, doctors, Governors, and Members of Congress. But despite those warnings of the real-world dangers of abuse and dependence on these new, supercharged opioid painkillers, the FDA willfully blinded itself to the warning signs.

In 2014, in the wake of the Zohydro decision, the FDA twice skipped the advisory committee process altogether when it approved the new prescription opioids Targiniq and Hysingla.

Then, in August of 2015, the FDA did it again, this time by bypassing an advisory committee on the question of a new use for OxyContin for children aged 11 to 16. This time the FDA even ignored its own rules that specifically call for advisory committee advice when a question of "pediatric dosing" is involved.

At this point, it became clear that the FDA was intentionally choosing to forgo an advisory committee in order to avoid another overwhelming vote recommending against approval of a prescription opioid. And why did they do it? Well, because the FDA would then have had to ignore yet another group of experts in order to continue its relentless march to put more drugs on the market.

With the OxyContin-for-kids decision, the FDA's reckless attitude toward expert advice on drug safety went too far. Children whose brains are not yet fully developed are especially vulnerable to drug dependency and abuse. Yet the agency focused its so-called safety analysis only on concerns about proper dosing, saying that it needed to tell doctors the proper doses for children who needed the drug. That is just plain wrong. We use experts to determine if child car seats are safe, if toothpaste is safe, and if vaccines are safe. We should also use experts to determine if those opioid painkillers are safe for the children in the United States of America.

We need to immediately reform the Food and Drug Administration's opioid approval process if we want to stop this epidemic of prescription drug and heroin addiction in the United States.

When I placed a hold on the nomination of Dr. Califf to head the FDA, I called on the FDA to commit to convening an advisory panel of outside experts for every single opioid approval question it reviewed. Here is how the FDA responded: It responded by committing to convene outside experts but only for opioids that are not abuse-deterrent. Let's be clear. I want everyone in this Chamber to understand this: "Abuse-deterrent opioid" is an oxymoron, like "jumbo shrimp" or "congressional expert." There is no such thing. When we hear the term "abuse-deterrent," think of pills that are tamper-resistant. They are supposed to be difficult to crush or chew

or cut open or tamper with. But nothing about abuse-deterrent opioid prevents addiction. There is no such thing as abuse deterrence if you are suffering from addiction and have access to the Internet, where you can find out just how easy these painkillers are to manipulate and abuse. Whether an opioid is abuse-deterrent or not hasn't prevented tens of thousands of people who have had their wisdom teeth extracted or experienced lower back pain from getting addicted to these painkillers.

By refusing to convene advisory committees to reform all of its opioid approval decisions, the FDA continues to ignore outside experts who could help stem the tide of tragic deaths and overdoses plaguing this country.

This all started back with the FDA's 1995 approval of the original OxyContin—the moment in history that is widely recognized as the starting point for the prescription opioid and heroin overdose epidemic in the United States. It started with the FDA. The FDA approved the original version of OxyContin—an extended-release opioid—believing that it “would result in less abuse potential, since the drug would be absorbed slowly and there would not be an immediate ‘rush’ or high that would promote abuse.” Since then, the claims that opioid is abuse-deterrent have time and again proven oxymoronic.

FDA's own guidelines recognize the inherent contradiction in the term “abuse-deterrent,” explaining:

It should be noted that [abuse-deterrent] technologies have not yet been proven successful at deterring the most common form of abuse—swallowing a number of intact capsules or tablets to achieve a feeling of euphoria. Moreover, the fact that a product has abuse-deterrent properties does not mean there is no risk of abuse.

That is from the FDA's own guidelines.

In many cases, the FDA approved so-called abuse-deterrent opioids despite warnings from the medical community about the potential for abuse. And when it wasn't turning a blind eye to the warnings of experts, the FDA simply didn't engage them at all in approval of opioids with abuse-deterrent properties. With numerous approvals of so-called abuse-deterrent opioids since

2010, the agency convened advisory committees for less than half of them.

This issue of abuse deterrence is not a hypothetical concern. The new policy announced by the FDA would not have guaranteed an advisory panel for the OxyContin that is on the market today and being sold in tens of millions of doses or for the other recently approved opioids that have raised serious concerns from public health and medical experts from around our country. The FDA is attempting to set up a system where nothing really changes.

We will not solve the prescription drug crisis with an FDA that operates with business as usual and continues to turn its back to external experts. The FDA needs to welcome outside expert advice and must convene expert advisory panels for all opioid approval decisions, period. Until the FDA makes that commitment, I am going to continue to raise my voice in opposition to the nomination of Dr. Califf.

This is an issue that is central in our country. The terrorist phone call that families in America are afraid of getting is not one from overseas; it is that a member of their family has fallen victim to this prescription drug opioid crisis. It is in every city, every town in our country. We have seen a quadrupling of the number of heroin deaths in our country in the last 13 years, and 80 percent of them started with OxyContin, with Percocet, with one of these prescription drugs.

We need the FDA to do the right thing, and until they do, we need to debate out here on the floor what the responsibilities will be of this new FDA Commissioner, because they have been unwilling to change their policy. Until they do, these people and communities all across our country are going to be helpless. They are going to be helpless because families think that if a bottle is given to them by an expert, they can trust it. And when their children die—when their children die—they ask themselves the question: Could I have done more? It starts with the FDA. It starts with MEA, mandatory education for physicians. It starts there. If we don't do this, then those families are still going to be having the same result year after year after year.

I thank the majority leader for sitting and hearing my objections. The majority leader and I have had many conversations about this subject, and I know of his deep concern on this issue. I think this is something that can be corrected. I hope it can be corrected. It must be corrected.

I thank the majority leader for staying to hear my presentation.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:21 p.m., adjourned until Friday, February 12, 2016, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

ABDUL K. KALLON, OF ALABAMA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE ELEVENTH CIRCUIT, VICE JOEL F. DUBINA, RETIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

JOHN B. KING, OF NEW YORK, TO BE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION, VICE ARNE DUNCAN.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate February 11, 2016:

THE JUDICIARY

LEONARD TERRY STRAND, OF SOUTH DAKOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA.

FOREIGN SERVICE

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATION OF CHRISTOPHER NAIRN STEEL.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER AND ENDING WITH TIPTEN TROIDL, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2015.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH VIRGINIA LYNN BENNETT AND ENDING WITH SUSAN M. CLEARY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 19, 2016.

MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION

MORTON H. HALPERIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION FOR A TERM OF TWO YEARS.

MICHAEL O. JOHANNIS, OF NEBRASKA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION FOR A TERM OF THREE YEARS.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LIFE OF
IRENE R. CARDAMONE

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Irene R. Cardamone, 90, who passed away on February 2, 2016. Irene was born on October 21, 1925 in Cleveland, Ohio.

Irene graduated from North Royalton High School. She worked as a customer service representative with Insurance Diversified Agency in Solon, Ohio, and once had her own catering company, Irene's Catering. Irene's passions included golf, sewing, crafts, and cooking. She was known to be a wonderful baker. She loved to travel, especially to the beach. Irene was a big baseball fan. She loved the Yankees, Derek Jeter, and the Cleveland Indians. Irene was happiest when she was with her wonderful family. She had a quick wit, and never forgot anyone's birthday. She will be remembered by her family and friends as a loving, caring, outgoing, and friendly woman, who always had a smile on her face.

Irene will be deeply missed by her family and friends. She leaves behind three children; Janet Carson (husband Terry), Nancy Vecchio (husband James), and MaryLou Mele (husband Paul); nine grandchildren; Carolyn Osters (Michael), Joseph Cardamone, Andrew Carson (Kelli), April Carson (James Ewing), Salvatore Vecchio (Sheridan), Cara Berg (Ryan), James Vecchio (Christine), Kristin Mele, Nicholas Mele; and 13 great-grandchildren.

Irene was preceded in death by her beloved husband, John S. Sr.; son, John S. Jr.; and sister, Alice Humphrey.

Losses like these are never easy, but we can all take comfort in the fact that Irene led a long and fulfilling life. She will live on in our memory and in the memory of her beautiful family.

TRIBUTE TO FRANCES GARLAND

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, Frances Garland once stated that she thought of herself first as a housewife and desired to be only a successful mother. Her personal view of her life as it unfolded does not do justice to how much she was appreciated by so many whom she touched, whether family or friends. Frances was one of my longtime friends in

Roanoke, Virginia and one of my constituents for the past 23 years until she passed away on January 12 at age 91. The Roanoke community is grieving this loss and we continue to keep her husband of 72 years, Bob, in our thoughts and prayers.

As someone new to Roanoke in the mid-1970s, Frances and Bob were among the first folks I met when I moved to the Star City with my wife to work for Sixth District Congressman Caldwell Butler. I knew the Garlands for owning and operating Garland's Drug Store in Roanoke's Grandin Village and then came to know them even better because of the role that Bob played as a member of Roanoke City Council and the work that Frances did as a stalwart in the Republican Party. Feeling the tug created by her husband's political service, Frances volunteered in a variety of important capacities—as a precinct captain in Roanoke, for four years as leader of the Virginia Federation of Republican Women (VFRW) in 1972, as one of the first female members of the Republican Party of Virginia's State Central Committee, as an alternate delegate to the 1976 Republican National Convention, and as a Presidential Elector in 1992. Her leadership of the VFRW was instrumental in giving women more important political opportunities throughout the Commonwealth, opportunities that have broadened to this day. She even served three Virginia Governors on the Virginia Commission on the State of Women.

Throughout her 91 years, Frances showed in everything she did that she was committed to being a loving wife and mother, to hard work, and to being a leader who displayed quintessential grace at every turn. My former boss, Congressman Butler, paid tribute to Frances in 1988 on the occasion of her receiving the Governor John N. Dalton Distinguished Service Award at the Virginia Republican State Convention. Congressman Butler said, "We remember her for all the things she has done and all the offices she has held, but we admire her most for her great talent, and for her charm, patience, and quiet dignity with which she has gone about her tasks."

While her tasks on Earth are complete, Frances Garland leaves behind a wonderful family who loved her dearly, a whole host of friends who will miss the renowned get-togethers at the Garland home, and a wide-ranging group of Republicans who will forever remember the invaluable contributions she made to making the party stronger in the Roanoke Valley, the Commonwealth, and our nation. And she did it all through digging in, doing the hard work, and with a talent for having others share in her love of it all.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT
OF ROBERT EDWARD HIGH

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the retirement of Mr. Robert Edward High and his thirty-seven years of service to the Paris Independent School District. After graduating with a B.S. from Texas A&M University, Mr. High began teaching science at Crockett Junior High School. He has since served in a variety of leadership roles including classroom teacher, coach, elementary and middle school assistant principal, middle school principal, high school principal, personnel director and assistant superintendent.

Mr. High is also active in community and civic affairs. He currently serves as vice-president of the NAACP Branch 6213 and has served as president and past president of the Lamar County Chapter of the American Red Cross. He has also been very involved with the Lamar County Heart Association, Retired Senior Volunteers, Crime Stoppers, March of Dimes, and United Way. He was the first African-American to serve as president of the Lamar County Chamber of Commerce in its 137-year history.

Mr. High's leadership has not gone unnoticed. During his tenure as middle school principal, Crockett Middle School was recognized by Governor Ann Richards as a "Gold Star Partnership School." He has also been named Outstanding Educator of the Year and Administrator of the Year. Additionally, he has received the Martin Luther King African American Heritage Award and the President's Volunteer Service Award under President George W. Bush in 2008.

The NAACP will dedicate the 19th Annual Freedom Banquet in Mr. Robert High's name to commemorate his commitment to education and civil rights in the Paris community and the proceeds of the banquet will support a scholarship in his name.

To celebrate Mr. Robert High's retirement after serving the Paris Independent School District for thirty-seven years, this statement will be submitted on Thursday, February 11, 2016.

HONORING HOUSTON HISPANIC
FORUM ON ITS 30TH ANNUAL CA-
REER AND EDUCATION DAY

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Houston Hispanic

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Forum for hosting its 30th annual Career and Education Day and for its commitment to the Greater Houston community.

The Houston Hispanic Forum is a community-based, non-profit organization whose mission is to "empower and inspire the success of the large and fast-growing Hispanic community in the Greater Houston area, thereby strengthening the entire community."

This year's Career and Education Day will bring 12,000 middle and high school students from throughout Houston and Harris County and surrounding communities to the George R. Brown Convention Center on February 13 for a day-long event to prepare our students for college and the professional world.

Students and their parents will have the opportunity to speak and learn from experts in over 55 professions, including accounting, journalism, and rocket science. The fair will have over 100 exhibitors, including local and national colleges and universities, trade schools, non-profit organizations, and large companies. Trained experts will be providing valuable assistance on how to apply for federal financial aid, deferred action, and tax consultation.

All of these opportunities and services will be available free of charge.

The economy of the 21st century demands a highly educated workforce. If Houston and Texas are to continue leading our nation in innovation and prosperity, we must educate and train all of our young people, regardless of race, ethnicity, or income, for the new economy. This is why organizations like the Houston Hispanic Forum and events like Career and Education Day are so valuable.

I would like to thank Houston Hispanic Forum President Daniel Contreras and its Board of Directors and staff for all the time and effort putting this special day together.

I would also like to thank our local school districts, colleges and universities for their participation and great efforts they make to provide a world class education to all of Houston's students.

HONORING THE LIFE OF VICTOR S. RUBENSTEIN

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Victor S. Rubenstein, 72, who passed away on Tuesday, February 2, 2016. Victor was born on November 21, 1943 in Youngstown, Ohio, a son of Emmanuel M. and Celia Copeland Rubenstein.

Mr. Rubenstein earned a bachelor's degree in education in 1966 from Youngstown State University, where he was Senior Class president, editor of The Jambar student newspaper, and also YSU's very first "Pete the Penguin" mascot. After graduating from YSU, Victor worked as a junior high school English teacher, publisher and editor of three area weekly newspapers, and as a public-relations director and television host for WYTV.

In 1970, Victor founded Rubenstein Associates, his own marketing and communications

agency, beginning a career of remarkable accomplishment. Throughout his career, Victor received over seventy-five awards for excellence in public relations and television production, was appointed to sit on the Governor's Advisory Board to the Ohio Film Bureau, served as the consulting vice-president of marketing for AVI Foodsystems in Warren, OH, and worked as one of the most prominent political consultants in the Mahoning Valley.

Victor had a great love for the Mahoning Valley and his hometown of Youngstown, OH. Victor was known to be a genuine, honest, engaging, and compassionate man. He had an extraordinary love for his family. They were the focal point of his life.

Victor will be deeply missed by his family, friends, and community. He leaves behind his wife, Carolyn Anne, whom he married on December 14, 1978. Together they raised four children; Keith (Susan) of Lake Forest, IL, Kim Rubenstein, Psy.D. (Tom Lundin) of Highland Park, IL, Eric (V.J.), Ph.D., (Lisa, Ph.D.) of Muncie, IN, and Mark (with Ryan Homes) in Charlotte, NC. He also leaves behind four grandchildren Lucille, Sydney, Zachary, and Ella Rubenstein of Lake Forest, IL. He was preceded in death by his parents and several aunts and uncles.

IN MEMORIAM OF THE HONORABLE PAUL MANNES

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Honorable Paul Mannes, an outstanding public servant who, over the course of his 34 years of service as a United States Bankruptcy Judge for the District of Maryland, exemplified the finest qualities of a jurist. Unfortunately, Judge Mannes passed away on January 20, 2016, at the age of 82. He is very much missed by his wife of 58 years, Karen Klein Mannes, and their three sons and daughters-in-law as well as his colleagues on the bench and in the bar.

Born in the District of Columbia on December 25, 1933, Judge Mannes grew up in Chevy Chase, Maryland, and went on to Dartmouth, where he majored in philosophy and graduated with honors in 1955. Thereafter, he attended Georgetown University School of Law, where he earned a juris doctor degree in 1958 and a Masters in Law in 1961. After serving as a law clerk to the Honorable Alexander Holtzoff, U.S. District Judge for the District of Columbia, and as an Assistant Corporate Counsel to the District of Columbia, he entered private practice with various law firms. On December 10, 1981, he was sworn in as United States Bankruptcy Judge for the District of Maryland.

During his time on the bench, Judge Mannes published 155 opinions that span more than 500 volumes of the Bankruptcy Reporter. He enjoyed a national reputation in the bankruptcy community as one of America's foremost judges. The Washington Post, for example, praised him in 1991 as the court's "workhorse."

In addition to his demanding workload on the bench, Judge Mannes devoted his time to improving the law. In 1987, he was appointed by Chief Justice Rehnquist to the Judicial Conference of the United States Advisory Committee on Bankruptcy Rules and later served as Chairman of the Committee, the first bankruptcy judge to be so honored. He was also active in the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges, where he served as President from 1992 to 1993, and was a member of the American Bankruptcy Institute, among other professional organizations.

Judge Mannes was also a valuable resource to the Committee on the Judiciary. For example, he testified before the Committee in 1995 and in 2003 on the need for additional bankruptcy judgeships respectively on behalf of the Judicial Conference's Advisory Committee on Bankruptcy Rules and the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges. He helpfully provided his assistance to Committee staff on both sides of the aisle. He also served on a special advisory group to the National Bankruptcy Review Commission, an independent body created by Congress to study and make recommendations to improve our Nation's bankruptcy laws.

Judge Mannes thoroughly embraced his role as a jurist and served as a mentor to those who were beginning their careers as bankruptcy judges. He and his wife hosted dinners for every new class of newly-appointed bankruptcy judges who attended the judges' orientation seminar at the Federal Judicial Center in Washington, DC. This home-style welcome, which he paid for at his own expense, became a virtual institution that endeared Judge Mannes and his wife to judges from all over the country and enhanced the collegiality of our Nation's bankruptcy bench.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring the life of the Honorable Paul Mannes. He will truly be missed, but his legacy will not soon be forgotten.

A STANDING OVATION FOR INSPIRATION STAGE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Inspiration Stage Theater Company of Sugar Land for receiving a National Outstanding Performance Award for their January festival performance at the Junior Theater Festival.

Inspiration Stage was founded in 2013, and as the only theater company in Sugar Land, has been attending the Junior Theater Festival since their inception. The performance that won this year's award was a reproduction of Disney's "The Lion King." The 39 cast member performance hosts actors of all ages and was one of the nine selected out of the 115 companies participating at the festival to win the Outstanding Performance Award. The Junior Theater Festival is an annual event that allows student performances of theater companies to be recognized for excellent ability. We

are extremely proud of the entire Inspiration Stage staff and cast and can't wait to see what happens next.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Inspiration Stage for winning the National Outstanding Performance Award. Keep up the great work.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES A. HIMES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, on February 9, 2016, I was unable to be present to cast my vote on the 9/11 Memorial Act (H.R. 3036). Had I been present for roll call No. 64, I would have voted "aye."

HONORING THE SERVICE OF
PAM BALSLEY

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Mrs. Pam Balsley, a dedicated professional with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, on the occasion of her retirement.

Pam has been an exemplary public servant who has demonstrated the highest standards of professionalism on a daily basis. This Ohio native proudly served in the United States Air Force for 20 years before coming to work at the Department of Veterans Affairs for more than 20 years. Her career in public service has been a testament to the importance of unselfish devotion.

As Pam embarks on a new chapter in life, it is my hope that she may recall with a deep sense of pride and accomplishment the outstanding contributions she has made to the Department of Veterans Affairs, the United States House of Representatives and the people of the United States of America. I would like to send her my best wishes for continued success in her future endeavors, and may her life be filled with health and happiness.

HONORING CAROL STREAM FIRE
CHIEF RICK KOLOMAY

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in recognition of the long and distinguished service of Rick Kolomay on the occasion of his retirement. Chief Kolomay will be concluding his loyal service as Fire Chief of the Carol Stream Fire Protection District after 37 years of service.

Chief Kolomay has served the Carol Stream community for 14 years, and has served as

chief since 2009. He was also a member of the Schaumburg Fire Department for 23 years and is a third-generation firefighter.

Throughout his career, his extraordinary leadership has earned him pronounced respect among colleagues and members of the community. Most notably, he helped create an alliance between neighboring fire departments, which improved efficiency and allowed the sharing of resources.

Time and time again, Chief Kolomay has exhibited the characteristics expected of a fireman: enormous sacrifice and courage. Mayor of Carol Stream, Frank Saverino described Chief Kolomay as a "hands-on guy" and commented on his devotion to the men of his department saying, "If they're climbing ladders, he's climbing ladders . . . He's got to be right there with them. He leads by example, and when you lead by example, and it's physical, it's hard". This is the true definition of a leader and his presence at the fire department will be deeply missed.

Mr. Speaker and Distinguished Colleagues, please join me in honoring Chief Kolomay on this occasion and wish him every happiness in the well deserved respite of his retirement.

RECOGNIZING KENDRA MURRAY
FOR HER OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Kendra Murray for being selected as one of Pennsylvania's top youth volunteers of 2016 by Prudential Spirit of Community Awards.

Kendra is a senior at Meyersdale Area High School, and one of the 29,000 students across the United States to participate in the 21st annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program. Kendra helped her high school raise \$5,000 to support breast cancer research by sponsoring a "Flamingo Flocking" pink flamingo event. Kendra is also the President of her school's student council, organizes community cleanup days along with other school activities and fundraisers.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Kendra is one we all should strive for. Her willingness to serve her community and Pennsylvania sets her apart as an outstanding individual and I am honored to represent her in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Kendra for this achievement and wishing her nothing but continued success.

HONORING CAPTAIN WILLIAM "BILL" McDONOUGH FOR HIS WORK IN SUPPORT OF THE PORTSMOUTH NAVAL SHIPYARD FOLLOWING HIS PASSING ON JANUARY 11, 2016

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my sincerest condolences and sympathy to the family of Captain Bill McDonough. Captain McDonough was a former commander of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, having served as its commander from 1974-1979 when he retired from the U.S. Navy. In the Granite State, Bill was most commonly known as the Washington representative to the Seacoast Shipyard Association (SSA), a post he assumed in 1991.

During many attempts by the Department of Defense to close the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard as part of the Base Realignment and Closure Process, in his role with the SSA Bill led the charge in support of keeping this important base open. He worked with current and former shipyard employees to highlight the important work done on the shipyard in support of the Navy's fleet of submarines. His expertise was sought after by many Members of Congress over the years who looked to Bill for his on the ground knowledge of the shipyard and its workers, and through these joint efforts and under Bill's strong leadership we were able to save our beloved shipyard from closure.

New Hampshire and the shipyard lost a true friend to the community and we will forever be grateful for his hard work and love of the community he held so dear.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the birthday of Frederick Douglass, I introduce a bill that would establish a bicentennial commission to study ways that the federal government might honor and celebrate the life of Douglass during the bicentennial anniversary of his birth, in 2018.

Frederick Douglass was born into slavery in 1818 on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. He learned basic reading skills from his mistress and continued to teach himself and other slaves to read and write despite the risks he faced, including death. After two attempts, Douglass successfully escaped to New York and became an abolitionist and anti-slavery lecturer. He went on to serve in several administrations, including as a close advisor to President Abraham Lincoln, U.S. Marshal of the District of Columbia under President Rutherford B. Hayes, and District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds under President James Garfield. In 1889, President Benjamin Harrison

appointed Frederick Douglass to be the U.S. minister to Haiti. He was later appointed by President Ulysses S. Grant to serve as secretary of the commission of Santo Domingo.

Douglass dedicated his life to achieving justice for all Americans. He lived in the District of Columbia for 23 of his 57 years as a free man and was deeply committed to obtaining equal congressional voting and self-government rights for District residents. His home at Cedar Hill was established as a National Historic Site in Southeast Washington, D.C., and his statue in the United States Capitol is a gift from the 650,000 American citizens of the District of Columbia.

My bill would establish a commission to examine ways the federal government can honor Douglass during the bicentennial anniversary of his birth, including the issuance of a Frederick Douglass bicentennial postage stamp, the convening of a joint meeting or joint session of Congress for ceremonies and activities relating to Frederick Douglass, a rededication of the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site, and the acquisition and preservation of artifacts associated with Frederick Douglass. The Commission would report its findings and recommendations to Congress.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

CELEBRATING THE 350TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF OLD LYME, CONNECTICUT

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 350th Anniversary of The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme and to thank its generations of members for their community building efforts over the past three and a half centuries.

The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme was founded in 1666 in Old Lyme, Connecticut, fifteen years after the Mayflower arrived in North America and has maintained its place as a facet of early American history. Since its founding, the church has been a pioneer in its faith and continues to contribute to the rich history of our region. Its congregation has included many notable Americans including the Noyes, who were original trustees of Yale University, and Samuel Holden Parsons, who led his regiment in the Battle of Bunker Hill during the American Revolution. Over the decades the church dealt with disaster and growth, and the church meetinghouse was rebuilt many times. The current meetinghouse is a landmark and an icon in the region and has served as inspiration for many artists from the area.

Today, The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme has grown to include almost a thousand members in its congregation. These members participate in efforts all over the world to improve the lives of others. From local Habitat to Humanity efforts, to establishing partnerships with churches in South Africa, to building interfaith relationships in

southeastern Connecticut, The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme has built a legacy of service and community that will continue for many decades to come.

I ask my colleagues to please join me in wishing The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme a joyous celebration of their 350th Anniversary.

H-GAC 2015 PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Richmond, Texas, for earning the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) 2015 Parks and Natural Areas Award.

The H-GAC Areas Award projects, like the one done by Richmond, help promote positive projects for the surrounding parks and natural areas. The City of Richmond received Special Recognition in the Planning Process competition. This project consists of a strategic design and progression of a communitywide trail network developed by the city of Richmond. We are extremely proud of the city of Richmond and thank them for their commitment to improving the quality of life for its residents.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to Richmond for receiving this award and helping to strengthen our community.

HONORING CHARLES WOOLLETT IN CELEBRATION OF HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my congratulations to Charles Woollett in celebration of his upcoming 100th birthday on March 12, 2016.

As he reflects on the great memories that have highlighted the past hundred years, and his life with his wife Lucille and daughters Ruth and Mary, I know he will think fondly on all that he's accomplished. As a resident of the Town of Alton, and a member of the United States Army during World War II, he has had a positive impact on both New Hampshire and the United States of America, and I thank him for his service to his community and our great country.

It is with great admiration that I congratulate Mr. Woollett on achieving this wonderful milestone, and wish him the best on all future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING GRADUATING SENIOR BUFFALO STATE BENGALS BASKETBALL PLAYERS, DERRICK FERNANDEZ, LUKE JENKINS, KEVIN MARMOLEJOS, AND AKEEM WILLIAMS

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize four exceptional members of the senior class at Buffalo State College, Derrick Fernandez, Luke Jenkins, Kevin Marmolejos, and Akeem Williams. These students are known as leaders among their peers and teammates as members of the Buffalo State men's basketball team. I commend these young men for their scholastic and athletic dedication, and congratulate them as their college careers come to a close.

Coming from the borough of the Bronx in New York City, Derrick attended Herbert H. Lehman High School and majored in Sociology. Derrick played the position of guard during his time on the Buffalo State basketball team.

Luke Jenkins came to Buffalo State from his hometown of Slingerlands, New York. A graduate of Bethlehem High School, Luke played forward for the Buffalo State Bengals. He will be earning a degree in Criminal Justice.

Kevin Marmolejos is a graduate of Beach Channel High School and a native of Woodhaven, New York. During his time at Buffalo State, Kevin played guard and his major was Individualized Studies.

Akeem Williams graduated from White Plains High School and made his way to Buffalo State from White Plains, New York. He studied Criminal Justice and played in the position of forward on the Buffalo State basketball team.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing my colleagues to join me in recognizing these outstanding Buffalo State Bengals and in congratulating them as they obtain their undergraduate degrees. As an alumnus of Buffalo State, I will be proud to call them fellow alumni. I wish them all the best in their future endeavors and am confident they will achieve success.

THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE YOLANDA ADAMS MORNING SHOW

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, today I stand in celebration of my good friend Yolanda Adams on this the 10th anniversary of her radio show.

Yolanda Adams rose to fame as one of Gospel Music's greats making her debut in 1988 with the acclaimed and uplifting Just As I Am album.

Since then Yolanda has been wowing gospel audiences all over the world.

Following an illustrious musical career, Yolanda began the Yolanda Adams Morning Show.

Yolanda simply connects with listeners by bringing her warm, embracing spirit to the airwaves in a playful blend of contemporary music, news, interviews, and daily features that are entertaining and inspiring.

The Yolanda Adams Morning Show is the longest running inspirational morning drive radio show of its kind.

Currently in over 40 markets. The show has over 5 million in listening audience every morning.

Yolanda and her co-hosts, Anthony Valary and Marcus D. Wiley, have made it about love and comradery make it about more than just a morning show . . . it's a celebration of friends and family.

It is with endearing sentiment that I celebrate The Yolanda Adams Morning Show, and I look forward to 10 more years of unmatched laughter, spirituality, and celebration on the radio waves.

ELECTRIFY AFRICA

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support passage of the Electrify Africa Act. This bipartisan legislation will build a brighter future for more than 600 million Africans by improving their access to reliable electricity.

During the last several decades, development gains in impoverished communities throughout the continent have been dramatically undercut by prevailing practices for accessing light and cooking fuel—practices that have damaged one's health and safety, degraded the environment, or have inefficiently used scarce resources.

By investing in electricity and by encouraging the private sector to do the same, this legislation will help save lives, provide education and medical services, bolster communities, and improve economic development.

As the Ranking Member of the State Department and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, I applaud Congress' passage of this critical legislation, and I look forward to working with the Administration on its implementation.

IN RECOGNITION OF STAG & DOE RESTAURANT AND TAVERN'S SELECTION AS THE ROWAN COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2015 CHAMBER CHAMPION SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Stag & Doe Restaurant and Tavern, located in China Grove, North Carolina, for its selection as the Rowan County Chamber of Commerce 2015 Chamber Champion Small Business of the Year. Stag & Doe is a fixture within Rowan County and this selection illus-

trates the profound impact the restaurant has had on our community for generations.

Established in 1953 by Dan Morton, Stag & Doe was styled after an English Pub that would be dedicated to providing customers a welcoming environment where people could enter as strangers and leave as friends. While many things have changed at Stag & Doe since 1953, it has never lost its family-owned, hometown atmosphere. Stag & Doe is still known today as one of the best places in Rowan County to go to for a great steak or the freshest seafood in the region.

In addition to providing a fantastic dining experience that attracts folks from all across the region, the restaurant's owners, the Morton family, have been actively involved in the community's development for decades. From opening up Stag & Doe for countless local events to being the driving force behind building support for a new interchange off Interstate 85 that would have a lasting impact on southern Rowan County, Gary Morton continues the legacy of community service that was started over 60 years ago. Stag & Doe is the embodiment of what a small business should be, and this award is truly a testament to the appreciation the restaurant has so rightfully earned from our community.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Morton family and the Stag & Doe staff for earning this prestigious award, and wishing them well as they continue to serve the people of Rowan County, North Carolina some of the finest food our area has to offer.

RECOGNIZING GRADUATING SENIOR BUFFALO STATE BENGALS BASKETBALL PLAYERS, CLARISA MATIAS, BRITT PERRY, KRISTAL WATSON, AND JORDAN YASTREMSKI

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Clarisa Matias, Britt Perry, Krystal Watson, and Jordan Yastremski, graduating seniors on the Buffalo State women's basketball team. During their collegiate careers, these young women have proven to be talented and dedicated scholars and athletes. Their achievements on and off the court are worthy of praise.

From Buffalo, New York, Clarisa Matias graduated from Holy Angels High School and majored in Biology at Buffalo State. Clarisa played the position of guard during her years on the basketball team.

Prior to her time playing guard for the Bengals, Britt Perry earned her high school diploma from Hutch Tech High School. She is a Buffalo native who chose to enroll at Buffalo State and will earn a degree in Health and Wellness.

Krystal Watson will graduate with a Business degree and played forward during her time on the Buffalo State basketball team. Her hometown is Buffalo, New York, and she attended Sacred Heart High School.

Hailing from Bath, New York, Jordan Yastremski traveled to Buffalo State from

Bath-Haverling High School. She studied Criminal Justice and played the position of forward for the Bengals.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing my colleagues to join me in recognizing these extraordinary Buffalo State Bengals and in congratulating them as they obtain their undergraduate degrees. As an alumnus of Buffalo State, I will be proud to call them fellow alumni. Their commitment and ambition will propel them to success, and I wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

THE GLOBAL ZIKA EPIDEMIC

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, in 1947, in a remote area of Uganda, scientists discovered a previously unknown virus among the rhesus monkey population. They called it the Zika virus for the forest in which it was found. It is endemic to Africa and Southeast Asia.

Scientists know that the Zika virus, like dengue fever and chikungunya, is spread almost exclusively through the bite of an Aedes species mosquito, an aggressive daytime biter. These mosquitoes had been significantly diminished in this hemisphere, certainly in the United States, until the recent resurgence of dengue and chikungunya disease. We know a great deal about these disease vectors, but there is much scientists admit they don't know about the Zika virus itself.

Lack of knowledge and misinformation has stoked apprehension and fear among many.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) some of the reasons we don't know more about this disease include:

A relatively small proportion (about 1 in 4) of infected people develop symptoms;

A virus that is only detectable for a few days in infected people's blood;

The failure of current tests to definitively distinguish Zika from similar viruses, such as dengue and chikungunya.

The WHO recommends that all people in areas with potentially infected mosquitoes, especially pregnant women, wear protective clothing and repellants and stay indoors to the extent possible with windows closed or screened. Pregnant women are urged to postpone travel to affected areas or to diligently protect against mosquito bites if travel is unavoidable.

Currently no therapeutics exist to treat Zika virus nor is there a vaccine—but that gap need not be forever. One of our witnesses at yesterday's hearing—Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of NIH's allergy and infectious diseases institute explained the scope of NIH research on the Zika virus as well vector control. Lessons learned from years of malaria vector control have applicability to Zika. Our two other distinguished witnesses included Dr. Thomas Frieden and Ariel Pablos-Mendez, Assistant Administrator for Global Health at USAID.

The U.S. Government has for quite some time promoted such tactics as insecticide-laced mosquito nets, window and door

screens, small pool and container drainage and the use of strong but safe pesticides to eradicate mosquitoes. However, our programs largely are tailored for developing countries. With the reemergence of dengue fever and chikungunya in the southern United States, we have to step up our domestic efforts to control mosquitoes before warmer weather leads to an explosion of the mosquito population during an imminent epidemic in the homeland.

According to Luiz Alberto Figueiredo Machado, Ambassador of Brazil to the United States, the Brazilian government has deployed 220,000 troops and 300,000 health agents to fight the vector of the infection by visiting communities to educate the population and help eliminate all mosquito breeding grounds.

Experts cite possible links with the Zika infection of pregnant mothers and disorders affecting their unborn children, although they—including our witnesses yesterday—are quick to point out that no definitive proof of such a linkage.

According to Brazil's Ambassador Machado, "Microcephaly in newborn babies can also be caused by a number of other diseases. Health experts are dealing with something new: the link between Zika and microcephaly is unprecedented in the scientific literature and requires in-depth studies and analyses. . . ."

In fact, in announcing the administration's proposal for a supplemental sum of \$1.8 billion to fund efforts to combat the Zika virus, the White House statement said there "may" be a connection between the Zika virus and disorders experienced by newborns in affected countries.

Dr. Marcos Espinal, Director of Communicable Diseases and Health Analysis at the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), said there is a broad spectrum of impacts for microcephaly.

A fact sheet on microcephaly in Boston Children's Hospital notes that "Some children with microcephaly have normal intelligence and experience no particular difficulty with schoolwork, physical activity, relationships or any other aspect of their lives. However, many children with the disease—especially those with more severe cases—face mild to significant learning disabilities, impaired motor functions, difficulty with movement and balance, speech delays."

In the meantime, we must work harder to prevent maternal infections and devise compassionate ways to ensure that any child born with disabilities from this or any other infection is welcomed, loved and gets the care he or she needs. USAID's Ariel Pablos-Mendez testified yesterday that we need to expand "best practices for supporting children with microcephaly." In like manner, parents of children with disabilities need to be tangibly supported.

Ana Carolina Cáceres, a Brazilian journalist born with microcephaly, told the BBC's Ricardo Senra in a February 5 interview that the condition "is a box of surprises. You may suffer from serious problems or you may not . . . On the day I was born, the doctor said I had no chance of survival. 'She will not walk, she will not talk . . . ' But he—like many others—was wrong. I grew up, went to school, went to university. Today I am a journalist and I write a blog . . . People need to put their prejudices aside and learn about this syndrome."

The hearing yesterday looked into the implications of the current and long-term threat from the Zika virus, and we assembled expert infectious health leaders from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Agency for International Development to help us do so.

For more than four years, I have been urging passage of my bill the End Neglected Tropical Diseases Act—H.R. 1797. The full Foreign Affairs Committee approved it last month. Since 2011, we've accelerated our discussions on the need for more study and funded efforts to identify tropical diseases and find diagnostics, vaccines and treatments of such illnesses.

At that time, West Nile virus was quietly making its way across the globe, including the United States, from its origins in East Africa.

Ebola virus, first discovered in a remote area of Central Africa in 1976, caused a global health crisis only two years ago.

For the second consecutive year, the administration has slashed funding for global health accounts in the budget proposal released this week, including a 19 percent cut for global program on tuberculosis—the world's leading infectious disease killer. Additionally, the administration is being short-sighted with regard to Neglected Tropical Diseases, cutting that program by nearly 15 percent. In the face of the waves of infectious disease epidemics in recent years, including multi-drug resistant tuberculosis, West Nile virus, Ebola and now Zika, the administration's habitual disregard of the increasing danger from infectious diseases is simply inexplicable.

Zika has now joined the ranks of previously little-known diseases that have created global alarm.

Before the next explosive health crisis appears, we must provide sufficient resources to the study of tropical diseases. H.R. 1797 authorizes the creation of Centers of Excellence to study every aspect of these dreaded diseases.

Zika virus is the latest crisis but won't be the last.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ELLEN L. STOVALL

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the passing of Ellen Lewis Stovall, but more importantly, to celebrate the life of a cancer advocate and pioneer. During a 44-year period, Ellen defeated cancer on 3 separate occasions and advocated for improved cancer treatment for more than 30 years.

At 24 years old, just weeks after giving birth to her son, Ellen was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma and told she had less than a 20 percent chance of survival. Against the odds, Ellen beat cancer and went on to found a support group for young cancer survivors at Georgetown University Hospital. During this time is when she became a strong advocate for the term cancer "survivor" as opposed to "victim," as the key to a new way of thinking about the disease.

In 1988, she was elected to the board of the National Coalition of Cancer Survivorship, where she later served as President and CEO. Ellen's contributions to the cancer treatment community are too numerous to count. Among various positions with the National Cancer Institute, American Association for Cancer Research, and the American Society of Clinical Oncology, she was appointed to the NCI's National Cancer Advisory Board by President Clinton in 1992. She later served as Vice President of the Institute of Medicine's National Cancer Policy Board and went on to become a founding member of the board's successor—the National Cancer Policy Forum.

As a doctor, I recognize the countless contributions Ellen made to the cancer treatment community. Her relentless advocacy of a more patient-centered approach to cancer survivors made her a pioneering figure in cancer treatment. I had the privilege of working with Ellen and Representative LOIS CAPPS (D-CA) to introduce the PATH Act providing a cancer treatment roadmap for patients. Ellen will be missed, not only by those of us who were fortunate enough to call her a friend, but also by the countless cancer survivors whose lives she has positively impacted. I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing her many years of dedication to improving the lives of her fellow cancer survivors.

HONORING COMMUNITY CHAMPION CHARLIE SCHMITZ

HON. MIKE KELLY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize one of my constituents from Western Pennsylvania, Mr. Charles Schmitz. Mr. Schmitz, known as 'Charlie' by many, was originally from New York City but now calls his ranch in Crawford County home.

Charlie gallantly served in our nation's military and spent three years in combat. He is a decorated Vietnam War veteran who continues to serve those around him with his selfless personality and admirable actions.

During his service, Charlie sustained injuries which had a significant impact on his life and ultimately motivated the next part of his journey. In 1993, Charlie founded the WCJ Ranch, a Pennsylvania non-profit that provides regulated licensed shooting and hunting grounds free of charge to Combat Disabled Veterans, Disabled Veterans and Inexperienced Youth Hunters. In order to benefit as many veterans as possible, WCJ Ranch collaborates with other organizations such as the Paralyzed Veterans of America and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

For twenty-three successful hunting seasons, Charlie has served as the ranch's founder, field guide and outfitter. Charlie has welcomed countless veterans regardless of their physical challenges, and provided them with the opportunity to hunt safely and enjoy the great outdoors to the fullest extent among other veterans. WCJ Ranch personalizes each and every hunt by accommodating the hunter's physical abilities. There are several handicapped-accessible deer and turkey blinds, accessible by wheelchair as well as specially-

outfitted trails and bridges. Facilities are continuously being adapted and upgraded to accommodate the ever-changing needs of the hunters. Charlie adds new stands and special facilities every year for repeat hunters who frequent WCJ Ranch to ensure they have new areas to explore each time they visit.

Everyone who has had the privilege of visiting WCJ Ranch has walked away changed for the better and sure of one thing—it's not just about the hunt. It's the overall experience which creates memories that last a lifetime. The camaraderie between the hunters and the staff leads to close bonds and beneficial relationships. It is the welcoming environment that Charlie has created where everyone feels safe and as if they belong.

Charlie has displayed an unwavering commitment to the veterans' community and those in need. He used his personal experience and what helped him heal following his time in combat, and decided to create a similar outlet for other veterans where they could find peace. Charlie is an honorable man whose dedication continues to make a positive difference in the lives of so many.

RECOGNIZING THE OZONA LIONS
7TH GRADE MEN'S BASKETBALL
TEAM

HON. WILL HURD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Ozona Lions 7th grade men's basketball team on winning the 2016 District Tournament in Eldorado, Texas.

The Lions, undefeated for the entire season, were behind for most of the championship game. It wasn't until the last two minutes that they secured the lead. Despite team injuries and illnesses, they were able to band together to secure the win. I would also like to give special recognition to Head Coach John Esparza, who led the Lions to victory. I look forward to seeing these young men develop into outstanding leaders in the community. On behalf of the 23rd Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to the Lions.

H-GAC 2015 PARKS AND NATURAL
AREAS AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sugar Land, Texas for earning the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) 2015 Parks and Natural Areas Award.

The H-GAC Areas Award projects, like the one done by Sugar Land, help promote positive projects for the surrounding parks and natural areas. The City of Sugar Land won in the On-the-Ground Projects Under \$500K competition. This project consists of a convenient, one-of-a-kind playground that can serve kids in different age groups and all capabili-

ties. We are extremely proud of the city of Sugar Land and thank them for their commitment to improving the quality of life for its residents.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to Sugar Land for receiving this award and helping to strengthen our community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I am not recorded on Roll Call Number 64 from February 9, 2016. As a cosponsor of H.R. 3036, the National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act, introduced by Rep. TOM MACARTHUR of New Jersey, I would have voted Yes on Roll Call Number 64.

HONORING MICHAEL RILEY FOR
HIS LEADERSHIP AT THE MOTOR
TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION OF
CONNECTICUT

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor President of the Motor Transport Association of Connecticut (MTAC), Michael Riley, upon his retirement. For just under three decades Mike has represented the commercial trucking interests of almost 1,400 member companies as a trusted and respected advocate.

From 1979 to 1987, before his involvement with MTAC, Mike was an executive assistant to Senator Christopher Dodd and he used that experience to work with lawmakers and Connecticut administration officials to improve the regulatory structure surrounding the trucking industry. These efforts resulted in achievements like the installation of weight station bypass systems, online permit processes, and important legislation to define "independent contractors" who work in the industry.

Mike's work at MTAC has tangibly increased the safety of Connecticut road users, as he led efforts to create a consortium for testing the use of controlled substances and alcohol abuse among drivers. Since 1989, and in conjunction with Gregory & Howe, MTAC has helped create the largest testing program in the state, so successful that even non-truck drivers from member companies are part of the program.

Mike's focus on safety extended to spearheading a commercial lines insurance program, which offers property and casualty insurance for members. The success of this venture is demonstrated by its size and support within the industry. Indeed the fund has become large enough in recent years to pay significant workers compensation dividends back to participating companies, showing what a sustainable and robust program Mike has developed.

Please join me in congratulating Mike for the significant impact he has made on the state of Connecticut, and wishing him an enjoyable and well-earned retirement.

RECOGNIZING IGNACIO GAMBOA,
JR.

HON. WILL HURD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and service of Mr. Ignacio Gamboa, Jr.

Mr. Gamboa passed away on December 23rd, 2015. He was a decorated veteran and fought heroically in both the Second World War and the Korean War. Among his Army decorations are three Asiatic Pacific Medals, the WWII Victory Medal, the Army Occupation Medal with the Japan Clasp, the Korean Service Medal with two Bronze Service Stars, the Philippines Liberation Medal with one Bronze Service Medal, and the U.N. Service Medal.

Mr. Gamboa was a notable and honorable citizen of Devine, Texas, and was highly involved in the Knights of Columbus and the Devine Housing Authority, upon which he served on the Board of Directors. He worked at Kelly Air Force Base for over 30 years and served as an elections judge for many of those years. He also enjoyed volunteering with the St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Devine. On behalf of the 23rd Congressional District of Texas, I thank Mr. Ignacio Gamboa, Jr. for his dedication and service to United States. May he rest in peace.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF MR. AND
MRS. WILLIAM HUGO PARKMAN

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the lives of Mr. Hugo Parkman and Mrs. Doris Parkman.

Residents of Palmetto, Georgia, Mr. Parkman passed away on November 20, 2012, and Mrs. Parkman passed away last Sunday, February 7, 2016.

Mr. Parkman served on the USS *Finback* during World War II and became bunkmates with future President George H.W. Bush after President Bush's plane was shot down over the Pacific. Mrs. Parkman was the first member of her family to attend college, enrolling in Alabama College. She then went to missionary school in Kentucky to study religious education where she met her life-long partner, Hugo.

Together, Mr. and Mrs. Parkman served as Southern Baptist missionaries in Makati, Philippines, establishing a church and serving everywhere they went.

Throughout their travels, family always came first for Mr. and Mrs. Parkman who are survived by their six children, 15 grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren. They will truly be missed.

H-GAC 2015 PARKS AND NATURAL
AREAS AWARD**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Missouri City, Texas for earning the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) 2015 Parks and Natural Areas Award.

The H-GAC Areas Award projects help promote positive projects for the surrounding parks and natural areas. The Missouri City SOWING Project Community Garden won in the Policy Tools category. This project, done by Men for Change, Inc., promotes a healthy lifestyle for people of all ages through informing families on proper nutrition and the importance of a balanced diet. We are extremely proud of Missouri City and thank them for their commitment to improving the quality of life for its residents.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to Missouri City for receiving this award and helping to strengthen our community.

HONORING REV. DR. ROBERT E.
HAMLIN, SR.

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, for two decades Rev. Dr. Robert E. Hamlin, Sr. has served as a faith leader and dedicated community member as Senior Pastor of the historic Second Baptist Church of Doylestown, Pennsylvania.

A native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Reverend Hamlin was first licensed to preach at McKinley Memorial Baptist Church in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania under the leadership of Rev. Lowell M. McCown, Sr. in 1994. In February of 1996, he was installed as the Pastor of the Second Baptist Church of Doylestown and, under his leadership, the congregation has grown in both size and spirit. Already one of Bucks County's most historic churches, Reverend Hamlin has strengthened and continued Second Baptist's important role in our area. His commitment to minister to the wide and diverse community he serves has provided for the spiritual development and earthly needs of the surrounding communities.

As a past moderator of the Suburban Baptist Association and member of the Board of Directors of several local, national and internationally based organizations, Reverend Hamlin's ministry is one that has impacted thousands not only in Bucks County, but around the world.

On this, Rev. Dr. Robert E. Hamlin, Sr.'s 20th Pastoral Anniversary, we recognize his continued commitment to the betterment of his congregation and community. I join with the members of the Second Baptist Church of Doylestown in recognition of this achievement and in sending best wishes for many more years to come.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$19,005,359,240,744.60. We've added \$8,378,482,191,831.52 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

SUPPORT FOR ACCESS TO EPI-
NEPHRINE FOR IN-FLIGHT EMER-
GENCIES**HON. PETER WELCH**

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for access to epinephrine for in-flight emergencies, commonly administered by epinephrine auto-injector (EAI) and want to commend Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. MALONEY of New York and Mr. HANNA of New York for their amendment and their leadership in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, working to ensure that Emergency Medical Kits (EMKs) are appropriate to meet the emergency needs of both adult and child passengers. Epinephrine Auto-Injectors are the primary method for treatment of anaphylaxis emergencies and the best way to address anaphylactic events. Due to the ease and safety of use of epinephrine auto injectors for many travelers with diagnosed and undiagnosed allergies, air carriers should consider stocking auto-injectable epinephrine for use in adults and children.

HAPPY 34TH TO THE FORT BEND
BOYS CHOIR**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Fort Bend Boys Choir for celebrating 34 years of hard work and musical talent.

From its inception in 1982, the talent of the Fort Bend Boys Choir has been impressive. They have performed across the country at high profile events like the Olympic Festival in 1986 and President George Bush's inauguration in 1989. They were also chosen to perform at the National Christmas Tree Lighting in 2001, which resulted in a nomination for a news Emmy award. Over the 34 years that the organization has grown, the Fort Bend Boys Choir started off at only 45 members and now consists of five ensembles with 200 members

total. Typically, the different choirs consist of younger boys in age, ranging from 6-14 years old. These young boys have accomplished so much and their hard work shows through the many achievements they have earned.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, we celebrate the Fort Bend Boys Choir on their 34th anniversary and look forward to enjoying their music for another 34 years.

A PLEA TO MY COLLEAGUES ON
THE FAA BILL**HON. LOUISE MCINTOSH SLAUGHTER**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about flight 3407 that crashed in Buffalo, New York, seven years ago tomorrow. This plane crashed in sight of the runway on an icy February night.

We learned that the pilot and the co-pilot had never been trained or flown into any icy situations. The young woman co-pilot had flown the night before from Seattle. She was so poorly paid, around \$13,000 a year, that she could not afford a motel room to sleep overnight. She instead, slept on the floor in the pilot's lounge. On the black box, before the crash, you could hear them both yawning.

On that plane were two of the best musicians in the United States, a woman who was an expert on Rwanda and the genocide there, and one of the top anthropologists. They died because these pilots had neither knowledge nor experience to fly in those conditions.

The families of the people who died on that plane have selflessly come to D.C. time and again, working to get regulations passed for seven years on how much training the pilot and the co-pilot have to have, and to ensure they have enough flying hours between them.

Now, we're facing an FAA bill with an amendment that would undo those safety regulations. I implore my colleagues not to let that amendment pass or weaken the regulations that protect the flying public and reverse the competency of pilots who hold the lives of those we love in their hands.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. RONALD
REED**HON. DEBBIE DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Ronald Reed of Taylor, Michigan. A Vietnam veteran and retiree of General Motors, where he spent 42 years, Mr. Reed has been donating blood since his early days as a young Marine in Okinawa, Japan.

During the last 35 years, Ronald has donated blood nearly 200 times—impacting the lives of close to 600 people. Each blood donation has the ability to touch up to three lives, and his selflessness is an inspiration for all of us. Few Americans can say they have touched that many lives.

Blood donations here in the United States are incredibly important, and we face a constant struggle to prevent shortages of available blood. The average able donor gives about 1.2 times annually. If others followed the leadership of Mr. Reed and gave two or more times a year, we would not face the frightening need particularly in times of bad weather and holidays. Mr. Reed's above and beyond level of donation is truly remarkable and deserves recognition.

When it comes to his service to his fellow man, Ronald is an extremely modest man. He says he simply gives because he can. In my opinion, Mr. Reed fully embodies the American spirit as both a veteran and a hard and loyal worker, giving his own blood to help those in his community.

A volunteer at a Riverview Red Cross location in 2011 observed that Ronald is "an unsung hero". It is for this reason Mr. Speaker, that I ask my colleagues today to join me in honoring Ronald Reed for his generous con-

tributions. I thank him not only for his overwhelming donation of blood, but also for his years of service in the auto industry as a millwright, as well as his service to our country as a Marine.

MAKING AN IMPACT—ONE MISSION
AT A TIME

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Reverend Drew Wood, pastor at St. Laurence Catholic Church in Sugar Land, TX for being honored at Catholic Charities' Mission of Love Gala.

The annual Mission of Love Gala recognizes Catholic Charities of the Fort Bend County area. Reverend Wood has served as

pastor of St. Laurence since 1998. He was ordained as a Priest at St. Mary's Seminary, and worked in various roles within the Diocese of the Galveston-Houston area including as the Vocations Director and Vice Chancellor. At St. Laurence, Reverend Wood found a calling in the lives of young people within the church. Due to his work chaperoning Teen Mass at conferences, Reverend Wood created a yearly retreat of his own, Heart of Worship, hosted at St. Laurence, where spiritual activities like speakers, worship, and mass impact young people's lives. Thank you to Reverend Drew Wood for the impact he has made on the lives of the Sugar Land residents.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Reverend Wood. We thank you for providing spiritual guidance to the parishioners at St. Laurence. We can't wait to see what you do next.

SENATE—Friday, February 12, 2016

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MIKE ROUNDS, a Senator from the State of South Dakota.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, instruct us in the way we should go. Direct the steps of our lawmakers, leading them beside still waters as You restore their souls. As they put their trust in You, be for them a shield of defense. Lord, preserve them, keeping them from stumbling or slipping. Enable them to rejoice because Your goodness and mercies endure forever. May our Senators remember that You love righteousness and justice. May this knowledge motivate them to follow Your precepts, earnestly striving to glorify Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MIKE ROUNDS, a Senator from the State of South Dakota, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. ROUNDS thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS**RECOGNIZING MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, more than 100 years ago, Albert Einstein proposed the theory of relativity. He predicted that violent events in the early universe shocked the cosmos, sending gravity waves rippling through the fabric of space time. By the time these waves reached Earth, they would be “vanishingly small,” and, with the technology available in Einstein’s day, impossible to detect. But after 100 more years of science and innovation, scientists announced yesterday that, with their new cosmic hearing aid, they have heard the first ripples from space.

I congratulate the men and women of the LIGO Scientific Collaboration, an international project of over 900 scientists led by MIT and Caltech, for their hard work and dedication. Using cutting-edge facilities in Louisiana and Washington State, scientists detected a vibration in the space-time continuum, opening our ears, not just our eyes, to space.

A billion years ago in a distant galaxy, two black holes spiraled inward on each other. Their eventual collapse released the energy of a billion trillion suns in a fraction of a second and sent gravity waves rippling through space and time. Gravity waves compress space in one direction and stretch it in the other. Since this push and pull weakens with distance, scientists have long thought gravity waves would be too faint to measure on Earth. But yesterday scientists proved such skepticism wrong. With their latest detector at the ready, scientists were waiting and listening for any faint sign of these waves. And on September 14, 2015, scientists heard a short chirp on their instruments that turned out to be the billion-year echo of a faraway past.

For the first time, we can hear the *Musica Universalis* because of our investment in basic science research. Throughout the 40-year, \$1.1 billion project, the National Science Foundation withstood harsh criticism about their funding to support the detection

of gravitational waves that were thought to be undetectable on Earth. But it was NSF’s commitment to basic science research and the dedication of Dr. Rainer Weiss of MIT, Dr. Kip Thorne of Caltech, Dr. Ronald Drever of the University of Glasgow, and an international team of scientists that has made yesterday’s announcement possible.

This discovery is a triumph for science and a testament to the payoff of long-term public investment in basic science research. It further illuminates our understanding of the universe and opens the door for a whole new way of peering into the cosmos. I congratulate all those involved in turning on the sound to the stars.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. McCONNELL:

S. Con. Res. 31. A concurrent resolution providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate and an adjournment of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 579

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 579, a bill to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 to strengthen the independence of the Inspectors General, and for other purposes.

S. 2426

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2426, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 31—PROVIDING FOR A CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF THE SENATE AND AN ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Mr. McCONNELL submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 31

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That when the Senate recesses or adjourns on any day from Thursday, February 11, 2016, through Saturday, February 20, 2016, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until 12:00 noon on Monday, February 22, 2016, or such other time on that day as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the House adjourns on any legislative day from Friday, February 12, 2016, through Tuesday, February 16, 2016, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 23, 2016, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 3 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. (a) The Majority Leader of the Senate or his designee, after concurrence with the Minority Leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the Senate to reassemble at such place and time as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the Senate adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the Senate shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

SEC. 3. (a) The Speaker or his designee, after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the House to reassemble at such place and time as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the House adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the House shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 153, 148, 204, 263, 329, 375, and 421.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Sunil Sabharwal, of California, to be United States Alternate Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund for a term of two years; Azita Raji, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Sweden; Brian James Egan, of Maryland, to be Legal Adviser of the Department of State; Samuel D. Heins,

of Minnesota, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Norway; John L. Estrada, of Florida, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago; Thomas A. Shannon, Jr., of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Ambassador, to be an Under Secretary of State (Political Affairs); and David McKean, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Luxembourg.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the nominations.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Sabharwal, Raji, Egan, Heins, Estrada, Shannon, and McKean nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

DESIGNATING "LIU XIAOBO PLAZA"

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 2451 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2451) to designate the area between the intersections of International Drive, Northwest and Van Ness Street, Northwest and International Drive, Northwest and International Place, Northwest in Washington, District of Columbia, as "Liu Xiaobo Plaza," and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and that the Senate vote on passage of the bill with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there further debate on the bill?

Hearing none, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 2451) was passed, as follows:

S. 2451

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF LIU XIAOBO PLAZA.

(a) DESIGNATION OF PLAZA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The area between the intersections of International Drive, Northwest and Van Ness Street, Northwest and International Drive, Northwest and International Place, Northwest in Washington, District of Columbia, shall be known and designated as "Liu Xiaobo Plaza".

(2) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the area referred to in paragraph (1) shall be deemed to be a reference to Liu Xiaobo Plaza.

(b) DESIGNATION OF ADDRESS.—

(1) DESIGNATION.—The address of 3505 International Place, Northwest, Washington, District of Columbia, shall be redesignated as 1 Liu Xiaobo Plaza.

(2) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the address referred to in paragraph (1) shall be deemed to be a reference to 1 Liu Xiaobo Plaza.

(c) SIGNS.—The Administrator of General Services shall construct street signs that shall—

(1) contain the phrase "Liu Xiaobo Plaza";

(2) be similar in design to the signs used by Washington, District of Columbia, to designate the location of Metro stations; and

(3) be placed on—

(A) the parcel of Federal property that is closest to 1 Liu Xiaobo Plaza (as redesignated by subsection (b)); and

(B) the street corners of International Drive, Northwest and Van Ness Street, Northwest and International Drive, Northwest and International Place, Northwest, Washington, District of Columbia.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROVIDING FOR A CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF THE SENATE AND AN ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 31.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 31) providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate and an adjournment of the House of Representatives.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 31) was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

APPOINTMENTS AUTHORITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the upcoming adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the major-

ity leader, the junior Senator from Alaska, and the junior Senator from Missouri be authorized to sign duly-enrolled bills or joint resolutions on Friday, February 12, through Monday, February 22.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2016, THROUGH MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2016

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn, to then convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted, on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Monday, February 15, at 11 a.m.; Thursday, February 18, at 9 a.m.; I further ask that when the Senate adjourns on Thursday, February 18, it next convene at 3 p.m., Monday, February 22, unless the Senate receives a message from the House that it has adopted S. Con. Res. 31, and that if the Senate receives such a message, it stand adjourned until 3 p.m., Monday, February 22; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; I ask that following the prayer and pledge, Senator COONS be recognized to deliver Washington's Farewell Address; further, that following the reading of Washington's Farewell Address, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 5:30 p.m., with Senators per-

mitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2016, AT 11 A.M.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 10:19 a.m., conditionally adjourned until Monday, February 15, 2016, at 11 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate February 12, 2016:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AZITA RAJI, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF SWEDEN.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

SUNIL SABHARWAL, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES ALTERNATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND FOR A TERM OF TWO YEARS.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BRIAN JAMES EGAN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE LEGAL ADVISER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

SAMUEL D. HEINS, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY.

JOHN L. ESTRADA, OF FLORIDA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO.

THOMAS A. SHANNON, JR., OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER AMBASSADOR, TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (POLITICAL AFFAIRS).

DAVID MCKEAN, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO LUXEMBOURG.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Friday, February 12, 2016

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As Members prepare to return to their home districts, endow them with ears to hear the voices of their constituents—those who voted for them and those who did not. It is the strength of our representative democracy that all have a voice in the governing of the Nation.

Our Nation will soon be remembering Presidents Washington and Lincoln, giants of America's history. One presided over a Nation united in its inception behind their President, the other over a Nation divided soon after his election. May each of their examples be an inspiration to all Americans that faithfulness to the laws of our land and the hope of our Founders is the responsibility of us all to bring to our political discourse.

Bless us this day and every day. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SCHIFF led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HONORING DONALD "BUDDY" WRAY

(Mr. WOMACK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WOMACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Donald "Buddy" Wray, a great Arkansan and American, a dear friend who passed away in January.

A native of Des Arc, Buddy earned a bachelor's degree in animal husbandry from the University of Arkansas. He spent time in the Army and later the Army Guard before joining a small poultry company in 1961 called Tyson Feed and Hatchery, today known as Tyson Foods.

For over 50 years, Buddy was instrumental in everything the company did. As president and COO, he helped build Tyson Foods into one of the world's leading food companies and a major contributor to our State's economy.

In addition to his career, Buddy was also dedicated to the northwest Arkansas community, especially Springdale. He was a member of the Kiwanis Club and served on countless boards—Harding University, the University of Arkansas, and the College of the Ozarks, to name a few. He was also a man of faith, dedicated to the Robinson Avenue Church of Christ in Springdale.

Buddy will be missed by his many family members, countless friends, the community, and the Tyson Foods family, but we find comfort in remembering Buddy's famous words: "Look behind with no regrets . . . look forward with no fear." Knowing his determination to live that message resulted in a life that made a difference.

Rest in peace, Buddy Wray.

EULICE BRANDON GARRETT

(Ms. KELLY of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Eulice Brandon Garrett, who, after nearly 3 years of serving the Windy City and Illinois' Second Congressional District as my chief of staff, is leaving for the sunny skies of L.A.

BG, as he is affectionately known, is exactly the type of servant leader this country deserves.

Brandon began his career in 2006 as a policy adviser to Congressman Bill Jefferson of Louisiana. Later he served as legislative director to Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE of Ohio and policy director of the Congressional Black Caucus.

After a brief stint as policy director to Vice President JOE BIDEN's 2012 reelection campaign, I was lucky to have Brandon take a gamble on me and agree to serve as my chief of staff. For nearly 3 years, he has worked tirelessly

for the residents of the Second Congressional District.

BG, you are truly one of a kind, from your very unique fashion to your quick smile and your cool demeanor and ability to make everyone you meet feel like they are your best friend. It was my honor and privilege to call you my chief.

On behalf of the families of the Second Congressional District and this Congress, thank you.

RETIRED U.S. AIR FORCE COLONEL CARLYLE "SMITTY" HARRIS

(Mr. KELLY of Mississippi asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize retired United States Air Force Colonel Carlyle "Smitty" Harris of Tupelo, Mississippi.

On this day in 1973, after nearly 8 years of being held as a prisoner of war in Vietnam, he was released to be reunited with his wife, Louise; his daughters, Robin and Carolyn; and his son, Lyle, who was born 1 month after he was captured.

Colonel Harris became a POW on April 4, 1965, when his F-105 *Thunderchief* was shot down by enemy fire while he was on a mission to attack a bridge known as the Dragon's Jaw, an important target in northern Vietnam. After he was captured, he was then transported to the well-known Hanoi Hilton.

Colonel Harris taught his fellow prisoners a vital way of communicating with each other through a method called the tap code. This gave the men the ability to communicate without speaking, establishing a chain of command and boosting morale. While he experienced cruelty, torture, and isolation, he was able to find solace in his faith in God, love for his country, and hope of seeing his family again.

Colonel Harris embodies the characteristics that make you proud to be an American.

Thank you, Colonel Harris, for your service. I join you in celebrating this happy anniversary of your homecoming.

PORTER RANCH

(Mr. SCHIFF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the environmental tragedy affecting residents in Porter Ranch.

Just a few miles from my district, and until yesterday, methane gas continued to leak into the air from one of the wells, spewing 110,000 pounds of methane per hour. This leak began last October. The full health and environmental impacts of this unmitigated disaster may not be known for many years, and already it has displaced thousands of families and caused innumerable illnesses and property losses.

Today I am calling on the U.S. Department of Energy to lead a comprehensive investigation into what caused this leak, its inadequate response, and to provide recommendations for mitigating the damage and preventing future incidents. This tragedy must never be repeated.

Between Porter Ranch and Flint, Michigan, it is clear that both the government and the private sector are far from placing the priority we need on our families' health and their safety.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS IN PENNSYLVANIA

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I was honored to host Christa Merein in Washington. Christa has competed in the Special Olympics as an athlete for 15 years. Recently, more than 300 athletes participated in the winter games in Pennsylvania, with 135 coaches and more than 1,000 volunteers.

Pennsylvania's Special Olympics includes many athletes from Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, including Potter County athlete Denise Menderler. Denise is highly accomplished, having earned 110 medals, including many gold honors. Denise gives back to her community as a peer advocate and a Potter County Human Services Advisory Board member. Denise's story is just like so many who participate in the Special Olympics who rise above challenges and excel in sports, from skiing to figure skating, speed skating, and snow shoeing.

Mr. Speaker, on March 5 and 6, the skills of our Special Olympians will again be on display at the State Floor Hockey Tournament at Bald Eagle Area High School in my home district. I look forward to seeing them compete in person.

NORTH CAROLINA PANTHERS

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the NFC Champion

North Carolina Panthers. I have the privilege of representing North Carolina's 12th Congressional District in Congress, home to the beloved Panthers.

Week after week, the Panthers gave their game their all and breezed through the season nearly undefeated. With each game came new rounds of support as the Carolina fan base swarmed to uncharted numbers. I am certain the Carolina Panthers put in long and hard hours of practice which led them to Super Bowl 50. The Panthers have had an amazing season.

I know I speak for all North Carolina fans when I say the Panthers did an amazing job making North Carolina proud to call them their home team. What a phenomenal trek to the Super Bowl.

To Carolina's own NFL MVP, Cam Newton, thanks for leading the charge and inspiring so many fans, young and old.

Based off this season's performance, I know that next year the Panthers will keep pounding all the way to Super Bowl LI and bring home the Lombardi Trophy.

Keep pounding.

UNITED SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS' 75TH ANNIVERSARY

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 75th anniversary of the United Service Organizations, known to all of us as the USO.

For 75 years, the USO has supported and strengthened the life of our servicemembers and their families at home and throughout the more than 160 countries in the world.

I am deeply grateful for those who serve our Nation, as I have had loved ones proudly wearing our Nation's uniform, and still do.

USO goes above and beyond to adapt its programs to our servicemembers' needs. They boost morale by helping them connect with their families and their home while overseas, as well as assisting with the transition back to civilian life and providing support and care for the wounded and for the families of the fallen. That is why, Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to pay tribute to the outstanding commitment of the USO and their excellent work over the last 75 years.

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT'S 25 WOMEN YOU NEED TO KNOW

(Ms. GRAHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I stand to bring attention to the Tallahassee Democrat's 25 Women You Need to Know.

For 10 years, the Democrat has named 25 women who deserve recognition from our community. These women have not only excelled in their professional careers, but they also donate their time and talents toward volunteering and giving back to our community.

For the second year in a row, the paper is also naming five young women to watch: Bliss Wilson, Cassidy Craig, Jordyn Berrian, Micah Joyner, and Zenani D. Johnson. These young women are only in high school but already have impressive resumes, and I know they are going to go on to do great things.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Democrat for their service to our community in recognizing these women, and I applaud this year's 25 women and 5 young women on all of their accomplishments.

NEW OIL TAXES COST AMERICAN FAMILIES

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, President Obama has proposed a new \$10-per-barrel tax on oil. That represents 24 cents in new taxes on every gallon of gas. That is right, 24 cents per gallon of new cost for families. When families are finally feeling the benefit of lower cost fuel, this President proposes a plan to take those savings away from families.

Worse, this new tax on driving will actually go to fund pie-in-the-sky government boondoggles like California's high-speed rail projects and many other pet projects of the President. That pet project in California has tripled in price since its first inception.

The American people paid a record amount of taxes last year to the Treasury, over \$3.2 trillion, or nearly \$22,000 per working American; yet there are those in government who still want to take more and spend more.

I say "no"—no more taxes on the American family; no more wasted billions of dollars on the President's and California Governor Brown's pet projects.

I urge my colleagues to join me and put this country, instead, on a balanced budget track.

RECOGNIZING MARTIN GROSS

(Ms. KUSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember a wonderful man, former mayor of Concord, New Hampshire, Martin Gross. Marty was a pillar of the Granite State community; and, to me, he was a beloved mentor, teacher, and friend.

As mayor of Concord, he gave so much to the city I grew up in. We see the effects of his legacy every day, walking down the streets of the historic city he helped restore and bring to life.

As a prominent lawyer, he was known among his colleagues for being a mentor to young lawyers who looked up to him and strove to follow in his footsteps as they learned to love the law.

As an activist, he inspired generations of Granite Staters to give back to their community, whether through community service, volunteering, or running for office.

As a strategist for generations of New Hampshire politicians, he helped make the dream of public service a reality.

Let's all join together to remember Martin, a man whose friendship, loyalty, kindness, and dedication to his town, State, and community will never be forgotten.

□ 0915

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2016

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 757) to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the “North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016”.

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Findings; purposes.

Sec. 3. Definitions.

TITLE I—INVESTIGATIONS, PROHIBITED CONDUCT, AND PENALTIES

Sec. 101. Statement of policy.

Sec. 102. Investigations.

Sec. 103. Reporting requirements.

Sec. 104. Designation of persons.

Sec. 105. Forfeiture of property.

TITLE II—SANCTIONS AGAINST NORTH KO- REAN PROLIFERATION, HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, AND ILLICIT ACTIVITIES

Sec. 201. Determinations with respect to North Korea as a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern.

Sec. 202. Ensuring the consistent enforcement of United Nations Security Council resolutions and financial restrictions on North Korea.

Sec. 203. Proliferation prevention sanctions.

Sec. 204. Procurement sanctions.

Sec. 205. Enhanced inspection authorities.

Sec. 206. Travel sanctions.

Sec. 207. Travel recommendations for United States citizens to North Korea.

Sec. 208. Exemptions, waivers, and removals of designation.

Sec. 209. Report on and imposition of sanctions to address persons responsible for knowingly engaging in significant activities undermining cybersecurity.

Sec. 210. Codification of sanctions with respect to North Korean activities undermining cybersecurity.

Sec. 211. Sense of Congress on trilateral cooperation between the United States, South Korea, and Japan.

TITLE III—PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Sec. 301. Information technology.

Sec. 302. Strategy to promote North Korean human rights.

Sec. 303. Report on North Korean prison camps.

Sec. 304. Report on and imposition of sanctions with respect to serious human rights abuses or censorship in North Korea.

TITLE IV—GENERAL AUTHORITIES

Sec. 401. Suspension of sanctions and other measures.

Sec. 402. Termination of sanctions and other measures.

Sec. 403. Authorization of appropriations.

Sec. 404. Rulemaking.

Sec. 405. Authority to consolidate reports.

Sec. 406. Effective date.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSES.

(a) *FINDINGS.*—Congress finds the following:

(1) The Government of North Korea—

(A) has repeatedly violated its commitments to the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of its nuclear weapons programs; and

(B) has willfully violated multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions calling for North Korea to cease development, testing, and production of weapons of mass destruction.

(2) Based on its past actions, including the transfer of sensitive nuclear and missile technology to state sponsors of terrorism, North Korea poses a grave risk for the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

(3) The Government of North Korea has been implicated repeatedly in money laundering and other illicit activities, including—

(A) prohibited arms sales;

(B) narcotics trafficking;

(C) the counterfeiting of United States currency;

(D) significant activities undermining cybersecurity; and

(E) the counterfeiting of intellectual property of United States persons.

(4) North Korea has—

(A) unilaterally withdrawn from the Agreement Concerning a Military Armistice in Korea, signed at Panmunjom July 27, 1953 (commonly referred to as the “Korean War Armistice Agreement”); and

(B) committed provocations against South Korea—

(i) by sinking the warship Cheonan and killing 46 of her crew on March 26, 2010;

(ii) by shelling Yeonpyeong Island and killing 4 South Korean civilians on November 23, 2010;

(iii) by its involvement in the “DarkSeoul” cyberattacks against the financial and communications interests of South Korea on March 20, 2013; and

(iv) by planting land mines near a guard post in the South Korean portion of the demilitarized zone that maimed 2 South Korean soldiers on August 4, 2015.

(5) North Korea maintains a system of brutal political prison camps that contain as many as 200,000 men, women, and children, who are—

(A) kept in atrocious living conditions with insufficient food, clothing, and medical care; and

(B) under constant fear of torture or arbitrary execution.

(6) North Korea has prioritized weapons programs and the procurement of luxury goods—

(A) in defiance of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1695 (2006), 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013), and 2094 (2013); and

(B) in gross disregard of the needs of the people of North Korea.

(7) Persons, including financial institutions, who engage in transactions with, or provide financial services to, the Government of North Korea and its financial institutions without establishing sufficient financial safeguards against North Korea’s use of such transactions to promote proliferation, weapons trafficking, human rights violations, illicit activity, and the purchase of luxury goods—

(A) aid and abet North Korea’s misuse of the international financial system; and

(B) violate the intent of the United Nations Security Council resolutions referred to in paragraph (6)(A).

(8) The Government of North Korea has provided technical support and conducted destructive and coercive cyberattacks, including against Sony Pictures Entertainment and other United States persons.

(9) The conduct of the Government of North Korea poses an imminent threat to—

(A) the security of the United States and its allies;

(B) the global economy;

(C) the safety of members of the United States Armed Forces;

(D) the integrity of the global financial system;

(E) the integrity of global nonproliferation programs; and

(F) the people of North Korea.

(10) The Government of North Korea has sponsored acts of international terrorism, including—

(A) attempts to assassinate defectors and human rights activists; and

(B) the shipment of weapons to terrorists and state sponsors of terrorism.

(b) *PURPOSES.*—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to use nonmilitary means to address the crisis described in subsection (a);

(2) to provide diplomatic leverage to negotiate necessary changes in the conduct of the Government of North Korea;

(3) to ease the suffering of the people of North Korea; and

(4) to reaffirm the purposes set forth in section 4 of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7802).

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) *APPLICABLE EXECUTIVE ORDER.*—The term “applicable Executive order” means—

(A) Executive Order 13382 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking property of weapons of mass destruction proliferators and their supporters), Executive Order 13466 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to continuing certain restrictions with respect to North Korea and North Korean nationals), Executive Order 13551 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note;

relating to blocking property of certain persons with respect to North Korea), Executive Order 13570 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to prohibiting certain transactions with respect to North Korea), Executive Order 13619 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking property of persons threatening the peace, security, or stability of Burma), Executive Order 13687 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to imposing additional sanctions with respect to North Korea), or Executive Order 13694 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking the property of certain persons engaging in significant malicious cyber-enabled activities), to the extent that such Executive order—

(i) authorizes the imposition of sanctions on persons for conduct with respect to North Korea;

(ii) prohibits transactions or activities involving the Government of North Korea; or

(iii) otherwise imposes sanctions with respect to North Korea; and

(B) any Executive order adopted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, to the extent that such Executive order—

(i) authorizes the imposition of sanctions on persons for conduct with respect to North Korea;

(ii) prohibits transactions or activities involving the Government of North Korea; or

(iii) otherwise imposes sanctions with respect to North Korea.

(2) **APPLICABLE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION.**—The term “applicable United Nations Security Council resolution” means—

(A) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1695 (2006), 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013), or 2094 (2013); and

(B) any United Nations Security Council resolution adopted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act that—

(i) authorizes the imposition of sanctions on persons for conduct with respect to North Korea;

(ii) prohibits transactions or activities involving the Government of North Korea; or

(iii) otherwise imposes sanctions with respect to North Korea.

(3) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Financial Services, and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives.

(4) **DESIGNATED PERSON.**—The term “designated person” means a person designated under subsection (a) or (b) of section 104 for purposes of applying 1 or more of the sanctions described in title I or II with respect to the person.

(5) **GOVERNMENT OF NORTH KOREA.**—The term “Government of North Korea” means the Government of North Korea and its agencies, instrumentalities, and controlled entities.

(6) **HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.**—The term “humanitarian assistance” means assistance to meet humanitarian needs, including needs for food, medicine, medical supplies, clothing, and shelter.

(7) **INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY.**—The term “intelligence community” has the meaning given such term in section 3(4) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003(4)).

(8) **LUXURY GOODS.**—The term “luxury goods”—

(A) has the meaning given such term in section 746.4(b)(1) of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(B) includes the items listed in Supplement No. 1 to part 746 of such title, and any similar items.

(9) **MONETARY INSTRUMENTS.**—The term “monetary instruments” has the meaning given such term in section 5312(a) of title 31, United States Code.

(10) **NORTH KOREA.**—The term “North Korea” means the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

(11) **NORTH KOREAN FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.**—The term “North Korean financial institution” means any financial institution that—

(A) is organized under the laws of North Korea or any jurisdiction within North Korea (including a foreign branch of such an institution);

(B) is located in North Korea, except for a financial institution that is excluded by the President in accordance with section 208(c);

(C) is owned or controlled by the Government of North Korea, regardless of location; or

(D) is owned or controlled by a financial institution described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C), regardless of location.

(12) **SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES UNDERMINING CYBERSECURITY.**—The term “significant activities undermining cybersecurity” includes—

(A) significant efforts to—

(i) deny access to or degrade, disrupt, or destroy an information and communications technology system or network; or

(ii) exfiltrate information from such a system or network without authorization;

(B) significant destructive malware attacks;

(C) significant denial of service activities; and

(D) such other significant activities described in regulations promulgated to implement section 104.

(13) **SOUTH KOREA.**—The term “South Korea” means the Republic of Korea.

(14) **UNITED STATES PERSON.**—The term “United States person” means—

(A) a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States; or

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or of any jurisdiction within the United States, including a foreign branch of such an entity.

TITLE I—INVESTIGATIONS, PROHIBITED CONDUCT, AND PENALTIES

SEC. 101. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

In order to achieve the peaceful disarmament of North Korea, Congress finds that it is necessary—

(1) to encourage all member states of the United Nations to fully and promptly implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 2094 (2013);

(2) to sanction the persons, including financial institutions, that facilitate proliferation, illicit activities, arms trafficking, cyberterrorism, imports of luxury goods, serious human rights abuses, cash smuggling, and censorship by the Government of North Korea;

(3) to authorize the President to sanction persons who fail to exercise due diligence to ensure that such financial institutions and member states do not facilitate proliferation, arms trafficking, kleptocracy, or imports of luxury goods by the Government of North Korea;

(4) to deny the Government of North Korea access to the funds it uses to develop or obtain nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles, cyberwarfare capabilities, and luxury goods instead of providing for the needs of the people of North Korea; and

(5) to enforce sanctions in a manner that does not significantly hinder or delay the efforts of legitimate United States or foreign humanitarian organizations from providing assistance to meet the needs of civilians facing humanitarian crisis, including access to food, health care, shelter, and clean drinking water, to prevent or alleviate human suffering.

SEC. 102. INVESTIGATIONS.

(a) **INITIATION.**—The President shall initiate an investigation into the possible designation of

a person under section 104(a) upon receipt by the President of credible information indicating that such person has engaged in conduct described in section 104(a).

(b) **PERSONNEL.**—The President may direct the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the heads of other Federal departments and agencies as may be necessary to assign sufficient experienced and qualified investigators, attorneys, and technical personnel—

(1) to investigate the conduct described in subsections (a) and (b) of section 104; and

(2) to coordinate and ensure the effective enforcement of this Act.

SEC. 103. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) **PRESIDENTIAL BRIEFINGS TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and periodically thereafter, the President shall provide a briefing to the appropriate congressional committees on efforts to implement this Act.

(b) **REPORT FROM SECRETARY OF STATE.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall conduct, coordinate, and submit to Congress a comprehensive report on United States policy towards North Korea that—

(1) is based on a full and complete interagency review of current policies and possible alternatives, including with respect to North Korea’s weapons of mass destruction and missile programs, human rights atrocities, and significant activities undermining cybersecurity; and

(2) includes recommendations for such legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate based on the results of the review.

SEC. 104. DESIGNATION OF PERSONS.

(a) **MANDATORY DESIGNATIONS.**—Except as provided in section 208, the President shall designate under this subsection any person that the President determines—

(1) knowingly, directly or indirectly, imports, exports, or reexports to, into, or from North Korea any goods, services, or technology controlled for export by the United States because of the use of such goods, services, or technology for weapons of mass destruction or delivery systems for such weapons and materially contributes to the use, development, production, possession, or acquisition by any person of a nuclear, radiological, chemical, or biological weapon or any device or system designed in whole or in part to deliver such a weapon;

(2) knowingly, directly or indirectly, provides training, advice, or other services or assistance, or engages in significant financial transactions, relating to the manufacture, maintenance, or use of any such weapon, device, or system to be imported, exported, or reexported to, into, or from North Korea;

(3) knowingly, directly or indirectly, imports, exports, or reexports luxury goods to or into North Korea;

(4) knowingly engages in, is responsible for, or facilitates censorship by the Government of North Korea;

(5) knowingly engages in, is responsible for, or facilitates serious human rights abuses by the Government of North Korea;

(6) knowingly, directly or indirectly, engages in money laundering, the counterfeiting of goods or currency, bulk cash smuggling, or narcotics trafficking that supports the Government of North Korea or any senior official or person acting for or on behalf of that Government;

(7) knowingly engages in significant activities undermining cybersecurity through the use of computer networks or systems against foreign persons, governments, or other entities on behalf of the Government of North Korea;

(8) knowingly, directly or indirectly, sells, supplies, or transfers to or from the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on

behalf of that Government, a significant amount of precious metal, graphite, raw or semi-finished metals or aluminum, steel, coal, or software, for use by or in industrial processes directly related to weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems for such weapons, other proliferation activities, the Korean Workers' Party, armed forces, internal security, or intelligence activities, or the operation and maintenance of political prison camps or forced labor camps, including outside of North Korea;

(9) knowingly, directly or indirectly, imports, exports, or reexports to, into, or from North Korea any arms or related materiel; or

(10) knowingly attempts to engage in any of the conduct described in paragraphs (1) through (9).

(b) **ADDITIONAL DISCRETIONARY DESIGNATIONS.**—

(1) **PROHIBITED CONDUCT DESCRIBED.**—Except as provided in section 208, the President may designate under this subsection any person that the President determines—

(A) knowingly engages in, contributes to, assists, sponsors, or provides financial, material or technological support for, or goods and services in support of, any person designated pursuant to an applicable United Nations Security Council resolution;

(B) knowingly contributed to—

(i) the bribery of an official of the Government of North Korea or any person acting for on behalf of that official;

(ii) the misappropriation, theft, or embezzlement of public funds by, or for the benefit of, an official of the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that official; or

(iii) the use of any proceeds of any activity described in clause (i) or (ii); or

(C) knowingly and materially assisted, sponsored, or provided significant financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, the activities described in subparagraph (A) or (B).

(2) **EFFECT OF DESIGNATION.**—With respect to any person designated under this subsection, the President may—

(A) apply the sanctions described in section 204, 205(c), or 206 to the person to the same extent and in the same manner as if the person were designated under subsection (a);

(B) apply any applicable special measures described in section 5318A of title 31, United States Code;

(C) prohibit any transactions in foreign exchange—

(i) that are subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; and

(ii) in which such person has any interest; and

(D) prohibit any transfers of credit or payments between financial institutions or by, through, or to any financial institution, to the extent that such transfers or payments—

(i) are subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; and

(ii) involve any interest of such person.

(c) **ASSET BLOCKING.**—The President shall exercise all of the powers granted to the President under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in property and interests in property of a designated person, the Government of North Korea, or the Workers' Party of Korea, if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(d) **APPLICATION TO SUBSIDIARIES AND AGENTS.**—The designation of a person under subsection (a) or (b) and the blocking of property and interests in property under subsection

(c) shall apply with respect to a person who is determined to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to have acted for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to this section.

(e) **TRANSACTION LICENSING.**—The President shall deny or revoke any license for any transaction that the President determines to lack sufficient financial controls to ensure that such transaction will not facilitate any activity described in subsection (a) or (b).

(f) **PENALTIES.**—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to any person who violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of any prohibition of this section, or an order or regulation prescribed under this section, to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that commits an unlawful act described in section 206(a) of such Act (50 U.S.C. 1705(a)).

SEC. 105. FORFEITURE OF PROPERTY.

(a) **AMENDMENT TO PROPERTY SUBJECT TO FORFEITURE.**—Section 981(a)(1) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(1) Any property, real or personal, that is involved in a violation or attempted violation, or which constitutes or is derived from proceeds traceable to a prohibition imposed pursuant to section 104(a) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016.”.

(b) **AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF CIVIL FORFEITURE STATUTE.**—Section 983(i)(2)(D) of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(D) the Trading with the Enemy Act (50 U.S.C. 4301 et seq.), the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.), or the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act of 2016; or”.

(c) **AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF SPECIFIED UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY.**—Section 1956(c)(7)(D) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “or section 92 of” and inserting “section 92 of”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: “, or section 104(a) of the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act of 2016 (relating to prohibited activities with respect to North Korea);”.

TITLE II—SANCTIONS AGAINST NORTH KOREAN PROLIFERATION, HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, AND ILLICIT ACTIVITIES

SEC. 201. DETERMINATIONS WITH RESPECT TO NORTH KOREA AS A JURISDICTION OF PRIMARY MONEY LAUNDERING CONCERN.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, who is responsible for safeguarding the financial system against illicit use, money laundering, terrorist financing, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and has repeatedly expressed concern about North Korea's misuse of the international financial system—

(A) in 2006—

(i) stated, “Given [North Korea's] counterfeiting of U.S. currency, narcotics trafficking and use of accounts world-wide to conduct proliferation-related transactions, the line between illicit and licit North Korean money is nearly invisible.”; and

(ii) urged financial institutions worldwide to “think carefully about the risks of doing any North Korea-related business”;

(B) in 2011, stated that North Korea—

(i) “remains intent on engaging in proliferation, selling arms as well as bringing in material”; and

(ii) was “aggressively pursuing the effort to establish front companies.”; and

(C) in 2013, stated—

(i) in reference to North Korea's distribution of high-quality counterfeit United States currency, that “North Korea is continuing to try to pass a supernote into the international financial system”; and

(ii) the Department of the Treasury would soon introduce new currency with improved security features to protect against counterfeiting by the Government of North Korea.

(2) The Financial Action Task Force, an intergovernmental body whose purpose is to develop and promote national and international policies to combat money laundering and terrorist financing, has repeatedly—

(A) expressed concern at deficiencies in North Korea's regimes to combat money laundering and terrorist financing;

(B) urged North Korea to adopt a plan of action to address significant deficiencies in those regimes and the serious threat those deficiencies pose to the integrity of the international financial system;

(C) urged all jurisdictions to apply countermeasures to protect the international financial system from ongoing and substantial money laundering and terrorist financing risks emanating from North Korea;

(D) urged all jurisdictions to advise their financial institutions to give special attention to business relationships and transactions with North Korea, including North Korean companies and financial institutions; and

(E) called on all jurisdictions—

(i) to protect against correspondent relationships being used to bypass or evade countermeasures and risk mitigation practices; and

(ii) to take into account money laundering and terrorist financing risks when considering requests by North Korean financial institutions to open branches and subsidiaries in their respective jurisdictions.

(3) On March 7, 2013, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2094, which—

(A) welcomed the Financial Action Task Force's—

(i) recommendation on financial sanctions related to proliferation; and

(ii) guidance on the implementation of such sanctions;

(B) decided that United Nations member states should apply enhanced monitoring and other legal measures to prevent the provision of financial services or the transfer of property that could contribute to activities prohibited by applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions; and

(C) called upon United Nations member states to prohibit North Korean financial institutions from establishing or maintaining correspondent relationships with financial institutions in their respective jurisdictions to prevent the provision of financial services if such member states have information that provides reasonable grounds to believe that such activities could contribute to—

(i) activities prohibited by an applicable United Nations Security Council resolution; or

(ii) the evasion of such prohibitions.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING THE DESIGNATION OF NORTH KOREA AS A JURISDICTION OF PRIMARY MONEY LAUNDERING CONCERN.—Congress—

(1) acknowledges the efforts of the United Nations Security Council to impose limitations on, and to require the enhanced monitoring of, transactions involving North Korean financial institutions that could contribute to sanctioned activities;

(2) urges the President, in the strongest terms—

(A) to immediately designate North Korea as a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern; and

(B) to adopt stringent special measures to safeguard the financial system against the risks posed by North Korea's willful evasion of sanctions and its illicit activities; and

(3) urges the President to seek the prompt implementation by other countries of enhanced monitoring and due diligence to prevent North Korea's misuse of the international financial system, including by sharing information about activities, transactions, and property that could contribute to—

(A) activities sanctioned by applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions; or

(B) the evasion of such sanctions.

(c) DETERMINATIONS REGARDING NORTH KOREA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Attorney General, and in accordance with section 5318A of title 31, United States Code, shall determine whether reasonable grounds exist for concluding that North Korea is a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern.

(2) ENHANCED DUE DILIGENCE AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—If the Secretary of the Treasury determines under paragraph (1) that reasonable grounds exist for concluding that North Korea is a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern, the Secretary, in consultation with the Federal functional regulators (as defined in section 509 of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (15 U.S.C. 6809)), shall impose 1 or more of the special measures described in section 5318A(b) of title 31, United States Code, with respect to the jurisdiction of North Korea.

(3) REPORT REQUIRED.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Secretary of the Treasury makes a determination under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains the reasons for such determination.

(B) FORM.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

SEC. 202. ENSURING THE CONSISTENT ENFORCEMENT OF UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS AND FINANCIAL RESTRICTIONS ON NORTH KOREA.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) All member states of the United Nations are obligated to implement and enforce applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions fully and promptly, including by blocking the property of, and ensuring that any property is prevented from being made available to, persons designated for the blocking of property by the Security Council under applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions.

(2) As of May 2015, 158 of the 193 member states of the United Nations had not submitted reports on measures taken to implement North Korea-specific United Nations Security Council resolutions 1718, 1874, and 2094.

(3) A recent report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO-15-485)—

(A) finds that officials of the United States and representatives of the United Nations Panel of Experts established pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1874 (2009), which monitors and facilitates implementation of United Nations sanctions on North Korea, “agree that the lack of detailed reports from all member states is an impediment to the UN’s effective implementation of its sanctions”; and

(B) notes that “many member states lack the technical capacity to enforce sanctions and prepare reports” on the implementation of United Nations sanctions on North Korea.

(4) All member states share a common interest in protecting the international financial system

from the risks of money laundering and illicit transactions emanating from North Korea.

(5) The United States dollar and the euro are the world’s principal reserve currencies, and the United States and the European Union are primarily responsible for the protection of the international financial system from the risks described in paragraph (4).

(6) The cooperation of the People’s Republic of China, as North Korea’s principal trading partner, is essential to—

(A) the enforcement of applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions; and

(B) the protection of the international financial system.

(7) The report of the Panel of Experts expressed concern about the ability of banks to detect and prevent illicit transfers involving North Korea if such banks are located in member states with less effective regulators or member states that are unable to afford effective compliance.

(8) North Korea has historically exploited inconsistencies between jurisdictions in the interpretation and enforcement of financial regulations and applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions to circumvent sanctions and launder the proceeds of illicit activities.

(9) Amrogang Development Bank, Bank of East Land, and Tanchon Commercial Bank have been designated by the Secretary of the Treasury, the United Nations Security Council, and the European Union as having materially contributed to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

(10) Korea Daesong Bank and Korea Kwangson Banking Corporation have been designated by the Secretary of the Treasury and the European Union as having materially contributed to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

(11) The Foreign Trade Bank of North Korea has been designated by the Secretary of the Treasury for facilitating transactions on behalf of persons linked to its proliferation network and for serving as “a key financial node”.

(12) Daedong Credit Bank has been designated by the Secretary of the Treasury for activities prohibited by applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions, including the use of deceptive financial practices to facilitate transactions on behalf of persons linked to North Korea’s proliferation network.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the President should intensify diplomatic efforts in appropriate international fora, such as the United Nations, and bilaterally, to develop and implement a coordinated, consistent, multilateral strategy for protecting the global financial system against risks emanating from North Korea, including—

(1) the cessation of any financial services the continuation of which is inconsistent with applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

(2) the cessation of any financial services to persons, including financial institutions, that present unacceptable risks of facilitating money laundering and illicit activity by the Government of North Korea;

(3) the blocking by all member states, in accordance with the legal process of the state in which the property is held, of any property required to be blocked under applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

(4) the blocking of any property derived from illicit activity, or from the misappropriation, theft, or embezzlement of public funds by, or for the benefit of, officials of the Government of North Korea;

(5) the blocking of any property involved in significant activities undermining cybersecurity by the Government of North Korea, directly or indirectly, against United States persons, or the

theft of intellectual property by the Government of North Korea, directly or indirectly from United States persons; and

(6) the blocking of any property of persons directly or indirectly involved in censorship or human rights abuses by the Government of North Korea.

(c) STRATEGY TO IMPROVE INTERNATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF UNITED NATIONS NORTH KOREA-SPECIFIC SANCTIONS.—The President shall direct the Secretary of State, in coordination with other Federal departments and agencies, as appropriate, to develop a strategy to improve international implementation and enforcement of United Nations North Korea-specific sanctions. The strategy should include elements—

(1) to increase the number of countries submitting reports to the United Nations Panel of Experts established pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1874 (2009), including developing a list of targeted countries where effective implementation and enforcement of United Nations sanctions would reduce the threat from North Korea;

(2) to encourage member states of the United Nations to cooperate and share information with the panel in order to help facilitate investigations;

(3) to expand cooperation with the Panel of Experts;

(4) to provide technical assistance to member states to implement United Nations sanctions, including developing the capacity to enforce sanctions through improved export control regulations, border security, and customs systems;

(5) to harness existing United States Government initiatives and assistance programs, as appropriate, to improve sanctions implementation and enforcement; and

(6) to increase outreach to the people of North Korea, and to support the engagement of independent, non-governmental journalistic, humanitarian, and other institutions in North Korea.

(d) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that describes the actions undertaken to implement the strategy required by subsection (c).

SEC. 203. PROLIFERATION PREVENTION SANCTIONS.

(a) EXPORT OF CERTAIN GOODS OR TECHNOLOGY.—A validated license shall be required for the export to North Korea of any goods or technology otherwise covered under section 6(f) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. 4605(j)). No defense exports may be approved for the Government of North Korea.

(b) TRANSACTIONS IN LETHAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall withhold assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) to the government of any country that provides lethal military equipment to the Government of North Korea.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The prohibition under paragraph (1) with respect to a government shall terminate on the date that is 1 year after the date on which the prohibition under paragraph (1) is applied to that government.

(c) WAIVER.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of State may waive the prohibitions under this section with respect to a country if the Secretary—

(1) determines that such waiver is in the national interest of the United States; and

(2) submits a written report to the appropriate congressional committees that describes—

(A) the steps that the relevant agencies are taking to curtail the trade described in subsection (b)(1); and

(B) why such waiver is in the national interest of the United States.

(d) EXCEPTION.—The prohibitions under this section shall not apply to the provision of assistance for human rights, democracy, rule of law, or emergency humanitarian purposes.

SEC. 204. PROCUREMENT SANCTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in this section, the head of an executive agency may not procure, or enter into any contract for the procurement of, any goods or services from any person designated under section 104(a).

(b) FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal Acquisition Regulation issued pursuant to section 1303(a)(1) of title 41, United States Code, shall be revised to require that each person that is a prospective contractor submit a certification that such person does not engage in any activity described in section 104(a).

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The revision required under paragraph (1) shall apply with respect to contracts for which solicitations are issued on or after the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) REMEDIES.—

(1) INCLUSION ON LIST.—The Administrator of General Services shall include, on the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Nonprocurement Programs maintained by the Administrator under part 9 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation, each person that is debarred, suspended, or proposed for debarment or suspension by the head of an executive agency on the basis of a determination of a false certification under subsection (b).

(2) CONTRACT TERMINATION; SUSPENSION.—If the head of an executive agency determines that a person has submitted a false certification under subsection (b) after the date on which the Federal Acquisition Regulation is revised to implement the requirements of this section, the head of such executive agency shall—

(A) terminate any contract with such person; and

(B) debar or suspend such person from eligibility for Federal contracts for a period of not longer than 2 years.

(3) APPLICABLE PROCEDURES.—Any debarment or suspension under paragraph (2)(B) shall be subject to the procedures that apply to debarment and suspension under subpart 9.4 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

(d) CLARIFICATION REGARDING CERTAIN PRODUCTS.—The remedies specified in subsection (c) shall not apply with respect to the procurement of any eligible product (as defined in section 308(4) of the Trade Agreements Act of 1979 (19 U.S.C. 2518(4)) of any foreign country or instrumentality designated under section 301(b) of such Act (19 U.S.C. 2511(b)).

(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to limit the use of other remedies available to the head of an executive agency or any other official of the Federal Government on the basis of a determination of a false certification under subsection (b).

(f) EXECUTIVE AGENCY DEFINED.—In this section, the term “executive agency” has the meaning given such term in section 133 of title 41, United States Code.

SEC. 205. ENHANCED INSPECTION AUTHORITIES.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that identifies foreign ports and airports at which inspections of ships, aircraft, and conveyances originating in North Korea, carrying North Korean property, or operated by the Government of North Korea are not sufficient to effectively prevent the facilitation of any of the activities described in section 104(a).

(b) ENHANCED CUSTOMS INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security

may require enhanced inspections of any goods entering the United States that have been transported through a port or airport identified by the President under subsection (a).

(c) SEIZURE AND FORFEITURE.—A vessel, aircraft, or conveyance used to facilitate any of the activities described in section 104(a) under the jurisdiction of the United States may be seized and forfeited under—

(1) chapter 46 of title 18, United States Code; or

(2) title V of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.).

SEC. 206. TRAVEL SANCTIONS.

The Secretary of State may deny a visa to, and the Secretary of Homeland Security may deny entry into the United States of, any alien who is—

(1) a designated person;

(2) a corporate officer of a designated person; or

(3) a principal shareholder with a controlling interest in a designated person.

SEC. 207. TRAVEL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNITED STATES CITIZENS TO NORTH KOREA.

The Secretary of State shall expand the scope and frequency of issuance of travel warnings for all United States citizens to North Korea. The expanded travel warnings, which should be issued or updated not less frequently than every 90 days, should include—

(1) publicly released or credible open source information regarding the detention of United States citizens by North Korean authorities, including available information on circumstances of arrest and detention, duration, legal proceedings, and conditions under which a United States citizen has been, or continues to be, detained by North Korean authorities, including present-day cases and cases occurring during the 10-year period ending on the date of the enactment of this Act;

(2) publicly released or credible open source information on the past and present detention and abduction or alleged abduction of citizens of the United States, South Korea, or Japan by North Korean authorities;

(3) unclassified information about the nature of the North Korean regime, as described in congressionally mandated reports and annual reports issued by the Department of State and the United Nations, including information about North Korea's weapons of mass destruction programs, illicit activities, international sanctions violations, and human rights situation; and

(4) any other information that the Secretary deems useful to provide United States citizens with a comprehensive picture of the nature of the North Korean regime.

SEC. 208. EXEMPTIONS, WAIVERS, AND REMOVALS OF DESIGNATION.

(a) EXEMPTIONS.—The following activities shall be exempt from sanctions under sections 104, 206, 209, and 304:

(1) Activities subject to the reporting requirements under title V of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3091 et seq.), or to any authorized intelligence activities of the United States.

(2) Any transaction necessary to comply with United States obligations under the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, or under the Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, and entered into force March 19, 1967, or under other international agreements.

(3) Any activities incidental to the POW/MIA accounting mission in North Korea, including activities by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency and other governmental or nongovernmental organizations tasked with identifying or

recovering the remains of members of the United States Armed Forces in North Korea.

(b) HUMANITARIAN WAIVER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may waive, for renewable periods of between 30 days and 1 year, the application of the sanctions authorized under section 104, 204, 205, 206, 209(b), or 304(b) if the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees a written determination that the waiver is necessary for humanitarian assistance or to carry out the humanitarian purposes set forth section 4 of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7802).

(2) CONTENT OF WRITTEN DETERMINATION.—A written determination submitted under paragraph (1) with respect to a waiver shall include a description of all notification and accountability controls that have been employed in order to ensure that the activities covered by the waiver are humanitarian assistance or are carried out for the purposes set forth in section 4 of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7802) and do not entail any activities in North Korea or dealings with the Government of North Korea not reasonably related to humanitarian assistance or such purposes.

(3) CLARIFICATION OF PERMITTED ACTIVITIES UNDER WAIVER.—An internationally recognized humanitarian organization shall not be subject to sanctions under section 104, 204, 205, 206, 209(b), or 304(b) for—

(A) engaging in a financial transaction relating to humanitarian assistance or for humanitarian purposes pursuant to a waiver issued under paragraph (1);

(B) transporting goods or services that are necessary to carry out operations relating to humanitarian assistance or humanitarian purposes pursuant to such a waiver; or

(C) having merely incidental contact, in the course of providing humanitarian assistance or aid for humanitarian purposes pursuant to such a waiver, with individuals who are under the control of a foreign person subject to sanctions under this Act.

(c) WAIVER.—The President may waive, on a case-by-case basis, for renewable periods of between 30 days and 1 year, the application of the sanctions authorized under section 104, 201(c)(2), 204, 205, 206, 209(b), or 304(b) if the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees a written determination that the waiver—

(1) is important to the national security interests of the United States; or

(2) will further the enforcement of this Act or is for an important law enforcement purpose.

(d) FINANCIAL SERVICES FOR HUMANITARIAN AND CONSULAR ACTIVITIES.—The President may promulgate such regulations, rules, and policies as may be necessary to facilitate the provision of financial services by a foreign financial institution that is not a North Korean financial institution in support of activities conducted pursuant to an exemption or waiver under this section.

SEC. 209. REPORT ON AND IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS TO ADDRESS PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWINGLY ENGAGING IN SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES UNDERMINING CYBERSECURITY.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that describes significant activities undermining cybersecurity aimed against the United States Government or any United States person and conducted by the Government of North Korea, or a person owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government.

(2) INFORMATION.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) the identity and nationality of persons that have knowingly engaged in, directed, or provided material support to conduct significant activities undermining cybersecurity described in paragraph (1);

(B) a description of the conduct engaged in by each person identified;

(C) an assessment of the extent to which a foreign government has provided material support to the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government to conduct significant activities undermining cybersecurity; and

(D) a United States strategy to counter North Korea's efforts to conduct significant activities undermining cybersecurity against the United States, that includes efforts to engage foreign governments to halt the capability of the Government of North Korea and persons acting for or on behalf of that Government to conduct significant activities undermining cybersecurity.

(3) SUBMISSION AND FORM.—

(A) SUBMISSION.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter.

(B) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in an unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(b) DESIGNATION OF PERSONS.—The President shall designate under section 104(a) any person identified in the report required under subsection (a)(1) that knowingly engages in significant activities undermining cybersecurity through the use of computer networks or systems against foreign persons, governments, or other entities on behalf of the Government of North Korea.

SEC. 210. CODIFICATION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO NORTH KOREAN ACTIVITIES UNDERMINING CYBERSECURITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—United States sanctions with respect to activities of the Government of North Korea, persons acting for or on behalf of that Government, or persons located in North Korea that undermine cybersecurity provided for in Executive Order 13687 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to imposing additional sanctions with respect to North Korea) or Executive Order 13694 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking the property of certain persons engaging in significant malicious cyber-enabled activities), as such Executive Orders are in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, shall remain in effect until the date that is 30 days after the date on which the President submits to Congress a certification that the Government of North Korea, persons acting for or on behalf of that Government, and persons owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by that Government or persons acting for or on behalf of that Government, are no longer engaged in the illicit activities described in such Executive Orders, including actions in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013), and 2094 (2013).

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the authority of the President pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

SEC. 211. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON TRILATERAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES, SOUTH KOREA, AND JAPAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—It is the sense of Congress that the President—

(1) should seek to strengthen high-level trilateral mechanisms for discussion and coordination of policy toward North Korea between the Government of the United States, the Government of South Korea, and the Government of Japan;

(2) should ensure that the mechanisms specifically address North Korea's nuclear, ballistic,

and conventional weapons programs, its human rights record, and cybersecurity threats posed by North Korea;

(3) should ensure that representatives of the United States, South Korea, and Japan meet on a regular basis and include representatives of the United States Department of State, the United States Department of Defense, the United States intelligence community, and representatives of counterpart agencies in South Korea and Japan; and

(4) should continue to brief the relevant congressional committees regularly on the status of such discussions.

(b) RELEVANT COMMITTEES.—The relevant committees referred to in subsection (a)(4) shall include—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

TITLE III—PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

SEC. 301. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.

Section 104 of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7814) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STUDY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2015, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a classified report that sets forth a detailed plan for making unrestricted, unmonitored, and inexpensive electronic mass communications available to the people of North Korea.”.

SEC. 302. STRATEGY TO PROMOTE NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with other appropriate Federal departments and agencies, shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that details a United States strategy to promote initiatives to enhance international awareness of and to address the human rights situation in North Korea.

(b) INFORMATION.—The report required under subsection (a) should include—

(1) a list of countries that forcibly repatriate refugees from North Korea; and

(2) a list of countries where North Korean laborers work, including countries the governments of which have formal arrangements with the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government to employ North Korean workers.

(c) STRATEGY.—The report required under subsection (a) should include—

(1) a plan to enhance bilateral and multilateral outreach, including sustained engagement with the governments of partners and allies with overseas posts to routinely demarche or brief those governments on North Korea human rights issues, including forced labor, trafficking, and repatriation of citizens of North Korea;

(2) public affairs and public diplomacy campaigns, including options to work with news organizations and media outlets to publish opinion pieces and secure public speaking opportunities for United States Government officials on issues related to the human rights situation in North Korea, including forced labor, trafficking, and repatriation of citizens of North Korea; and

(3) opportunities to coordinate and collaborate with appropriate nongovernmental organizations and private sector entities to raise awareness and provide assistance to North Korean defectors throughout the world.

SEC. 303. REPORT ON NORTH KOREAN PRISON CAMPS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that describes, with respect to each political prison camp in North Korea, to the extent information is available—

(1) the camp's estimated prisoner population;

(2) the camp's geographical coordinates;

(3) the reasons for the confinement of the prisoners;

(4) the camp's primary industries and products, and the end users of any goods produced in the camp;

(5) the individuals and agencies responsible for conditions in the camp;

(6) the conditions under which prisoners are confined, with respect to the adequacy of food, shelter, medical care, working conditions, and reports of ill-treatment of prisoners; and

(7) imagery, to include satellite imagery of the camp, in a format that, if published, would not compromise the sources and methods used by the United States intelligence community to capture geospatial imagery.

(b) FORM.—The report required under subsection (a) may be included in the first human rights report required to be submitted to Congress after the date of the enactment of this Act under sections 116(d) and 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d) and 2304(b)).

SEC. 304. REPORT ON AND IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO SERIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES OR CENSORSHIP IN NORTH KOREA.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that—

(A) identifies each person the Secretary determines to be responsible for serious human rights abuses or censorship in North Korea and describes the conduct of that person; and

(B) describes serious human rights abuses or censorship undertaken by the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government in the most recent year ending before the submission of the report.

(2) CONSIDERATION.—In preparing the report required under paragraph (1), the Secretary of State shall—

(A) give due consideration to the findings of the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea; and

(B) make specific findings with respect to the responsibility of Kim Jong Un, and of each individual who is a member of the National Defense Commission of North Korea or the Organization and Guidance Department of the Workers' Party of Korea, for serious human rights abuses and censorship.

(3) SUBMISSION AND FORM.—

(A) SUBMISSION.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter for a period not to exceed 3 years, and shall be included in each human rights report required under sections 116(d) and 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d) and 2304(b)).

(B) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(C) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary of State shall publish the unclassified part of the report required under paragraph (1) on the website of the Department of State.

(b) DESIGNATION OF PERSONS.—The President shall designate under section 104(a) any person listed in the report required under subsection (a)(1) that—

(1) knowingly engages in, is responsible for, or facilitates censorship by the Government of North Korea; or

(2) knowingly engages in, is responsible for, or facilitates serious human rights abuses by the Government of North Korea.

(c) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that the President should—

(1) seek the prompt adoption by the United Nations Security Council of a resolution calling for the blocking of the assets of all persons responsible for severe human rights abuses or censorship in North Korea; and

(2) fully cooperate with the prosecution of any individual listed in the report required under subsection (a)(1) before any international tribunal that may be established to prosecute persons responsible for severe human rights abuses or censorship in North Korea.

TITLE IV—GENERAL AUTHORITIES

SEC. 401. SUSPENSION OF SANCTIONS AND OTHER MEASURES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Any sanction or other measure required under title I, II, or III (or any amendment made by such titles) may be suspended for up to 1 year upon certification by the President to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of North Korea has made progress toward—

(1) verifiably ceasing its counterfeiting of United States currency, including the surrender or destruction of specialized materials and equipment used or particularly suitable for counterfeiting;

(2) taking steps toward financial transparency to comply with generally accepted protocols to cease and prevent the laundering of monetary instruments;

(3) taking steps toward verification of its compliance with applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

(4) taking steps toward accounting for and repatriating the citizens of other countries—

(A) abducted or unlawfully held captive by the Government of North Korea; or

(B) detained in violation of the Agreement Concerning a Military Armistice in Korea, signed at Panmunjom July 27, 1953 (commonly referred to as the “Korean War Armistice Agreement”);

(5) accepting and beginning to abide by internationally recognized standards for the distribution and monitoring of humanitarian aid; and

(6) taking verified steps to improve living conditions in its political prison camps.

(b) **RENEWAL OF SUSPENSION.**—The suspension described in subsection (a) may be renewed for additional, consecutive 180-day periods after the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of North Korea has continued to comply with the conditions described in subsection (a) during the previous year.

SEC. 402. TERMINATION OF SANCTIONS AND OTHER MEASURES.

Any sanction or other measure required under title I, II, or III (or any amendment made by such titles) shall terminate on the date on which the President determines and certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of North Korea has—

(1) met the requirements set forth in section 401; and

(2) made significant progress toward—

(A) completely, verifiably, and irreversibly dismantling all of its nuclear, chemical, biological, and radiological weapons programs, including all programs for the development of systems designed in whole or in part for the delivery of such weapons;

(B) releasing all political prisoners, including the citizens of North Korea detained in North Korea’s political prison camps;

(C) ceasing its censorship of peaceful political activity;

(D) establishing an open, transparent, and representative society; and

(E) fully accounting for and repatriating United States citizens (including deceased United States citizens)—

(i) abducted or unlawfully held captive by the Government of North Korea; or

(ii) detained in violation of the Agreement Concerning a Military Armistice in Korea, signed at Panmunjom July 27, 1953 (commonly referred to as the “Korean War Armistice Agreement”).

SEC. 403. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There are authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021—

(1) \$3,000,000 to carry out section 103 of the North Korea Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7813);

(2) \$3,000,000 to carry out subsections (a), (b), and (c) of section 104 of that Act (22 U.S.C. 7814);

(3) \$2,000,000 to carry out subsection (d) of such section 104, as add by section 301 of this Act; and

(4) \$2,000,000 to carry out section 203 of the North Korea Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7833).

(b) **AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.**—Amounts appropriated for each fiscal year pursuant to subsection (a) shall remain available until expended.

SEC. 404. RULEMAKING.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The President is authorized to promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act (which may include regulatory exceptions), including under section 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1704).

(b) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this Act, or in any amendment made by this Act, may be construed to limit the authority of the President to designate or sanction persons pursuant to an applicable Executive order or otherwise pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

SEC. 405. AUTHORITY TO CONSOLIDATE REPORTS.

Any and all reports required to be submitted to appropriate congressional committees under this Act or any amendment made by this Act that are subject to a deadline for submission consisting of the same unit of time may be consolidated into a single report that is submitted to appropriate congressional committees pursuant to such deadline. The consolidated reports must contain all information required under this Act or any amendment made by this Act, in addition to all other elements mandated by previous law.

SEC. 406. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Except as otherwise provided in this Act, this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, for 3 years the Committee on Foreign Affairs that I chair has worked with great determination to build support for this North Korea sanctions legislation.

I want to thank my Democratic colleagues, and I especially want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), our ranking member, for his support in this legislation.

I also thank Senators CORKER, CARDIN, and GARDNER, for their leadership in the Senate and for their strong additions, particularly on human rights and on cyber attacks by the brutal and hostile North Korean regime.

Today Congress—Democrats and Republicans, House and Senate—unites to put this North Korean sanctions legislation on the President’s desk. Last month this bill passed the House with 418 votes, and this week it passed the Senate 96–0.

Mr. Speaker, these overwhelming votes reflect bipartisan frustration with our North Korea policy, a policy of strategic patience that isn’t working. Today Congress unites to say it is time for a new approach.

Mr. Speaker, last month North Korea conducted its fourth known nuclear test, and last weekend it concluded a long-range missile test. On Tuesday, our Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, testified that North Korea has restarted a plutonium reactor and expanded that production of weapons-grade nuclear fuel.

The threat to the United States and our allies is real. The tyrannical regime of Kim Jong-un has developed increasingly destructive weapons: its miniaturized nuclear warheads that fit onto its most reliable missiles. We cannot stand by any longer.

The legislation we consider today, H.R. 757, is the most comprehensive North Korea sanctions legislation to come before this body. My bill uses targeted financial and economic pressure to isolate Kim Jong-un and his top officials from the assets they maintain in foreign banks and from the hard currency that sustains their rule.

These assets are gained, in part, from illicit activities on the part of North Korea, like counterfeiting U.S. currency and selling weapons around the world, and they are used to advance the North Korean nuclear program.

They also pay for the luxurious lifestyle of the ruling elites and the continued repression of the North Korean people by their police state.

In 2005, the Treasury Department blacklisted a small bank in Macao called Banco Delta Asia, which not only froze North Korea’s money in the bank, but also scared away other financial institutions from dealing with the Government of North Korea for fear that they, too, would be blacklisted. Unfortunately, this effective policy was shelved for ill-fated negotiations, but this bill can get us back to a winning strategy.

Equally important to the strong sanctions in this bill are its critical human rights provisions. North Korea operates a brutal system of gulags that hold as many as 120,000 men, women, and children.

If a North Korean is suspected of any kind of dissenting opinion, even telling a joke about the regime, his entire family for three generations is punished. North Korea is a human rights house of horrors.

Two years ago the U.N. Commission of Inquiry released the most comprehensive report on North Korea to date, and their finding was that the Kim Jong-un regime and the whole family regime has, for decades, pursued policies involving crimes—and this is the words of the United Nations report—crimes that shock the conscience of humanity.

This amended version requires the administration to develop a strategy to promote North Korean human rights, including a list of countries that use North Korean slave labor.

The implementation of this bill will help sever a key subsidy for North Korea's weapons of mass destruction program, for only when the North Korean leadership realizes that its criminal activities are untenable will the prospects for peace and security in northeast Asia improve.

I reserve the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of this measure.

First of all, let me thank Chairman ROYCE for authoring the bill. I am proud to be the lead Democratic cosponsor, and I am glad that we are almost to the finish line.

Just over a month ago we passed this bill and sent it to the Senate. The Senate acted quickly to make minor adjustments, and today we will pass this bipartisan legislation and send it to the President's desk.

This process is a great example of what we can accomplish when we work in a bipartisan way to advance American security. As I have said many times before, I am proud of the members on both sides of the aisle of the Committee on Foreign Affairs because we have worked in a bipartisan manner.

I would caution all Members about leveling political charges when it comes to North Korea. I am reminded of the old adage that people who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

We all know North Korea is a problem, but let's not kid ourselves. This problem has grown under many administrations, in Congresses of both parties. So when we talk about how we got here, we need to really focus in a bipartisan manner. That is what we are trying to do.

The Kim regime is dangerous. North Korea's nuclear program threatens re-

gional stability and global security. It worries me to think what North Korea's leaders plan to do with their nuclear arsenal or who they might be willing to sell nuclear material to.

While it is bad enough on its own, North Korea's nuclear program is just the top item on a long list of dangerous and illegal activity by that regime.

From cyber attacks to money laundering and counterfeiting, from human rights abuses, as Chairman ROYCE has pointed out, to the regular attacks on South Korea, the Kim regime runs roughshod over the rules and norms that guide the global order. Yet, they haven't been deterred by some of the toughest sanctions imaginable or the near-universal condemnation of the global community or the deepening isolation of North Korea from the rest of the world. So we are left to tighten the screws even further. That is what we are trying to do today.

We need to work with South Korea and Japan on a tough, coordinated response. We need to take every opportunity to collaborate on this issue with the Chinese, who wield considerable influence over North Korea, and we need to dial up our own sanctions and toughen sanctions enforcement. That is exactly what this bill does.

North Korea is always looking for ways to get around our sanctions. The sanctions in this bill would focus especially on North Korean elites who conduct shady transactions with shell corporations, then cover up the money trail. In Pyongyang, the capital, these cronies of the Kim regime pocket the cash while the rest of the North Korean people suffer.

I have been to North Korea twice, and it is just sickening that the regime and its friends profit from these crimes while the rest of the country is literally starving.

On that point, this bill includes important exceptions for the humanitarian aid that benefits the North Korean people. Our anger is not with the people of North Korea. In fact, the United States does a great deal to provide aid to this oppressed population.

But they deserve better from their leaders. That is why we should send this bill to the President. That is why we should continue to make North Korea a top foreign policy priority.

The Kim family has ruled North Korea for many, many, many years. Kim Jong-un seems to be the worst of the lot, with the repressions, the assassinations, the political stranglehold that he keeps the whole country in, and the fact that many people get caught, as Chairman ROYCE pointed out, in the gulag. Families are oppressed. It is just a nightmare of horrors.

The North Korean people deserve better from their leaders. That is why we should send this bill to the President and why we should continue to make

North Korea a top foreign policy priority.

I am proud to support this bill. I am proud to be the lead Democrat on the bill. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, before yielding to our next speaker, I also want to note that this bill effectively reauthorizes and extends the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004, which I have worked to support for more than a dozen years.

That groundbreaking law, which was reauthorized in 2008 and again in 2012 by our chairman emeritus, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, emphasized that human rights, the free flow of information, and the protection of those who escaped are not only important to the people of North Korea, they are also critical to changing North Korea's strategic calculus and trying to force that rogue regime to address the needs of its own people instead of threatening its neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations.

□ 0930

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the North Korean dictatorship is an existential threat that requires significantly enhanced vigilance and response.

The North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act of 2016, authored by Chairman ED ROYCE, will ensure that the Obama administration takes meaningful action to mitigate North Korea's cruelty, human rights abuse, and military danger.

The U.S. can no longer sit on the sidelines while Kim Jong-un proliferates nuclear and missile technology and abuses and starves the North Korean people.

North Korea violates every single human right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. North Korea is listed by the State Department as a tier 3 country with respect to human trafficking. It is designated as one of eight Countries of Particular Concern for engaging in egregious violations of religious freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I have chaired four hearings on human rights abuses in North Korea. It is, as Chairman ROYCE noted, a house of horrors.

The U.N. Commission of Inquiry on North Korea recommended that the U.N. impose targeted sanctions on North Korean leaders responsible for these crimes against humanity. However, China blocks effective U.N. actions. This, in part, is why the Congress and the administration must act

now. North Korean human rights abusers must be identified and listed so that sanctions can be appropriately applied.

North Korea's launch of a long-range rocket last week reenergized concern over that country's intercontinental ballistic missile program. The launch was strongly condemned by the U.N. Security Council, which vowed to apply further sanctions. Hopefully, the Security Council's investigation now underway will also look at partner nations who purchase North Korean missile technology.

Iran, to whom the administration has just released billions of dollars, is one of North Korea's nuclear partners. We should be very concerned about that. At some point, the Iranians will acquire fissile material beyond what they are allowed to produce, they may clandestinely purchase actual warheads from North Korea, or, perhaps, Iran will get enriched uranium—their stash—back from Russia.

At a Foreign Affairs Committee hearing yesterday, Mr. Speaker—and Chairman ROYCE has had well over 35 oversight hearings on Iran—I asked President Obama's coordinator for implementation of the Iran nuclear deal where Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium was sent. Where did it go? Is it in Russia? What city? Do we—or the IAEA—have onsite access to where it is stored for verifications purposes? Remember President Reagan? He said: Trust and verify. Onsite verification.

Shockingly, Ambassador Mull said he didn't know where the enriched uranium is. He did say it was on a Russian ship somewhere heading to a port or to a final destination. But its specific location—we don't have a clue.

Yesterday's revelation was yet another flaw in an egregiously flawed Iran nuclear deal. We know that there is a connection between North Korea and Iran. So our vigilance must be stepped up significantly. This bill is a major step. It is in fact bipartisan: ELIOT ENGEL, again, working side-by-side with the chairman to make sure a good bill is produced.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and chairman of the Armed Services Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. I thank Chairman ED ROYCE for his leadership on freedom and liberty.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act of 2016.

Recently, we have seen overwhelming evidence that the monarchy in North Korea, led by an unstable dictator, has become increasingly hostile, threatening its neighbors, which are American allies.

Sadly, just last week, it successfully tested a long-range rocket which is capable of reaching California. This recent missile test comes after years of ignoring nonproliferation agreements and conducting nuclear tests without facing any meaningful consequences.

As America continues to fight the global war on terrorism, we should not allow an unpredictable rogue leader to continue unchecked. We must change course to a strategy of peace through strength to protect American families.

In 2003, I was one of the few Members of Congress to visit Pyongyang, North Korea, along with Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL and Chairman JEFF MILLER. I saw firsthand the struggle and oppression its citizens have endured under Communist totalitarian rule. Compared to the dynamic capital of South Korea, North Korea is the ultimate example of another socialist failure.

The North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act strengthens our Nation's ability to sanction the agents, government, and financial institutions that enable North Korea's dangerous activities.

I am grateful to Chairman ED ROYCE for introducing the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act, unanimously supported in the U.S. Senate with bipartisan support, which puts pressure on the regime by restricting them from selling weapons of mass destruction, importing and exporting conventional weapons, and engaging in further cyberattacks. It also directs the State Department to hold the administration accountable by creating a strategy to improve enforcement of existing sanctions.

This legislation is an important first step to achieving peace through strength in the region. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Armed Services Committee to promote positive change and stability in Northeast Asia so that all Koreans can have a bright future.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to also reiterate the bipartisan ship in which this legislation has been brought to the floor through the work of the chairman and the ranking member, who are experts in foreign affairs and especially countries like North Korea.

Mr. Speaker, when I had a chance last year to visit with the Pacific Command, I talked to the four-star Admiral in Pacific Command and asked him this question: Of the five entities that are threats to the United States—Russia, China, Iran, ISIS, and North Korea—which of those concerns you the most? He quickly said: North

Korea. Because they are an unstable regime.

This legislation will help, hopefully, have that unstable dictator, who murders his own people, is trigger happy, and is developing all types of weapons and puts them on the open market to sell them to other nations that want to cause mischief in the world, stop this conduct in North Korea.

Yes, North Korea has nuclear weapons. They are developing missiles to deliver those nuclear weapons. About a year or a year and a half ago, the dictator of North Korea said he wanted that first intercontinental ballistic missile to go to Austin, Texas. I take that a little personal, Mr. Speaker. I don't know why he picked Austin. Anyway, they are working on their delivery capability. They have no intention of stopping.

So, the international community must tell the dictator of North Korea: You can't do this. You can't be a menace to not only your own people, or the people in South Korea and the entire region, but the world.

This legislation is an important step in stopping the mischief-making and trigger-happy dictator of North Korea. And that is just the way it is.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me first start with Mr. JOE WILSON of South Carolina, who was on the trip with me, as he mentioned, to North Korea.

We drove in from the airport on a bus. JOE was sitting at the front of it. We saw all these hostile billboards. We couldn't, of course, read it—it was in Korean—but we could look at the pictures.

One of the pictures had an American soldier on the ground and a North Korean soldier with a bayonet right through the American soldier's head. The reason why we knew it was an American soldier is because it said USA on the soldier's uniform.

Mr. WILSON sat in the front and very carefully maneuvered his camera and snapped a picture. We have that picture. If the North Koreans had known what we were doing, they probably would have confiscated the camera, but they didn't. I just wanted to mention that.

There were, I believe, six of us on that trip. It was a bipartisan trip. It was an eye-opener. I went back a few years later, but I remember the gentleman from South Carolina sitting there and very skillfully maneuvering that camera. That is a good picture that we should probably blow up and let our colleagues see so that they understand the regime they are dealing with. This was not Kim Jong-un. His father was in power at the time.

So, it seems to be getting progressively worse. The father was known as the "Dear Leader." The grandfather, who was the person most responsible

for their revolution, was also heralded. Wherever we went in North Korea, there were pictures of the two of them on the walls, whether it was in schools or at the hotel. It is a very eerie feeling.

It kind of brings you back, for those who read the book "Nineteen Eighty-Four" when we were kids, which was in the future and now is in the past. But for those people who read that book, to me, that sort of describes the Korean regime. It is really a scary, scary thing.

The work we are doing here today is so important. It is so important to send a message. It is so important to let the world know that we haven't forgotten this. This remains a bipartisan priority for the U.S. Congress.

The Kim regime must understand that if it continues to defy the global consensus and ignore its obligation under international law, there will be consequences. The elites in North Korea must be shown that if they try to skirt sanctions, we will find new ways to go after them. Anyone who wants to do business with North Korea must be warned that we will crack down on those who help sustain this brutal regime.

The only way forward for North Korea is for its leaders to give up their illegal and dangerous pursuits and come back to the negotiating table.

I am proud that Congress is sending this bill to the President, and I hope we will ramp up engagement with our partners and allies and make it clear that North Korea's present course can only lead to deeper isolation for the country's leaders and, sadly, continued suffering for the country's people.

I think the most stark difference that I have seen in all the years I have been in Congress was when we went to the North Korean capital of Pyongyang and then traveled to the capital of South Korea—Seoul—where Congressman WILSON's wife and other spouses were waiting.

Seoul is a city that is vibrant. It is much like New York City, Chicago, or any of the big cities in our country, where the people are well-dressed and well-fed and shops are open. It looks like a real western-style city. Of course, it is Asia, but it reminds one of Tokyo or cities like that.

When you go to North Korea, it is just like going back into 1950's East Germany. That is just the feeling that you get. You see hotels and buildings that were constructed poorly and couldn't be occupied. When we came back about 18 months later, it was still just the way it was 18 months before. You hardly see a car. Traffic lights don't work. It is just bizarre—I think that is the word—and the poor North Korean people are the ones who are really suffering. The contrast between Pyongyang, which is the capital of North Korea, and Seoul, the capital of

South Korea, was just unbelievable. It was like night and day. It is on the same peninsula, it is the same Korean people, and yet it is like night and day.

□ 0945

I think they say pictures are worth a thousand words. There is a picture of the Korean Peninsula at night. It was taken by satellite, and if you take a look, you see that South Korea is vibrant. There are all kinds of lights. It is lit up. North Korea is absolutely black, absolutely dark—no lights, no energy, no power.

What a contrast—two Koreas, same people. One is a bastion of democracy in South Korea—the chairman and I have visited South Korea—and one, a brutal, brutal dictatorship.

So I hope that this bill overwhelmingly passes. I hope that we have strong support from both sides of the aisle.

We want to let the people of North Korea know that we are with them, not with the brutal regime, and that is why we are doing this legislation today.

So I thank Chairman ROYCE. I urge everyone to vote "yes."

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to again thank Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL for his leadership on this issue. He is my coauthor on this bill.

I would just like to concur in his thoughts about the shocking nature of this totalitarian regime, not just in terms of the way it has treated its people, but also its hostility towards South Korea and towards the United States and to the West; and to just share the thought, as he has expressed, this level of struggle that the people themselves in North Korea live in under this totalitarian state.

When I was in North Korea, I had an opportunity to see something that struck me just in terms of the malnutrition. The NGO community tells us that close to 50 percent of those children are malnourished. What I saw in terms of the malnourishment, the NGO community says malnourished to the point that it affects their ability to learn.

The malnourishment can be seen everywhere. The actual height differential between the average person in North Korea, it is 4 inches shorter than in South Korea. That is a really stark thing to see as you are in North Korea.

But the other observation that Mr. ENGEL made was the overt hostility shown to the United States and, of course, to South Korea and to the rest of the world.

I remember seeing the Cheonan. This is a corvette. This was a South Korean ship on which 46 South Koreans lost their lives, over 50 were injured. It was split in half by a torpedo from a North Korean submarine. And they actually

lifted the two halves out of the water. Inspecting that and looking at the letters, the last letters that some of those young South Korean sailors had sent home before they perished, it is just a reminder, it is a reminder of how brutal that regime can be on its own people, but also on those against whom it has ill intent. So the South Koreans have suffered from this.

And now, to see them move forward and try to expand this nuclear weapons program, each new launch brings them closer. They say they can hit the West Coast of the United States. They are claiming that they will be able to hit the entire U.S. with their ICBM program. These placards that you see and these posters actually show their missiles coming down on the United States.

So, at this point, I think it is critical, and our colleagues in the Senate feel the same way. I want to thank our Senate colleagues for building upon the House bill which ELIOT ENGEL and I have authored. And I also appreciate the cooperation of the bipartisan House leadership to ensure this bill's quick scheduling. It is just back from the Senate.

In the wake of North Korea's fourth nuclear test and its recent missile launch, many of our allies also are trying to tighten the screws now on that regime in order to slow its capability to deliver this type of weapon. Only days ago, South Korea shuttered the Kaesong Industrial Complex because, as they observed, it was giving the North Korean regime the hard currency it needed in order to move forward its weapons programs. This will end a very important revenue for the North Korean regime. Japan has issued a new set of sanctions as well, and China and Russia should take notice and follow this example.

It is time for the United States to stand with our partners in northeast Asia as we press China and Russia to follow suit, and this bill sends the message to that regime in North Korea that they must reform and they must disarm this nuclear weapons program. By cutting off Kim Jong-un's access to the hard currency he needs for his army and his weapons, H.R. 757 will return us to the one strategy that has worked: financial pressure on the North Korean regime. So I urge the passage of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SALMON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to add my strong support to H.R. 757, the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act of 2016, a critical bill to target the rogue Kim Jong Un regime in North Korea. I want to thank Chairman ED ROYCE for drafting this important piece of legislation with Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL and moving swiftly to bring it for a final vote here in the House before sending it on to the President. North Korea needs to know that it cannot pursue a nuclear program without a

tough response from the United States and our allies in the region.

This latest nuclear test and missile launch test fly in the face of current international sanctions and against years and years of negotiation to end North Korea's nuclear ambitions.

By their actions, it is clear that North Korea has every intention to continue advancing its nuclear and missile programs, in an effort to strengthen both domestic and international positions. This must stop here.

This bill before us today will seize assets connected with North Korea's proliferation program. It will staunch the flow of cash from anyone involved in arms trafficking, luxury goods, money laundering, and other means of weapons proliferation in North Korea.

H.R. 757 will also target the regime's horrendous and appalling human rights abuses, by requiring the Administration to develop a strategy that would protect human rights in North Korea and identify those in the North Korean regime who violate basic human rights and dignity.

The time is now to take action and punish the North Korean regime for its destructive behavior. The time to act is now. We cannot wait for another nuclear test, another missile launch, another island shelling, another ship sinking, or another hacking attack. If the Administration will not act to hold the North Korean regime to account, then the Congress must.

I am proud to vote in favor of H.R. 757 and strongly encourage all of my House colleagues to join me.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 757.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

COMMON SENSE NUTRITION DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2015

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 2017, including an exchange of letters between the Committees on Energy and Commerce and the Judiciary.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WILSON of South Carolina). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 611 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in

the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2017.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 0954

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2017) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A, with Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. GUTHRIE) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act, sponsored by Conference Chair CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS and Representative LORETTA SANCHEZ.

This legislation, first and foremost, is about making menu labeling work for the American people and American businesses. Providing accurate information to consumers when they are deciding what to order is at the heart of this bill. This is not about hiding the calorie information. This bill is about making menu labeling requirements work for the entire industry.

It seems obvious to me that a one-size-fits-all solution will not work for all restaurant chains; yet FDA's menu labeling recommendation does just that, and its burdensome rules have raised alarm bells with businesses across the country.

Convenience stores, grocery stores, take-out restaurants, pizza restaurants, movie theaters, amusement parks, bowling alleys, and chain restaurants, I think it is fair to say, can be very different. Expecting these distinct businesses to all comply with the same standards is simply not reasonable; in fact, it is ridiculous.

Furthermore, FDA's existing regulations force businesses to provide information that is often useless to the consumer. The Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act provides calorie information to the customers when it would actually be helpful before they order. Knowing how many calories are in your meal at the point of purchase is not going to help anyone. Having calorie information when you place your

order will help customers make healthier decisions.

The current FDA menu labeling rules also will expose restaurants and retailers to harsh penalties. This bill makes sure that employees don't get penalized for an inadvertent error. This bill would also help protect businesses from frivolous lawsuits.

Our bill also addresses other impractical, unworkable aspects of FDA's regulation. For example, flyers and advertisements were never meant to be considered menus; yet, through guidance, the FDA confirmed that they consider flyers and advertisements menus. FDA had their chance to make corrections and they did not. This must be fixed, and our bill does just that.

This bill came through our Subcommittee on Health with a voice vote. In full committee, it passed with a bipartisan vote of 36-12-1. I look forward to passing H.R. 2017 through the House with an even stronger bipartisan vote. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2017.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, February 10, 2016.

Hon. FRED UPTON,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN UPTON: I am writing with respect to H.R. 2017, the "Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015," which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

As you know, H.R. 2017 contains provisions that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary. As a result of your having consulted with the Committee and in order to expedite the House's consideration of H.R. 2017, the Committee on the Judiciary will not assert its jurisdictional claim over this bill by seeking a sequential referral. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding and agreement that doing so will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 2017, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H.R. 2017.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, February 11, 2016.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 2017, the "Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015."

I appreciate your willingness to forgo seeking a sequential referral of the bill, and I agree that your decision will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation.

I will include a copy of your letter and this response in the Congressional Record during consideration of H.R. 2017 on the House floor.

Sincerely,

FRED UPTON,
Chairman.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2017, the so-called Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act.

Far from common sense, this unnecessary legislation would deny consumers critical information about the food that we eat.

I began my career a long time ago as a consumer advocate, joining together with a small group of housewives to get retailers to put expiration dates on the products they sell. This was way back in 1970, when every single item in the grocery store was code dated. Now expiration dates are on nearly every single product because this change was good not only for consumers, but it was good for the retailers. They were able to control their inventory much better—less waste because dates are on the food. We can also control our refrigerators a little bit better as well.

□ 1000

Consumers can make better decisions with better information, and retailers can better control their inventory. Similarly, I believe menu labeling would be helpful to both consumers and retail food establishments, as more and more people are asking for this information and making smart decisions.

At a time when over 78 million adult Americans are obese and the estimated cost of obesity in the United States is \$147 billion a year, we should be embracing efforts to reduce this enormous cost to our healthcare system.

In fact, a recent Harvard study found restaurant menu calorie labeling could save over \$4.6 billion in healthcare costs over 10 years. That is not chump change.

Countless consumer and public health organizations oppose H.R. 2017. That includes the American Diabetes Association, the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the American Public Health Association, and the Center for Science in the Public Interest.

Supporters claim that menu labeling requirements would be too difficult to implement. That is what I heard from my colleague. But we know this isn't true. Why? Because California, New York City, the State of Vermont, and several counties around the country have successfully implemented menu labeling.

Only chain restaurants with 20 or more locations operating under the same name must post calorie information. So this is not about small businesses must post calorie information. Many of these chains have already had to comply with menu labeling in the places where it is currently required.

In addition, the National Restaurant Association has long supported menu labeling, and consumers find this to be an asset. Claims that implementation of menu labeling has been rushed or has not allowed industry to weigh in are simply false.

It has been 6 years since the law first passed, giving industry plenty of time to weigh in with the FDA and implement this law. The FDA has already issued a 1-year extension, and the FY16 omnibus delayed implementation even further.

The FDA has allowed for plenty of industry participation through this 6-year process, and their final regulations provide a great deal of flexibility.

H.R. 2017 would not only decrease consumer access to calorie information, but it would allow for inconsistent or confusing menu information. This legislation, for example, allows food establishments to simply make up their own serving sizes.

For example, the bill would allow establishments to list the calories for one chicken wing as opposed to an order of chicken wings and wouldn't require the total number of calories to be listed.

We have also heard that many establishments, especially chain pizza restaurants, claim that menu labeling would be too difficult for them to account for all the variations in their menu offerings.

But let's be clear. Pizza chains only need to post calories for the standard menu items they list on their menu boards, not every possible pizza combination. So clearly, California, Vermont, and the City of New York have figured it out.

I also took it upon myself to come up with an easy template for pizza restaurants to use and that is free of charge. I am not going to charge them. It shows how easy it is for them to clearly display the calorie information and account for the different pizza options. You can see right here.

So we have one slice of cheese pizza. I just made up these calories. I think they are way too low. But let's say one slice of cheese pizza is 250 calories. God bless them if they can do that. So then, for sausage, you would add calories; mushrooms, you would add calories; pepperoni, add calories; onion. I think it is rather attractive, easy to read, and important for consumers.

Pizza is undeniably one of the most common menu items in America. On any given day, one out of every eight Americans eats pizza—one out of eight. The United States spends \$37 billion a year on pizza, which accounts for one-third of the global pizza market.

H.R. 2017 still requires chain pizza restaurants to calculate the calories for their menu items; so, clearly, it can't be that difficult to come up with this information.

Instead, this bill would allow them to present calorie information in a decep-

tive manner and restrict customer access to this information, depending on where they place an order.

Given how often pizza is consumed, it is critical that consumers have access to accurate calorie information at all points of sale.

More and more, people are planning their caloric intake and making healthier decisions for themselves. We should be encouraging this and providing consumers with the information they need to make smart decisions about their health.

So I encourage my colleagues to oppose this unnecessary bill that only serves to harm and confuse consumers.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Chairman, first, when we looked at the nice menu labeling board that was just presented, it shows why H.R. 2017 is necessary.

Because, if you look at just that board, it was simple, but it fails to specify the calories listed for each topping or the calories added to a single slice.

Under FDA regulations and guidance, the menu must specify that the sausage, mushroom, pepperoni, and onion calories are added to the basic preparation of slices of pizza with the word "add" or "added" spelled out.

You can't use the plus symbol, which the FDA has specifically said is not permitted. It fails to declare calories per slice and per topping for each size of pizza slice.

The FDA regulations require that calories be declared for each size of pizza slice and for each topping as applied to each size. So it shows why we need to move forward. It also doesn't say that 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice, but calorie needs vary.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON), my good friend and the chairman of the full committee.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of this bill H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act.

Simply put, this is a bipartisan bill that would impose common sense where it is sorely needed: the final food labeling rule issued by this administration.

We have a classic example of the administration overreaching with a top-down, big government approach. Its impact is wide ranging and will negatively impact your pizza places, convenience stores, grocery stores, amusement parks, movie theaters, and ice cream stores, you name it.

The administration's own estimates state that this regulation could cost American businesses as much as \$1 billion to comply and 500,000 hours of paperwork, all on small businesses. That is a huge chunk of time and money that would be better spent hiring more

folks who are creating improved experiences for customers.

Michigan's own Domino's pizza illustrates just how this rule simply doesn't work. They have literally hundreds and hundreds of different potential order combinations: large pizzas, small ones, medium, thick, thin, and crispy.

Right now they have an online calculator that, in fact, will determine nutritional information so that, when you order from your computer or your app, you can see the precise nutrition information on that pizza.

When 91 percent of orders are placed online, it doesn't make much sense for Domino's to have an in-store menu board that won't provide precise nutritional information for customers on literally hundreds of different choices. Yet, that is what the final food labeling rule would require.

We live in an innovative world, with businesses like Seamless and Uber Eats that bring all kinds of food with the click of a button to consumers' doorsteps. The menu board won't be impactful and is not the solution to menu labeling.

The Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act prevents these onerous burdens and puts in place a framework that actually works for consumers and businesses.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Chairman, I yield the gentleman from Michigan an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank, in particular, CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS and LORETTA SANCHEZ for their bipartisan work to advance a workable, pragmatic solution that focuses on consumers and small businesses.

As was noted, it did pass in our committee 36-12 with one voting present. I look forward to an even stronger bipartisan vote today.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I thank the distinguished gentlewoman. I also thank my good friend. I will move as quickly as I possibly can.

Mr. Chairman, these legislative issues are important to us, and we realize that there is a difference of opinion. So I don't come to the floor harking with great adversity, but I do come with a reasonable response to my opposition to H.R. 2017 in terms of its overall impact.

So I would like to say that it is overly broad in its approach to address narrower concerns from the pizza industry and other food establishments that are better resolved through guidance.

The bill will reduce the likelihood that consumers will receive clear and consistent calorie information at chain food service establishments, and the bill weakens an important tool in-

tended to help Americans make informed food choices at a time when obesity and other nutrition-related health problems are at crisis.

Our constituents have gotten used to seeing the calorie content. They look for it. They want transparency. Obviously, Americans eat less than the recommended amounts of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, dairy products, and oil. Although we are not the Big Brother, we have to create opportunities for such.

I live in communities where there are food deserts. More than 23 million Americans, including 6.5 million children, live in food deserts, areas that are more than a mile away from a supermarket.

In 2008, an estimated 49.1 million people, including 16.7 million children, experienced food insecurity—limited availability to safe and nutritionally adequate foods—multiple times throughout the year. So anytime there can be an increased knowledge about the nutrition of a food product, that is crucial.

In addition, as the co-chair and founder of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I work on the issues of childhood obesity.

Data from 2009 to 2010 indicates that over 78 million U.S. adults and about 12.5 million—16.9 percent—children and adolescents are obese. We need to help those individuals both in terms of their own confidence about themselves, but to eat healthy.

So I rise today to oppose this legislation because I believe we can find a better place of guidance.

I include in the RECORD a letter, Mr. Chairman, from the National Restaurant Association, which says: "We are writing to inform you of our opposition to H.R. 2017. This legislation would create an unfair advantage between competitors by specifically carving out segments of the food service marketplace from the federal requirement. . . ."

NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, April 28, 2015.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: We are writing to inform you of our opposition to H.R. 2017. This legislation would create an unfair advantage between competitors by specifically carving out segments of the food service marketplace from the federal requirement to provide uniform nutrition information. We urge you to treat establishments selling restaurant type food equitably. Congress should not provide a competitive advantage for one segment of an industry over another.

H.R. 2017 would broadly exempt thousands of chain grocery and convenience stores from providing uniform nutrition information on restaurant type food to customers notwithstanding that each day thousands of customers purchase such meals at these establishments. Such establishments each made strategic decisions to compete directly with their local restaurants. While we welcome their competition, there is no justifiable reason why they should not be held to the same rules as those with whom they have chosen to compete. While we recognize the need ex-

pressed by supporters of H.R. 2017 to have appropriate time for menu-labeling implementation, H.R. 2017 would outright exempt entities from providing nutrition information, create an uneven playing field, and cast different requirements amongst competitors.

The food service industry is a broad but competitive industry that is ever expanding in areas that have not traditionally provided restaurant meals. For example, today there are 54,000 grocery stores and 59,000 convenience stores that offer freshly prepared food and beverages, with annual average foodservice sales of \$25 billion dollars. Taken together, these two foodservice segments alone represent 12% of total restaurant and foodservice locations in the U.S. In fact, in recent years, sales in this broad 'retail host' segment have grown much faster than the restaurant industry as a whole. Between 2006 and 2011, sales in this sector jumped 31%, compared to a 16% increase in total restaurant industry sales.

It is clear that grocery and convenience stores are expanding into the traditional restaurant space and competing for the traditional restaurant customer. Just as a restaurant that decides to sell gas or packaged food would be required to adhere to the laws governing those products, our competitors should follow the rules that apply to restaurant products.

Moreover, as with most federal legislation, we recognized the need for a small business protection in the menu labeling requirements. As a result, the law only applies to chains with 20 or more locations that operate under the same trade name and offer for sale substantially the same menu items. Smaller chains and independent operators have the choice to voluntarily provide menu labeling but they are not required to do so under the federal law.

Lastly, the menu labeling rule comes at a time when consumers are demanding more information about the food they eat. In providing the nutritional content of restaurant foods, customers will have access to the information they seek. In fact, this information is being met favorably with estimates suggesting 76% of consumers want menu labeling.

We appreciate your consideration that establishments offering restaurant food be treated equally under the law. Should you have questions on the final requirements around menu labeling, please feel free to consult our website at www.restaurant.org/menulabeling. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at the National Restaurant Association.

Sincerely,

DAN ROEHL,
Vice President,
Government Relations.

TRUST FOR AMERICA'S HEALTH,
February 8, 2016.

DEAR LILLIE: Trust for America's Health (TFAH), a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to promoting health for all Americans, urges Representative Jackson Lee to oppose H.R. 2017, legislation which would weaken and partially repeal critical Food and Drug Administration (FDA) menu labeling standards. The bill is scheduled to be considered by the House later this week.

According to The State of Obesity 2015, obesity remains one of the biggest threats to the health of our children and country. Around 17 percent of children and more than 30 percent of adults are currently considered obese, putting them at heightened risk for a

wide range of health problems such as heart disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, stroke, cancer, asthma and osteoarthritis.

Today, Americans consume roughly one-third of all calories outside the home. There is no single solution to the obesity epidemic, but without improved information about the nutritional content of their food options, millions of Americans will not have the tools they need to make healthy choices.

I urge you to oppose this legislation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact TFAH's Senior Government Relations Manager Jack Rayburn.

Thank you,

RICHARD HAMBURG,
Interim President and CEO.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. This is the National Restaurant Association.

I received a letter from the Trust for America's Health. They, too, are a non-profit, nonpartisan organization. They have asked for us to oppose this, which would weaken and partially repeal critical Food and Drug Administration, FDA, menu labeling. The bill, as I said, is scheduled to come, and here we are today.

So my final points are this. If we have a problem, let's try to work it out, but let's not take a sledgehammer and sledgehammer the requirements that help Americans have transparent information about their food.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2017, the "Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015," which amends the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to revise the nutritional information that restaurants and retail food establishments must disclose.

As the founder and chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I oppose this legislation for the following four reasons:

1. H.R. 2017 is overly broad in its approach to address narrower concerns from the pizza industry and other food establishments that are better resolved through guidance;

2. The bill will reduce the likelihood that consumers will receive clear and consistent calorie information at chain food service establishments; and

3. The bill weakens an important tool intended to help Americans make informed food choices at a time when obesity and other nutrition-related health problems are at crisis levels.

The FDA has been responsive to industry concerns and has already delayed implementation of menu labeling by two years, which is more than six years after it was enacted.

Moreover, H.R. 2017 states that its goal is to establish that the nutrient content disclosure statement on the menu or menu board at establishments that serve prepared foods must include:

1. the number of calories contained in the whole menu item;

2. the number of servings and number of calories per serving;

3. the number of calories per common unit of the item, such as for a multi-serving item that is typically divided before presentation to the consumer; and

4. allow nutritional information may be provided solely by a remote-access menu (e.g., an Internet menu) for food establishments where the majority of orders are placed by customers who are off-premises.

NUTRITION AND OBESITY

Typical American diets exceed the recommended intake levels or limits in four categories: calories from solid fats and added sugars; refined grains; sodium; and saturated fat.

Americans eat less than the recommended amounts of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, dairy products, and oils.

About 90% of Americans eat more sodium than is recommended for a healthy diet.

Reducing the sodium Americans eat by 1,200mg per day on could save up to \$20 billion a year in medical costs.

Food available for consumption increased in all major food categories from 1970 to 2008. Average daily calories per person in the marketplace increased approximately 600 calories.

Since the 1970s, the number of fast food restaurants has more than doubled.

More than 23 million Americans, including 6.5 million children, live in food deserts—areas that are more than a mile away from a supermarket.

In 2008, an estimated 49.1 million people, including 16.7 million children, experienced food insecurity (limited availability to safe and nutritionally adequate foods) multiple times throughout the year.

In 2013, residents of the following states were most likely to report eating at least five servings of vegetables four or more days per week: Vermont (68.7%), Montana (63.0%) and Washington (61.8%). The least likely were Oklahoma (52.3%), Louisiana (53.3%) and Missouri (53.8%). The national average for regular produce consumption is 57.7%.

Empty calories from added sugars and solid fats contribute to 40% of total daily calories for 2–18 year olds and half of these empty calories come from six sources: soda, fruit drinks, dairy desserts, grain desserts, pizza, and whole milk.

US adults consume an average of 3,400 mg/day [of sodium], well above the current federal guideline of less than 2,300 mg daily.

Food safety awareness goes hand in hand with nutrition education. In the United States, food-borne agents affect 1 out of 6 individuals and cause approximately 48 million illnesses, 128,000 hospitalizations, and 3,000 deaths each year.

US per capita consumption of total fat increased from approximately 57 pounds in 1980 to 78 pounds in 2009 with the highest consumption being 85 pounds in 2005.

The US percentage of food-insecure households, those with limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways, rose from 11% to 15% between 2005 and 2009.

OBESITY

Data from 2009–2010 indicates that over 78 million U.S. adults and about 12.5 million (16.9%) children and adolescents are obese.

Recent reports project that by 2030, half of all adults (115 million adults) in the United States will be obese.

Overweight adolescents have a 70% chance of becoming overweight or obese adults.

CHILDREN AND OBESITY

For children with disabilities, obesity rates are approximately 38% higher than for children without disabilities. It gets worse for the adult population where obesity rates for adults

with disabilities are approximately 57% higher than for adults without disabilities.

In 2011–2012, 8.4% of 2- to 5-year-olds had obesity compared with 17.7% of 6- to 11-year-olds and 20.5% of 12- to 19-year-olds. Childhood obesity is also more common among certain racial and ethnic groups.

In 2011–2012, the prevalence among children and adolescents was higher among Hispanics (22.4%) and non-Hispanic blacks (20.2%) than among non-Hispanic whites (14.1%).

The prevalence of obesity was lower in non-Hispanic Asian youth (8.6%) than in youth who were non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic black or Hispanic.

Almost 40% of black and Latino youth ages 2 to 19 are overweight or obese compared with only 29% of white youth.

IMPACT OF BILL ON CHILDREN

Nearly 1 in 3 children, 2–19 years of age living in the United States is overweight or obese, putting them at risk for serious health problems.

As members of Congress we should be joining with parents, caregivers, brothers and sisters, schools, communities and healthcare providers in making accurate and easily understandable information regarding the nutrient and calorie content of takeout food transparent to the public.

Our goal should be to work together to create a nation where the healthy choices in takeout as well as food prepared at homes are readily available.

Part of that means information on calorie content and nutrition of food is essential.

Food high calorie content, while low in nutritional value, is a recipe for obesity.

HUMAN AND FINANCIAL COSTS OF OBESITY

Obesity-related illness, including chronic disease, disability, and death, is estimated to carry an annual cost of \$190.2 billion.

Projections estimate that by 2018, obesity will cost the U.S. 21 percent of our total healthcare costs—\$344 billion annually.

Those who are obese have medical costs that are \$1,429 more than those of normal weight on average (roughly 42% higher).

The annual cost of being overweight is \$524 for women and \$432 for men; annual costs for being obese are even higher: \$4,879 for women and \$2,646 for men.

Obesity is also a growing threat to national security—a surprising 27% of young Americans are too overweight to serve in our military. Approximately 15,000 potential recruits fail their physicals every year because they are unfit.

The medical care costs of obesity in the United States are staggering. In 2008 dollars, these costs totaled about \$147 billion.

Hunger hurts everyone, but it is especially devastating to children. Having enough nutritious, healthy food is critical to a child's physical and emotional development and their ability to achieve academically.

Children facing hunger may perform worse in school and struggle with social and behavioral problems that impact their ability to learn.

16 million children in America face hunger. In 2014, more than 21.5 million low-income children received free or reduced-price meals daily through the National School Lunch Program.

84% of client households with children report purchasing the cheapest food available, even if it wasn't the healthiest option.

H.R. 2017 Removes the Information Needed by Consumers to make Good Food Choices

TEXAS AND CARRYOUT FOOD LABELING

Nearly 27 million people call the state of Texas home, making it the second largest and most populous state in the nation.

Unfortunately, Texas ranks first as the most obese state in the United States for children.

More than 1 in 3 children and adolescents in Texas is obese, putting them at risk for serious health problems.

The story does not end with these statistics.

An initiative by state school districts in collaboration with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is working to address childhood obesity in the state of Texas.

More than 2,100 schools serving over 1.4 million students across the state of Texas have joined the Alliance's Healthy Schools Program, creating healthier school environments for children to thrive.

Since 2007, 136 Texas schools have been recognized with National Healthy Schools Awards for their outstanding efforts.

I must encourage my colleagues to join me in opposition to this unwise and harmful legislation.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), my good friend.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I thank my good friend from Kentucky.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act. This bill, as the name suggests, truly is a commonsense bill. H.R. 2017 would lift many of the burdens on small businesses and help protect establishments from excessive regulations.

This summer I visited many Florida food producers, distributors, and restaurants, including one of the local Publix Super Markets, in Land O' Lakes, Florida, where employees showed me how current policies and excessive regulations impact their store.

However, it was clear that reasonable regulations are needed. This bill allows for providing nutritional information to consumers based on the different ways that foods are prepared and sold across venues and formats.

Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairwoman McMORRIS RODGERS for sponsoring the bill and the committee for their good work. I urge passage of this great bill, H.R. 2017.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER).

I am really glad to introduce MARK DESAULNIER, who has experience with this particular legislation.

Mr. DESAULNIER. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to express my strong opposition to H.R. 2017. I do this in the context of my background and my professional life, 40 years in the restaurant business.

I started as a busboy and a dishwasher. I have worked in chain res-

taurants and fast-food restaurants and owned multiple fine-dining restaurants in the Bay Area and have done consulting to restaurants throughout California.

□ 1015

I was an author along with a colleague in the State legislature. At that time, the first statewide menu labeling legislation in the country was in California. My colleague had been on the L.A. City Council, I had been in local government in the bay area, and we had started in local government doing this.

We took 2 years, from 2006 to 2008, to work with a Republican administration and a Democratic leadership of both Houses in California. I worked with the California Restaurant Association, which I was a longtime member of.

At the end of the day, we accommodated all people's interests, including the stakeholders in the pizza industry. What we had was a remarkable piece of legislation that is helping to address what the Center for Disease Control called over 10 years ago a national epidemic in this country, a national epidemic of obesity, particularly for young people, for young Americans, of which as many as two-thirds of them deal with obesity every day, or overweight, and obesity-related diseases, like diabetes type 2, has expanded over 300 percent since 1971, when many of us were younger. This is a national epidemic.

When we were doing the legislation in California, we considered cost benefits. We worked, as I said before, with the Restaurant Association. As somebody who spent 4 years in the Restaurant Association—and they were independent restaurants so I understand that this would not apply directly—but many of those restaurants already started on their own, and the consumers responded to it in the context of this national crisis.

Here is a piece of legislation that the administration is continuing to work in full faith with the stakeholders on. Why not let them continue. It is a major piece of prevention. It is a major piece of public health.

I have been in the restaurant business long enough to remember when Mothers Against Drunk Driving brought their issues to the restaurant industry and said that we should do something about the epidemic of drunk driving deaths. We did. The restaurant industry put up a struggle and thought it would be the end of it.

I have been in the business long enough to remember secondhand smoke, where similarly people said: This will be the end of us.

I know how hard it is to keep a restaurant open. It is one of the most daunting things you can do in life. I know the importance of them in a community where more and more Ameri-

cans with two-income households rely on restaurants and dining out to provide for their families. Therein lies part of our crisis.

The restaurant business responded when we had drunk driving issues. It responded again in secondhand smoke. Many of us can remember when you would walk into a restaurant and you were engulfed in smoke. We know what the public health dangers of that were. We know how we have reduced that exposure and led the world.

Here is another occasion where the United States—and I know in California, we led the world, and it is working. I will say that you can remedy, as somebody with my background, the conflicts between public health.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. CURBELO of Florida). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I yield the gentleman from California an additional 1 minute.

Mr. DESAULNIER. I urge my colleagues—given the experience I have had and others, and the urgency of the issue when it comes to public health and the future of this country—to vote “no.”

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, can I inquire how much time I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Illinois has 16½ minutes remaining.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ), my good friend.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Chairman, this is an issue that I care a lot about. Diabetes runs in my family, and I am talking generations worth.

One of the ways that you combat diabetes is through nutrition and through exercise. I watch everything that I eat. I am very grateful that when I go to a restaurant, they put the calorie count on the different pieces on the menu. I am very grateful that when I go into a 7-Eleven or some other type of convenience store, that there is calorie count and serving size on everything that I buy there. This is very important to me.

But at the same time, I have been a small business woman, I have had a small business, and I know how difficult it is to make payroll, to be a small business trying to make a profit. I think that this particular regulation, not law, because when we passed the Affordable Care Act we said: Let's help people make good nutrition decisions, and I agree with that. But then we had a regulatory agency that made these regulations that just don't make sense. That is what this bill is about.

Ms. JACKSON LEE, one of my colleagues, said: This is easy, let's just work it out. But the reality is we have been at this for almost 2 or 3 years, and

we have not been able to work it out at the table. This is very, very important.

There was just a letter of opposition put into the RECORD from the National Restaurant Association. Yes, early on, to this bill, they were opposed. But the thing they were opposed to was the 50 percent rule, and we have taken that out of this.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. GUTHRIE. I yield the gentlewoman from California an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. I would like to say that the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015 aims to fix these problems and to help small businesses meet the intention of the law.

I think it is very unfair if you walk into a 7-Eleven and because something is taken out of its package and is put in a toaster oven that, all of a sudden, another place has to put the calories.

So I would ask my colleagues, please, let's do the right thing. Let's help consumers be smart about what they are eating, and let's let businesses go about their business.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), the wonderful consumer advocate who has been fighting issues on nutrition and consumer information for such a long time and who is so knowledgeable about the importance of information for consumers.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015.

As many of you know, I have been a longstanding champion of menu labeling, and I have fought to secure its inclusion in the Affordable Care Act. In fact, I was the original author of the House menu labeling bill.

When the Congress passed standardized menu labeling in 2010, what was the goal? To arm Americans with the right-to-know information they need to make informed nutritional decisions for themselves and for their families.

The language was built on consensus and compromise and worked out between a wide variety of interests, including many industry partners. I can find you the quotes from the National Restaurant Association where we stood together to make the announcement to put calories up on menu boards where people could see them and make the decision about what they were going to purchase at the point of purchase.

Now certain sectors of the industry want to tear down the progress that we have made. This bill would weaken and repeal a crucial step to combat the obesity epidemic in the United States. This bill increases consumer confusion and allows restaurants to list deceptive portion sizes, listing an entree as multiple servings, even though these items are often consumed by one person.

For example, a restaurant could list the caloric content of one chicken wing, deciding that one chicken wing is a serving size. But people do not eat just one chicken wing. Under the proposed bill, a restaurant would not be obligated to inform a consumer that there are 12 chicken wings in an order, which can lead to consumers making misinformed decisions based on misleading information, consuming far more calories than they ever realized.

This bill would also deny consumers the right to nutritional information at that point of purchase, even if 49 percent of orders are placed from in-store menus. Food establishments, what they would like to do is to bury menu labeling online.

Multiple studies have shown that providing calorie menu information can help Americans make lower calorie choices. But they cannot do this if they do not have the information they need.

It also weakens enforcement, consumer protection, and it would completely remove an establishment's incentive to comply with menu labeling requirements.

It also removes the ability of individuals to hold retail establishments accountable for violations to the food labeling law.

Many public interest health organizations are concerned about the ability of citizens to take action on non-compliance to menu labeling standards. Given that the Food and Drug Administration is chronically underfunded, this would be a serious setback.

We live in a country where obesity is an epidemic. In March 2015, sales at restaurants and bars surpassed spending at grocery stores for the first time ever. On an average day, one out of three Americans eat at a fast food restaurant. Americans are eating nearly half of their meals and snacks outside the home. Nutritional information must be made readily available where the consumer is at a point of purchase. Children are especially at risk.

Today, more than a third of children and adolescents are overweight and obese. Children eat almost twice as many calories at a restaurant than they do at home. The impact on our kids alone should be reason enough to oppose a measure that undermines the consumer's ability to make an informed nutrition choice at mealtime.

The good news is that menu labeling works. A 2015 study at Harvard found that menu labeling could save \$4.6 billion in healthcare costs over 10 years. It is a popular concept. A national poll found that 80 percent of Americans support menu labeling in chain restaurants. Over 100 nutrition and health organizations support menu labeling, along with trade associations, like the National Restaurant Association, chain restaurants such as McDonald's, Chili's, and IHOP.

The existing law is flexible. Restaurants with less than 20 locations—a

mom and pop small businesses—are excluded. Your local grocery store is excluded.

It has been 6 years since the original labeling law passed. There has been a 2-year delay in its full implementation.

The Food and Drug Administration has actually gone almost door to door to work with the industry to address their concerns. We should let them work through this process rather than complicating it with this legislation, which is just industry's answer to gutting the legislation.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I yield the gentlewoman from Connecticut as much time as she may consume.

Ms. DELAURO. Let them work through the process. We would be undoing years of meaningful, impactful work on menu labeling with a single stroke.

This is a special interest-driven bill. No one is suggesting that every permutation of a meal has to be changed and listed on a menu board. That is false. That is misrepresentation. You take the standard menu and you put that up there, and the same is true of pizza places, the same is true of the deli counter, and a convenience store. Do not let an industry that doesn't want to provide information to the American people about what they are eating and what the calorie content is—you know, when we first started this, we talked about calories and sodium and a whole bunch of other things, but it was by working with the industry that I did at that time, that said: No, let's just put calories up there. That is reasonable. We don't have to go further than that. They stood side by side with me and we went to restaurants where we saw what the calorie count was on the label, and they were perfectly happy with it.

Subsections of this industry have refused to do what the broad-based industry has wanted to do.

This is industry-driven. It is not the answer. It would undo over 5 years of progress on menu labeling. It hurts the American public. It hurts our children. And I urge all of my colleagues to oppose it.

□ 1030

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BLUM).

Mr. BLUM. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act.

This commonsense, bipartisan legislation would change the FDA's burdensome and impractical labeling of prepared food items at grocery stores and at convenience stores into a more workable and efficient solution that keeps food costs down for consumers.

In the First District of Iowa, many of my constituents stop by local businesses, like Casey's General Store or

the Hy-Vee supermarket, to get a hot breakfast or to pick up a convenient meal over their lunch breaks. These stores often use local ingredients and offer specialty items, which means their recipes and nutritional information and content can vary.

Under the FDA's regulation, Casey's, Hy-Vee, and any other business that is impacted by the rule could be penalized for failing to label accurately a sandwich that happens to get an extra squirt of mayo or a salad that a customer chooses to top off with bacon bits. H.R. 2017 would fix these issues by providing a menu board that lists nutritional information for prepared items instead of forcing these businesses to pass excessive labeling compliance costs on to their customers.

Furthermore, as a career small-business man, I know how tough it is to compete with massive corporations, and excessive red tape like this makes it even harder. While large corporations can often afford the added costs, it is the smaller businesses that get squeezed out of the marketplace by the extra burden of ever-increasing red tape.

Mr. Chairman, the FDA's regulation is just another example of Washington overreach that forces businesses to push costs, with no added benefit, onto customers.

I am proud to cosponsor this bill, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting in favor of H.R. 2017.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG).

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act.

This bipartisan bill would protect small businesses from overbearing FDA regulations that harm workers, job creators, our economy, and, oh, by the way, personal freedom of choice for individual citizens, who, in most cases, make good decisions and ought to have a choice in America.

The FDA's poorly designed menu labeling requirements do not take into account the diversity of restaurants and of food products. That is America. The estimated cost for places like delis, convenience stores, and pizzerias to comply would be more than \$1 billion.

Mr. Chairman, we are here today to offer a practical alternative that would rein in and clarify the FDA's burdensome, one-size-fits-all approach. This commonsense bill offers an efficient and, I believe, an effective solution by giving small businesses greater flexibility to provide nutrition information in a way that best serves their customers.

I urge its passage.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The previous speaker said that this is all about choice. I agree with that. I think it is all about choice and about having the kind of information to make a proper choice.

Let me just give you an example of a menu from a SUBWAY in Montgomery County, Maryland.

This is from SUBWAY, which lists the calories in a standardized way, and that is what the original regulations and law required before there being this confusing change in the legislation. It reads, for example, that a SUBWAY Melt is 380 calories and that a Chicken and Bacon Ranch is 580 calories. Now, one would not necessarily assume that a SUBWAY Melt, which sounds cheesy and kind of rich, would, actually, have fewer calories—by 200—than a Chicken and Bacon Ranch. I think it is good for me and for many consumers to go in and to be able to see that and know that is going to be the standard way that calories are presented. This legislation would allow such things as this.

The covered establishments could make their own decisions about what is a serving size. It wouldn't be the same from establishment to establishment. For example, this allows covered establishments to not list the total number of servings for an item on the menu, like a platter of a certain appetizer. For example, an advertiser could list the calories as 400 calories but not disclose that one platter—just one order—has three servings, for a total of 1,200 calories—400 versus 1,200 calories. This presents real confusion and, I would argue, misinformation to the consumer.

More and more Americans are eating food outside of the home that is prepared by restaurants or by chain grocery stores where they have a section on prepared foods. In order to have complete decisionmaking power, it is very important that we have the calories that are there and posted.

Obviously, this is not overburdening, certainly, small businesses, because this isn't about small businesses. We have the largest State in the country already having these regulations, operating smoothly. We have got the second largest city in the country—the city of New York—and we have the State of Vermont, very different kinds of locations that are being able to comply with the FDA regulations and the law that we want to go into effect next year. We do not need H.R. 2017 to confuse and disarm consumers and not provide them with the information they need.

I have another menu from Specialty Pizza: build your own pizza. What it has is a range of calories; so it would not be overburdening for every single different iteration of a pizza to have all of the different calories. There are options and there is flexibility under the legislation. It doesn't need to be changed and undermined by H.R. 2017.

If we are serious about dealing with one of the most important, expensive, and ubiquitous diseases in the United States of America—diabetes. One of the greatest problems that we face is obesity in adults and especially in children—then I think we owe it to our families to make sure that we do not pass H.R. 2017, a special interest-driven bill to decrease consumer access to important nutrition and calorie information.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again, let me state what this bill is not. It is not doing away with the calorie count or the ability for people to understand what calorie content, or caloric content, is available in each product. I am one who looks at that. I don't know of anything that has a calorie count on anything that I have eaten recently that I haven't looked at. I have checked out the serving sizes so that I know how many chicken wings I want to order. If I can get the calories per chicken wing, I can make that determination.

We looked at the menu board that was offered earlier, and it looked simple, but this is the issue: Even if you put ranges, how do you get the information in people's hands? I was just at a restaurant, when I was traveling in my district the other day, that had calories for different orders. One was from 400 to 800 on one. So what we want to do is to make it available in a way that is efficient, as most people now get their information not necessarily on a board where you have to have big ranges, but specific. For instance, at one pizza restaurant alone, we had the pizza slice plus a few toppings; but what if you have five styles of crust, six different cheeses, five sauces, four sizes, and 20 different toppings? If you put all of that together, it comes to about 34 million different combinations, and deviations from the standard that the FDA has put forward could lead to fines and to criminal penalties.

What we are looking at, as my friend from California said, are these rules that are incredibly complex, burdensome, and inflexible. What this bill does not do is create exemptions or diminish the amount of information that must be provided by restaurants or retailers. All it does is allow for some flexibility, and it clarifies the unworkable and overly complex regulations the FDA finalized in November 2014. A lot of things that happen here are overly cumbersome and unworkable. We go to delay, to delay, and we delayed an omnibus, as they said. These are going to be unworkable 6 months from now and a year from now.

So let's fix it so that our businesses know what to provide without their having the threat of penalty, because they will know what to provide, and so

that consumers can make choices. I am one, as I said, who wants that information because I want to be able to make that choice for myself and for my family.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the bill before us today takes an important step in protecting our nation's small businesses from unnecessary costs and regulatory burdens. The Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act provides for flexibility for the food service industry to ensure they can comply with the regulatory requirements as issued by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Sadly, the rule issued by the FDA was declared to be the third most burdensome regulation proposed in 2010 and could cost American businesses \$1 billion to comply and 500,000 hours of paperwork. The 400-page rule establishes one-size-fits-all nutritional disclosure requirements.

H.R. 2017 is necessary to help small business owners, franchisees, as well as consumers who want easy access to accurate nutrition information in a common sense way.

Without H.R. 2017, covered establishments, including pizza delivery businesses and grocery stores, would be subject to a cumbersome, rigid and costly regulatory compliance process to avoid violations and possible criminal prosecution.

H.R. 2017 improves and clarifies the final rule promulgated by the FDA implementing the menu-labeling requirements of Section 4205 of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The concern is that without the relief and flexibility provided for in H.R. 2017, the final rule goes well beyond what was intended by the ACA.

The obligations are imposed not only on chain restaurants—including delivery establishments, but also on any other chain retailer that sells non-packaged food, such as grocery store salad bars, and convenience stores' meals to go.

Small businesses that are not chain restaurants but are indeed subject to the rule will face a dramatic increase in regulatory compliance costs. Consumers most assuredly will see higher food costs, and perhaps fewer choices. Some retailers may find it more advantageous to stop selling restaurant-type food altogether. So instead of purchasing fresh sandwiches, consumers may have to buy pre-packaged sandwiches since those will not require the retailer to comply with labeling requirements.

Fixing this burdensome regulation will benefit tens of thousands of restaurants, grocery stores, convenience stores and small business owners that otherwise would be burdened with regulations that are costly and hurt job creation.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation provides clarity, flexibility, and certainty for these companies, and also ensures consumers have access to the information they need to make informed nutritional decisions. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2017.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HULTGREN). All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce, printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 2017

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. AMENDING CERTAIN DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS FOR RESTAURANTS AND SIMILAR RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 403(q)(5)(H) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 343(q)(5)(H)) is amended—

(1) in subclause (ii)—

(A) in item (I)(aa), by striking "the number of calories contained in the standard menu item, as usually prepared and offered for sale" and inserting "the number of calories contained in the whole standard menu item, or the number of servings (as reasonably determined by the restaurant or similar retail food establishment) and number of calories per serving, or the number of calories per the common unit division of the standard menu item, such as for a multiserving item that is typically divided before presentation to the consumer";

(B) in item (II)(aa), by striking "the number of calories contained in the standard menu item, as usually prepared and offered for sale" and inserting "the number of calories contained in the whole standard menu item, or the number of servings (as reasonably determined by the restaurant or similar retail food establishment) and number of calories per serving, or the number of calories per the common unit division of the standard menu item, such as for a multiserving item that is typically divided before presentation to the consumer"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following flush text:

"In the case of restaurants or similar retail food establishments where the majority of orders are placed by customers who are off-premises at the time such order is placed, the information required to be disclosed under items (I) through (IV) may be provided by a remote-access menu (such as a menu available on the Internet) as the sole method of disclosure instead of on-premises writings.";

(2) in subclause (iii)—

(A) by inserting "either" after "a restaurant or similar retail food establishment shall"; and

(B) by inserting "or comply with subclause (ii)" after "per serving";

(3) in subclause (iv)—

(A) by striking "For the purposes of this clause" and inserting the following:

"(I) IN GENERAL.—For the purposes of this clause";

(B) by striking "and other reasonable means" and inserting "or other reasonable means"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(II) REASONABLE BASIS DEFINED.—For the purposes of this subclause, with respect to a nutrient disclosure, the term 'reasonable basis' means that the nutrient disclosure is within acceptable allowances for variation in nutrient content. Such acceptable allowances shall include allowances for variation in serving size,

inadvertent human error in formulation or preparation of menu items, and variations in ingredients.";

(4) by amending subclause (v) to read as follows:

"(v) MENU VARIABILITY AND COMBINATION MEALS.—The Secretary shall establish by regulation standards for determining and disclosing the nutrient content for standard menu items that come in different flavors, varieties, or combinations, but which are listed as a single menu item, such as soft drinks, ice cream, pizza, doughnuts, or children's combination meals. Such standards shall allow a restaurant or similar retail food establishment to choose whether to determine and disclose such content for the whole standard menu item, for a serving or common unit division thereof, or for a serving or common unit division thereof accompanied by the number of servings or common unit divisions in the whole standard menu item. Such standards shall allow a restaurant or similar retail food establishment to determine and disclose such content by using any of the following methods: ranges, averages, individual labeling of flavors or components, or labeling of one preset standard build. In addition to such methods, the Secretary may allow the use of other methods, to be determined by the Secretary, for which there is a reasonable basis (as such term is defined in subclause (iv)(II)).";

(5) in subclause (x)—

(A) by striking "Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this clause, the Secretary shall promulgate proposed regulations to carry out this clause." and inserting "Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015, the Secretary shall issue proposed regulations to carry out this clause, as amended by such Act. Any final regulations that are promulgated pursuant to the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015, and any final regulations that were promulgated pursuant to this clause before the date of enactment of the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015, shall not take effect earlier than 2 years after the promulgation of final regulations pursuant to the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015."; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

"(IV) CERTIFICATIONS.—Restaurants and similar retail food establishments shall not be required to provide certifications or similar signed statements relating to compliance with the requirements of this clause.";

(6) by amending subclause (xi) to read as follows:

"(xi) DEFINITIONS.—In this clause:

"(I) MENU; MENU BOARD.—The term 'menu' or 'menu board' means the one listing of items which the restaurant or similar retail food establishment reasonably believes to be, and designates as, the primary listing from which customers make a selection in placing an order. The ability to order from an advertisement, coupon, flyer, window display, packaging, social media, or other similar writing does not make the writing a menu or menu board.

"(II) PRESET STANDARD BUILD.—The term 'preset standard build' means the finished version of a menu item most commonly ordered by consumers.

"(III) STANDARD MENU ITEM.—The term 'standard menu item' means a food item of the type described in subclause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (5)(A) with the same recipe prepared in substantially the same way with substantially the same food components that—

"(aa) is routinely included on a menu or menu board or routinely offered as a self-service food or food on display at 20 or more locations doing business under the same name; and

"(bb) is not a food referenced in subclause (vii)."; and

(7) by adding at the end the following:

“(xii) **OPPORTUNITY TO CORRECT VIOLATIONS.**—Any restaurant or similar retail food establishment that the Secretary determines is in violation of this clause shall have 90 days after receiving notification of the violation to correct the violation. The Secretary shall take no enforcement action, including the issuance of any public letter, for violations that are corrected within such 90-day period.”.

(b) **NATIONAL UNIFORMITY.**—Section 403A(b) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 343-1(b)) is amended by striking “may exempt from subsection (a)” and inserting “may exempt from subsection (a) (other than subsection (a)(4))”.

SEC. 3. LIMITATION ON LIABILITY FOR DAMAGES ARISING FROM NONCOMPLIANCE WITH NUTRITION LABELING REQUIREMENTS.

Section 403(q)(5)(H) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 343(q)(5)(H)), as amended by section 2, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(xiii) **LIMITATION ON LIABILITY.**—A restaurant or similar retail food establishment shall not be liable in any civil action in Federal or State court (other than an action brought by the United States or a State) for any claims arising out of an alleged violation of—

“(I) this clause; or

“(II) any State law permitted under section 403A(a)(4).”.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in House Report 114-421. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MRS. MCMORRIS RODGERS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 114-421.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

On page 5, strike lines 15 through 24 and insert the following:

“(II) **PERMISSIBLE VARIATION.**—If the restaurant or similar food establishment uses such means as the basis for its nutrient content disclosures, such disclosures shall be treated as having a reasonable basis even if such disclosures vary from actual nutrient content, including but not limited to variations in serving size, inadvertent human error in formulation or preparation of menu items, variations in ingredients, or other reasonable variations.”;

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 611, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Chairman, the amendment I am offering is a clarifying amendment.

Current law requires that restaurants and food establishments have a reasonable basis for how they determine the calorie count they ultimately disclose to their customers. The FDA's final rule does not accommodate for the variability that is involved when preparing food. Especially when chefs are preparing fresh, custom order items, mistakes and variations are inevitable. For example, if someone is making a pizza and is adding a handful of every topping, chefs' hands are different sizes, so people may end up with more or less of each ingredient.

The amendment will provide the added flexibility that we want for food establishments to determine accurate nutrient disclosures by allowing for permissible variations, like inadvertent human error, while also ensuring that businesses and their employees will not be criminally penalized.

Now I want to address some of the concerns that were raised by my colleagues from across the aisle about the underlying legislation, H.R. 2017.

This bill is not about the merits of calorie counts. This bill does not remove any requirements for calorie counts on menus. This bill certainly does not make it more difficult for customers to receive nutritional information. This bill, at its very core, is about flexibility. In trying to create a uniform standard, the FDA's rule attempts to impose a one-size-fits-all approach to an industry as diverse as its ingredients.

□ 1045

Every deli and salad bar offering, every possible pizza topping combination will soon have to be calculated and their calorie count displayed on physical menus.

This is problematic for two reasons: First, the made-to-order portion of the food industry offers endless, constantly changing combinations of ingredients. For some sandwich shops and pizzerias, the possible variations are tens of millions. The FDA wants these restaurants to put on paper all of these variations and their calorie counts and have it publicly displayed in the restaurant. It is unrealistic.

Second, digital and online ordering are many customers' preferred methods of ordering. Nearly 90 percent of orders in some restaurants are placed by an individual never stepping foot into the restaurant. So tell me, why does it make sense to force a restaurant to have a physical menu with calorie listings when 90 percent of your customers aren't ever going to see it? How does it make sense to force a customer to navigate millions of combinations to find the nutritional information that matches their order?

This legislation provides flexibility in how these restaurants provide the

nutritional information. It makes it easier for customers to actually see and understand the information because it is displayed where the customer actually places the order, including by phone, online, or through mobile apps.

By bringing this rule into the 21st century, customers can trust that they are getting more reliable information in an easy-to-access, consumer-friendly way. It also protects small-business owners and their employees from frivolous lawsuits and criminal actions that could be honest, inadvertent human error. Accidentally putting too many pickles on a sandwich and increasing its calorie count should not be a criminal offense.

This bill is about trusting people through their elected representatives to make their own decisions and pursue their own dreams. It is all a part of the choice that we are offering America as we move forward in 2016.

Before I close, I want to thank my colleagues and the stakeholders, including the National Restaurant Association, which has withdrawn its previous opposition to the bill, for their hard work in this bipartisan effort. Thank you, everyone. It has been a team effort, and I appreciate your support.

Finally, I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this important amendment and ultimately vote “yes” for the bipartisan, commonsense Nutrition Disclosure Act.

Mr. Chairman, I include in the RECORD this letter from the National Grocers Association.

NATIONAL GROCERS ASSOCIATION

KEY VOTE,
February 9, 2016.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,
Majority Leader, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

Hon. STENY HOYER,
Democratic Whip, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN, LEADER PELOSI, LEADER MCCARTHY, AND REPRESENTATIVE HOYER: On behalf of the National Grocers Association (NGA), I am writing to express our support for H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015, which would provide common sense reforms to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) final rule for Nutritional Labeling of Standard Menu Items in Restaurants and Similar Retail Food Establishments (FDA-2011-0172). NGA strongly encourages the House to pass this bill with bipartisan support. We commend House Leadership for bringing this bill to the Floor and the champions of the legislation, Congresswomen Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) and Loretta Sanchez (D-CA).

NGA is the national trade association representing the retail and wholesale grocers that comprise the independent channel of

the food distribution industry. An independent retailer is a privately owned or controlled food retail company operating a variety of formats. Most independent operators are serviced by wholesale distributors, while others may be partially or fully self-distributing. Some independents are publicly traded, but with controlling shares held by the family and others are employee owned. Independents are the true “entrepreneurs” of the grocery industry and dedicated to their customers, associates, and communities. The independent supermarket channel is accountable for close to 1% of the nation’s overall economy and is responsible for generating \$131 billion in sales, 944,000 jobs, \$30 billion in wages, and \$27 billion in taxes.

As part of the nutrition labeling provisions contained in the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the FDA is requiring the disclosure of caloric information for standard menu items in restaurants and retail food establishments. The provision amended the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA) to require restaurants and similar retail food establishments that are part of a chain operating 20 or more locations and doing business under the same name to provide nutritional information for standard menu items, including food on display and self-service food. The original intent of the provision contained in the ACA aimed to provide one federal standard for chain restaurants with highly standardized menus and menu boards from regulatory confusion created by a growing list of state and local laws regarding nutrition information disclosures. Unfortunately, throughout the rulemaking process the FDA greatly expanded the scope of the rule, and has now included companies that have highly specialized menus that vary by location, including supermarkets.

H.R. 2017 contains important regulatory fixes that would eliminate confusion and uncertainty in implementation, limit burdensome regulatory costs and provide flexibility to community oriented supermarkets, allowing them to tailor their offerings to the neighborhoods and communities they serve. Importantly, H.R. 2017 does not exempt any entities, including supermarkets from the requirements under the law.

Under the FDA rule, independent supermarket operators with 20 or more locations would be required to provide caloric information throughout the store, including menus, display cases, booklets, pamphlets or fliers, advertising circulars. For independent supermarkets that provide extensive fresh and local options, freshly baked goods, cut fruit, and salad bars, this creates challenges in terms of how to properly display this information. H.R. 2017 provides important flexibility for supermarkets while also ensuring consumers are provided with the information they desire.

Additionally, the rule does not provide flexibility for unique, local items that are sold at only one store within a chain. Many independent grocers take pride in providing fresh and local items that reflect the communities in which they operate, often contracting with local businesses in order to provide one or two items to one location. NGA believes that this provides a large disincentive for independent supermarket operators to continue providing localized options. H.R. 2017 provides flexibility to ensure independent supermarkets can continue to provide these local, unique products.

As currently constituted, the final menu labeling rule creates extensive legal liability issues for independent supermarket operators. Due to the fact that the menu labeling

rule falls under the FFDCA, failure to comply with the menu labeling rule in any way carries potential felony penalties, including the possibility of jail time. Additionally, there is no grace period or warning system in place for first-time offenders who may be in violation of the rule due to inadvertent human error, such as adding an extra slice of ham to a sandwich, additional pepperoni to a pizza, or simply placing an item in the “wrong” bin before placing it in the salad bar. H.R. 2017 protects front line employees who make inadvertent mistakes while also providing establishments with 90 days to take corrective action prior to any enforcement action. Additionally, businesses are protected from frivolous lawsuits by prohibiting private rights of action.

NGA strongly supports H.R. 2017, and urges the House to pass this common sense bill to provide businesses with regulatory relief from this unworkable rule, while continuing to ensure that consumers receive the nutritional information they require from their local independent supermarket. NGA urges all Representatives to vote in favor of H.R. 2017, and will consider this a “key vote” for our scorecard for the 114th Congress.

Sincerely,

GREG FERRARA,
Senior Vice President,
Government Relations and Public Affairs,
National Grocers Association.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Illinois is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment offered today by Representatives McMORRIS RODGERS and CÁRDENAS. This amendment would further undermine consumer confidence in the nutrition information they receive from restaurants and retail food establishments. One could call it flexibility, which actually the current legislation provides; and others, including me, would call it adding confusion.

Under the Federal menu labeling law, restaurants and retail food establishments are supposed to have a reasonable basis for determining calorie and nutrition information for their menu items. This can be done using a nutrient database, such as USDA’s National Nutrient Database, cookbooks, recipes, nutrition fact labels, or FDA’s nutrient values, among others. Again, the FDA is allowing significant flexibility, as it is, in how establishments determine this information. What is most important to the agency is that this information is accurate and consistent.

Some stakeholders have raised concerns about changes to the nutrition information based on an employee being too heavyhanded with one ingredient, like pickles, or perhaps not following the recipe appropriately. We can all understand that in cooking, this type of flexibility is needed. FDA’s

guidance addresses the question of how closely standard menu items must match the nutrient values, advising that an establishment “must take reasonable steps to ensure that how you prepare your product . . . and how you serve your product are the same as those used to determine the calorie and nutrient declarations.”

The McMorris Rodgers-Cárdenas amendment further undermines the “reasonable basis” standard outlined in H.R. 2017 and in FDA’s final rule by permitting any type of variation for any reason from the nutrient content disclosed to the actual nutrient content in the standard menu item. Under this amendment, a restaurant would be able to change their recipe or how they prepare the food or swap out one ingredient for another and not have to change the nutrient information they disclose to account for these variations.

This amendment would also allow for further inconsistencies from restaurant to restaurant or grocery store to grocery store, as what might be a permissible variation to one restaurant or one grocery store may not be permissible to others, again, potentially creating an uneven playing field among the industry.

It is also important to note that this amendment is inconsistent with requirements for food labeling under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. This law requires that food labeling be truthful and not misleading. If nutrient content disclosures can vary for any reason to any extent, it would undermine such requirement in the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, a requirement that the food industry has long had to meet.

As we have said all along, for calorie and nutrition information to be valuable to consumers, it must be accurate and it must be consistent. If consumers have no reason to believe that what is disclosed by a restaurant is accurate, then the disclosure of nutrient information is rendered meaningless.

I believe FDA’s guidance has provided a great deal of flexibility for how nutrient content should be disclosed, and I know the agency is committed to working with covered establishments to meet the requirement of providing accurate, consistent nutrition information in a way that is feasible for the establishment.

I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Illinois has 1½ minutes remaining.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Chairman, just to clarify, we are not getting rid of the “reasonable basis” definition, and it does not allow for

any variation. What it says is, where there is inadvertent human error, there would not be criminal penalties attached to that.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, let me make a point. The fact has been mentioned that people can go online and they can find their information in that way. Forty-nine percent of orders are placed from in-store menus. Food establishments can bury anything online. Not everyone has access to that kind of information. All of the studies have determined that you make your choice at the point of purchase.

I want to make one other comment because the National Restaurant Association has been talked about here this morning. Let me just quote to you Scott DeFife, executive vice president of the National Restaurant Association, who praised the menu labeling law when the two of us stood to introduce this legislation 6 years ago. He said why it was a good thing to do and why he praised it and why the National Restaurant Association was foursquare for it: "It sets a clear national standard across the country."

They were opposed to this bill. They have been all along. God only knows what happened in the last 24 or 48 hours to have the National Restaurant Association, which we stood shoulder to shoulder as we passed this unbelievably record-breaking bill in order to allow people to know what they are eating, make their own choice, and to know the calorie content of food, standard-sized menus. The variations are not there.

So much misinformation is being peddled on this floor today about what was a bill to protect the American public.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Washington will be postponed.

The Chair understands amendment No. 2 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. SCHRADER

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 114-421.

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

On page 3, line 24, insert "and" after the semicolon.

Strike page 4, lines 13 through 22.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 611, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. SCHRADER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Chairman, though I support efforts to clarify rules as they apply to consumers and small business, this bill, as currently constructed, creates an inequity in the industry by creating an exception for many menu labeling rules for certain establishments, particularly chain pizza shops and other restaurants that could potentially serve a majority of their customers via remote ordering.

While I have nothing against these businesses, I believe all restaurants should be treated equally. My amendment merely ensures that the rules are applied fairly by removing this exemption from the bill.

Under the terms of the bill, most chain restaurants will be required to list calories on menus at the point of purchase. However, pizza chains and other establishments where most orders could be placed off-site, will gain an exemption from this rule. They will not be required to list calories in their brick-and-mortar locations, even when orders are placed on-site. This is an inequitable and unfair exemption. While the vast majority of large chain restaurants will be required to list the calories in their physical location, these folks will not.

In addition to being unfair to businesses, it is also confusing to the consumers, whom we are actually trying to protect with this current bill. They will see calorie information when they place an order at one restaurant but not necessarily at their local pizza shop.

Opponents of the FDA rule argue the provision is necessary because pizza restaurants offer many menu items and will not be able to comply with the rule. This is simply not true. The FDA rule already allows some variation within menu labels and serving parameters. Generally, I agree that one size does not fit all when it comes to rule-making for businesses, but not in this case.

The National Restaurant Association has indicated that most of their members are preparing to comply with the menu labeling rules. By all means, the FDA should assist these restaurants with proper guidance, but specifying an exemption to one segment of the industry is unfair, inequitable, and confusing to the consumer.

You might hear opponents of my amendment argue the exemption allows pizza chains to post calorie infor-

mation online rather than in their physical locations. For these Members, I have good news. If my amendment is adopted, these restaurants will still be able to offer this information online. In fact, many restaurants already do so, and those businesses should be commended for their transparency.

Mr. Chairman, we don't need to add unfair and confusing exemptions to the difficult menu labeling rule we already have. The FDA has indicated a willingness to work with all affected to provide guidance and clarity to make compliance easier. This is what our businesses want and need.

I ask my colleagues to join me in assuring fairness for businesses and clarity for consumers. Please reject this bill—it is an unfair loophole—and vote "yes" on this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chairman, I express appreciation to my colleague who offers this amendment; yet I rise in opposition because, in fact, this amendment undermines a key provision of the Common Sense—I will repeat that—the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act, which is a bipartisan bill that makes necessary changes to the FDA's menu labeling regulations.

If, indeed, as has been stated, the FDA is willing to work and be flexible, we wouldn't need this legislation. It is because they have shown no real flexibility that this legislation has been offered.

Currently, FDA's menu labeling rules remain costly, ineffective, and overly burdensome for more than 70,000 restaurants. That is no small number, Mr. Chairman. For places like pizza shops, where the vast majority of orders are online—and, yes, they are providing a service, in most cases, online for their customers—they are voluntarily doing it and really doing it in a quality way. It is nearly impossible for a single menu board to be designed in a way that can provide accurate calorie counts for literally millions of combinations.

The FDA sadly ignores the realities of a diverse market and the technological advances, innovation, creativity, et cetera, by applying the same menu standard as a one-size-fits-all, top-down approach, and that is the reality that is out there with the FDA.

If the House accepts this amendment which strips the remote ordering provision from the bill, it would greatly harm a bill that seeks to provide an alternative method for thousands of small businesses to effectively share nutritional information with consumers.

□ 1100

The FDA menu requirements simply do not make sense neither for the restaurant nor for consumers.

I urge my colleagues to reject this amendment, however well meaning, and support the underlying bipartisan bill that protects small businesses from overbearing FDA regulations that harm workers, job creators, consumers, and our economy.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Chair, how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Oregon has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Chair, I yield 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY), the ranking member.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chair, there were so many falsehoods, really, in what my colleague across the aisle said. We have evidence in California, the city of New York, and Vermont that absolutely restaurants can comply. It is not about small businesses, about 20 or more establishments with the same name.

This idea of 50 percent online, this is not the vast majority of their information online. It is 50 percent. We already know that 49 percent of orders at these establishments are done in person. What about those people who come in? Are they not entitled to the same thing that is in other restaurants?

Mr. Chair, I support the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chair, I will respond just briefly to that. It is truly about making this information meaningful. I watch my wife go online on her iPhone to check calories all the time. She does it better than I do. But consumers are moving in that direction.

I have walked through various industries, including Domino's, and have seen the amazing technological advances that they have that are putting their consumers first and giving them the ability to know this in a far more meaningful way than you can do on a menu board. So I reject that argument, absolutely, in defense of the consumer as well as the industry.

Mr. Chair, again, I appreciate the concern that my colleague expresses here; yet, I still stand in very strong support of giving this opportunity, making sure that FDA is pushed into a flexibility that I don't believe they are willing to go. This is for the consumer in the end. This allows advances to move within the market.

I think we will find that all concerns are met and addressed very well, but we don't put unnecessary burdens upon businesses, job providers, and, ultimately, on the choice of citizens to have a better opportunity to make bet-

ter choices. And, oh, by the way, we reaffirm in our country the desire to give people personal responsibility and personal choice together.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman from Michigan's discussion. I want to assure him and everyone out there that the online ordering is still allowed under my amendment so that those people who have technology can do so.

But for seniors and some of our less-advantaged folks at home, they can go to the store and also get that information, which is not allowed under this current bill, but would be allowed under my amendment.

To the argument that there are too many combinations to be accounted for, the FDA does allow for flexibility in listing calories for menu items so they are accessible in different restaurant types. Pizza shops in locations like New York and Montgomery County, Maryland, already are complying with rules very similar to these.

Other restaurants have indicated a willingness to comply, including a national chain that sells coffee, doughnuts, and ice cream: Dunkin' Donuts, Baskin-Robbins. They serve 15,000 different ways of coffee, sandwiches 3,000 different ways, ice cream sundaes 80,000 different ways. They can comply under my amendment. Why can't everyone else?

The NRA itself, the National Restaurant Association, says it is critical that all businesses that have made the strategic decision to sell restaurant food play by the same rules.

Furthermore, they talk about that such provisions create inconsistent and erratic labeling by putting in these exemptions not only among restaurants, but among restaurants, food service operators, grocery stores, convenience stores, et cetera.

My amendment removes this unfair exemption. Very simple. Government should not be in the business of picking winners and losers in private enterprise. The same rules should apply to everybody.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. SCHRADER).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments

printed in House Report 114-421 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS of Washington.

Amendment No. 3 by Mr. SCHRADER of Oregon.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MRS. MCMORRIS RODGERS

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 309, noes 100, answered "present" 1, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 79]

AYES—309

Abraham	Collins (NY)	Graves (GA)
Adams	Comstock	Graves (LA)
Aderholt	Conaway	Graves (MO)
Aguilar	Connolly	Green, Gene
Allen	Cook	Griffith
Amash	Cooper	Grothman
Ashford	Costa	Guinta
Babin	Costello (PA)	Guthrie
Barletta	Cramer	Hahn
Barr	Crawford	Hanna
Barton	Crenshaw	Hardy
Beatty	Cuellar	Harper
Benishek	Culberson	Harris
Bera	Curbelo (FL)	Hartzler
Bilirakis	Davis (CA)	Heck (WA)
Bishop (GA)	Davis, Rodney	Hensarling
Bishop (MI)	DeFazio	Hice, Jody B.
Bishop (UT)	Denham	Hill
Black	Dent	Holding
Blackburn	DesJarlais	Huelskamp
Blum	Diaz-Balart	Hultgren
Bost	Dold	Hunter
Boustany	Donovan	Hurd (TX)
Brady (TX)	Doyle, Michael	Hurt (VA)
Brat	F.	Issa
Bridenstine	Duckworth	Jenkins (KS)
Brooks (AL)	Duffy	Jenkins (WV)
Brooks (IN)	Duncan (SC)	Johnson (GA)
Brownley (CA)	Duncan (TN)	Johnson (OH)
Buchanan	Ellmers (NC)	Johnson, Sam
Buck	Emmer (MN)	Jolly
Bucshon	Farenthold	Jones
Burgess	Fitzpatrick	Jordan
Bustos	Fleischmann	Joyce
Butterfield	Fleming	Katko
Byrne	Flores	Keating
Calvert	Forbes	Kelly (MS)
Cárdenas	Fortenberry	Kelly (PA)
Carney	Foster	Kennedy
Carson (IN)	Fox	Kilmer
Carter (GA)	Franks (AZ)	Kind
Carter (TX)	Frelinghuysen	King (IA)
Cartwright	Garamendi	King (NY)
Chabot	Garrett	Kinzing
Chaffetz	Gibbs	Kirkpatrick
Cicilline	Gibson	Kline
Clawson (FL)	Gohmert	Knight
Clay	Goodlatte	Kuster
Clyburn	Gosar	Labrador
Coffman	Gowdy	LaHood
Cole	Graham	LaMalfa
Collins (GA)	Granger	Lamborn

Lance
Latta
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes

NOES—100

Bass
Becerra
Beyer
Blumenauer
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Capps
Capuano
Chu, Judy
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clever
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis, Danny
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Frankel (FL)

O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Pascarell
Paulsen
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Scalise
Schradler
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David

Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Takai
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vela
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin

McGovern
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Payne
Pelosi
Pingree
Polis
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Serrano
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (MS)
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Visclosky
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)

NOT VOTING—23

Amodi
Bonamici
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cohen
DeSantis
Fincher
Grijalva
Heck (NV)
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Lieu, Ted
Moore
Pallone
Pocan
Ribble
Smith (WA)
Stivers
Stutzman
Wasserman
Schultz
Westmoreland
Zinke

□ 1128

Mr. VISCLOSKEY, Ms. GABBARD, and Mr. HASTINGS changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

Messrs. TONKO, MASSIE, LIPINSKI, BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico, JOYCE, Mrs. BEATTY, Messrs. THOMPSON of California, CLYBURN, and RICHMOND changed their vote from “no” to aye.”

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. SCHRADER

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. SCHRADER) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 148, noes 258, answered “present” 1, not voting 26, as follows:

[Roll No. 80]

AYES—148

Adams
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Capps
Capuano
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Frankel (FL)

Deutch
Doggett
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Grayson
Green, Al
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Hinojosa
Hond
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee

Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Mooney (WV)
Moulton
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan

Norcross
O'Rourke
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Cárdenas
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Clever
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores

Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Slaughter
Speier

NOES—258

Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Himes
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Levin
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers

Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Visclosky
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman

McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Takai
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Torres

ANSWERED “PRESENT”—1

Yarmuth

Trott	Walz	Wittman
Upton	Weber (TX)	Womack
Valadao	Webster (FL)	Woodall
Vela	Welch	Yoder
Wagner	Wenstrup	Yoho
Walberg	Westerman	Young (AK)
Walden	Whitfield	Young (IA)
Walorski	Williams	Young (IN)
Walters, Mimi	Wilson (SC)	Zeldin

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—26

Amodei	Herrera Beutler	Stivers
Bonamici	Hudson	Stutzman
Castor (FL)	Huizenga (MI)	Turner
Castro (TX)	Lieu, Ted	Walker
Cohen	Moore	Wasserman
Fincher	Pallone	Schultz
Franks (AZ)	Pocan	Westmoreland
Grijalva	Rokita	Wilson (FL)
Heck (NV)	Smith (WA)	Zinke

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1132

Mr. NORCROSS changed his vote from "no" to "aye."

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to correct my vote from earlier today on rollcall 80, which was the Schrader amendment to H.R. 2017. While my vote was recorded as a "nay" it was my intention to vote "yea."

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. NEWHOUSE) having assumed the chair, Mr. HULTGREN, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2017) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A, and, pursuant to House Resolution 611, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on the amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on passage of H.R. 2017 will be followed by a 5-minute vote on the motion to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to H.R. 757.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 266, nays 144, answered "present" 1, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 81]

YEAS—266

Abraham	Duncan (SC)	Lamborn
Aderholt	Duncan (TN)	Lance
Aguilar	Ellmers (NC)	Latta
Allen	Emmer (MN)	LoBiondo
Amash	Farenthold	Long
Ashford	Fitzpatrick	Loudermilk
Babin	Fleischmann	Love
Barletta	Fleming	Lucas
Barr	Flores	Luetkemeyer
Barton	Forbes	Lummis
Benishek	Fortenberry	Lynch
Bilirakis	Fox	MacArthur
Bishop (GA)	Franks (AZ)	Marchant
Bishop (MI)	Frelinghuysen	Marino
Bishop (UT)	Garrett	Matsui
Black	Gibbs	McCarthy
Blackburn	Gibson	McCaull
Blum	Gohmert	McClintock
Bost	Goodlatte	McHenry
Boustany	Gosar	McKinley
Brat	Gowdy	McMorris
Bridenstine	Graham	Rodgers
Brooks (AL)	Granger	McSally
Brooks (IN)	Graves (GA)	Meadows
Buchanan	Graves (LA)	Meehan
Buck	Graves (MO)	Messer
Bucshon	Griffith	Mica
Burgess	Grothman	Miller (FL)
Bustos	Guinta	Miller (MI)
Butterfield	Guthrie	Moolenaar
Byrne	Hanna	Mooney (WV)
Calvert	Hardy	Mullin
Cárdenas	Harper	Mulvaney
Carter (GA)	Harris	Murphy (FL)
Carter (TX)	Hartzer	Murphy (PA)
Chabot	Hensarling	Neal
Chaffetz	Hice, Jody B.	Neugebauer
Clawson (FL)	Hill	Newhouse
Clay	Holding	Noem
Cleaver	Huelskamp	Nugent
Coffman	Hultgren	Nunes
Cole	Hunter	O'Rourke
Collins (GA)	Hurd (TX)	Olson
Collins (NY)	Hurt (VA)	Palazzo
Comstock	Issa	Palmer
Conaway	Jenkins (KS)	Paulsen
Cook	Jenkins (WV)	Pearce
Costa	Johnson (OH)	Perry
Costello (PA)	Johnson, Sam	Peterson
Cramer	Jolly	Pittenger
Crawford	Jones	Pitts
Crenshaw	Jordan	Poe (TX)
Cuellar	Joyce	Poliquin
Culberson	Katko	Pompeo
Curbelo (FL)	Keating	Posey
Davis, Rodney	Kelly (MS)	Price, Tom
DeFazio	Kelly (PA)	Ratcliffe
Denham	Kennedy	Reed
Dent	Kind	Reichert
DeSantis	King (IA)	Renacci
DesJarlais	King (NY)	Ribble
Diaz-Balart	Kinzinger (IL)	Rice (SC)
Dold	Kline	Rigell
Donovan	Knight	Roby
Doyle, Michael	Labrador	Roe (TN)
F.	LaHood	Rogers (AL)
Duffy	LaMalfa	Rogers (KY)

Rohrabacher	Sinema	Walker
Rokita	Sires	Walorski
Rooney (FL)	Smith (MO)	Walters, Mimi
Ros-Lehtinen	Smith (NE)	Walz
Roskam	Smith (NJ)	Weber (TX)
Ross	Smith (TX)	Webster (FL)
Rothfus	Stefanik	Welch
Rouzer	Stewart	Wenstrup
Royce	Takai	Westerman
Ruppersberger	Thompson (MS)	Whitfield
Russell	Thompson (PA)	Williams
Salmon	Thornberry	Wilson (SC)
Sanchez, Loretta	Tiberi	Wittman
Sanford	Tipton	Womack
Scalise	Tonko	Woodall
Schweikert	Trott	Yoder
Scott, Austin	Turner	Yoho
Scott, David	Upton	Young (AK)
Sensenbrenner	Valadao	Young (IA)
Sessions	Vela	Young (IN)
Shimkus	Wagner	Zeldin
Shuster	Walberg	
Simpson	Walden	

NAYS—144

Adams	Gallego	Meeks
Bass	Garamendi	Meng
Beatty	Grayson	Moulton
Becerra	Green, Al	Nadler
Bera	Green, Gene	Napolitano
Beyer	Gutiérrez	Nolan
Blumenauer	Hahn	Norcross
Boyle, Brendan	Hastings	Pascarell
F.	Heck (WA)	Payne
Brady (PA)	Higgins	Pelosi
Brown (FL)	Himes	Perlmutter
Brownley (CA)	Hinojosa	Peters
Capps	Honda	Pingree
Capuano	Hoyer	Polis
Carney	Huffman	Price (NC)
Carson (IN)	Israel	Quigley
Cartwright	Jackson Lee	Rangel
Chu, Judy	Jeffries	Rice (NY)
Ciilline	Johnson (GA)	Richmond
Clark (MA)	Johnson, E. B.	Roybal-Allard
Clarke (NY)	Kaptur	Ruiz
Clyburn	Kelly (IL)	Rush
Connolly	Kildee	Ryan (OH)
Conyers	Kilmer	Sánchez, Linda
Cooper	Kirkpatrick	T.
Courtney	Kuster	Sarbanes
Crowley	Langevin	Schakowsky
Cummings	Larsen (WA)	Schiff
Davis (CA)	Larson (CT)	Schrader
Davis, Danny	Lawrence	Scott (VA)
DeGette	Lee	Serrano
Delaney	Levin	Sewell (AL)
DeLauro	Lewis	Sherman
DelBene	Lipinski	Slaughter
DeSaulnier	Loebach	Speier
Deutch	Lofgren	Swalwell (CA)
Dingell	Lowenthal	Takano
Doggett	Lowe	Thompson (CA)
Duckworth	Lujan Grisham	Titus
Edwards	(NM)	Torres
Ellison	Luján, Ben Ray	Tsongas
Engel	(NM)	Van Hollen
Eshoo	Maloney,	Vargas
Esty	Carolyn	Veasey
Farr	Maloney, Sean	Velázquez
Fattah	Massie	Visclosky
Foster	McCollum	Waters, Maxine
Frankel (FL)	McDermott	Watson Coleman
Fudge	McGovern	Wilson (FL)
Gabbard	McNerney	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—22

Amodei	Heck (NV)	Smith (WA)
Bonamici	Herrera Beutler	Stivers
Brady (TX)	Hudson	Stutzman
Castor (FL)	Huizenga (MI)	Wasserman
Castro (TX)	Lieu, Ted	Schultz
Cohen	Moore	Westmoreland
Fincher	Pallone	Zinke
Grijalva	Pocan	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1141

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 757) to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 408, nays 2, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 82]

YEAS—408

Abraham	Chu, Judy	Edwards
Adams	Cicilline	Ellison
Aderholt	Clark (MA)	Ellmers (NC)
Aguilar	Clarke (NY)	Emmer (MN)
Allen	Clawson (FL)	Engel
Ashford	Clay	Eshoo
Babin	Cleaver	Esty
Barletta	Clyburn	Farenthold
Barr	Coffman	Farr
Barton	Cole	Fattah
Bass	Collins (GA)	Fitzpatrick
Beatty	Collins (NY)	Fleischmann
Becerra	Comstock	Fleming
Benishek	Conaway	Flores
Bera	Connolly	Forbes
Beyer	Conyers	Fortenberry
Bilirakis	Cook	Foster
Bishop (GA)	Cooper	Fox
Bishop (MI)	Costa	Frankel (FL)
Bishop (UT)	Costello (PA)	Franks (AZ)
Black	Courtney	Frelinghuysen
Blackburn	Cramer	Fudge
Blum	Crawford	Gabbard
Blumenauer	Crenshaw	Galleo
Bost	Crowley	Garamendi
Boustany	Cuellar	Garrett
Boyle, Brendan	Culberson	Gibbs
F.	Cummings	Gibson
Brady (PA)	Curbelo (FL)	Gohmert
Brady (TX)	Davis (CA)	Goodlatte
Brat	Davis, Danny	Gosar
Bridenstine	Davis, Rodney	Gowdy
Brooks (AL)	DeFazio	Graham
Brooks (IN)	DeGette	Granger
Brown (FL)	Delaney	Graves (GA)
Brownley (CA)	DeLauro	Graves (LA)
Buchanan	DelBene	Graves (MO)
Buck	Denham	Grayson
Bucshon	Dent	Green, Al
Burgess	DeSantis	Green, Gene
Bustos	DeSaulnier	Griffith
Butterfield	DesJarlais	Grothman
Byrne	Deutch	Guinta
Calvert	Diaz-Balart	Guthrie
Capps	Dingell	Gutiérrez
Capuano	Doggett	Hahn
Cárdenas	Dold	Hanna
Carney	Donovan	Hardy
Carson (IN)	Doyle, Michael	Harper
Carter (GA)	F.	Harris
Carter (TX)	Duckworth	Hartzler
Cartwright	Duffy	Hastings
Chabot	Duncan (SC)	Heck (WA)
Chaffetz	Duncan (TN)	Hensarling

Hice, Jody B.	McCollum	Russell
Higgins	McDermott	Ryan (OH)
Hill	McGovern	Salmon
Himes	McHenry	Sánchez, Linda
Hinojosa	McKinley	T.
Holding	McMorris	Sanchez, Loretta
Honda	Rodgers	Sanford
Hoyer	McNerney	Sarbanes
Huelskamp	McSally	Scalise
Huffman	Meadows	Schakowsky
Hultgren	Meehan	Schiff
Hunter	Meeks	Schrader
Hurd (TX)	Meng	Schweikert
Hurt (VA)	Messer	Scott (VA)
Israel	Mica	Scott, Austin
Issa	Miller (FL)	Scott, David
Jackson Lee	Miller (MI)	Sensenbrenner
Jeffries	Moolenaar	Serrano
Jenkins (KS)	Mooney (WV)	Sessions
Jenkins (WV)	Moulton	Sewell (AL)
Johnson (GA)	Mullin	Sherman
Johnson (OH)	Mulvaney	Shimkus
Johnson, E. B.	Murphy (FL)	Shuster
Johnson, Sam	Murphy (PA)	Simpson
Jolly	Nadler	Sinema
Jones	Napolitano	Sires
Jordan	Neal	Slaughter
Joyce	Neugebauer	Smith (MO)
Kaptur	Newhouse	Smith (NE)
Katko	Noem	Smith (NJ)
Keating	Nolan	Smith (TX)
Kelly (IL)	Norcross	Speier
Kelly (MS)	Nugent	Stefanik
Kelly (PA)	Nunes	Stewart
Kennedy	O'Rourke	Swalwell (CA)
Kildee	Olson	Takai
Kilmer	Palazzo	Takano
Kind	Palmer	Thompson (CA)
King (IA)	Pascrell	Thompson (MS)
King (NY)	Paulsen	Thompson (PA)
Kinzinger (IL)	Payne	Thornberry
Kirkpatrick	Pearce	Tiberi
Kline	Pelosi	Titus
Knight	Perlmutter	Tonko
Kuster	Perry	Torres
Labrador	Peters	Trott
LaHood	Peterson	Tsongas
LaMalfa	Pingree	Turner
Lamborn	Pittenger	Upton
Lance	Pitts	Valadao
Langevin	Poe (TX)	Van Hollen
Larsen (WA)	Poliquin	Vargas
Larsen (CT)	Polis	Veasey
Latta	Pompeo	Vela
Lawrence	Posey	Velázquez
Lee	Price (NC)	Visclosky
Levin	Price, Tom	Wagner
Lewis	Quigley	Walberg
Lipinski	Rangel	Walden
LoBiondo	Ratcliffe	Walker
Loebach	Reed	Walorski
Lofgren	Reichert	Walters, Mimi
Long	Renacci	Walz
Loudermilk	Ribble	Watson Coleman
Love	Rice (NY)	Weber (TX)
Lowenthal	Rice (SC)	Webster (FL)
Lowe	Richmond	Welch
Lucas	Rigell	Wenstrup
Luetkemeyer	Roby	Westerman
Lujan Grisham	Roe (TN)	Whitfield
(NM)	Rogers (AL)	Williams
Luján, Ben Ray	Rogers (KY)	Wilson (FL)
(NM)	Rohrabacher	Wilson (SC)
Lummis	Rokita	Wittman
Lynch	Rooney (FL)	Womack
MacArthur	Ros-Lehtinen	Woodall
Maloney,	Roskam	Yarmuth
Carolyn	Ross	Yoder
Maloney, Sean	Rothfus	Yoho
Marchant	Rouzer	Young (AK)
Marino	Roybal-Allard	Young (IA)
Matsui	Royce	Young (IN)
McCarthy	Ruiz	Zeldin
McCauley	Ruppersberger	
McClintock	Rush	

NAYS—2

Amash
Massie

NOT VOTING—23

Amodei	Fincher	Huizenga (MI)
Bonamici	Grijalva	Lieu, Ted
Castor (FL)	Heck (NV)	Moore
Castro (TX)	Herrera Beutler	Pallone
Cohen	Hudson	Pocan

Smith (WA)	Tipton	Waters, Maxine
Stivers	Wasserman	Westmoreland
Stutzman	Schultz	Zinke

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1149

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, February 9; Wednesday, February 10; Thursday, February 11; and Friday, February 12, 2016, I was on medical leave while recovering from hip replacement surgery and unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: "Yes" on rollcall vote No. 64 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3036, as amended). "No" on rollcall vote No. 65 (on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 609). "No" on rollcall vote No. 66 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 609). "Yes" on rollcall vote No. 67 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4470, as amended). "Yes" on rollcall vote No. 68 (on agreeing to the Eddie Bernice Johnson Amendment to H.R. 3293). "Yes" on rollcall vote No. 69 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 3293, with instructions). "No" on rollcall vote No. 70 (on passage of H.R. 3293). "Yes" on rollcall vote No. 71 (on agreeing to the Kelly of Illinois Amendment to H.R. 3442). "No" on rollcall vote No. 72 (on agreeing to the Duffy Amendment to H.R. 3442). "Yes" on rollcall vote No. 73 (on agreeing to the Grijalva Amendment to H.R. 3442). "Yes" on rollcall vote No. 74 (on agreeing to the Takano Amendment to H.R. 3442). "Yes" on rollcall vote No. 75 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 3442, with instructions). "No" on rollcall vote No. 76 (on passage of H.R. 3442). "No" on rollcall vote No. 77 (on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 611). "No" on rollcall vote No. 78 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 611). "No" on rollcall vote No. 79 (on agreeing to the McMorris Rodgers Amendment to H.R. 2017). "Yes" on rollcall vote No. 80 (on agreeing to the Schrader Amendment to H.R. 2017). "Yes" on rollcall vote No. 81 (on passage of H.R. 2017). "Yes" on rollcall vote No. 82 (on the motion to concur in the Senate amendment to H.R. 757).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 79 on the McMorris Rodgers Amendment to H.R. 2017—Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 80 on the Schrader Amendment to H.R. 2017—Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present I would have voted "aye."

Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 81 on the Final Passage of H.R. 2017—Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present I would have voted “nay”.

Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 82 on Concurring in the Senate Amendment to H.R. 757—North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present I would have voted “aye”.

FLIGHT 3407 ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. COLLINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember the 50 men and women and the 1 unborn child who died 7 years ago today in the crash of Continental Flight 3407.

As Erie County Executive, I was in charge of the emergency response and one of the first people on the scene. The plane crashed less than a mile from my house. I will never forget what I saw and the grief of the families who lost loved ones that fateful night.

Over the past 7 years, Flight 3407 families have been relentless in the fight to achieve one level of aviation safety for all airline carriers, from new training standards to guidelines that prevent pilot fatigue.

On this seventh anniversary, we remember those who died that night and reinforce our commitment to ensure the safety measures these families have fought so hard to enact will stay in place.

POVERTY AND THE BUDGET

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, the Democratic Whip Task Force on Poverty, Income Inequality, and Opportunity was launched to bring to the forefront of Congress' attention the everyday challenges of Americans living in poverty.

On Tuesday, the President sent us a budget that invests in meeting our greatest challenges: creating opportunity for all, an objective that all of us I think are committed to.

The budget expands Pell grants to make college more affordable and supports more apprenticeships and skills training so that young people and others can make it in America. It doubles investment in clean energy and R&D to attract more jobs while tackling climate change.

The President's budget expands access to quality child care and paid leave for working parents and provides children from low-income families healthy meals over the summer

months when they are out of school, but are still eating, of course. It makes it easier to save for a retirement and provides a better backstop for when economic circumstances push careers off track.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is up to Congress to craft a budget. I hope Republicans will work with us to provide the opportunities necessary to escape poverty, as Speaker RYAN says we ought to do.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairwoman, BARBARA LEE, and her members of the task force for undertaking and focusing on this important effort.

RECOGNIZING SECRETARY MICHAEL LUMPKIN

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to recognize the accomplishments of Michael Lumpkin, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict, and congratulate him on his new position as director of the newly established Global Engagement Center at the Department of State.

A decorated Navy SEAL, Secretary Lumpkin has quickly distinguished himself at the Pentagon as a senior adviser to the Secretary of Defense on all matters related to Special Operations Forces.

He has also worked to develop special operations forces partnerships with foreign nations to sustain and improve global counter-terrorism operations. His engagement on this issue will ensure that Special Operations Forces remain an effective component of defense strategy.

Secretary Lumpkin has also enhanced efforts to counter narcotics, illicit trafficking, and transnational organized crime. He has been instrumental in guiding counter-narcotics and counterinsurgency operations successfully in the Republic of Colombia.

I know his expertise will be greatly missed at the Department of Defense. I look forward to seeing his accomplishments in his new role at the Department of State.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose a Republican bill that was introduced yesterday that would let States use drug testing to deter-

mine low-income Americans' eligibility to receive food assistance through SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

This is nothing more than an attempt to demonize poor people and has no basis in reality.

Similar laws in Florida and Georgia were struck down as unconstitutional and only waste thousands of taxpayer dollars to identify very few drug users. In fact, those receiving public assistance actually test positive at a lower rate than the general population.

Why aren't my Republican colleagues calling for drug testing for wealthy CEOs and oil company executives who receive taxpayer subsidies? Why is it that they always pick on poor people? It is a lousy thing to do.

SNAP is intended to help people put food on the table when they are struggling to find work, when their current job is not paying enough, or simply when they have fallen on hard times.

We should be talking about improving the SNAP benefit so that families can afford more nutritious food, not creating more insulting hoops for vulnerable families to have to jump through.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RONALD JASON ADAMS

(Mr. HILL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in sadness to honor the life and bravery of one of Arkansas' finest citizens, Ronald Jason Adams.

On Friday, January 22, Mr. Adams, a lieutenant at the Sherwood Fire Department with 5 years of experience, was shot and killed while responding to an emergency medical call in North Little Rock, Arkansas. He was just 29 years old.

I was honored to attend a flashlight vigil for Jason on January 25 and was moved by the turnout from our entire community to honor his life.

Every time we lose one of our first responders, our community experiences a little fray or tear in our beautifully crafted quilt of our towns.

Our first responders in Arkansas and throughout the country deserve our gratitude and our respect. Lieutenant Adams' death is a tragic reminder of the dangers these brave men and women face every day.

I extend my warmest regards and prayers to his loved ones. He will be greatly missed.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Mr. KENNEDY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, this Black History Month, as we celebrate

and honor those who shaped American history, we cannot afford to lose sight of the present and our future.

It was only five decades ago that men and women in every corner of this country concluded their patient, persistent, and peaceful march to the voting booth, gaining an equal voice in this country.

You don't have to leave this Chamber to see firsthand the scars that this march left behind. For so many, including some of our colleagues, the memories of being denied that sacred right to vote have never and will never fade.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, some of those similar memories are now forming again for a new generation of Americans.

Respectfully, Mr. Speaker, I ask you to bring the Voting Rights Amendment Act to the floor immediately. Our Nation deserves a vote on this important legislation.

□ 1200

CONGRATULATING COLONEL SANDY BEST

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Colonel Sandy Best, who will become the very first female general in the Minnesota National Guard, first in history with her promotion to Brigadier General next week.

Best will command the Air National Guard units in Minnesota, including the 133rd Airlift Wing at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and the 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth.

Colonel Best has served admirably as Director of Strategic Relations and also as Director of Government Relations for the Minnesota National Guard and her promotion is well deserved.

Colonel Best will continue to play a critical role in helping to keep our country safe and secure, and will act as a leader to our military men and women in Minnesota.

Not only that, but this historic event is a welcome precedent for our other Minnesota National Guard members, as I am sure many other women will rise in ranks following in her footsteps.

I look forward to working with Colonel Best—now General Best in the future—as she continues to make Minnesota Air National Guard among the best in the country.

CONGRATULATING THE DENVER BRONCOS ON THEIR SUPER BOWL 50 VICTORY

(Mr. PERLMUTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Denver Broncos on winning the 50th Super Bowl.

We have proposed House Resolution 614—the Colorado delegation—to congratulate our team. It is their third Super Bowl victory. It is the culmination of a 12 wins and 4 losses season.

The State of Colorado, the city of Denver, and the Rocky Mountain West are extremely proud of the talented players, coaches, and key personnel. I want to thank General Manager John Elway, CEO Joe Ellis, and the entire Broncos' front office, who spent the off season building a Super Bowl winner.

Head Coach Gary Kubiak, Coordinators Wade Phillips and Rick Dennison, and his staff had great game plans.

The Broncos, through their owners, the Bowlen family, have been a key to the success of Denver and that team, and we want to thank them very much.

I know I speak for everybody in the House of Representatives when I say "Go Broncos!"

MARYLAND SHERIFF DEPUTIES: PATRICK DAILEY AND MARK LOGSDON

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, five police officers in the United States this week have been gunned down: one in North Dakota, one in Georgia, one in Colorado, and two in Maryland. I am going to talk about the two in Maryland.

On February 10, on a bitter winter day, two sheriff's deputies were called to a disturbance at a shopping center in Abingdon, Maryland. As the deputies were attempting to speak with a disruptive individual, he held a gun to 52-year-old Deputy Patrick Dailey's head and fired, killing him.

Deputy Mark Logsdon pursued the assassin, but Logsdon was also killed by the criminal's gunfire during this chase. Later, the outlaw was shot and killed.

Dailey was a life member of the Joppa-Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company and spent 30 years defending the public as a sheriff's deputy. He was a hero to his two now fatherless children.

Forty-three-year-old Deputy Mark Logsdon was a 16-year veteran of the force, leaving behind three children and a wife.

Both men had been honored for valor during their careers of protecting and serving the community. Patrick and Mark's lives were coldly and maliciously stolen, ripped away from this world and their families.

These men behind the badge are a special breed, a rare breed. They work selflessly, maintaining and restoring order in our neighborhoods. They are

the best of our Nation. They protect us from evil, cold, calculated criminals who wish to do harm to the rest of us.

Mr. Speaker, we mourn the passing of these two lawmen who are cut above the rest of us.

And that is just the way it is.

PRESIDENT'S BUDGET, CANCER MOONSHOT

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Moonshot to end cancer, a historic investment in research in President Obama's budget proposal.

For years, the burden of cancer has affected everyone in our Nation. Each and every day, in communities, neighborhoods, and families everywhere, including my own, ordinary Americans and their loved ones are affected by cancer.

As co-chair of the House Cancer Caucus, I stand in solidarity with all patients, and with those involved in their care and their support.

The progress made in the last decade in reducing cancer mortality is a testament to the great potential of our scientific community, but far too many have been left behind.

That is why, with great hope, I urge my colleagues to support funding for the Cancer Moonshot. We need to allow our scientific community to build on the strides they have made so far through comprehensive, multifaceted approaches to making real progress.

By funding the National Institutes of Health and the Food and Drug Administration so that they may work in synergy, we will utilize all of the tools in our arsenal to save lives across America.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 487. An act to allow the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma to lease or transfer certain lands.

The message also announced that the Senate has agreed to a concurrent resolution of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 31. Concurrent resolution providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate and an adjournment of the House of Representatives.

HONORING ROGER M. SCHRIMP

(Mr. DENHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the

life of a very good and personal friend, Roger Schrimp, who died unexpectedly on Wednesday, February 10, 2016.

Roger and his wife Delsie live in Oakdale, California, in my district. Roger has been a shareholder and a partner in the firm Damrell, Nelson, Schrimp, Pallios, Pacher, & Silva.

Roger is most known for being very passionate, not only about his practice, but in addressing many different areas within our community. Within his practice, he addressed cases before the U.S. Supreme Court, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, U.S. District Court, and the U.S. Tax Court of Claims. In addition, he has gone before several State and local agencies.

Roger was also an active leader in many different local, State, and national organizations. Since 1976, he was a member of the elite group out of Santa Barbara, California, the Rancheros Visitadores. He was appointed in 1996 by Governor Wilson. Roger served a 6-year term on the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. He also served on the Executive Board of the California State Parks Foundation.

Ever since joining the Boy Scouts of America in 1948, Roger has been dedicated to the organization throughout the years. The Eagle Scout has held a variety of voluntary positions within the group, including serving on the National Executive Board.

From 2007 to 2015, Roger was named one of the top attorneys in Northern California by the Northern California Super Lawyers Magazine.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring and recognizing my good friend, Roger Schrimp, who will be missed by many. God bless him always.

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the story of Texas Southern University. It started out in Houston, Texas, in the early 1920s to educate then, of course, the colored or Negro population, and they have grown into the 21st century.

In the 1940s, they were expanded because a young man by the name of Heman Sweatt attempted to attend the University of Texas School of Law and he was prohibited, he was prevented. So by a court, the law school was established which is now named Thurgood Marshall.

I really rise to say that this school is a Texas asset, and yet the State of Texas publicly has underfunded this university. In 2000, I helped settle a desegregation lawsuit of which that school had sued because it was discriminated against.

Sadly, I rise today to ask for another investigation by the Department of

Education, Civil Rights Division, because the State of Texas is now again discriminating against the students and faculty of Texas Southern University by not funding them equally with other majority-based institutions. It is sad to rise today to say that. But in that school, Barbara Jordan graduated, our colleague; Mickey Leland graduated. Of course, Barbara Jordan was a colleague. Many outstanding scientists and doctors.

Stop discriminating against Texas Southern University. We need to investigate it again to make this school whole.

RECOGNIZING THE BEACON PLACE COMMUNITY CENTER IN WAUKEGAN

(Mr. DOLD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the Beacon Place Community Center in Waukegan and Executive Director Barb Koracic.

Beacon Place focuses on the power of neighbors helping neighbors by offering a variety of services to the community. They recently received a grant from the Community Purse, which will help them expand neighborhood cooking classes, improve technology for after-school tutoring programs, and obtain fresh produce for children in the summer.

I visited Beacon Place in July and was inspired by the educational activities offered for the children. These programs help children sustain their math and reading skills throughout the summer.

I had a great time participating in the learning by reading and painting with some of these children, and I saw firsthand the benefit that these resources will have in the Waukegan community.

Beacon Place is truly a much-needed and inspiring program, which is why I am honored to be able to recognize them today.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Black History Month and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which was founded 107 years ago today.

Black History Month is an opportunity for Americans to reflect on the contributions of the African American community to this country, on the injustices that they have endured through American history, and how far we have gone and still need to go to

end discrimination and racism in America.

This past weekend, I attended the Orange County Heritage Council's 36th Annual Orange County Black History Month Parade and Cultural Fair. I was honored to meet a lot of veterans there, including Mr. Warren Bussey, a World War II hero, and, at 103 years old, the oldest African American living in Orange County today.

Mr. Bussey and others like him are a testament to the enduring legacy of African American commitment to the military service. They went, yet they came back, and there were no civil rights for them.

This month we honor their contribution.

ANIMAL SHELTER

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the ASPCA in celebration of their event Paws for Love, and bring attention to the importance of animal shelters throughout our country.

Paws for Love is an annual event, hosted by the ASPCA, as well as many local animal shelters here in Washington, D.C., featuring adoptable pets, along with providing information about adoption.

As a proud parent of an adopted pitbull of my own and co-chair of the Congressional Animal Protection Caucus, I know firsthand the value that local animal shelters offer and how they offer a second chance and loving homes to animals in need.

As we have seen through natural recent disasters, animal shelters were placed in difficult situations when families evacuated and were forced to separate from their pets. These shelters need our help.

Ensuring adequate funding for these programs is incredibly important. I am proud to be an outspoken advocate for animal welfare. I look forward to working with my colleagues on these issues in the future.

□ 1215

AMERICA'S RULE BOOK: THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, we have got our Presidential primary coming up in Georgia in the first week of March, and everybody is talking about what it means to be an American and where it is we want America to go. I

love that conversation. I love that it is happening on the Democratic side of the aisle. I love that it is happening on the Republican side of the aisle. I love that it is happening in every household in America.

What I don't hear as much conversation about—and I wish that I did—is about that rule book for how America is supposed to be run, called the United States Constitution. Folks seem to have a firm grasp on it when they want to be the President of the United States. They lose that grasp when they get to be President of the United States, because they want to serve. They so badly want to serve.

What I have here, Mr. Speaker, are a couple of quotes from President Obama.

He says:

I taught constitutional law for 10 years, and I take the Constitution very seriously. The biggest problems that we are facing right now have to do with George Bush's trying to bring more and more power into the executive branch and not go through Congress at all; and that is what I intend to reverse when I am President of the United States of America.

Now, that was at a Pennsylvania townhall meeting, Mr. Speaker, when the President was running for office.

As a Senator, he could see clearly that, in article I, the House and the Senate were in charge of passing the laws, and that, in article II, the White House was in charge of enforcing the laws. During the 8 years that George Bush was President, time and time again, charges were made that the White House was taking the people's power from article I and carrying it down Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House.

Again, I quote from President Obama:

I taught the Constitution for 10 years. I believe in the Constitution, and I will obey the Constitution of the United States. We are not going to use signing statements as a way of doing an end run around Congress.

That was at a Montana campaign event back in 2008.

The President was absolutely right, and Republicans in this institution were absolutely wrong, during his 8 years in the White House, for not holding George Bush more accountable to his article II responsibilities and staying out of Congress' article I responsibilities; but it was hard, Mr. Speaker. It was after 9/11.

I will forever wonder what America would have looked like but for that fateful day. The President was off, focusing on his agenda. We were not campaigning on 9/11 issues in that election. We were campaigning on domestic issues, on economic issues. The economy was on fire, and then everything changed.

I would argue that many of my Republican colleagues—you and I were not here at that time, Mr. Speaker—cut President Bush a lot of slack.

America was in crisis, and the Nation was under attack; and we said: Do you know what? The Constitution does give the President special responsibilities during these times of national crisis, and I am willing to allow him to adopt a little more authority—I am willing to be a little more deferential—to the President during these difficult times.

President Obama saw that as then-Senator Obama, and he said: That is wrong. Republicans are not supposed to be Republicans first. Republicans in Congress are supposed to be Congressmen first. Republicans in the Senate are supposed to be Senators first. Our obligation first is to our constituents back home, to the United States Constitution, not to someone who may or may not hold the same party title at the White House.

As a candidate, the President saw that clearly, but we all know how that transpired, Mr. Speaker.

As President, the President has said this:

We can't wait for an increasingly dysfunctional Congress to do its job. Where they won't act, I will.

We can't wait for that Constitution, which was specifically designed to be slow and painful, because every act that we pass here, Mr. Speaker, takes freedom or power or money from someone in America and gives it to someone else. It was designed to be hard; but as President Obama says: I can't wait. Where Congress won't act, I will.

I continue to quote, Mr. Speaker, from a different speech during a Cabinet meeting in 2014:

But one of the things that I will be emphasizing in this meeting is the fact that we are not just going to be sitting, waiting for legislation, in order to make sure that we are providing Americans with the kind of help that they need. I have got a pen and I have got a phone. I can use that pen to sign executive orders and take executive actions and administrative actions that move the ball forward.

Mr. Speaker, one of my great disappointments in this administration is that President Obama had an opportunity to lead America in ways that no other President could have led. He had an opportunity when he was elected, with all of his personal charisma and popularity, to lead public opinion in ways that no other President could. He was not my choice for President, but when America chose him, America chose opportunity to do things that we could not have done otherwise.

All we are in this Chamber is a reflection of that public opinion back home. All we are the voices of our individual districts back home—435 voices representing millions of constituents back home. The President could have come and changed the minds of those in this Congress. He could have come and changed the minds of the people. Instead—do you know what?—he said: I have studied the Constitution for 10 years. It is really hard to move Con-

gress. It is really hard to move public opinion. So I am going to use my phone and my pen, and I am going to do it alone.

This isn't just in the White House, Mr. Speaker. This idea that the people's voice in Congress is a nuisance and gets in the way of getting the real business done permeates the entire administration.

I quote from EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy:

But I will tell you that I didn't go to Washington to sit around and wait for congressional action. I have never done that before, and I don't plan to do it in the future.

Forbid the thought. Forbid the thought you would be on the Federal Government's payroll, charged with enforcing the laws of the land, and you might sit around and wait for Congress to pass the laws of the land. Forbid the thought. If you have got a phone and if you have got a pen, just go ahead and rewrite those laws of the land, Mr. Speaker. It is dangerous when Republicans do that. It is dangerous when Democrats do that. It is dangerous when Independents do that.

We have a Constitution as our rule book for a reason, and that is that changing the law should be hard. Taking power from one group and giving it to another should be hard. Taking money from one group and giving it to another should be hard. The power is not ours, Mr. Speaker. The power is the people's. They allow us to administer it for a short period of time, and there is a long and difficult process to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to focus on some EPA regulations today. In the past, Presidents have acknowledged how hard it is to get it done, but they have committed to going out there and getting it done. I will remind you, Mr. Speaker, that the EPA was created by a Republican President. There is no one who cares more about clean water and clean air in the great State of Georgia than I do. I am a hardcore, Deep South Republican, Mr. Speaker, and we play outside a lot. Our kids are outside a lot. We are drinking a lot of water, and we are playing in a lot of grass. We care about a clean environment. So did President Richard Nixon when he created the EPA.

He said this:

The reorganizations which I am proposing afford both the Congress and the executive branch an opportunity to reevaluate the adequacy of existing programs involved in these consolidations.

I look forward to working with the Congress in this task. Congress, the administration, and the public all share a profound commitment to the rescue of our natural environment and in the preservation of the Earth as a place both habitable by and hospitable to man. With its acceptance of these reorganization plans, the Congress will help us fulfill that commitment.

Mr. Speaker, President Nixon had a vision of what he wanted to do for environmental protection in America.

He said this is a three-part vision: it is going to involve the executive branch; it is going to involve the legislative branch; it is going to involve the American people. I am going to take this idea out, and I am going to sell it. We are going to get it passed into law because I am going to make the American people believe it. We all want the same things: we want an environment that is hospitable to and habitable by man; we want an environment that serves us today and our kids and grandkids tomorrow. He went out there, and he sold America on this, and we did it together. By article I, Congress passed it, and the President signed it into law.

With the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, Mr. Speaker, you will remember it was a Democrat-controlled Congress and Republican George H. W. Bush in the White House.

George H.W. Bush said this:

Upon signing the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, today, I am signing S. 1630, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act, and I take great pleasure in signing S. 1630 as a demonstration to the American people of my determination that each and every American shall breathe clean air. The passage of this bill is an indication that the Congress shares my commitment to a strong Clean Air Act, to a clean environment, and to the achievement of the goals I originally set forth.

Mr. Speaker, if you will recall, at the time of the Clean Air Act of 1990, I was in college. It was a battle in Washington, D.C. It was a battle. Again, the Democrats were controlling all of Congress, and the Republicans were in the White House, trying to decide what our obligations were as individuals, what businesses' obligations were, and what government's obligations would be. It was hard and it was important.

Mr. Speaker, you will remember that was acid rain. That was when they panned the camera around to the monuments throughout the city and showed where the facial features were being eroded by acid rain.

We said what can we do together to make a difference? It was not someone with a phone and a pen. It became a national movement. It was what all laws are supposed to be, Mr. Speaker, which is where we come together and we talk about our differences; we take steps forward where we can; we take time to sort out the steps we can't take today but hope to take tomorrow.

In signing that legislation, the President said: This represents my vision. This represents my goals. This represents my commitment to clean air. Because the people's Representatives in Congress passed it, it represents all of the American people as well.

Mr. Speaker, that is the way it is supposed to be. It is hard and it is slow, and it has been a long time since we have seen that function effectively; but let me tell you what the impact of that is.

The Founding Fathers were really smart folks, and I am never willing to

underestimate the wisdom that is in those few founding pages. We have article I in the legislative branch. We have article II in the executive branch. We have article III in the judicial branch. In these days, where article I and article II are not functioning as they should, article III is wielding more than its fair share of the power, and I will tell you that is wrong. I will tell you that is wrong.

Decisions about what is the right law of the land are made one of three ways, Mr. Speaker. They get made because the President of the United States, who was popularly elected, signs a bill into law. They get made because the United States Congress, which was popularly elected, overrides a veto and implements a new law; or they get made because nine men and women who are in black robes and are across the street at the Supreme Court, who have never been elected, sit around and think deeply about it and pronounce what the law of the land will be.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have great respect for the Supreme Court, and I believe it is critical—again, in the wisdom of our Founding Fathers—to have balanced power in that way; but as a citizen, as just a guy from the great State of Georgia—just one of 300 million—when I have to choose who writes the law—the President I have a chance to vote for, the Congress I have a chance to vote for, or the Supreme Court, which is appointed for life and is never accountable to anyone—I feel a little bit safer when it is one of the folks who has to be up for reelection every once in a while.

It is bad for America when the President—with a pen and a phone—goes and implements those things, when we as the legislative branch don't identify ourselves as article I but identify ourselves as Republicans and Democrats—who are divided along those lines—and allow the courts to sort it out.

Let me just give you an example, Mr. Speaker: WOTUS, waters of the U.S. I had never heard the term "WOTUS" until I showed up in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker. Waters of the United States is an initiative from the President that is going to reregulate who controls and keeps tabs on clean water in America.

□ 1230

Currently, if it is navigable water, water that you can sail your boat on, then it is governed by the Federal Government. If it is any other water, it is governed by State government.

The little creek in the backyard at the park down the road from my house, that is governed by the great State of Georgia, and they do a great job with it. It empties out into the Chatahoochee River, which is navigable, which is regulated by the Federal Government. It goes through some National Park land, national recreation area, but it begins—where so

much of an opportunity to impact pollution and make a difference in water quality—at the headwaters, which is regulated by State governments.

Well, Jim Oberstar, a Representative in this Chamber back in 2010, introduced a bill that said, since the Federal Government is so effective at everything that they do, let's entrust all clean water decisions to the Federal Government instead of to the localities that have been doing it so well for so long.

Well, he introduced a bill in Congress, Mr. Speaker, and that is the way it is supposed to start. This was H.R. 5088. He introduced a bill to expand the definition of water so that the Federal Government could regulate everything.

Second step, Mr. Speaker, is to have that bill considered. Well, the bill never was considered in this Chamber. It could not gather enough support in this Chamber to even be considered in the committee, much less the floor of this House.

Well, you have seen it, Mr. Speaker: "Yes, I'm only a bill. And I'm sitting here on Capitol Hill. Well, it's a long, long journey to the Capital City. It's a long, long wait while I'm sitting in committee..."

That is "Schoolhouse Rock," a tale of how a bill becomes a law. If you can't get consideration, it expires.

Well, the President wanted this regulation, and he couldn't get the support in Congress to pass it. He didn't want to go out and sell it to the American people, so he went to the Federal Register, Mr. Speaker. Most folks don't even know the Federal Register exists. It comes out every day. It is a list of all the regulations that the administration is proposing, and it is thick. Every day, it is thick. It is new restrictions on private life in America.

In April 2014, the President went out and published this rule and said: This is what I am going to do. Congress hasn't authorized it. It is a dramatic departure from the way America has been governed for the last 200 years, but I have a pen and phone, and I am just going to do it.

Mr. Speaker, if he wanted to do it, he should have come and sold Congress. If he wanted to do it, he should have gone and sold the American people, but he didn't. He published it in an obscure publication, and, a year later, he announced new rules that would govern all activity affecting water in the United States of America. Not one congressional bill had passed authorizing such an action.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the opposite had happened. Congress saw what was going on. Congress saw that the President was way outside of his authority. Congress saw that he was way outside of the mandate given to him by the people, and Congress passed legislation to block those rules.

Now, hear that, Mr. Speaker. The President had legislation introduced to

implement the rules. It never even got out of committee because folks opposed it. Then he went around Congress, tried to do it on his own. Congress passed a new measure that said: Mr. President, that is wrong. Don't do it.

So Congress—it is not that we failed to act—we acted affirmatively and said: Mr. President, that is not okay.

It passed the House, Mr. Speaker. It passed the Senate. It went to the President's desk, where he vetoed it. Understand that.

The President is outside of his constitutional role. Congress calls him on it, passes it by both Houses—which is rare, these days, as you know. The President, armed with the knowledge that the American people are against him on this issue, vetoes that measure. It took him exactly 24 hours to think through that, Mr. Speaker. Hear that.

He knew Congress rejected the measure because he couldn't get it out of committee. He implemented it by going around Congress, doing it entirely through the administrative branch, which we all know from Constitution 101 is not the way laws get made.

Congress affirmatively passes a law that says: You cannot do that, Mr. President; that is outside of your bounds. It takes him 24 hours to think about that before he stamps it with a veto stamp and sends it away.

So what do you do, Mr. Speaker? What do you do? What do you do when you represent 300 million Americans, you have a democratic process here on the floor of the House, everybody's voice is heard, you duly pass measures, and the President says: No, I am not concerned about that?

You go to court. You go to court. Mr. Speaker, I hate going to court. I hate it.

We are the Congress of the United States. We are article I for a reason. This is where the power was supposed to reside, distributed among all of us across this country.

I hate going to the court to solve problems between the White House and the President. We ought to be able to solve those on our own, but we haven't been able to. We haven't been able to start that dialogue. So what do we do? We go to the court.

Here is what the court says about this waters of the U.S. rule. I am quoting from their opinion:

"Even so, a review of what has been made available reveals a process that is inexplicable, arbitrary, and devoid of a reasoned process."

They are not talking about what happened in Congress, Mr. Speaker. We did everything by the book. The court is talking about what happened at the White House and at the EPA, this administrative process that tried to craft a brand-new regulatory regime to regulate all water in the United States

of America: our review "reveals a process that is inexplicable, arbitrary, and devoid of a reasoned process."

Quoting from another section of the decision, Mr. Speaker:

It appears likely that the EPA has violated its congressional grant of authority in its promulgation of the rule at issue, and it appears likely the EPA failed to comply with the EPA requirements when promulgating the rule.

That is the requirement that we have some public input on the rule. So not only did we violate our authority to begin with, but even if the EPA had had authority, the court says it should have invited more public input, which it did not.

Reading, finally, from that decision, Mr. Speaker:

A far broader segment of the public would benefit from the preliminary injunction because it would ensure that Federal agencies do not extend their power beyond the express delegation from Congress.

The court said: No, Mr. President, no. You do not have this authority. Congress makes the law. The answer is "no."

So just a recap, Mr. Speaker: a bill was brought in this Congress to implement these rules. It never made it out of committee because folks didn't like it. The President did it unilaterally, and Congress responded by passing a bill out of both Chambers and sending it to the President's desk, saying: Don't do that; that is wrong.

The President vetoes it.

America sues, and the court says: You can't do that; that is wrong. You are exceeding your grant of authority under the law.

You would think that after all of that, Mr. Speaker, the White House might say: Well, I don't know how we got it wrong, but we got it wrong. Let's go back to the drawing board.

Not so. The White House continues to march on in this direction.

Mr. Speaker, it sounds like inside baseball. It sounds like this is just that standard quibbling—Republicans-Democrats-Washington, D.C., dysfunction. That is not so. We are talking about water. We are talking about every spigot in America, Mr. Speaker.

Let me tell you what folks have said in Georgia. This is our attorney general, Sam Olens. He is commenting after the court has prevented the implementation of these waters of the U.S. rules. He says:

I am pleased the Sixth Circuit has granted a nationwide stay on the burdensome waters of the United States rule. Under this illegal rule, Georgia families, farmers, and businesses would be subject to excessive and intrusive Federal regulation. As the Federal Government continues to issue massive and unconstitutional executive directives at an alarming rate, I remain steadfast in my commitment to protect and defend the interest of Georgians.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know how it is in your home State. In my home State,

the attorney general is elected by the people. He is not named by the Governor. This is the popularly elected representative for constitutional issues in the State of Georgia talking about Washington, D.C., and the White House, talking about illegal rules, unconstitutional executive directions coming out at an alarming rate.

Again, these are regulations that have traditionally been controlled at the local level. I promise you—I promise you, Mr. Speaker—there is not a man or woman in this city who cares more about the streams outside of my home than I do; there is not a man or woman in this city who cares more about the water in my district than I do; and there is not a man or woman in this city that knows better about how to protect that order than the men and women in local government back home.

This is from the Association County Commissioners in Georgia, Mr. Speaker:

We feel that this rule has great potential to increase counties' risk of litigation and unnecessary delays and confusion and cause disincentive for adequately constructed and maintained drainage ditches.

This is where it has come, Mr. Speaker. In the massive power grab that is the waters of the U.S. rule, trying to grab everything and carry it to Washington, D.C., I have county commissioners writing to say this goes even to the drainage ditches in our area, which we are in charge of keeping clean, which we are in charge of water quality. We are involved in sediment control.

It will also divert critical county resources—those being taxpayer resources—from other critical local government services and federally mandated Clean Water Act responsibilities at a time when our budgets are already under great duress. Hear that. There are already Federal mandates on counties for a variety of other issues. They are handling it all, even in these tough budget times, and they are saying not only are these new regulations going to drain taxpayer resources that would have been going to clean water, but the litigation is going to drain them because we are going to sue and we are not going to allow you to do these unconstitutional things.

This is the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Speaker:

As such, the chamber opposes recent attempts by the Obama administration to circumvent the role of Congress in the regulation and management of the Nation's water resources, as well as that of the States. In addition, the chamber believes the proposed rules would violate private property rights and subject business to yet another layer of uncertainty.

More lawsuits, Mr. Speaker. This is not an issue for courts to solve.

The President proposed it. Congress rejected it. Then the President tried to implement it, and Congress rejected

that, too. Then the President vetoed that. Now the courts have rejected it, too.

Mr. Speaker, if you have got a good idea, get out there and sell it. If you want to change the law of the land, get out there and persuade folks it is a good idea.

Look at what the President did on the Affordable Care Act, Mr. Speaker. There is not a man or a woman in America today who believes there should be lifetime caps on insurance policies. They believe, if you are facing the greatest crisis in your life, your insurance company ought to be there for you. President Obama won on that issue. I agree with him on that issue. That law is never going to change, that segment of it.

President Obama said, you know, just because you have had cancer doesn't mean you shouldn't ever be able to buy an insurance policy again; just because you were born with a pre-existing condition doesn't mean you should never be able to buy an insurance policy again.

The President was right. Republicans in Congress passed that for federally regulated plans back in 1996. Some States didn't follow suit. That is now the law of the land. The President went out and led on some issues and changed America's minds on some issues.

He did not do that here. He did it with his pen and his phone. It is unconstitutional, and the courts are telling him as much.

This is right from my home district, Mr. Speaker. Gwinnett County is the biggest county in the district. I only represent two counties. So many folks live in these two counties, Mr. Speaker.

On behalf of the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners and the residents of Gwinnett County, I am writing to encourage continued action by the United States Congress to delay and defeat the proposed EPA rule regarding the definition of waters of the United States.

The county commissioners, who have enough work to do, Mr. Speaker, are taking up for Congress, saying this is way outside of the bounds of what lawmakers ought to be doing from the White House. It ought to be happening in article I. Do what you can.

Quoting from that same county commissioner, Mr. Speaker, the chairwoman of our county in Gwinnett:

This would have the potential to increase costs and cause delays in permitting an operation of needed public works projects. In Gwinnett County, 2,700 miles of roads and 684 miles of ditches within the highway right-of-way would be impacted by this proposed definition if it is adopted, as would 1,400 miles of streams and 1,400 miles of drainage ditches.

Now hear that, Mr. Speaker. I guess I kind of glossed over that. I called this the largest power grab that we have seen in water rights in American history, but I haven't really tried to enumerate it.

One county in the State of Georgia—we have got a lot of counties, Mr. Speaker. I believe we have the second most counties in the United States of America. So our counties are not that big.

In one county, there are 2,700 miles of roads going under Federal regulation, 684 miles of ditches in those right-of-ways going under Federal regulation, 1,400 miles of streams going under new Federal regulation, and 1,400 miles of additional drainage ditches going under Federal regulation in one county—one county.

To add insult to injury, Mr. Speaker, the Government Accountability Office, the auditor of the United States Government, had this to say in December of last year:

"The Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, violated publicity or propaganda and anti-lobbying provisions contained in appropriations acts with its use of certain social media platforms in association with its 'Waters of the United States,' WOTUS, rulemaking . . ."

□ 1245

Mr. Speaker, the EPA violated propaganda and antilobbying provisions. Hear that. I am begging the administration to go out there and sell the American people before they act, as is supposed to be done.

The General Accountability Office is chastising the administration because, instead of going out and selling it, they are illegally lobbying for it after the fact. We couldn't persuade anybody about it ahead of time. We didn't bother to involve folks ahead of time. We are going to go out after the fact illegally and try to change everybody's mind.

Quoting again from that same report: "The EPA engaged in covert propaganda when the agency did not identify EPA's role as the creator of the Thunderclap message to the target audience."

This is one particular campaign that the General Accountability Office is looking at.

Mr. Speaker, we have got to demand better. President Obama, when he was Senator Obama, was demanding better of the Bush administration. He was right to do so.

I am demanding better of the Obama administration. This Congress is demanding better. We are right to do so. Whoever the next President is, him or her, we have to ask more of them.

The Constitution was crafted with three branches of government for a reason, one branch to create the laws—that is us—one branch to enforce the laws—that is the President—and one branch to adjudicate the differences.

I will come back to the courts, Mr. Speaker. I have been talking about waters of the U.S. That is just one of dozens of examples of administration overreach.

This headline, Mr. Speaker: Supreme Court Deals Blow to Obama's Effort to Regulate Coal Emissions. Coal emissions. This is the war on coal that you hear so much about.

Mr. Speaker, the President has not come to Congress to sell Congress on doing away with our number one natural energy resource. The President has not gone to the American people to sell the American people on doing away with the number one energy resource in America.

In fact, if you go into coal country, Mr. Speaker, every single Democrat at the Federal level has been defeated not because they weren't doing a good job—they may well have been—but because the President was declaring a war on coal.

Hardworking Americans who work in the coal industry said: Why are you picking on me? If you want clean air, let's pass clean air regulations. Why are you declaring war on coal? This ends up in the Supreme Court.

Former EPA Assistant Administrator Jeff Holmstead says this: It is the first time the Supreme Court has actually stayed a regulation.

This is happening right now. It is happening right now. Mr. Speaker, I have got it on the front page of yesterday's National Journal, one of those Washington, D.C., dailies that tracks Federal opportunities and regulations. The headline reads: "Obama's Second-Term Agenda Hits a Roadblock: the Supreme Court."

Think about that, Mr. Speaker. The headline, the generally accepted conventional wisdom, is the President's agenda hits a roadblock because the Supreme Court says no.

Mr. Speaker, the President's agenda hit a roadblock when he decided not to sell it to Congress, not to sell it to his constituents, but to go around us both and do it through administrative action. It is the first time in American history that the Supreme Court has stayed a regulation, so egregious is this action.

I go on from The New York Times, Mr. Speaker, just this week: "But the Supreme Court's willingness to issue a stay while the case proceeds was an early hint that the program could face a skeptical reception from the justices."

With the Court's four liberal members dissenting, a 5-4 decision was unprecedented. "The Supreme Court had never before granted a request to halt a regulation before review by a federal appeals court."

"It's a stunning development," Jody Freeman, a Harvard law professor and former environmental legal counsel to the Obama administration, said in an email."

A stunning development. What is stunning, Mr. Speaker, is around and around and around the President goes, around this body, Republicans and Democrats.

It is not a partisan issue. This is a constitutional issue of whether or not we should be concerned why it is that the courts are solving the issues.

Here is a quote from Laurence Tribe, Harvard law professor. In fact, he was President Obama's constitutional law professor when the President was in law school.

Professor Tribe says this: "To justify the Clean Power Plan"—that is this power plan that is implementing the coal regulations that the Supreme Court just put a stay on this week—"the EPA has brazenly rewritten the history of an obscure section of the 1970 Clean Air Act . . . Frustration with congressional inaction cannot justify throwing the Constitution overboard to rescue this lawless EPA proposal. . . ."

Mr. Speaker, we are supposed to disagree on things. You don't have to go far outside of my congressional district. HANK JOHNSON represents the south side of the county just beyond me, JOHN LEWIS just beyond that.

We disagree on all sorts of things. I admire them. I respect them. We work together on issues. It is not surprising that we disagree.

What is surprising and, in fact, alarming is that the American people's thirst for results has become such that Presidents think they can just skip the process, that the ends are going to justify the means.

President Obama's law school professor, an undisputed congressional scholar, not a conservative by any stretch of the imagination: "Frustration with congressional inaction cannot justify throwing the Constitution overboard to rescue this lawless EPA proposal. . . ."

I need folks to understand, Mr. Speaker, that this is not Republican-Democrat. This is article I, article II. We talked about waters of the U.S. We talked about the war on coal. What about Guantanamo Bay, Mr. Speaker? What about the detention facility in Guantanamo Bay?

U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch in November of last year—this is not old news; this is right now—said: "With respect to individuals being transferred to the United States, the law currently does not allow for that. . . ."

The Attorney General of the United States, President Obama's Attorney General, the chief law enforcement officer of the land second only to the President, says the law will not allow you to transfer these individuals to the United States.

The Secretary of Defense, Ash Carter, just last month: "There are people in Gitmo who are so dangerous we cannot transfer them to the custody of another government no matter how much we trust that government. . . . We need to find another place [and] it would have to be in the United States. So I've made a proposal for the president, and

he has indicated that he's going to submit that to Congress."

Hear that. The Secretary of Defense, Mr. Speaker, says the guys in Guantanamo are so dangerous, we cannot trust any other government on the planet with them. And so, if we are to close Guantanamo, as the President has desired for 8 years, we must bring those folks back to the U.S. It is the only way.

He's going to have to submit that proposal to Congress, the Secretary of Defense says. Why is that? Because it's against the law to establish another detention facility, so, therefore, to get the support of Congress.

It is against the law. So we have got the Secretary of Defense saying these guys are really dangerous, which would question why we want to bring them to the United States to begin with.

But you can't transfer them here because it is against the law. We have Loretta Lynch, Attorney General, saying you can't bring them here because it is against the law.

But I challenge anyone in this Chamber to do a news search, a Yahoo! search, Google search, however it is you get your news, and look in the last 14 days and see if you have seen another statement from the President saying he is going to bring those folks here.

There is no proposal on Capitol Hill to do that. There is no effort from the White House on Capitol Hill to get that done. In fact, the opposite is true. Time after time after time this body, the Senate—the President has signed it into law—says that you cannot bring these folks back to America, that they are too dangerous. The Secretary of Defense agrees. U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch agrees. Yet, we go down this road again.

Visa waiver reform, Mr. Speaker, I was about to dismiss. Yet another issue. We passed a bill that said: Listen, if you have been traveling to some of these countries in the Middle East where terrorism is running rampant today, you are not going to get a free pass into America. We are going to want to look at your background before we tell you to come on in.

Now, that seems fair, Mr. Speaker, if you are from one of these countries and you have been traveling through these countries where terrorism is running rampant, where there is case after case of terrorists leaving those countries and performing deadly acts around the globe, before we just let you in, which is what the Visa Waiver Program is.

It says: Come on in. We are not going to do a background check on you. If you are from England, you are from France, you are from Germany, we trust you. Come right on in.

We say: If you have been traveling to sites where the terrorist training camps are, we are going to want to give you a little further scrutiny.

Congress passed this. The House passed it. The Senate passed it. The President signed it into law. And then he turned around the very next day and said: Well, but I am not going to enforce that because I promised the Iranians in my nuclear deal that I wouldn't enforce those kinds of rules against Iranians.

Well, you can't pick and choose. Veto the bill if you don't like the bill. Sign the bill if you do like the bill. You can't pick and choose.

I quote from Senator RON JOHNSON. He is the chairman of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee on the Senate side.

He says: "Congress has every right to expect full compliance with the new provisions."

As the lead sponsor of the Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act of 2015, I can attest that Congress considered and rejected expanding the waiver authority in the way the President proposes because these groups of travelers would be hard to verify and any waivers granted would be easy to exploit.

This isn't 8 years ago. This isn't 5 years ago. This isn't 3 years ago. This is happening right now. The President signed language into law in December, signed language into law in November, in October, in September, signed language into law last year and said that this is the way it is going to be and has shown up this year and said: Oh, well, I didn't mean it. I am going to do it differently.

You have the lead Senate sponsor, the chairman of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, saying: No. We considered that. We specifically didn't give you that waiver authority. Don't go down that road.

Mr. Speaker, I have a chart up here. You can't see it. It says 9-0. It is another Supreme Court decision against the administration, saying: You have gone outside of your congressionally delegated authority. You can't do that.

You see a lot of 5-4 decisions out of the Supreme Court, Mr. Speaker. You rarely see a 9-0 decision. These are Justices appointed by Presidents of all political stripes, including Justices appointed by President Obama.

They looked at what the President did in the Noel Canning case where he declared that Congress was in recess so that he could put people in executive positions without having to have Congress' approval.

And they said: Nonsense. Nonsense. You can't do that. It is outrageous. The Supreme Court rejected that 9-0.

Mr. Speaker, I don't pick on this issue because it is an example of good news. I pick on it because it is an example of bad news. The courts said the President is overreaching and seizing congressional power illegitimately, unconstitutional actions.

But when I go to Democrats in the Senate during the time period this was going on, Mr. Speaker, I get this.

Senator Tom Harkin from Iowa: "By appointing these nominees, President Obama has acted responsibly in order to ensure that workers and businesses across this country who rely on the stable functioning of this important agency would not be caught in the crossfire of the Republicans' misguided ideological battle."

He has a good reason. He has a good reason for defending the President. Partisan politics have created gridlock on Capitol Hill, Mr. Speaker.

So I support the President ignoring the Constitution, seizing authority that is granted only to the Senate, and doing what he wants to do with it.

This is a United States Senator choosing to be a Democrat first and defending article I second.

I am not picking on Senator Harkin. That happens all the time in this place, Mr. Speaker.

When did that happen? When did it become more important to defend your President than to defend the Constitution? When did it become more important to be a good Republican than to be a good Congressman? I argue we can still turn the tide on that, Mr. Speaker.

Representative George Miller from California, ranking member of the Education and the Workforce Committee, which had jurisdiction over these issues in the House, said this: "President Obama's recess appointments will guarantee both employers and employees will have a place to go to have their rights under the law protected and enforced."

Well, that would be true except that they were unconstitutionally appointed, and, thus, all of the decisions they rendered are now moot. No one is defending article I. Folks are defending their President instead.

Senator HARRY REID: "Since President Obama took office, Senate Republicans have done everything possible to deny qualified nominees from receiving a fair up-or-down vote. President Obama did the right thing when he made these appointments on behalf of American workers."

Mr. Speaker, at 9-0, the Supreme Court said: No. You did not do the right thing, Mr. President. In fact, you did exactly the wrong thing. In fact, it is unconstitutional what you did. You do not have the power to act in this way. And Democrat after Democrat after Democrat is defending him.

□ 1300

Now, Mr. Speaker, if I put up these same charts from the Bush administration, I would have Democrats saying the Bush administration overstepped its bounds, and Republican after Republican after Republican would be defending them.

It has got to stop. It may be too late for this administration, Mr. Speaker. The lines in the sand may have already been dug so deep that we won't be able to cross them, but here in this Presidential primary season we have got to ask of our Presidential candidates: What are you first? Are you your own leader first? Are you a Republican or Democrat first? Or, are you the leader of the free world under the restrictions of article II first?

Are you going to use your pen and your phone? Are you just going to go out there and get it done by yourself? Or, are you going to go sell your own boss on the idea—your boss, being 300 million Americans—and then are we going to bring ourselves together as a Nation to do these things one by one?

Mr. Speaker, we have got to stop defending or criticizing actions based on which party is involved in it. There is one rule book for this country. It is not the policy position of the Republican National Committee. It is not the policy position of the Democratic National Committee. The one rule book in this country is the United States Constitution, which says Congress writes the law and the President enforces it.

We have got to expect more of our Presidents—not about the results that they get, but about the leadership they provide. Not the leadership to go around the law, but the leadership to change people's minds and then change the law.

We have got so much opportunity, Mr. Speaker. We have so much opportunity. The men and women that I have gotten to know in this Chamber would rather lose their seat tomorrow—who cares about the election—and they want to make a difference for the country. Don't tell me partisan gridlock has rendered self-governance impossible.

Gridlock is the natural state of the constitutional government that our Founding Fathers created. We have to work with it, not around it, and we have to work with the American people, changing hearts and minds, not going around the American people and having to rely on the Supreme Court to fix those mistakes.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PROVIDING FOR A CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF THE SENATE AND AN ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following privileged concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 31) providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate and an adjournment of the House of Representatives.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

S. CON. RES. 31

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That when the Senate recesses or adjourns on any day from Thursday, February 11, 2016, through Saturday, February 20, 2016, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until 12:00 noon on Monday, February 22, 2016, or such other time on that day as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the House adjourns on any legislative day from Friday, February 12, 2016, through Tuesday, February 16, 2016, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 23, 2016, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 3 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. (a) The Majority Leader of the Senate or his designee, after concurrence with the Minority Leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the Senate to reassemble at such place and time as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the Senate adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the Senate shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

SEC. 3. (a) The Speaker or his designee, after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the House to reassemble at such place and time as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the House adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the House shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RATCLIFFE). Without objection, the concurrent resolution is concurred in.

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PRESIDENT'S BUDGET PROPOSAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, the President submitted a budget request to the Congress. That budget request increases spending by approximately \$2.5 trillion over the next 10 years. It raises taxes by \$3.4 trillion over the next 10 years. And I will say that again. It increases spending by \$2.5 trillion and raises taxes by \$3.4 trillion over the next 10 years.

This budget, like every other budget that has been submitted by this White House, does not ever come into balance. It never comes into balance. It

stays in the red. In fact, under this budget, we will see a 13 percent structural shortfall in funding. The deficit would increase this fiscal year to \$616 billion. That is up from approximately \$438 billion last year. Either number is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, with the trajectory that we are on, by 2022, just the interest on the debt—let me be clear: just the interest, not the principal—is going to result in us spending more money on paying that interest payment than we will spend on all of our defense spending in a year.

I will say that again. We will spend more money just paying the interest payment on the debt—not dropping the principal—than we will spend on our entire defense budget in the year by 2022, with the trajectory that we are on, increasing this Nation's debt.

The debt is going to be more than double what it was at the time this President took office. It is going to more than double by the time he leaves office. It currently exceeds \$18 trillion. Yes, \$18 trillion is our debt today. To break that down, that is approximately \$155,000 per taxpayer. This isn't Monopoly money. These are real repercussions.

Earlier this week, in this Chamber, I was able to host a seventh-grade class from LSU University Lab School. These are the folks that are going to pay for it. It is that generation of these seventh-graders and their children and grandchildren and great children.

Mr. Speaker, at some point, this debt is going to be due. The bill is going to have to be paid. You can see that we are going off this cliff of spending to where our interest payments in a short 6 years are projected to exceed all that we are spending in our defense budget in a single year. This budget adds \$6 trillion in debt over the next 10 years.

I would like to break it down a little bit in terms of what some of these tax increases are and what the implications are.

The President has taken a lot of credit over the past few years over job growth. He has talked a lot about these increases in jobs that have occurred under his administration.

When you actually look at the numbers, where we have actually had job growth is in the energy sector. It is the one place where we have seen this extraordinary job growth over the last several years.

However, just over the last year, we have lost approximately 10,000 jobs in the energy industry in Louisiana. By some estimates, that is 20 percent of our oil and gas workforce. That is 10,000 jobs in the last year tied back to our energy sector.

There was a study that just came out that said, at current prices, oil and gas producers in the United States and Canada are losing approximately \$350 million every single day.

So, I am going to put this in perspective. We have lost 10,000 jobs in Louisiana alone. We are seeing a bleeding of energy jobs across this Nation. You have energy producers that are losing, according to one study, \$350 million every single day.

The White House's solution in their budget is to impose more taxes. It makes zero sense. For those of you that are listening, it is not going to make sense. People are bleeding jobs, they are losing money, and let's go ahead and put that last nail in the coffin and increase taxes.

We just don't subtly increase taxes. This budget proposes to increase taxes by \$10 a barrel. At the barrel prices that ended yesterday, that is in excess of 30 percent; in fact, it is approaching a 40 percent tax in an industry that is bleeding jobs. It is completely nonsensical. Obviously, it is not well thought out.

The study I referenced earlier projects that, by 2017, approximately one-third of the companies involved in oil and gas exploration and production activities will go bankrupt. It is killing American jobs.

I want to be clear that it is not going to decrease our demand for oil and gas, as we have seen prices as low as they are. You are seeing more people buying oil and gas because of the low prices. But what it means is that we are going to kill our domestic industry and become more reliant on foreign sources. I will say it again: It is nonsensical.

Further, adding insult to injury is the fact that this administration is continuing to move forward on this well control rule, which they have hidden from industry, hidden from Congress, and refused to meet with committees and delegations about what they are trying to do. Yet, they thought it was appropriate to leak it to *The Wall Street Journal* this week.

So, they can't talk to the people that exercise oversight, but they can talk to the newspapers. Even their comments to the newspapers continue to demonstrate a fundamental misunderstanding of how our offshore industry works.

A study that was just released indicates that we can see a 35 percent reduction in domestic energy production in the offshore as a result of this well control rule.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear: Like everyone, I support safe energy production in the United States. What happened in 2010, with the Macondo disaster and the loss of those lives was an absolute travesty—and it was avoidable—but, as the judge said in that case, it was gross negligence and willful misconduct.

The judge didn't say that the Department of Interior was at fault from flawed rules. He said that the operators were at fault and that it was the result of multiple, multiple mistakes that, in

aggregate, was grossly negligent and showed willful misconduct.

Since the Macondo spill, industry has taken their own steps to ensure safety. The Department of Interior has taken steps to ensure safety. Yet, this well control rule is going to result in a 35 percent reduction, and I believe it will actually result in decreased safety because of the fundamental misunderstanding of these regulators of the industry they are attempting to regulate. They are in an ivory tower—and it is inappropriate—further attempting to kill the oil and gas industry.

Now, here is where the irony comes in even further.

Mr. Speaker, the President indicated that the effort to assign this \$10 a barrel tax is tied back to his environmental agenda, tied back to his efforts to ensure that we are good environmental stewards, which, to be clear, Mr. Speaker, I am a strong advocate of the environment and ensuring that we balance environmental protection, environmental sustainability, and ecosystem production with our economic development efforts.

But in this case, by taking these steps and reducing our domestic production of energy, particularly offshore, you are reducing the funds that are available for environmental restoration and environmental initiatives. Because it is going to result in a 35 percent reduction in offshore energy production, according to the McKinsey study. So, if that is accurate, it is going to result in billions of dollars of less revenue for the U.S. Government.

Now, what makes that even worse is that the far, majority of the offshore energy production in the United States happens off the shores of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

□ 1315

Mr. Speaker, I believe that is your home State, one of those.

So, under Federal law, from 2006, those energy revenues are shared back with the States so they can carry out efforts to help ensure the sustainability of their coasts and resilience of their communities.

In the case of Louisiana, my home State, we actually passed a constitutional amendment to dedicate those dollars back to restoring the coast, to preventing floods.

So this budget, as submitted, does not include funds through the Corps of Engineers for projects like the Morganza to the Gulf project. It doesn't include funds for important projects to prevent repetitive flooding, like the Comite project. It doesn't fulfill the President's commitment that he made to Louisiana in 2012, when he walked on the streets in St. John Parish and said he was going to advance the West Shore project to ensure that we don't continue to see flooding from hurricanes and storms in St. John Parish and St. Charles Parish and some of the adjacent areas.

He fails to fulfill his own commitment by zeroing out funding for that important project, and again adding insult to injury to insult to injury to insult, by taking away funds in his budget request, attempting to repeal these offshore energy revenue-sharing dollars that in the State of Louisiana are committed to ecosystem restoration and to community resilience efforts to prevent floodwaters, to save FEMA money, to prevent disasters, to prevent economic disruption, to prevent disrupting our families and our businesses in south Louisiana.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to close by saying that this budget is entirely nonsensical. It talks about reducing spending and saving money, yet it does completely the opposite.

It talks about environmental initiatives, yet all it proposes to do is reduce funds available for environmental purposes, and then, in one case, swaps the Louisiana money, or attempts to take the Louisiana money—excuse me—take the money from the Gulf States and send it up to Alaska for a climate initiative on coastal resiliency.

And one last note on that, Mr. Speaker. I have been up to the communities in coastal Alaska. I have been up to Shishmaref and Kivalina and Kotzebue and Nome and Barrow and Deadhorse. I have been to these communities, and they deserve help. But, Mr. Speaker, to simply trade, or to rob Peter to pay Paul, to rob the Gulf to set up a program in Alaska, it is mind-boggling.

Mr. Speaker, they all deserve help. They all deserve help. To simply take money from one area and to send it to another one, that doesn't fix the problem.

This budget, from a fiscal perspective, is fatally flawed policy. It is going to put extraordinary financial burden on future generations. From an environmental perspective, it is completely nonsensical in that it takes money away from environmental restoration and environmental initiatives and community resilience. It is going to result in increasing FEMA disaster spending by leaving these communities vulnerable by failing to address these hazards.

I urge, Mr. Speaker, that, as we move forward, we move forward with commonsense reforms to reduce spending, to bring the debt under control, to begin reducing our national debt, and to make sure that we are spending money in places where it makes sense, to fulfill commitments to the people in St. John and St. Charles Parishes, to ensure that our communities and our economy are more resilient, and not to continue mortgaging our future and continue allowing our environment to degrade, as it is in coastal Louisiana.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LESSONS FROM THE VIETNAM WAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Louisiana, my neighbor—wonderful points being made.

I also want to call attention, Mr. Speaker, today to the 43rd anniversary of the release from imprisonment of American POWs from North Vietnam, among whom is our friend and hero here in the House, SAM JOHNSON.

It was nice of staff to have a little reception for Congressman JOHNSON, and it is important to remember such things and try to learn from our mistakes. Because once again, in the last couple of weeks, I have heard references to mistakes of the past, like the lesson we should have learned from Vietnam, and then they get the lesson all wrong.

We really didn't allow our military in Vietnam to win the war in Vietnam. Our pilots, our military operations, they could have won that war had they been allowed to do so.

And the best indication of that is, after 7 years that SAM JOHNSON spent in just the most horrid conditions, horrendous torture, joined by other American heroes, like JOHN MCCAIN, who was 3 years at the Hanoi Hilton, where SAM JOHNSON was.

I know he was shot down 5 years before the release, but it was only the last 3 years that he was placed in confinement there with, I believe, 10 others in the worst of the worst facilities, so bad that even today, after they cleaned up some of the torture chambers and tried to dress them up, they still won't let Americans go into the original Hanoi Hilton where they held 11, including SAM JOHNSON, in the most horrid of conditions.

But the chronology, basically, in a nutshell, Nixon promised that he would, if he was reelected, he would get us out of Vietnam. So after reelection, they start the Paris peace talks—and I realize this is a gross generalization. They start the Paris peace talks. The North Vietnamese storm out. So Nixon orders carpet bombing of sites in North Vietnam that they had never been allowed to bomb before, including the areas in Hanoi itself.

SAM has related personally that, when they first heard the first bomb drop, they thought: Wow, one might fall here. And then they were absolutely overjoyed that, finally, their country, the United States of America, was finally bringing the war to the North Vietnamese leaders. They had not done that.

So there was massive bombing for 2 weeks. After 2 weeks, tremendous bombing, then the leaders came rushing back to the peace tables: Let's work this out.

They got a peace accord agreed to. They agreed to provide all the names, locations of Americans who were killed in action or missing in action, provide all of the POWs. Apparently, American officials knew pretty quickly they didn't give us everybody, and that is another dark chapter in our history. But they agreed to release the POWs.

As SAM JOHNSON and others were being released from the Hanoi Hilton, he said probably the cruelest of the officers there was laughing and smirking at the Americans as they were allowed to leave and go to a bus and, basically, said: You stupid Americans. If you had just bombed us for one more week, we would have had to surrender unconditionally.

Yes, that is right. The lesson of Vietnam should have been that we should never, ever put our military in harm's way without giving them all of the equipment and ordnance they need to win and the order to win. If we are not willing to give them rules of engagement that allow them to win, they should not be sent.

Yet, since this administration has been in office, there have been three to four times more American military lives lost.

I am told by many in the military, because of the rules of engagement, because of where they are placed, without being able to properly defend themselves, that, under Commander in Chief Obama, three to four times more military members, American military members, have given their lives, their last full measure of devotion, than were lost during the 7¼ years in which the war in Afghanistan raged at its highest under Commander in Chief Bush. The difference is you had one Commander in Chief that gave them more authority to win and a second, a later Commander in Chief, that tied their hands behind their backs.

So that brings us to where we are today, 43 years after SAM JOHNSON and other American POWs were released from North Vietnam. The real lesson of Vietnam still hasn't been learned because we have still got American military members being killed abroad, in Afghanistan, without giving them the rules of engagement to protect themselves.

And if that were the end of the story, that would be bad enough; but it is even worse when our military members have been subjected to the examples of having American military members punished, sent to prison if they dared to put the safety and lives of their men as the first consideration of their actions and their orders.

So we have a lieutenant in Leavenworth who, when an Afghan on a motorcycle refused to honor the signs, the orders to stop, refused to stop or even slow down when shots were fired in his direction, and so you have to give some credit to this administration and the

military leaders and the orders that make their way from the top down and the rules of engagement as to why, just in recent weeks, we have lost military members when someone on a motorcycle rode up and exploded themselves.

They knew. Our American military that died in that suicide motorcycle bombing, they knew what had happened to the lieutenant. All of our people in Afghanistan know what happened when this administration makes an example out of an officer who dares to put the safety of his own people upmost in his mind.

It is a sad time in America. Our allies notice that, if we will not even take the life, the treasure of our own American military more seriously, then how can they possibly put their faith in us that we will keep our word and protect them? They have seen what happened in Ukraine.

□ 1330

They didn't really lift a finger to help the Ukrainians against the Russian aggression. In fact, after Russian aggression against Georgia, President Bush put some sanctions in place. Relations got more chilled between the United States and Russia because of the egregious, unfair actions of Russia in Georgia.

The first thing this President did was send Hillary Clinton over with a plastic, red button. They put the wrong interpretation on it. They meant to say a reset button, and they got the wrong language on there.

The message was very clear to the Russians: Ah, President Obama and Hillary Clinton don't care if we violate their allies. They don't care if we invade their friends. They don't care. They want a reset button and basically have apologized for getting upset that we in Russia invaded Georgia. So Hillary Clinton and President Obama are fine with us invading other places.

What were they supposed to think that this administration would do when they invaded Ukraine? Well, they guessed right, that this administration wouldn't really do anything about it.

Oh, I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. I forgot. This administration did do something about the Russian aggression. In fact, the President delivered it. He didn't know the microphone was picking him up when he said, basically:

Tell Vladimir that I will have a whole lot more flexibility after the election.

So they got the messages. We can pretty much abuse and invade, whatever we care to do. It is outrageous what has happened to American reputation abroad.

So today is the 43rd anniversary. We salute SAM JOHNSON and all those POWs that were released today from North Vietnam. I wish we had learned the lesson from the horrors that they experienced.

In fact, there is an article here by Anne Bayefsky. It originally appeared on FOX News. This was released February 11, 2016, by Human Rights Voices:

"There is a dangerous scam gaining traction at the United Nations, backstopped by the White House."

That is our U.S. President's House.

"It's called 'violent extremism.' Given the U.N.'s long and undistinguished history of being unable to define terrorism, and an American President who chokes on the words 'radical Islamic terrorism,' pledges to combat 'violent extremism' have become all the rage.

"It turns out that the terminological fast one is a lethal diplomatic dance that needs to be deconstructed, and quickly.

"In 1999, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation"—that is the OIC—"enemy" insert parenthetically, Mr. Speaker—the OIC, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, has all of the Islamic nations except the United States included in it, and they also include the Palestinians that are in the nation of Israel.

I always get confused whether the OIC has 50 states and we have in the United States 57 States or whether the OIC has 57 states and we have 50. So I shared that with our President when he was running for the Presidency as he got confused whether the U.S. has 57 states—no, that is the OIC—and the United States has 50. It is confusing.

The article states: "In 1999, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation . . . adopted an 'anti-terrorism' treaty stating that 'armed struggle against foreign occupation, aggression, colonialism, and hegemony, aimed at liberation and self-determination . . . shall not be considered a terrorist crime.'"

"In practice, that means it is open season on all Israelis, as well as Americans and Europeans who get in the way. Each of the 56 Islamic states"—actually, the OIC is 57 because they claim Palestine—"and what the UN labels the 'State of Palestine,' is a party to this treaty.

"The September 11 terror attacks then launched a growth industry in U.N. counter-terrorism chit-chat and paraphernalia.

"Year-after-year, Islamic states have prevented the adoption of a UN Comprehensive Convention Against Terrorism by refusing to abandon their claim that certain targets are exempt.

"In 2001 the U.N. Security Council created the Counter-Terrorism Committee. But it is unable to name a state sponsor of terrorism. In fact, from 2002 to 2003, Syria, a state sponsor of terrorism, was a member.

"In 2005 the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, once chaired by Colonel Qaddafi's Libya, created the U.N. expert on 'the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental free-

doms while countering terrorism'—as if countering terror is not about protecting human rights.

"In 2006 the General Assembly adopted a Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It manages to cast terrorists as victims. 'Pillar Number One' starts by worrying about 'conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.' 'Youth unemployment,' for instance, purportedly results in 'the subsequent sense of victimization that propels extremism and the recruitment of terrorists.'

"In 2011 the U.N. established the Counter-Terrorism Center—at the initiative of Saudi Arabia. The Saudis threw \$100 million at the venture and became chair of the 'Advisory Board.' Saudi financing of radical charities and 'academic' exercises around the world are somehow left out of Center events on investigating and prosecuting terror financing.

"Integral to the best-defense-is-a-good-offense routine, has been the constant unsubstantiated allegation of an 'Islamophobia' pandemic.

"For the first decade of the 21st century, the Islamophobia charge was hurled in UN resolutions on the 'defamation' of Islam or the 'defamation of religion.' Defamation meant the freedoms of human beings should be trumped by the 'rights' of 'religion.'

"In 2009 'defamation' was repackaged by the General Assembly as 'human rights and cultural diversity.' Ever since, the over 100 countries of the 'Non-aligned movement' vote against Western states and demand the freedoms of human beings be trumped by 'cultural diversity.' And that's cultural diversity Iran-style. In December 2015, the UN resolution praised Tehran's Centre for Human Rights and Cultural Diversity—the brainchild of former Iranian President and well-known human rights aficionado Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"In the last six weeks alone, Islamic states have staged two UN meetings focusing on 'Islamophobia and inclusive societies,' and 'countering xenophobia.' Two weeks ago, the servile Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon couldn't mention 'antisemitism' on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz without connecting it to 'anti-Muslim bigotry.'

"Of course, the Islamophobia drumbeat skips right over the xenophobia, antisemitism, and exclusively that is endemic—and officially-sanctioned—in Islamic states.

"This is the substrate from which Ban Ki-moon has now manufactured a 'Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.' Introduced in January, the General Assembly is meeting on February 12, 2016 to push the plan forward.

"After one mention of 'ISIL, Al-Qaeda and Boko Haram,' the Plan insists that violent extremism 'does not arise in a vacuum. Narratives of grievance, actual or perceived injustice . . . become attractive.' 'It is critical that

in responding to this threat,' stresses the Plan, that states be stopped from 'overreacting.' Topping 'conditions conducive to violent extremism' is 'lack of socioeconomic opportunities.'"

Mr. Speaker, this just shows the ignorance in the U.N. in propagating such a plan and the sheer naiveté, if not outright intentional misleading, of those who would read their report.

Lack of socioeconomic opportunities is not what caused one of the wealthier Islamists to put together and carry out a plan of attacking the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and, apparently, this Capitol. He was wealthy. So are many of those who are funding terrorism. It arises out of radical Islamic beliefs.

Nobody should have to ever say: We know all Muslims don't believe this. It should go without saying. We know that. But for those that do, it is sheer idiocy to claim that Islam has nothing to do with the radical Islamic terrorism that is occurring.

When you have one of the most world-renowned experts on Islam who has studied his whole life on the Koran, the holy Koran, as he would call it, the tenets and the pillars of Islam and even has his Ph.D., we are told, in Islamic studies from the University of Baghdad—Mr. Speaker, I think I forgot to mention he is the head of ISIS.

The head of the Islamic State is one of the world's foremost experts on Islam, and he says the Islamic State is exactly what Islam is all about.

I know, when I was a judge, people had to put on evidence as to educational background and study in an area so that I, as the judge, could determine whether that man or woman was actually an expert in their field.

I would say the head of ISIS, with his educational background and his research and study, certainly is far more of an expert on Islam than our President or Valerie Jarrett or anybody in this administration.

The article says: "Here we go again. The bigots, fanatics and killers are allegedly driven by our annoying insistence on fighting back—which the Plan astonishingly calls 'the cycle of insecurity and armed conflict.'"

"As per usual in U.N. negotiations, the Obama administration has jumped on board while Islamic states are holding out for greater elaboration of their grievances and even more 'nothing to do with religion or Islam' clauses.

"The U.N.'s idea of a win-win is an illusory 'global partnership to confront this menace' that allows states to define violent extremism any which way they want: 'This Plan of Action pursues a practical approach to preventing violent extremism, without venturing to address questions of definition.'

"Only U.N. con-artists could present refusing to identify a problem as the most practical way to solve it.

"More practically speaking, the latest Palestinian terror wave began by

pumping bullets into a young mom and dad in front of their little kids for the crime of being Jews living and breathing on Arab-claimed land. In U.N. terminology, Eitam and Naama Henkin were 'extremist settlers.'

"So to all you extremist lovers of liberty: beware the violent extremists in U.N. clothing, and the morally-challenged commanders in chief bringing up the rear."

Well written. We have got to wake up. We had another bombing. We have more violence. We hear from ISIS leaders that they have been able to get some of their best warriors into the United States and into Europe posing as refugees. We have the head of the FBI who warns all of us in the House and all of us in the Senate and says we have cases regarding the Islamic State in every State in the Union.

□ 1345

Still, we let the administration get away with turning a blind eye toward the real problem and say we need to welcome more and more refugees. We are told by the people who are in charge of the vetting: We will vet them, but we have no information really to vet them with, so, sure, there are going to be some terrorists come in.

We have an obligation in this House, and those Senators at the other end of the hall, to our Constitution, and we are to provide for the common defense. We are supposed to provide that defense against all enemies—foreign and domestic.

For those who don't know the Constitution well enough, there is no right by someone illegally in the United States to have a hearing before an article III Federal District Court. In fact, there is no District Court mentioned in article III. The only court mentioned is the Supreme Court. As my old constitutional law professor said, there is only one court in the country that owes its existence to the U.S. Constitution. Every other Federal Court, every other tribunal, and magistrate in the country owes its existence—that is a Federal entity—owes its existence to the United States Congress. We have the right to create them; we have the right to remove them.

Our own military do not have a right to a United States District Court. Why? Because the Constitution says Congress has the full authority to create disciplinary systems for the military. That is why the UCMJ, the Uniform Code of Military Justice, was created.

Why in the world should we have people in this administration advocating for people illegally in this country, people illegally in this country that want to do damage to America, and advocate that they have a right to a U.S. District Court that our own military heroes don't have a right to? The answer is: They don't have that right at all.

There is an article: Female Suicide Bomber Pair Kill 58 in Nigerian Refugee Camp. Having been there and having wept with family members who have lost kids, had kids kidnapped, held, their little girls raped repeatedly for months now, and the best this administration does is start a little social media campaign: Bring Back Our Girls, are you kidding me?

Give Nigeria all the Intel they need to wipe out Boko Haram. Let them do it.

The Taliban was totally defeated between October of 2001 and February of 2002. Without one single American life lost, we had embedded military in Afghanistan, no lives lost, and the Taliban was totally routed by February. Then we did something that wasn't very smart. We began basically an occupation of Afghanistan. It hasn't worked out well.

Here is an article: CIA Director Says Islamic Group Has Used, Can Make Chemical Weapons. It quotes Brennan on CBS News and Lehrer on 60 Minutes as saying: The CIA believes the IS group has the ability to make small amounts of mustard and chlorine gas for weapons, and "there are reports that ISIS has access to chemical precursors and munitions that they can use."

Mr. Speaker, we need to have learned our lesson, and we haven't. If this administration doesn't stand up, more lives will be needlessly lost.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. STIVERS (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of his duties with the Ohio National Guard.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 757. An act to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

H.R. 907. An act to improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

H.R. 1428. An act to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 31, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until Tuesday, February 23, 2016, at 2 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4329. A letter from the Deputy Director, Directorate of Cooperative and State Programs, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Maine State Plan for State and Local Government Employers [Docket No.: OSHA-2015-0003] (RIN: 1218-AC97) received February 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4330. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of Regional Haze BART Alternative Measure: Washington [EPA-R10-OAR-2015-0398; FRL-9942-15-Region 10] received February 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4331. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Benzyl acetate; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0783; FRL-9941-49] received February 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4332. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Clean Air Act Title V Operating Permit Program Revision; West Virginia [EPA-R03-OAR-2015-0594; FRL-9942-12-Region 3] received February 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4333. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Diflubenzuron; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0672; FRL-9939-59] received February 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4334. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition Library Address; Technical Amendments [Docket No.: FDA-2015-N-0011] received February 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4335. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Venezuela that was declared in Executive Order 13692 of March 8, 2015, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4336. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements other than treaties en-

tered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(d) Public Law 92-403, Sec. 1; (86 Stat. 619); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4337. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, pursuant to Secs. 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-050; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4338. A letter from the Assistant Director for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Cuban Assets Control Regulations received February 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4339. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting notification of two nominations, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4340. A letter from the General Counsel, Peace Corps, transmitting a notification of an action on nomination, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4341. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Ironman 70.3 Miami; Miami, FL [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0483] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4342. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Consumer Price Index Adjustments of Oil Pollution Act of 1990 Limits of Liability — Vessels, Deepwater Ports and Onshore Facilities [Docket No.: USCG-2013-1006] (RIN: 1625-AC14) received February 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4343. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31055; Amdt. No.: 3677] received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4344. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31054; Amdt. No.: 3676] received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4345. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Ap-

proach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31053; Amdt. No.: 3675] received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4346. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31051; Amdt. No.: 3673] received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4347. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31052; Amdt. No.: 3674] received February 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4348. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Shore (Belt) Parkway Bridge Construction, Mill Basin; Brooklyn, NY [Docket Number: USCG-2014-1044] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4349. A letter from the Inspector General, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting the FY 2017 Congressional Budget Justification for the Office of Inspector General of the Railroad Retirement Board, pursuant to 45 U.S.C. 231f(f); Public Law 93-445, title I, Sec. 416; (97 Stat. 436); jointly to the Committees on Appropriations, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Ways and Means.

4350. A letter from the Labor Member and Management Member, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting the Congressional Justification of Budget Estimates for FY 2017 including the Performance Plan for the year for the Railroad Retirement Board, pursuant to 45 U.S.C. 231f(f); Public Law 93-445, title I, Sec. 416; (97 Stat. 436); jointly to the Committees on Appropriations, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Ways and Means.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4551. A bill to require the establishment of a Consumer Price Index for Older Americans to compute cost-of-living increases for monthly insurance benefits under title II of the Social Security Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JOLLY (for himself and Mr. O'ROURKE):

H.R. 4552. A bill to require all gas stations offering self-service to meet certain accessibility standards for individuals with disabilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HARPER (for himself, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi):

H.R. 4553. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to clarify reasonable costs for critical access hospital payments under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DELBENE (for herself, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. WALZ, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. JONES, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CARNEY, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. HONDA, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. SERRANO, and Ms. MCCOLLUM):

H.R. 4554. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to ensure that certain members of the National Guard serving on full-time National Guard duty and dependents remain eligible for the TRICARE program during periods in which the member is responding to a disaster; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. LAMBORN (for himself, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. ZELDIN, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. ROSS, Mr. WALKER, and Mr. COOK):

H.R. 4555. A bill to clarify the application of section 304 of the Tariff Act of 1930 as it relates to articles from areas of the West Bank and Gaza that are not administered by Israel; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HIMES, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JONES, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. COHEN, Mr. RUSH, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio):

H.R. 4556. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to hire psychiatrists; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio (for himself, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. SHMKUS, and Mrs. ROBY):

H.R. 4557. A bill to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. THOMPSON of California (for himself, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. KIND, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mr. WITTMAN):

H.R. 4558. A bill to authorize the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to seek compensation for injuries to trust resources and use those funds to restore, replace, or ac-

quire equivalent resources, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FRANKS of Arizona (for himself, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. CRAMER):

H.R. 4559. A bill to establish the United States Commission on the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BEATTY (for herself, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. CLAY, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. LEE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. NORTON, Ms. FUDGE, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. VEASEY, and Ms. PLASKETT):

H.R. 4560. A bill to assist survivors of stroke and other debilitating health occurrences in returning to work; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida (for himself, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN):

H.R. 4561. A bill to authorize the use of Ebola funds for Zika response and preparedness; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida (for himself, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN):

H.R. 4562. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program to prevent and control mosquito-borne diseases; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida (for himself and Mr. MURPHY of Florida):

H.R. 4563. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit for research related to the development of a vaccine for the Zika virus; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CROWLEY (for himself, Mr. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. NEAL, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 4564. A bill to redesignate the small triangular property located in Washington, DC, and designated by the National Park Service as reservation 302 as "Robert Emmet Park", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. DELAURIO:

H.R. 4565. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to restrict direct-to-consumer drug advertising; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KNIGHT (for himself, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Mr. SCHIFF):

H.R. 4566. A bill to withdraw certain lands in Los Angeles County, California, from entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. LANCE (for himself and Ms. MATSUI):

H.R. 4567. A bill to increase the number of States that may conduct Medicaid demonstration programs to improve access to community mental health services; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico (for himself, Mr. POLIS, and Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico):

H.R. 4568. A bill to make funds available to the Department of Energy National Laboratories for the Federal share of cooperative research and development agreements that support maturing Laboratory technology and transferring it to the private sector, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Ms. MATSUI (for herself and Mr. LANCE):

H.R. 4569. A bill to amend the Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014 (PAMA) to extend and expand the Medicaid community mental health services demonstration program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. MENG (for herself and Mr. ZINKE):

H.R. 4570. A bill to amend the Department of Agriculture program for research and extension grants to increase participation by women and underrepresented minorities in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to redesignate the program as the "Jeannette Rankin Women and Minorities in STEM Fields Program"; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Ms. MOORE (for herself, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. RANGEL, Mrs. BEATTY, and Ms. BORDALLO):

H.R. 4571. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve the health of children and help better understand and enhance awareness about unexpected sudden death in early life; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 4572. A bill to amend the Trade Act of 1974 to authorize a State to reimburse certain costs incurred by the State in providing training to workers after a petition for certification of eligibility for trade adjustment assistance has been filed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER:

H.R. 4573. A bill to provide for research on the use of child restraint devices on commercial aircraft; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER (for himself and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 4574. A bill to require the Federal Aviation Administration to adopt safety standards regarding fuel systems in newly manufactured helicopters; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. POLIQUIN (for himself and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia):

H.R. 4575. A bill to amend the Federal Home Loan Bank Act to provide investment authority to support rural infrastructure development, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mrs. RADEWAGEN (for herself and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska):

H.R. 4576. A bill to implement the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean, to implement the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. ROHRABACHER (for himself and Mr. PETERSON):

H.R. 4577. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income compensation received by employees consisting of qualified distributions of employer stock; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SHERMAN (for himself, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. BECERRA, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FARR, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. POCAN, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Mr. CÁRDENAS):

H.R. 4578. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide for minimum safety standards for underground gas storage facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. STEWART (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. CHAFFETZ, and Mrs. LOVE):

H.R. 4579. A bill to withdraw certain Bureau of Land Management land in the State of Utah from all forms of public appropriation, to provide for the shared management of the withdrawn land by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of the Air Force to facilitate enhanced weapons testing and pilot training, enhance public safety, and provide for continued public access to the withdrawn land, to provide for the exchange of certain Federal land and State land, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ASHFORD:

H. Con. Res. 116. Concurrent resolution condemning North Korea's February 6, 2016, long-range rocket launch and North Korea's February 9, 2016, restart of a plutonium reactor; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4551.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4552.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. HARPER:

H.R. 4553.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section VIII

By Ms. DELBENE:

H.R. 4554.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LAMBORN:

H.R. 4555.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the power "to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes."

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4556.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution states The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . .

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio:

H.R. 4557.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution, To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. THOMPSON of California:

H.R. 4558.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 1

By Mr. FRANKS of Arizona:

H.R. 4559.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 3 (related to regulation of Commerce with foreign nations and among the several States).

By Mrs. BEATTY:

H.R. 4560.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida:

H.R. 4561.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida:

H.R. 4562.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida:

H.R. 4563.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution

By Mr. CROWLEY:

H.R. 4564.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section VIII

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 4565.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clauses 3 and 18 of the United States Congress

By Mr. KNIGHT:

H.R. 4566.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Sec. 3 refers to the managerial authority over property owned by the Federal Government

By Mr. LANCE:

H.R. 4567.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, of the United States Constitution

This states that "Congress shall have the power to . . . lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States."

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico:

H.R. 4568.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Ms. MATSUI:

H.R. 4569.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, §8, clause 3, the Commerce Clause

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 4570.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. MOORE:

H.R. 4571.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 4572.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. PERLMUTTER:

H.R. 4573.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. PERLMUTTER:

H.R. 4574.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 4575.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

"To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes:" as enumerated in Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. RADEWAGEN:

H.R. 4576.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3—The Congress shall have power . . . to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. ROHRABACHER:

H.R. 4577.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section, 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, which gives Congress the "power to lay and collect taxes," as well as Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution, which gives Congress the "power to lay and collect taxes on incomes . . .".

By Mr. SHERMAN:

H.R. 4578.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. STEWART:

H.R. 4579.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 27: Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. MICA, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. UPTON, Mr. YODER, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. BUCK, Mr. HOLDING, and Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 188: Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 228: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 250: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 267: Mrs. DINGELL.

H.R. 494: Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, and Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H.R. 534: Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 604: Mr. FLEMING.

H.R. 663: Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 664: Mr. NOLAN and Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 716: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H.R. 759: Ms. BASS and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 775: Ms. TITUS and Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 793: Mr. BABIN.

H.R. 799: Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Ms. MOORE, and Mr. KIND.

H.R. 814: Mr. POSEY and Mr. BUCHANAN.

H.R. 829: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 921: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 932: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 953: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 969: Mr. GALLEGO.

H.R. 1095: Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 1116: Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 1197: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 1221: Miss RICE of New York.

H.R. 1342: Mr. WALBERG and Mr. BLUM.

H.R. 1391: Mr. CLAY and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 1399: Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 1486: Mr. CONAWAY and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 1516: Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 1733: Mr. CROWLEY.

H.R. 1742: Ms. MENG.

H.R. 1797: Mrs. DINGELL and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1957: Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 1958: Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 2156: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 2264: Mrs. WAGNER and Mr. AMODEI.

H.R. 2293: Mr. THOMPSON of California and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 2367: Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 2411: Mr. MCNERNEY and Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 2418: Mr. ROONEY of Florida and Mr. HUNTER.

H.R. 2515: Mr. CRENSHAW.

H.R. 2530: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 2553: Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 2698: Mr. RENACCI and Mrs. WALORSKI.

H.R. 2844: Mr. CLEAVER.

H.R. 2901: Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H.R. 2911: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2990: Mr. REED.

H.R. 3060: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 3084: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 3099: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 3152: Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 3180: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 3187: Mr. LABRADOR.

H.R. 3190: Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 3225: Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 3235: Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 3250: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 3294: Mr. KATKO and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 3299: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 3308: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. ESTY, Mr. BEYER, Ms. TITUS, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 3326: Mr. TIBERI.

H.R. 3339: Ms. BONAMICI and Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 3355: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama.

H.R. 3377: Ms. BASS and Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 3381: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 3406: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 3470: Mr. COHEN, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. JEFFRIES, and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 3497: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 3546: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 3599: Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 3684: Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 3706: Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 3765: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama and Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 3862: Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 3952: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 3954: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.

H.R. 3957: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.

H.R. 3977: Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 3985: Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. KIND.

H.R. 3986: Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 4007: Mr. KNIGHT.

H.R. 4017: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 4073: Mr. VAN HOLLEN and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 4137: Ms. NORTON, Ms. FUDGE, and Mrs. DINGELL.

H.R. 4229: Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. DONOVAN, and Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 4247: Mr. HASTINGS and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 4249: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 4260: Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 4262: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 4279: Mr. VISCLOSKEY.

H.R. 4293: Mrs. WALORSKI and Mr. MACARTHUR.

H.R. 4313: Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 4335: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.

H.R. 4336: Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. FORBES, Mr. VALADAO, and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 4342: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 4352: Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. RENACCI, and Mr. PAULSEN.

H.R. 4365: Mr. HARRIS.

H.R. 4388: Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 4396: Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. GRAYSON, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 4400: Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 4406: Mrs. WALORSKI.

H.R. 4410: Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 4420: Mr. MEEHAN and Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 4430: Mrs. NOEM.

H.R. 4433: Mr. DELANEY, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 4441: Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. HANNA, and Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 4457: Mr. SCHWEIKERT and Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 4461: Mr. HUNTER, Mr. BUCSHON, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 4462: Ms. LEE.

H.R. 4475: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 4479: Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.

H.R. 4486: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.

H.R. 4488: Mr. BEYER, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 4519: Mrs. LAWRENCE and Mr. JONES.

H.R. 4520: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. MOOLENAAR, and Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.

H.R. 4521: Mr. SCHRADER and Mr. WOMACK.

H.R. 4522: Mr. HECK of Nevada and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H.R. 4524: Mr. LEVIN.

H.R. 4525: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 4528: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 4534: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 4540: Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 4546: Ms. SPEIER.

H.J. Res. 12: Mr. BRAT.

H. Con. Res. 100: Mr. ROHRABACHER.

H. Res. 32: Ms. LOFGREN.

H. Res. 52: Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H. Res. 318: Mr. CICILLINE.

H. Res. 393: Mr. ASHFORD.

H. Res. 431: Mr. BUCSHON.

H. Res. 501: Mr. NEAL, Mrs. BEATTY, and Mr. ASHFORD.

H. Res. 509: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.

H. Res. 540: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ and Ms. BASS.

H. Res. 551: Mr. LAMBORN.

H. Res. 571: Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. PITTS, Mr. CRAMER, and Mrs. LUMMIS.

H. Res. 588: Mr. JONES.

H. Res. 604: Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H. Res. 610: Mr. DELANEY.

H. Res. 613: Ms. FOX and Mrs. NOEM.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

BORDER TO BORDER BROADBAND:
BETTER TOGETHER**HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with my Minnesota colleague Congressman COLLIN PETERSON, to recognize the Blandin Foundation and all they do for rural Minnesota, and particularly for their efforts to provide broadband internet service to all Minnesotans.

I was honored to recently speak at the 'Border to Border Broadband: Better Together' conference, which was sponsored by the Blandin Foundation and the Minnesota Office of Broadband Development. More than 170 participants came together and agreed on a vision statement for the future of broadband of Minnesota. Today, Congressman PETERSON and I rise in strong support of that vision, which states that "All Minnesotans will be able to use convenient, affordable world class broadband networks that enable us to survive and thrive in our communities and across the globe."

The fact is, we need high-speed broadband in our rural communities. It's a necessity required to help grow our small town rural economy and compete, start new businesses, create new jobs, attract new people and modernize the education and health care services so essential to quality of life. Across our expansive and diverse district the Blandin Foundation is working hard to make sure rural communities have access to world-class high-speed broadband internet.

Once again, we would like to thank the Blandin Foundation for all they do to strengthen rural Minnesota through their many important programs, in addition to their work on rural broadband.

RECOGNIZING ROBERT C.
MORALES**HON. WILL HURD**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of Mr. Robert C. Morales.

Mr. Morales passed away on Tuesday, February 9, 2016. He was well known in Van Horn, Texas for his outstanding leadership in the community. Not only did he provide Van Horn with a timely and reliable news source, but he also mentored unemployed youth, played the organ at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church, and was a member of a local band, Los Pecadores. Mr. Morales also served

on the Culberson-Allamore ISD School Board, Culberson County Property Tax Appraisal District Board, and the Town of Van Horn Zoning Board.

Mr. Morales was raised in Van Horn, graduated from Van Horn High School in 1976, and earned a college degree from the University of Texas at Austin. After graduation, he worked for the Laredo Morning News and the City of Laredo, later accepting jobs at Enron and Dr Pepper. His contributions to the town of Van Horn and the 23rd Congressional District of Texas have been integral to the community and will not be forgotten. On behalf of the 23rd Congressional District of Texas, I thank Mr. Morales for his involvement in Van Horn and his dedication to serving others. May he rest in peace.

RECOGNIZING MRS. JUANITA
PAYNE-GALBREATH AS THE
OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA,
EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFES-
SIONAL OF THE YEAR**HON. JEFF MILLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Mrs. Juanita Payne-Galbreath as the Okaloosa County, Florida, Education Support Professional of the Year. Mrs. Payne-Galbreath has proven to be a truly exceptional mentor whose impact extends far beyond her students, and I am proud to recognize her success and outstanding achievements.

Mrs. Payne-Galbreath graduated from Niceville High School before attending Pensacola Junior College. After completing her studies, Mrs. Payne-Galbreath joined the Okaloosa County School District, where she has served thousands of students over the last 18 years and has filled numerous important roles. She began her education career at Combs New Heights as an assistant, lunchroom monitor, and Exceptional Student Education classroom assistant, before continuing her career at Fort Walton Beach High School where she worked for five years in several capacities. She then moved to her current position at Crestview High School, where she is as an ESE para-professional.

Outside of school, Mrs. Payne-Galbreath—a loving wife to her husband, Joshua and mother to their ten children—still finds time to serve Okaloosa County students, going far above and beyond the core responsibilities of her job. Her dedication to the students of Okaloosa County and her community is exemplified by the "Showers of Blessings Nook," a service she created that provides high school students and their families basic needs such as—shoes, toiletries, and food gift cards.

Northwest Florida is grateful to have such a compassionate individual working with our

youth. Without question, her tangible contributions to her students are appreciated. It is Mrs. Payne-Galbreath's love, faith, and nurturing character, however, for which we are most grateful.

Mr. Speaker, the Okaloosa County Education Support Professional of the Year award is a true reflection of Mrs. Payne-Galbreath's steadfast dedication to the students of Okaloosa County. I am privileged to recognize Juanita for her accomplishments and her continuing commitment to excellence. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating her and thanking her for her dedication to serving the students, teachers, and families of the Northwest Florida community. We wish Mrs. Payne-Galbreath all the best for continued success.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, ANTI-SEMITISM, AND RULE OF LAW IN THE
OSCE**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about human rights crises in Europe and Eurasia. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War, many people expected that freedom, democracy, and peace, would spread throughout Europe and Eurasia. And yet now, the religious freedom of Christians, and people of other faiths, is being regularly violated. Russia invaded its neighbor Ukraine, illegally annexed Crimea, and is fueling and funding violent proxies in the eastern Donbas region of that country. Deadly anti-Semitism is again stalking European Jewish communities. The worst refugee and migrants' crisis in Europe since World War II has engulfed the continent. Autocrats are using the law, and acting outside the law, to crush democratic opposition to their despotism.

Violent anti-Semitic attacks increased 100 to 400 percent in some European countries between 2013 and 2014. Anti-Semitism, and the evil goal of killing Jewish people, is hardwired into ISIS and those it inspires. Perhaps no other group in Europe is more at risk from ISIS attacks than the European Jewish community. That is why I authored House Resolution 354 as a blueprint for vital actions that are needed to prevent another Paris, Brussels, or Copenhagen. The House of Representatives passed it unanimously and I intend to hold a hearing over the coming weeks to explore what is necessary to ensure these actions are taken.

In Crimea, the occupying authorities have targeted and retaliated against the Crimean Tatar people for opposing the annexation and the rule that has followed. Crimean Tatars have been arrested, detained, interrogated,

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

and sometimes charged with extremism, illegal assembly, or belonging to an unregistered religious group. Religious minorities, including the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, have likewise been repressed. Crimeans who opposed or oppose the Russian takeover of Crimea, or have been unwilling to seek a Russian passport, have been at risk of a crackdown. Restrictions have proliferated, including even on the teaching of the Ukrainian language or access to Ukrainian culture.

Repression is also rife in Azerbaijan. The Commission recently held a hearing on the terrible plight of political prisoners in Azerbaijan, particularly the imprisonment of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty journalist Khadija Ismayilova. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, Azerbaijan leads all of the countries in Eurasia in jailing journalists. In 2015, the government imprisoned many well-known activists, including Anar Mammadli, the courageous head of EMDS, the leading election monitoring organization in Azerbaijan. He spoke the truth about the fraudulent 2013 presidential election and is still paying the price. I met with Anar's father—a very gentle man—just a few months after Anar was arrested and saw how Anar's family is suffering from this injustice.

More than 40 years ago, all the countries of Europe, the United States, and Canada, formed the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, to prevent and respond to these kinds of crises. This week, I chaired a hearing of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Helsinki Commission, where we heard testimony from Ambassador Michael Link, Director of the OSCE's Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

Mr. Speaker, his testimony was a reminder of the serious threats to European Jewish communities, Christians and other religious minorities, and to the rule of law in Europe and Eurasia. We must remain vigilant and ensure that the United States, as an original participating State of the OSCE, strongly supports the OSCE's efforts to ensure European Jewish communities are safe and secure, that Christians and other religious minorities are free to fully practice their faith, and that the rule of law prevails.

RECOGNIZING LIFELONG EDUCATOR DR. AUBREY W. BONNETT

HON. KATHLEEN M. RICE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Miss RICE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Dr. Aubrey W. Bonnett, a resident of New York's Fourth Congressional District and a life-long educator.

Throughout his 43-year career in higher education, Dr. Bonnett has achieved tremendous success as a scholar of immigration, race, sociology and diasporic studies, particularly with relation to our nation's vibrant African American, West Indian and Caribbean communities.

Dr. Bonnett currently serves as a professor emeritus in the department of American Stud-

ies at the State University of New York (SUNY)—Old Westbury, where he also previously served as the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost. Dr. Bonnett is also the dean emeritus of the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences at the California State University—San Bernardino and was the first black Dean hired at the University. Having authored and coauthored four books and more than one hundred scholarly articles, Dr. Bonnett is truly one of the preeminent sociologists in the state of New York. Dr. Bonnett has dedicated his life to exploring and shedding light on the immigrant experience in the United States, and as a native of British Guyana, he is a testament to the incredible and critical contributions that immigrants have made to American academia.

I'd like to congratulate Dr. Bonnett on his retirement and on an incredible career. It is truly an honor to serve as his representative in Congress.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RUBEN GALLEGO

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and was not present for one roll call vote on Tuesday, February 9, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted in this manner:

Roll Call Vote Number 64—9/11 Memorial Act—yes.

HONORING LAURIE HARKNESS, PH.D., ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to join the many family, friends, and colleagues who have gathered as Dr. Laurie Harkness, founder and Director of the VA Connecticut Healthcare System's Errera Community Care Center, celebrates her retirement after decades of dedicated service to our community's veterans.

To say that Laurie is a remarkable public servant is an understatement. During her tenure with the VA Connecticut Healthcare System, Laurie has demonstrated an unparalleled commitment to ensuring that our veterans are receiving the best possible care and have access to the programs, services, and resources they need to live healthy, independent, fulfilling lives. While her contributions to veterans care are innumerable, the most well-known is the Errera Community Care Center which she founded more than twenty years ago.

Over the course of its history, the Errera Center has evolved into one of the leading centers of innovation in psychosocial rehabilitation and in the integration of the psychosocial and biomedical approaches. Serving veterans struggling with mental illness and/or

substance abuse disorders, homelessness, and/or aging, the team of multidisciplinary mental health professionals at the Errera Center work together to provide an array of community-based rehabilitative programs including day and crisis intervention programs, vocational programs, housing programs, homeless outreach and advocacy and case management programs. Providing a myriad of support to hundreds of veterans every year, the Errera Center has been nationally recognized for its exceptional model of care that emphasizes evidenced-based clinical programs provided in conjunction with a comprehensive network of community partnerships and repeatedly been awarded status as a VA Center of Excellence for the Care of Individuals with Mental Illness.

Laurie's work has also been recognized with numerous local, state and national awards and recognitions. She is the recipient of the Olin E. Teague Award, the highest VA clinical award given, as well as the distinguished Eli Lilly Lifetime Achievement Award for her work in developing programs that assist veterans with serious mental illnesses reintegrate back into their own communities. She has been recognized by Vietnam Veterans of America for her service and dedication to Vietnam veterans and their families and was awarded the "Excellence in Community Mental Health Services" award from NAMI, the first non-MD recipient and first VA employee to be so honored. Her legacy of service will serve as a standard for which to strive for generations to come.

I would be remiss if I did not extend a personal note of thanks to Laurie for her many years of guidance and assistance. Over my tenure in Congress, Laurie has been an invaluable resource for myself, my staff, and my constituents. Her expertise, compassion, and leadership has made all the difference and I consider myself fortunate to have had so many opportunities to work with her.

Laurie Harkness is a reflection of the very best in public service and her presence will certainly be missed by all of those fortunate enough to have worked with her as well as the countless veterans who have benefitted from her outstanding work. Today, as she reflects on her career with the VA, she can be proud of the indelible mark she has left on the agency. It is my great honor to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Laurie as she celebrates her retirement and extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to her for her many years of service. I wish her all the best for many more years of health and happiness as she enjoys her retirement.

HONORING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS FOUNDATION, INCORPORATED & THE 1976 CLASS OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the 40th Anniversary of the

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Incorporated (CBCF) and the 1976 Class of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC). Established in 1976, this non-profit, non-partisan education and research institution was founded by Nira Hardon Long, Albert L. Nellum and Congresswoman Yvonne B. Burke (CA). The CBCF's commitment to advancing the global black community by developing leaders, informing policy, and educating the public has not wavered and will remain steadfast for many years to come.

One of the CBCF's innovative initiatives is its virtual library project called 'Avoice.' Avoice: African American Voices in Congress launched in 2006 and has received over 27 million hits to date. Through this virtual portal people from around the world log onto the Avoice website to find out about the legislative work done by African American members of Congress.

The CBCF and the CBC have collaborated for many years on policy issues that would uplift the African American community in the United States including major laws like the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and legislation that created the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday. Even before the CBCF or CBC were created, African American members of Congress, black civil rights leaders, and others have been on the forefront advocating for criminal justice reform, environmental justice, voting rights protection, and economic empowerment for African Americans.

Mr. Speaker, when CBCF was founded in 1976, there were 17 members of the Congressional Black Caucus Congress who stood together to empower America's neglected citizens and to address their legislative concerns.

These members are—former Representatives Yvonne B. Burke (CA), Shirley A. Chisholm (NY), William Clay, Sr. (MO), Cardiss W. Collins (IL), Charles C. Diggs, Jr. (MI), Ron Dellums (CA), Harold Ford, Sr. (TN), Augustus F. Hawkins (CA), Barbara C. Jordan (TX), Ralph H. Metcalfe (IL), Parren J. Mitchell (MD), Robert N.C. Nix, Sr. (PA), Louis Stokes (OH), Andrew Young (GA), and our two distinguished members still serving this institution—Representatives JOHN CONYERS, JR. (MI) and CHARLES B. RANGEL (NY).

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 40th Anniversary of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation and the 1976 Class of the Congressional Black Caucus and recognizing their tremendous contributions to our nation.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL MARRIAGE WEEK

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge and recognize that this is National Marriage Week. The sacred vows that a man and woman exchange as a part of the sacrament of marriage have been part of our culture from the very beginning of humanity. It's an institution that, over the centuries, has proven to be the best for raising a family, and

creating self-sufficient and well-balanced children.

However, this week as we celebrate National Marriage Week, I remain deeply concerned that this sacred institution is suffering in our country. More than half of all marriages in the United States end in divorce. Fewer couples are choosing to marry. And there are still large numbers of women having children out of wedlock.

More than half of all babies born to women under the age of 30 are now born outside of marriage. Fifty years ago, that number was around 5 percent. While the culture we live in today is no doubt responsible for much of this shift, the government could be doing more to help this situation. Our laws do not encourage marriage, but in many cases, they also discourage marriage by imposing tax penalties on those who would like to marry.

So, as we recognize the importance of marriage, I believe that it's time that Congress remove the government-imposed financial barriers—which is often called the marriage tax penalty—that too often make marriage a second choice for these couples.

I am blessed to have been married to my wife, Caroline, for almost 22 years. Our partnership is one of the great joys of my life.

I am proud to recognize National Marriage Week and the institution of marriage here in the United States as well as around the world.

HONORING GEORGE PRESCOTT BUSH AND JOSÉ ANTONIO MEADE KURIBREÑA

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Texas Land Commissioner George Prescott Bush and Mexican Secretary of Social Development José Antonio Meade Kuribreña, who have been recognized as the 2016 Señor Internacional Award recipients by LULAC Council 12 in Laredo, Texas. For over 30 years, LULAC Council 12 has recognized Latinos on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border for their service to the community and exceptional individual achievements.

George P. Bush currently serves as the Texas Land Commissioner, a post in which he continues the public service legacy of the Bush family. Commissioner Bush was born in Houston, Texas, to former Florida Governor Jeb Bush and Columba Garnica Gallo. After graduating from Rice University, Commissioner Bush worked as a public school teacher in Miami. He then went on to earn a Juris Doctorate from the University of Texas Law School. After attending law school, he co-founded a private equity firm, Pennybacker Capital LLC, and later founded an energy consulting firm, St. Augustine Partners.

In 2007, Commissioner Bush joined the Naval Reserve and in 2010, he courageously served an eight-month tour of duty as an officer in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. In 2014, he was elected Texas Land Commissioner, beginning his political career. Commissioner Bush prides himself on sup-

porting our veterans, increasing funds for public education, and providing a path for the U.S. to become energy-independent.

Secretary José Antonio Meade was born in Mexico City, Mexico, and is an economist, lawyer, diplomat, and currently serves as Mexico's Secretary of Social Development. He received his degree in Economics from the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, one of Mexico's preeminent institutions of higher learning. He continued his education at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, where he studied law and also received his PhD in Economics from Yale University. He served as a professor at ITAM and Yale University. He has received recognition for his research on Economic Analysis of the Law and has also been given the National Tlacaélel Award.

Throughout his illustrious career, Secretary Meade has served his country in several important posts such as: Chief Executive Officer of the National Bank for Rural Credit, Chief Executive Officer of Financiera Rural, Secretary of Energy, Secretary of Finance and Public Credit, and Secretary of Foreign Relations.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize Commissioner George Prescott Bush and Secretary José Antonio Meade Kuribreña.

HONORING RALPH VERSCHOOR

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the birthday of Mr. Ralph Verschoor, who will be ninety-five years old on February 20, 2016.

In 1926, Ralph was born in Hot Springs, Arkansas. In 1930, he moved to Colorado with his family. His father then decided to move away from the cold and snowy Colorado area and ventured to Ceres, California.

On May 3, 1944, Ralph's life was forever changed when he was drafted into the U.S. Army where he served in the 503rd Airborne. He completed 16 weeks of basic training at Fort Bragg in North Carolina before he was transferred to Fort Benning, Georgia where he underwent parachute training. Despite being injured on his first jump he continued with the training and successfully received his wings.

Before long, Ralph was sent to Fort Ord and then San Francisco, where he boarded a ship on a 31 day voyage to New Guinea. After departing New Guinea, Ralph travelled to the Philippines. There, in March 1946 on the Beach of Negros Island, he experienced combat for the first time. Ralph spent his time as a rifleman, but due to unfortunate circumstances, his weapon malfunctioned. He was stuck with this weapon until the 1st Scout was wounded and they were able to trade weapons. At this point Ralph became 1st Scout and spent six weeks leading his troops into the jungle. Requested by his Captain to become a combat medic, Ralph was tasked with giving first aid to his wounded comrades. He witnessed many traumatizing events in his line of duty that he will never forget.

The war ended in the summer of 1945. Ralph, as a combat medic, was asked to travel to Hiroshima, Japan to study radiation burns. After a six month stay, he was sent to Sendai, Japan to join a medical team aiding in the treatment of those exposed to communicable diseases. Upon returning from the war in 1946, Ralph made his way back home to California, settling in Escalon, where he has resided for the last 70 years. Ralph was elected to the Escalon City Council in 1957, and later served as Mayor.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Ralph Verschoor for his 95th birthday and outstanding contributions to the community of Escalon as well as our country.

**RECOGNIZING MEAGAN WARREN,
FOUNDER OF BOOKS FOR BED-
TIME, FROM BEXLEY, OHIO**

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the residents of the Third Congressional District of Ohio, I am pleased to commend Meagan Warren for being recognized by the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards as "Ohio's Top Youth Volunteer" in 2016.

A seventh-grade student at Bexley Middle School in my district, Meagan has always been an avid reader.

For Meagan, who learned to read when she was two years old, it is hard to imagine not having a book within arm's reach, especially at bedtime.

Unfortunately, many children her age do not have the same fortune.

One night, while reading in bed, Meagan thought about other children her age that had no books to read.

She committed herself to doing something about it.

Meagan's late-night inspiration spurred her into action and, with the help of her family, she founded Books for Bedtime, a nonprofit organization that has collected more than 14,000 books from neighbors and local businesses for low-income children since 2014.

Books for Bedtime's mission is simple: to distribute books to low-income children and to install the "magic of reading" in Columbus-area students.

Meagan's unbridled passion for reading and service has impacted countless children and families in Central Ohio.

Today, I commend Meagan Warren on this well-deserved recognition as "Ohio's Top Youth Volunteer" and thank her for making Columbus the place we are all proud to call "home."

**TRIBUTE TO MS. THERESA
(TEESE) FAMBRO HOOKS**

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speak-

er, I rise to pay tribute to a personal friend who was an outstanding award winning columnist and photographer for the Chicago Daily Defender Newspaper. In addition to her outstanding work at the Defender Newspapers as a woman's editor and society columnist, Teesee published articles about community events and social activities. She was indeed a social activist and involved herself in many organizations such as the Westside Association for Community Action where I was also actively involved.

Teesee started working with the Chicago Defender Newspaper in 1961 and although she may have retired, she never quit. While Teesee was comprehensive in her approach to journalism, she was totally dedicated to issues involving women and girls.

Theresa Fambro Hooks was known to the world as "Teesee," the socialite who traveled the world highlighting the lives and achievements of others put her in a class by herself. When your name appeared in Teesee's column, you knew that you had arrived.

Family and friends of Teesee Frambo Hooks, you have our condolences and may she rest in peace.

**DR. E. ANN MCGEE—A TRIBUTE TO
TWO DECADES OF OUTSTANDING
SERVICE TO SEMINOLE STATE
COLLEGE**

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Dr. E. Ann McGee of Seminole State College in the 7th Congressional District. Dr. McGee is the second president and first woman to head the college in its half-century history. This year marks her 20th anniversary of leading Seminole State College in Central Florida. The tenure of this education leader has been highlighted by the impressive expansion and positive development at this outstanding educational institution. Not only has she led the college, her work in the community and contributions to higher education in our region and state have set a standard for all to follow.

Dr. McGee's two decades at the helm of Seminole State College have seen the college go from one to six locations, begin offering four year bachelor's degrees and grow to become the eighth largest college in the 28-college Florida College System. Currently, over 30,000 students attend Seminole State College each year.

Her initiative and vision for the future have helped pioneer the DirectConnect to UCF program that has become a national model for making four year degrees more affordable and accessible. She has also partnered with Seminole County Public Schools to reduce the number of incoming freshman in need of remedial math classes from 78 percent to just 15 percent.

Dr. McGee grew up in Largo, Florida and is a graduate of St. Petersburg College. She has earned a Bachelor's in Speech and a Master's in Communication from Florida State University, as well as a Doctorate in Education Ad-

ministration from Nova Southeastern University.

Dr. McGee is a respected professional in the education field, having been recognized widely for her work as President of Seminole State College as well as former Chair of the Florida College System Foundation and a trustee of the Phi Theta Kappa Foundation. She is also a board member of the Higher Education Research & Development Council, the American Association of Community Colleges and the Metro-Orlando Economic Development Commission.

She has been recognized far and wide for her many successes, having received the Atlantic Institute Central Florida Global Vision and Education Award, the Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission's James B. Greene Economic Development Award, the Women's Executive Council of Orlando's Women of Achievement in Education Award, Phi Theta Kappa International's President's Council Gold Medallion, the Orlando Business Journal's Publisher's Award, St. Petersburg College "Most Outstanding Graduate" Award, the Association of Community College Trustees Marie Y. Martin "Top CEO" Award, Phi Theta Kappa's Shirley B. Gordon Award of Distinction and the Seminole County Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dr. McGee's contributions to our community and to the lives of thousands of students and young professionals across Central Florida cannot be understated. I ask my colleagues from Florida and Members to join in congratulating Dr. E. Ann McGee as we pay tribute to her two decades of outstanding service and dedication to Seminole State College.

**COMMEMORATING THE 75TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF THE PEORIA COUN-
TY SOIL & WATER CONSERVA-
TION DISTRICT**

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Peoria County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) on achieving their 75th anniversary.

Authorized under the District Act of 1937, the public servants of SWCD have assisted Peoria County landowners in promoting a healthy Midwestern ecosystem to ensure the mitigation of soil erosion and promotion of improved water quality and wildlife habitat for seventy-five years. Because of their sustained efforts in ecology and education, the local agricultural community continues to produce higher quality crops.

By playing an active role within our agrarian society, residents of Peoria County have the ability to take advantage of beneficial programs. The Conservation Practices Program (CPP) allows residents who undergo a project to benefit our land and water resources receive up to \$6,000 from the SWCD to complete the project. In addition, for those who wish to learn more about the advantages of conservation, the SWCD promotes the Gilles Family Tours in which participants tour a family farm and discover the values of conservation.

As a native of Peoria County, I consider myself fortunate that our county has the SWCD as a resource. Congratulations Peoria County Soil & Water Conservation District on a prosperous seventy-five years and I wish it many more years of success.

HONORING JOSÉ ANTONIO MEADE
KURIBREÑA

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mexican Secretary of Social Development José Antonio Meade Kuribreña, who has been recognized as a 2016 Señor Internacional Award recipient by the LULAC Council 12 in Laredo, Texas. For over 30 years, LULAC Council 12 has recognized Latinos on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border for their service to the community and exceptional individual achievements.

Secretary José Antonio Meade was born in Mexico City, Mexico, and is an economist, lawyer, diplomat and currently serves as Mexico's Secretary of Social Development. He received his degree in Economics from the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México one of Mexico's preeminent institutions of higher learning. He continued his education at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, where he studied law and also received his PhD in Economics from Yale University. He served as a professor at ITAM and Yale University. He has received recognition for his research on Economic Analysis of the Law and has also been given the National Tlacaélel Award.

Throughout his illustrious career, Secretary Meade has served his country in several important posts such as: Chief Executive Officer of the National Bank for Rural Credit, Chief Executive Officer of Financiera Rural, Secretary of Energy, Secretary of Finance and Public Credit, and Secretary of Foreign Relations.

Secretary Meade, has proven to be a strong advocate for the well-being of others. He has worked towards eliminating poverty, advanced food and nutritional programs, and has helped to create employment opportunities for those in need. His career serves as an example of what someone can accomplish through hard work and perseverance. He is an inspiration to many and it is my hope that others follow in his path.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize Secretary José Antonio Meade Kuribreña.

CONDOLENCES TO TAIWAN

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following letter:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2016.

Hon. AMBASSADOR SHEN,
Washington, DC.

DEAR AMBASSADOR SHEN: I write to you today to send my condolences for the loss of precious human lives and destruction caused by the earthquake in the city of Tainan on Saturday, February 6, 2016. Our nations share a long and rich relationship that makes our respective nations stronger, and facilitates the spread of the benefits of liberty throughout the world.

Through trade and the promotion of peaceful resolutions in the Asia-Pacific region, Taiwan has become a trusted ally of the United States. I firmly believe that our bond is stronger than ever. In this time of tragedy and loss, know that our citizens grieve with yours. Our hearts and prayers are with you, and we stand ready to offer assistance and our continued friendship as you mourn and recover.

Sincerely,

STEVE KING,
Member of Congress.

TRIBUTE TO ABIGAYIL CLARK

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I submit these remarks in honor of Abigayil Clark, a Bland County High School senior who has also been with the Bland Fire Department for a little more than two years. Remarkably, this young woman recently saved the life of a fellow firefighter, Zeke Harman.

The Bland County Messenger newspaper reports that around midnight on January 21, the two were among a group of firefighters responding to a fatal house fire. Harman began attacking the fire with the heavy fire hose, with Clark close behind. All of a sudden, Clark says, Harman abruptly turned off the hose before stumbling a few steps and falling directly into the fire.

Clark attempted to help Harman out of the fire, but quickly realized he was not going to get up on his own. She then picked him up and carried him approximately 15 feet before taking off their masks. Upon doing so, she observed that Harman was unconscious and not breathing. She was preparing to begin performing CPR when Harman regained consciousness.

Harman and Clark then recognized they were close enough to the burning residence that, if it were to collapse, they both would be injured. Clark again picked up Harman and helped get them both to safety.

"If it wasn't for her, I don't know what I would have done, honestly," Harman said. "I'm grateful, very, very grateful."

The newspaper reports Harman's tests at the Wythe County Community Hospital came back normal, and that both returned to running calls as members of the Bland County fire and rescue squads the very next day.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Abigayil Clark for her bravery in this situation. It is clear this young woman responded in fine fashion, and truly rose to the

occasion. I thank her for her efforts, and also thank Zeke Harman, their fellow firefighters, and other emergency personnel for their important work to help keep safe those in their communities.

HONORING HARRISON COLBERT

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Harrison Colbert from Steelville, Missouri for earning the rank of Eagle Scout. The Eagle Scout Award is the highest honor attainable in Boy Scouts. Only a small percentage of Boy Scouts reach the level of Eagle Scout, which requires years of dedicated effort.

Community service, leadership, and family values are the most important aspects of scouting, and are essential to becoming an Eagle Scout. After winning a difficult battle with cancer seven years ago, Harrison grew from this struggle into the exceptional young man he is today. He is a proud American, a helpful, honorable citizen, a strong Christian, and a leader by example. Harrison's Eagle Scout project involved collecting photos of tombstones in the Steelville Cemetery and uploading them to an online data base, known as Billion Graves, accessible to the public so individuals could locate their loved ones. Prior to his project, the Steelville Cemetery had no records of who was buried where, or any listing of the deceased whatsoever. Harrison's contributions and commitment to the Steelville community have helped prepare him as a leader who will excel in his future collegiate and professional careers.

It is my great pleasure to congratulate Harrison Colbert on his accomplishment of becoming an Eagle Scout before the U.S. House of Representatives.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION
TO EXPAND EMPLOYEE OWNER-
SHIP

HON. DANA ROHRABACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, today Congressman COLLIN PETERSON and I introduced legislation that will expand employee ownership throughout America. This legislation is a bold proposal that, if enacted, will put management and labor on the same side, thus fostering cooperation rather than conflict.

President Jefferson recognized ownership of private property as the keystone of a free society. Only a few decades after Jefferson's presidency, Abraham Lincoln pushed for, and Congress delivered, the Homestead Act of 1862, which has proven to be one of the most important manifestations of Jefferson's vision for broad-based ownership of property. More recently, President Reagan supported employee stock ownership, labeling it "the next logical step . . . a path that benefits a free people."

The belief that all citizens should be able to acquire property and wealth made our country the envy of the world. This legislation is consistent with the vision of our founding fathers because it empowers employees—not just a select few at the top of the management structure—to share in the development, success, and profits of a company. Our proposal would enhance accountability, productivity, and prosperity by making sure all employees—both inside and outside of management—keep an eye toward the long-term interests of their company.

Our proposal would provide certain tax benefits to employees who are recipients of a broad distribution of voting company stock, so long as that stock is held for a specified amount of time. Specifically, when an employer makes an across-the-board distribution of voting stock, the value of the grant would not be counted as an employee's taxable income, provided that the same number of shares is granted to every employee and the stock is held for five years. If held for ten years, employee stockholders can begin to sell or exchange a portion of their stock for other similarly-priced stock free of capital gains. Thus, after 20 years, the stock would be totally tax free.

The provisions of this bill are carefully crafted to allow for the empowerment of employees and the diversification of an employee's portfolio. The phase-in of the capital-gains-free treatment is meant to ensure that the company stock will not simply be dumped all at once.

One of the most important aspects of my bill is that it would, unlike traditional ESOPs, allow employees to directly own the stock granted to them, including all voting rights granted to any other normal stockholder. This would empower employees to exercise oversight of their managers in an enlightened and responsible manner, and create a spirit of corporate unity rather than the adversarial labor-versus-management environment that is all too pervasive in corporate America today. It also gives the American working people the chance to benefit not just from physical and mental labor, but to profit from capital—from corporate income, as well as their own time and energy.

I ask my colleagues to join me in support of this legislation and let us lead the way forward to prosperity for millions of Americans in the years to come.

HONORING JUNE JESSEE

HON. RODNEY DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of June Jessee, the daughter of Matt and Genny Jessee who passed away earlier this month at the age of three.

Soon after June was born, she was diagnosed with a catastrophic form of epilepsy found in babies, causing her to have dozens of seizures a day and severely stunting her cognitive development.

After learning of a promising new treatment therapy, that uses cannabidiol derived from

marijuana, Matt and Genny became hopeful. The treatment, however, was not legal in their home state of Missouri and the Jessee family moved to Colorado. In the meantime, Matt took their family's story to state lawmakers and last fall the state legalized cannabidiol for seizure patients and the family was able to move back home to Missouri.

Currently, federal law prohibits the medical use of this treatment. I am supportive of federal legislation like the Charlotte's Web Medical Hemp Act, that would allow for cannabidiol therapy to become more accessible for children like June.

June's story has brought to light the lack of treatment options for children who suffer from epileptic seizures, and she will be missed by many. I continue to keep the Jessee family in my thoughts and prayers and will continue to advocate for research into this important area.

ILLINOIS 18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT SERVICE ACADEMY NOMINEES

HON. DARIN LaHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to proudly announce the service academy nominees for Illinois' 18th congressional district.

Twenty-two remarkable individuals have been selected for admittance into the U.S. Military Academy, U.S. Naval Academy, or U.S. Air Force Academy. These young men and women have gone through a rigorous and competitive application process, making them the most impressive and outstanding group of individuals. This group gives me confidence in America's future.

I would like to thank the members of our selection panel including veterans and community leaders who volunteered their time, talents, and attention to this process. I would also like to thank the parents for raising these exceptional young adults. Finally, I would like to thank the nominees themselves for their dedication to serving this great nation.

The Illinois 18th congressional district service academy nominees are:

Randy Meneweather II of Washington, IL, U.S. Air Force Academy; Matthew Helmich of Virginia, IL, U.S. Air Force Academy; Mason Pohlman of Jacksonville, IL, U.S. Air Force Academy; Joseph McCabe III of Morton, IL, U.S. Air Force Academy; Ashton Williams of Springfield, IL, U.S. Air Force Academy; Eric Betts of Camp Point, IL, U.S. Military Academy; Maximilian Rawls of Dunlap IL, U.S. Military Academy; Jace Taliaferro of Pleasant Hill, IL, U.S. Military Academy; Jacob Lowman of Nauvoo, IL, U.S. Military Academy; Elias Sanchez of Green Valley, IL, U.S. Military Academy; Bradley Novak of Brimfield, IL, U.S. Military Academy; Jeston Rademaker of Mapleton, IL, U.S. Military Academy; William Lucie of Basco, IL, U.S. Military Academy; Morgan Riley of Peoria, IL, U.S. Naval Academy; Jacob Armbricht of Springfield, IL, U.S. Naval Academy; Nathaniel Fierstos of Springfield, IL, U.S. Naval Academy; Spencer Myers

of Golden, IL, U.S. Naval Academy; Reed Groesch of Springfield, IL, U.S. Naval Academy; Tucker Schmidt of Petersburg, IL, U.S. Naval Academy; August Will of Hudson, IL, U.S. Naval Academy; Faith Kim of Washington, IL, U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Naval Academy; Kelsie Taylor of Pekin, IL, U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Naval Academy, U.S. Military Academy.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF HADLEY ROFF

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Hadley Roff, a proud San Franciscan, beloved friend, and deeply respected and beloved public servant, who passed away last month at the age of 85.

Hadley was the hallmark of the era when reporters walked the beat in search of stories that touched the communities they served. Learning from and listening to citizens as a newspaper reporter informed Hadley's public service career in San Francisco City Hall and in the Congress.

As a Santa Cruz native, Hadley remained committed to the Bay Area throughout his life. After graduating from Stanford University in 1954, Hadley became a journalist for the News, the Call Bulletin, and, later, the Examiner. For Hadley, exercising freedom of the press was his first foray into a lifetime of public service.

In 1967, Hadley embarked on decades of service in San Francisco City Hall when he became Mayor Joe Alioto's press secretary.

A few years later, in 1970, Hadley moved to the nation's capital where he served the people of California working for Senator John Tunney of California. In 1972, Hadley worked on the presidential campaign of Senator Ed Muskie of Maine. Hadley also served as press secretary to the liberal lion, the late Senator Ted Kennedy.

Hadley never lost his passion for improving the lives of Bay Area residents. In 1979, he returned to San Francisco to serve as deputy mayor to then-Mayor Dianne Feinstein. After nearly a decade of service to Mayor Feinstein, Hadley remained a fixture at City Hall during the Administrations of San Francisco Mayors Art Agnos and Frank Jordan.

A true public servant, Hadley strived to meet the needs of local residents under four very different San Francisco mayors, with four very different personalities, and governing styles. Mayors called upon Hadley to confront challenges and create solutions while treating everyone with respect and dignity.

He served as president of the San Francisco Fire Commission and Director of the San Francisco Urban Institute. He may have been the most popular and widely loved public figure in San Francisco over the past fifty years.

We were all thrilled when Hadley's dear friend, the late Susie Trommald, became his wife. Susie and Hadley shared a zest for life that inspired others to take notice. In their 30 years of marriage, they brought joy and pleasure to any gathering, and to their many

friends. It was an honor for many of us to join Hadley in a celebration of Susie's life after her passing.

I hope it is a comfort to Hadley's two sons, Jim and Tim, his devoted brother-in-law Elliott and his dearest friends that so many join them in mourning Hadley's passing and celebrating his life.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$18,991,325,677,268.42. We've added \$8,364,448,628,355.34 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, on roll call No. 46, I was speaking with constituents and unintentionally missed the vote on roll call No. 46, H.R. 2187, the Fair Investment Opportunities for Professional Experts Act. Had I been present I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. AUSTIN SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call Number 46 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 2187 the Fair Investment Opportunities for Professional Experts Act, I am not recorded because I was detained. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call Number 47 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 4168 the Small Business Capital Formation Enhancement Act, I am not recorded because I was detained. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call Number 48 on ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 594—the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3700—Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2015, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

HONORING AMANDA WEINSTEIN

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Amanda Weinstein, a young student from my district who was recently recognized for exemplary volunteer service. Amanda was named one of the top honorees in Florida by the 2016 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program, an annual honor given to the most impressive student volunteers throughout our Nation.

Currently a senior at North Broward Preparatory School, Amanda founded the "Family Central Teen Advisory Board" in 2013. Since then, she has encouraged fifty teens to share in her mission to assist the parent organization Family Central, a nonprofit that helps children and families in need. Amanda, who had been volunteering with Family Central for ten years, organizes toy, food, clothing and school supply drives, and has also created a tutoring and mentoring program.

Among thousands of volunteers who participated in this year's program, Amanda's dedication and strive for excellence stood out as exceptional. I applaud Amanda for her initiative in seeking to make our community a better place to live.

I happily congratulate Amanda and wish her the best of luck in her future academic and community pursuits. It is with great pleasure that I honor her, and I know that she will continue to inspire young South Floridians to live by her example.

IN RECOGNITION OF SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE OF CALIFORNIA MEN'S RUGBY TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2015 DIVISION 1A RUGBY NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. DeSAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with Congressman SWALWELL to congratulate the Saint Mary's College Men's Rugby team for winning the 2015 Division 1A Rugby National Championship on May 9, 2015 in Atlanta, Georgia.

In their quest for back-to-back national championships, the Saint Mary's Gaels earned a spot in the national semifinal by defeating Utah University 72–26, and then defeated Davenport University by a score of 48–32 to reach the championship match. In a repeat of the 2014 Division 1A Rugby National Championship, the second ranked Saint Mary's Gaels defeated Life University by a score of 30–24 to complete the defense of their national title.

The Saint Mary's College Rugby team has now reached the National Championship in three consecutive seasons and have earned the title of National Champion in back-to-back years. Saint Mary's College is a distinguished

California institute of higher education with academic and athletic traditions grounded in core Lasallian values that have found consistent success both in the classroom and on the field.

Congressman SWALWELL and I are proud that the 2015 Saint Mary's College Men's Rugby team members are distinguished by their commitment to the highest degree of scholarship, athleticism, and teamwork. The 2015 Men's Rugby team has represented their school honorably.

At this time I, along with Congressman SWALWELL, would like to recognize the outstanding achievement by the members of the 2015 Men's Rugby team: Roberto Arellano, Dylan Audsley, Alec Barton, Trey Boone, Alex Brewer, Jack Carso, Placido Castrejon, Billy Coen, Mason Colombo, Tony DeLaNuez, Dante DiMario, Nico Docolas, Jack Dowling, Alex Drake, Alejandro Duran, Michael Garrett, Henry Hall, Vili Helu, Xavier Hunter, Timothy Johnston, Patrick Keating, Cory Kroeger, Charles Loudon, Frank Maitia, Cooper Maloney, Canon Marin, Gabriel Marin, Mike McCarthy, Chris McDonnell, Kingsley McGowan, Declan McNeice, Austen Middleton, Alec Mills, Nate Mills, Kevin O'Connor, Michael O'Neill, David Onyike, Ryan Pratt, Danilo Rapadas, Casey Reilly, Bradley Roberts, Kraig Roscoe, Nick Schlobohm, Paul Tiernan, Michael Tillson, Marcus Viscardi, Dino Walden, Peter Waldren, Thomas Wallace, Ethan Waller, Anthony West, Cameron Wiggins, Holden Yungert, Francis X Vignoles.

Congressman SWALWELL and I would also like to recognize the coaches of the 2015 Men's Rugby team: Timothy O'Brien, John Everett, Mark Bass, Jon Straka and Athletic Trainer Shelley Taketa are highly skilled and dedicated to the success of the 2015 Saint Mary's College Men's Rugby team.

I join with Congressman SWALWELL in inviting our colleagues to join us in recognizing the members of Saint Mary's College of California Men's Rugby team, its coaches, fans, and athletic department for winning the 2015 Division 1A Rugby National Championship through their hard work, dedication, and athletic excellence.

IN HONOR OF LINDA HORAN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, today we honor Ms. Linda Horan, of Alstead, New Hampshire, a "tenacious labor leader" and an "advocate for the people." I was deeply saddened to hear the tragic news that Ms. Horan lost her battle to cancer. My thoughts and prayers, along with those of the entire Granite State, are with Ms. Horan's family and friends during this difficult time.

Through her dedicated service as a social justice activist and advocate, she made her family, her state, and her nation proud. As her IBEW 2320 colleagues so eloquently summarized, "Sister Horan will forever be in our hearts and her memory will live on in our spirit

as we continue to fight for the rights of workers and people everywhere in our attempt to channel her eternal drive for equality."

The greatest tribute we can provide for Linda Horan is to continue to remember her passion and drive, and to celebrate her life by

combatting injustices. Her contributions will not be soon forgotten, as her beloved union's scholarship fund now carries her name. Hopefully, this will inspire future generations to follow in her footsteps and continue strengthening civic life in New Hampshire. We owe our

deepest gratitude to Linda Horan for helping to make the Granite State a better place for us all to live. In responding to such tragedies, our community comes together and shows its capacity for resilience and strength.

SENATE—Monday, February 22, 2016

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our Father in Heaven, Your counsel stands firm and sure. Fashion the hearts of our lawmakers so that they desire to do Your will. Today, as we remember George Washington's Farewell Address, may we not forget that our Nation is not strong merely because of military might, but that integrity and righteousness are also critical to national security. Lord, keep our Senators from forgetting Your promise to surround the righteous with the shield of Your Divine favor. Help us all to continue to find hope in Your loving kindness, for we trust in Your Holy Name. May we take refuge in the unfolding of Your loving providence.

And, Lord, thank You for the life and integrity of Justice Antonin Scalia.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

**READING OF WASHINGTON'S
FAREWELL ADDRESS**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to the order of the Senate of January 24, 1901, the Senator from Delaware, Mr. COONS, will now read Washington's Farewell Address.

Mr. COONS, at the rostrum, read the Farewell Address, as follows:

To the people of the United States

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS: The period for a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should

now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you at the same time to do me the justice to be assured that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country—and that, in withdrawing the tender of service which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness, but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have twice called me have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious in the outset of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself, and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were tem-

porary, I have the consolation to believe that, while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred upon me, still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise and as an instructive example in our annals that, under circumstances in which the passions agitated in every direction were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained; that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these states, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger natural to that solicitude, urge me on an occasion like the present to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with the more freedom as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings

of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity, of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that, from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national Union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts—of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the Union of the whole.

The North, in an unrestrained intercourse with the South, protected by

the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South in the same intercourse, benefitting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the North, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength to which itself is unequally adapted. The East, in a like intercourse with the West, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications by land and water will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad or manufactures at home. The West derives from the East supplies requisite to its growth and comfort—and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest as one nation. Any other tenure by which the West can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While then every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and, what is of inestimable value! they must derive from union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves which so frequently afflict neighboring countries not tied together by the same government, which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues would stimulate and embitter. Hence likewise they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments, which under any form of government are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. In this sense it is, that your Union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind and exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object

of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to union affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as a matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations—northern and southern—Atlantic and western; whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from these misrepresentations. They tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head. They have seen in the negotiation by the executive—and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate—of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the general government and in the Atlantic states unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi. They have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain and that with Spain, which secure to them everything they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the Union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay by the

adoption of a Constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate Union and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government. But the Constitution which at any time exists, until changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations under whatever plausible character with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction; to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation the will of a party, often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils and modified by mutual interests. However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect in the forms of the Constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system and

thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments as of other human institutions, that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country, that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypotheses and opinion exposes to perpetual change from the endless variety of hypotheses and opinion; and remember, especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty is indispensable; liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is indeed little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party, generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and the duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the commu-

nity with ill founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, foment occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This within certain limits is probably true—and in governments of a monarchical cast patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favor, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be by force of public opinion to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest instead of warming it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power and proneness to abuse it which predominates in the human heart is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern, some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If in the opinion of the people the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable

supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

It is substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible, avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should cooperate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all; religion and morality enjoin this conduct, and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and things the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be, that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others should be excluded and that in place of them just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests. The nation, prompted by ill will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times, it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty, of nations has been the victim.

So likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions, by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained and by exciting jealousy, ill will, and a disposition to retaliate in

the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation) facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country without odium, sometimes even with popularity, gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak towards a great and powerful nation dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy to be useful must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favorite, are liable to become suspected and odious, while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be

scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest guided by justice shall counsel.

Why forgo the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humor, or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world—so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it, for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements (I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy)—I repeat it therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectably defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand: neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce but forcing nothing; establishing with powers so disposed—in order to give to trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them—conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another—that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character—that by such acceptance it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish—that they will

control the usual current of the passions or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good, that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism—this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my official duties I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my proclamation of the 22d of April 1793 is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice and by that of your representatives in both houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take—and was bound in duty and interest to take—a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe that, according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I

fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize without alloy the sweet enjoyment of partaking in the midst of my fellow citizens the benign influence of good laws under a free government—the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors and dangers.

GEO. WASHINGTON.

UNITED STATES, 19th September 1796.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN MEMORY OF JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate observe a moment of silence in memory of Justice Antonin Scalia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(Moment of silence.)

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I wish to say a few words about a towering figure of the Supreme Court who will be missed by many. Antonin Scalia was literally one of a kind. In the evenings, he loved nothing more than a night at the opera house. During the day, he often starred in an opus of his own.

For most watchers of the Court, even many of Scalia's most ardent critics, the work he produced was brilliant, entertaining, and unmissable. Words had meaning to him. He used them to dissect and refute, to amuse and beguile,

to challenge and persuade. And even when his arguments didn't carry the day, his dissents often gathered the most attention anyway.

President Obama said that Justice Scalia will be "remembered as one of the most consequential judges and thinkers to serve on the Supreme Court." I certainly agree. It is amazing that someone who never served as Chief Justice could make such an indelible impact on our country. He is, in my view, in league with Oliver Wendell Holmes, Louis Brandeis, and John Marshall Harlan as perhaps the most significant Associate Justices ever.

I first met him when we both served in the Ford administration's Justice Department. I was fortunate, as a young man, to be invited to staff meetings that featured some of the most influential conservative judicial minds of the time. Robert Bork was there. He was the Solicitor General. Larry Silverman was there. He was the Deputy Attorney General. Everyone in the Department agreed on two things: One, Antonin Scalia was the funniest lawyer on the staff; and, two, he was the brightest.

Scalia was usually the smartest guy in whatever room he chose to walk into. Of course, he didn't need to tell you he was the smartest. You just knew it.

I came back to Washington a few years later as a Senator on the Judiciary Committee, serving there when Scalia was nominated to the Supreme Court. His views on the Court were strong, and they were clear. Some tried to caricature his judicial conservatism as something it was not. It was not political conservatism.

Scalia's aim was to follow the Constitution wherever it took him, even if he disagreed politically with the outcome. We saw that when he voted to uphold the constitutional right of protesters to burn the American flag. He upheld their right to do that. This is what he said: "If it was up to me, I would have thrown this bearded, scandal-wearing flag burner into jail, but it was not up to me."

It was up to the Constitution.

"If you had to pick . . . one freedom . . . that is the most essential to the functioning of a democracy, it has to be freedom of speech," Scalia once said. He went on:

Because democracy means persuading one another. And then, ultimately, voting. . . . You can't run such a system if there is a muzzling of one point of view. So it's a fundamental freedom in a democracy, much more necessary in a democracy than in any other system of government. I guess you can run an effective monarchy without freedom of speech. I don't think you can run an effective democracy without it.

Justice Scalia defended the First Amendment rights of those who would express themselves by burning our flag just as he defended the First Amendment rights of Americans who wished

to express themselves by participating in the changemaking process of our democracy: the right to speak one's mind, the right to associate freely, the rights of citizens, groups, and candidates to participate in the political process.

Numerous cases involving these kinds of essential First Amendment principles came before the Court during his tenure. I filed nearly a dozen amicus curiae briefs in related Supreme Court cases in recent years, and I was the lead plaintiff in a case that challenged the campaign-finance laws back in 2002.

These core First Amendment freedoms may not always be popular with some politicians who would rather control the amount, nature, and timing of speech that is critical of them, but Scalia recognized that protecting the citizenry from efforts by the government to control their speech about issues of public concern was the very purpose of the First Amendment. He knew that such speech—political speech—lay at its very core.

It is a constitutional outlook shared by many, including the members of an organization such as the Federalist Society. You could always count on him attending the Society's annual dinner. One of his five sons, Paul, is a priest, and he always gave an opening prayer. This is what Scalia said about that.

If in an old-fashioned Catholic family with five sons you don't get one priest out of it, we're in big trouble. The other four were very happy when Paul announced that he was going to take one for the team.

That is the thing about Antonin Scalia. His opinions could bite. His wit could be cutting. But his good humor was always in abundant supply. One study from 2005 concluded decisively—or as decisively as one can—that Scalia was the funniest Justice on the Court.

He was also careful not to confuse the philosophical with the personal.

I attack ideas. I don't attack people. If you can't separate the two, you gotta get another day job.

These qualities endeared him to many who thought very differently than he did—most famously, his philosophical opposite on the Court, Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Their friendship began after Ginsburg heard him speak at a law conference. Here is what she said: "I disagreed with most of what he said," she recalled, "but I loved the way he said it."

Scalia put it this way:

She likes opera, and she's a very nice person. What's not to like?

Well, he continued, "except her views on the law."

Ginsburg called him Nino. Scalia referred to the pair as "the Odd Couple." They actually vacationed together. They rode elephants. They parasailed. And just a few months ago, their relationship was captured in the perfect medium: opera, their shared love.

"Scalia/Ginsburg: A (Gentle) Parody of Operatic Proportions" premiered last summer. In it, a jurist named Scalia is imprisoned for "excessive dissenting," and it is none other than Ginsburg, or an actress faintly resembling her, who comes crashing through the ceiling to save him. It is the kind of show that is larger than life, and so was Nino Scalia.

He leaves behind nine children and a wife who loved him dearly, Maureen. Maureen would sometimes tease her husband that she had her pick of suitors and could just as well have married any of them. But she didn't, he would remind her, because they were wishy-washy, and she would have been bored. "Whatever my faults are," Scalia once said, "I am not wishy-washy."

Far from wishy-washy and anything but boring, Justice Scalia was an articulate champion of the Constitution. He was a personality unto himself, and his passing is a significant loss for the Court and for our country. We remember him today. We express our sympathies to the large and loving family he leaves behind. We know our country will not soon forget him.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA AND FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Madam President, we were all shocked by the sudden passing of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. Justice Scalia and I had our differences. However, there was no doubting his intelligence or dedication to the country. I offer my condolences to the entire Scalia family, who laid to rest a devoted husband, father, and grandfather this weekend.

I watched the funeral from Nevada, and I was deeply impressed with Justice Scalia's son, Reverend Paul Scalia, and the moving eulogy he gave his father. It was quite remarkable.

But now President Obama must nominate a qualified individual to the Supreme Court. Once the President has sent a nominee to the Senate, it is our responsibility to act.

Unfortunately, it appears that the Republican leader and his colleagues have no intention of filling this important vacancy. The Republican leader has repeatedly declared himself to be "the proud guardian of gridlock." That is a quote. He has lived up to that moniker, and that is an understatement.

In recent years, the Republican leader and the Republican Senators have done everything possible to grind the wheels of government to a halt. But now we are seeing something from the Republican leader that is far worse

than his usual brand of obstruction. We are seeing an unprecedented attempt to hold hostage an entire branch of government.

The damage already done to the legislative branch has been written about. The last 7 years, the Republicans have done everything they can to stop President Obama's legislative ability to move forward. As leader of this democracy, it is too bad that President Obama has had to put up with this obstruction of everything dealing with the legislature.

The statement the Republican leader issued less than an hour after Justice Scalia's death announcement argued that starting now, any President should be denied the right to fill a Supreme Court vacancy in a Presidential election year.

Think about that. This is a foolish gambit, one to deny President Obama his constitutional right to appoint nominees to the Supreme Court. This is a full-blown effort to delegitimize President Obama, the Presidency, and undermine our basic system of checks and balances, which is integral to our Constitution.

I can find no limits on the President's legal authority to nominate Supreme Court Justices during an election year in our Constitution. I can find no mention of a 3-year Presidency in our Constitution. What I do find in the Constitution is article II, section 2, which clearly provides President Obama with the legal obligation to nominate Justices to the Supreme Court, contingent on the advice and consent of the Senate.

This is how our system of government has operated for more than 200 years. This constitutional prerogative is essential to the basic functioning of our coequal branches of government. What the Republican leader is suggesting runs contrary to two centuries of precedent and is inconsistent with the Constitution.

Our Founding Fathers constructed this American democracy while maintaining certain assumptions of us as elected officials in the future. They expected us to be rational. They expected us to operate in good faith. They expected this government to be effective. The Republican leader's proposal is none of those things. It is, instead, an attempt to nullify what James Madison and the other constitutional architects envisioned.

The Founding Fathers never intended the Senate to simply run out the clock on its constitutional duties, subverting the President's authority and leaving the judiciary in limbo. The authors of the Constitution never envisioned the level of cynicism and bad-faith governance that we see exhibited by today's Republican Party—a Republican Party that so loathes this President that it is willing to render useless our government's system of checks and balances.

Senate Republicans would have the American people believe that is a long-held practice to deny the President the right to fill a Supreme Court vacancy. That is simply not true. I have heard several of my Republican colleagues repeat this line in public statements. It grieves me to say it, but the fact is, when Republicans repeat this statement, they are clearly spreading a falsehood. It is not true. I have enormous respect for my Republican friends, but repeatedly skirting the truth is beneath the dignity of their office.

According to Amy Howe, an expert on Supreme Court proceedings and editor at the popular SCOTUSblog—the Supreme Court of the United States blog—there is no such precedent. She writes:

The historical record does not reveal any instances since at least 1900 of the president failing to nominate and/or the Senate failing to confirm a nominee in a presidential election year because of the impending election.

There is not one shred of evidence in the last 116 years to back the Republicans' claims. Democrats never stopped a Republican Supreme Court nominee from receiving a hearing and ultimately getting a vote on confirmation—never, never, never.

Republicans want to talk about precedent. Well, let's talk about precedent. As recently as 1988, which was both an election year and the last year of a Presidency, the Senate confirmed Supreme Court nominees. That year, a Democratic Senate confirmed President Ronald Reagan's nomination of Justice Anthony Kennedy in the final year of his administration. I voted to confirm Justice Kennedy's nomination, as did my friend, the current chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY.

I think it is well that the Presiding Officer today is the junior Senator from Iowa. I hope she will listen to what Senator GRASSLEY, the senior Senator from Iowa, has said time and time again. Senator GRASSLEY had no trouble supporting Justice Kennedy's nomination then, notwithstanding the fact that it occurred during President Reagan's last year in office. Since that time, the senior Senator from Iowa has been on record defending the President's right to put forward nominees during a Presidential election year. In 2008, in fact, Senator GRASSLEY said: "The reality is that the Senate has never stopped confirming judicial nominees during the last few months of a president's term." I will repeat that quote. "The reality is that the Senate has never stopped confirming judicial nominees during the last few months of a president's term." I agree with Senator GRASSLEY—or at least I agreed with him. Frankly, now I am not sure where the senior Senator from Iowa stands. He issues a contradictory statement, it seems, every day on this one issue.

Another person who voted to confirm Justice Kennedy in 1980 was a first-term Senator from Kentucky, Senator MCCONNELL. In fact, for 40 years the Republican leader was remarkably consistent in asserting that the Senate has a duty to consider the Supreme Court's Presidential nominations.

As a law student at the University of Kentucky, he wrote in 1970:

Even though the Senate has at various times made purely political decisions in its consideration of Supreme Court nominees, certainly it could not be successfully argued that it is an acceptable practice.

If political matters were relevant to senatorial consideration it might be suggested that a constitutional amendment be introduced giving to the Senate rather than the president the right to nominate Supreme Court justices.

My friend the Republican leader carried that belief with him into public service. As a freshman Senator in 1986, during a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, he said:

Under the Constitution, our duty is to provide advice and consent to judicial nominations, not to substitute our judgment for what are reasonable views for a judicial nominee to hold.

Again, in 1990, the Senator from Kentucky said:

It is clear under our form of government that the advice and consent role of the Senate in judicial nominations should not be politicized.

In 2005, the Senator from Kentucky reaffirmed his stance, stating:

Our job is to react to that nomination in a respectful and dignified way, and at the end of the process, to give that person an up-or-down vote as all nominees who have majority support have gotten throughout the history of the country. It's not our job to determine who ought to be picked.

Finally, just 6 years ago, the Republican leader put it in the simplest terms possible:

Americans expect politics to end at the courtroom door.

These are just a few examples, but there are pages of similar quotes from the Republican leader spanning four decades on this subject. Unfortunately, he seems to no longer believe that politics end at the courtroom door. The reason for the Republican leader's about-face is clear: He and his party want to undermine this President, Barack Obama. Senate Republicans would upend our Nation's system of checks and balances rather than afford President Obama the same constitutional authority his 43 predecessors enjoyed.

Throughout the news today, it is said by all the Republican think tanks—or a lot of them—that it is more important for the Republicans to make sure Obama does not get a Supreme Court nominee on the floor of the Senate than it is for them to maintain the majority in the Senate. Think about that. That is not what I am saying; that is what they are saying.

A few minutes ago, the junior Senator from Delaware was here on the Senate floor reading George Washington's Farewell Address. He did a remarkable job. This man, who was the national debate champion twice, did a very good job.

In his address, President Washington warned of the partisan party politics that Republicans are now employing. He warned of their negative influence on our government. He said:

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put, in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party.

The American people are watching. They are watching the Republicans' obstruction on this issue and the direct contravention of the belief of President George Washington. The vast majority of Americans are wondering how Republicans can say the Senate is back to work—we hear that all the time from my friend the Republican leader—while at the same time denying a vote on a nominee who hasn't even been named yet.

I say to my friends across the aisle: For the good of the country, don't do this.

I hope my Republican colleagues will heed the counsel offered by the senior Senator from Iowa and chairman of the Judiciary Committee, CHARLES GRASSLEY, just a few short years ago when he said:

A Supreme Court nomination isn't the forum to fight any election. It is the time to perform one of our most important Constitutional duties and decide if a nominee is qualified to serve on the nation's highest court.

Elections come and go, but the centerpiece for our democracy, the U.S. Constitution, should forever remain our foundation.

I say to my Senate Republican colleagues: Do not manipulate our nearly perfect form of government in an effort to appease a radical minority.

Madam President, will the Chair announce the business of the day.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, it is my understanding that I can have 40 minutes at this point, and if I don't have that time, I ask unanimous consent for that time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to Associate Justice Scalia of the Supreme Court. His recent death is a tremendous loss to the Court and the Nation.

He was a defender of the Constitution. Since his death, a wide range of commentators—even many who disagreed with him on judicial philosophy—have hailed him as one of the greatest Supreme Court Justices in our history. Justice Scalia was a tireless defender of constitutional freedom. In so many cases when the Court was divided, he sided with litigants who raised claims under the Bill of Rights. This was a manifestation of his view that the Constitution should be interpreted according to the text and as it was originally understood.

The Framers believed that the Constitution was adopted to protect individual liberty, and, of course, so did Justice Scalia. He was a strong believer in free speech and freedom of religion. He upheld many claims of constitutional rights by criminal defendants, including search and seizure, jury trials, and the right of the accused to confront the witnesses against them.

Justice Scalia's memorable opinions also recognize the importance the Framers placed on the Constitution's checks and balances to safeguard individual liberty. Their preferred protection of freedom was not through litigation and the Court's imperfect after-the-fact redress for liberty deprived.

Justice Scalia zealously protected the prerogatives of each branch of government and the division of powers between Federal and State authorities so that none would be so strong as to pose a danger to freedom.

We are all saddened by the recent death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. I extend my sympathies to his family. His death is a great loss to the Nation.

This is true for so many reasons. Justice Scalia changed legal discourse in this country. He focused legal argument on text and original understanding, rather than a judge's own views of changing times. He was a clear thinker. His judicial opinions and other writings were insightful, witty, and unmistakably his own.

Even those who disagreed with him have acknowledged he was one of the greatest Justices ever to serve on the Supreme Court.

Today I would like to address a common misconception about Justice Scalia, one that couldn't be further from the truth. Some press stories have made the astounding claim that Justice Scalia interpreted individual liberties narrowly. This is absolutely untrue.

It's important to show how many times Justice Scalia was part of a 5-to-4 majority that upheld or even expanded individual rights.

If someone other than Justice Scalia had served on the Court, individual liberty would have paid the price.

The first time Justice Scalia played, such a pivotal role for liberty was in a Takings clause case under the Fifth Amendment. He ruled that when a State imposes a condition on a land use permit, the government must show a close connection between the impact of the construction and the permit condition.

Even though I disagreed, he ruled that the First Amendment's Free Speech clause prohibits the States or the Federal Government from criminalizing burning of the flag.

Congress cannot, he concluded, claim power under the Commerce clause to criminalize an individual's ownership of a firearm in a gun-free school zone.

Justice Scalia was part of a five-member majority that held that under the Free Speech clause, a public university cannot refuse to allocate a share of student activity funds to religious publications when it provides funds to secular publications.

He found the Tenth Amendment prohibits Congress from commandeering State and local officials to enforce Federal laws.

The Court, in a 5-to-4 ruling including Justice Scalia, concluded that it didn't violate the First Amendment's Establishment of Religion clause for public school teachers to teach secular subjects in parochial schools, as long as there is no excessive entanglement between the State and the religious institution.

Justice Scalia believed that the Sixth Amendment right to a jury trial requires certain sentencing factors be charged in the indictment and submitted to a jury for it to decide, rather than a judge.

He concluded with four other Justices that the First Amendment's freedom of association allowed the Boy Scouts to exclude from its membership individuals who'd affect the ability of the group to advocate public or private views.

Showing that original intent can't be lampooned for failing to take technological changes into account, Justice Scalia wrote the Court's majority opinion holding that under the Fourth Amendment, police can't use thermal imaging technology or other technology not otherwise available to the general public for surveillance of a person's house, even without physical entry, without a warrant.

He decided that notwithstanding the Establishment clause, a broad class of low-income parents may receive public school vouchers to defray the costs of their children's attendance at private schools of their choice, including religious schools.

He voted to strike down as a violation of the Sixth Amendment's right to a jury trial Federal and State sentencing guidelines that permit judges

rather than juries to determine the facts permitting a sentence to be lengthened beyond what is otherwise permissible.

Justice Scalia found placing the Ten Commandments on the Texas State House grounds doesn't violate the First Amendment's Establishment clause when the monument was considered in context, and conveyed a historical and social message rather than a religious one.

He was part of a 5-to-4 Court that concluded the denial of a criminal defendant's Sixth Amendment right to his counsel of choice, not only denial of counsel generally, automatically requires reversal of his conviction.

He wrote for a 5- to-4 majority that the Second Amendment protects an individual's right to possess a firearm for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense within the home, in Federal enclaves such as Washington, DC. A later 5-to-4 decision applies this individual Second Amendment right against State interference as well.

According to Justice Scalia and four other Justices, a warrantless search of an automobile of a person who has been put under arrest is permissible under the Fourth Amendment only if there is a continuing threat to officer safety, or there is a need to preserve evidence.

Justice Scalia also voted that it is a violation of the Sixth Amendment right of the accused to confront the witnesses against him for the prosecution to use a drug test report without the live testimony of the particular person who performed the test.

He was part of a 5-to-4 majority that found that the First Amendment requires that corporations, including nonprofit corporations such as the Sierra Club and the National Rifle Association, are free to make unlimited independent campaign expenditures.

And under the Free Exercise of Religion clause, according to Justice Scalia and four other Justices, a closely held corporation is exempt from a law that its owners religiously object to, such as ObamaCare's contraception mandate, if there is a less restrictive way to advance the law's interests.

Think about the liberty lost, had Justice Scalia not served our Nation.

A different Justice might have ruled against individual liberty in each of these cases. It is a frightening prospect. But in each instance, that is what four of Justice Scalia's colleagues would have done.

Of course, these are only the 5-to-4 opinions. There were many others where Justice Scalia ruled in favor of constitutional liberty, and more than four other Justices joined him.

And then there were other decisions where Justice Scalia voted to accept the claim of individual liberty, but a majority of the Court didn't. Some of those cases unquestionably should've come out the other way.

When considering Justice Scalia's contribution to individual liberty, it's vital to consider his great insight that the Bill of Rights are not the most important part of the Constitution in protecting freedom.

For him, as for the Framers of the Constitution, it is the structural provisions of the Constitution, the checks and balances and the separation of powers that are most protective of liberty.

These were made part of the Constitution not as ends unto themselves, or as the basis to bring lawsuits after rights were threatened, but as ways to prevent government from encroaching on individual freedom in the first place.

For instance, Justice Scalia protected the vertical separation of powers that is federalism. Federalism keeps decisions closer to the people but also ensures we have a unified nation.

And it prevents a Federal government from overstepping its bounds in ways that threaten freedom.

He also maintained the horizontal separation of powers through strong support of the checks and balances in the Constitution. He defended the power of Congress against Executive encroachment, such as in the recess appointments case.

Justice Scalia protected the judiciary against legislative infringement of its powers. He defended the Executive against legislative usurpation as well.

The best example, and the one that most directly shows the connection between the separation of powers and individual freedom, was his solo dissent to the Court's upholding of the Independent Counsel Act.

Contrary to the overwhelming views of the public, the media, and politicians at the time, Justice Scalia correctly viewed that statute not as a wolf in sheep's clothing, but as an actual wolf.

Dismissively rejected in 1988 by nearly all observers, his dissent understood that the creation of a prosecutor for the sole purpose of investigating individuals rather than crimes not only was a threat to the Executive's power to prosecute, but was destined to produce unfair prosecutions.

It's now viewed as one of the most insightful, well-reasoned, farsighted, and greatest dissents in the Court's history. But his powerful and true arguments didn't convince a single colleague to join him.

As important as his 5-to-4 rulings were, in so many ways, the difference between having Justice Scalia on the Court and not having him there, was what that meant for rigorous analysis of the law.

Justice Scalia's role as a textualist and an originalist was vital to his voting so frequently in favor of constitutional liberties. He reached conclusions supported by law whether they were

popular or not, and often whether he agreed with them or not.

He opposed flag burning. And he didn't want to prevent the police from arresting dangerous criminals or make trials even more complicated and cumbersome.

He acted in the highest traditions of the Constitution and our judiciary.

We all owe him a debt of gratitude. And we all should give serious thought to the kind of judging that, like his, is necessary to preserve our freedoms and our constitutional order.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, we find ourselves in a very unusual situation. We are in a Presidential election year. The campaign for our next Commander in Chief is in full swing. Voting has begun. Some candidates for President have dropped out of the race after disappointing finishes in the primaries. Republicans hold the gavel in the U.S. Senate, and a term-limited Democrat in the twilight of his Presidency occupies the White House. It is within this context that our Nation has lost one of the greatest legal minds ever to serve the Court.

Justice Scalia's death marks the first time a sitting Supreme Court Justice passed away in a Presidential election year in 100 years, and it is the first time a sitting Supreme Court Justice passed away in a Presidential election year during a divided government since 1888.

As my colleagues and I grapple with how the Senate Judiciary Committee should approach this set of circumstances, we seek guidance and wisdom from a number of sources. These include history, practice, and common sense, and, yes, we look to what former committee chairmen have had to say on the subject. In reviewing this history, I am reminded of remarks a former chairman delivered during an election year. That former chairman tackled this knotty problem, and he described what should happen if a Supreme Court vacancy arises during a Presidential election year. In fact, this chairman's guidance is particularly instructive because he delivered his remarks in a Presidential election year during a time of divided government.

The Presidential election year was 1992. We had no Supreme Court vacancy. No Justice had passed away unexpectedly. No Justice had announced his or her intention to retire. Rather, it was the fear of an unexpected resignation that drove this former chairman to the Senate floor 1 day before the end of the Court's term.

Near the beginning of his lengthy remarks, this chairman—who was and remains my friend—noted another speech he delivered several years prior on the advice and consent clause. That speech,

from July 1987, was titled "The Right and Duty of the Senate to Protect the Integrity of the Supreme Court." This chairman delivered those remarks in 1987 as the Senate embarked on one of its saddest episodes: the unfair and ugly treatment of an exceptional jurist, Judge Robert Bork.

I don't reference that episode to open old wounds, only to provide context because it was in that speech during the debate that this former chairman defended the Senate's constitutional role in the appointment process. It was there in that speech during that debate in 1987 that this former chairman reached back to an early debate from an especially warm summer in Philadelphia 200 years prior. He reached back to the Constitutional Convention because it was then and there that individuals such as Rutledge of South Carolina, Wilson of Pennsylvania, Gohram of Massachusetts, and, of course, the father of the Constitution, Madison of Virginia, debated how our young Nation's judges were going to be appointed. It was his examination of the debate in 1787 that led this former chairman to declare 200 years later, nearly to the day:

Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution clearly states that the president "shall nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . judges of the Supreme Court." I will argue that the framers intended the Senate to take the broadest view of its constitutional responsibility. I will argue that the Senate historically has taken such a view.

That discussion on the advice and consent clause transpired in 1987, but, as I said, it was during a Presidential election year in 1992 that my friend, this former chairman, took to this very floor. Why did he begin his remarks in 1992 by reference to an earlier speech on the advice and consent clause? I will say it wasn't only because Senators sometimes like to quote the wise words they once spoke. My friend referenced his own remarks on the advice and consent clause because he wanted to remind his colleagues in this Senate of this Senate's constitutional authority to provide or withhold consent as circumstances might require. And he wanted to remind his colleagues of the Senate's constitutional authority before he addressed the real reason he rose to speak in 1992: the prospect of a Supreme Court vacancy in a Presidential election year.

After discussing confirmation debates that had not occurred in Presidential election years, my friend turned to some of those who had:

Some of our nation's most bitter and heated confirmation fights have come in presidential election years. The bruising confirmation fight over Roger Taney's nomination in 1836; the Senate's refusal to confirm four nominations by President Tyler in 1844; the single vote rejections of nominees Badger and Black by lameduck Presidents Fillmore and Buchanan, in the mid-19th century;

and the narrow approval of Justices Lamar and Fuller in 1888 are just some examples of these fights in the 19th century.

This former chairman continued:

Overall, while only one in four Supreme Court nominations has been the subject of significant opposition, the figure rises to one out of two when such nominations are acted on in a presidential election year.

This former chairman then outlined some additional history of Supreme Court nominations in Presidential election years. He emphasized that in four vacancies that arose during a Presidential election year, the President exercised restraint and withheld from making a nomination until after the election. One of those Presidents was Abraham Lincoln.

Ironically, like President Obama, our 16th President was a lawyer and called Illinois home. But unlike our current President, Abraham Lincoln didn't feel compelled to submit a nomination before the people had spoken in November of 1864.

Eventually, my friend got to the heart of the matter during election year 1992:

Should a justice resign this summer and the President move to name a successor, actions that will occur just days before the Democratic Convention and weeks before the Republican Convention meets, a process that is already in doubt in the minds of many will become distrusted by all. Senate consideration of a nominee under these circumstances is not fair to the president, to the nominee, and to the Senate itself.

My friend went on to say:

It is my view that if a Supreme Court justice resigns tomorrow, or within the next several weeks, or resigns at the end of the summer, President Bush should consider following the practice of a majority of his predecessors and not name a nominee until after the November election is completed.

And what is the Senate to do if a President ignores history, ignores good sense, ignores the people, and submits a nominee under these circumstances? Here again my good friend, the former chairman, had an answer:

It is my view that if the President goes the way of Presidents Fillmore and Johnson and presses an election-year nomination, the Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination until after the political campaign season is over.

Well, what of the likely criticisms that will be lobbed at the Judiciary Committee and at the entire Senate if they were to choose this path of not holding a hearing?

My friend, the former chairman, continued:

I am sure, Mr. President, having uttered these words, some will criticize such a decision and say it was nothing more than an attempt to save the seat on the Court in the hopes that a Democrat will be permitted to fill it, but that would not be our intention, Mr. President, if that were the course to choose in the Senate, to not consider holding hearings until after the election.

Continuing to quote:

Instead, it would be our pragmatic conclusion that once the political season is under way . . . action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over. That is what is fair to the nominee and is central to the process. Otherwise, it seems to me, Mr. President, we will be in deep trouble as an institution.

But won't that impact the Court? Can it function with eight members for some time? Won't it create "crisis"? Not remotely. My friend considered this issue as well and appropriately dismissed it:

Others may fret that this approach will leave the Court with only eight members for some time. But as I see it, Mr. President, the cost[s] of such a result, the need to re-argue three or four cases that will divide the Justices four to four, are quite minor compared to the cost that a nominee, the President, the Senate, and the Nation would have to pay for what assuredly would be a bitter fight, no matter how good a person is nominated by the President, if that nomination were to take place in the next several weeks.

"In the next several weeks" refers to sometime between June and November of 1992.

I want to read this part again:

Others may fret that this approach will leave the Court with only eight members for some time. But . . . the cost[s] of such a result . . . are quite minor compared to the cost that a nominee, the President, the Senate, and the Nation would have to pay for what assuredly would be a bitter fight, no matter how good a person is nominated by the President.

That is very well said. This former chairman is eloquent, where I happen to be very plainspoken. I would put it this way: It is the principle that matters, not the person.

My friend concluded this section of his remarks this way:

In the end, this may be the only course of action that historical practice and practical realism can sustain.

I think probably everybody kind of knows these are the Biden rules.

The Biden rules recognize that "the framers intended the Senate to take the broadest view of its constitutional responsibility."

The Biden rules recognize the wisdom of those Presidents—including another lawyer and former State lawmaker from Illinois—who exercised restraint by not submitting a Supreme Court nomination before the people had spoken.

The Biden rules recognize that the Court can operate smoothly with eight members for some time, and "the cost of such a result, the need to re-argue three or four cases that will divide the Justices four to four, are quite minor compared to the cost that a nominee, the President, the Senate, and the Nation would have to pay for what assuredly would be a bitter fight."

The Biden rules recognize that under these circumstances, "[the President] should consider following the practice of a majority of his predecessors and not name a nominee until after the November election is completed." The

President he is referring to there is President George H.W. Bush.

The Biden rules recognize that under these circumstances, “[it does not] matter how good a person is nominated by the President.”

The Biden rules recognize that “once the political season is under way . . . action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over. That is what is fair to the nominee and is central to the process.”

The Biden rules recognize that “Senate consideration of a nominee under these circumstances is not fair to the President, to the nominee, or to the Senate itself.”

The Biden rules recognize that under these circumstances, “the Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination until after the political campaign season is over.”

Vice President BIDEN is a friend, as I said three or four times during my remarks, and I say it with the utmost sincerity. I served with him in this body and on the Judiciary Committee for nearly 30 years. He is honorable, he is sincere, and he is loyal to the President he now serves. Because I know these things about him, I can say with confidence that he will enthusiastically support the President and any nominee he submits to the Senate, but I also know this about Vice President BIDEN: He may serve as Vice President, but he remains a U.S. Senator. That is why when he rose to speak in this Senate Chamber for the last time, he shared this with his colleagues:

I may be resigning from the Senate today, but I will always be a Senate man. Except for the title of “father,” there is no title, including “Vice President,” that I am more proud to wear than that of United States Senator.

If the President of the United States insists on submitting a nominee under these circumstances, Senator BIDEN, my friend from Delaware, the man who sat at a desk across the aisle and at the back of this Chamber for more than 35 years, knows what the Senate should do, and I believe in his heart of hearts he understands why this Senate must do what he said it must do in 1992.

I yield the floor and give back the remainder of my time.

NOMINATION OF ROBERT CALIFF

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, drug overdose deaths, driven largely by prescription painkillers, continue to outpace the number of fatalities from traffic accidents in Kentucky. While I recognize the need to protect legitimate patient access to prescription painkillers, the FDA must do more to help us fight back in the midst of today’s prescription-opioid epidemic.

The FDA plays a leading role in addressing this epidemic through its drug

approval process, in which it is required by Federal law to ensure the safety and effectiveness of all drugs. However, the FDA has been rightly criticized for not recognizing the severity of this significant problem and for not taking greater action to address it.

Over the years, I have heard from many Kentuckians concerned about FDA’s lax attitude in this area, with many of the belief that the agency simply has not taken its role in fighting the prescription opioid epidemic seriously.

To try and push the FDA in the right direction, I contacted the agency in both 2012 and 2013 to warn of the problems with allowing generic, crushable opioids to be made available without the introduction of abuse-deterrent features. As a result, the FDA announced in April 2013 that it had decided to prohibit a generic version of a certain opioid that lacked abuse-deterrent features.

I also cosponsored a measure in the last Congress that aimed to push the FDA to encourage the development and use of abuse-deterrent formulations of prescription opioids, which make them harder to crush and abuse.

Additionally, I joined more than 20 Senate and House Members last October in a letter to OMB’s Administrator of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Howard Shelanski. We urged him to help us tackle the prescription-drug abuse epidemic by taking down barriers in the Medicaid repayment system that actually discourage manufacturers from developing the very same abuse-deterrent formulations that I have been pushing the FDA to encourage.

I recently met with Dr. Robert Califf, the FDA Commissioner nominee we will consider this evening. We had a productive meeting in which I expressed my concerns about the agency’s past insensitivity to the opioid crisis, along with my desire to see the FDA play a more prominent role in addressing this prescription-opioid epidemic.

Dr. Califf shared his proposed plan to reassess the agency’s approach to approving and regulating prescription painkillers. Dr. Califf also acknowledged that a cultural shift will be needed within the FDA if the potential for addiction and abuse of prescription opioids is to be taken more seriously. He assured me that, as head of this important agency, he would be the kind of leader our country needs when it comes to confronting this growing epidemic.

I believe Dr. Califf understands the dire nature of the opioid epidemic, and accordingly, I believe he is today the right person to lead the FDA in a new direction. That said, confirming Dr. Califf will be just the beginning of a much longer and enduring effort on everyone’s part; he and the FDA should

expect continued rigorous oversight in the way the agency deals with prescription opioids moving forward.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today the Senate will consider the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf to head the Food and Drug Administration. For too long, the FDA has been without a Senate-confirmed commissioner, and, given the scope and reach of the agency, action on Dr. Califf’s nomination is welcomed. After speaking with him and carefully reviewing his record, I have decided to support this nomination.

Consumers depend on the FDA to ensure that food, medicine, and products sold in this country are safe. The agency has oversight of one-quarter of all consumer goods sold in the United States, including nearly \$1 trillion in foods, drugs, medical devices, cosmetics, and supplements. The Commissioner must supervise this critical work with independence from outside influence. Some Senators have raised concerns about Dr. Califf’s record as a researcher who worked closely with drug companies and have questioned his ability to make decisions free from the influence of the multibillion dollar pharmaceutical industry. After speaking with Dr. Califf and reviewing his record, I believe that he will conduct himself with integrity and in the best interest of the public.

While the head of the FDA must be an independent voice, we should not discount the benefits having a Senate-confirmed Commissioner who understands the importance of medical research and the potential to advance lifesaving treatments. Under Dr. Califf’s leadership, the Duke Clinical Research Institute made advances in drugs that dissolve blood clots, cut the risk of heart attacks and strokes, and lower cholesterol. As director of the Duke Translational Medicine Institute, Dr. Califf worked closely with the National Institutes of Health, the FDA, and the Institute of Medicine to help ensure scientific discoveries are translated into usable treatments. I believe that Dr. Califf’s understanding of the importance of research in promoting lifesaving treatments and his ability to navigate potential conflicts that can arise with drug-industry funded research will be an asset to him as the leader of the FDA.

Dr. Califf and I also discussed other issues of importance before the FDA, including the labeling of generic drugs. For several years, I have led a group of nearly 40 Democrats in Congress in pressing the FDA to require generic drug manufacturers to update their safety labeling, instead of simply mirroring the brand companies’ warnings, as they do now. Generics fill over 80 percent of prescriptions, but injured patients have no remedy against them if their product is mislabeled. Patients who are injured by a brand-name drug can seek justice, but they have no remedy if, like countless Americans, the

drug that injures them is a generic. All drug manufacturers should be required to improve the warning information they give to doctors and consumers. Americans have waited 3 years for the FDA to finalize their rule regarding the labeling of generics, and I intend to continue to urge the FDA, and Dr. Califf if he is confirmed, to move forward on this critical issue.

The next Commissioner of the FDA must also work to promote safer alternatives to powerful prescription painkillers and to remove from the market older, less safe drugs. Dr. Califf and I discussed the FDA's recent announcement to expand access to abuse-deterrent formulations of these powerful drugs to help address the opioid epidemic in this country. While it is a step in the right direction, the FDA can and must do more. I appreciate Dr. Califf's commitment to redouble the agency's efforts in combatting this issue, while working closely with other governmental agencies that can oversee the prescribing of these drugs. I expect to work closely with the agency on this issue and will continue to press Dr. Califf to take action in this area.

I hope that the FDA will also recognize the significant concerns that I and others in Vermont and other maple producing States have for the harm being done to maple sugar producers' income as a result of potentially false and misleading labeling of products that contain neither maple syrup nor real maple flavor. I recently meet with sugarmakers in Vermont who are asking for a strong and thorough investigation into possibly misrepresentative labeling of food products whose labels incorrectly indicate the presence of maple syrup and request appropriate enforcement action where warranted. The tradition of sugaring is significant not only to our cultural heritage in Vermont and throughout New England, but to our efforts to strengthen the working landscape and local agriculture in rural parts of our States.

Vermont's cheese industry, particularly raw milk cheese producers, have also raised concerns about FDA overreach. While I fully support the FDA's efforts to ensure the safety of our Nation's food supply, I believe that standards set by the FDA must be scientifically based and must address a known threat to public health. There have been some positive steps forward, and the FDA has recently met with these producers, agreeing to hand over the FDA's data on the standards they had set. I hope that progress continues, and I look forward to hearing how these discussions and data sharing is going.

We know that food safety will also be high on the priority list for the FDA as it works to implement the Food Safety Modernization Act, FSMA. A landmark piece of legislation, FSMA was passed in 2011 to ensure the production of safe foods; yet the farmers and processors

in Vermont and across the country are in need of science-based, clear technical assistance to aid in their compliance with this new set of rules. I was proud to learn recently that the University of Vermont was recently chosen to lead the Northeast Center to Advance Food Safety. This new collaboration will advance understanding and practice of improved food safety among the region's small and medium-sized produce growers and processors as they learn to comply with these new complex food safety standards.

The FDA has been without a Commissioner for nearly a year and with no shortage of issues to address. I am pleased the Senate is moving one step closer to filling this position with tonight's vote. I look forward to working with Dr. Califf on the many pressing issues before the FDA.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, today we are about to begin consideration of the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf to lead the Food and Drug Administration. This is a historic time at that agency. It has a record which is not enviable in terms of the way in which it has been dealing with the opioid prescription drug epidemic in our country.

I want to give just a very brief history of what has been happening on that issue. About 20 years ago, the FDA was asked to approve OxyContin—which is just a shortened form of oxycodone—continuously going into the bloodstreams of Americans. Purdue Pharma represented that this would be a safer way of having prescription opioids go into the American medical system. Nothing could have been further from the truth because oxycodone—the material inside of OxyContin—is molecularly very similar to heroin.

So when one has a bottle of OxyContin or oxycodone continuously in your cabinet—30 pills, 60 pills or more—you are talking about having a bottle in your medicine cabinet that is very close to being heroin. Now if someone said to you that your child or family member is now taking something that is very close to heroin, that would have a profound impact on you—but that is never quite explained to the American public. That is something that was not understood at the time because Purdue Pharmaceutical company was representing that it was safe to take OxyContin. It turned out that was not the case.

Today we have an epidemic in the United States. More than 30,000 people in 2014 died from this prescription drug heroin epidemic which is ravaging our country. This is a dramatic increase from 1996, when we really didn't even talk about it in our country. More than 30,000 people died in 2014. The number most likely was much higher last year.

The number, most likely, will be even higher this year as well. Here is the story—80 percent of all people who are dying in the United States from heroin overdoses started on prescription opioids. Eighty percent of all people who died in 2014 from heroin overdoses started on prescription opioid painkillers. So the pathway into this heroin epidemic is quite clear. It is the Food and Drug Administration approving these new prescription opioid pills without the proper safeguards having been put in place to ensure that it doesn't make the problem worse rather than improving the problem.

That is why the debate on Dr. Robert Califf is so important. The Food and Drug Administration is saying they will not empanel expert advisory panels to review the approval of each one of the new prescription opiates that are in the pipeline right now at the FDA. What is the evidence that will cause big problems? Well, back in 2012 the FDA had to consider Zohydro. Zohydro was a new prescription pain opioid. They empaneled a group of advisers—experts—to look at the drug. By 11 to 2, the expert advisory panel said: No, do not approve this new drug, unless we establish a whole new system or standard in America for addiction, abuse, for diversion of these drugs. Don't do it. The FDA ignored the advisory panel and approved Zohydro, with experts all across America attacking the FDA for not understanding how fundamentally the culture in our country had changed since 1996 with the first approval of OxyContin.

Moving forward, the FDA decided it would not empanel expert advisory panels at all because they knew most likely they would vote no. So on new drugs such as Hysingla or Targiniq, there were no advisory panels at all because it was said by those companies that there are abuse deterrents that are inside those new opioids.

What does that mean? Abuse deterrent is basically going to the issue of whether that new pill—that new drug—can be crushed to be used for purposes other than what is intended, which is to be a painkiller. However, if the individual just continues to take the pills in the bottle as they are prescribed and they do it on a continuous basis, they run a high risk of becoming addicted.

The warning went out from all of these outside groups that expert advisory panels were needed. The FDA ignored them. Then we hit August of 2015. Believe it or not, Purdue Pharma wanted to get approval for 11- to 16-year-olds to have OxyContin. Remember, this is heroin equivalent. This would go to 11- to 16-year-olds. What they decided to do was to not have any advisory panel at all on that issue in August of 2015. This is despite the fact that it was controversial, that it had tremendous social impact on our society, and that the FDA's own guidance

says that expert advisory panels are needed on drugs of that nature when pediatric dosing or child prescribing is in question. The FDA just ignored it.

I put my hold on Dr. Califf's nomination. Senator MANCHIN put his hold. We are raising this issue. We are saying to the FDA that we need advisory panels. We need a change of culture at the FDA. This just cannot continue.

The FDA said they would look at it. The FDA said they would study it. Then the FDA announced 2 weeks ago that there would be no advisory panels for any of the new opioids which are in the pipeline over at the FDA because they are "abuse deterrent." Abuse deterrent is an oxymoron. It is a contradiction in terms. It is like jumbo shrimp. There is no such thing as an abuse deterrent inside of a bottle of pills that have the same molecular constitution as heroin, especially if we are talking about giving it to kids age 11 to 16 in our society.

By the way, if you want to know why there has been a spike in the number of breaking-and-entering crimes in people's homes, with people breaking in and looking for these bottles of pills, I will tell you why. Each one of these pills can be worth upward of \$80 apiece on the streets of America. Hear that number? For a bottle of 60 with 80 milligrams is worth between \$4,000 and \$5,000 on the streets of America. That is why they want to break into your house. They don't take the TV. They are looking for that bottle of medicine because that is how much it is worth. That is how much they can sell it for.

When do we begin to get real about the fact that it is a bottle of heroin-equivalent in people's homes?

Ultimately, when all their prescriptions are finished off and they can't get it anymore from the doctor, they wind up with heroin at \$5 a bag in the street. So America, it doesn't matter which community in America we are talking about. It can be Boston, West Virginia, Kentucky, California, it is all the same story, the same pathway in, for 80 percent of all those who overdose on heroin in our society. They are still looking for that heroin-like experience.

So we have a big issue that the FDA is not responding to, which is why I don't believe Dr. Califf should be confirmed until we have a change at the FDA, and they are not going to do it. We have to make sure they understand it is a coalition of pharmaceutical companies and physicians which have created this epidemic in our country. We are reaching a point where we are going to have a Vietnam war equivalent of people dying every single year inside of the United States on an issue created largely by the pharmaceutical and physician community in our society. So when do we start getting real about it? When do we start having a reality check, that while we are 5 percent of the world's population here in the

United States, we consume 80 percent of all of the prescription painkillers in the world? Mix well, wait 20 years, and a pandemic has broken out across our country.

The FDA has a responsibility to ensure that we put the protections in place, that the warnings are there, that the dosage is correct, and that the preventive measures are used to reduce dramatically the number of families who are going to be devastated by this issue.

When people have back pains, when people have issues other than the most life threatening, we have to begin to discuss how long we want these people to be on something that has the same molecular constitution as heroin. It is a big issue. Lower back pain, broken legs—there is perhaps a greater danger from the prescribing than there is from the actual underlying injury in terms of the long-term consequences for these families.

We have to have this discussion in our country. We have to have the kind of discussion that says that heroin overdoses in our country have quadrupled in the last 14 years—quadrupled—and 80 percent of it started with prescription opioids. We have to have this discussion.

Dr. Califf has been nominated as the new head of the FDA. They are not going to change business as usual at the FDA. They are not going to do it. They have already announced it. They don't want to hear from experts. Their slogan at the FDA is no experts need apply to come in and give advice to the pharmaceutical companies and to the FDA. No warnings are needed from anyone with regard to what this industry has been doing to our country and what the FDA has been approving. So this issue is one that absolutely is at the top of the list of the things we have to deal with in our country.

Last year, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the agency that actually approves how much of this opioid painkiller can be sold in—and the way the system works is individual companies go to the Drug Enforcement Administration, tell them how much they want to have approved, and then the DEA never tells the rest of the world how much they allowed each company to, in fact, manufacture in terms of the painkiller, the opioid. They give an aggregate number, but they never tell you how much each company got approved.

What I would like people to do in their minds right now is to think for a moment how many prescription opioid pain pills—equivalent in oxycodone, other opioids—were approved by the Drug Enforcement Administration last year. Just pick a number. How many pills total? Do you have a number in your head? I am going to give you the answer: 14 billion. Can I repeat that? There were 14 billion prescription opioid pills approved for a country of

300 million. That is a bottle for every single adult—a bottle, again I tell you—with the material that has the molecular equivalency of heroin inside the cabinets of people inside the United States of America.

This has to stop. It has to end. I understand it is a good business model for the companies manufacturing these things, but it is not good for America, and it is not good for the families in our country. The FDA has to stop them. That is why Senator MANCHIN, Senator BLUMENTHAL, and others who are going to be speaking on this issue—we don't think Dr. Califf should be approved until they change business as usual, until they make a commitment that they are going to change business as usual at the Food and Drug Administration. They are supposed to be the guardian of our public health. They are supposed to be the arbiters of what is safe for Americans to consume, but they have not been doing the job. I am not talking about 1996 anymore; I am talking about 2015 and 2016. I am talking about right now with the evidence of this national tragedy manifesting itself in every community in our country.

The least that the Senate should be able to say is that it tried, really tried, to deal with this issue that has been created by the pharmaceutical and the physician community. It will not be enough to say that we are going to authorize \$1.1 billion for treatment, although we need treatment because there are millions of people who are going to need it in our society.

We have to go back to the root causes of this problem, this flood of drugs that have gone into this society, the lack of prescribing education that physicians have to undergo. The FDA indicates that only 10 percent of physicians in America voluntarily even get educated with regard to what are the consequences of having a bottle of molecularly similar heroin pills to be put inside the cabinets of Americans—10 percent of physicians. That is just plain wrong, ladies and gentlemen. We have to make sure that the education is there for the physicians who need it. We have to make sure that the pharmaceutical companies do not get permission to be able to get these new pills approved until there is a new standard for abuse, a new standard for addiction, a new standard for the diversion of these pills, a new standard for what abuse deterrent means because right now, again, it is a contradiction in terms.

You can still get addicted by taking an Oxy or a Percocet over and over again, day by day. You are going to get just as addicted. It is not an abuse deterrent if that is how you are going to be taking it. You still wind up with the same problem.

We need to get real here. There is no bigger issue in our country. There is no

more profound change that has taken place on the streets of our country. When it increases by fourfold in just 14 years, what is on the horizon for our society if we don't put an end to it?

Working with other Senators, I intend to continue to explain this problem to other Members. I could not have a better partner than the Senator from Connecticut, Senator BLUMENTHAL, who as attorney general in the State of Connecticut and now as a Senator has focused laserlike on this issue. We are both committed to making sure that education of physicians becomes an indispensable part of the remedy—the Rx that we in the Senate put on the books—so that at a minimum that education is made mandatory for every physician who is going to be handing out these pills to otherwise unsuspecting Americans.

I will just finish this way. One patient came up to me and said: You know, when a doctor says to you that these pills for your family member are good, you are not going to second-guess the physician. You are going to assume that because the physician gave them to you, they must be good.

And then this man said to me that he and his wife looked back and said: Should we have known more? Should we have done something different? Should we have tried to protect that other family member?

No, it should be the FDA. It should be the DEA. It should be the physicians. It should be the prescribers. They are the ones that should have the responsibility, not the guilt that they are giving to families all across the country that they should have known more. No, ladies and gentlemen, this is the time for us to finally act on this issue.

I yield to the great Senator from the State of Connecticut, Senator BLUMENTHAL.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I am so honored to follow my great friend and very eloquent advocate from Massachusetts, Senator MARKEY, who said much more powerfully than I can our reasons for opposing Dr. Robert Califf as the nominee for the head of the FDA. To say it very simply, this agency needs drastic reform. It needs an overhaul in the way that it approves these powerful painkilling substances that can be a gateway to addiction, whether to opiates or whether to heroin. I am proud to stand on the floor with Senator MARKEY, Senator MANCHIN, and others who feel that more must be done, that our Nation is lagging in addressing an epidemic.

It is truly a public health hurricane that is sweeping Connecticut and our country. I have done roundtables around my State that are among the most moving public experiences of my

service in the Senate and, indeed, my time for 20 years as attorney general on any public issue. It is an issue that concerns Iowa as well as every other State in the country. It is an issue that should bring us together on a bipartisan basis to address this true public health crisis.

My reason for opposing Dr. Califf is, very simply, the failure of the FDA to recognize its own shortcomings and the prospect that there will be no change in the way the FDA is responding or failing to respond to this crisis if he is confirmed. With his confirmation, all that we can see ahead is more of the same.

That is unacceptable. The FDA must be part of the solution or it will continue to be part of the problem. There is no question that the solution to this problem has to be multifaceted. In the roundtables that I have held around our State and in my conversations with the experts in this field and in the meetings that I have conducted with public health officials around the State with recovering addicts and their families, law enforcement, as well as public officials, I have seen that there is no single solution. There is no one-size-fits-all for recovering addicts, for communities, for different parts of the country. There has to be an emphasis on law enforcement because cutting off the supply has to be an objective, and law enforcement needs and deserves more support from this Nation and from the Congress. There has to be an emphasis on treatment and services. We are not going to arrest our way or jail our way out of this public health crisis, nor is treatment alone a sufficient solution. Part of the solution has to be more action from the FDA to oversee, scrutinize, and stop the pipeline of painkillers and opioids that are continuing to deluge our community.

The urgency of this crisis is clear. In 2015 my State had more than 700 prescriptions leading to overdose deaths. These fatal overdoses are also avoidable. The number of opioid-related deaths around the Nation has skyrocketed, and behind every one of these heartbroken families and communities is a realization that more must be done. We depend on the FDA to deal with these kinds of problems. The American people rely on this agency to implement a strong, regulatory approach to protect them.

Unfortunately, the FDA has utterly and abjectly failed to protect the American people against the epidemic of opioid overuse. The FDA has a troubling history in this area, and I am well familiar with it because I highlighted it when I was the attorney general of our State, asking for stronger warnings for patients and consumers, asking for better oversight of oxycodone and related medicine, and asking for better supervision and education of the prescribers. And I asked

in letters, in petitions, and in legal actions. In effect, the FDA has fueled this crisis by approving too many drugs with too little analysis. Too often, it has failed to use an advisory committee when approving a new opioid painkiller. It has demonstrated a troubling preference for speed over safety. It has expedited consideration at the risk of public health.

It is essential to have an independent panel of experts to review and advise the agency on its approval of any opioid painkiller, giving the public a chance to provide input before a product comes to market. Unfortunately, in addition to instances where no advisory committee has been convened, the FDA has simply approved new drugs over committees objections. This failing to listen to warnings from experts harms public health and safety and confidence and credibility of this agency.

One example, which some of my colleagues may remember, concerns the FDA's approval of the drug Zohydro. This high-dose, extremely potent opioid, which lacks abuse-deterrent properties, was approved in 2014 despite strong objections from the scientific advisory panel that approved it. That panel voted 11 to 2 against approving the drug.

The questionable oversight tactics the FDA has employed so far leave me with serious doubts about its ability to implement its recently released action plan. In this plan, the agency committed to convening advisory committees when approving any opioid painkiller that is not abuse-deterrent. This approach is, very simply, insufficient.

We have seen how dangerous opioids can be. All opioids, whether or not they are classified as abuse-deterrent, should be reviewed by an independent advisory committee. And even if an opioid is classified as abuse-deterrent, that doesn't mean it cannot be abused or that an advisory committee shouldn't be consulted. The FDA itself recognizes that abuse-deterrent technology is in its infancy and independent advice is therefore essential.

Unfortunately, instances where the FDA has failed to listen to its advisory committees are not limited to the context of drug approvals. In 2012 the agency recognized that opioids could lead to a number of dangerous outcomes—addiction, accidental overdose, and death. In response, the FDA implemented a risk-management strategy for extended-release opioids, including requiring education for prescribers on safe prescription practices and the potential for abuse and addiction. Two years have passed—2 years since the first of these trainings was made available—but the FDA has yet to release information showing how many prescribers have been trained and educated on responsible prescribing practices. The FDA has ignored my call for this information to be released.

The FDA has ignored the recommendations from two advisory committees that a similar strategy should be used for immediate-release opioids as well—a crucial issue, given that 91 percent of all opioids prescribed are in this category.

I urge my colleagues to join with me in sending a signal to the FDA that more effective scrutiny and actions are vitally important. The FDA has failed to take this crisis seriously. Until it does, it is failing the American people. And a new FDA head must indicate there will be a sea change—a fundamental overhaul—in the way FDA oversees and protects the American people.

I would like to highlight as well the crucial importance of finalizing the deeming rule, which is necessary to ensure the agency's authority over all tobacco products—also pertaining to addiction; the drug is nicotine—and that is essential to ensure that not only cigarettes but also e-cigarettes—that the companies that make them cannot market to children and to people who may be led to addiction to that drug.

I am determined that the Nation do better in addressing this urgent crisis—a public health hurricane sweeping this country, as disastrous as any physical crisis of tornadoes or floods, maybe, in destroying lives and jeopardizing our national security.

I am pleased to yield back to my colleague Senator MARKEY and to be joined by my great friend and colleague Senator JOE MANCHIN of West Virginia.

Mr. MARKEY. I thank the Senator from Connecticut, and we intend on continuing this battle right through this entire confirmation process and beyond. Unless we stop it now, FDA is not going to stand for “Food and Drug Administration,” it is going to stand for “fostering drug addiction.” That is what it has been doing. It has to change the way it does business. It has to respond to this addiction and abuse crisis in our country. It has to be the cop on the beat. It has to understand its responsibility to not allow this flood of drugs to go into our society, and we have to begin the battle now.

I urge all Members to vote no on this nomination. This is not directed personally at Dr. Califf but directed at an agency which has allowed this flood of drugs into our society without putting the proper protections in place.

I now yield to the great Senator from West Virginia, who has dedicated his career as Governor and as Senator to leading on this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. First of all, Mr. President, I want to say to my colleagues, Senator MARKEY of Massachusetts and Senator BLUMENTHAL of Connecticut, this doesn't have a partisan home. This is not a Democratic or Re-

publican issue. This is an epidemic that is devastating our entire country. It doesn't matter whether someone comes from affluence or is socioeconomically challenged. Rich or poor, it makes no difference. What side of the track you live on makes no difference. This is an epidemic that hits us all in its devastation.

If Senators will just talk to their communities, their law enforcement officials, they will tell you that over 80 percent of all crimes are drug-related. Look at the cost, look at the economy, and look at the devastation in the cost of lives it is taking. Something has to be done.

We are expected to vote to confirm the President's nominee for Commissioner of the FDA, Dr. Robert Califf. Let me say this about our President, President Barack Obama: I think he is taking this seriously. He has come to the State of West Virginia, and I am very appreciative of that. He has seen firsthand the devastation it has taken in all aspects of life in West Virginia. We are a State that is hit as hard as if not harder than other States. It is the No. 1 killer in my State. There are more people dying by legal prescription drug abuse than any other cause. So the President came there and he saw that. I am just asking the President to make that major commitment to our having a cultural change by giving us someone who will shake it up from the top.

I believe Dr. Califf is a good man. I really do. I believe he is a qualified man. I met with him and spoke with him, and I directly asked him—I said: Dr. Califf, you come from a culture where basically the large pharmaceutical industry that supplies these types of products to the market and expects the FDA to approve them are the people who have supported you for the last 20 years. It is just human nature that that is hard to change and hard to say no to.

So with that being said, I said that I think we need a cultural change. I think he understands that and respects my position. I respect his. I just think he is the wrong person at this time of need for the position. We need to shake it up. He is going to continue to serve as Deputy Commissioner of the FDA's Office of Medical Products and Tobacco, but the Commissioner of the agency must be someone willing to lead in a different direction. With 51 Americans dying every day due to an opioid overdose, the FDA now more than ever needs a Commissioner who is a champion committed to changing the way this agency handles opioids.

As I have said many times before, my State of West Virginia has been hit hardest. Drug overdose deaths have soared by more than 700 percent since 1999. We lost 600 West Virginians to opioids last year alone. But that is not the only problem in West Virginia.

Since 1999 we have lost almost 200,000 Americans to prescription opioid abuse.

I am here today to urge all my colleagues, before they take their vote today, to think about the citizens of their States who are suffering from prescription drug abuse. Think about all those you know who have lost a loved one due to this epidemic. Each and every one of us here knows someone whose life has been wrecked by legal prescription drug addiction.

This is a silent killer. There is not a person whom I know in any community or any group in any setting whom I can't look at and say: There is not one of you in this room who doesn't know someone in your immediate family or among your extended family or friends who hasn't been affected. That is how rampant this is, but it is something we don't speak about much. We are concerned. It could be our son, could be a brother or a sister, could be a mother, father, aunt, or uncle, but we don't want to talk about it. We are afraid it has been stereotyped.

We need a culture change. As the agency overseeing the approval of these addictive drugs, the FDA plays a critical role in this epidemic, and as my dear friend from Massachusetts, Senator MARKEY, said, the FDA might have to change what it stands for. It really has fostered this drug addiction more than any other agency. Think about the fact that it is being produced legally, approved by the Federal Government in a legal way, and it is being prescribed in legal ways. We are the most addicted Nation on Earth. Over 80 percent of the opioids consumed in the world are consumed by 5 percent of the world's population, that 5 percent all living in this great country of ours. Something is wrong. Something is wrong, and everyone should be concerned about this.

I tell our children and grandchildren, Mr. President, when I speak in schools—I say: You don't have to worry about another country ever taking us over militarily. We have the greatest military the world has ever known. We have the strongest economy, and we are the only ones who can correct the mistakes we have made in our economy because it is so strong. They do not think they have to take us on militarily or be worried about overtaking our economy; they are going to sit back and wait until we become so addicted we can't function. This is what we are dealing with, and this is why it is of such importance.

The agency has been so callous about their approach to this epidemic. As a matter of fact, time and time again they have failed to consider the public's health. One would assume that if the Food and Drug Administration makes a decision that something is good and consumable, they would have looked at the effect it has on the public, the health and well-being of the

citizens of this great Nation. Yet it has actively stood in the way of addressing this opioid abuse epidemic—and not only not considering it but prohibiting others from doing it.

For years, the FDA delayed before finally agreeing to reschedule hydrocodone—to reschedule. Let me explain where I am coming from. When I first came to the Senate in late 2010, early 2011, I said: My goodness, we have Vicodin and Lortab, the most prescribed opioids on the market—more than any others. OxyContin had already been moved to a schedule II, and Vicodin and Lortab were schedule III. It took us 3 years to get the FDA to reschedule Vicodin and Lortab and all opioids to a schedule II. It took 3 years—and after their own advisory committee overwhelmingly recommended that it be rescheduled. That means a doctor can only give out a 30-day supply at one time without a doctor visit. Under a schedule III, they can give out 90 days and continue to just call it in without seeing a doctor. They were putting this stuff out like they were M&Ms. So that changed and we finally got that done, but it took forever to get it done and we never could understand why.

Since that change went into effect, we have seen the number of prescriptions for hydrocodone products, such as Vicodin and Lortab, fall by 22 percent. We know it worked because they were overprescribing. So 22 percent—that is 26 million fewer prescriptions and 1.1 billion fewer pills on the market. That is how much just that one change—it took 3 years but should have been done in 3 weeks. It took 3 years because the FDA stalled their decisionmaking. Then, after finally making the important step after 3 years, the next day—the next day that that was done—the FDA approved the dangerous drug called Zohydro. The next day, after 3 years of waiting to get all opiates to a schedule II, they came out and recommended Zohydro and approved it, even when their own experts—their own advisory committee made up of experts—recommended 11 to 2 against bringing this most powerful, lethal drug on the market.

This drug has ten times the hydrocodone of Vicodin and Lortab, with the capability of killing an individual with just two pills, and just recently the FDA approved OxyContin for use for children 11 years of age. Can you believe that? They did that without having any experts or any advisory committee's consent or recommendations. This decision means that Pharma is now legally allowed to advertise OxyContin to pediatricians under certain circumstances.

We have seen the devastating impacts of this type of advertising, and we have years of evidence that shows that drug use at an early age makes a child more likely to abuse drugs later

in life. These decisions illustrate the FDA's inability to consider public health and assess the realities of this deadly epidemic. While I recently accepted the agency's decision to finally start listening to the advice of its expert advisory committee—they have just decided now they are going to start listening to their advisory committees. No way have they decided to take their recommendations. They are just going to listen. While this might be a step in the right direction, finally, of their listening and basically taking the advice of experts but not acting on it, I think is absolutely meaningless.

The change at the FDA needs to be fundamental, and it needs to come from the top. We need a leader who changes the current way of thinking. Unless a major cultural change is implemented at the FDA, similar instances will continue to occur into the future. Meanwhile, our Nation's opiate epidemic continues only to worsen, and our friends and families are further torn apart by the impact of addiction.

If Dr. Califf is confirmed today, I do not feel confident that this culture change is going to take place. Dr. Califf has close financial ties with the pharmaceutical industry. Between 2010 and 2014, Dr. Califf received money through his university salary and consulting fees from 26 Pharma companies, including opiate manufacturers. In the past, Dr. Califf has actually described the FDA regulation as a barrier—not a safeguard for public health, but a barrier.

I believe the FDA needs new leadership, new focus, and a new culture. Dr. Califf's past involvement with the pharmaceutical industry shows that he would not be the person to do that. He would not have the impact or leadership capabilities the Nation needs to stem the tide of the opioid crisis. I believe the FDA must break its cozy relationship with the pharmaceutical industry and, instead, start a relationship with the millions of Americans impacted by prescription drug abuse. It is because of this belief that I am urging my colleagues to vote against the confirmation of Dr. Califf.

My office has been absolutely flooded with stories from West Virginians and Americans who want their voices heard. I am going to read just a couple of letters because I think it is important to know the impact of these letters. I absolutely want you to hear it. And I know every State has been impacted the way my State has.

This is Susan's story:

My name is Susan. I am from West Virginia and I am the mother of three children, ages 20, 16, and 14. My oldest son's name is Zack. Zack is an addict.

Zack grew up in a small town with his mother, father, brother, and sister. He played sports throughout his childhood including football, baseball, wrestling, and basketball. He got good grades in school. He went to church with his grandparents and

wanted to be a preacher until the age of 11 or 12.

My husband and I divorced when Zack was 13, and it deeply affected Zack. We moved to a new town where Zack and his brother and sister started into a new school system. Around the age of 15–16 Zack started self-medicating with nerve pills—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I hate to interrupt the Senator, but the time has expired.

Mr. MANCHIN. I didn't think there was a time barrier on this. I am so sorry. I ask unanimous consent to continue at least this letter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, reserving the right to object. The Senator from Washington has 5 minutes to go. I have 10 minutes to go. The vote is at 5:30. So I guess—

Mr. MANCHIN. I should be done here in about 2 or 3 minutes. If I can just finish this letter—I have many more, but I will come back later.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following the Senator's remarks, I be allowed 6 minutes and the Senator from Tennessee be allowed 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the request of the Senator from West Virginia?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANCHIN. Continuing:

Around the age of 15–16 Zack started self-medicating with nerve pills, smoking pot, and drinking. Zack did his first stint in rehab at the age of 16. He went to Florida to a rehab facility because they were able to arrange everything including his flight before we even got a call back from any facility in our state. Zack was in treatment 60 days and returned home. He was clean for several months and then started using again. Zack graduated to using pain pills. From there he started shooting up pain pills. A child who had a horrific fear of needles was now injecting opiates to escape his painful reality. Zack was robbing people and living house to house and on the streets. Then when he figured out heroin was a cheaper fix and more accessible, this became his new drug of choice. Zack was arrested and given the chance to go to rehab again. He completed another 2 trips to rehab, one being 60–90 days and another being around 30. He came home, relapsed and went to jail for 4 months due to failed drug tests. He spent 4 months in regional jail without receiving one counseling session or any help with substance abuse. When he was released from jail he was very lost and didn't know what to do with his life. He was clean several months before relapsing again.

Zack is now in a peer recovery program in West Virginia. He is 20 years old and on his 4[th] stint in rehab. He is fighting for his life in this program along with about 120 other men. He has been to jail, and has lost close to 20 people in his life due to overdoses.

Being a mother of an addict is a nightmare. From learning your child has this disease to fighting with insurance companies

and doctors to get your child treatment. When Zack was a juvenile, I was told by treatment providers that insurance companies did not consider substance abuse in children a life threatening disorder. I had to run up in a house when he ran away and handcuff him and take him to a hospital high as a kite. I had CPS called on me for having my intoxicated son handcuffed because I wasn't a police officer. I had mental hygiene warrants lost. My son was released by a hospital at a moderate risk to suicide and because of that treatment centers wouldn't even consider admitting him into their program. I was told by hospital staff that if I had a medical card instead of private insurance or if my child was a ward of the state, they could get him more help. I contemplated quitting my job in order to get a medical card for my son. I have been asked by rehab to take out loans in order to get my son help. I have had to borrow thousands of dollars from my family in order to get my son into treatment.

I have driven my child to hospitals while he is nodding in and out and I was crying so hard I couldn't see. I have stayed up for 24 hours in a row watching my son detox in hospitals. I have followed ambulances for miles transferring him [to] facilities. I have missed Christmases, Thanksgivings, and birthdays with my son. I have gone months and months without a good night's sleep. I would cringe every time the phone rang or there was a knock on the door. No mother should ever have to just wait on that phone call or for that [knock] on the door.

I have also had to sit my other 2 children down and explain to them that I don't love them any less than I do their brother. I have had to tell them I have to dedicate more time to Zack because I know the 2 of them will be okay but I have to try and keep their brother alive.

You see this epidemic is not only affecting the person who is the addict. It is destroying families and communities. Siblings are forgotten. Marriages and relationships are being destroyed. Entire families are getting PTSD. Crime is at an all-time high. The list goes on and on. The whole system is broken when it comes to treating mental illness and addiction. Until we get the money to fund treatment and more treatment centers, this epidemic will continue to get worse.

If my child had cancer, or any other chronic disease, he would be able to get immediate treatment. He would be able to get good treatment. Addiction is a disease that may start with a poor choice, but is ultimately a disease. Until we are able to provide adequate treatment immediately to those suffering we will continue to lose a generation of people. I pray that no one else has to experience the pain my family and my son has experienced, but unfortunately, this disease has entered into every community, every neighborhood, and into most families. It's just a shame that we live in the greatest nation in the world and this is our reality.

Mr. President, I thank my colleagues for allowing me that. I am very concerned about where our country is going and the role the FDA plays. We need a cultural change.

I thank my colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I want to start by expressing my appreciation to Dr. Califf for accepting this nomination and continuing to offer his expertise in service of families and communities nationwide.

I am glad this evening to have the opportunity to talk about the progress the FDA has made in recent years, the challenges that lie ahead, and why I believe Dr. Califf has the necessary leadership, background, and experience to guide the FDA at this very important time.

The FDA oversees a quarter of all the goods sold in the United States, including more than \$1 trillion in medical devices, cosmetics, and supplements. So the FDA Commissioner has a very critical responsibility to support health and well-being in this country.

I am pleased that in recent years important progress has been made to improve FDA's services for patients and families, from approving the highest number of new drugs and biologics in 2014, to making progress toward a 21st-century food safety system as the Food Safety Modernization Act is implemented. These are important steps that have no doubt made a difference for families, but the FDA still faces significant challenges as we look ahead.

As I have discussed with Dr. Califf, the FDA must continue to encourage the development of safe, effective cures and treatments for the chronic illnesses that impact far too many families across the country. The agency should prioritize tackling the threat of antibiotic resistant infections, such as the ones linked to the contaminated medical devices in my home State, and it should do more to ensure patients can always trust that the medical devices used in their care are safe and effective, including by building a robust postmarketing surveillance system for devices. The FDA should continue to strengthen its generic drug and biosimilar programs and needs to play a role in ensuring that all patients and families have access to the prescription drugs they need.

In addition, our country faces urgent public health challenges that the FDA must help to address. To name a few, we need to move forward on making sure families have access to nutritional information and on ensuring our food supply is both safe and healthy. We need to put all the agency tools to work to stop tobacco companies from targeting our children. And we need to tackle the epidemic of opioid abuse that is ending and ruining lives in communities nationwide.

I was pleased to see that the FDA put forward an action plan to help protect our communities from that crisis, and I look forward to working together with all of our colleagues to address that area.

Another critical priority is ensuring the FDA always puts science over politics. As some on the floor today will remember, several of my colleagues fought long and hard to ensure that medical expertise, not ideology, governed decisionmaking on the sale of

Plan B over the counter. Women and families have to be able to trust the FDA to not play politics with their health.

After careful consideration and review, I am confident that Dr. Califf would contribute leadership and expertise as we work to tackle all of these challenges. He is a strong nominee for the role of FDA Commissioner. He has an impressive history of leadership and management experience, especially at Duke University, where he led one of our largest academic clinical research organizations. He would bring to this new role a record of advancing medical breakthroughs on challenging illnesses through clinical trials and working to translate NIH lab discoveries into usable medical treatments for patients. Our review of his record demonstrates a longstanding commitment to transparency in relationships with industry and working to ensure academic integrity. Dr. Califf has made clear he will continue to uphold those values and prioritize a strong, independent FDA as Commissioner. His nomination received letters of support from 128 different physician and patient organizations, as well as the strong, bipartisan support of the members of our HELP Committee.

I have approached this nomination focused on the best interests of families and communities in my State and across the country and in making sure the FDA puts them first in all its work. I believe Dr. Califf would be a valuable partner in this effort as FDA Commissioner. So I encourage all of our colleagues to join me in supporting his nomination, and I look forward to working with all of us to strengthen health and well-being for the families and communities we serve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President for the information of Senators, the vote will be in about 10 minutes, following my remarks, and I want to make my remarks because of the importance of this nomination.

I join the Senator from Washington State in urging our colleagues to vote to end debate on the nomination of Dr. Califf and then tomorrow to vote for him.

We are very fortunate to have a man of this distinction accept this position. I congratulate the President for his nomination. I note, as the Senator from Washington said, that his nomination has been widely applauded across this country and received strong bipartisan support in our committee after an intense investigation.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD, following my remarks, a list of 124 organizations that have submitted letters in support of Dr. Califf's nomination to our committee. The list does not include press

releases or other statements of support that were not submitted to the committee.

Dr. Califf will be in charge of the Food and Drug Administration. That agency is responsible for the safety and effectiveness of our Nation's medicines, devices, and other medical products in protecting our country's food supply.

It is not too much to say that this job affects virtually every single American. It is a huge job. The FDA affects nearly every single American and regulates about one-quarter of all consumer spending in the United States—about \$4 trillion annually. It is responsible for product areas as diverse as prescription drugs for humans as well as for animals, for medical devices, for biologics, for cosmetics, over-the-counter medications, food, and tobacco.

To accomplish this, the FDA employs 15,700 full-time employees worldwide, with an annual total budget of \$4.505 billion from funds appropriated by the Congress and user fees paid by the industries it regulates. Managing an enterprise of this size is no small undertaking. It requires strong leadership and a steady hand.

Last year, on September 17, the President nominated Dr. Califf. My staff and I reviewed the nomination carefully. I found him to be well qualified to take charge of the FDA. He is one of the Nation's leading cardiologists. He was a professor at one of the Nation's top medical schools for over 30 years. He is an expert on clinical research. He has been recognized by the Institute for Scientific Information as one of the top 10 most cited authors, with more than 1,200 peer-reviewed publications. He has managed large organizations, including the Duke Clinical Research Institute as a founding director. In his current position, he is FDA's Deputy Commissioner for Medical Products and Tobacco, in which capacity he oversees the regulation of products including human drugs, biological products, medical devices, and tobacco.

He has conducted scores of important clinical trials and has advised and worked on research with some of the Nation's leading pharmaceuticals and biopharmaceutical companies.

In addition, Dr. Califf, like every full-time nominee, has been through an indepth process to review his background. Before the President even announced his nomination, there was an extensive vetting by the White House and the FBI. He submitted paperwork to the Office of Government Ethics, which carefully reviewed that information looking for conflicts of interest. The form he submitted is public and includes every source of income over \$200, every asset worth more than \$1,000, and every potential conflict that the Office of Government Ethics determined would require a recusal.

Before our committee held a hearing, Dr. Califf answered 37 pages of ques-

tions from the bipartisan leadership of the committee, including confidential questions on financial information, and he responded to written followup questions. His responses included over 3,000 pages of articles and lectures my staff and Senator MURRAY's staff reviewed and any Member of the Senate could review.

On November 17, the HELP Committee held a hearing on his nomination. He provided testimony and took questions. Afterward, he answered 100 pages of written questions. Throughout this process, we have carefully reviewed everything submitted and not found anything that would call into doubt Dr. Califf's ability to lead the FDA fairly, ably, and impartially.

I am pleased to support his nomination. I am pleased the full Senate now will have an opportunity to vote on that nomination in a prompt way.

Dr. Califf's nomination comes at an important time for the FDA. For the past year, the FDA has been operating without a confirmed Commissioner. There are important issues there. It needs a confirmed Commissioner to provide the leadership that will carry the agency into the future.

One issue that has been on many of our minds is how to make sure American patients have access to affordable drugs. Of course, the FDA's job is not to set drug prices. I am pleased Dr. Califf agreed at his confirmation hearing that he understands the FDA's role is to make sure that drugs are safe and effective, not to regulate their price, but the FDA can help lower drug prices by approving generic drugs and other products as quickly as it possibly can so there is more choice and competition in the market.

There are thousands of applications for generic drugs sitting at the FDA awaiting approval. Addressing this backlog, and reviewing new applications as expeditiously as possible, will allow lower-cost drugs to be available to patients. I am confident the FDA can improve its performance. Just last month, our committee held a hearing on this issue and the FDA was optimistic about making progress.

We also needed a confirmed Commissioner who can guide the agency to make sure it keeps pace with medical innovation. There has never been a more exciting time in medical research than today. We know more about biology and medicine than ever before, and knowledge is being applied in innovative ways.

We are talking about actually curing, not just treating cancers. We are using 3-D printing to help doctors replace knees. In one case the FDA has approved a drug to treat epilepsy that is made by 3-D printing. The President has announced a Precision Medicine Initiative designed to promote personalized treatments to take into account an individual's genes, environment,

and lifestyle. These are exciting developments.

First, the FDA needs to make sure that regulation is appropriate. Too much regulation could reduce investment. Not enough regulation could lead patients to getting therapies that are not safe and effective.

At the same time, the FDA will need to make sure its policies and its procedures, many of which were adopted decades ago, are capable of addressing the technologies of today and tomorrow. Second, as we continue to make medical advances, the FDA will need to keep up with the science and rely on expertise outside the FDA when appropriate. Doing that will require a leader who can manage a large and complex organization—not just on big policies that make headlines but on day-to-day matters such as hiring and training scientists on the core mission and integrating information technology.

Medical products take more time and money to discover, develop, and reach American patients than ever before. We hear stories about drugs and devices that are available to patients outside the United States before they become available here, often because it is difficult for manufacturers to navigate the FDA's often unclear approval requirements. It often takes over a decade to develop a drug that gains marketing approval in the United States. According to one recent study, the costs have tripled in the last 10 years.

Senator MURRAY and I are working with our colleagues on our committee on bipartisan legislation to help get safe, cutting-edge drugs, medical devices, and treatments into Americans' medicine cabinets and doctors' offices more quickly.

We held a markup on February 9, in which we approved seven important bills with bipartisan support that will help both manufacturers and the FDA to get innovative treatments to patients more quickly. They are all bipartisan bills.

Senators BENNET, WARREN, BURR, and HATCH offered the Advancing Targeted Therapies for Rare Diseases Act of 2015, S. 2030. If you are the parent of a child suffering from a rare disease like Cystic Fibrosis, this bill increases the chances that researchers will find a treatment or cure for your child's disease. It does that by allowing researchers to reuse good data they have collected, because it is hard to find enough patients for a clinical trial studying a rare disease with multiple genetic mutations.

Senators BURR and FRANKEN offered the FDA Device Accountability Act of 2015, S. 1622. If you are one of the millions in our country who will need a medical device such as a pacemaker or knee implant, this bill will help drive the faster development of better devices—cutting unnecessary red tape from the review process for these devices.

Senators BALDWIN and COLLINS offered the Next Generation Researchers Act, S. 2014. If you are a smart young scientist who wants to find a cure for cancer, this bill will help the National Institutes of Health create opportunities for you to get funding for your research, so that you don't head to another country or into another field. It will also help you pay back more of your student loans.

Senators KIRK, BENNET, HATCH, MURKOWSKI, ISAKSON, and COLLINS offered the Enhancing the Stature and Visibility of Medical Rehabilitation Research at NIH Act, S. 800. If you are one of the millions of Americans with disabilities, illnesses and chronic conditions that require medical rehabilitation—maybe you suffered a stroke and need to relearn how to walk—this bill will help ensure that the government is supporting research that will help you have the best chance at rehabilitation.

Senators ISAKSON and MURPHY offered the Advancing Research for Neurological Diseases Act of 2015, S. 849. If you are the child of a parent with Parkinson's, this bill will help speed a treatment or cure for your parents' disease by helping researchers have access to more data on neurological diseases.

Senator MURRAY offered the Preventing Superbugs and Protecting Patients Act, S. 2503. If you suffer from something as common as indigestion, or perhaps something scarier like cancer, that requires putting a scope down your throat to diagnose or better understand your ailment, and this bill will help ensure that the scope the doctor uses is clean and doesn't give you an infection.

I offered with Senator MURRAY the Improving Health Information Technology Act, S. 2511. If you are anyone who has ever changed doctors or needs to see a specialist and you want to be sure the new doctor you are seeing knows your medical history so he or she can help you best, this bill takes several steps to get health records flowing between doctors, hospitals, and patients to help realize the promise of health information technology by turning these systems from something that doctors and hospitals dread into something that actually helps patients.

We will be taking up more of these proposals in March and in April.

The next FDA Commissioner will have a lot of work to do, both to implement the legislation we are passing and to take the existing authority and make sure we help patients as best we can. He will be dealing with one-quarter of the consumer spending in the United States and affecting virtually every American. He is the right person for this job.

I strongly encourage my colleagues to vote for Dr. Califf, first today, to end debate on the nomination, and tomorrow, once that has ended, to confirm him in this important position.

I yield the floor.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

ORGANIZATIONS IN SUPPORT

DR. ROBERT CALIFF—NOMINEE FOR COMMISSIONER OF FOOD AND DRUGS

The following 124 organizations have submitted letters in support of Dr. Califf's nomination to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions. The list does not include press releases or other statements of support that were not submitted to the Committee.

Accelerate Brain Cancer Cure, Accelerated Cure Project for Multiple Sclerosis, Action to Cure Kidney Cancer (ACKC), Addario Lung Cancer Medical Institute, Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma Research Foundation, Alliance for Aging Research, Alliance for Lupus Research, Alpha-1 Foundation, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Association for Cancer Research (AACR), American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American College of Cardiology (ACC), American Heart Association, American Sleep Apnea Association, American Society for Reproductive Medicine, American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), American Statistical Association, Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI), Association of American Medical Colleges.

BCM Families Foundation, Bert's Big Adventure, Bonnie J. Addario Lung Cancer Foundation, C-Change, Cancer Research Institute, Cancer Support Community, CancerCare, Celiac Disease Foundation, Center for Medical Technology Policy, CEO Roundtable on Cancer, Chase After a Cure, Childhood Cancer Guides, Children's Cause for Cancer Advocacy, Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy, Clinical Research Forum, Coalition of Cancer Cooperative Groups, COPD Foundation, Cure AHC, Cure SMA, CureHHT, Cutaneous Lymphoma Foundation, DC Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Foundation, Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance, Dysautonomia International, Dystonia Medical Research Foundation, Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group (ECOG), EveryLife Foundation.

Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered (FORCE), FasterCures, a center of the Milken Institute, FH Foundation, Fight Colorectal Cancer, Foundation Fighting Blindness, Foundation for Mitochondrial Medicine, Foundation for Prader-Willi Research, Friedreich's Ataxia Research Alliance, Friends of Cancer Research, Gastroparesis Patient Association for Cures and Treatments, Genetic Alliance, Geoffrey Beene Foundation, Glaucoma Research Foundation, Grandparents In Action, Heart Failure Society of America, Healthcare Leadership Council, Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association, Hepatitis Foundation International, Institute for Clinical Bioethics, Institute of Catholic Bioethics, International Myeloma Foundation, JDRF, Kids v. Cancer, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Lung Cancer Alliance, LUNGevity Foundation, Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Lupus Research Institute, LymeDisease.org, Lymphangiomatosis & Gorham's Disease Alliance.

Martin Truex Jr. Foundation, Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation, Melanoma Research Alliance, Men's Health Network, MLD Foundation, MPN Research Foundation, Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation, Muscular Dystrophy Association, Myotonic Dystrophy Foundation, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), National Alopecia Areata

Foundation, National Brain Tumor Society, National Health Council, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD), National Patient Advocate Foundation, National PKU Alliance, NCCS, New England Journal of Medicine, New York Stem Cell Foundation, Oncology Nursing Society, Oncology Nursing Society (ONS), Pac2, Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy.

Pediatric Congenital Heart Association, Personalized Medicine Coalition, PFO Research Foundation, Phelan-McDermid Syndrome Foundation, Prevent Cancer Foundation, Progeria Research Foundation, Prostate Cancer Foundation, Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy Syndrome Association, Research!America, Rett Syndrome Research Trust, Sjögren's Syndrome Foundation, Society of Women's Health Research, Solving Kids' Cancer, Sophia's Fund, St. Baldrick's Foundation, Stand Up To Cancer, T1D Exchange, The ALS Association, The diaTribe Foundation, The Hide and Seek Foundation, The Nicholas Conner Institute, The Swifty Foundation, USAgainstAlzheimer's, Wake Up Narcolepsy.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Lamar Alexander, Bill Cassidy, Chuck Grassley, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Richard Burr, Tim Scott, Orrin G. Hatch, Michael B. Enzi, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Cory Gardner, Roger F. Wicker, Thom Tillis, Roy Blunt.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, of South Carolina, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr.

CASEY), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 80, nays 6, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 24 Ex.]

YEAS—80

Alexander	Fischer	Murray
Baldwin	Franken	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Boozman	Graham	Reed
Boxer	Grassley	Reid
Brown	Hatch	Risch
Burr	Heinrich	Roberts
Cantwell	Hirono	Rounds
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cardin	Isakson	Schatz
Carper	Johnson	Schumer
Cassidy	Kaine	Scott
Coats	King	Sessions
Cochran	Kirk	Shaheen
Collins	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Coons	Lankford	Sullivan
Corker	Leahy	Tester
Cornyn	Lee	Thune
Cotton	McCain	Tillis
Crapo	McConnell	Udall
Daines	Menendez	Warner
Donnelly	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Wyden
Feinstein	Murphy	

NAYS—6

Ayotte	Manchin	Nelson
Blumenthal	Markey	Portman

NOT VOTING—14

Blunt	Heitkamp	Sanders
Booker	Heller	Shelby
Casey	Hoeven	Toomey
Cruz	McCaskill	Vitter
Flake	Rubio	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 80, the nays are 6.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Cloture having been invoked, the clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, of South Carolina, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. NELSON pertaining to the introduction of S. 2558 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I recently joined my good friend from Iowa, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, in writing an opinion piece. We expressed our joint view that the death of Justice Scalia represented a significant loss for our country and that while finding the right person to take the seat he occupied will clearly be a monumental task, it is one we think the American people are more than well equipped to handle. Some disagree and would rather the Senate simply rush through yet another lifetime appointment for a President who is on his way out the door.

Of course, it is within the President's authority to nominate a successor even in this very rare circumstance. Remember, the Senate has not filled a vacancy arising in an election year when there was a divided government since 1888—almost 130 years ago. But we also know that article II, section 2 of the Constitution grants the Senate the right to withhold its consent as it deems necessary.

It is clear that concern over confirming Supreme Court nominations made near the end of a Presidential term is not new. Given that we are in the midst of the Presidential election process, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee and I believe that today it is the American people who are best positioned to help make this important decision rather than a lameduck President whose priorities and policies they just rejected in the most recent national election.

MORNING BUSINESS

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for today's vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services. I would have voted nay. •

NOMINATION OBJECTION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I intend to object to the nomination of Dr. Mary Wakefield to the position of HHS Deputy Secretary.

The reason for my objection is the following: Last summer, separate in-

quiries from Chairman JOHNSON and myself and from Senators ERNST and BLUNT were sent to HHS regarding fetal tissue harvesting practices of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, an HHS grant recipient. Response to the letters did not fully answer the questions raised and, furthermore, raised additional concerns. Follow-up inquiries to HHS also failed to address some of the questions.

Today I sent a followup letter to Secretary Burwell in order to determine whether any audits of the fetal tissue programs have ever been undertaken.

REMEMBERING DAVID HURD

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today I wish to honor David Hurd on his passing.

David was 86 years old, but his family and friends would tell you he packed much more into his years than even his long life would suggest.

He was a prominent businessman, chief executive officer of the Principal Financial Group from 1989 to 1994, and a member of the Iowa Business Hall of Fame.

He is credited with helping to build Principal into the global powerhouse company it is today.

David also was a well-regarded civic leader.

He wasn't a native Iowan, but Des Moines became his home in 1954 when he came to work for what was then Banker's Life, now Principal Financial.

Having lived in Des Moines for so many years, he became an advocate and an activist for making Des Moines an attractive place to live and work.

Des Moines is a thriving city today, and David did a lot to contribute to its success.

It was fitting that his longtime home was a high-rise building downtown, right in the middle of everything, where he could enjoy the benefits of city living and watch Des Moines change in so many positive ways.

David also held many hobbies and interests in diverse areas: running, patronizing the arts, playing Scrabble, rowing, protecting the environment, and more.

He made friends across these many fields who were united in their regard for his zest for life, sense of humor, and intellectual curiosity.

The phrase "renaissance man" is sometimes overused, but in David Hurd's case, it is 100-percent accurate.

Des Moines and the State of Iowa are richer for having had this renaissance man in our midst.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING VICTOR L. CAMPBELL

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, it is my honor today to congratulate Victor L. Campbell on receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Federation of American Hospitals.

Mr. Campbell has devoted 44 years of service to the Nation's health care delivery system and the patients it serves. He has represented the hospital community with distinction and has earned the great respect of his colleagues as a voice of wisdom.

He has played a role in shaping Federal health care policy for decades. Mr. Campbell is a three-time chairman and longtime board member of the Federation of American Hospitals. He has also served on the board of the American Hospital Association.

Mr. Campbell's commitment and tireless leadership has led to the creation of positive legislative solutions designed to strengthen and improve our Nation's health care infrastructure. He has also developed numerous collaborative initiatives between hospitals and the communities which they serve.

As a longtime resident of Nashville, in my home State of Tennessee, Mr. Campbell is also active in various community organizations, which promote innovation, education, and charitable activities.

Mr. Campbell, through force of personality, geniality, and dedication, has worked relentlessly to promote market-based, creative approaches to health care delivery which have made a difference in the lives of countless patients at community hospitals across our Nation.

I sincerely congratulate Mr. Campbell on earning this distinguished award and wish him well.●

RECOGNIZING MAINE STITCHING SPECIALTIES

• Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the success of Maine Stitching Specialties, a fast-growing company that is quickly establishing itself as an important business in the Skowhegan manufacturing community. During the first week of March, Maine Stitching Specialties' founders, Bill and Julie Swain, will celebrate a major step forward in the expansion of their company as they team up with Wal-Mart to sell their premium textile goods. The company will commemorate this milestone with a ceremonial loading of the first truck and a celebratory farewell as the first shipment of goods departs to be sold at Wal-Mart stores.

Bill and Julie Swain founded their pet products company, Dogs Not Gone, 8 years ago, and since then, their business has expanded to employ 22 people

at their new Maine Stitching Specialties manufacturing facility. Their successful expansion 15 months ago set Bill and Julie apart from their competition, and today their company is one of the largest in Skowhegan.

Maine Stitching Specialties' commitment to local manufacturing and high-quality products has garnered respect from numerous mainstream retail stores. In recent years, Bill and Julie have had the opportunity to sell their products to well-established companies like L.L. Bean and now Wal-Mart. Their reputation for manufacturing durable products and their commitment to the traditions and spirit of our State will ensure that Maine Stitching Specialties continues to grow and prosper.

Bill and Julie represent a strong community of small business owners who are devoted to boosting our State's economy and creating jobs in local communities. Manufacturing is at the heart of industry in Maine, and the success of hard-working people like Bill and Julie helps our State remain economically competitive.

I would like to recognize and congratulate Bill and Julie on their success and ongoing commitment to producing high-quality goods. Our State owes Maine Stitching Specialties a great deal of thanks for their vision and dedication and for their social and economic contributions to the people of Maine and to our economy. I look forward to Bill and Julie's continued success over the coming years and to watching Maine Stitching Specialties grow and thrive.●

REMEMBERING EDGAR MITCHELL

• Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to remember and honor the life of Ed Mitchell. Ed was one of our Nation's great space pioneers and one of only a handful of Americans to walk on the moon. Ed once said of his *Apollo* 14 crew: "We went to the moon as technicians; we returned as humanitarians." Ed and his fellow *Apollo* astronauts not only inspired a generation of astronauts and explorers, they blazed the trail we are all now following as we continue to journey outward to Mars and beyond.

Thank you, Ed.●

VERMONT ESSAY FINALISTS

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD copies of some of the finalist essays written by Vermont High School students as part of the sixth annual "What is the State of the Union" essay contest conducted by my office. These finalists were selected from nearly 800 entries.

The material follows:

NICK SEARS, VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL
(FINALIST)

The United States of America is an amazing nation that continues to lead the world

through the complex geopolitical problems that we are faced with today. As a strong economic and political world leader, we have become the role model for developing nations attempting to give their people the same freedoms and opportunities that Americans have become so accustomed to. This is why it is so important to work harder than we ever have before to better ourselves as a nation, because what we change will set a precedent of improvement around the world and inspire change.

The biggest problem in the U.S. is the incarceration system. It has been broken for decades, and there has been no legitimate attempt to fix it. Over the past thirty years, there has been a 500% increase in incarceration rates, resulting in the U.S. leading the world in number of prisoners with 2.2 million people currently incarcerated. Especially in this example, it is important to humanize these statistics. These are 2.2 million people, who now because of their conviction will find it much harder to be truly integrated back in their communities, due to the struggles of finding a job with a record, and the fact that they often do not qualify for social welfare. The incarceration system is also bankrupting both the state and federal government. It currently is the third highest state expenditure, behind health care and education.

Fortunately, we as a nation have the opportunity to fix the incarceration system. First, we need to get rid of mandatory minimum sentences. Judges from across the nation have said for decades that they do not like mandatory minimums, that they do not work, and that they are unconstitutional. Mandatory minimum sentences, coupled with racially biased laws concerning drug possession is the reason why we see the ratio of African American males to white males over 10:1. This leads to the second action we must take; we must end the war on drugs. It has proven to be a failed experiment that has reopened many racial wounds in our nation. The war on drugs also put addicts behind bars, rather than treating addiction like the problem it actually is; a mental health issue.

PAIGE THIBAUT, CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNION
HIGH SCHOOL (FINALIST)

In common day society, education is widely accepted as a valuable resource to our nation's future. Education has immeasurable impact on our lives and on our identity, as we build foundations of our growth off of our learning. However with all these potentially influential factors that education possesses, the system that we have nurtured has failed in reaching students with meaning and value. Like other things in our world, the system is broken.

What I've been noticing within my own education is that the prospect of content is idolized in the classroom. Teachers no longer cram memorization into our heads (an educational revolution in itself), yet their focus is still the intimate prevalence of deadlines and test scores. Yes—school is where we learn—yet the purpose of our learning should not to become 'smart'. When students start thinking that this is indeed the purpose of their learning, inspiration and drive are completely decimated. Being 'smart' is a subjective standard that we press upon our kids, yet it's something which has shallow value. Classes stuffed with disconnected information only promote this misconception even further. Why should we be focusing on feeding students material when the students themselves don't see why they're supposed to consume it?

And this isn't just the content; it's the atmosphere. An example: When an adult reads

from a manual in front of a class, there are two parties in play. There's the instructor (includes the teacher, the manual, the authors of the manual), and there is the student body. Notice it's not twenty individual humans learning differently on the same topic, it is the singular and collective student group. Sitting in this blob of the "student body" and being considered solely for the fact that you belong to a mass of apparent learning is an extremely demoralizing thought in the learning setting. I want to be appreciated for what I can bring to my learning; not what the class average is. What value do I have if I can be replaced with a statistic?

I'll tell you why: our hopes and dreams are original. Our minds run differently. And most importantly our souls all want to go in our own direction. No matter how similar our test scores are, we will never be destined to have the same future, so why are we clustered to have the same upbringing? Why are we held to the same expectations if the only thing that is the same about us is the year on our birth certificate? I understand that grouping students by age is a positive thing, but we should not let that number classify us as learners.

We need to rethink education, emphasizing personal growth versus increased IQ. Students should not be accepted with their differences, but should be accepted because of them. The teachers that guild students should be trained with the ideology that learning is not for a destination, it is for a journey. Administrators and Curriculum Directors or Superintendents need to see the content and need to understand that force-feeding students knowledge is not knowledge at all. We need to create the environment where students have choice of what their learning environment looks like; choice of how they learn material; choice of how they develop and a choice of how they grow.

It's true: education is an important system that gets a significant share of financial and governmental attention. Now let's make it a revolution of consciousness. Let's make meaningful education for our future; not for our brains.

PETER UNGER, CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL (FINALIST)

The internet is the first human creation with the potential to unify and connect the world; with the potential to change the way we collaborate and innovate forever; with the potential to reestablish the United States of America as the preeminent global leader in education, technology, and medicine. However, none of this potential will be realized without a fundamental rethink of Internet Service Provider regulations. We also need a fresh approach on infrastructure capable of launching a new age industrial revolution. The United States of America needs a government maintained and mandated fiber optic network. We no longer have an economy based on production of tangible products for a regional economy, instead we produce innovative and revolutionary ideas. Without a fiber optic backbone, these ideas won't reach their potential. Let me convey to you the urgency and importance of this issue. The competition has already started or even finished the improvements this country is in dire need of. The cost of broadband in dollars per megabits per second ranked Bulgaria as number one with a cost of forty seven cents per megabit per second, and in thirty third place is the United States of America at three dollars and fifty cents. This disconnect between value and product is dousing the innovative fire that is the American Technology industry.

What do we do? Myself and experts alike, know for certain that the Internet Service Providers aren't going to figure it out on their own. They are up selling us into decade old technology for a premium. Currently, there is no incumbent to challenge the oligopoly that are the American Internet Service Providers. The only realistic solution to this dire problem is a mindset change in the legislative branch of this very country; people don't do things on the internet, people just do things. Internet needs to be classified as the true utility it is. The internet may be the most powerful collaboration and creation tool ever known to man. I personally believe that we can't currently comprehend the possibilities that will be made real by this truly amazing tool.

Do you want cable companies to control what website you visit and to prioritize services that pay a premium? Currently, these are controlled by a concept known as net neutrality, the cable companies' lobbyists want to abolish this fundamental protection of freedom of speech and innovation. Without this fundamental freedom, the creativity, innovation, and communication, at which the internet is so powerful at stimulating, will be stomped out for good.

The only way to protect the openness, fairness, and freedom we as United States Citizens are accustomed to as well as enhance the creativity, innovation and communication, which we all use the internet for, is for the Federal Communications Commission to reclassify broadband service under Title II of the Telecommunications act. This letter is not a preventative measure, this letter is an eleventh hour plea to pull even with the rapidly evolving global information arms race.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Under the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on February 12, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 907. An act to improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

H.R. 1428. An act to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the en-

rolled bills were signed on February 12, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. McCONNELL).

The message also announced that the House agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 757) to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on February 12, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 757. An act to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the enrolled bill was signed on February 12, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. McCONNELL).

Under the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on February 12, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 31. Concurrent resolution providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate and an adjournment of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2017. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A.

H.R. 3442. An act to provide further means of accountability of the United States debt and promote fiscal responsibility.

The message also announced that pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 28, 114th Congress, and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies: Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, and Ms. PELOSI of California.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 2017. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve

and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 3442. An act to provide further means of accountability of the United States debt and promote fiscal responsibility; to the Committee on Finance.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. GRASSLEY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 524. A bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. NELSON (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 2558. A bill to expand the prohibition on misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BURR (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. COTTON):

S. 2559. A bill to prohibit the modification, termination, abandonment, or transfer of the lease by which the United States acquired the land and waters containing Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. CASIDY, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 2560. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to make college affordable and accessible; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SESSIONS (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 2561. A bill to amend the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 to provide expedited processing for unaccompanied alien children who are not victims of a severe form of trafficking in persons and who do not have a fear of returning to their country of nationality or last habitual residence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 2562. A bill to support a comprehensive public health response to the heroin and prescription drug abuse crisis; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MORAN:

S. 2563. A bill to affirm the importance of the land forces of the United States Armed Forces and to authorize fiscal year 2016 end-strength minimum levels for the active and reserve components of such land forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. BENNET):

S. Res. 371. A resolution congratulating the Denver Broncos for winning Super Bowl 50; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 239

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 239, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, with respect to apportionments under the Airport Improvement Program, and for other purposes.

S. 524

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) were added as cosponsors of S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 524, *supra*.

S. 627

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 627, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to revoke bonuses paid to employees involved in electronic wait list manipulations, and for other purposes.

S. 1010

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1010, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to exempt from registration brokers performing services in connection with the transfer of ownership of smaller privately held companies.

S. 1061

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1061, a bill to improve the Federal Pell Grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 1062

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1062, a bill to improve the Federal Pell Grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 1169

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1169, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, and for other purposes.

S. 1555

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Colorado

(Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1555, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 1567

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1567, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for a review of the characterization or terms of discharge from the Armed Forces of individuals with mental health disorders alleged to affect terms of discharge.

S. 1641

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1641, a bill to improve the use by the Department of Veterans Affairs of opioids in treating veterans, to improve patient advocacy by the Department, and to expand availability of complementary and integrative health, and for other purposes.

S. 1820

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1820, a bill to require agencies to publish an advance notice of proposed rule making for major rules.

S. 1855

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1855, a bill to provide special foreign military sales status to the Philippines.

S. 1883

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1883, a bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1919

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1919, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to protect rights of conscience with regard to requirements for coverage of specific items and services, to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit certain abortion-related discrimination in governmental activities, and for other purposes.

S. 2102

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2102, a bill to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority.

S. 2198

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2198, a bill to establish a grant program to encourage States to adopt certain policies and procedures relating to the transfer and possession of firearms.

S. 2218

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2218, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care.

S. 2268

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2268, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the United States Army Dust Off crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their extraordinary heroism and life-saving actions in Vietnam.

S. 2377

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2377, a bill to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and protect and secure the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2426

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2426, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

S. 2486

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2486, a bill to enhance electronic warfare capabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 2487

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2487, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs

by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

S. 2515

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2515, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to ensure criminal background checks of employees of the military child care system and providers of child care services and youth program services for military dependents.

S. 2531

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2531, a bill to authorize State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 2540

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2540, a bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations.

S. 2554

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2554, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 340

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 340, a resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS or Da'esh) is committing genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes, and calling upon the President to work with foreign governments and the United Nations to provide physical protection for ISIS' targets, to support the creation of an international criminal tribunal with jurisdiction to punish these crimes, and to use every reasonable means, including sanctions, to destroy ISIS and disrupt its support networks.

S. RES. 346

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 346, a resolution expressing opposition to the European Commission interpretive notice regarding labeling Israeli products and goods manufactured in the West Bank and other areas, as such actions undermine the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the names of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. NELSON (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 2558. A bill to expand the prohibition on misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, we all know how our senior citizens have been the victims of spoofing. Well, that is happening to a lot of our fellow citizens, no matter what the age is, because fraudulent and abusive phoning scams are plaguing thousands of Americans each year. These deceitful practices are causing very serious harm to victims by fake messages coming across often that cause the receiver to respond with some kind of financial transaction or the giving up of a credit card number.

The Commerce Committee and the Aging Committee have explored the impact of these scams, and by one account consumers continue to lose millions of dollars each year to fraudulent phone scams, many of which originate in other countries. The impact of these scams are very real to the consumers who suffer.

For example, one old poor soul took his life last year after spending thousands in a vain attempt to collect on his winnings in what he thought was a Jamaican lottery—winnings that were nonexistent because it was all a scam. A lot of us think we have trained ourselves to ignore phone calls and text messages from numbers that pop up that we don't recognize, but this is also where the sophisticated scammer enters because now scammers can impersonate government institutions' numbers. They promote fraudulent lottery schemes and they tailor their calls to individuals in order to coerce victims into paying large sums of money, just like the victim I mentioned earlier.

Spoofing technology is used to manipulate the caller ID information and trick consumers into believing that the calls are local or are coming from trusted institutions. A few years ago, this Senator introduced the Truth in Caller ID Act to prohibit ID spoofing

when it is used to defraud or harm consumers, and this law provided important tools for law enforcement to go after these criminals and crack down on the phone scams. That legislation was passed. It was signed into law. It was a huge win for consumers and the first step toward ending these abusive practices, but technology is passing us by.

As the technologies evolve, the law directed the Federal Communications Commission to prepare a report to Congress outlining additional tools that are going to be needed for different kinds of spoofing practices because of new technologies. The FCC a few years ago provided its recommendations to Congress on how to update the law to keep pace with technology and the use of it by criminals.

Senator FISCHER and I have introduced a bill today that responds to the FCC's report, recommendations, and their requests, and it builds on the 2010 act on phone scams to keep up with the new kind of spoofing because they are now much more sophisticated. We need to make sure there are consumer protections and tools for law enforcement to keep up. That is why this legislation we introduced today is important. It is called the Spoofing Prevention Act of 2016. It would extend the current prohibition in law on caller ID spoofing to text messages and to calls coming from outside the United States, as well as from all forms of voice over Internet protocol services. For the first time, this bill would have access to information to go after these criminals in a centralized location on current technologies available to protect them against this sophisticated type of criminal. It does so by directing the FCC to publish and regularly update a report on existing tools.

The act also directs the Government Accountability Office to conduct a report to assess government and private sector work being done to curb this spoofing, as well as what new measures, including technological solutions, can be taken to prevent this.

I urge our colleagues to join Senator FISCHER and me in supporting this act to try to give some protection in this age of digital technology, of rapidly advancing technology, to help protect those poor consumers who are getting fooled and in other words getting spoofed.

I also thank Senator KLOBUCHAR and Senator DONNELLY for their work in combatting spoofing. We are going to continue to work on this, and this Senator is going to press the Federal Communications Commission to continue to use its full authority under the Truth in Caller ID Act to stop these scams, including a consideration of technical solutions like call authentication to protect consumers.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2558

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Spoofing Prevention Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term "Commission" means the Federal Communications Commission.

(2) VOICE SERVICE.—The term "voice service" means any service that furnishes voice communications to an end user using resources from the North American Numbering Plan or any successor to the North American Numbering Plan adopted by the Commission under section 251(e)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 251(e)(1)).

SEC. 3. EXPANDING AND CLARIFYING PROHIBITION ON MISLEADING OR INACCURATE CALLER IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION.

(a) COMMUNICATIONS FROM OUTSIDE UNITED STATES.—Section 227(e)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227(e)(1)) is amended by striking "in connection with any telecommunications service or IP-enabled voice service" and inserting "or any person outside the United States if the recipient of the call is within the United States, in connection with any voice service or text messaging service".

(b) COVERAGE OF TEXT MESSAGES AND VOICE SERVICES.—Section 227(e)(8) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227(e)(8)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking "telecommunications service or IP-enabled voice service" and inserting "voice service or a text message sent using a text messaging service";

(2) in the first sentence of subparagraph (B), by striking "telecommunications service or IP-enabled voice service" and inserting "voice service or a text message sent using a text messaging service"; and

(3) by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

"(C) TEXT MESSAGE.—The term 'text message'—

"(i) means a message consisting of text, images, sounds, or other information that is transmitted from or received by a device that is identified as the transmitting or receiving device by means of a 10-digit telephone number;

"(ii) includes a short message service (commonly referred to as 'SMS') message, an enhanced message service (commonly referred to as 'EMS') message, and a multimedia message service (commonly referred to as 'MMS') message; and

"(iii) does not include a real-time, 2-way voice or video communication.

"(D) TEXT MESSAGING SERVICE.—The term 'text messaging service' means a service that permits the transmission or receipt of a text message, including a service provided as part of or in connection with a voice service.

"(E) VOICE SERVICE.—The term 'voice service' means any service that furnishes voice communications to an end user using resources from the North American Numbering Plan or any successor to the North American Numbering Plan adopted by the Commission under section 251(e)(1)."

(c) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 227(e) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C.

227(e)) is amended in the heading by inserting "MISLEADING OR " before "INACCURATE".

(d) REGULATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 227(e)(3)(A) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227(e)(3)(A)) is amended by striking "Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of the Truth in Caller ID Act of 2009, the Commission" and inserting "The Commission".

(2) DEADLINE.—The Federal Communications Commission shall prescribe regulations to implement the amendments made by this section not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is 6 months after the date on which the Commission prescribes regulations under subsection (d).

SEC. 4. REPORT ON EXISTING TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS TO COMBAT MISLEADING OR INACCURATE CALLER IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION.

(a) PUBLICATION OF REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Commission shall publish on the website of the Commission a report that identifies existing technology solutions that a consumer can use to protect the consumer against misleading or inaccurate caller identification information.

(b) CONTENTS OF REPORT.—In preparing the report under subsection (a), the Commission shall—

(1) analyze existing technologies that can enable consumers to guard against misleading or inaccurate caller identification information;

(2) describe how the technologies described in paragraph (1) protect consumers; and

(3) detail how voice service subscribers can obtain access to the technologies described in paragraph (1).

SEC. 5. GAO REPORT ON COMBATING THE FRAUDULENT PROVISION OF MISLEADING OR INACCURATE CALLER IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the actions the Commission and the Federal Trade Commission have taken to combat the fraudulent provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, and the additional measures that could be taken to combat such activity.

(b) REQUIRED CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall examine—

(1) trends in the types of scams that rely on misleading or inaccurate caller identification information;

(2) previous and current enforcement actions by the Commission and the Federal Trade Commission to combat the practices prohibited by section 227(e)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227(e)(1));

(3) current efforts by industry groups and other entities to develop technical standards to deter or prevent the fraudulent provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, and how such standards may help combat the current and future provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information; and

(4) whether there are additional actions the Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, and Congress should take to combat the fraudulent provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and

Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report on the findings of the study under subsection (a), including any recommendations regarding combating the fraudulent provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information.

SEC. 6. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this Act, or the amendments made by this Act, shall be construed to modify, limit, or otherwise affect any rule or order adopted by the Commission in connection with—

(1) the Telephone Consumer Protection Act of 1991 (Public Law 102-243; 105 Stat. 2394) or the amendments made by that Act; or

(2) the CAN-SPAM Act of 2003 (15 U.S.C. 7701 et seq.).

(b) ADDITIONAL.—Nothing in this Act, or the amendments made by this Act, shall be construed—

(1) to mean that a text messaging service (as defined in section 227(e)(8) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227(e)(8))) is a telecommunications service under title II of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 201 et seq.), or require or direct the Commission to classify a text messaging service as a telecommunications service;

(2) to mean that an interconnected VoIP service (as defined in section 9.3 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation) or a non-interconnected VoIP service (as defined in section 64.601(a)(23) of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation) is a telecommunications service under title II of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 201 et seq.), or require or direct the Commission to classify an interconnected VoIP service or a non-interconnected VoIP service as a telecommunications service; or

(3) to modify, limit, or otherwise affect the authority of the Commission to determine the scope of any other provision of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 151 et seq.) and its applicability to any voice service, including an interconnected VoIP service or a non-interconnected VoIP service, or text messaging service.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 371—CONGRATULATING THE DENVER BRONCOS FOR WINNING SUPER BOWL 50

Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES 371

Whereas, on February 7, 2016, the Denver Broncos won Super Bowl 50, defeating the Carolina Panthers by a score of 24-10 at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, California;

Whereas the victory marks the third Super Bowl title for the Denver Broncos;

Whereas the Broncos' appearance in the Super Bowl was their National Football League record-tying eighth appearance;

Whereas quarterback Peyton Manning earned his 200th career win;

Whereas linebacker Von Miller earned the Most Valuable Player award while recording 2 ½ sacks and 2 forced fumbles;

Whereas running back C.J. Anderson rushed for 90 yards and 1 touchdown;

Whereas wide receiver Emmanuel Sanders caught 6 passes for 83 yards;

Whereas defensive tackle Malik Jackson recorded 5 tackles and a defensive touchdown;

Whereas wide receiver Jordan Norwood's 61-yard punt return was the longest in Super Bowl history;

Whereas head coach Gary Kubiak led the team to a Super Bowl victory in his first season as head coach of the Broncos;

Whereas defensive coordinator Wade Phillips won the National Football League Assistant Coach of the Year award;

Whereas Owner Pat Bowlen and the Bowlen family have owned the Denver Broncos since 1984 and led the team to 7 American Football Conference championships and 3 Super Bowl victories, and the Broncos have the third-highest winning percentage among all professional sports teams during that period;

Whereas Executive Vice President of Football Operations and General Manager of the Denver Broncos, John Elway, has helped lead the Broncos to 2 Super Bowl appearances in 5 seasons; and

Whereas the Denver Broncos football team has proudly represented the City of Denver and the State of Colorado, and all of the loyal Broncos fans: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the Denver Broncos for winning Super Bowl 50;

(2) recognizes the achievements of all the players, coaches, and staff who contributed to the victory; and

(3) requests that the Secretary of the Senate prepare an official copy of this resolution for presentation to—

(A) the Owner of the Denver Broncos, Pat Bowlen;

(B) the President and CEO of the Denver Broncos, Joe Ellis;

(C) the Head Coach of the Denver Broncos, Gary Kubiak.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO OBJECT TO PROCEEDING

I, Senator CHARLES E. GRASSLEY, intend to object to proceeding to the nomination of Mary Katherine Wakefield, to be Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services; dated February 22, 2016.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "ESSA Implementation in States and School Districts: Perspectives from Education Leaders."

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Jake Baker of the committee staff on (202) 224-8484.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet during the session of the Senate on February 24, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of

the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Zika Virus: Addressing the Growing Public Health Threat."

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Jamie Garden of the committee staff on (202) 224-0623.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Nomination of Dr. John King to serve as Secretary of Education."

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Jake Baker of the committee staff on (202) 224-8484.

REVISING THE BOUNDARIES OF CERTAIN JOHN H. CHAFEE COASTAL BARRIER RESOURCES SYSTEM UNITS IN FLORIDA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 890 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 890) to revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 890) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

PROVIDING FOR THE CONVEYANCE OF LAND OF THE ILLIANA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3262 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3262) to provide for the conveyance of land of the Illiana Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Danville, Illinois.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 3262) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

EXTENDING THE DEADLINE FOR THE SUBMITTAL OF THE FINAL REPORT REQUIRED BY THE COMMISSION ON CARE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4437 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4437) to extend the deadline for the submittal of the final report required by the Commission on Care.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 4437) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

CONVEYING TO THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PROPERTY KNOWN AS "THE COMMUNITY LIVING CENTER"

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4056 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4056) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States to the property known as "The Community Living Center" at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 4056) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 2234 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2234) to award the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in recognition of their superior service and major contributions during World War II.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 2234) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2234

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Office of Strategic Services Congressional Gold Medal Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was America's first effort to implement a system of strategic intelligence during World War II and provided the basis for the modern-day American intelligence and special operations communities. The U.S. Special Operations Command and the National Clandestine Service chose the OSS spearhead as their insignias.

(2) OSS founder General William J. Donovan is the only person in American history to receive our Nation's four highest decorations, including the Medal of Honor. Upon learning of his death in 1959, President Eisenhower called General Donovan the "last hero". In addition to founding and leading the OSS, General Donovan was also selected by President Roosevelt, who called him his "secret legs", as an emissary to Great Britain and continental Europe before the United States entered World War II.

(3) All the military branches during World War II contributed personnel to the OSS. The present-day Special Operations Forces

trace their lineage to the OSS. Its Maritime Unit was a precursor to the U.S. Navy SEALs. The OSS Operational Groups and Jedburghs were forerunners to U.S. Army Special Forces. The 801st/492nd Bombardment Group ("Carpetbaggers") were progenitors to the Air Force Special Operations Command. The Marines who served in the OSS, including the actor Sterling Hayden (a Silver Star recipient), Col. William Eddy (a Distinguished Service Cross recipient who was described as the "nearest thing the United States has had to a Lawrence of Arabia"), and Col. Peter Ortiz (a two-time Navy Cross recipient), were predecessors to the Marine Special Operations Command. U.S. Coast Guard personnel were recruited for the Maritime Unit and its Operational Swimmer Group.

(4) The OSS organized, trained, supplied, and fought with resistance organizations throughout Europe and Asia that played an important role in America's victory during World War II. General Eisenhower credited the OSS's covert contribution in France to the equivalent to having an extra military division. General Eisenhower told General Donovan that if it did nothing else, the photographic reconnaissance conducted by the OSS prior to the D-Day Invasion justified its creation.

(5) Four future directors of central intelligence served as OSS officers: William Casey, William Colby, Allen Dulles, and Richard Helms.

(6) Women comprised more than one-third of OSS personnel and played a critical role in the organization. They included Virginia Hall, the only civilian female to receive a Distinguished Service Cross in World War II, and Julia Child.

(7) OSS recruited Fritz Kolbe, a German diplomat who became America's most important spy against the Nazis in World War II.

(8) America's leading scientists and scholars served in the OSS Research and Analysis Branch, including Ralph Bunche, the first African-American to receive the Nobel Peace Prize; Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.; Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg; Sherman Kent; John King Fairbank; and Walt Rostow. Its ranks included seven future presidents of the American Historical Association, five of the American Economic Association, and two Nobel laureates.

(9) The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research traces its creation to the OSS Research and Analysis Branch.

(10) James Donovan, who was portrayed by Tom Hanks in the Steven Spielberg movie "Bridge of Spies" and negotiated the release of U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers, served as General Counsel of the OSS.

(11) The OSS invented and employed new technology through its Research and Development Branch, inventing new weapons and revolutionary communications equipment. Dr. Christian Lambertsen invented the first underwater rebreathing apparatus that was first utilized by the OSS and is known today as SCUBA.

(12) OSS Detachment 101 operated in Burma and pioneered the art of unconventional warfare. It was the first United States unit to deploy a large guerrilla army deep in enemy territory. It has been credited with the highest kill/loss ratio for any infantry-type unit in American military history and was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation.

(13) Its X-2 branch pioneered counterintelligence with the British and established the modern counterintelligence community. The

network of contacts built by the OSS with foreign intelligence services led to enduring Cold War alliances.

(14) Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of French North Africa in November 1942, was aided by the networks established and information acquired by the OSS to guide Allied landings.

(15) OSS Operation Halyard rescued more than 500 downed airmen trapped behind enemy lines in Yugoslavia, one of the most daring and successful rescue operations of World War II.

(16) OSS "Mercy Missions" at the end of World War II saved the lives of thousands of Allied prisoners of war whom it was feared would be murdered by the Japanese.

(17) The handful of surviving men and women of the OSS whom General Donovan said performed "some of the bravest acts of the war" are members of the "Greatest Generation". They have never been collectively recognized for their heroic and pioneering service in World War II.

SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the presentation, on behalf of the Congress, of a gold medal of appropriate design in commemoration to the members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), in recognition of their superior service and major contributions during World War II.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.

(c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the gold medal in commemoration to the members of the Office of Strategic Services under subsection (a), the gold medal shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution, where it will be displayed as appropriate and made available for research.

(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should make the gold medal received under paragraph (1) available for display elsewhere, particularly at other appropriate locations associated with the Office of Strategic Services.

SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 3 under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, at a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses, and the cost of the gold medal.

SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.

(a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck pursuant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

(b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

CONGRATULATING THE DENVER BRONCOS FOR WINNING SUPER BOWL 50

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 371, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 371) congratulating the Denver Broncos for winning Super Bowl 50.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 371) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow, Tuesday, February 23; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the Calif nomination postcloture; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings; finally, that all time during the recess and adjournment of the Senate count postcloture on the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:56 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, February 23, 2016, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CHRISTINE ANN ELDER, OF KENTUCKY, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA.

ELIZABETH HOLZHALL RICHARD, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR

EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE LEBANESE REPUBLIC.

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

JOHN MCCASLIN, OF OHIO

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR:

LAURIE FARRIS, OF CALIFORNIA

CYNTHIA GRIFFIN, OF VIRGINIA

DONALD NAY, OF FLORIDA

RICHARD STEFFENS, OF NEW JERSEY

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, AS A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

CYNTHIA BIGGS, OF ILLINOIS

DANIEL CROCKER, OF CALIFORNIA

ROSEMARY GALLANT, OF CONNECTICUT

JONATHAN HEIMER, OF NEW YORK

NICHOLAS KUCHOVA, OF FLORIDA

BRYAN LARSON, OF COLORADO

JAMES RIGASSIO, OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. JOSEPH L. VOTEL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

LT. GEN. RAYMOND A. THOMAS III

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. PATRICK D. SARGENT
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT D. TENHET

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be brigadier general

COL. JEFFREY J. JOHNSON
COL. RONALD T. STEPHENS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be brigadier general

COL. DENNIS P. LEMASTER
COL. MICHAEL J. TALLEY

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. SCOTT F. BENEDICT
COL. JASON Q. BOHM
COL. BRIAN W. CAVANAUGH
COL. DANIEL B. CONLEY
COL. FRANCIS L. DONOVAN
COL. RYAN P. HERITAGE
COL. CHRISTOPHER A. MCPHILLIPS
COL. WILLIAM H. SEELY III
COL. ROBERT B. SOFGE, JR.
COL. MATTHEW G. TROLLINGER

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

JAMES B. ANDERSON
ROBERT E. BORGER
WILLIAM J. BRASWELL
GARY A. COBURN
DARREN B. DUNCAN
LANCE K. GIANNONE
MARSHALL E. MACCLELLAN
SHAWN L. MENCHION
ROBERT J. MONAGLE
ERIK W. NELSON

KRISTINA Y. NYBERG
RONALD R. RAGON
STEVEN R. RICHARDSON
JOHN G. SACKETT
HERBERT C. SHAO
HYRAL B. WALKER, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT
TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR
FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JEREMY V. BASTIAN
MICHAEL D. BRAM
KEVIN H. CHELF
MATTHEW A. CLOUSE
JAYME L. KENDALL
JOSHUA P. KING
RONALD S. KISER
WADE S. MATUSKA
DAVID S. MERRIFIELD
ONYEMA G. OKORIE
DONALD GILBERT ROMERO
SHIN H. SOH
JEFFREY C. SOLHEIM
CHRISTOPHER A. WATSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT
TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR
FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

CHRISTOPHER F. ABBOTT
JASON W. ABSHIRE
PRISCILLA M. ADAMS
DAVID BRUCE ADAMSON
DENNIS A. ADEZAS
JEFFREY DONALD ADLING
CHIKAODI H. AKALAO
CHRISTOPHER R. ALBA
SHAWN ALCOCK
BARNEY B. ALES
CURTIS M. ALEXANDER
BRIAN TAYLOR ALLEN
JOSEPH R. ALLEN
JOSHUA B. ALLEN
RYAN G. ALLEN
STEVEN M. ALLEN
RICHARD S. ALLRED
LENORA A. ALVA
CHRISTOPHER D. AMBROSIO
JOSHUA W. AMES
LANCE J. ANDERS
ANDREW D. ANDERSON
BRIAN H. ANDERSON
DANIEL ROBERT ANDERSON
HILLERY N. ANDERSON
JEFFREY K. ANDERSON
JOHN A. ANDERSON
KYLE T. ANDERSON
LEE E. ANDERSON
MICHAEL DAVID ANDERSON
TIMOTHY D. ANDERSON
TIMOTHY S. ANDERSON
WARREN LINDEN ANDERSON
NATHAN N. ANDING
RYAN D. ANDREASEN
JUSTIN R. ANDRESS
JONATHAN FISHER ANDREW
BLYTHE A. ANDREWS
KIRK ANDREWS
SCOTT ANDREWS
TOBY A. ANDREWS
JUSTIN ALAN ANKENBRUCK
VALERIE J. ANNUNZIATA
CHRISTOPHER J. ANTHONY
ADRIAN DUANE ANULEWICZ
EUMIR C. ARCEO
JONATHAN R. AREHART
DONALD T. ARETZ
MARC A. ARMBRUSTER
CHARLES E. ARMSTRONG III
NATHAN L. ARNESON
JAMES D. ARNOLD
ANDREW D. ARNOTT
MARGARET E. ARRINGTON
NICHOLAS D. ARTHUR
THOMAS S. ASHMAN
JACOB S. ASHMORE
TREVOR M. ASHOUR
KEATON B. ASKEW
JEREMY J. ATHERTON
CLAYTON J. AUNE
MATTHEW A. AUSTIN
JASON MATTHEW AYERS
JOHN P. AYERS
JARED T. BAAN
ANDREW J. BAER
RYAN S. BAGBY
MICHAEL DOUGLAS BAGLEY
AARON J. BAHR
CLAYTON L. BAILEY
KEVIN M. BAILEY
KYLE W. BAILEY
STEPHEN J. BAILEY
ADAM L. BAKER
ERIK M. BAKER
JAMES E. BAKER
JASON B. BAKER
JOHN P. BAKER
SEAN L. BAKER
JONATHAN N. BALL
MICHAEL BALL

BRANDON M. BALLARD
GREGORY R. BALZHISER
MARISSA L. BANDUCCI
JOHN D. BANKER
JAMES P. BANTA
COLIN V. BARCUS
ALLISON M. BARKALOW
BRANDON J. BARKAUSKAS
RAY WRIGHT BARKLEY, JR.
WILLIAM S. BARKSDALE
COURTNEY LANDIS BARNETT
NICHOLAS V. BARNHART
PETER MICHAEL BARRETT, JR.
JOHN D. BARRINGER
ANTONY J. BARRIOS
ARA P. BARTEMES
MATTHEW G. BARTOMEIO
STEPHANIE S. BASKETT
DAVID J. BATES
MOZAMBIQUE L. BATTS
ANDREW T. BAYDALA
CRAIG M. BAYER
PAUL M. BEACH
JOSEPHINE BEACHAM
DEVIN A. BECKWITH
BRIAN D. BEEARS
ERIC W. BEEBE
LAUREN R. BEERS
CHRISTOPHER CURTIS BEETS
GREGORY S. BEHELER
JOSHUA M. BEHLER
ANDREW D. BEHM
ANTHONY M. BEHNEY
GRANT W. BEHNING
THOMAS M. BEIER
MICHAEL S. BELLISS
WILLIAM DONALD BELVILLE, JR.
KIMBERLY BENDER
BRYANT R. BENEFIEL
JOSEPH M. BENJAMIN
DUSTIN R. BENNETT
JOSHUA N. BENNETT
DANIEL A. BERGERON
LINDSEY L. BERGERON
JOHN H. BERGMANS
KYLE BERGREN
JULIAN G. BERMUDEZ
CHRISTOPHER E. BERNARDO
PAUL J. BERNARDS
LEE M. BERRA
BRIAN F. BERRY
MATTHEW A. BERRY
DONNA M. BESLEY
JOAN ADDISON BETANCES JORGE
VELICE BETSAYAD II
PAUL M. BICKFORD
MICHAEL D. BIEDERMAN
MICHAEL W. BIEN
MELISSA BIERMA
ARTHUR J. BIERZONSKI
BRIAN L. BIGGERSTAFF
AARON M. BIGLER
AARON N. BIGNAULT
JOE G. BILES
GREGORY J. BINE
ERIC BIRCH
MACKENZIE J. BIRCHENOUGH
CORRINE RENE BIRD
NATHAN S. BISCHOPING
CALEB J. BISSETT
JOSEPH M. BISSON
MATTHEW S. BITTNER
BRETT W. BLACK
CHRISTOPHER J. BLACK
JOSEPH B. BLANC
BENJAMIN JAMES BLANCHET
AMY C. BLANCO
DAVID M. BLANKENSTEIN
JOHN A. BLASE
BRYAN D. BLASY
ERIC CRAIG BLATTNER
ERIC J. BLISS
JASON R. BLODZINSKI
MATTHEW SCOTT BLYSTONE
KLAYTON S. BOBSEIN
DUSTIN C. BODINE
JEREMY A. BOEING
DAVID F. BOETTCHER
MATTHEW RICK BOGGESS
JOSEPH P. BOGGS
BRETT BOHN
CHRISTOPHER A. BOHNER
RONALD L. BOISVERT
CHARLES BOLER IV
JASON W. BOMAN
ANTHONY T. BOMBACI
LATASHA N. BONE
NATHAN BOONE
SARAH B. BOOTH
WILLIAM B. BOOTH
JACOB A. BOTELLO
TIMOTHY F. BOTH
JOSEPH A. BOUDREAU
JEREMY J. BOUDREAU
TODD A. BOURGEOIS
DANIEL P. BOYARSKI
ADAM R. BOYD
DANIEL H. BOYD
PAUL DANIAL BOZZO
STEPHANIE M. BRADFORD
EDWARD A. BRADY
JOEL C. BRAGG

MEHUL J. BRAHMBHATT
SCOTT BRANCO
EMILY E. BRAND
JOEL BRAUN
NICHOLAS BRAUN
GIAN P. BREHM
STEVEN C. BRENOSKIE
DAVID E. BREWER III
CULLEN RICHARD BREWSTER
WILLIAM D. BRIDGES
SARAH MARIE BRILL
PAUL D. BRISKI
MICHAEL R. BRODERICK
JAMES R. BROOKS
ANTHONY M. BROWN, JR.
APRIL E. BROWN
CODY M. BROWN
ELIZABETH BROWN
GREGORY P. BROWN
JASON C. BROWN
JASON D. BROWN
JERMAINE ANTHONY BROWN
JESSICA E. BROWN
NICHOLAS N. BROWN
ERIC A. BROWNING
MICHAEL HOWARD BROWNLEE
ERIC M. BROYLES
TEIA M. BRUMGARD
ERIC W. BRUTON
BRANDON R. BRYAN
MATTHEW J. BRYAN
ADAM BUCHANAN
JAMES M. BUCHANAN
TIMOTHY W. BUCHER
CHRISTOPHER R. BUGG
SARAH K. BULINSKI
DAVID P. BULL, JR.
DAVID E. BULLOCK
JAMES D. BULLOCK
JASON WAYNE BULLOCK
BRUSSELL C. BUNGAY
JUNELENE MONZON BUNGAY
JOSEPH J. BURCHELL
MARTIN P. BURDEN
KRISTA BURES
BRENT W. BURGE
PATRICK J. BURKE
SCOTT A. BURKEY
RUSSELL BURKHARD
JARRED L. BURLEY
ANDREW R. BURNS
JEFFREY M. BURNS
BENJAMIN M. BURR
ALAN C. BURWELL
BRIAN S. BUTLER
JARED RHETT BUTLER
NATHANIEL BUTLER
KENNETH L. BYRD
MAGNO L. CABIAO
MICHAEL CADY
STEVEN JAMES CAIN
ANDREW I. CALHOUN
CHRISTOPHER N. CALLAS
KEVIN A. CALLOWAY
TIMOTHY I. CALVER
LUIS CALVO
SANTIAGO CAMACHO, JR.
WILLIAM J. CAMP
JOHN P. CAMPANA
CALEB PHILIP CAMPBELL
JONATHAN M. CAMPBELL
ROBERT D. CAMPBELL
JOHN J. CAMPION
MATTHEW S. CAMPISE
SETH M. CANNON
ELLEN MARIE GETZELMAN CANUP
MARGOT C. CAPELL
MICHAEL L. CAPRA
TIMOTHY J. CARBINO
MARVIN G. CARDER, JR.
ALICIA D. CAREY
ERIC B. CAREY
ALEXANDRA L. CARICO
JOHNNY C. CARLISLE
MATTHEW R. CARPENTER
BRANDON M. CARTER
JEFFREY P. CARTER
MARION M. CARTER
JOSEPH R. CARUSO
GERSHWYN S. CARUTH
MICHAEL PATRICK CARVIN
JAIME CASAS
DANIEL J. CASEY
GRIFFIN R. CASEY
JASON CASEY
JOHN GERALD CASEY
STEPHEN M. CASH
CHRISTOPHER S. CASLER
JERMEKO S. CASSEL
NICHOLAS L. CASTRO
MARC P. CATALANO
CHRISTOPHER ROBERT CAVE
JORDAN G. CAYTON
HUMBERTO J. CENTENO
KRISTEN A. CEPACK
NICK M. CHACHOR
NATHAN W. CHAL
SHAWN M. CHAMBERLIN
ERIC E. CHAN
ROZENA CHAN
ROBERT T. CHANCE, JR.
RUSSELL C. CHANCE

LANDON P. CHANDLER
 REGINALD L. CHANDLER
 WILLIAM Y. CHANG
 JOSEPH O. CHAPA
 BENJAMIN R. CHAPMAN
 PATRICK J. CHAPMAN
 JOSEPH W. CHASSER
 ANDREW CHEN
 CARL R. CHEN
 ERNIE CHEN
 NICOLAIS R. CHIGHIZOLA
 GREGG R. CHILSON
 CHRISTOPHER H. CHIN
 BYUNGSUK CHOI
 NATALIE G. CHOUNET
 ELAINE C. CHRISTIAN
 MICHAEL E. CHUA
 DANIEL L. CHURCHILL
 RANDY S. CICALA
 CALEB T. CIENSKI
 JOSEPH A. CITRO
 SARAH K. CLAPP
 BARTHOLOMEW W. CLARK
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 THOMAS J. WEBER
 PATRICK J. WEEKLY
 DANIEL J. WEEMS
 CHRISTOPHER W. WEIMER
 EMILI A. WEIS
 ROBERT D. WEISS
 ROBERT J. WEITERSHAUSEN
 RICHARD A. WELCH
 LOUIS ANTHONY WELLE III
 PAUL J. WELSH
 JAMES B. WENTZEL
 THOMAS M. WERNER
 BRIAN K. WERNLE
 MICHAEL L. WERRE
 TYLER K. WEST
 BRANDON M. WESTLING
 ZACHARY J. WHALEN
 CHAD M. WHARTON
 JAMES B. WHEATLEY
 BRANDON J. WHEELER
 WILLIAM J. WHIDDON
 RYAN M. WHITAKER
 ALEXANDER B. WHITE
 GORDON M. WHITE
 JON A. WHITE
 KENNETH E. WHITE II
 MATTHEW D. WHITE
 TRAVIS J. WHITE
 ZACHARY L. WHITE
 ANTHONY D. WHITEHEAD
 KEVIN C. WHITLATCH
 DAVID L. WHITTNEY
 LEE E. WHITTEN
 JOHN RALPH WIDMER
 JORDAN M. WIERSCH
 ADAM B. WIESER

DOUGLAS J. WIETLISBACH
 RAY S. WILCOX
 GENE MICHAEL WILKINS
 LUCAS E. WILL
 DUSTIN R. WILLARD
 RICHARD P. WILLE
 CHRISTOPHER S. WILLEY
 BENJAMIN G. WILLIAMS
 CHRISTOPHER J. WILLIAMS
 DUSTIN K. WILLIAMS
 ISAAC C. WILLIAMS
 KEVIN D. WILLIAMS
 MICHAEL W. WILLIAMS
 RUSSELL H. WILLIAMS
 TYLER J. WILLIAMS
 BRADLEY C. WILLIS
 CHANELLE M. WILLIS
 ERIC T. WILMOT
 JARED A. WILSON
 JONATHAN A. WILSON
 MATTHEW P. WILSON
 NORMAN K. WILSON
 RYAN W. WILSON
 SIGANSULPUM WILSON
 TERRENCE WILSON
 JONATHAN B. WING
 NATALIE M. WINKELS
 HANS U. WINKLER
 BRANDON M. WINNINGHAM
 SABRINA N. WINTER
 THOMAS D. WITTWER
 MARQUIS A. WOFFORD
 ANDRE WOLF
 KARLTON J. WOLF
 ANDREA WOLFE CLARK
 JOSHUA J. WOLFRAM
 SUSAN W. K. WONG TWOREK
 BRANDON M. WOOD
 JODY ROSS WOOD
 TRAY C. WOOD
 ISHMAN W. WOODARD, JR.
 OLIVER L. WOODLAND
 JASON C. WOOLFORD
 COURTNEY L. WORDEN
 RYAN J. WORRELL
 ROBERT O. WRAY
 THOMAS WRAY
 JEFFREY D. WRIGHT
 JESSICA D. WRIGHT
 JONATHAN W. WRIGHT
 LATOSHIA WRIGHT
 ZACHARY ADAM WRIGHT
 JAMES CHIEN CHIN WU
 KELLI NICOLE WYATT
 GILBERT S. WYCHE II
 CASEY H. WYMAN
 LIVATH XAYASANE
 REYN M. YAMASHIRO
 PHILIP A. YARBOROUGH
 JACOB R. YATES
 KYLE G. YATES
 MAX W. YATES
 GRACE U. YI
 BRIAN P. YODER
 MICAH S. YOST
 AARON J. YOUNG
 CARMEN E. YOUNG
 JOHN J. ZAIMIS
 FARAKH BALAL ZAMAN
 ANDREW J. ZANRUCHA
 CHRISTOPHER D. ZAREMSKI
 MATTHEW W. ZAYATZ
 TABATHA R. ZELHART
 SCOTT C. ZETTERSTROM
 ROBERT E. ZICKEFOOSE II
 MARSHALL R. ZIEMANSKI
 KENNETH J. ZIMMERMAN
 TIMOTHY G. ZISHKA
 AARON ZORN
 CURTIS ZOSS
 RACHEL M. ZOTTO
 JOSEPH V. ZUEHL, JR.
 DEVIN LEE ZUFELT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT
 TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR
 FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

CHRISTOPHER T. STEIN

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT
 TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY
 NURSE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND
 3064:

To be major

ADRIAN R. ALGARRA
 TERRI C. ANDREWS
 NIKKI L. ARMSTRONG
 CHAD W. BACKUS
 CHRISTINE M. BACSA
 KIMBERLY M. BANNISTER
 KIMBERLY A. BARCUS
 SHERI L. BATES
 JOEL C. BAUZON
 JEAN Y. BELL
 TERRIE L. BOISVENUHOATLAND
 KAY M. BOLIN
 LISA A. BOWERS
 RODERICK BOWSER

BETHANY L. BRADBURY
 CLAUDIA BRADFORD
 STACEY L. BRECKONS
 MARC T. BRINSLEY
 FELICIA R. BROWN
 JODI L. BROWN
 MICHAEL F. BROWN III
 AMY E. BRZUCHALSKI
 SUMMER N. BUCHMEIER
 MATTHEW E. BUCKLES
 BRANDI M. BURROWES
 ERSAN CAPAN
 CARY N. CARTER
 WILLIAM J. CHAPPELL
 BRANDY L. CLAYTON
 KEVIN D. COPLE
 DAVID L. COTTLE, JR.
 JULIE A. COWLES
 ANNE M. DANIELE
 KIMBERLY A. DILGER
 NOELLE S. DOVE
 LENA M. FABIAN
 KATHLEEN S. FEELEYLYNCH
 LINDSAY R. FELKER
 BRYAN S. FERRARA
 SHARA FISHER
 GERBERT L. FLORESCHAVEZ
 MONICA F. FLOWERS
 ERICA L. FRANKLINWILKERSON
 JULIE A. GABELETTO
 PAUL R. GALEY
 DIONICIO M. GARMA
 EDWARD A. GEIGER
 CAISSY A. GOE
 TAWANA GOLDSTEIN
 JESSICA M. GORDON
 JACLYN A. GRANT
 SARAH E. HARRIS
 ALAN J. HARVEY
 MEREDITH M. HETTINGER
 TRACY HO
 ELIZABETH A. HULTGREN
 DIANNE A. JAMES
 ERIKA JARAMILLO
 NICOLE M. T. JOHNSON
 PATRICK R. KADILAK
 ELIZABETH L. KASSULKE
 ADAM D. KELLER
 MICHAEL A. KNIGHT
 DJAKARIA KONATE
 BRANDI L. LANGE
 KEITH M. LATHROP
 NICOLE M. LAWRENCE
 LOUIS J. LOZANO
 AMY L. LUCIA
 DEBORAH L. MANDEL
 WILLIAM B. MARSH
 MEGAN L. MATTERS
 JAMILL A. MATTHEWS
 JAMES P. MCCAMPBELL
 ANGIE D. MCCONNICO
 KEITH W. MCDONALD
 JORGE L. MENDOZA
 WILLIAM A. MOLINA
 KIMBERLY J. MOORE
 TIFFANY J. MOORE
 DAVID S. MORAN
 MAYKO L. MOSES
 LAUREY K. MUNCH
 NICHOLAS C. MURPHY
 KEYONA M. NELSON
 MIGUEL NEMETH
 TINIKA N. NIXON
 SOFIYA NUKALO
 MATTHEW A. OCONNOR
 MONICA M. OLSON
 ANGELA D. PALMER
 EBONY A. PETERMAN
 DIONNE D. PHILLIPS
 BENILANI M. PINEDA
 AKIL RAHMAN
 ROBERT S. REVELS
 TIFFANY E. RICHARDS
 ROBIN C. RIGGS
 TABITHA L. RILEY
 WILFREDO E. RIVERASILVA
 MICHAEL T. ROBERTSON
 JORGE J. RUBIO
 ANTHONY M. SABATINI
 SONIA M. SHAKIR
 KRISTEN E. SHEAR
 CHRISTINE C. SHEPHERD
 LECRESHIA S. SHIELDS
 ANGELA K. SHRADER
 MELANIE D. SIMS
 LAVEETA S. SPRINGER
 BLAIR M. STONE
 DUANE N. THOMAS
 REGINA M. THORP
 CLAUDIA I. TORRES
 TRAM N. UNG
 VIKKI A. VARISCE
 VERNETTA C. WARNER
 MARLA A. WASHINGTON
 DELLENE R. WEBB
 GREGORY B. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT
 TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY
 MEDICAL SPECIALIST CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C.,
 SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

PHILIP O. ADAMS

MICHAEL C. ATCHLEY
 TYSON G. BAYNES
 MICHAEL J. CONNER
 JOSEPH T. COSTELLO
 JENNIFER L. DEMPSEY
 SEAN DONOHUE
 PETER M. DOYLE
 JESS FELDTMANN
 SCOTT D. FISHER
 STEPHANIE M. GASPER
 JOHN GOTTSCHALK
 NICHOLAS J. GRANDE, JR.
 JONATHAN R. HALLER
 JEFFREY D. HANNAH
 MELISSA K. HODGES
 TRAVIS L. JACOBS
 JULIANNA M. JAYNE
 MARY M. JOHNSON
 JASON R. JONES
 SEON JONES
 ANDREW R. KENNEDY
 ADRIENNE M. KRAMER
 MARGARET M. KUCIA
 JESSICA A. LARSON
 YI L. LEE
 JOSEPH A. LOPEZ
 HUGH S. MCLEOD IV
 SHERYL R. MILFORD
 BRANDON J. MOORE
 JAMIE B. MORRIS
 DEBORAH J. OLDFIELD
 SEAN M. PENARANDA
 BRYAN B. PICKENS
 MANISH RAWAT
 MATTHEW D. RIED
 JAMES E. ROCKWOOD
 MATTHEW S. SHURTLEFF
 LAUREL B. SMITH
 JILL SPACKMAN
 SEAN M. SPANBAUER
 MARY H. STAUDTER
 BRIAN E. STOLTENBERG
 SHAWN M. THOMPSON
 GARY P. TOCCI
 RAUL VILLALOBOS
 JERIMIAH D. WALKER
 TERESA A. WALTERS
 GEOFFREY A. WASHBURN
 BENJAMAN M. WUNDERLICH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT
 TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY
 VETERINARY CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS
 624 AND 3064:

To be major

JULIA N. ALVAREZ
 LAURA M. ANDERSON
 ANDREW J. ARMSTRONG
 MARY C. AVRIETTE
 PHILIP A. BOWLING
 CATHERINE D. BURLISON
 NATHAN S. CHUMBLER
 EMILY M. CORBIN
 SARAH K. CUDD
 JENNIFER C. EFFLER
 KERRIE L. FARRAR
 ELLIOTT R. GARBER
 DAWN M. HULL
 ROBERT K. KIM
 TIFFANY L. KIMBRELL
 KELLY A. LOVE
 SARAH A. LUCIANO
 SHANNON L. MCLEAN
 SEAN P. MCPECK
 ALICIA M. MOREAU
 KRISTINA A. PUGH
 ELLIOT RAMOSRIVERA
 ANDREW J. SCHRADER
 ELAD I. STOTLAND
 MICHAEL J. VANDERWALKER
 VIRGINIA C. WHITE
 APRIL D. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT
 TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY
 MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SEC-
 TIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

WENDY M. ADAMIAN
 CHRYSTAL J. AGNOR
 MICHAEL L. AHRENS
 JONATHAN D. AKERS
 CHRISTOPHER S. ALFEREZ
 NOLAN H. ANDERSON III
 BRANDON J. ARCHER
 MANUEL A. BACCINELLI
 MICHAEL T. BADDLEY
 EVETTE C. BARNES
 DONELL L. BARNETT
 TANYA A. BARTLETT
 SATHIELIER L. BATES
 RAYMOND T. BECKMAN
 DAVID J. BEHRMANN
 YOLANDA T. BENSON
 ANDREW T. BIGELOW
 DANA BRENNER
 JULIE C. BRIDGES
 REBEKAH C. BROADY
 JOCEPHUS S. CARLILE
 ERICA H. CHAE
 ANDRE C. CHANCE

ANDRE P. CHAPLIN
STEVEN S. S. CHO
FRANCIS G. CIOCHINI
CANDICE M. CLARK
LAURA L. R. CLARK
THOMAS J. CLIFFORD
SAMUEL COLEMAN III
THOMAS C. COLLINS
MICHAEL K. CONNELLY
JASON A. CONSTANTINEAU
MICHAEL A. COOMBES
CESAR A. COSTALES
CARA E. COXCOLEMAN
JAMIE L. CULBREATH
ANGELA R. DAVIS
JENNY L. DAVIS
ROBERT B. DAVIS
AMANDA J. DECKER
MARY A. DEJOSEPH
PETER J. DELL
DARREN D. DENT
THOMAS J. DOLCE
DIONNE DRAYTON
NATHAN A. DREWELLOW
PHILIP B. DUFF III
VINCENT L. DUNCAN
CRAIG S. EATON
CAITLIN J. EBBETS
AIDA M. ECHEVARRIA
CLINTON D. ELLIS
MARK J. EUSE
RAYSON E. EVBUOMWAN
KURTIS P. EVICK
DEREK L. FELDER
JULIAN P. GILBERT
WALTER L. GLASCO
DANIEL L. GONZALEZ
GEORGE C. GOODWYN
VANESSA GOOSEN
JOHN C. GORBET
SUSAN N. GOSINE
STEVEN P. GUTIERREZ
SARA J. HAIMES
CALE T. HAMILTON
ELIZABETH E. HAMILTON
LAUREN M. HAMLIN
GREGORY W. HARE
JESSICA M. HARMON
DEBBIE A. HARRIS
TONJA R. HARRIS
TRAVIS C. HELM
WILLIAM L. HENJUM
JONATHAN P. HICKS
EARL W. HIRATA
MATTHEW J. HOLUTA
VICTORIA L. IJAMES
JENNIFER M. IRWIN
KARA L. JENSEN
ROBBIE S. JOHNSON, JR.
JENNIFER A. JONES
PHILIP S. KABERLINE
WILLIAM T. KILGORE
STACEY A. KRAUSS
AARON N. KRUPP
STEPHEN P. KRUTKO
ANGELICA M. LABOONE
BETHANY G. LANDECK
NABIL H. LATIF
GENNARO V. LAYO
DARLENE A. LAZARD
JUSTIN M. LILLY
EHREN A. LINDERMAN
BJORN C. LISTERUD
MATTHEW L. LOPRESTI
ANDREW J. MACCINI
JUSTINE J. MAJERES
TYLER J. MARK
LLOYD A. MASON
SETH A. MAYER
EUGENIA E. MCDANIEL
ROBERT C. MCDONOUGH
JOSEPH W. MCGEE, JR.
NICOLE L. MCNISH
AMASA L. MECHAM
LYSSA L. MEHALL
JESSE M. MONCIVAIS
ERIC R. MOORMAN
MICAH J. MORINO
CHRISTOPHER D. MORISOLI
KRISTI L. MUELLER
DUSTIN P. MULLINS
JOYCE M. MULLINS
ANDREW R. NEIGHBORS
JUSTIN C. NEVINS
KENESHA D. PACE
TODD A. PERRY
VIDHIKA M. PERSAUD
SANTIAGO PIMENTA
MEGAN E. PITTINGER
STEVEN L. PLAXCO
WILLIAM A. POLAND
LUCAS L. K. POON
WENDY L. PRICE
LUIS J. QUINONESVARGAS
RYAN M. RAUSCH
SAMANTHA S. RIEGER
DEVON V. RILEY
MATTHEW C. RILEY
AARON F. ROBERTS

JOSEPH T. ROBINETTE
CHARMEON W. ROBINSON
THOMAS F. ROBINSON
TAMMY L. ROHRBACH
ROBERTO SANCHEZPEREZ
JODI L. SANTIAGO
VERONICA F. SCHOENBORN
SEAN P. SEAY
RALPH J. SEPULVEDA
LACEY M. SHARKEY
WILLIAM T. SHONTZ
BRYAN D. SHRIVES
DAVID L. SMITH
BOBBI S. SNOWDEN
PERRY C. SOSEBEE, JR.
JAMIE L. SPAYDE
DAWN N. STEPHENS
SARAH M. SUBLETT
DERREK M. SUMMERS
KENNETH W. SWANSON
SIERRA A. L. SYMONETTE
KAREN E. THOMAS
SARA V. TURINSKY
KARL V. UMBRASAS
DANIELLE A. VAZQUEZ
ERICK M. VINES
ALIZA L. VINSON
BETHANY A. WAGNER
NATHAN T. WAGNER
HEATHER M. WAITE
WILLIAM K. WHITE
ERIK C. WIESEHAN
ANDREW T. WILSON
FABIOLA WILSON
JENNIFER D. WILSON
DANIEL W. WINNIE
RYAN D. WOOD
RONALD L. WOODBURY
EDDIE S. WRIGHT
GINA M. WRIGHT
CHARLES J. WYATT
RENDY F. YUDHISTIRA
DAVID C. ZGONG
VICTOR E. ZOTTIG
D011667
D012433

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

VERNITA M. CORBETT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

MATTHEW H. ADAMS
LARRY A. BABIN, JR.
CHAD B. BALFANZ
JACOB D. BASHORE
RYAN BEERY
CANDACE M. BESHESSE
BRADFORD D. BIGLER
JOHN W. BROOKER
BAILEY W. BROWN III
STEVEN J. COLLINS
JESSICA CONN
MELISSA R. COVOLESKY
PATRICK L. DAVIS
CHRISTIAN L. DEICHERT
DANIEL D. DERNER
JEROME P. DUGGAN
DAVID A. DULANEY
CHRISTOPHER M. FORD
LAWRENCE P. GILBERT
RICHARD E. GORINI
JOHN J. GOWEL
KATHERINE S. GOWEL
PATRICK B. GRANT
KELLI A. HOOKE
SCOTT Z. HUGHES
NATHAN P. JACOBS
KEVIN M. JINKS
SALLY M. JUAREZ
KEIRSTEN H. KENNEDY
DANIEL R. KICZA
MATTHEW A. KRAUSE
GARY R. LEVY, JR.
KEVIN A. MCCARTHY
TODD A. MESSINGER
DONALD L. POTTS
KRISTY L. RADIO
TERESA L. RAYMOND
ROBERT A. RODRIGUES
VINCENT T. SHULER
ANDREW J. SMITH
GREGORY T. STRICKER
TIMOTHY W. THOMAS
MEGAN WAKEFIELD
D012453

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

MICHAEL F. COERPER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

WILLIAM D. ROSE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

MARK W. MANOSO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

ERIC F. SABETY

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 5721:

To be lieutenant commander

MATTHEW T. ALLEN
VANCE R. BEATTY
BRIAN T. BITTNER
SAMUEL H. BLAIR
THOMAS K. BREWER
WILLIAM R. BRIDGES
TIMOTHY B. BROCK
LOWELL E. BRUHN
JEFFREY C. BUENAVENTURA
JEFFREY L. BURKHOLDER
MATTHEW J. CAMPBELL
PAUL J. COLWELL
MORGAN M. DIETZEL
ERIC T. FAIRCLOTH
GRAHAM D. FLETTERICH
ANDREW S. FOOR
GREGORY E. HITT
PRESTON S. HOOPS
CARLOS M. IGUINA
CHRISTOPHER D. IVEY
JOHN B. JUDY
KRISTOPHER J. KELLOGG
SCOTT M. KENNICOTT
ANDREW L. LAIDLER
WINSTON B. LANGHAM
KRISTOPHER R. LEWIS
YILEI LIU
CATHERINE S. LONG
DOUGLAS K. MCKENZIE
NICHOLAS G. MILLER
CHRISTOPHER B. MINICK
JASON M. MOODY
GARRETT T. MOORE
GAROLD I. MUNSON
GREGORY A. PAULUS
RUSSELL G. PAV
TIMOTHY D. PONSCHOCK
ERIC T. REGNIER
JOSE J. REYES
DAVID R. RINEHART
JONATHAN M. ROGAN
ALBERTO C. RUIZ
PATRICK D. SHOVLIN
PATRICK R. STONE
DAVID K. TAWHEEL
JUDSON J. C. THOMAS
JAMIE A. TURF
ADAM R. TURPIN
GERALD E. VINEYARD
JASON I. WELLS
JASON M. WILLIAMS
ADAM C. WISEMAN
JOSHUA F. ZIMMER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUALS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

RICHARD W. LANG
MARCO A. MARTINEZ
HERNAN PINILLA
BRADLEY E. SHEMLUCK

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on February 22, 2016 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATION OF ERIC N. RUMPF, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 13, 2015.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, February 23, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY 24

10 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Renewable Fuel Standard.

SD-406

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine ending modern slavery.

SD-419

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine the Zika virus, focusing on addressing the growing public health threat.

SD-430

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of The American Legion.

SH-216

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Army.

SD-192

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management

To hold hearings to examine the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, focusing on opportunities for improvement to support state and local governments.

SD-342

2 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of State.

SD-124

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Homeland Security.

SD-192

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

SD-138

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To hold closed hearings to examine Iran's intelligence and unconventional military capabilities.

SVC-217

Special Committee on Aging

To hold hearings to examine opioid use among seniors, focusing on issues and emerging trends.

SD-562

FEBRUARY 25

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Brad R. Carson, of Oklahoma, to be Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Jennifer M. O'Connor, of Maryland, to be General Counsel, and Todd A. Weiler, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary, all of the Department of Defense.

SD-G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

Business meeting to consider the Chairman's mark on biotechnology labeling solutions.

SR-328A

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine connecting patients to new and potential life saving treatments.

SD-342

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold hearings to examine changes to the United States patent system and impacts on America's small businesses.

SR-428A

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Justice.

SD-192

1:30 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the Tribal Law and Order Act 5 years later, focusing on the next steps to improve justice systems in Indian communities.

SH-216

2 p.m.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of John B. King, of New York, to be Secretary of Education.

SD-430

Select Committee on Intelligence

To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH-219

2:30 p.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest

To hold hearings to examine the impact of high-skilled immigration on United States workers.

SD-226

MARCH 2

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission.

SR-253

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

SD-G50

MARCH 3

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment

To hold hearings to examine regulatory reforms to improve equity market structure.

SD-538

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Energy.

SD-366

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations.

CHOB-345

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

MARCH 8		MARCH 9		quest for fiscal year 2017 for Indian Country.	
10 a.m.		2 p.m.			SD-628
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources		Committee on the Judiciary			
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Forest Service.		Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights		MARCH 16	
	SD-366	To hold an oversight hearing to examine the enforcement of the antitrust laws.		10 a.m.	
			SD-226	Committee on Veterans' Affairs	
		2:15 p.m.		To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations.	
		Committee on Indian Affairs			SD-G50
		To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget re-			

SENATE—Tuesday, February 23, 2016

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Lord, You are great and highly to be praised. Make Yourself known in the hearts and minds of our lawmakers. May Your presence create in them a hunger and thirst for righteousness. Help them to see the opportunities that reside in their challenges, as thoughts of Your steadfast love sustain them throughout life's seasons.

May their lips speak of Your wisdom and the meditations of their hearts earn Your sacred approval. Lord, give them the wisdom to remember how fragile life is and that when we die we leave our possessions to others. When our Senators call on You in the day of trouble, deliver them with Your mighty hands.

And, Lord, touch Senator CLAIRE MCCASKILL with Your healing hands.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

NOMINATION OF ROBERT CALIFF

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, at a time when the prescription drug opioid epidemic is tearing families and communities apart in our country, it is clear we need strong leadership at the FDA. This is an agency that can play a leading role in addressing the crisis through its drug-approval process, but it is also an agency that has been rightly criticized for not recognizing the severity of such a significant problem and for not taking greater action to address it.

Today we will consider the nomination of someone who I think can help lead the agency in a new direction. I recently met with Dr. Califf and raised my concerns and desire for the FDA to take a more assertive role in address-

ing this serious epidemic. He shared with me his proposed plan for dealing with the issue and for establishing a necessary cultural shift over the agency. I plan to support his nomination today, and I look forward to working with him.

That said, I have proudly led many efforts over the years to push the FDA to take a stronger approach when it comes to ending today's prescription opioid epidemic. I don't plan to let up now. The FDA should expect continuous, rigorous oversight in the way the agency addresses this epidemic in the future.

GUANTANAMO DETAINEES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we understand that in just a few minutes the President is set to make an announcement on the secure facility in Guantanamo. In light of that, colleagues should consider the following things we have heard in recent weeks.

General Dunford has spoken of the need for our military to take more aggressive action against the ISIL group that is operating inside Libya.

General Campbell has spoken of the need to retain a sizable enough force in Afghanistan to accomplish the dual missions of both conducting counterterrorism operations and training and advising the Afghan security forces.

Secretary of Defense Ash Carter has issued a budget request that seeks funding for the weapons systems and programs we will need to balance against the regional ambitions of China and Russia.

In other words, some of the most senior national security officials within this administration are already working to better position the next President for the national security challenges we will face in 2017 and beyond. Yet President Obama seems to remain captured on one matter by a campaign promise he made in 2008—his ill-considered crusade to close the secure detention facility at Guantanamo.

Today we received the descriptions of where the President would like to detain terrorists within the United States—though not any actual proposed locations—despite the fact that it would be illegal under current law to transfer foreign terrorists at Guantanamo into the United States. This isn't a case where the President can even try to justify the use of some pen-and-phone strategy by claiming Congress failed to act. To the contrary, Congress acted over and over again in a bipartisan way to reject the President's desire to transfer dangerous terrorists to

communities in the United States. The President signed all these prohibitions and his Attorney General recently confirmed that it is illegal for the President to transfer any of these terrorists into the United States.

We will review President Obama's plan, but since it includes bringing dangerous terrorists to facilities in U.S. communities, he should know that the bipartisan will of Congress has already been expressed against that proposal.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the signs of the season are all around us. Volunteers are knocking on doors, caucusers are caucusing, voters are voting, and countless ballots have been cast already in places as diverse as Council Bluffs, Nashua, and Myrtle Beach. Thousands more Nevadans are making their voices heard today, and Americans in over a dozen more States will have an opportunity to do the same next week.

It is campaign season. We are right in the middle of it, and one of the most important issues now is this: Who will Americans trust to nominate the next Supreme Court justice? The Presidential candidates are already debating the issue on stage. Americans are already discussing the issue among themselves, and voters are already casting ballots—in the case of the Democratic leader's constituents on this very day—with this issue very much in mind.

One might say this is an almost unprecedented moment in the history of our country. It has been more than 80 years since a Supreme Court vacancy arose and was filled in a Presidential election year, and that was when the Senate majority and the President were from the same political party. It has been 80 years.

Since we have divided government today, it means we have to look back almost 130 years to the last time a nominee was confirmed in similar circumstances. That was back when politicians such as mugwumps were debating policy like free silver and a guy named Grover ran the country. Think about that.

As Senators, it leaves us with a choice. Will we allow the people to continue deciding who will nominate the next Justice or will we empower a lameduck President to make that decision on his way out the door instead?

The question of who decides has been contemplated by many, including our

friends on the other side of the aisle. We already know the incoming Democratic leader's view. The senior Senator from New York didn't even wait until the final year of President George W. Bush's term to declare that the Senate "should reverse the presumption of confirmation" and "not confirm a Supreme Court nominee except in extraordinary circumstances."

We also know how the current Democratic leader feels about judicial nominees from a President of the other party. This is what he said:

"The Senate is not a rubberstamp for the executive branch," he said. "Nowhere in [the Constitution] does it say the Senate has a duty to give presidential nominees a vote. It says appointments shall be made with the advice and consent of the Senate. That's very different than saying every nominee receives a vote."

What about the views of the top officer of this body, the President of the Senate? JOE BIDEN was a Senator for many decades. He was a loyal Democrat. He developed enduring friendships in both parties, and before becoming Vice President, he served here as chairman of the Judiciary Committee. Let's consider what he said in circumstances similar to where we find ourselves today. It was an election year with campaigns already underway, a President and a Senate majority from different political parties, just as we have today. This is what appeared on page A25 of the Washington Post:

Sen. Joseph R. Biden Jr. (D-Del.), chairman of the Judiciary Committee, has urged President Bush not to fill any vacancy that might open up on the Supreme Court until after the November election. Warning that any election-year nominee "would become a victim" of a "power struggle" over control of the Supreme Court, Biden said he would also urge the Senate not to hold hearings on a nomination if Bush decided to name someone.

The article continued, quoting then-Senator BIDEN:

"If someone steps down, I would highly recommend the president not name someone, not send a name up," Biden said. "If he [Bush] did send someone up, I would ask the Senate to seriously consider not having a hearing on that nominee."

And then, this:

"Can you imagine dropping a nominee, after the three or four or five decisions that are about to [be] made by the Supreme Court, into that fight, into that cauldron in the middle of a presidential year?" Biden went on. "I believe there would be no bounds of propriety that would be honored by either side. . . . The environment within which such a hearing would be held would be so supercharged and so prone to be able to be distorted."

"Whoever the nominee was, good, bad or indifferent," he added, "would become a victim."

As the current chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, pointed out yesterday, BIDEN went even further on the Senate floor. He said that "[it does not] matter how good a person is nominated by the President"

because it was the principle of the matter, not the person, that truly mattered.

BIDEN cautioned that "Some of our nation's most bitter and heated confirmation fights have come in presidential election years" but also reminded colleagues of several instances when Presidents exercised restraint and withheld from making a nomination until after the election.

One of them was Abraham Lincoln. It offers an example others may choose to consider.

President Obama, like Lincoln, once served in the Illinois legislature. It is a place he returned to just the other day to talk about healing the divide in our country. He said:

It's been noted often by pundits that the tone of our politics hasn't gotten better since I was inaugurated. In fact it's gotten worse. . . . One of my few regrets is my inability to reduce the polarization and meanness in our politics.

Well, this is his moment. He has every right to nominate someone, even if doing so will inevitably plunge our Nation into another bitter and unavoidable struggle. That certainly is his right. Even if he never expects that nominee to be actually confirmed but rather to wield as an election cudgel, he certainly has the right to do that. But he also has the right to make a different choice. He could let the people decide and make this an actual legacy-building moment, rather than just another campaign road show.

Whatever he decides, his own Vice President and others remind us of an essential point. Presidents have a right to nominate just as the Senate has its constitutional right to provide or withhold consent. In this case, the Senate will withhold it. The Senate will appropriately revisit the matter after the American people finish making in November the decision they have already started making today.

For now, I would ask colleagues to consider once more the words of Vice President BIDEN. He said:

Some will criticize such a decision and say it was nothing more than an attempt to save the seat on the Court in the hopes that a . . . [member of my party] will be permitted to fill it, but that would not be our intention. Mr. President, if that were the course to choose in the Senate to not consider holding hearings until after the election. Instead, it would be our pragmatic conclusion that once the political season is underway, and it is, action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over.

That is Vice President BIDEN when he was chairman of the Judiciary Committee in a Presidential election year. Fair to the nominee, essential to the process, a pragmatic conclusion—the words of President Obama's own No. 2. What else needs to be said?

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

WISHING WELL SENATOR CLAIRE MCCASKILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on behalf of the entire Senate, we acknowledge the prayer of the Chaplain today regarding CLAIRE MCCASKILL. CLAIRE MCCASKILL, as is known now, has breast cancer. She feels comfortable with the diagnosis. She is in a place where they are rendering great care in St. Louis, in the State of Missouri, so we are hopeful and very confident she is going to be just fine. But our thoughts are with her, recognizing the number of people in the Senate who have been stricken with cancer of one kind or another.

Without belaboring the point, breast cancer is personally very devastating not only to the patient, of course, but to the family who is doing everything they can in a compassionate way to support their loved one. We know Joe, her husband, is terribly concerned, but I sent a message to him that the treatment of breast cancer is so much better than it was just a few years ago and that we believe CLAIRE will be OK, and we certainly hope that is the case.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Republican leader mentioned a number of things, and I am not going to talk about all of them, but there is one thing I want to focus on for just a minute. We have something that is devastating moving forward throughout this country, and that is poisoning by opioids. These products that come in the form of medicine prescribed by doctors have been devastating and sweeping the country.

Of course, I am glad we are moving forward on Dr. Califf—he is a fine man, and he will do a good job as head of the Food and Drug Administration—but we are going to move to some legislation dealing with these poisons. I would hope that everyone would appreciate the fact that what we are going to do, as we do too often, is celebrate the passing of legislation that really doesn't have much to do with reality. The only way we are going to do a better job of fighting this scourge is to have some resources to help people who have the responsibility to do something about that. We need to take up the Judiciary Committee's opioid bill, maybe even as early as next week, but we also need to devote real resources, not just lipservice, to this important problem.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I know the Republican leader is doing his best to

try to make a good picture here as to why he has made the decision that the Senate is not going to confirm any Supreme Court nominee the President puts forward. I heard one statement by the former chair of the Judiciary Committee this morning saying it doesn't matter whom he puts up, we are not going to vote for him or her, whatever the case may be. But the facts my friend provides are absolutely distracting and they are wrong. He can read all the statements he wants from the senior Senator from New York and the Vice President, but never were any nominees held up.

In fact, we don't have to go back to Grover, as he indicated, to find a similar situation. Let's talk about Ronald, a more recent President. In 1988, in the last year of his Presidency, President Reagan put forward the nomination of Anthony Kennedy to be a Supreme Court Justice. That was in the last year of his term. And what did we do? We took it up, and he was confirmed.

There is a lot of time to do things. Vice President BIDEN's statement was made in the middle of the summer of the year he spoke, but there is so much time left. We have 333 days left in President Obama's term of office, so there is plenty of time to get the work done. The average number of days to confirm Justices is 67 days, so I think we should be able to squeeze 67 days out of 333 days.

I don't want to burden everyone with facts, but sometimes they can get in the way of some of these ridiculous diversions from what our job should be. When Senator BIDEN was chairman of the Judiciary Committee in 1991 and 1992 during George W. Bush's term, we confirmed 120 judges. Certainly that hasn't been the case in the last few years because Republicans basically have opposed all judges. And now this new direction toward making sure there is no confirmation of a Supreme Court Justice is obstruction on steroids.

This is really a pivotal moment for the Republican Party and this Republican Senate. The Republican Party of Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt is transforming before our eyes, abandoning its last vestiges of decency and rationality and unconditionally surrendering its moral compass to Donald Trump and TED CRUZ. Gone are the days of levelheadedness and compromise. The radicals in the Republican Party have turned "bipartisanship" into a dirty word. Behind closed doors, my Republican colleagues like to express disappointment at the direction the party is taking, but never, never will they say anything publicly because the extreme elements in their party who seem to be running the party will criticize them.

Republicans should think long and hard about this simple fact: If they follow the course set by the Republican

leader, every one of them will be as responsible as Trump and CRUZ in the debasement of the Republican Party. He will join them in what they have done to the party. It will be a new and much worse Republican Party.

Clearly, Senator MCCONNELL is absolutely following the lead of extremists Trump and CRUZ. There is no clearer example of this than the Republican leader's response to the Supreme Court vacancy. In the aftermath of Justice Scalia's passing, the senior Senator from Kentucky could have announced his intent to fulfill the Senate's constitutional responsibility and invited the President to send a well-qualified candidate to the Senate for confirmation. But that is not what he did because that is not the party of Trump. Instead, the Republican leader announced that he will deny President Obama his constitutional right to appoint nominees to the Supreme Court, defying all precedent that has been set, and by so doing, he will leave the Supreme Court in a state of uncertainty.

Senator MCCONNELL is leading a charge to obstruct and cheapen the Presidency at all costs, regardless of the damage it does to our democracy. Doesn't that sound familiar? Sounds like something Donald Trump would do. That is because it is exactly what Donald Trump urged Senator MCCONNELL to do. At a Republican Presidential debate in South Carolina 10 days ago, Mr. Trump said of the Supreme Court vacancy:

I think it's up to Mitch McConnell and everybody else to stop [the nomination]. It's called delay, delay, delay.

That is from Donald Trump, and that is exactly what the Republican leader is doing—delay, delay, delay.

I believe 333 days is enough to do the work we ordinarily do in 67 days.

It is disappointing that the Senator from Kentucky takes his marching orders from extremists such as Donald Trump. It is a pretty stark change from what Senator MCCONNELL used to believe. He used to loathe this radical tea party faction of the Republican Party. According to an account in the New York Times, the Republican leader once referred to the tea party Republicans as "those idiots, those people come up here and have never been in office and know nothing about being in office." Yet, today, he is meeting with those same Republicans. He is meeting with the House Freedom Caucus—the same Republicans who worked with TED CRUZ to shut down the government. And they did shut it down. It seems as though the Republican leader now subscribes to this new, radical Republicanism.

Even though this extremist brand of politics may sell in Republican Presidential primaries, mainstream Americans categorically reject it. Yesterday, Public Policy Polling released a survey of Independent voters in Pennsylvania

and Ohio—not Democrats, not Republicans, but a large swath of Americans who are now Independents. These numbers should serve as a wake-up call to the Republican leader's party: 70 percent of Independent voters in Ohio believe a new Supreme Court Justice should be named this year. More than 60 percent of Independent voters in Pennsylvania believe a new Supreme Court Justice should be named this year.

The American people are telling Republicans in the Senate that they reject this obstruction of a Supreme Court nominee. Unfortunately, the Republican leader is listening to Donald Trump and the junior Senator from Texas. He is not listening to mainstream America. He is not listening to the few voices of reason coming from his own party, even from his own Senators.

Yesterday the senior Senator from Maine, a Republican, told CNN:

For my part, it's clear the President can send up a nominee—regardless of where he is before he leaves office. It is the duty of the Senate, under the Constitution, to give our advice and consent or withhold our consent. I believe we should follow the regular order and give careful consideration to any nominee that the President may send to the Senate.

There is precedent in this body. Even in the Judiciary Committee, if there is a hearing held and the person is not reported out with a majority vote, it comes to the floor anyway. Senator LEAHY—longtime chair of the Judiciary Committee, the President pro tempore of the Senate, and now ranking member of the Judiciary Committee—will come and talk about that this morning.

I just read a quote from Senator COLLINS, but she is not alone in urging the Republican leader to follow regular order. Other sitting Senators are saying the same thing. I will not read what all of them say, but there is a small nucleus of Republican Senators who believe strongly that what Senator MCCONNELL is doing is wrong.

The Republican Senator from Indiana, Senator COATS, was quoted in one interview as saying:

If the President nominates someone, which is his choice, I think that person would deserve a hearing if that person is not someone that is just obviously nominated for political purposes.

Even the Republican leader's former colleagues agree that the President's nominee deserves a fair shake. The former Senator from Indiana, Dick Lugar, is urging Senate Republicans to do the right thing and honor their constitutional duty. He served here for more than three decades. Here is what he said yesterday:

I can't understand their reluctance given the controversy that surrounds all of the debate that has already occurred. But that is not sufficient reason to forgo your duty.

But perhaps the former Republican Senator from Maine, Olympia Snowe, said it best:

I believe that the process should go forward and be given a good-faith effort.

“A good-faith effort”—it is a phrase we hear often, but it is absolutely crucial to American democracy. Our Constitution is constructed with the expectation that elected leaders would act in good faith. That is how our government operates. It should. Under the Republican obstruction, that has not been the case.

I ask my Republican colleagues, whose side do you want to be on? Whose voice are you listening to? These voices of moderation and reason coming from within your own party or the shrill voices—the shrill, shrill voices—of Trump and CRUZ? There isn't time to vacillate. Right now, before our eyes, the Republican leader is leading this conference straight to the side of Donald Trump and TED CRUZ.

It is not too late to change course. Reject the extremist approach being propagated by the likes of Donald Trump and TED CRUZ. It will only hurt our country. Put aside this unprecedented obstruction and work with President Obama to fill this crucial vacancy on the Supreme Court. Do your job. All we are saying is: Do your job. Do your job. Do your job.

Will the Chair announce the schedule for the rest of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, of South Carolina, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL MISSAL

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, it is quite a discussion when we talk about confirmations, one of the responsibilities this body has that the other body does not have. In the case of a U.S. Supreme Court vacancy, however, during an election year, I think it has actually been some 80 years since they have actually filled a vacancy as opposed to waiting until after the next election.

I am concerned today, though, about another confirmation. VA IG nominee

Michael Missal has been nominated, and I have a hold. To explain what that means, when you have a hold, that doesn't necessarily mean you don't approve of the nominee, but it does mean there is one reason or another you don't want to go ahead and confirm that person. That happened in the case of the nominee to be a VA inspector general, Michael Missal. Actually, I am not placing a hold on him because of deficiencies in him but deficiencies in the Office of the Inspector General. Today what I am announcing is that I am lifting that hold. That means they are free to go ahead and have this nominee go forward, and I think that is the right thing to do.

At the Muskogee VA facility alone, the IG office has conducted nine investigations since 2009, and there has been little or no change in the quality of care. Right now, my office is working hundreds of cases of Oklahoma veterans facing inadequate care or blocked access to benefits. I wrote the VA IG in January of 2016 simply requesting that the VA IG—inspector general—visit Oklahoma facilities and to do so with an outside entity such as a joint commission. There is an attitude sometimes with individuals not wanting outside help, a kind of assumption that “I don't need their help.” Their response letter denied my request to conduct an investigation with a third party. It is time for our VA facilities in Oklahoma to be held to those same standards as private hospitals, and I believe it would take the aid of an outside group to make this happen because right now they are not meeting that quality.

Since placing a hold on Mr. Missal, the IG office has committed to investigating Oklahoma's VA facilities with the oversight of an outside entity, and I have also had commitment from Michael Missal that he will do that. I appreciate their commitment, but our work to improve the care for Oklahoma veterans doesn't end there.

Since the VA reform bill passed Congress this last summer—and it was a good bill—it is clear our facilities in Oklahoma have continued business as usual. I haven't seen any noticeable difference in the performance and treatment of our veterans since the passage and activation of that bill. I believe the impending investigations will show it is going to require a change in the management level to bring about lasting improvements for veterans care.

That is why I, along with my junior Senator from Oklahoma JAMES LANKFORD, introduced S. 2554, the Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability Act, on February 12. This legislation is critical to providing the best treatment for our country's veterans. Building upon the comprehensive plan of the 2014 VA reform bill, our legislation grants VA leadership at the re-

gional level the authority to fire and demote staff working in these facilities. I think a lot of them thought the reform bill did that, but it didn't. We haven't been able to do it. It also allows directors of veterans regional chapters to contract with an outside entity to conduct investigations of their VA medical facilities. As I have worked to address the many concerns I have with Oklahoma's VA facilities, I have come to trust the leadership at the regional level. One individual who has come in is Ralph Gigliotti. He has done a great job. He doesn't have the authority to do what this bill would allow him to do. Not only were intermediate surgeries suspended due to what they have now uncovered, but also the chief of staff has been temporarily removed from his position.

However, this process revealed that regional directors are not presently empowered to address staffing concerns in the facilities they oversee. We have seen this in the State of Oklahoma numerous times. Our legislation peels away the layers of bureaucracy and allows the directors and each of the regional areas to play a larger role with improving the VA system as a whole.

As we all know, freedom isn't free. Many of our veterans have paid the prices with scars, some visible and some may go unseen such as post-traumatic stress disorder—PTSD—depression, and traumatic brain injuries. In my great State of Oklahoma, there are more than 37,000 military families and roughly 340,000 veterans that call our State home, attend our churches, and contribute to our communities. On behalf of Oklahoma, I say we are humbled by the immeasurable dedication of each and every one of them. I think it is the government's duty to honor the promises made to our veterans in return for their sacrifice. I urge our colleagues to remember that.

I can remember when I was in the Army, commitments were made to me when a decision was made—actually, mine was not a decision because it was compulsory service at that time, which I think we ought to go back to. Anyway, I think this is going to be good, and this is going to give us the resources and the capability of correcting the problems as we see them. For that reason, I am lifting my hold on Mr. Michael Missal and his nomination will move forward.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, this past weekend the Nation honored Justice Antonin Scalia, who was laid to rest after serving on the Supreme Court for nearly three decades. Marcelle and I were home in Vermont when we learned that Justice Scalia had passed. Frankly, we were stunned by the news. I did not often agree with Justice

Scalia, but he was a brilliant jurist with a deep commitment to our country and to the Constitution, and we enjoyed his friendship for decades. He will be remembered as one of the most influential Justices in modern history.

While his family and all should have had a chance to mourn his passing, I was shocked when, in the immediate wake of his death, Senate Republicans moved quickly to shut down the constitutionally mandated process to fill the vacancy left on the Supreme Court. Within hours of his death being announced, they declared they would oppose any effort to confirm the next Supreme Court Justice this year. I have served in this body longer than any Member here and I have heard some shocking things during that time, but I am surprised by the political crassness of these statements.

Before a nominee had even been named, some Republicans reflexively decided to prematurely reject anyone—anyone—nominated by the President. This impulsive rush to judgment runs completely contrary to how this body has always treated nominees—always treated nominees—to the highest Court in the land. Republicans should not allow the hyper-partisan rhetoric of the campaign trail to trump one of the Senate's most important constitutional duties.

I have talked to the President, and I know he will fulfill his constitutional duty. He will nominate an individual to bring the Supreme Court back to full strength, and of course he should. The President has already begun consulting with Members of both parties in Senate, but after a nomination has been made, we in the Senate should get to work and do our jobs—the jobs we were elected to do.

I was all over my State of Vermont last week. The Vermonters I spoke with last week reflect Americans across the country who are tired of partisan political games that are chipping away at the foundation of our constitutional democracy. I heard this from both Republicans and Democrats in Vermont.

As Oliver Goodenough, a law professor at Vermont Law School, wrote this weekend in the Rutland Herald, an extended Supreme Court vacancy caused by Senate inaction “would certainly create a constitutional embarrassment.”

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Rutland Herald, Feb. 21, 2016]

COURT BATTLE—ANOTHER SHUTDOWN?

(By Oliver R. Goodenough)

Within hours of the announcement of Anton Scalia's death, one of our political parties was already trying to make points with the electorate about the process of

picking his successor. At that evening's debate, the GOP presidential candidates advocated that the constitutional process should be suspended, either voluntarily by President Barack Obama or by purposeful inaction by the Senate.

Mitch McConnell, the Senate majority leader, was just as speedy, trying to warn Obama off from acting on the mandate of Article II, Section 2, which charges the president with nominating a replacement for Justice Scalia and the Senate with providing its advice and consent on the president's choice.

One can understand McConnell's disapproval. Appointments to the Supreme Court are for life, which means only resignation, impeachment or death will create a vacancy. In the somewhat ghoulish game of waiting for a slot on the closely divided Supreme Court to open up, the short-term expectations of mortality had been focused elsewhere—Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, in particular, has been a survivor of long-odds pancreatic cancer.

So Republicans were brought up short by the death of a conservative hero, whose replacement could shift the balance of the court. The accidents of history will do that sometimes.

The Constitution makes provision for what happens in such a case—in the kind of clear, unequivocal language that is the best target for Justice Scalia's vaunted originalism. The president nominates. The Senate, for its part, gives the qualifications of any nominee a serious vetting; it is not entitled to just ignore the nomination.

Some reports have argued that such a course of process sabotage would create a “constitutional crisis.” This is probably an overstatement; it would certainly create a constitutional embarrassment. With nearly a year left in Obama's term, waiting for his successor to name the new justice in 2017 would remove the ninth voice from the court not just for the current yearly term but also for most of the following term as well, since the replacement would arrive in the spring and miss months of argument and deliberation. For the better part of a year, the vacancy would sit like a broken tooth in the operations of the court. Close cases would often end up tied, with the result that the lower court finding would remain the binding result. Not itself a disaster, but a result that the constitutional provisions for naming a successor are designed to avoid.

The embarrassment of sabotage on judicial appointments actually already exists: Republicans in the Senate have effectively shut down the process of nominating new judges for the federal courts of appeal. The blockage isn't over qualifications—such considerations would be a proper exercise of the Senate's confirmation role, raised in committee and on the Senate floor. Rather, the nominations are sitting in a limbo of inaction: It is simply a matter of not doing the job at all.

This is the real crisis, a state of politics where Republicans in the House and Senate are willing to derail the processes of government to thwart the actions of President Obama, good, bad or indifferent. The most obvious example was the full shutdown of government. Limited shutdowns on matters like judicial appointments are parts of the same pattern.

Of course, obstructionism is not just a Republican failing, and it can be present in both parties to some degree in the spicy stew of politics in our robust democracy. But the bottom-line commitment of all parties should be to maintaining a functioning government, structured and administered in ac-

cordance with the framework set out in our Constitution, even when it is not working to their advantage. Why is this so hard for at least some Republicans to buy into? Why the willingness, indeed eagerness, to bring down the house we all live in?

The key is a widespread denial among Republicans of the legitimacy of the Obama presidency. This is partly related to the man himself—all the blather about his birth, his religion, etc. While many Americans find it a vindication that we can elect an African-American to our highest office, for some it is an impossibility which in turn justifies the most extreme forms of resistance. Race is our original sin as a country, and its legacy haunts us still.

Republicans are also in denial over changes in the social and economic fabric of America. We are, as always, in the process of moving from what America has been to what it will be. Conservatives have a role to play, reminding us of the valuable parts of where we came from. Progressives have a role, recognizing the imperatives of the future and charting the paths of change toward positive outcomes. Politics is the sometimes rough and tumble playing field where the dialog on this goes forward.

The intransigence of shutdowns, however, whether of the full government or a critical aspect like the nomination process, exceeds the boundaries of acceptable play and hurts us all. Obama needs to make a good faith nomination to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court. McConnell and his colleagues in the Senate majority need to review it in good faith. That is what the Constitution provides; that is what the country needs. Get on with it.

Mr. LEAHY. We must not let that dysfunction infect the Supreme Court, an independent, coequal branch of government that was designed to be above politics. The next nominee to the Supreme Court deserves full and fair consideration by the Senate. This includes a timely hearing and then having an up-or-down vote.

I am worried that even before President Obama took office, and ever since then—even after he was reelected by a 5 million-vote plurality—there has been an unrelenting and cynical campaign by some hyper-partisans to delegitimize the President's authority. There were the birthers, and there have been and still are spurious slurs of all kinds.

Outside of this body, the efforts to undermine President Obama's constitutional authority to fill this Supreme Court vacancy draws some of their vehemence and venom from these dark corners. But every one of us took an oath of office—every one of us—and we are sworn to uphold our constitutional duties. Let us not be intimidated and pressured to avoid our sworn duty. Let us act for the good of the American people and for the good of this great Nation.

Some have justified their call for unprecedented obstruction by claiming it is because the American people need a voice. Give me a break. The American people have spoken—millions of Americans—and an overwhelming majority of Vermonters voted in record numbers in

2008 and again in 2012 to elect President Obama. In doing so, they granted him constitutional authorities for all 8 years of those two terms. A President isn't elected for 1 year or 2 years or 3 years. A President is elected for 4 years at a time. Just saying that President Obama is a "lame duck" President does not make it true. In fact, the next election is not until November. The American people expect those they elected to do their jobs for their entire term. That means both in the Senate and in the White House. They don't expect Senators to say: Well, we can't vote on anything this year because it is an election year. We will collect our full salary, but we are not going to vote on anything. The American people don't like that.

It is rare that a vacancy in the Supreme Court arises during an election year, but it is just false to say Justices do not get confirmed in Presidential election years. More than a dozen Supreme Court Justices have been confirmed in a Presidential election year.

The Democrats led the Senate during President Reagan's final year in office, and we voted. President Reagan's nominee was confirmed by a Democratic-led Senate during the President's final year in office. He received a hearing and a confirmation vote. It would be the height of hypocrisy to say we shouldn't apply the same process with a Democrat in the White House and Republicans in control of the Senate. We can't say that we will follow our constitutional duties and do our work if we have a Democratic-controlled Senate and a Republican President but we can't do it if it is the other way around.

Some Republican Senators have acknowledged that the next Supreme Court nominee should receive a fair hearing. But the process can't end there. I have served on the Judiciary Committee for 36 years. During my time on the committee, we have never refused to send a Supreme Court nominee to the full Senate for a confirmation vote. Even in those cases where a majority of the committee had opposed the nomination, we still reported the nominee to the full Senate. Once reported to the full Senate, every Supreme Court nominee has received an up-or-down confirmation vote during my 40 years in the Senate. We have to uphold this bipartisan tradition for the next Supreme Court nominee because so much is at stake. Merely holding a hearing without full committee process and a confirmation vote is insufficient for a Supreme Court nominee. It would be a charade, and it would be an avoidance of our constitutional duties.

If Republicans refuse to uphold their constitutional responsibility to consider the next Supreme Court nominee, I believe it will harm our constitutional system of government. If they succeed in deliberately holding open a

seat on the Supreme Court for more than a year, they will be intentionally disabling the Court's ability to fulfill its constitutional role, and Republicans will be harming the Supreme Court for more than a year.

Justice Scalia once wrote that a Supreme Court of just eight Justices risked the possibility the Court "will find itself unable to resolve the significant legal issue presented by the case." The legal issues before the Supreme Court are significant, and the importance of a single vote on the Court cannot be overstated. One vote on the Supreme Court decided landmark cases concerning our campaign finance laws, clean water and air policies, marriage equality, and voting rights. Americans deserve a fully functioning Supreme Court.

I have traveled all over my State. I have traveled all over this country. I have talked to Republicans and Democrats alike. What I know about my fellow Americans that makes me so proud is that they show up for work and they do their jobs. Americans don't have the luxury of telling their bosses that instead of doing their job, they would rather delay, delay, delay. If they did, they would probably be fired. The U.S. Senate shouldn't tell the American people that we are not going to do our jobs; that we will delay, delay, delay. The stakes are too high.

The American people actually expect us to show up for work and do our job. Let's get to work, do the job the American people sent us here to do. And we may want to reread our oath to uphold the Constitution. It requires no less.

Mr. President, I don't see others on the floor about to speak. I will yield the floor when I do.

We have allowed this whole process to become far too partisan. I am a lawyer, a former prosecutor. I have argued cases in the State court, Federal courts, Federal trial courts, and Federal appellate courts. When I have gone to the Federal courts, I have always thought that the beauty of this—whether Republican or Democratic nominees—is that I could get a fair hearing. I thought it was a great honor to go there.

People come from other parts of the world, and they talk about our Federal judiciary as an example for them. I recall that when a country that had been under dictatorship changed to a more democratic form of government, some of their people came to my office and asked about our judicial system.

They said: Is it true that in the United States of America, people can actually sue their government?

I said: That is true. It happens all the time.

They said: Well, is it true that sometimes the government loses?

I said: It happens all the time.

They said: Well, do you replace the judge when that happens?

I said: No. They are independent.

It was like a lightbulb went on. They realized how different we are. Think of the image we send to the rest of the world—as well as 300 million Americans—if we say: No, we are going to politicize the Supreme Court, the Court that is supposed to be the final arbiter on constitutional questions. Look at what it says to them if we say: Yes, we have time to take more recesses this year than I think the Senate ever has, that I can ever remember, but we don't have time to do the job we were elected to do, the job we are paid to do—have a hearing on and vote on a Supreme Court nominee.

The American people have jobs. They can't pick and choose when they will bother to show up. They can't say "I know this is what I am supposed to do in this job, but I don't feel like it" or "I have a partisan reason not to do it. I am going to sit this out. See me next year, and I may do my job." Nobody would accept that. But that is really what is happening. The Republican leadership is saying "No, we want to sit this out. We don't want to do our work. We don't want to do our job. See us next year, and maybe we will then." That has never happened. It never happened during an election year. There have been at least a dozen Supreme Court vacancies during an election year, and a dozen times the Senate, no matter who was President, came together and handled the nominee and got them confirmed. Why did Senators do that in the past? Probably because they figured they had been elected, they were being paid by the American people, it was part of their job, and so they showed up and did their job.

Are we now going to change what has been the precedent ever since the beginning of this country and say "Oh, we are better than that. We don't have to do our job. Keep paying us, but we don't have to do our job even though we have taken an oath to uphold the Constitution and do our job"? Even Justice Scalia said that would be wrong, that you shouldn't have an eight-member Supreme Court. And we don't.

Let's actually show up and do the job we were elected to do, do the job we are paid to do. Let's do what every other American has to do. They have to show up for work. They have to do their jobs. They can't say "I don't feel like it this year. I will see you next year. Oh, by the way, send me my paycheck." That is not the American way; it should not be the Senate way.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise today first to praise and echo the words of the senior Senator from Vermont, our ranking member on Judiciary, in urging our Republican colleagues to give a fair and full consideration of a Supreme Court nominee. I particularly wish to praise my friend, the ranking member, for his eloquent remarks and for his leadership of the committee when he was chair and as ranking member.

My friend from Vermont is absolutely right. Just as the President has a constitutional responsibility to name a nominee to the Court, the Senate has a constitutional duty to provide advice and consent on that nominee. Frankly, it is the Senate's job to consider Supreme Court nominees, and the American people expect the Senate to do its job. We are telling Senate Republicans, America is telling Senate Republicans: Do your job. Plain and simple.

My friend, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, should commit to holding hearings. The distinguished majority leader should commit to holding a vote. It has been a longstanding precedent of the Senate to consider Supreme Court nominees in a timely manner, even in election years: Justice Pitney in 1912; Brandeis and Clarke in 1916; Cardozo at a time when America was even more divided than now, 1932. In the middle of the Depression, the great election between Roosevelt and Hoover, they put in Cardozo in that last year. Murphy in 1940 and Kennedy in 1988 were confirmed. Justice Kennedy was confirmed in the last year of a Presidency with a Republican in the White House and Democrats in control of the Senate. That is the mirror image and the most recent chance we have to compare how Democrats were acting, how Republicans were acting. All of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who were here voted that way.

I know today our Republican colleagues point to what Senator BIDEN said. They have pointed to what Chairman LEAHY said. They have pointed to what I and other Democrats have said. There are equal quotations that Senator MCCONNELL, Senator GRASSLEY, and others have said, each voicing a different view than maybe is being voiced today. But none of those were held up. You can have all the competing quotes you want; they amount to nothing. The American people are strong—Democrats and Republicans—in telling Senate Republicans: Do your job.

The bottom line is very simple. To say that there will be no hearing, no vote, no consideration whatsoever even before a nominee is named to a vacancy, that is not doing your job; that is quitting before you start. Senator LEAHY said it well. Imagine someone showing up at work. Imagine if an av-

erage American showed up at work and said: I am going to take a year off, but you still have to pay me. Your boss wouldn't stand for it. Well, our boss, the American people, will not stand for this because it will take over 300 days before a Supreme Court nominee is filled, at best.

The kind of knee-jerk political obstruction the American people have grown so frustrated with in the Congress is what our Republican colleagues are saying. If Republicans truly respect the Constitution, they should follow it and consider a nomination from the sitting President rather than playing political games. Instead, they are once again threatening to bow to the most extreme rightwing voices and engage in the kind of political obstruction that brought us a 3-week government shutdown that cost us hundreds of thousands of jobs and took \$15 to \$20 billion out of the economy.

In 2013, after the hard right didn't get its way in its fight to undo the Affordable Care Act, they waged a war to shut down the government. Republican leaders listened. They probably knew it was wrong in their heads, but they listened. What happened? After 3 weeks with their tails between their legs, the leadership had to say we have to open up the government even though we haven't repealed the Affordable Care Act. The now-junior Senator from Texas had urged that course, and they were foolhardy to follow. The junior Senator from Texas is now urging the course of having no hearings and no votes. I tell my Republican colleagues—and to his credit, Senator MCCONNELL said we have to get the Senate working again—that this is a foolhardy course, and it will not stand. It will not last because the American people are telling Senate Republicans: Do your job.

Republicans say the American people should have a voice in choosing a Supreme Court Justice. Well, guess what. President Obama won reelection by a large margin in 2012. Many of the issues they bring up now were there then, such as security and the Affordable Care Act. There was a referendum on all these kinds of things.

The people spoke loudly and clearly on November 6, 2012, when they elected the President to another 4-year term. That is 4 years, as called for in the Constitution, not 3 years, as some of my Republican friends like to say now. If Republicans get their way, we would have a 4-to-4 gridlocked Supreme Court for a year that would tie the Court and large parts of the country in knots. Let me say, if we have a tie in the Supreme Court decision, the decision has no Presidential value. You get gridlock and confusion. America doesn't want gridlock. They don't want gridlock on the floor of the Senate, they don't want gridlock on the floor of the House, and they don't want gridlock in

the Supreme Court. The American people expect the Senate to do its job. They are tired of obstruction and "my way or the highway" politics.

Again I say that our friend, the junior Senator from Texas, likes to quote the Constitution. He likes to walk around carrying the Constitution. That is great. I am all for that. I would like him to show me the lines in the Constitution that say in the last year of the President's term, he doesn't have the power or the right to nominate a Supreme Court Justice. Of course he does. Yet the Republican majority—at least by its stance now—is taking away that right because they will not even have a hearing.

Some people say: Well, they will just vote no after the hearing. Maybe yes, maybe no. I believe every Member has the right to vote no if they think the nominee is out of the mainstream, and I will be the first to admit mainstream is defined differently by different people. But hearings are amazing things. If the candidate is being open and honest, hearings help us to get to know the candidate better. Whatever one thinks of hearings, the last four nominees of the Supreme Court—two under President Bush, two under President Obama—got bipartisan votes and passed.

This idea of not having a vote is wrong. For the sake of our Constitution and for the sake of getting our country moving again, I urge and plead with my colleagues on the other side to do their job. That is what the American people want, plain and simple.

It is time for the Senate to do its job. Once the President nominates someone, we need to have hearings with our Republican colleagues in a careful and thoughtful way. They don't have to rush a nominee through—no dilatory tactics—and then there should be a vote.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA AND FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on February 13 the Nation was shaken by the news that Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia had passed away. Justice Scalia served on the Nation's highest Court for 29 years, and he was a major figure on the American legal landscape. Justice Scalia was described by Judge Richard Posner of the Seventh Circuit as "the most influential justice of the last quarter century."

Over the years I came to know Justice Scalia. He was a man of great intellect, good humor, and he was a very

social person. We certainly disagreed on many fundamental issues, but even those who disagreed with Justice Scalia on legal matters still admired him as a person.

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg—no ideological ally of Justice Scalia—wrote after his death, “we were best buddies.” She described him as “a jurist of captivating brilliance and wit, with a rare talent to make even the most sober judge laugh.” Justice Ginsburg said she and Justice Scalia were “different in our interpretation of written texts,” but they were “one in our reverence for the Constitution and the institution we serve.” I have great respect for the decades Justice Scalia spent in public service. My thoughts and prayers clearly go with his family.

As surprised as I was by the news of Justice Scalia’s passing, I was amazed at how quickly the Senate majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL of Kentucky, issued a press release saying, “this vacancy should not be filled until we have a new President.” His statement came out within 90 minutes of the press report of the Justice passing. This statement clearly came at a time when most people reflected on the loss of the Supreme Court Justice, and just like that, the conversation shifted from the passing of an American legal giant to an attack on President Obama’s authority to fill his vacancy on the Supreme Court.

What does the Constitution tell us about filling a vacancy on the Supreme Court? There are very few oaths a person takes in their life. As Members of the Senate, we swear each time we are reelected to a new term to uphold and defend that Constitution.

What does the Constitution say about a vacancy on the Supreme Court? If you go to article II, section 2, it is explicit and very simple. The President “shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the Supreme Court.”

The President, under the Constitution, has an express responsibility to submit to the Senate the nomination of a person who is qualified to serve on our Nation’s highest Court. Then, of course, the Senate has a job to do: Give that nominee a fair hearing and a timely vote. This is our constitutional responsibility as U.S. Senators. This is what we have been elected to do. Aside from voting on a declaration of war, I believe there is no greater responsibility than voting on the confirmation of a Supreme Court nominee.

I serve on the Judiciary Committee, and it has been my privilege and honor to consider the nominations of four of the current Supreme Court Justices. There is no question that we have the time remaining to meet our constitutional responsibility in a thoughtful and careful way.

It is now February of 2016. We are almost a year away from January of 2017

when President Obama will officially leave office. The Republican leader would have us leave a seat on the Nation’s highest Court vacant for at least 1 year. Not since the Civil War has the Senate taken longer than a year to fill a Supreme Court vacancy, and it certainly shouldn’t happen now.

Usually it takes the Senate about 2 months to consider a Supreme Court nominee. Senator LEAHY, the ranking Democrat on the Judiciary Committee said that on average it takes about 67 days. So we have more than enough time to do this in a thoughtful and responsible way.

Even during Presidential election years, the Senate has routinely confirmed Supreme Court Justices. It has happened over a dozen times, most recently in 1988, when Justice Anthony Kennedy was confirmed by a 97-to-0 vote during President Reagan’s final year in office. President Reagan—a Republican President about to leave office—submitted a name, Justice Kennedy, to the Supreme Court, and a Democratic-controlled Senate approved it with a vote of 97 to nothing. So to argue that this has never happened before is to ignore history, and even recent history.

In the past, Senate Republican leaders have said that the confirmation process should move forward with as little time as a month before an election. Consider the Presidential election of 1968. On June 13 of that year, Chief Justice Earl Warren informed the President he wanted to step down. On June 26 of the election year, Johnson nominated Associate Justice Abe Fortas to become Chief Justice and nominated George Homer Thornberry to fill his seat.

President Johnson had already announced he would not run again, but Senate Republican leaders did not call President Johnson a lame duck and question his right to put forward nominees. In fact, Senate Republican leader Everett Dirksen of my State of Illinois said on July 13 of that year, “I find that term ‘lame duck’ as applied to the President of the United States as an entirely improper and offensive term.” Republican Senator Dirksen was referring to the lame duck status of President Lyndon Johnson, a Democrat.

The Senate gave the President’s nominee a prompt hearing in the Judiciary Committee. As it turned out, the hearing uncovered a range of ethics concerns about Justice Fortas, and in late September and early October, Senate Republicans filibustered his nomination. Fortas subsequently withdrew. But on October 3—same election year, just a month before the election—the New York Times reported that “Senator Dirksen said there was still time for the President to submit a new name and rush it through the Senate before the Congress adjourned.” The Republican leader said that even with a

month left, we should try to fill the vacant seat. This was a month before the Presidential election. Where are the leaders like Everett Dirksen in today’s Republican Party, Senators who are willing to roll up their sleeves and get down to the work of considering the nominees on their merits so the Supreme Court can do its work? We have a constitutional responsibility, as does the President.

Make no mistake—the Supreme Court needs a full complement of Justices on the bench. When the Court has an even number, as it does today, four to four, important cases are increasingly likely to end up in a tie vote. When that happens in a case, the ruling of the lower court stands and it is as if the Supreme Court never heard the case at all.

Major legal and constitutional questions are constantly brought before the Court. When the Court is frozen at an even number of Justices, many of those questions go unresolved and millions of Americans who are impacted by these questions have to wait. That is not fair to the American people. That is why historically the Senate moved to fill vacancies of the Court. That is why so many Americans are troubled by Senate Republicans’ call for a 1-year hiatus in filling the Supreme Court vacancy.

Former Justice Sandra Day O’Connor said in an interview last week that she disagreed with the idea of waiting for the next President to appoint a new Justice. Justice O’Connor said, “We need somebody there now to do the job. Let’s get on with it.” I agree with Justice O’Connor.

When President Obama submits a nominee, which he will do in coming days, the Senate needs to do its job, its constitutional responsibility, and give that nominee a fair hearing and timely vote. My Republican colleagues can choose to vote for or against the nominee. That is their prerogative. They should not simply duck the vote. We were not elected to this job to ignore important issues; we were elected to cast votes on important issues. This is too important an issue to simply ignore.

When it comes to giving the President’s nominee a fair hearing, I certainly hope Senate Republicans don’t adopt the Donald Trump position. When asked about the President’s nomination, Mr. Trump, as he is wont to do, gave us a juicy quote. Here is what he said: “I think it’s up to MITCH MCCONNELL and everybody else to stop it—it’s called delay, delay, delay.”

I am sure the Senate Republicans were not happy with that statement by Trump, but he did speak for a number of people who believe that is the right strategy: stop the President from using his constitutional authority; stop the Senate from accepting its constitutional responsibility. I hope my Republican colleagues don’t follow Mr.

Trump's lead and try to stop President Obama's nominee through endless delays. No one is going to be fooled if Senate Republicans spend weeks haggling over unreasonable document requests or swamping the nominee with endless written questions. Mr. Trump has already made it clear that "delay, delay, delay" is simply a strategy to stop the seat from being filled.

If Republicans delay in an effort to run out the clock, we will know it, and the American people will know it. The American people want us to act. They want us to accept our constitutional responsibility. It is time for us to get down to work and do our job. The Senate can't afford to sit on its hands for 1 year and leave the Supreme Court hanging in the balance.

When President Obama names a nominee, I urge my Republican colleagues to give that person a fair hearing and timely vote.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING CHAIR. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to express my serious concerns with the FDA's actions on opioid pain relievers and my concern that they have not sufficiently addressed what we are seeing as an epidemic in my home State of New Hampshire. The implications of prescribing opioids and ensuring that we take a very strong public health approach toward these pain relievers is important.

I know my that my colleagues—Senators MARKEY, MANCHIN, and BLUMENTHAL—have been on the floor previously to discuss the concerns they share about the FDA as well. I thank them for their leadership on this important issue.

I think what is important to understand here is what we are facing when it comes to heroin, the drug deaths that are occurring in my home State of New Hampshire, the connection between people who are misusing prescription opioids and then becoming addicted to heroin, and the deadly use of a drug called fentanyl, which is 50 times more powerful than heroin. When we bring this all together, we have a situation with opioid abuse which includes painkiller abuse, heroin use, fentanyl abuse, and it is killing people in New Hampshire and across this country.

Across this country, approximately 30,000 people died of heroin or prescription opioid overdoses in 2014. As we come to receive the 2015 numbers, unfortunately, if the experience is anything like my home State of New Hampshire, the numbers are going to be much larger than 30,000 because in New Hampshire, every corner of my State has been impacted by this.

I had the privilege of serving as attorney general before I came to the Senate, and I dealt with many drug issues as attorney general. In fact, I

had a drug task force that reported to me. We dealt with the surge of methamphetamine, cocaine, and other illegal drugs that certainly have caused addiction and people to struggle with addiction. Obviously, alcohol is also something people struggle with when it is misused, but I have never seen anything like this.

I talk to my law enforcement officers and I talk to my first responders about what they are dealing with. In 2015, in New Hampshire, we had over 400 overdose deaths, and those 400 deaths were situations where there was a combination—many of them, hundreds of them—of heroin and/or fentanyl. And that was a dramatic increase over 2014. In 2014, we had 320 deaths. And by the way, that is a 60-percent increase from the year before.

Unfortunately, this is not stopping. It is the single most important public health and safety issue facing the State of New Hampshire right now, but I know New Hampshire is not alone. Certainly working with my colleague ROB PORTMAN from Ohio, I know this is hitting Ohio. Working with SHELDON WHITEHOUSE from Rhode Island, I know this is hitting Rhode Island. AMY KLOBUCHAR from Minnesota—this is hitting so many different places in our country. That is why I know Senator MARKEY from Massachusetts is concerned about this and Senator MANCHIN from West Virginia, who was on the floor earlier. This is about our quality of life in this country and the ability for people to live full lives and about our public safety and about our children most of all.

The headline from the Union Leader over this weekend: "Fentanyl, other drugs suspected in three Manchester deaths." So we had three deaths in New Hampshire, in our largest city, within 24 hours, and those three deaths were from a combination of heroin and fentanyl. According to Assistant Fire Chief Daniel Goonan, in just 24 hours in Manchester, these overdoses claimed the lives of a 23-year-old man, a 29-year-old woman, and a 34-year-old man. That was in just a 24-hour period.

In fact, what our first responders are seeing—I did a ride-along with the Manchester fire department. I was there less than an hour. We went to an overdose, and I saw the firefighters and their emergency personnel bring someone back to life using CPR and Narcan. If we did not have that drug, the over 400 we had in New Hampshire—I can't even tell you what the numbers would be, because not only did I do a ride-along with the Manchester fire department, I did one with the police, too, and we went to two overdoses in an hour and a half, and I saw them bring those individuals back to life.

But lest we think this is something that happens on some other street or in some other neighborhood, I can assure you that this can happen to any fam-

ily, and that is something we need to understand. That was really brought home for me from a wonderful family I met, Doug and Pam Griffin, who lost their beautiful daughter Courtney. They are wonderful people.

I think about what our first responders are facing. This same article I just talked about, over the weekend—unbelievable. Twice the fire department in Manchester revived a woman who was 4 months pregnant, working on her in front of her young children.

I will never forget the overdose I went to. The firefighters came into the room, and there was a young man on the ground. They administered the Narcan and brought him back. But do you know what was in the corner? A crib with a baby in it. The firefighter grabbed the baby and was bringing the baby over. The father was lying on the ground.

So this is having a tremendous impact on not only those who are struggling with addiction but also their families and the children around them and the future generations.

In this article, the assistant fire chief from Manchester basically said: It is more deadly than we have ever seen.

So that is why I have been proud to work with my colleagues, proud to work with Senators WHITEHOUSE, PORTMAN, KLOBUCHAR, and so many others on the Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act. I thank the members of the Judiciary Committee for voting that important piece of legislation out of the committee, and I look forward to us taking that up on the floor.

Right now pending on the floor, we have an important nomination for the FDA. That is why I come to the floor today, because if you look at what we are addressing here, we are concerned about heroin and fentanyl, but there is a very important connection for us to understand, unfortunately, and it is also why I have been such a strong supporter of prescription-monitoring programs. The opiates that are prescribed—SAMHSA has found that four out of five individuals who turned to heroin actually started with prescription opiates and misusing prescription opiates or overusing those and then transitioning to heroin because heroin is cheaper, unfortunately, on our streets.

So it is very important that we have the FDA engaging on this issue very aggressively with our medical community, that the FDA take a prominent role in ensuring that what they are saying is, this is the appropriate use of prescription opiates. In my humble opinion, the FDA needs to take a much more aggressive role than it has in recommending the appropriate uses and engaging the medical community and the pharmaceutical community, very importantly, on this discussion, this public health crisis we are facing.

We have come together as a body on this issue, and I think it is important

that we have been working on this in a very bipartisan basis. But just to talk about the importance of the FDA and the leadership we need there, in 2013 we saw the FDA approve Zohydro—a powerful, pure hydrocodone drug—without an abuse-deterrent formulation, and an abuse-deterrent formulation is important so that it will be used for its intended purpose and not chopped up or otherwise abused. Yet the FDA approves Zohydro—this powerful, pure hydrocodone drug—without an abuse-deterrent formulation despite the fact that its own advisory committee voted against approving the drug by a vote of 11 to 2.

I see Senator MARKEY coming to the floor, and I appreciate his leadership on this. One of the things that I know have troubled Senator MARKEY, Senator MANCHIN, and me as well is that last year the FDA approved OxyContin for use by children as young as 11, and when they did that, they did not have an advisory committee or use an advisory committee before taking that step.

So I would say that I certainly appreciate that I had the opportunity to sit down with Secretary Burwell on this issue and learn more about the FDA's action plan that it issued, but unfortunately I believe the agency has to go further than it is going. The example I would use is the issuance of the recommendations for the children as young as 11 with OxyContin, without an advisory committee on something so important, seems—to me, it just doesn't pass the commonsense test. So I would recommend to the FDA, let's make sure we have an advisory committee look at this issue carefully and then reissue a recommendation, because to me it seems important that we have that guidance and the careful, thoughtful approach of the advisory committee. Of course, what troubles me is we hope they would take the advisory committee's recommendations, unlike what happened with Zohydro, unfortunately.

So we need leadership right now in the FDA. I have concerns that we are not going to be in a position where we get the strongest leadership we can have. We have a nominee pending on the floor. These concerns are very important. I hope, if he is confirmed, he will be aggressive on this issue and that the FDA will take a stronger leadership role on opiates, understanding that they have a very important role when it comes to this public health concern.

Right now I am not satisfied with where we are. I believe there is so much more we need to do. That is actually why yesterday I voted to not go forward with this nomination, because I haven't heard this clear statement, I haven't heard what the leadership plans are on this issue.

While I appreciate some of the steps the Department of Health and Human

Services has taken, those steps to me need to be very much strengthened. As I look at the FDA's action plan, it pledges to make the use of advisory committees more frequent, but it should require the use of advisory committees for all opioid pain relievers, not just when we decide we want to use it. This should be consistent, given that we unfortunately know that the data is there on the connection between misuse of opioid pain relievers and the connection to those who unfortunately then turn to heroin, with the deadly combination of fentanyl, which is killing people in this country.

Again, I wish to thank Senator MARKEY for his leadership on this issue. There isn't a place I go in my State where I don't hear from a mother, a father, a sister, a brother, a grandmother, a grandfather, a friend about someone who lost a loved one, lost someone they care about, because of heroin, opioids, fentanyl, the deadly combination that is killing people.

We have an opportunity, not only with the important work in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act to add more resources to address prevention, treatment, and support for our first responders but also the FDA has a very important role, and we need stronger leadership there and greater engagement of our medical community on the best prescribing practices for opioids. To me, this is an opportunity where I would like to see stronger leadership and I would like to hear a much more aggressive stance from this FDA.

Of all the issues we struggle with, the things we disagree on in this body—heroin, fentanyl, they don't care whether you are a Republican or a Democrat, I can assure my colleagues, or an Independent or a Libertarian because these drugs are taking everyone's lives. So as I think about all the issues we can come together on, this is one about our public health, about our public safety, about our quality of life, and it requires all of our leadership. There is nothing partisan about this.

I hope we will see stronger leadership from the FDA. I hope we as a body will build on what the Judiciary Committee did and bring to the floor the CARA bill that many of us have worked hard on and support each other's efforts to do all we can to end this public health crisis and ensure that none of us have to run into families of people in our State whom we represent who are losing people they love to heroin or fentanyl or misuse of opioid prescription drugs.

This is devastating. I know we can make a difference. This is something we can make a difference on in this body.

I thank the Chair.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I want to follow on with the discussion that

Senator AYOTTE from New Hampshire was bringing to the Senate floor. What she is saying is just so accurate in terms of the pervasive nature of this opioid-driven epidemic—pandemic—in the United States of America. It is time for us to come together in a bipartisan fashion to deal with what is now the great medical storm sweeping across this country.

There has been a quadrupling of opioid-related deaths in just the last 14 years in our country. This is something that has to be understood. I heard Senator AYOTTE mention it, but we can't say it enough: 80 percent of all people in the United States who die from heroin overdoses begin with prescription painkillers—opioids—that have been given to them by physicians. Let me say that again. Eighty percent of the people who die from heroin overdoses started on prescription pills. They got addicted to the prescription painkiller. It deals with the same receptors in the brain. It creates the same kind of need in the brain, and when people get addicted to prescription pain medicine, it is ultimately a very short to a product which is much less expensive—heroin—on the streets of the United States.

This epidemic has to be dealt with and it has to be dealt with where it starts and it starts at the FDA. It starts at the Food and Drug Administration. It starts with the agency that approves these drugs for sale in the United States of America.

Yes, the FDA stands for Food and Drug Administration, but over the last 20 years it really stands for "Fostering Drug Addiction," and it has to end. This is why the nomination right now of Dr. Robert Califf to be the new head of the FDA gives us an opportunity to talk about this issue, to talk about where it all starts, how it began, and what we are going to have to do in this body to reverse this trend, which last year led to the deaths of 30,000 people in our country. Again, I say to my colleagues that between 2000 and 2014, the heroin overdose death rate has quadrupled in the United States of America.

This is something that is recent. It is related to the FDA, and we have to now have an honest discussion about the role that agency is playing because we have become the "United States of Oxy." We have become a nation of 5 percent of the world's population that consumes 80 percent of the prescription painkillers in the world.

This overprescribing, this consumption of Oxy and Percocet, down the line has led to this epidemic, this contagion that is killing people on a daily basis in our country who otherwise would never have even contemplated using heroin or using any of these other more dangerous drugs.

That is why we are here. That is why I am recommending a "no" vote on Dr. Robert Califf.

The FDA has a chance to change its policies. Thus far, it is saying it will not change its policies.

In 2012, health care providers wrote 259 million prescriptions for opioid painkillers. That is enough for every single adult in America to have a bottle of these pills in their medicine cabinet. We should understand as we talk about this that the molecular composition of OxyContin is very similar to heroin. In fact, Oxycodone is the sole ingredient in OxyContin. OxyContin stands for oxycodone continuously in the bloodstream of the patient who is taking these pills. It creates this sense that you are able to deal with the pain. It creates this sense that you are being taken care of, but if it is not handled correctly over time, it then creates an addiction, and that addiction then leads to, once you are off these pills, to being out on the street buying the heroin or buying the Oxy you need in order to continue this habit.

So we have to start to deal with the issue very realistically in terms of this pathway that has been created into the minds of millions of people all across this country.

Thirteen hundred people died in Massachusetts in 2014, of the 30,000 people in our country, as a result of this issue. We have the FDA, going back to the year 1996, accepting the misrepresentation of the pharmaceutical company Purdue, which represented to the FDA that OxyContin, in its original formulation, was abuse deterrent, meaning that since it was time-released inside of the patient, that, therefore, it was abuse deterrent and it could be prescribed safely to people all across our country. Well, it turned out that not only was that a misrepresentation to the FDA, but Purdue Pharma subsequently was fined millions of dollars and its executives punished for the misrepresentation they made to the Food and Drug Administration.

That was a brief 20 years ago, but that is pretty much where it all started. That is the original sin—accepting this whole notion of abuse deterrent.

Let's go to the FDA in more recent times. In 2012, there was a new opioid that the FDA had to consider for approval. That new opioid's name is Zohydro. The FDA impaneled 13 experts to examine that drug for the FDA. When those 13 experts concluded their examination of the drug by an 11-to-2 vote, the expert advisory panel voted, no, do not allow this new Zohydro drug out on to the marketplace. They said the standards for abuse are too low. The standards to deal with addiction are too low. The standards to deal with a diversion of the drug are too low. What did the FDA do in 2012? It approved Zohydro for sale in the United States over the objections of the advisory panel that had voted 11 to 2 against it—and these are experts.

Moving forward, the FDA decided to reexamine what it was going to do. So when it was considering Targiniq, when it was considering Hysinla, it decided to solve the problem by having no expert advisory panels which it would convene to examine the impacts of that drug before it got approved. That is a good way to solve the problem—just accept the representations of the company that it had abuse deterrent in it, and then you don't have to worry because you will not have to talk to experts on the outside again. So those two drugs got approved.

Then, in August of 2015, there was an application by Purdue Pharma, once again—that company's name just keeps coming back into the equation—they wanted approval to sell OxyContin to children ages 11 to 16. Now mind you, the actual standards at the FDA require an outside expert panel to look at approval for opioids being sold in America if it is controversial, if it could have a huge social impact in our society. And it specifically says in the FDA's own guidelines that if pediatric doses—if the proper dose for a child is involved—then the FDA should have an expert panel. What did the FDA do? The FDA decided no expert panel would examine the appropriateness of OxyContin being prescribed for children ages 11 to 16 in our country—no expert advisory panel, which brings us to the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf.

We are now in a process where we are examining his nomination and his qualifications. This Senator leaves aside his own personal qualifications. This is not a debate, really, over Dr. Califf. It is a debate over the agency because the agency is saying—even today as we will be voting on Dr. Califf's nomination—they will not change. They will not convene expert outside advisory panels to look at this new generation of opioids with abuse deterrents built into them to determine whether or not they are actually appropriately being put into our society.

Today is the day to begin this debate. This nomination is the occasion that we can use in order to debate what has gone wrong at the Food and Drug Administration. If we don't start with a brand new definition that gets created for abuse, for addiction, for what the standards should be for the use of these opioids, then this issue is just going to escalate until we are losing a Vietnam war's number of people every single year in the United States.

This is a pharmaceutical industry-created problem. This is a physician-created problem. This is an FDA-created problem. It is created by men and women, and it can be solved by men and women. This is not Zika, this is not Ebola, and this is not some disease that you can't really point to that is responsible. This is us, this is our country, and this is our culture. We did it.

We created this problem. We are 5 percent of the world's population consuming 80 percent of all opioids—crazy. Really, it is crazy.

We have to finally come to the recognition that this is no longer some inner city heroin epidemic. This disease knows no barrier—racial, income, geography, employment—no barriers at all. It is spread across every single segment of the American population, top to bottom. There is no discrimination whatsoever.

We have to decide what we are going to do in order to make sure that we put the proper safeguards in place. Senator MANCHIN and I, Senators AYOTTE, SANDERS, BLUMENTHAL, and others have been raising these questions. To the credit of the Senate Judiciary Committee, they are considering legislation to bring to the floor. I thank Senators WHITEHOUSE, PORTMAN, SHAHEEN, AYOTTE, and Senators GRASSLEY and LEAHY for their work on that legislation, but that legislation does not conclude anything on this issue that I am talking about right now. This has to be solved by the FDA.

That is why this Senator has put a hold on this nomination, saying that they will not get this nomination until they change their policies. We are in the eighth year of this administration, and the policies still remain in place.

Abuse deterrent is really a contradiction in terms. If you take these pills—you are a carpenter or an ironworker, and you have a bad back—you start taking these OxyContin pills right now, and you take them as they are prescribed, and you keep going month after month after month. You are increasing the likelihood on a daily basis that you are going to become addicted to these pills.

We have heard these stories over and over again about the pathway in from family members. They come into the office and talk about the pathway in that their child, husband, or son took. It all starts with the same story. They were given the prescribed pills.

Right now the industry is saying: Don't worry; there is an abuse deterrent. Tell that to these family members. Tell that to the families who have lost their loved ones. The drugs are not abuse deterrent. It is a contradiction in terms, like jumbo shrimp. There is no such thing. You need to be realistic about what this drug represents once it is consumed over and over again by people in our country who think that because the doctor has given them a bottle of pills, that is going to help them. That is one of the stories we hear over and over again from family members.

They say that they question themselves. Could they have done more themselves to help their family member before they became addicted? The common theme from each of them is that you have to assume, when a doctor is giving you a bottle of pills for

your family member, that it must be good for them. It must be good for them.

It turns out that for 30,000 people in 2014, it wasn't good for them. This number is going to continue to escalate because we haven't put tough enough standards on the books in order to deal with these issues. By refusing to convene expert advisory boards to come in and to create the guidance which is going to be needed in our country going forward, we are going to have a continued flood of opioid deaths that could have been stemmed if we had dealt with this issue in the proper fashion.

This is not a hypothetical concern. The policy announced last week by the FDA would not have guaranteed an advisory panel for OxyContin on the market today. The FDA must change its decision not to seek expert advice against the risk of addiction before it approves any and all opioids.

I want to tell a little story. It is a story about one of maybe the five greatest basketball players ever to come out of the State of Massachusetts. His name is Chris Herren. Chris became a Boston Celtic. He was the greatest basketball player in Fall River history, was drafted in the first round by the NBA, and went to the same college I went to—Boston College. In an excerpt of remarks he recently made in DC at the Unite to Face Addiction rally on the National Mall, here is what Chris Herren said:

I truly believe when it comes to prevention and educating our kids, we need to stop focusing on the worst days and start educating about the first day.

At 18 years old, on the campus of Boston College I was introduced to cocaine. I promised myself one time—just one line. That one line took me 14 years to walk away from.

Despite myself at 22, my dream came true. I was 33rd pick in the NBA draft, but that same year I was introduced to a little yellow pill—a 40 milligram OxyContin that cost a 20 dollar bill. That 40 milligrams turned into 1600 milligrams a day. And that 20 dollars became a \$20,000-a-month Oxy habit. And just 2 years later, that pill turned into a needle and that needle stayed in my arm for the next 8 years.

I often say if you can't find it in your heart to have empathy for someone who is battling their illness, then you must know that he or she has a mother, father, son or daughter that is at home with a broken heart that wants them back. Just one pill, lives impacted, some recover and many are lost.

Another story—Kaitlyn Oberle from Scituate, MA. Here is what she says:

I have survived a fatal opiate overdose, yet I never abused opiates.

On November 13, 2015 I spoke to my 27-year-old brother for the last time. Less than 30 minutes after our final conversation, he passed away from an opiate overdose.

He was only 16 years old when he first encountered the demon that consumed the better part of his adult life; sadly, that same demon ultimately killed him. Injuries from a dirt bike accident left him with two broken arms, a knee injury, and what felt like an unending supply of prescription opiate pain-

killers. After his bones mended, he was left with an untreated gaping open wound that would never fully heal itself: an opiate addiction.

During my brother's recovery he painted a picture for me of how easy it was for him as a high school teenager and student athlete to call his doctor and request refills for his pain pill prescriptions. When he no longer had injuries to substantiate a prescription, he turned to illegal forms of opiates in both pill and intravenous form. Unfortunately, the damage to his brain had been done.

There are many facets to what may cause someone to become addicted to opiates, and there are equally as many angles of attack before there is substantial progress to a viable solution. Mr. Senator, I am writing to you because I am a survivor. I've lived through my worst fear by knowing I can be a voice in helping prevent future deaths caused by opiate addiction.

As you convene to debate the fitness of Dr. Robert Califf's nomination for head of the Food and Drug Administration, please ask the Senate to reflect on his time as deputy commissioner.

As second in power at the FDA, he has had a chance to do something about these issues. It is time for a change in culture at that agency.

A third letter—final letter written by Stephen Jesi, from Malden, MA:

I am writing to you as a longtime Maldonian and a father of a 33-year-old daughter Stephenie who passed away on December 13, 2015 of a heroin overdose.

Stephenie overdosed on Thursday, two days prior to her death and was released by the hospital at 11:39 p.m. on to the streets. We've experienced this first hand many times. Thank God for Chief Campanello of the Gloucester Police Department who picked up the phone, talked to us, talked to Stephenie, and assisted us in every way he could to get her into treatment. Everybody else just said sorry, there is nothing we can do.

I believe that our medical community along with the pharmaceutical industry are grooming and developing drug addicts and putting them right into the hands of the cartels and the drug dealers. Way too many prescriptions are written for more narcotics than are necessary after surgeries with no follow up. Many of those who are predisposed to addiction, either by genetics or co-existing mental health issues, are easy prey for these drugs that begin as legally prescribed. Once they are addicted and can no longer afford the medically prescribed version of the medication they fall into illegal drugs and from there too often the addiction has taken control of their lives.

The pharmaceutical industry along with our medical community has to prescribe these highly addictive narcotics much more carefully and offer less addictive medication whenever possible. Most patients take these narcotics for just a couple of days after the surgery but are provided a much longer supply where they can easily fall into the hands of the addict. Our legislators and government officials cannot be tied to the desires of the pharmaceutical lobbyists.

This is the cry that is coming out from every community in America. Individuals are saying: How did this happen to my family? How could that accident with the broken leg or the back pain turn into an opioid overdose? How could it have happened? Well, it hap-

pened because the medical community and the pharmaceutical industry have not put the protections in place for us to be able to deal with it.

Let me give you this number. This is a crazy number. It is a crazy number. Over the last 15, 20 years, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of prescription opioid pills that have been allowed to be sold in America.

So I am just going to ask people who are listening to this, pick a number. How many 10 milligram prescription opioids were allowed to be made in America last year? Just pick a number. We have 300 million people in America. How many of these pills were allowed or given the permission to be made by pharmaceutical companies? Here is the answer—14 billion. May I say that again—14 billion opioid pills for our country.

The numbers are out of control. The overprescribing is out of control. We have to find a way to dramatically reduce the amount of drugs that are being sold legally in our country. Before we even reach illegal, you have to start with legal. That is the problem because the Drug Enforcement Administration, the agency responsible for deciding how much each pharmaceutical company can manufacture each year, doesn't even announce how much each company is given permission to manufacture; instead they just announce the gross number of total opioid materials that can be put into pills in our country each year.

Does anyone understand this in America, that that is the process? The FDA allows the company to sell it. Then it goes over to the DEA. Then the DEA picks a number of pills that can be sold, and then physicians are allowed to prescribe these pills, but this is the FDA's own number.

Listen to this. The FDA asks for voluntary guidelines to be put together for physicians' education so they know what they are doing with these opioids. Pick a number in your brain as to how many physicians have voluntarily accepted medical education on the consequences of prescribing opioids.

Pick a number. Here is the correct answer: 10 percent of physicians. That is it. On something that is so catastrophic, something that is creating an epidemic in our country, you would think this would be mandatory; that the medical associations at the State level, the national level had created some kind of mandatory education. It hasn't happened.

Is it mandatory in medical schools across America that they receive education as to what the consequences are of prescribing opioids? Not at all.

So who would think a physician would have to be trained in how to handle pain? I mean, a physician is only dealing with the issue all day long, every single day. You would

think there would be some understanding then of what the consequences were of the medicines they were prescribing. No courses in medical school are mandated. No courses are mandated after you have graduated, you are practicing medicine, and now you are licensed by the DEA to prescribe opiates—no courses.

So as we move forward on the legislation that is going to be coming out on the floor of the Senate, I intend to make an amendment—Senator BLUMENTHAL and I tried to make it in the Judiciary Committee, and we are going to be making it on the Senate floor—requiring the Drug Enforcement Administration to require mandatory education for any physician who wants to prescribe these drugs. That is the minimum, the minimum that the medical profession should have to accept as a responsibility before they are allowed to prescribe these drugs.

There is another amendment which I am working on with Senator PAUL of Kentucky, and that is an amendment that is going to increase access to medication that can help people deal with their addictions. Again, that is a classic example of a Democrat and Republican working together on these issues. Senator AYOTTE and I have an amendment that would create a Good Samaritan protection for any American, any family member who wants to apply Narcan to a family member or someone who has overdosed and would die in the absence of Narcan, the antidote, being applied to them. Senator AYOTTE and I are working on that amendment.

We are trying hard to find ways where, unfortunately, legislatively we can act. This should have happened at the agencies. This should have happened in the medical profession. We shouldn't be forced to debate this on the Senate floor, but it is absolutely, indispensably necessary for us to take this action.

This is the epidemic of our time. The death rates now in the age group that is affected by this epidemic are now declining at the same rates as they did during the war in Vietnam. We haven't seen anything like this since the war in Vietnam in the death rates—30,000 people—quadrupling in 14 years, escalating on a daily basis. It is time for the Senate to take real action on this issue so we can deal with it.

In Boston, MA, we had a police chief who saw that something had gone wrong, Chief Campanello. He said that incarceration doesn't work and instead treatment should be substituted. So beginning last June, what Chief Campanello said in Gloucester, MA, was that if you come in and you are an addict, you have a problem, you come into the police station, bring your drugs with you, we are not going to arrest you, we are going to put you into treatment immediately—no arrests.

Four hundred people have walked into that police station in Gloucester, MA, in just 8 months—400 people. By shifting the paradigm from arrests to treatment, 800 more people—800 total across the country—as city after city, town after town adopts this model, have now accepted that as a better route for them in their lives, to just turn themselves in at the local police stations.

He has partnered with a man named John Rosenthal. John Rosenthal is an activist in our State, and he helps to fund this program. Last Wednesday night, tragically, John Rosenthal's own nephew, Nathan Huggins-Rosenthal, age 34, died of an overdose in Calgary, Canada. My heart goes out to the Rosenthal family because obviously they were committed to dealing with this issue, pioneering ways to have addicts be able to have a place they can go. Yet in John Rosenthal's own family, his nephew overdosed just last Wednesday night.

As Senator AYOTTE was saying, there is no neighborhood immunity. There is no family who is completely protected. This epidemic has been created by pharmaceutical companies, by physicians, by the agencies responsible to deal with it, and it is now time for us to put in place the protections which are needed to deal with it.

Let me give you opioids 101 so you can understand how we get to this—what are opioids, how do they work, and why do they lead to heroin abuse. Here is how it works. It starts with a seed pod of the opium poppy. We get the morphine, a naturally occurring opiate pain reliever from that pod seed. The morphine interacts with so-called opioid receptors that are found in high concentrations in areas of the brain that control pain and emotions. Taking opiates can increase the levels of dopamine in the brain's reward areas and produce euphoria or a rush of pain relief and relaxation. In fact, morphine, which was first identified in the early 1800s is named after Morpheus, the Greek god of dreams.

In 1895, the Bayer Corporation, Bayer Aspirin—the Bayer Corporation in Germany introduced a new cough suppressant marketed as a safer alternative to morphine. This new wonder drug was called heroin. In the 1920s, drug manufacturers began making fully synthetic analogs to morphine. They were called opioids. These drugs contain the same basic chemical framework as morphine, and they have exactly the same mechanism of action in the brain. They share common chemical features that allow them to buy into the brain's opioid receptors, and they all are considered highly addictive. These drugs vary widely in potency. That is the amount of the drug required to reach the same level of pain relief and sedation as morphine.

OxyContin, for example, is 150 percent as strong as morphine. Heroin is

also an opioid. They share the same fundamental chemical structure. Heroin binds to the very same receptors in the brain and produces the same euphoria and sedation, and heroin is plagued by the same addiction potential. Heroin is classified as a schedule I drug, the most dangerous class, because it has no accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse and addiction.

So this is the pathway between opioids and heroin and why that pathway is very short. It is all about the chemistry because OxyContin has the nearly identical molecular constitution as heroin. Over time, the brain, the receptors are saying: I need to have to continue to have that hit. Thus, we have this epidemic where 80 percent of all people in the United States who are dying from heroin overdoses started on prescription opioid drugs that had been prescribed by their physicians. Physicians should have to be educated. The FDA should have expert advisory panels that give the strongest possible guidance to the pharmaceutical companies. That is what is missing in this equation. It starts there.

We need a debate on \$1.1 billion for more treatment and more education, and we are going to have that debate on the Senate floor. These local families, these local groups, they are heroes, but heroes need help, and it is time for us to fund those programs in the same way we funded the Ebola crisis and the same way we are being asked to help to fund the Zika crisis. We have a crisis in America ourselves, but if we don't deal with the issue right from the beginning at the FDA, at the DEA, and at the AMA, we are not going to solve this problem. We are just putting medical facilities in place to deal with the consequences of having no policy. This is our great opportunity to have a debate in our country.

I can't thank the Members enough for beginning to deal with this issue on a serious basis, but we can't be afraid of the pharmaceutical industry. We can't be afraid of the American Medical Association. We can't be afraid of the bureaucrats in these agencies who say: Oh, Mr. or Ms. Senator, we are the experts. You don't know what you are talking about.

Well, just let me tell you this. The people of the United States don't trust the experts anymore in these agencies. They want more accountability. They want other experts to come in to check those experts, to ask the tough questions on behalf of the American people.

That is why I have a hold on Dr. Robert Califf's nomination for the FDA, because right now the FDA is saying it is going to continue business as usual and that is just wrong. That is just plain wrong. It has to stop there. The signal must come from this administration.

I thank all the Members for this discussion, for where we are today and

where we are going to have to go in the months ahead, but I don't think we should end this year without a fundamental change that has taken place in our society in this relationship.

I will just add one final issue, and that is the issue of how many pills, how many pills a doctor can prescribe initially to a patient. We are now debating that issue in the State of Massachusetts. Governor Baker has been saying it should only be 3 days' worth of pills. One of the counterproposals is 7 days of pills that can be used by the patient.

I do know this. We have to start here because right now doctors are handing out bottles of 60 to patients who only need a week's worth or 3 days' worth. When you leave a dentist's office, you don't need 60 days' worth of pills for your wisdom teeth that have been removed. When you have some pain that you just got from playing a softball game and you have twisted your back, you don't need a bottle of 60 or 30. You might need a few pills for 3 days or 7 days, but you don't need the 60. Having that 60 in that medicine cabinet is the beginning of the problem.

I thank Governor Baker for what he is doing on this issue. They haven't resolved it in Massachusetts. I think we have to debate that in the Halls of Congress as well. They are all related, how these pills get into the blood system of our country.

Again, I thank all of the Members for their consideration of this issue.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess as under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:26 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, are we still in recess?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is now postcloture on the nomination.

The Senator may proceed.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise to honor the memory of one of our Na-

tion's greatest champions of limited government under the Constitution, Justice Antonin Scalia. Justice Scalia set the standard for the kind of judge upon which liberty depends. He was a dear friend, and I will miss him greatly.

The purpose of government, according to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, is to secure inalienable rights and the blessings of liberty. Liberty exists by design and, as Andrew Jackson put it, by eternal vigilance. America's Founders were clear that liberty requires separated and limited government powers, including a particular role for unelected judges. Judges who seek to determine what the law is promote liberty; judges who say what they think the law should be undermine it.

Put simply, judges must interpret and apply the law impartially; that is, by setting aside their own opinions, preferences, or prejudices. Interpreting and applying the law impartially particularly leaves the American people and their elected representatives in charge of the law. When they interpret written law impartially, they discern what the original public meaning of the law is. When judges apply the law impartially, they pay no regard to the identity of the parties or the political effects of their decision. Judges can neither make nor change the law they use to decide cases. That is the kind of judge liberty requires. That is the kind of judge Antonin Scalia was.

When President Ronald Reagan first appointed Antonin Scalia to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit in 1982, the future Justice said to those of us on the Judiciary Committee that if confirmed the time for him to opine on the wisdom of laws would be "bygone days." When he again came before the committee a few years later as a Supreme Court nominee, he repeated that setting aside personal views is "one of the primary qualifications for a judge." He described a "good judge" as one who starts from the law itself and not "where I would like to come out in [a] particular case."

Justice Scalia's brilliance and wit were certainly impressive, but they were powerfully connected to this deeply considered and deliberately framed judicial philosophy rooted in the principles of the Constitution. He stuck doggedly to this ideal of the good judge whose role in our system of government is limited to properly interpreting the law and impartially applying it to decide cases. His approach requires self-restraint by judges. Judges, he often said, must take the law as they find it and apply it even when they do not like the results. In his own words, "If you're going to be a good and faithful judge, you have to resign yourself to the fact that you're not always going to like the conclusions you reach."

Liberty requires such judicial self-restraint, whether it is en vogue or not. As President Reagan put it when he witnessed the oath of office administered to Justice Scalia in September 1986, America's Founders intended that the judiciary be independent and strong but also confined within the boundaries of a written Constitution and laws.

No one believed that principle more deeply and insisted on implementing it more consistently than our Justice Scalia. His approach to the law was often called textualism or, in the constitutional context, originalism—an approach which is nothing more than determining the original public meaning of the legal text. It leaves the lawmaking to the lawmakers and the people they represent, rather than to the judge.

The Senate unanimously confirmed Justice Scalia's nomination on September 17, 1986, the 199th anniversary of the Constitution's ratification. That was very appropriate because his approach gives the Constitution its real due, treating it as more than empty words on a page but as words that already have meaning and substance. Justice Scalia knew that the Constitution cannot limit government's power if government actors—including judges—define the Constitution.

Justice Scalia rejected judicial activism—what he called power-judging—that treats the law as shape-shifting. For activists, the laws and the Constitution have no fixed meaning but can rather be contorted and manipulated to fit the judge's own policy preference. Such an approach puts the unelected judge, not the American people in their elected representatives, in the position of supreme lawmaker.

Thomas Jefferson warned that if judges controlled the Constitution's meaning, it would be "a mere thing of wax in the hands of the judiciary, which they may twist and shape into any form they please." That is exactly what activist judges do, treating the law like clay that they can mold in their own image.

Rather than reinterpreting the law in his own image, the good judge conforms his decisions to the fixed meaning of the law. By insisting that even judges must be the servants rather than the masters of the law, Justice Scalia was simply following the lead of America's Founders and empowering the American people.

Justice Scalia's approach to judging not only requires self-restraint by judges, but it also demands rigor and accountability by legislators. The good judge takes seriously the language the legislators enact, so the people can hold accountable the legislators they elect.

The famed Senator and Supreme Court advocate Daniel Webster once said that "there are men in all ages

who mean to govern well, but they mean to govern. They promise to be good masters, but they mean to be masters." Those who object to Justice Scalia's approach embrace the notion that judges, rather than the people, should be the masters of the law.

Justice Scalia's impact has been enormous. A liberal legal commentator may have put it best in his review of Justice Scalia's book, "A Matter of Interpretation," with these words:

We are all originalists now. That is to say, most judges and legal scholars who want to remain within the boundaries of respectable constitutional discourse agree that the original meaning of the Constitution and its amendment has some degree of pertinence to the question of what the Constitution means today.

Justice Scalia brought the boundaries of respectable constitutional discourse more in line with the principles of liberty than they had been in a generation. For that, our liberty is more secure, and we should be deeply grateful.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA AND FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this past Saturday I was honored to attend the funeral mass for Justice Scalia. I couldn't help but recall back when President Reagan nominated him for the Supreme Court of the United States. At that time Judge Scalia said that "[his] only [agenda] was to be a good judge."

Today, 30 years later, it is clear that Justice Scalia, who until his death served longer than any of the current members of the Supreme Court of the United States, was more than a good judge. In fact, he was a great judge. He was a giant of American jurisprudence.

As I got to know him even better during the course of the more recent years, thanks to a mutual acquaintance, I can tell you he was also a good man. My first encounter with Justice Scalia was back in 1991 when I won an election to be on the Texas Supreme Court and the court invited Justice Scalia to come to Austin, TX, and administer the oath of office. At that time I already admired his intellect and commitment to the Constitution and the rule of law, and believe me, he was an inspiration to young judges like me who were inspired to do the same. He has been an inspiration to so many judges, lawyers, and law students for decades.

I admired and respected Justice Scalia. Like many Texans, I was proud

of the fact that he also seemed to love Texas, believe it or not, even though he was a Virginian. He remarked once that if he didn't live in Virginia, he would "probably want to be a Texan."

I wish to spend a couple of minutes remembering this great man and the contributions he made to our Nation. Beyond his incredible resume, Justice Scalia was a devoted husband to Maureen for more than 50 years. He was a dedicated father to 9 children and a grandfather to more than 30 grandchildren. As I said earlier, he was not only a family man, which I am sure he would have considered his most important job, he was a role model for a generation of lawyers, judges, legal scholars, and those who loved the Constitution.

One of the interesting things about Justice Scalia—and perhaps he could teach all of us a little something these days—was that he was quick to build relationships with people who had different views from his own and fostered an environment of collegiality and friendship on the Court.

As we learned earlier, Justice Scalia had relationships with people with whom he couldn't have disagreed more on key issues that the Court confronted—people like Justice Ginsburg, for example. We all know he was a gifted writer and possessed an infectious wit, but Justice Scalia's most important legacy is his life's work and his call for a return to our constitutional first principles.

Justice Scalia strongly believed that words mattered, and I think that is one of the reasons why he quickly became one of the most memorable writers on the Court and one of the best in the Court's entire history. He believed the words written in the Constitution mattered because that was the only thing the States voted on when they ratified the Constitution. Those were the words with which the American people chose to govern themselves. For decades he tried to give those words force and fought against an attempt to say that we really don't have a written Constitution; we have a living Constitution that should be reinterpreted based on the times when, indeed, the text had not changed one bit.

His originalist interpretation of the Constitution meant that he viewed the Court as a place to vindicate the law and what it meant, not express the preferences of five Justices. Justice Scalia was one of the most fervent advocates for the rule of law and a written Constitution. On many instances, he made the important point that if the Supreme Court was viewed merely as a group of nine individuals making value judgments on how our country ought to be governed under our Constitution, then the people may well feel that their values were equally as valid as those of the "high nine" on the Potomac given life tenure and a seat on

the Supreme Court. It was his strict adherence to the text of the Constitution, and not evolving value judgments over time, that gave protection to our democracy.

Justice Scalia was strongly committed to the separation of powers. This is so fundamental to the Constitution that, until the first Congress, James Madison didn't even think that we needed a Bill of Rights because he felt that the separation of powers and the division of responsibilities would be protection enough because they viewed the concentration of powers, the opposite of separation of powers, as a threat to our very liberty. I think he said that the very definition of tyranny was the concentration of powers. So he saw the separation of powers as nothing less than the most important guarantor of our liberty and the most important shield against tyranny.

In one dissent Justice Scalia wrote "without a secure structure of separated powers, our Bill of Rights would be worthless." I guess you would have to say he is a Madisonian and not a Federalist by temperament and view. This recognition of the importance of separation of powers could not be any more important at this point in our history because scarcely a month goes by when this administration has chosen to undermine this basic constitutional precept by exerting itself and claiming authorities which the Constitution does not give the President.

Justice Scalia understood what was at stake. He believed that every blow to the separation of powers would harm our Republic and liberty itself.

As Justice Scalia wrote in a case in which the Court unanimously struck down the President's violations of the constitutional doctrine of separation of powers, he said: "We should therefore take every opportunity to affirm the primacy of the Constitution's enduring principles over the politics of the moment." He continued, warning against "aggrandizing the Presidency beyond its constitutional bounds." That is what Justice Scalia did time and again, and that is what he reminded all of us about—the importance of doctrines of separation of powers, adherence to the text of the Constitution, and not making it up as you are going along or expressing value judgments that can't be related to the actual text and original understanding of the Constitution.

The question arises: When the President makes a nomination to fill the vacancy left by Justice Scalia's death, what is the constitutional responsibility of the U.S. Senate? It is true that under our Constitution, the President of the United States has a unique role and the authority to make a nomination to fill this vacancy, but it is also true that the Senate has an essential and unique role to play as well. The founding generation regarded the Senate's role in the appointment process as "a critical protection against

'despotism.''' Nothing less. That means that the U.S. Senate has a unique and separate role to play, and certainly a coequal role with that of the President, in the process of filling vacancies on the Court. We are not, and the Constitution never intended us to be, a rubber stamp for the President of the United States.

I know that President Obama would love to nominate somebody in the waning months of his last term of office as he is heading out the door and perhaps fill this vacancy, which in the case of Justice Scalia was filled for 30 years, far extending President Obama's term of office. That is not what the U.S. Senate is about. We are a coequal branch of government, and we have an independent and separate responsibility from that of the President. He can nominate anybody he wants, but it is up to the Senate, in its collective wisdom, on whether or not to grant advice and consent. When we say that, we mean that if the Senate did not play its unique role, liberty itself would be weakened and despotism strengthened.

As I said before, the American people can and should have a voice in the selection of the next Supreme Court Justice. In the waning days of this Presidential election year after voters have already cast their ballots in primaries for Republican and Democratic candidates—even as I speak, there is a caucus convening today in Nevada—I believe giving the American people a choice in who selects the next Justice of the Supreme Court is very important. I think it elevates what is at stake in this next election this November, and that means simply that this vacancy should not be filled at this time by this President.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senator from California.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I came to the floor because I am stunned. I just learned that the Republicans have announced to the country they will not even call a hearing, if and when President Obama does his job and nominates a replacement for Justice Scalia.

We send our heartfelt sympathy to his family.

I don't know where the Republicans have come up with this notion that this is the right thing to do. If you look at the strict constitutionalists, you know they are reading the Constitution, unless they are phonies. This is what the Constitution says, the President shall "nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court." Where in this does it say: except in election years. As a matter of fact, we have acted 14 times in election years.

Whoever is a strict constructionist should read the Constitution, article II,

section 2, clause 2. I am going to read it again: The President shall "nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court."

It doesn't say as Senator CORNYN said: Oh, the President can nominate, but nobody else has a job to do. Oh no. It says: "... and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate . . ."

To have such a press conference, as I understand it—I didn't see it myself, but it has been reported to me—there has been an announcement that the Republicans will not even hold a hearing, which goes against this Constitution. I wouldn't be surprised if there is a lawsuit brought by the people of this country, 70 percent of whom believe we have an obligation. We have an obligation.

Nowhere in the Constitution does it say it is too late for the President to nominate. Guess what. The Republicans keep saying we need an elected President. Well, I have good news for them. This President was elected twice and he has about a year left. Guess what. I am not going to run again, but I am here now. I want to work. I did not take this job to have a year off and not worry about working in my last year.

Nowhere in the Constitution does it say: Oh, and by the way, don't advise and consent if it is a Democratic President in his second term. It does not say that. So if you consider yourself a strict constructionist, then pay attention to this. I am proud that several Republicans on the other side said: Baloney, we don't go along with it. Good for them and more should do it.

It doesn't say in the Constitution, you only advise and consent if it is a Republican President with a Republican Senate.

Again, the Senate over the years has repeatedly considered Supreme Court nominees in both election years and in the final year of a President's term.

Justice Kennedy, who serves now, a fellow Californian, was nominated by President Reagan in 1987. I was over on the House side, and I didn't have anything to do with it, but I sure watched it. Kennedy was confirmed by a Democratic Senate during Reagan's last year in office.

My Republican friends say: Oh, but this Senator said this about it and that Senator said that and JOE BIDEN said this. It doesn't matter what people say. It is what we do, and 14 times in history we have voted on judges in an election year.

My Republican colleagues who suggest that this process cannot be done before President Obama leaves office are fooling themselves. History has disproven them and the Constitution is going to chastise whoever says: I want a dead Constitution. Read this. This is very clear. It absolutely is.

So I have a message for my Republican friends. Pretty simple. Pretty simple. Do your job. Do your job. If you are afraid to do your job, then do something else with your life. If you don't want to do your job because you are worried that one moderate may get through, then make your argument. If you want to vote no, vote no, but to hold a press conference and say you will not even hold a hearing is outrageous.

Every day in talented cities across this country, Americans show up for work and they do their jobs. They don't call their bosses and say: You know, I just don't feel like doing this today. I am healthy, I am fine, I am well, but you know what, I don't want to do my job. They would be fired and they should be. Do your job. You are elected to do your job. The American people show up for their jobs. They do their jobs. It is as simple as that. The Justices of the Supreme Court show up and they do their jobs every day. Justice Scalia did it. They all do it. They hear cases. They write opinions.

The Supreme Court is the last stop on the justice train, but to be able to function as our Founding Fathers in the U.S. Constitution intended, they need a full bench with all nine Justices. A Supreme Court with eight Justices is not a functioning Court.

Let us look at the Republicans' hero, Ronald Reagan. We always hear them say: Ronald Reagan. I was proud to serve in the House during Ronald Reagan's term. I didn't agree with him on a lot of things, but I agree with him on this. Do you know what he said?

I look forward to prompt hearings conducted in the spirit of cooperation and bipartisanship. I will do everything in my power as President to assist in that process.

President Ronald Reagan, November 12, 1987. What did he say? Did he get up and say: Oh, it is an election year—which it was. No. Kennedy was voted on in an election year and President Reagan made the case.

This is what else Ronald Reagan said: "Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body."

Let me say that again. Ronald Reagan, who was pushing for a vote on a Supreme Court Justice in an election year, said the following: "Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body."

I don't understand where the Republicans are coming from. They are disregarding Ronald Reagan, their hero. They are disregarding the Constitution that they say is their shining star of their being, which it should be for all of us, and they stood there today and blatantly announced they are not even going to hold a hearing on a nominee before they even know who he or she is.

What is that about? I am truly stunned. I thought I had seen everything, but I have never seen this. You show up and you do your job.

I am going to show you a few other quotes of people who are very important to this conversation and what they are saying about not moving forward. How about Sandra Day O'Connor, what an incredible woman. She was appointed by Ronald Reagan, the first female ever appointed to the Supreme Court, a magnificent person and a Republican.

What did she say? "I think we need somebody there, now, to do the job, and let's get on with it." She just said that 10 days ago or less. Is she a partisan? I don't think so. She is speaking from the heart. She is speaking from her soul. She is speaking from experience. She knows the Court has important cases before it and will be tied in knots if we don't have a Court at full strength.

Again, here is what she said, Republican Sandra Day O'Connor, esteemed member of the Supreme Court, a Ronald Reagan nominee: "I think we need somebody there, now, to do the job, and let's get on with it."

I am going to show you two more quotes. This is from the American Constitution Society:

A vacancy on the Court for a year and a half, which is what the Republicans want, at least a year and a half, would mean many instances where the Court could not resolve a split among the circuits. There would be the very undesirable result that the same federal law would have differing meanings in various parts of the country.

That is the American Constitution Society.

Then we have another quote I wish to share with you by the director of the Byron White Center at the University of Colorado:

It would essentially shut the Supreme Court down for two years. It would be a monumental crisis for the development of the law and the need to resolve large legal questions.

Let me say it again.

It would essentially shut the Supreme Court down for two years. It would be a monumental crisis for the development of the law and the need to resolve large legal questions.

It is not as if large legal questions aren't at stake. Right now the Supreme Court is set to look at some incredibly important cases that have real effects on our people. This isn't some argument in a salon. This is real stuff. The cases can't wait, and it doesn't matter what side you are on with these cases. They have to be resolved.

What about voting rights? I don't think there would be a difference of opinion in this Chamber that this is what makes this country great and special, the right to vote, the responsibility to vote. We have many States that have put forward voter ID laws. They need to be told whether they are

fair or unfair, whatever side you come down on. We need a Court to look at voting rights cases and see who the eligible voters are.

Affirmative action. They are going to reexamine that case. Whatever side you are on, it has to be decided.

Workers' rights. The Court will decide the impact of the ability of the union to represent millions of working Americans. Whatever side you are on, there needs to be a decision, otherwise you are going to have different States with different laws and it makes no sense.

This is one Nation under God. That is why we have a U.S. Senate and a U.S. House and a U.S. President and a U.S. Supreme Court—because we are one Nation and these issues have to be decided. There is one on employee discrimination. How do people get their day in court if they are being discriminated against? It doesn't matter what side you are on. The fact is there needs to be a decision.

Women's health. There is a big case on women's health as to whether workers can get birth control. Again, whatever side you are on, pro, con, there needs to be a decision.

It is about women, health care, voting rights, students. These cases have real consequences. I am going to conclude with one more chart that deals with the length of Supreme Court Justices for the past 35 years. Here you see the list of the various nominees. Not all of these made it, a couple did not, but here is the deal with these. O'Connor waited 95 days, Rehnquist 92, Scalia 82, Bork 109, Kennedy 113, Souter 74, Thomas 110, Ginsburg 137, Breyer 114, Roberts 90, Alito 95, Sotomayor 97, Kagan 118.

Under MITCH MCCONNELL's plan, the Republican plan that they laid out, if you averaged all of this, you get 102 days. That is the average it takes. Under MCCONNELL's plan, it would take 444 days, at best. That is assuming everything goes perfectly well. It could take a lot longer.

What does this mean? Anyone within the sound of my voice has heard this: Justice delayed is justice denied. That is a fact. And it is used throughout the country when we talk about the importance of making these decisions. When our constituents go to jury duty, what are they asked? Can you make this decision? Can you come to this decision? Because everyone deserves to have an answer.

So, in conclusion, take a look at this. This is an abomination. This is the number of days we have seen over the last 35 years that it took to confirm. Fourteen of our Justices have been confirmed in election years since the beginning of this country, and this takes us back to the Civil War days—imagine—when we really had a country divided.

This is not what we need to do right now, with all of these decisions coming

up. Regardless of your stand on them, people deserve justice.

I will conclude with the "Do Your Job" chart because I have to say that is what it comes down to. I urge the people of this great country to call the Republicans, every one of them, with three words: Do your job. And if the person who answers says "I don't know what you mean," say "Do your job. Let the process move forward on the Supreme Court Justice." And if they say "Well, we want an elected President," what will be told to them is "We are fortunate. We have one, elected not once but twice." More than enough time remains for him to do his job, and more than enough time remains for us to do ours.

Republicans, do your job.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the importance of filling the current vacancy on the Supreme Court of the United States. I appreciate the words of my colleague from California.

I wish to begin by saying that my prayers and thoughts are with the family and friends and Supreme Court colleagues of Justice Scalia. He was a great scholar who had friends in many places. Just last week I was at the University of Chicago Law School, where I went to law school, and so many people have stories. He used to teach there. He taught there for a long period of time, and they miss him very much.

The Supreme Court has the constitutional responsibility to weigh some of the most important issues facing the American people. From freedom of speech, to due process, to doing business in America, Supreme Court decisions have impacted and continue to impact the daily life of every citizen of this country. As one of the three pillars of our government, we value the Court's distinctive insulation from public opinion. Justices commit themselves to the law and to the Constitution and not to politics or partisanship.

Americans need and deserve to have a functional and fully staffed Supreme Court. We cannot delay consideration of the next Supreme Court nominee. As my colleague just pointed out, we would have to go back to the Civil War, to a time where a position—an important key position on the Supreme Court of the United States—was left open. We would have to go back to a time when it was left open for more than a year. We would have to go back to a time before we had planes, before we had automobiles, before we had washing machines—you name it. We would have to go back to the Civil War.

Delaying the confirmation of a new Justice will prevent the Court from issuing binding precedent and deny access to justice for Americans. Lower courts will be left with decisions, and

decisions will not be made in those cases. That is why the Constitution of the United States says that the President shall—shall—nominate someone to the Supreme Court. It doesn't say that he will wait for a year. It doesn't say that he can't do it in an election year. It says that he shall nominate someone.

We have a lot of Members of this great body who are lawyers, a lot of whom I have heard quoting the Constitution. A lot of them believe in strict interpretation of the words of the Constitution. Well, the words of the Constitution say that the President "shall nominate" and that the Senate's job is to "advise and consent." It says that it is the Senate's job. It doesn't say that it is the Senate's job to avoid things and to just go on TV and to run ads. No. It says that the Senate has a job to do. The Senate has a job to do.

Both the President and the Senate have a constitutional duty to protect the Supreme Court's ability to function and dispense justice—not to tell the Supreme Court what to do, not to dictate their decisions, but to make sure they are simply able to do justice. This means they must be fully staffed and have the Justices in place, and it also means they should be funded. Those are our jobs.

According to our Constitution, the President replaces vacant seats on the Supreme Court. That duty does not end, as I noted, in a Presidential year, just as the responsibilities of all Senators in their States and in their Nation do not end in an election year.

President Obama was elected to serve out his entire second term, not just the first 3 years. For 332 long days, the President will be the democratically elected President of the United States—democratically elected, as in a democracy, as in how our democracy functions. He has an obligation to all Americans to dutifully execute his oath of office.

The President has not yet announced a nominee to fill the current vacancy on the Court. When he does, it will be the constitutional duty of each one of us to consider the nominee on his or her merits and then choose whether to vote yes or no. It is really not that hard. It is what the kids learn when they are taught social studies and civics when they are in elementary school. The American people who voted for us, as well as those who didn't vote for us, expect us to do the jobs we were elected to do, regardless of the timing.

A complete refusal to engage in this constitutionally required process before the President has even announced a nominee is dangerous for our system of governance. It defies the words of the Constitution. This Chamber would be neglecting a key constitutional duty if it prevented a well-qualified nominee from serving on the Supreme Court.

And guess what. How do we figure out if someone is well qualified? We have hearings. That is what we have been doing for decades now. We have hearings to figure out whether this person is qualified. That is how we advise. That is how we consent. That is how we do our duty under the Constitution.

It is for that reason that I urge my colleagues to continue in the Senate's bipartisan tradition of giving full and fair consideration to Supreme Court nominees. We have precedent for the Senate performing this role in the final year of a Presidency. Most recently, the Senate confirmed Justice Kennedy, someone who is currently serving on the Supreme Court, a current member sitting on the Supreme Court, someone who makes decisions every day. When was he confirmed? He was confirmed in the last year of Ronald Reagan's Presidency. And guess what. The Senate was controlled by Democrats. So we had the exact opposite situation. Now we have a Democratic President and we have a Senate that is in the control of Republicans. Back then we had a Republican President and a Senate that was in the control of Democrats. People say: Well, what does history show us? What do we know? To me, that is the best example of history. And we know what happened: Justice Kennedy was confirmed, on Ronald Reagan's nomination, by a Democratic Senate in an election year unanimously—unanimously.

The Senate has taken such action more than a dozen times in our Nation's history, and there is no reason to abandon that precedent now. I am talking about when a Justice position opens up during an election year. We have that precedent, which I think is important. Again, I think the most important precedent, the most important example for historians, is what I led with: the fact that we have to go back to the Civil War to find a time when we left a vacancy on the Supreme Court open for a year. Think about that. Through World War I, through World War II, through huge tumult in this country, we always made sure we had a fully staffed Supreme Court.

It would be unprecedented to deny a Supreme Court nominee fair consideration in the U.S. Senate. In the last 100 years, the Senate has taken action on every Supreme Court nominee regardless of whether the nomination was made in a Presidential year. It is now February, which gives us plenty of time to consider and confirm a nominee. Let's go to that next.

People say: When will we have the time to get that done? I would submit that we do. We have hundreds of days before us. In fact, the Senate has taken an average of only 67 days. Let's make it easier: 2 months—about 2 months. That is the average since 1975 from the date of the nomination to the confirmation vote—2 months. That means

that if the President offers a nomination, say, in the month of March—that sounds like a good month to have a nominee—that nominee would receive a vote in the Senate by Memorial Day. There are our 2 months. And if we even wanted to add a little time on, we would certainly do it by the Fourth of July, which is a very good holiday for those who believe in the Constitution and in the words of the Constitution.

Until we confirm a nominee, the Court is left with only eight Justices. A split decision will prevent the Supreme Court from making critical decisions and leave lower courts without a precedent to follow. A major responsibility of the Supreme Court is to resolve disagreements among lower courts. A failure of the President or the Senate to meet its constitutional obligations would cause the Supreme Court to be unable to fill its constitutional obligations.

These Supreme Court Justices aren't elected directly; they have lifetime appointments. Their job is to be insulated from elections and politics, and that is why we have these strict and straightforward words in the Constitution that say that the President shall nominate someone for the job, and they also say that the Senate will advise and consent. We have those words in place in the Constitution, in that incredibly important document that guides us in this Chamber every single day, just for a situation such as this one, just for situations such as these.

In closing, I remind my colleagues of the important work the people have sent us here to do. Yes, we have major disputes every day. That happens every day. We get into arguments about issues. There are political campaigns going on. But we have always at least followed the Constitution. That is what this is about today.

As soon as we have a nominee, as soon as the President exercises his constitutional duty and puts someone in place, we should follow the Constitution and our longstanding traditions and the history of this country and uphold that duty. We should diligently consider the President's nominee to be the next Supreme Court Justice. As members of the Judiciary Committee, we must have the confirmation hearing. We must do our jobs.

Thank you, Mr. President, and I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I am here to talk about Takata airbags, but I want to say to the Senator from Minnesota that she is so right on. The Constitution, article II, says that the President "shall nominate" and the Senate "shall confirm." It doesn't say "may" or "wish." It says "shall." It is a constitutional responsibility of our duties.

Just do your job, U.S. Senate. Just do the job, and we will see, once the

President comes forward with a nominee. Let's see. Are we going to have committee hearings? Let's see if we are going to have open and bipartisan discussion on the merits of the nominee that is put forth. Let's see if the Constitution is trashed or whether the Constitution is upheld in the process put out to us in the third branch of government. I thank the Senator from Minnesota.

TAKATA AIRBAGS

Mr. President, I came here to speak about something else—something that looks very sinister. As a matter of fact, I ask unanimous consent to have two items to show to the Senate with regard to the Takata airbag crisis.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON. It looks kind of sinister, unfortunately, because it is. It is supposed to save lives, not kill. This is an airbag. It obviously has already been inflated. It goes right in the steering wheel, so when you get in an accident, this inflates and fills up with gas within a split second, and that protects your head and your torso from coming forward and being injured.

What happens if this malfunctions, and what happens if the very manufacture of it causes it to malfunction under conditions? Let me show you what happens.

I said these things look pretty sinister. Indeed, this is pretty sinister because this is a fragment that was in the metal casing in one of these airbags in Florida that, when it malfunctioned, caused the explosive force of the ammonium nitrate gas. It was so explosive that it ripped apart the metal casing, and this part that I am showing came flying into the face of the driver, severely injuring the driver. In this case it hit the forehead.

I have told the Senate on many occasions that fragments of metal like this have come out just within the Orlando area of my State. They found a woman in the middle of an intersection where she had a collision, and when the police arrived, they found out that she was dead. She had bled to death. They looked at her neck and it was slashed. The police's immediate response was that this was a homicide. Upon reflection, she had a collision in the intersection that otherwise would have been a major fender bender, but because of a defective Takata airbag, it sent a piece of metal like this into her neck and cut her jugular vein.

Near Orlando, a firefighter—a big, strapping, 6-foot-4 hunk of a man—doesn't have an eye anymore because a piece of metal fragment like this one from a Takata airbag came out when there was nothing more than a fender bender. When this bag exploded, it sent out a piece of metal. In his case, that firefighter doesn't have the sight in one eye because this piece of metal fragment hit him.

Unfortunately, this has happened all over the country. Unfortunately, it has happened with a great deal of, shall we say, dragging of feet, coverup, and obfuscation. These airbags are supposed to save lives, but when they fail, they rupture violently and they send metal fragments right at the driver or the passenger.

These Takata airbags have such an explosive force. What is behind it? Well, our staff on the Commerce Committee has just produced a report which this Senator is releasing today. It is an update on this report which found, through a review of recently obtained internal documents in the Takata Corporation, that Takata employees routinely manipulated safety testing data. That would be bad enough, but let's see the consequence of this drip, drip, drip approach to now a substantial number of recalls. There were a million vehicles recalled in 1 week, a million more the next, and there is no end in sight.

A few days ago, there was a Reuters report that said that in addition to the already 20-plus million recalls of Takata airbags, an additional 70 to 90 million Takata airbags may have to be recalled right here in the United States. Can you imagine what that is going to do to all these poor auto dealers? I mean, don't even speak about the person who is in the greatest jeopardy, the one who is behind the wheel of a car with an explosive grenade right in front of their face, and the grenade may go off. But can you imagine the poor auto dealers, the Toyotas, the Hondas?

Let me tell you about the last person killed. He was in a Ford F-150 pickup truck, and it was in South Carolina. By the time people got to the truck after the crash that would not have killed him, he was dead because of a fragment like this. I wish you could see this fragment. I wouldn't want that hitting me with an explosive force that inflates the airbag in less than 1 second. That is why the Commerce Committee has decided to jump all over this. We have been doing it for the last 2 years. We had a hearing on this 2 years ago.

On the current recall, I said it was in excess of 20 million. It is actually 29 million with these defective inflators. That is because nine people are dead and dozens are injured. We find out now that in all, there may be 120 million airbags that eventually in the United States alone will have to be recalled. If you want a shocking figure, there may be in excess of 260 million airbags recalled worldwide.

Knowing of all these problems, it is puzzling that the consent order that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration signed with Takata allows the continued production of ammonium nitrate-based inflators indefinitely. Then they said that certain ones had to be phased out by 2018. Why

isn't the NHTSA taking a more aggressive approach? What is going on after all of these inflators, based on what we see with ammonium nitrate, have exploded?

The essence of this and of the report we are releasing today as an addendum to the previous report is that the current recall may have to be redone. Why? Because auto manufacturers are installing new live grenades into people's cars as replacements for the old live grenades.

According to Reuters and the New York Times, there are also internal documents that show Takata officials were aware of these consistent problems at its manufacturing plants. These reports claim that officials knew of manufacturing issues that could lead to moisture contamination, contaminating the ammonium nitrate wafer inside of the airbag inflator. This just adds all the more to the finding of evidence.

Last June, the oversight and investigations staff of the Commerce Committee released a report on the Takata airbag fiasco showing that the company knew there were serious production and testing issues dating back more than one decade. That is why we wanted to release this report today. Through a thorough review of recently obtained internal documents at Takata, it was discovered that Takata employees continually manipulated the safety testing done. For example, in this report, in a 2005 memo to the Takata vice president, an engineer at Takata explained that "the integrity of the validation reports . . . is in serious question."

That engineer continued: "These are not trivial changes in that the data clearly in violation of the customer specs is altered to meet the customer specs." The engineer called that "a clear misrepresentation of the facts."

That is what the Takata engineer said to one of the Takata vice presidents back in 2005. That was 11 years ago.

In a 2006 email, a different engineering manager explained that testing reports were "cherry picked" and a Takata employee was "schmoozed" to accept deviations in the data.

So was he schmoozed or intimidated? Whatever it was, it was altering what was the truth. The manager concluded—this is the Takata manager in 2006, which was 10 years ago—that "the plant should have been screaming bloody murder long ago."

Well, if I were a lawyer making a case to a jury, I would rest my case right now. The fact is, we are not lawyers arguing to a jury. As Senators, we are here to try to protect the American people. And this data manipulation has continued. Even after the recalls had been announced and the rupturing inflators had caused deaths and injuries, the data manipulation continued.

I will give an example. A 2010 presentation explains that an experimental inflator was experiencing a significant safety and weld quality issue. According to that presentation, “[Takata Japan] was informed of these results, but altered them and reported good results to Honda.” Furthermore, even when these issues were raised to senior Takata employees, no action was taken.

In a Takata director’s notes from 2013, he explains that he shared his view that the range of a certain recall might be a “violation of our moral obligation to protect the public.” Let me repeat that. A “violation of our moral obligation to protect the public”—that came from a Takata director. Wow.

The engineer raised these concerns with Takata’s senior vice president of quality assurance, but the vice president failed to take action to address it.

These new documents that we note in this report from the committee speak for themselves. Takata failed to prioritize the safety of its products, and as a result, nine people are dead and dozens were injured. And even after exploding Takata airbags killed these innocent people, company employees continued to manipulate safety testing data. This is not only inexcusable, it is reprehensible.

We have these thousands of automobile dealers around the country who have sold vehicles with the Takata airbags. They cannot sell a new vehicle if that vehicle is under recall because of a Takata airbag. Under law, they cannot sell that new vehicle. Also, rental car companies that have more than 15 cars cannot rent cars if they are under recall. But used car dealers can sell used cars that have defective Takata airbags in them that are under recall—without fixing it.

I really feel for our automobile dealers. I really feel for our automobile dealers also because what in the world are they going to do with the customers now screaming “Replace this airbag” when, in fact, there are not enough replacement airbags? In fact, because the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration has allowed some of these replacements to go in with this ammonium nitrate, this is a horrendous situation.

So I come to the floor today—this has been going on for over 2 years. We brought this out in a hearing in the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee. And today I urge Takata and NHTSA to do what should have been done long ago: Stop producing these ammonium nitrate airbags and get them out of people’s vehicles. And by the way, give your automobile dealers some relief. And how about giving the American driving public, which is driving around with one of these things in their face, some consideration and put them first? Hopefully, we will see some more action on this.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed for 15 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GUANTANAMO DETAINEES

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about President Obama’s plan to move Guantanamo Bay terrorists to the United States. However, it is not much of a plan. With all due respect, it is more of a failed attempt to fulfill a campaign promise and, in my view, what he believes will secure his legacy.

Fortunately for us—those who believe that moving dangerous enemy combatants within our communities is dangerous, irresponsible, and an illogical idea—the President’s plan contains nothing really substantive. In fact, it fails to recommend an alternative location to any current facility at all. As a matter of fact, I call that a win.

The plan does not provide any intelligence to substantiate the President’s claims, nor does it even provide a chart or a graph to support the mathematics on the alleged cost savings, and there is no estimate regarding the cost to local and State governments to support such a move. Indeed, the 9-page report is short in every regard.

The White House received the Department of Defense’s results of their site surveys and other data regarding a potential closing last month. And this—I am holding up the report here—this is all we have in return: 9 pages.

I know the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, my good friend and colleague, Senator JOHN MCCAIN, is not going to be pleased with the lack of substance or data or the articulation of a real plan. The same goes for Senator RICHARD BURR, chairman of the Intelligence Committee, who at this particular time is going to be introducing legislation of his own to provide intelligence with regard to the administration’s lack of intelligence on moving detainees to the United States.

The lack of a plan and the inability of this administration to provide an alternative site indicate that none of the sites visited by DOD’s survey team met the demands necessary to hold detainees and, more important, keep our community safe. The fact that no site was named and no substance on those visits was provided tells me there is no alternative to match what we are now doing safely and securely at Gitmo, period.

This so-called plan, as outlined by the President in his speech today from the White House, skims over four steps to closing Guantanamo Bay.

First, it articulates the administration’s plan to continue moving detainees designated for transfer by the President’s national security team to foreign countries.

In some instances, this may have been successful with regard to individuals being rehabilitated, but a third of the time, detainees transferred to third-party host countries have returned to the battlefield. And these are just the ones we know about. This is called recidivism, and the rates are too high for this process to be called “secure and responsible,” as the administration has labeled it.

Second, the administration plans to continue its review of the threat posed by those detainees who are not currently eligible for transfer through the Periodic Review Board.

This is to provide a new review on the current population of detainees who have been deemed too dangerous to transfer—deemed too dangerous to transfer, and yet this President wants to give them a second shot at getting out. This doesn’t make any sense. Terrorists are not criminals. As much as this President would like for you to believe they are, terrorists are not equal to the inmates we have across America’s prison system. They are fixated on the destruction of America. They have no regard for life, not that of their own and especially not the lives of innocent civilians.

The report hones in on having a detainee population anywhere from 30 to 60. There seems to be an assumption on the part of the President that the review board will determine that half of those deemed too dangerous for transfer or release are suddenly safe for transfer or release. Does the President believe this is possible or does this assumption simply serve his own means to create cost savings for his plan that can never be realized?

The plan also fails to account for the fact that our Nation is still mired in the War on Terrorism. We are still fighting in the Middle East and worldwide, including the United States of America, to ensure that terrorism does not prevail. What about the individuals we detain from this day forward? What about those individuals with critical information related to the next terrorist threat? How can we operate without a facility like Guantanamo Bay to hold terrorists we take off the battlefield?

Third, the plan attempts to identify individual dispositions, one by one, for those who remain designated for continued law of war detention, to include Article III, military commissions, or foreign prosecutions. What a muddle.

In his remarks today, President Obama advocated for trying terrorist suspects in Article III courts. The President named two American citizens—Faisal Shahzad and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev—to articulate his point. Both of those individuals, however, were apprehended in the United States, not on the battlefield.

The intent of the Guantanamo detention facility is to protect the American

people by removing terrorists from the battlefield. As the United States faces a growing threat from terrorist organizations, such as ISIS, which have tens of thousands of members, bringing those terrorists to the United States to stand trial simply cannot be the answer. It is not safe for the American people and irresponsible to our national security.

Fourth, the plan states the administration's desire to "work with Congress to lift unnecessary prohibitions in current law." That is in quotes, "work with Congress."

Well, there is something that is unique with the President, "work with Congress to lift unnecessary prohibitions in current law." But it does not anywhere in its nine pages endorse a specific facility to house Guantanamo detainees; rather, the plan describes a prototype for a detention facility in the United States—not Kansas, not Colorado, not South Carolina, not anywhere in the United States.

The President's long-awaited plan is to work with Congress to identify the most appropriate location as soon as possible, according to the summary provided to my office by the Department of Defense. Question: How could it take 7 years to arrive at the idea to work with Congress? What a novel idea, but only for this express purpose. If the President had a suitable alternative, he would have provided it in this plan. If he had a suitable alternative, he would have provided it in 2009 when we stopped his plan the first time.

Further, the plan fails to substantiate President Obama's repeated claims that Guantanamo Bay serves as a recruiting tool for jihadists. Let me repeat this. The plan fails to substantiate President Obama's repeated claims that Guantanamo Bay serves as a recruiting tool for jihadists, a rallying point for terrorist attacks, hindering relations with allies, and draining Department of Defense resources. My goodness.

I wrote Defense Secretary Ash Carter in November to ask for intelligence reports or data to support many of these assertions. I asked Secretary Carter if an intelligence assessment has been done in conjunction with the site surveys recently conducted by the Department of Defense from the safety of our community's standpoint. I asked for the Department's rationale for evaluating Fort Leavenworth, when three previous evaluations have made it abundantly clear it is and continues to be an unacceptable alternative. I asked if there were intelligence products regarding previous site evaluations at Fort Leavenworth.

The administration has argued that Guantanamo is a recruiting tool for terrorists. So I logically asked for an intelligence assessment to support that argument. As a follow on, I asked what

assessment had been done to reflect that Guantanamo has increased terrorist recruitment. And finally, was there any empirical data to support the administration's argument that national security threats will decrease if enemy combatants are held in the United States? Common sense will tell you that it would increase.

Two months later, the response confirmed my assumptions. The Department of Defense had no intelligence products—none. There were no intelligence products, no data to provide to support the President's argument that GTMO serves as a recruiting tool and that moving detainees to the mainland would increase security and decrease the terrorist threat to the United States.

My colleagues, this plan really confirms what many of us already know: There is no safe alternative to GTMO—not in Kansas, not in Colorado, not in South Carolina. Nowhere on the mainland is there a secure and responsible alternative. If there were, this President would not have failed to articulate it in his plan.

Mr. President, a plan that is a legacy speech does not safeguard the lives of the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are postcloture on the nomination.

Mr. MANCHIN. I wish to speak on the nomination of the Food and Drug Administration, Dr. Robert Califf.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senator is recognized.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I believe the FDA needs new leadership, a new focus and a new culture, and Dr. Robert Califf's past involvement with the pharmaceutical industry reflects that he will not be this person. He will not have the impact or leadership capabilities the Nation needs to stem the tide of the opioid crisis we have all over this country, even in your great State of Oklahoma and my State of West Virginia, which has been ravaged by this. I would like to put this in context for a little bit. He has been there over a year—a good man. I am not speaking about his ability, his honesty, his integrity, his education, his background, and all the good work he has done. But he has been there for a year, and for the past 20 years Dr. Califf basically has come from the institutional research side, from education, and with that, his support has come from the pharmaceutical industries, those that are putting opioids on the market. I just feel it would be hard, human naturewise, for him to change and rule to keep these products from coming onto the market. So to put this in context, this is not personally about Dr. Califf. This is about the culture he

comes from and the year he has been there as the No. 2 man and what has happened during that period of time.

Let me go over some things. Over the last decade, the FDA has approved new drugs at historically high rates. In 2008, companies filing applications to sell never-before-marketed drugs were denied 66 percent of the time. They were denied 66 percent of the time. Yet between the beginning of 2015 and August of 2015, the FDA rejected only 3 uses for new chemical entities and approved 25. That is an approval rate of 89 percent.

Now, tell me how in 7 short years that culture changed to where anything and everything coming at us was passed through, when we have already become the most addicted country on Earth. If one looks at new drugs and not the use of drugs, they have rejected only 1 and approved 23. That is a 96-percent approval rate in 2015. So of the new drugs that came to the market, only 1 was rejected—a 96-percent approval rate.

In 2008, the FDA's approval of new marketing claims for existing drugs was 56 percent. In the first 8 months of 2015, it was 88 percent. This includes approving OxyContin for children as young as 11. The FDA's 2013 approval of Zohydro drew widespread concern. All of us were outraged when we heard this new drug came on the market.

To put another time period in context, I had worked for 3 years to try to get all opioids from a schedule III to a schedule II so doctors could prescribe only for 30 days. You had to go back and see your doctor. Up until that time, Vicodin and Lortab—the two most widely prescribed opioids—were schedule III. That means you could get a 90-day prescription and then call in to get it refilled. They were going out like M&Ms.

We were able to do that, and no sooner did we get that done—and it took 3 years, when it should have been 3 weeks. Within the same week that all opioids got to us from a schedule III to a schedule II, they approved a new drug called Zohydro, which was 10 times more powerful than Vicodin or Lortab—much more powerful. That approval was done against their advisory committee 11 to 2. That means 13 experts evaluated this drug and said: It is not needed, too powerful, don't do it. Guess what, they did it anyway.

Now they are saying that they are not going to pay attention to the advisory committee. Not only did they say they are not going to pay attention to the advisory committee, but we have had the decision on OxyContin being given to 11-year-old children; we have had the two new drugs that came out in 2014 after Zohydro and the pushback from Senators representing our respective States; they had a new drug called Targiniq, which is an extended-release OxyContin product, and Hysingla,

which is an extended-release hydrocodone product.

So there were three new decisions made, with two new powerful opioids coming to the market and the decision that OxyContin would be given to 11-year-olds. That was done without any review from the advisory committee. They got so much pushback from Zohydro, they said: We are not going down this path again. We will just not have anybody review it. We will just go ahead and do it.

If you believe that is a culture that will protect the welfare and well-being of our citizens in our States all through this great country of ours, then I am sorry because I don't. I am sorry, but that is why I have been so passionate. I have more people dying of legal prescription drug abuse than anything else in the State of West Virginia. More people die. It is ravaging families.

I have personal letters I will read, and they will tear your heart out with what is happening and how this grips and tears people apart. It tears communities apart. Every law enforcement agency in America will tell you—no matter what town they are in, what county they are in, or what State they are in—that over 80 percent and upward of 95 percent of all crimes committed are drug related, are some sort of drug related.

There is not one of us right now in this beautiful Senate Chamber that doesn't know somebody in our immediate family or Senate family that hasn't been affected by drugs, either prescription legal drugs or illegal drugs. It is awful. It is an epidemic.

I believe the FDA must break its cozy relationship with the pharmaceutical industry and instead start a relationship with the millions of Americans. I have said that I am going to fight against the FDA protecting a business plan and hopefully the culture will change, and they will start protecting America and the plan of families and citizens of this great country to have a healthy lifestyle.

It is because of this belief that I am urging my colleagues to vote against the confirmation of Dr. Robert Califf as the director of the Food and Drug Administration. He will still be there and still be a valuable person. He is just not that person with the passion to change the culture in this important agency. We have let this sleeping giant go for far too long.

My office has been absolutely flooded, Mr. President, with stories from West Virginians—but I have received them from all over the country—who want their voices to be heard. They say: Please use my name. I am not ashamed. We have been hiding too long. I have watched too many people's lives be destroyed. So today I will read letters not only from West Virginians but also people across this great coun-

try of ours that have been impacted by the opioid abuse epidemic.

I urge my colleagues to listen to these letters from their States and stories from my State about these drugs before confirming Dr. Califf, and in all good conscience make that decision tomorrow when we vote. Do you really believe he can bring the changes needed and not just say: Well, we have to have somebody there. He is already there. He will do a good job where he is; he is just not going to be able to kick them and shake them up and say we are not going down this path any more. There are some good people. We have made some recommendations of some good people who would bring the cultural changes that need to be brought.

I am going to read first about a young lady from Southern West Virginia. Her name is Chelsea. This is her story.

As a recovering addict, I have watched myself, my friends, and loved ones suffer from this horrible thing we call addiction. As I watch all these people now suffering, I know they had no idea what they were getting themselves into, and neither did I.

Whether it be for pain or just simply hanging with the wrong people like I did, we all have one thing in common, we chose to do drugs for the first time.

Someone made a decision to do drugs for the first time.

Growing up, I can honestly say I had what most people would call a normal childhood.

Chelsea comes from an upper socioeconomic family in Southern West Virginia. She continues:

I was raised by two hardworking parents who would and will still do anything for me. I was a gymnast and a cheerleader for most of my life and went to church every Wednesday and Sunday. My dad was even the Mayor of Madison at one point. But even being raised up in a good home did not stop me from doing drugs.

So this has no socioeconomic bearing. It does not. It is not a partisan issue. Whether you are a Democrat or Republican, it makes no difference. Rich or poor makes no difference. Chelsea continues:

I can still remember the first time I heard about someone getting high. I was in the 6th grade and became friends with a girl whose parents got high themselves. We would walk about the playground and she would talk of these things called "drugs." As she talked day in and day out about how getting high made her feel, it made me start to wonder what this thing called "getting high" was really about.

Now, mind you, I am talking about a 12-year-old girl. She was just 12 years old.

I can remember thinking how cool I thought it was that her parents had done drugs with her and would party with her.

So another friend of hers, also 12 years old, had parents who were doing drugs with her and would party with her.

Chelsea continues:

One weekend I went to her house to stay the night and this was the first time I had

gotten high. We smoked some pot, drank some alcohol, and I was turned on to my first pill around the age of 12. From this day forward, my life would forever be changed.

From the ages twelve to fifteen I partied some on the weekends and sometimes during the week, but as time went on my addiction and tolerance grew more and more. By this time, I was doing more pills because I had access to them. Between stealing Lortabs off my dad, to hanging with that girl so we could get high with her dad, to buying pills off the local drug dealer on the street, I had moved from doing them every now and then to every day.

I would stay a lot of weekends at this girl's house just to get high because my parents would never have done that nor did they know I was doing it. By sixteen my life took another turn. My grandmother, who I called Nana, had taken care of me most of my life while my mother worked. She was diagnosed with lung cancer two years prior. In the last days of her life, I would visit her in the hospital and she would tell me how proud she was of me and how I was her little model.

I had also met a very special guy by the name of J.R. a few months before this who I spent a lot of time with. On July 18, 2003, my Nana passed away. On the day of her wake, J.R. took me out to dinner, and on the way home he asked me to go meet his dad. I explained to him I could not and that my grandma's funeral was the next day.

He dropped me off that night, kissed me good-bye, and that was the last time I ever heard from J.R. Twenty minutes after he left me, he wrecked and died. I felt like my heart had been ripped out of my chest.

The day of his funeral is the next time I met the love of my life that would soon try to destroy my life. It was called OxyContin. I fell in love immediately with OxyContin. It took all of my cares and worries away, and from that moment on all I wanted to do was be numb.

As the years passed, my drug addiction grew worse. I was not only doing pain pills, I was now experimenting with all kinds of other things.

I can still remember my senior week in high school. While everyone was excited about going to the beach, I had to make sure I had enough drugs to go and not be sick. I took Roxy's and Oxy's, pretty much anything I could get my hands on, and eight balls of cocaine.

By this time in my life I didn't care about anything. It never once had crossed my mind that if I got caught with all of that I could go to jail. I was just worried about my next high.

The following months were the same. I was doing anything I could to get my hands on drugs, from pain pills to cocaine to meth. I did not care as long as I was high. I was hanging around with people who were as sick as I was and places that I look back now that I would not even take my dog.

At 19 I met a guy who would fuel my drug addiction even more. He was 40 years old and dealt OxyContin. At this point I could not afford my habit, so I did what I had to do. I started seeing my drug dealer.

My life soon went from bad to worse. I had OxyContin 80s any time I wanted them, and at the time I thought life can't get any better than this. When you are doing eight to ten OxyContin 80s a day, you will do whatever it takes to get them.

At this point I was turned on to heroin. Heroin would have taken my life if it hadn't scared me so much. The high from heroin is so intense that anyone who had done it

would have fallen in love. But, actually, it scared the life out of me.

As time passed and I wasn't getting high like I wanted to anymore from snorting OxyContin, I decided to start shooting up. That is one thing I never thought I would do is shoot up. I always told myself that people who shot up were the homeless people on the streets, complete and utter trash.

Now here I was sticking a needle in my arm to get what I wanted. And to be honest, I thought life was bad before. It just got a whole lot worse. The life I was and the life that I knew was gone, and OxyContin was completely ruling my life now.

OxyContin is a legal drug made by a legal pharmaceutical that knew exactly the effects this would have when they put this on the market over 20 years ago.

She said:

What stood before everyone was pure addiction.

I had started stealing off of everyone by now and didn't care who I hurt. People's priceless possessions that meant so much to them meant nothing to me. All I'd seen was my next fix. That's all I could see.

People were bringing me stolen stuff and I was taking it to the nearest pawn shop or my drug dealer. I had no shame. I had needle marks all up and down my arms, and I would lie to my family about how they got there. It was like I had no conscience, or, better yet, my addiction was my conscience.

Eventually I got caught stealing and was charged with 17 different felonies and one misdemeanor. This still did not slow me down even though I was looking at two to 20 years in prison. Nothing scared me more than being sick from the drugs.

On September 29, 2008, I was called in for a random drug test and failed because I had shot up OxyContin the day before. At the courthouse they handcuffed me and shackled me and sent me to Southwestern Regional Jail where I did a total of 10 days. As I sat there in that jail cell and cried, I thought a pill could not be worth two to 20 years of my life, and I hit my knees and prayed to God that if He brought me out of that jail cell, that I would never, ever, ever touch drugs again. The Lord answered my prayer and the judge gave me the choice to stay in jail or go to the Life Center of Galax, in Galax, Virginia.

I chose to go to rehab. I completed the 30-day program and came back and did Thomas Memorial's intense outpatient program for 6 more weeks. Once I got home I was sentenced to two to 20 years, but they suspended my sentence. I went through drug court and completed it. I was the third person to ever graduate from the Lincoln County Drug Court.

I also had to do 14 more days in jail, 6 months of home confinement, and 4 years' probation. I can honestly say that going to jail and rehab saved my life. If I hadn't have been put in jail, I would probably be 6 feet in the ground just like a lot of my friends that I had to bury.

All of these things combined gave me something I hold very dear to my heart. My recovery. Recovery has not only given my life back. It has given me a chance to be a daughter, a sister, a wife, and hopefully a mother someday, a productive member of society, a good friend, but most of all, my recovery has given me a chance to be the voice of the sick and suffering addicts who lay in bed at night wondering if there is a way out.

I enjoy giving people hope and showing them that treatment does work. I am living

proof that if you work the program of recovery, it will work for you. Since that day I had found myself sitting in that jail cell with no hope and my life completely consumed by my addiction, my life has changed for the better. I have graduated with an Associate's Degree in applied science from Southern West Virginia Community Technical College.

I went on to get my Bachelor's degree in the arts of psychology from West Virginia State University, and now I am currently working on my Masters of Social Work degree at Concord University, and I will graduate with that degree in May.

I have also been able to go to various schools, drug courts, and different places around the state to tell my story of addiction from where I was then to where I am now. I have also had the pleasure of working with a great group of people who are trying to get a sober living home open in Danville, West Virginia called the Hero House.

I can tell you, she is so passionate about getting this Hero House so she can help other people. Anybody listening who wants to help Chelsea in Danville, WV, with the Hero House, please do so or contact my office.

Now, with all this being said, I don't tell my story to get praise. I tell my story because there is a son, a daughter, a husband, a father, a wife, and many, many other people out there addicted to drugs and they do not see a light at the end of the tunnel.

When you are in active addiction, that light is so dim and a lot of times people think they are going to die from this horrible disease. But I am here to show people that you don't have to die. You don't have to let that horrible addiction win. You can step out and take your life back, because I am here to tell you that if you don't, if you don't, your addiction is going to take you to your grave.

Drugs do not discriminate. They know no good, no bad, no rich, no poor. There are so many people out there who suffer from this because there is little to no treatment.

By the grace of God I was sent to rehab and given a second chance. I still have the horrible reminders every day of the things I did to my family, to my body, and, most of all, to my self-esteem.

I have the track marks after being 7 years sober that constantly remind me of the life I once lived. I have a poor self-image because of the men I chose to give myself to just to get a pill, and the damage I did to my family because I had no cares in the world.

One day I hope there is enough treatment to help the addicts who want help. People need to be given a second chance and shown there is a better way of life than to do drugs.

I have another story called Tami's story, but I know Chelsea. I know this girl. She is impressive. She said: Please tell my story, I want people to know. No one could come from a finer family than I came from. No one can go lower than I have gone, and no one but by the grace of God could be saved like I was.

When we hear these stories—and all she is saying is there is no treatment. She was lucky. She found a treatment center. Somehow we have to come to grips with this. We have a tax on tobacco because we know it is harmful and we have to cure people of the disease. We have a tax on alcohol. We have no fee whatsoever on opiates—

none—and it is destroying lives like nothing else that has ever happened in this country. We need to make people conscious of this, and we need to have an FDA that is compassionate, but not only that, is committed to the change that needs to be made in our culture.

I want to read Tami's story, from West Virginia. That is in the northern panhandle. Chelsea was way down in the southern part of our State of West Virginia.

We have 2 adult children suffering from substance use disorder.

Our son entered the military while in college. He was sent to Iraq right after 9/11, December 27, 2001. He experienced things that he never talked about, celebrated his 21st birthday there, and returned home. He was not a saint when he went to war. He had a juvenile past of drinking. Back then we thought he was a typical teenager acting out. When he returned, he suffered PTSD, as many do, and went to the VA hospital for treatment. He was put on cocktail after cocktail of medications.

We all know this. We all know that basically these brave men and women who are willing to risk their lives and sacrifice their lives for us—in order to treat their pain, we think, just give them a prescription, and they are able to get anything and everything. That is what they are talking about when he was put on cocktail after cocktail of medications—was this his starting point of the spiral into addiction?

I believe his addiction to opioids, benzoids, and amphetamines started then. I know that he spiraled from that point on. He lost his marriage, he didn't see his son, he bounced from drugs to drugs to drugs. He obtained several DUIs, and time after time he walked away, no offer of help, no sentencing. He bounced, married again. She was addicted to heroin. He bounced again, was in and out of our house. Unfortunately, we always gave him a safe place to land.

She said: "Unfortunately,"—not fortunately but unfortunately—"we always gave him a safe place to land."

The last time I saw him is when I called the police on him. I discovered that him and his girlfriend, with two small children, who had been living in our house for four months were using and selling drugs. I found out he was recently incarcerated for drug traffic and sent to a correctional rehabilitation facility.

Our daughter was an athlete all through school. She received injury after injury, and at 18 started seeing specialists for back pain. That was in 2004. They prescribed opiates. I never saw the addiction coming. She lost her best friend since first grade that year to a drunk driving accident. She went to counseling. More prescriptions.

She appeared fine, gave birth to a beautiful baby boy, and then because of back pain more pain prescriptions were given. I realized she had a problem when she was pregnant with her second child and was stepped down to Vicodin while pregnant.

Vicodin while pregnant.

After his birth, we started her first rehab experience. She returned to the father of her children sober. She relapsed and began snorting heroin.

At this time she was living in Ohio and we were unaware of her relapse. We found out

when her mother-in-law went to court and took her children. That was one of the worst days of all of our lives. We immediately picked her up, brought her back to West Virginia, and into treatment.

Fast forward. Thousands of dollars later on attorneys, doctors, rehab, she returns to Ohio to try to obtain her children. Relapsed. She began shooting heroin and then arrested. We let her sit in jail and picked her up on her release. Charges were dismissed. Back to West Virginia she comes, hospitalized for a week and rehab again.

She has now been in recovery for 13 months. She fell in love with a nice, drug-free man, moved to Ohio to try to obtain custody of her children back, and is six months pregnant. One thing I can say is my daughter was always a good mother. Even while on active addiction, she worked and took care of them.

As you can tell, both of our children became addicted to prescription drugs first. . .

And they tell me this is exactly how it starts. It starts at a very young age. Recreational marijuana, prescription drugs out of your parents' medicine cabinet, taking it to school, being the cool kid in school, sharing those drugs, then you begin using them, then you sell them. This is how it starts, and it leads to obtaining street drugs to feed their addiction. So it goes from occasional to recreational to addiction to feeding that addiction.

This is a condensed version of course. As with any family dealing with addiction, it does not show the tears, the hurt, the financial breakdown put on the family; (we are broke).

Literally and figuratively. She says: I want to thank you for listening.

Doctors keep prescribing pills, and they will tell you that they have had very little training in this area. As they go through all of their medical schools and advanced training, they get very little training on the effects these drugs have on human beings and the addiction.

We took 1 billion pills off the market when we went from 90 days to 30 days of Vicodin and Lortab. We took that many pills off the market. That means 30 days.

I have people in my office or in their families—and I know the Presiding Officer does as well—who will go to the doctor for something where they may need pain relief for 1 or 2 days. Do you know what they get? They automatically get enough pills for 30 days. That is the path of least resistance. It is legal, they can do it, and the doctor will write a 30-day prescription.

We are working on a bill that will be coming to the floor. We need to make a lot of changes to that bill, but most importantly, we need to make sure we have an agency in the Federal Government of the United States of America that is fighting to protect every American. And it is not a business plan that we have to adhere to, not at all. These are good companies. They are legal pharmaceutical companies. They do an awful lot of good. I challenge every one of them that is listening to what we

are talking about right now to give us pain relief without addiction to opioids. Do something. Break through the chemistry or something. It has to be there. We have been able to solve every other epidemic. We have been able to cure epidemics and pandemics, and now we have one that has been ravaging our country for almost 30 years.

I have Samantha's story. She says:

Hello. My name is Samantha Holbrooke.

She wants you to know her name.

I am from Fayette County, WV. I am a 28-year-old female. I have been an addict for the past 6 years. This letter is to explain to you how addiction has affected my life. It is also to express my view on drugs and what it is doing to our society.

I first started drugs when I was 13 years old. I was a recreational marijuana user. My mother was an alcoholic and a drug addict. My father was not in the home or involved in my life.

Unfortunately, that is true for many people around this country.

My mother would allow me to drink with her and go to bars. I was often her designated driver, but I was only 13 years old. I got in my first and only bar fight at 13. It was with a 24-year-old woman. She thought I was coming on to her boyfriend. In reality, we were smoking weed, not trying to hook up.

When I was 19, my oldest sister and mother introduced me to hydrocodone, Ritalin, Xanax, and Percocet. My sister and mother had no income; I did. By getting me on pills, they were able to get free pills by charging me to get them for them. By the time I was 22, I think I was snorting Oxycodone.

Oxycodone is made in a single source, which is a powder form that is compressed. They would break it down, crush it, and snort it to get the quicker high.

That became my drug of choice. I eventually got in with a doctor who was pretty much a pill mill.

We know we have them all over this country.

He wrote me a prescription for Xanax and Oxycodone. I got even more strung out on those two.

As a result of using drugs, I now have memory problems, concentration problems, and the list goes on and on. I lost about 30 pounds. I lost my job. I lost my home. I lost my child. I lost my fiancé to suicide. He was drunk when he shot himself in the head. I believe that had he not been drinking, he wouldn't have taken his own life.

As a result of these life-changing events, I became severely depressed. I then took the wrong road and began to use drugs intravenously. I started lying and stealing. This led me to gain two felony charges and several other misdemeanors. I went to jail and prison and spent 2½ years locked up. I am now on DRC because I am on parole and had a relapse, which led to several bad decisions, and now I am paying the consequences.

I am now in recovery. I am a recovering addict. I joined Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous. The classes and programming in prison helped me to think better. I now analyze a situation before making a decision.

This is my story. Prescription drugs and all drugs have ruined a large percentage of the citizens of West Virginia's lives. I am now in full control of my life again, thank the Lord.

This story is anonymous, but they wanted to share it with us.

I grew up in a nice home. My grandfather was a pastor. My dad grew up in church. My family went to church every Sunday. We had a nice house. We had nice cars. My mom didn't have to work, and my dad took very good care of us.

My dad had surgery, a common surgery to remove several large veins in his legs. This is where his addiction began. This is where he found his unlimited supply of numbness.

I was in middle school, and this is when I remember things being different. Things were changing. My dad stayed out with his friends a lot. He wasn't home for dinner anymore. When he was home, he was lying down sleepy and always said silly things. I would stay up late at night until he would get home, only to hear my mom and dad fighting, screaming, and my mom crying. Eventually I hated to hear the garage door open because I didn't want him to come home. Before my dad would take me to school, standing in his business suit with his briefcase, he would scarf down pills out of a little orange bottle. He would tip it back like he was eating a box of Nerds. I didn't know any better. My naive, my innocent mind didn't know what was happening. I couldn't comprehend that a doctor could be his drug dealer!

They couldn't comprehend that because we have been taught to trust doctors.

Things got worse. I started finding bottles of liquor and cans of beer hidden, and I passed it off. The 3 empty beers in the back of his company car: Oh, they must be his "friends". No one in our family drinks, definitely not my dad.

I remember whole vacations, weekend trips, and afternoons ruined by his addiction. Mad fits of rage until one day my mom stood up and couldn't take it anymore. My dad got the help he needed, but how did he get the help? In hiding, in private—a local rehab facility. He was on a business trip. Our culture has stigmatized a group of people—a group of people who transcend race, status, gender—at the expense of their lives.

This is a hidden killer. Drug abuse and drug addiction are hidden killers. So many of us have people in our families or close friends who don't want to talk about it. They are ashamed, and so it gets covered up and hidden away. As a result, we don't bring people out, let them know the effects, and cure them.

She says:

My dad was hurting. No, not from the wounds on his legs when he had his surgery but from depression and bipolar disorder. These are the roots of his addiction. They go hand in hand. When will we see this? When will we stop seeing addicts as a problem and see them as human beings and hurting?

For the last 20 to 30 years, I have been in public life, and the Presiding Officer has been in public life a good bit. I always thought that anybody who fools with drugs is a criminal and should be put in jail. We have done that, and it hasn't solved a thing. It has gotten a lot worse. We have to rethink this issue. This is not a crime.

Addiction is basically an illness. It needs to have a cure, and treatment is that cure. We have to face that. Senate Republicans and Democrats are looking at how to fix the sentencing guidelines, and I think it is encouraging and healthy for us to have these discussions.

She says:

Is it a selfish sickness? Of course it is. But how can we help them see the light when we push them aside? Because "they asked for it?" Just like a lady with skin cancer "asked for it" because she laid in a tanning bed? What if we treated addicts with the same compassion that we treat cancer patients?

My father has been clean for almost a decade, and the demons of his addiction still haunt us all. No, we weren't homeless, nor did we have to face a death to be completely broken by this horrible epidemic, but I had a zombie for a father for my adolescence. I missed my childhood, years that we can never get back, memories that will never be erased, all because of a little orange pill bottle chased and hidden with a brown paper bag.

Luckily, my story ends with a happy ending. I still have my dad. My story hasn't ended up the way so many do every day, like my two friends who didn't get help in time and passed away.

I have stories from all over the country, and they are pathetic. I have a couple more I can read from West Virginia. I will go to different States.

This is Erica's story. She says:

Hello, My name is Erica and I am an addict. And I say that with great pride as I celebrated 10 years of recovery in November of 2015.

I began using drugs here in West Virginia at the ripe age of 13.

Thirteen seems to be that magic—adolescence. We are coming into adolescence. We are willing to experiment. We think we are invincible. We think nothing can harm us.

Prescription drugs were easily accessible at that age and opened the door to 11 years of anguish, desperation, jails, and dirty needles. I came from a stable, drug- and alcohol-free home, but I was able to gain access to prescription drugs from my peers and my local middle school and high school on a daily basis.

As my disease progressed, I dropped out of high school my freshman year and continued to put myself and family through years of pain and suffering. I attempted drug replacement therapy to control my opioid addiction, but that was only a temporary solution, and I eventually returned to drugs.

Finally, I found myself in the court system and facing felony drug charges. It was then that I was able to find freedom through a 12-step fellowship.

Today I can say I am a cum laude graduate of Marshall University, fully employed, homeowner, wife, and the mother of two wonderful West Virginia boys.

I pray my children don't follow the path that, not only myself, but many of my West Virginians fall into. The disease of addiction is progressive and fatal if not treated or prevented.

Here in West Virginia, we are leading the Nation in drug overdoses. And where I live in Cabell County, we have had over 900 overdoses in just the year of 2015.

As a mother, I must trust our leaders to make responsible choices to help us seek solutions, gain back our communities, and save our children from following the same deadly path.

I know the FDA was so proud that they came out with some new guidelines, and they said now they are going to start paying attention to the advisory committees. They didn't say they would adhere to their recommendations; they would just start paying attention to them. Also, the CDC—the Centers for Disease Control—put out some guidelines of how we should be prescribing, the knowledge we should have, how we should be administering, and what we should be doing to curb this drug abuse. And guess which agency fought against that and put it on delay? The FDA.

The only thing I ask all of my colleagues to do is to please consider—just send a message with the vote you make tomorrow. It is not about the doctor at all. It is not about the person before us. It is about getting an advocate who will make a real change and make sure we fight this war.

This story is another anonymous story:

My brother is in his early 20s and was hired at the local plant that employs the majority of the county. He was injured on the job, saw his doctor, and was prescribed Lortab long term.

Lortab, as I said before, is a schedule III, 90 days. You can keep calling it in, calling it in, and calling it in.

As the effects from this started to wane, he was prescribed Xanax, Klonopin, and a variety of other prescription medicines. He then lost his good-paying job but found other work at a lower pay after almost a year of unemployment.

This prescription med addiction continued for years, and once laws finally cracked down on prescribing narcotics, it left him unable to get all the medicines he had previously been prescribed. Once it became too expensive to buy them on the street, he turned to heroin.

My fun-loving brother who was always at family functions, loved to be around his nieces and nephews, totally disappeared. I suspected that something more serious was going on, but he wouldn't answer calls or texts.

In August, I hadn't seen him in several months. We have always been close. This was very unusual. I sent him a novel of a text since he wouldn't take my phone calls confronting him over the rumors that I had heard of his heroin use. He denied it.

A few short weeks later, I got a call from my mother that he was transported to the hospital by ambulance but discharged a few hours later for chest pain. He later told us he had gotten a bad batch of heroin and was certain he was dying.

He told the EMS he had used that morning, as well as hospital staff. I still to this day don't understand how someone can come in suffering from an overdose and be discharged a few hours later.

People don't have knowledge. They are not being trained in this horrible epidemic that we have in this country.

NOTHING was mentioned to him about treatment or rehab and he was treated as a

lesser person. I was worried before, but after this was in a constant state of fear that I would get a call that my 31-year-old brother was dead.

In October, he called me to tell me yes he was a heroin addict, but a new treatment center had opened near his home and he wanted to get clean. He asked if I would go with him, and I said of course yes.

His insurance wouldn't cover a dime of this treatment. It would be all out of his pocket at \$100 a day plus the cost of meds. For someone working at a \$30,000 or less a year job, paying for housing, utilities, food (he never did receive public assistance).—

He was too proud for that—

this cost was more than he could do.

Again I told him I would be there and pay for whatever he couldn't. I convinced him he needed more of a support system than just me and he finally told our parents. We were raised in church and came from a large religious family. He was so ashamed of what he had become he didn't want the family to know and the majority of them still don't know to this day.

I am hoping, as this letter was written anonymously, eventually he will share this with the family, maybe preventing other members from going down this road.

He will tell them when he is ready. My mom and I went with him to his first appointment at the suboxone clinic, and one of us has been at every appointment since. It is wonderful—he has a session with a psychiatrist at every visit.

It's more than prescribing meds. They are doing the counseling to make sure their patients get clean. I am proud to say that after only four months, not only is he clean but he has weaned off the suboxone.

He still goes for counseling and has the nurse's cell that he can call 24 hours a day if he's having a hard day. In the future he wants to tell his story and help others facing the same crisis.

Madam President, I have been reading stories of people addicted all over the State of West Virginia. I have stories from your State also, Madam President. I would like to read that for you.

This is in New Hampshire—Sandown, NH. This is Kathleen's story. I am sure she has sent you the same copy she sent me. She wants her name to be known.

My name is Kathleen Stephens. I am a 56 year old RN, BSN, from Sandown, NH. I am currently the Director of Clinical Service at a nationwide hospice company. My story is much like thousands of others out there, pretty average, fairly normal. I have two children; a 33-year-old son who graduated with a degree in Mathematics from Boston University and a 31-year-old daughter who graduated with a psychology degree from Assumption College. I myself have a Bachelor of Science and Nursing degree and my children's father a Bachelor's degree in business from Wharton School of Business in PA. I give you this detailed background for to you see that we are a well educated and successful family. We are a white, mid to upper middle class who have always lived in a beautiful neighborhood surrounded by loving families whose children played outside, joined pee-wee soccer, little league, softball, basketball and girl scouts to name but a few. We were the home in the neighborhood where

all the children loved to play. We took our children to drive in movies, camping, the beach, museums and always visited their grandparents. We were normal, that's all, or what we perceived was normal.

When speaking with our children now, they both recount wonderful childhoods and deem themselves "lucky." Our house was filled with love. I hugged my kids all the time, never hesitated to demonstrate to or tell them how much I loved them. They had grandparents who were always around, who also demonstrated love for them. About 5 years ago, my daughter, and her boyfriend, an Intern at Tufts Medical School decided, after being together for 2 years that they would move to Sacramento. I was devastated inside but encouraged my daughter to follow her heart. Over the subsequent years, our communications went from daily to weekly to scattered. Each conversation seemed more distant than the last. We saw her an average of twice a year; most significantly, when we paid her expenses to come home for Christmas. Her boyfriend never came; he distanced himself from us almost immediately.

I'm sure at this point you know the story. About 18 months ago I finally confronted my daughter asking what was wrong, seeing her go from a loving daughter to a distant person I no longer knew. Over the previous few years, she turned into a virtual stranger. I told her I loved her no matter what and that I would be there for her. At that time she denied any issue. A few weeks later she was in the hospital and called me. Apparently, she had hit bottom. She confided that she was a heroin addict. I was more than shocked. She had been in a substance free dorm in college, hated drinking, drugs and was pretty straight laced overall. I kept myself in check saying that no matter what I would support her, asked her to come home so we could help her. She confided that it started with a prescription for opioids that her boyfriend had shared with her. He was given one for back pain years before, got hooked and decided she might just like it.

So, amazingly she did come home, but she went back a few months later. She then returned to get clean again and went back a few months later. She overdosed multiple times, of which I knew nothing until recently. Her boyfriend gave her IV heroin while she was in the hospital being treated for pneumonia to keep her habit going. He was the one, I found out later, that he shot her up because she hated doing it. He had developed a hold on her that was a bond of heroin high. I knew the drug had gotten her when, due to the stress of everything happening, I ended up in the hospital ruling out a heart attack. She drove me there, dropped me off and went to get high (I found out later). I ended up being fine, stress of course, and she ended up going back home yet again. She stayed clean after going into a rehab, which kicked her out after 8 days because her insurance was declined. She then attended NA—

Narcotics Anonymous—

meetings almost daily and got a job that she loved. In the meantime, her boyfriend was found out through a "random" drug test and suspended. She was clean for 4 months, the happiest four months of my life. We spoke every few days, or texted. Her voice was truly hers again . . . her laughter, her expressions, her humor. I felt she was finally back with us. She had left her boyfriend and went into a sober living home. Life was good and I was so grateful to have my daughter, my best friend, back.

About 3 months into her sobriety she decided to reach out and try to get her boy-

friend sober as well, the beginning of the end. At exactly month 4 she went to his house and he had a "surprise" for her. She was new in her sobriety, just once she said, and she fell back down the rabbit hole. I knew when she didn't return my calls or texts that it was bad. But finally she responded; she was back into it again, but she'd get out she promised.

The next 8 months were a few weeks clean then back into drugs again. I did not send her money. Honestly, she never asked. She knew I'd never support her habit. Around Thanksgiving 2015 she had had it. She called me and said she wanted to get back into rehab and leave her boyfriend permanently. Her life was no longer worth living. Weeks of trying to get her into rehab went unsuccessfully when we finally found Clean and Sober in Sacramento. At that point she was clean two weeks, had slowly packed up or sold her belongings and was ready for the break. But she had to sneak out to get away from her very controlling, manipulative partner; and she did.

The happy part: She is today 60 days sober. She has a new job (She had been fired from the other one), which she loves. She blocked her boyfriend from her phone, her email and her facebook. She is the daughter, once again, that I know and love, but I love her regardless of the disease of addiction. Love the addict, hate the disease. And for right now I thank God, pray a lot, and take it one day at a time.

I have another one here I want to share with you. The thing I wanted to share, Madam President, is this: My State and your State have probably been hit as hard as any two States in the country. We have people coming to us all the time. We are fighting every way we can. We are introducing pieces of legislation. We are not worrying about who is Republican or Democrat. How can we help Americans—the beautiful people in New Hampshire, the wonderful people in West Virginia, who are facing more deaths, more disease, more destruction to the family?

I want to share with you that when I first got elected—Senator Byrd had died in 2010. I was Governor of the State of West Virginia. I had to make a decision. I thought maybe I could come to Washington and help with the experiences I had and what I had seen in my State and times. We had challenges.

After I was elected to the Senate, I had gone back to Oceana, WV. At that time it had been called "Oxyana" because drug use was so rampant in this beautiful town. I remembered this town because when I was a freshman in college, my roommate was from this town. It was the most beautiful town I had been in. They had everything. What a privilege it would have been to grow up in this beautiful town, but I could see many years later it was not the town I knew or remembered in my mind. I went to the middle school. These were all children in fifth to eighth grade. I tried to give pep talks. I wanted to get them involved and tell them how good they could be, how much we are counting on them, what they need to get a good education and

contribute something back to society, and how fortunate and lucky they are to be in this little town.

After I finished speaking—they were attentive and cooperative—there was a group of them. They asked: Can we talk to you privately? I will never forget this. These were 12- and 13-year-old boys and girls. There had to be six or seven of them. I went in the back room and sat at a table. They started talking and telling me their stories. These were stories they had watched and were telling me. This was the first time I had ever heard from a child up close and personal who said: My dad worked at the mines. He had a back problem. He got hurt. They kept giving him pills. We lost our house. Mom and dad were fighting. They got divorced. We lost everything. I've got nothing now. My grandparents were watching me while I was trying to take care of us. My dad is an addict.

I heard these stories from these five kids. They were all pleading.

Now fast forward to the year 2015. I go back to the same school. These kids that were 12 years old are now seniors in high school. The same group wants to talk to me. They had lived a clean life, but I think about what they have gone through and what they have seen. Then I sit down with another group of 12- and 13-year-olds from the same area. They are telling me stories about how they are watching their lives before them when they watch a boyfriend or a stepfather because the family had broken apart, the mother remarried or whatever, and the person that she is with is a drug addict. This little child watches her mother get shot up and killed because of the drugs the boyfriend shoots into the mother. Can you imagine a 12- or 13-year-old having to live with this and see this happen in their home?

What we are asking is simply for the Food and Drug Administration to change, to be the watchdog to help us. They are supposed to protect us. They don't say: I did my job. The pharmaceutical company told me they made this drug, and this is the way it was made. This is what it was supposed to do. We checked it out. Everything is fine; leave it on the market.

You are not looking at the welfare of the people. You know what it does. You know it is addictive. We have no treatment centers. We are doing nothing to treat this. We are not challenging these pharmaceutical companies who are good companies. They do a lot of good and put a lot of products out there that are very good, but they are bringing these opiates on the market quicker than ever before, more powerful than ever before, and they know what is going to happen.

I am challenging all of them. I think the FDA should challenge them. We are not going to approve more opiates. We are not going to let you bring on the

market stronger opiates that we know are addictive and will ruin people's lives. If they will do that and challenge these companies to come out with new research and development that can scientifically give us relief needed for people who have chronic pain without making them addicts who lose their lives—we should be able to do that in this great country. I am going to read you a story from Kentucky, my next door neighbor, the majority leader's home—Kentucky and West Virginia. This is Emily from Louisville, KY.

My name is Emily Walden. I am a mother who lost my 21-year-old son to a drug overdose in 2012. My son TJ came from a good family, was a member of the Kentucky National Guard and the most respectful young man you could have ever met. TJ made an initial poor decision that led to an addiction to the drug Opana; he had unlimited access to this drug during that time. TJ did not want to die from this. He tried very hard to overcome his addiction and I tried very hard to save his life. I started researching the drug Opana about five years ago and would like to share with you what I have learned that illustrates the need for changes to our FDA policies and approval processes for all opioid drugs.

The drug Opana contains the opioid Oxycodone which was removed from the market in 1979 due to the overdose deaths and addiction this drug was causing across our country.

In 2002, the FDA started holding IMPACT meetings every year allowing pharmaceutical companies to pay money to be included in discussions and changes to clinical trials, design.

We call that pay to play—the impact it has because they are able to go to these types of settings and get absolute front row seats with the people they are trying to persuade to take another look at these drugs that might have been taken off the market because they were deemed too dangerous. This is allowed to go on. It has been going on for far too long, and the FDA is part of it. This is part of the change that needs to be made and made immediately.

Endo Pharmaceuticals, the manufacturer of Opana, attended each one of these “pay-to-play” meetings.

In 2003, Endo Pharmaceuticals brought the drug Opana to the FDA for approval and was denied due to the overdoses that occurred during the clinical trials.

In 2006, Endo Pharmaceuticals again brought the drug Opana to the FDA for approval but this time using new clinical trial that applied a modified process, called “Enriched Enrollment,” which removed patients with preexisting opiate sensitivities from the trial. The Enriched Enrollment process skews results and seriously underestimates risks associated with the proposed drug involved in the clinical trial. In addition, the FDA ignored their own review guidance by bypassing their advisory committee and approved Opana for moderate to severe pain.

At the time Opana was approved, our country was already experiencing an explosion of overdose deaths and addiction from the over-prescribing and misrepresentation of the safety of opiates. In addition to causing thousands of deaths and addiction, the approved use of Opana has now been directly implicated in an outbreak of Hepatitis C and HIV cases in the State of Indiana.

The FDA has continued to use Enriched Enrollment—

Or pay to play—

to approve new opiates and override or bypass altogether their advisory committee for new opiate approvals and for new uses of opiates further contributing to the overdose deaths and addiction. These process changes must stop.

The year after my son died I traveled to Washington DC for the first time in my life and was very fortunate to be able to meet with the then Senate Minority Leader—

Now Senate majority leader—

Senator McConnell, the next year I had nine meetings which included a meeting with then acting Director Botticelli of ONDCP, DEA Administrator Michelle Leonhart and seven meetings with Senator's staff. In 2015 I had thirteen meetings scheduled. I am not going away! We need change to curb this horrible epidemic that started with prescribed opiates and the mistakes that were made need to be corrected.

How many people have to die? How many more people have to become addicted? The FDA is sending the wrong message to physicians by continuing to approve opioids during the worst drug epidemic our country has ever faced.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. AYOTTE). The Senator's postcloture time has expired.

Mr. MANCHIN. I ask unanimous consent to continue.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANCHIN. Thank you, Madam President.

The FDA is supposed to be protecting public health and yet over 200,000 people have died and they have failed to put appropriate restrictions on these dangerous drugs to prevent overdose deaths. I want to know why there is one death from something such as ecoli and every head of lettuce is pulled from the shelves in ten different states but opioids have killed thousands of people and they are considered safe and effective? How can that be?

When is the FDA going to put human life before the paychecks of Big Pharma? What will it take? A million deaths? We need an FDA commissioner that will protect the citizens of this country that is willing to take the overall best interest of public safety into consideration and not allow the pharmaceutical companies to have him in their back pockets. My son TJ had a lifelong dream of joining the military and fighting for his country. He would have given his life to protect and serve. He was one of the most patriotic young men and his country failed him. Please do the right thing. Please do not let one more mother get a knock on her door saying their child is gone and that they will never [ever] come home [again]. There is no greater pain than burying your child! My son, my precious child with the most beautiful blue eyes, caring and loving heart, died in part by the greed of big Pharma and—

Most importantly—

the carelessness of the FDA. It is time for change!

Another story from Kentucky. This is in Northern Kentucky and this is Kimberly's story.

My name is Kimberly Wright. I am a [mother from Northern Kentucky] who works in the trenches to save the lives of people in my Community. NKY was hit by a pill epidemic around 2000. That pill epidemic

has now turned into a Heroin Epidemic. Since 2013 the death toll continues to climb. In 2015 we have had 1,168 overdose reverses. We still await the number of deaths. Our entire system is on the verge of collapse—our Courts, Police, Children's Services, Jails. Our jails currently have 99% Heroin and Pill cases housed in the jails. Our Treatment system is seriously strained with not 1 new bed added in the last 10 years since this epidemic started. We are in a War in [Northern Kentucky]. Every day we wait to see how many died that day. We have people getting in their cars driving high on pills and Heroin wrecking into innocent people and killing them. This is the United States of America and this is a shame. We allow the FDA and Big Pharma to profit off the deaths of an entire generation of young people. We are in effect losing 2 jumbo jets full of kids every day in America due to Pills and Heroin. We need help. We are begging for help to stop this madness. Our American families are losing our children at an alarming rate to overprescribing Drs and Big Pharma. We beg you, please help us stop this.

I lost my sister Alicia Cook on October 26, 2010, to an overdose. Alicia was a nurse with 2 young daughters. This Epidemic has no boundaries and it's in every community in the Country. Northern Kentucky has the highest rates of HEPC, surpassing the National Level, due to heroin and pills being injected. We have a high rate of homeless children due to their parents being dead or drug addicted with no end in sight. We have 52% of grandparents raising their grandchildren due to death and addiction. This is a nightmare for parents. When our children were born we could have never imagined this would be our life. You don't sleep at night from the anxiety of wondering if you are the next parent to get that call that your child has overdosed. It's like being in a constant panic attack. It's not normal to grieve the loss of a child who is alive, for they are truly lost. I [know lots of] parents who have lost their child and I can't imagine their pain and grief. I grieve for my addicted 26-year-old daughter who is in the fight of her life [because of] her Addiction. I watch her destroying herself every day. I don't want to join the mothers who have lost their child to this Epidemic. I know how I suffer now and I just can't go there. I will continue to fight for my community. Will you [please] join me?

That is Arlene's story.

Indiana is one of the States that has been hit so hard also. This is Danielle's story from Southern Indiana.

My name is Danielle McCowan. I live in southern Indiana and work as a server. About 2 and a half years ago a customer by the name of Josh Harvey left me his number. At the time he told me he was living in Chicago for school. Little did I know he was in rehab there. Granted, I didn't know about his addiction for over a year because we hadn't stayed in constant contact. Over a year or so ago I found out about his heroin addiction. He still told me little about it. I do know it started out with prescription pills and later went to heroin when the pills became harder to get. He served a month in jail in Michigan for the entire month of this past July over a heroin related charge. He came home immediately after and overdosed that same weekend. Luckily, his dad saved him that time. Now he got enrolled in college and was going to an outpatient program doing better. Or so we all thought. School let out for break and I guess it all went downhill. He came to me on November the 4th telling me he had used

a couple of times and wanted my advice. I suggested an in-patient program. He went to Wellstone after he left my house. He sat for several hours and finally was given a room. I went and checked on him 2 different times while he waited to make sure he was there. Thursday I didn't receive any calls. Friday nothing either. Then Saturday morning, the 7th of November, his mother called me to break my heart. He had passed away that Friday, the 6th, over in Louisville and didn't know who to contact until that Saturday morning, I guess. He had checked himself out of Wellstone, broke into his house, took his Xbox which he later either pawned or traded for heroin. Never in a million years did I think I'd become close to anybody addicted to heroin. It doesn't discriminate. It can get ahold of any and everybody. Never in my life have I been so depressed or heartbroken. All I want is his story shared. He was my happy ending gone away too soon.

They continue. They continue on, these stories, the heartaches and the lives destroyed, lives changed. Few too many lives are saved.

Massachusetts. As the Presiding Officer knows, Senator MARKEY has been working with me very closely and all of us on this horrible epidemic that we have. This is Sara's story. She is from Amherst, MA.

My nuclear family is middle class or the working poor, but it is blended in that I was raised by my mother and step-dad, but my bio father's side of the family would be considered well-off. Heroin first came to my radar after my brother Donny became addicted to pain pills after surgery, and heroin followed suit after RX's stopped. Then it seemed like it was everywhere around me: my nephew, my niece. Then we lost my cousin in Cory, who passed in a sober house for his addiction to alcohol, along with a needle and an empty bag next to him. Cory is an example of a young man institutionalized by multiple incarcerations and just when he would try to lift himself up, in he would go again. He was trying to get clean for his girlfriend and unborn child when he passed away, and he was happy, thinking he was getting better. Living with someone close who struggles and then multiply that by two, and adolescence, young adulthood mixed in, and you have my descent as an empathetic aunt who felt powerless to change anything.

Then the bottom dropped out. My cousin, John Ahern, passed at the end of August after a long period of recovery alone in the woods. It didn't matter he came from privilege or was the nicest person I had ever known in my life for so long. He leaves behind three loving sons. They both couldn't access the help they needed at various stages, including recovery, and died alone.

It is my mission to stand up for them and the young people like my niece who began her struggle at 14, and now approaching 18 has some clean time. There are no support programs in my community for this age group, and especially for non-White young people like my niece and nephew. They are both of Latino descent. Please do something.

People are begging us everywhere in this country to help them, and basically it starts with treating this as an illness and not as a crime. It starts also with having clinics, having basic places where we can serve them and help them get clean. They cannot do it by themselves, and they are the first to

tell you. The stories I am reading here exemplify that so well.

I have a Florida story here, and Florida has also been ravaged. Florida was a problem that we had in West Virginia because of the pill mills there. People would take the bus down or they could take a cheap flight down to Florida, buy all the pills they could and come back. Florida has been very helpful in the last years trying to stop the pill epidemic.

This is Janet from Fort Lauderdale.

Dear Senator Manchin. I appreciate you taking the time to stop the appointment of Dr. Califf from becoming the FDA commissioner. I founded STOPPnow—Stop the Organized Pill Pushers now—due to all the drug-addicted babies I was caring for as a neonatal intensive care nurse at a children's hospital in Broward County, FL. We started holding protests in front of the 150 pill mills that were in Broward County alone. Many parents came out to protest with us. Parents from all over the country contacted us as well. Too many parents are crying themselves to sleep over the loss of their child.

At first, there were no consequences for either the clinic owner or the doctor. Then they started arresting the doctors for money laundering. Our State's attorney has called the doctors drug dealers in white coats. The Board of Medicine is not protecting the public by allowing high-prescribing doctors to keep their license. Therefore, the plight of the drug-addicted babies and the devastation to the families continues to rise. When one clinic owner was arrested, he was earning \$150,000 a day.

I repeat, \$150,000 a day.

Not one doctor in that clinic to date has lost his license or his practice.

We only have the judicial system helping to alleviate this in Florida. Doctors are now being charged with first-degree murder. It would be kinder for a doctor to lose his license than to sit in a courtroom at their own murder trial.

We have been unsuccessful in our efforts for lawmakers to mandate that prescribers use the prescription drug monitoring program in Florida. Yet in this environment, there is a bill passing through the committees allowing nurse practitioners and physician assistants to prescribe narcotics without a doctor signing off on the order. I would support this bill if they included the mandate. And, of course, the FDA approved that children as young as 11 years old can be prescribed OxyContin. We definitely need an investigation.

Madam President, as you can see, these are problems that we have all over the country. This is not just your State and not just my State. I know it is hard. They say we need someone in there, so let's just go ahead and confirm Dr. Califf. Dr. Califf is an honorable man. He is still there. He is going to be there. He has been there for 1 year. In the 1 year that he has been there, we have basically put more opiate drugs on the market without even going through a clinical overview. If that change were going to come, it would have come by now. I am sure he could have had input, and I would hope that he would.

Dr. Califf has called a lot of our colleagues and said that these changes

will be coming. This Senator will tell you the changes they recommended when they said they were going to make changes. They said: We are going to make sure that we are going to start listening to our staff and people who are reviewing these drugs.

They are going to listen to them, but there is no mandate that they will have to follow.

This Senator has a piece of legislation that the Presiding Officer coauthored, and I appreciate that very much. Basically what we are saying is this: When you have your advisory committee—and every drug must go through an advisory committee's opinion, and if they recommend as they did with Zohydro to not let it go on the market, that cannot be bypassed, neglected, or pushed aside. Our bill would basically state that they must bring it to the people's representatives in Congress and state why it is so very important for them to bring this new high-powered drug to the market—as if we don't have enough.

The United States has 5 percent of the world's population but consumes 80 percent of these addictive opiate drugs. Something is wrong. Something must change.

I thank the Presiding Officer for allowing me to be able to read the letters of people who have been affected by this all over this great country in all of our States. I know we feel the pain, and we are going to try to make these changes and make sure this agency will do what it is supposed to do.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, first of all, I want to take a moment to honor the life and service of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia.

Justice Scalia was a dedicated public servant who gave so many years to our courts and our country. He and I didn't agree on every issue, but his intellect, passion, and commitment were unquestionable. I know he will be missed, and the thoughts and prayers of Washington State families go out to his family.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Madam President, people across the country are now looking at what is happening here in Congress, and they are frustrated. They look at the many challenges we face as a Nation, and they want Democrats and Republicans to work together to tackle them to make sure our government is functioning and that it is working for all of our families, not just the wealthy and few.

Madam President, I share that frustration. We have been able to get things done when Democrats and Republicans work together to break

through the gridlock. That shouldn't end just because it is an election year. It certainly should not end when it comes to one of our most important roles here in the Senate, working with the President to evaluate and confirm judges for the highest court in our land.

The Supreme Court plays such an important role in protecting the rights, liberties, and responsibilities of all Americans. Over the years the Court has made decisions that have moved our country in the right direction, and it has made decisions that have set us back. When the Court can do its work, it offers certainty to people across the country when it comes to their rights as workers or as patients or as consumers or as women or as citizens. At its best, it helps our judicial system rise above politics, above partisanship, and above the spats and sniping of the moment. In order to do that, the Court must have a full bench. It cannot have vacancies leading to potential deadlocks at every turn.

That is why I was so disappointed that hours after Justice Scalia passed away, Republican leaders jumped out of the gate to say they would not allow the vacancy to be filled while President Obama was still in office. Right away—before the Nation had a chance to take in and mourn the loss of a Supreme Court Justice, a man who seriously believed in the Constitution—Republican leaders injected politics and partisanship into a process that should be about our obligations as Americans.

The Constitution is very clear. Let me take a moment to read from it directly.

In article II, which clearly defines the powers of the President, section 2 states that “he shall nominate and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court and all other Officers of the United States.”

Madam President, this could not be more explicit. The President “shall nominate” and shall appoint with “the Advice and Consent of the Senate”—not shall nominate in the first 3 years, not shall nominate unless the Senate leadership wants to keep the seat open for a while. The President “shall nominate.” That is his responsibility.

Then it is our responsibility in the Senate to consider, advise, and ultimately help make sure that the vacancy is filled with a qualified person. Of course, the Senate has the right to weigh in with our advice and consent. It is our job to vet nominees sent to us by the President, to make sure they are qualified for the job, and to determine if they meet the basic standards of honesty, ethics, qualifications, and fairness. Personally, this Senator will want to evaluate if they will be independent, evenhanded in deciding cases, and if they will uphold our rights and

liberties, including the critical right to privacy.

Republican leaders are not objecting to a person; they are objecting to this President being allowed to do his job. That is not advice and consent; it is politicize and obstruct.

Republicans say there is a precedent to stall on Supreme Court nominations in the last year of a President's term. That is not true. President Reagan had Justice Kennedy confirmed with a unanimous vote in a Democratic Senate in his last year in office.

Since 1975, the average number of days from nomination to final Senate vote is about 70 days. So this kind of obstruction and partisanship is absolutely wrong. People across the country will not stand for it, and I hope our Republican leaders will back down and do the right thing because evaluating and confirming Supreme Court Justices is one of the most important roles we have in the U.S. Senate.

In fact, it is this issue that actually pushed me to run for the Senate in the first place. Back in 1991 I was a State senator, a former school board member, a mom. Like so many people at that time, I watched the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings. For days I watched in frustration.

I couldn't believe this nominee wasn't pushed on the issues that I and so many others thought were so important to our country. I didn't feel the Members on that committee represented the full spectrum of perspectives, and I decided then and there to run for the U.S. Senate to give Washington State families a voice.

Now, as a U.S. Senator, I want my questions answered. I want to make sure my constituents have a seat at the table and I get to push nominees for the highest Court in the land on the issues I care about most, but I can't do that if Republicans play election-year politics and don't even allow us to have that debate. The American people will not have a voice, the Court will be dysfunctional for a year longer, and Republicans will have politicized a process that should be above this sort of petty partisanship.

Many Republicans may not want to hear this, but Barack Obama is still President Obama for almost a full year more. This Senator is hopeful that Republicans will step back from this very dangerous and very partisan path they are on and work with us to consider and confirm a nominee in a reasonable timeframe.

Families across the country deserve to have a functioning Supreme Court and a Congress that works well enough to allow this to happen.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here now for the 128th time to urge that we wake up to the ugly changes that carbon pollution is wreaking on our climate. It is happening all around us, and it is happening right now, not in some far-off future.

As humans we are terrestrial beings. We live on the land. So naturally we pay more attention to the experience where we live—things such as increasing average temperatures on the land and changes in extreme weather when it hits the land. We don't so much pay attention to what is happening in our warming and acidifying oceans.

The oceans are a big deal in climate change. For decades the oceans have absorbed more than 90 percent of the excess heat trapped in the atmosphere by greenhouse gas emissions. Of all the different places the excess heat goes, 93 percent is into the oceans. What we see in the atmosphere—the temperature changes we have already measured, the changes we are seeing in our habitat and what is happening to the western forest—all of that is less than the remaining 7 percent.

A study published in the journal *Nature Climate Change* found that the oceans have absorbed as much energy just since 1997 as they had in the preceding 130 years—as much in 20 years, less than 20 years, as they had in the preceding 130 years.

According to an Associated Press write-up of the study's findings, “Since 1997, Earth's oceans have absorbed man-made heat energy equivalent to a Hiroshima-style bomb being exploded every second for 75 straight years.” That is the energy load of heat that has gone into our oceans—a Hiroshima-style bomb exploded every second for 75 straight years. What does all that excess energy mean for the oceans? It means that sea levels are rising, in part due to melting glaciers but also because of expanding ocean water. It is basic physics, explained by the principle of thermal expansion. When the ocean warms, it expands. It can't go down, so it comes up along our shores.

We have measured sea level rise in Rhode Island since 1930. Since then, the water level is up nearly 10 inches at the tide gauge at Naval Station Newport, and rates of sea level rise are on the increase worldwide. Since 1993, global sea level has risen at a rate approximately double the average rate observed through the 20th century. It is accelerating.

Current forecasts confirm that if we do nothing to curb greenhouse gas emissions over the next decades, the oceans could rise as much as 3 or 4 feet by 2100. Our State coastal management agency predicts that we could see as much as 7 feet of sea level rise in the Ocean State, in Rhode Island, by the end of the century. I hope my colleagues understand that when I come to do this, I am deadly serious about things that are predicted to happen in my State.

This week, the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences reported that global sea levels are rising at their fastest rate in nearly 3,000 years. That study also estimates that about half of the 20th century sea level rise would not have occurred without global warming.

The lead author, Dr. Robert Kopp, an earth scientist at Rutgers University, explained in the New York Times:

Physics tells us that sea-level change and temperature change should go hand-in-hand. This new geological record confirms it.

Sea level rise matters to my constituents and to all coastal communities. A related study, led by Dr. Robert Strauss, found that approximately three-quarters of the tidal flood days now occurring in towns along the east coast are a result of the rise in sea level caused by human emissions. For example, looking at tide gauge data, 32 flood days were recorded in the decade from 1955 to 1964 at Annapolis, MD, and 34 flood days were recorded in that same period for Charleston, SC. In one decade, there were 32 flood days in Annapolis and 34 flood days in Charleston. Scroll forward to the decade 2005 to 2014, and the number of flood days in Annapolis jumps to 394 from 32—in one decade—and 219 flood days were recorded in Charleston.

Sea level rise brings coastal erosion, and it brings saltwater inundation of coastal marshes and habitats. It amplifies the effects of storm surge and flooding as storms ride ashore on higher seas. It changes flood zones and affects flood insurance for homeowners. These are real problems, and they are serious problems.

Dr. Strauss explains in a New York Times article this week:

It's not the tide. It's not the wind. It's us.

The main culprit is carbon dioxide building up in the atmosphere, which again in 2015 reached new record levels. To put a little context on this, for as long as human beings have inhabited planet Earth, we have existed safely in a range between 170 and 300 parts per million of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Unfortunately, we broke beyond 300 parts per million early last century, and we haven't looked back. We have now exceeded 400 parts per million.

Among its harms, this excess carbon dioxide has a particularly damaging chemical effect on our oceans. Oceans, in addition to absorbing 90 percent of

the heat, I pointed out, are absorbing about 30 percent of the carbon dioxide—it goes right into the oceans—roughly 600 gigatons since preindustrial times. As all that carbon is absorbed into the oceans, it changes the oceans' chemistry. It makes the oceans more acidic. The chemical reaction is simple, but the effects on the ocean are serious.

This chart shows ocean pH—or acidity—over the past 25 million years, and we can see some variation across those millions of years. This is what is projected for the next 100 years: pH drops equals acidity rises.

According to a research article published in the journal *Nature Geoscience*, the rate of change in ocean acidity is already faster than at any time recorded in the past 50 million years. Scientists go back and they can see this in the geologic record. We have broken every record for 50 million years—millions of years before human beings were ever on the planet.

This all may sound esoteric, but it has real hometown consequences for Rhode Island, where coastal life defines our heritage, our culture, and our economy. Fishing is big business in my State. Rhode Island's annual farmed oyster production, for instance, is valued at over \$5 million. But carbon pollution is changing the very chemistry in which those oysters must survive.

Research on the effects of ocean acidification on shellfish and other marine life can barely keep up with a rapidly acidifying ocean—another reason we need more money for research. Change is coming at us faster. We have to speed up the pace of research to understand it. But what we do know is that shellfish, such as mussels, clams, and oysters, make their shells from calcium carbonate, and calcium carbonate dissolves in acidified seawater.

Here is how Bob Rheault, executive director of the East Coast Shellfish Growers Association, put it:

The only thing we know for sure is that the larvae, in that first 48-hour period before they start feeding, are tremendously susceptible to dissolution. Their energy budget goes negative because they haven't started to feed yet, and if they haven't got enough energy in that egg and they're starting to dissolve, then it takes extra energy to lay down shell, and they sometimes don't make it.

Here we see normal, healthy oyster larvae in those first few crucial days of development, compared to larvae growing in more acidic ocean water.

NOAA scientists have projected that the world's oceans and coastal estuaries will become 150 percent more acidic by 2100. This could mean disaster for shellfish—a \$1 billion industry around the country. U.S. shellfish production is currently expected to see a 10- to 25-percent reduction in the next five decades, according to the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute. Again, pardon me for being serious about this,

but it is currently predicted that a major industry in my State is going to be knocked down 10 to 25 percent because we are making our oceans acidic with carbon pollution.

A study published last year found that Rhode Island's shellfish populations are especially vulnerable. Mark Gibson is the deputy chief of marine fisheries at the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, and he calls ocean acidification a "significant threat" to local fisheries. I don't know how many Senators are expected to forget or ignore a significant threat to an industry in their home State because it is inconvenient for lobbyists and for the fossil fuel industry, but I don't think that is a fair thing to ask of me.

But acidification is not the only problem for fishermen. In a 2015 survey from the Center for American Progress, 40 percent of fishermen in the Northeast reported catching new fish species they don't usually see in the waters they fish. Rhode Islanders are starting to catch tarpon and grouper, usually tropical fish; our valuable winter flounder fishery is virtually gone; and our lobstermen have to go farther and farther out to sea to find cooler waters where they can catch their lobsters.

Among the fishermen surveyed, 80 percent of those who noticed "warmer water temperatures" attribute it to climate change. This is new. When I first got to the Senate, if I went down to Galilee—Rhode Island's largest fishing port—and tried to talk to the fishermen there about climate change or ocean acidification, I was lucky if they didn't throw me off the pier. They didn't want to hear about it. But then it started to hit home. Now fishermen come to me and say: SHELDON, it is getting weird out there. SHELDON, this is not my grandfather's ocean any longer. These are men who fished with their grandfathers, who fished with their fathers, and who now have their own boats. They know these waters, and when they say that the ocean has changed and it is getting weird out there, we should listen. They are on the water every day, and they see these changes happen before their very eyes.

I hope my Republican colleagues are like those fishermen. I am sure some of them probably want to throw me off a pier for all these talks, but mostly they probably just don't want to hear about climate change. But what I am hoping is that soon they will hear it from the fishermen in their own States, or their farmers or their foresters, and that they will hear it from their State health officials, their State emergency officials, their own State universities, and they will listen. When they do, they will realize the fossil fuel industry has been duplicitous with them and has been leading them away from their own State's best interests.

They will learn that the fossil fuel industry lobbyists are false friends as well as greedy ones.

We have a clear scientific understanding of the problem. Yet relentless fossil fuel opposition prevents us from moving toward a solution. It is a disgrace, frankly.

It is time to pay attention to reality, to the evidence, to what our farmers and foresters, and, yes, our fishermen are telling us. It is time to shut off the toxic polluter-paid politics that cloud this issue and give Washington a dirty name. It is time, indeed, to wake up.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO ALEE LOCKMAN

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I rise to recognize Alee Lockman.

Alee Lockman is the pride of Brockton, MT. In fact, Alee grew up on her family's wheat farm 10 miles north of Brockton in eastern Montana. Alee is also the pride of Froid High School, a classic high school in Montana. She was the valedictorian of a graduating class size of six. Alee graduated from Froid High School and went on to Harvard and graduated in 2010.

Alee Lockman also served as my communications director for the past 3 years. She came back to Washington when I was elected to the House and served on my team there. She worked on my campaign staff as well when we ran for the U.S. Senate. And thanks to Alee's tireless work and strong work ethic, we were able to win that race, and she came over to the Senate side and served as my communications director there for the past year-plus.

She played an absolutely invaluable role in my office. She is a brilliant, creative thinker who has a talent unparalleled.

I will never forget our road trips across Montana. There were times when we would spend countless hours in a small, little compact car—I am used to driving my big Ford pickup—that we would rent and literally drive thousands of miles across Montana and visit all the small towns.

Nobody was a greater advocate for rural Montana issues—somebody who lived it and breathed it her entire life—than Alee Lockman. In fact, one of the best nights of the month was our monthly tele-townhall meeting, where tens of thousands of Montanans would know Alee's voice because she would always introduce me. I always took pride in announcing: "You just heard from Alee Lockman from Brockton, MT."

I could always count on her to provide wisdom and much needed insight, particularly when it came to my prolific social media feeds. Sometimes Alee would place guardrails around what I probably should or should not be saying.

We are going to miss Alee Lockman. Alee has gone on to pursue a great, new opportunity, which I am very excited about for her, and I wish her the very best.

I wish to thank Alee Lockman for her service to the people of Montana, to this Nation, and to this institution.

You are going to be missed, Alee, and we wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENSURING PATIENT ACCESS AND EFFECTIVE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ACT

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I wish to discuss S. 483, the Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act, which the Judiciary Committee reported out by voice vote right before we went into recess. At the outset, I would like to thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his important work on this bill. He and his staff have been crucial partners in helping to move this legislation forward.

S. 483 will bring much-needed clarity to several key provisions of the Controlled Substances Act. In particular, it will better delineate the standards a company must satisfy in order to obtain a Controlled Substances Act registration and the circumstances under which a registration may be suspended without an adjudicative proceeding.

To elaborate briefly on this second point, under the terms of the Controlled Substances Act, the Attorney General may suspend a registration to manufacture or distribute controlled substances without court process if she determines there is an imminent danger to the public health and safety, but the Controlled Substances Act does not define what constitutes an imminent danger. S. 483 clarifies the Attorney General's authority under this provision by specifying that imminent danger means that, "due to failure of the registrant to maintain effective controls against diversion or otherwise comply with the obligations of a registrant under this title or title III, there is a substantial likelihood of an immediate threat that death, serious bodily harm, or abuse of a controlled substance will occur in the absence of

an immediate suspension of the registration."

It is the intent of the bill authors that the phrase "substantial likelihood of an immediate threat that death, serious bodily harm, or abuse of a controlled substance will occur" include situations where evidence of diversion indicates there is a substantial likelihood that abuse of a controlled substance will occur—that is it is the intent of the authors that this language authorize the Attorney General to issue an immediate suspension order in cases where evidence of diversion points to a substantial likelihood of abuse, provided the other conditions for issuing such an order are met.

In addition to these important clarifications, S. 483 will also facilitate greater collaboration between registrants and relevant Federal actors in combatting prescription drug abuse. In particular, the bill provides a mechanism for companies who inadvertently violate the Controlled Substances Act to submit a corrective action plan to remediate the violation before their registration is suspended and the supply of drugs to patients is interrupted. This provision will encourage greater self-reporting of violations and promote joint efforts between government and private actors to stem the tide of prescription drug abuse. It will also help ensure that supply chains remain intact for legitimate uses such as the alleviation of pain and illness.

S. 483 takes a balanced approach to the problem of prescription drug abuse. It clarifies and further defines the Attorney General's enforcement powers while seeking to avoid situations that may lead to an interruption in the supply of medicine to suffering patients. It reflects a measured, carefully negotiated compromise between stakeholders and law enforcement that will enable both to work together more effectively. I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE again for his work on this bill and urge my colleagues to give it their strong support.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for yesterday's vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services, so I could attend the funeral service for Police Officer Jason Moszer with the city of Fargo, ND, who lost his life in the line of duty.

Had I been present, I would have voted yea on the motion.

NOMINATION OBJECTION

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, we have witnessed in this administration Executive overreach with increasing

boldness. One manifestation of Executive overreach is the shocking indifference with which departmental agencies spurn the congressionally mandated rulemaking processes in favor of regulating under the guise of “guidance documents.” Guidance documents in their proper form advise the public of their obligations under existing law and, therefore, merely interpret the law without imposing any additional obligation. Agencies are quick to echo that guidance documents do not have the force and effect of law; yet governmentwide, agencies increasingly have used guidance as an end-run around the rulemaking process in violation of Federal law.

The Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights is such an offender. Their guidance documents, including Dear Colleague letters on harassment and bullying, issued October 23, 2010, and sexual violence, issued April 4, 2011, purport to merely interpret title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, yet advance troublesome policies not contemplated by the text of title IX or its implementing regulations.

I appreciate the fact that these guidance documents predated Mr. King’s service at the Department of Education, and I do not assert that he had any role in developing or issuing the letters. However, in a letter dated January 7, 2016, I asked him to clarify his role as Acting Secretary, in no uncertain terms, that the policies expounded in the 2010 and 2011 letters not required by the terms of title IX cannot be grounds for any adverse action.

To my disappointment, his response failed to do so. Mr. King should commit to use the office of the Secretary to rein in the regulatory abuses within the Department of Education and encourage his Cabinet counterparts to do the same. Until such time as such commitments are made, I intend to object to his nomination.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to offer a few words remembering Associate Justice Antonin Scalia of the Supreme Court. America has lost a legal giant and tireless defender of the Constitution. Justice Scalia dedicated his life to his country and the rule of law. His passing is a significant loss for the Court and the United States.

Few Associate Justices of the Supreme Court capture the attention of both lawyers and non-lawyers like Justice Scalia has throughout his career. Antonin Scalia used wit, humor, and colorful writing to captivate Americans in his judicial opinions and educational talks. Justice Scalia also felt strongly about protecting the rights of the individual and did so in monumental opinions interpreting the First, Second, Fourth, and Sixth Amend-

ments. In the immediate days following his passing, I received substantial correspondence from Wyoming residents praising his work for upholding the Constitution and defending individual liberties.

A number of my colleagues have already mentioned how Justice Scalia would always put the Constitution first, even if it conflicted with his personal views. This was the case when Justice Scalia voted to uphold the right of protesters to burn the American flag—even though he strongly disagreed with flag desecration.

When it comes to privacy, Justice Scalia established himself as a leading champion of the Fourth Amendment, particularly when it comes to privacy in one’s home or car.

Justice Scalia also authored a landmark majority opinion upholding gun rights under the Second Amendment which reiterated the constitutional right of an individual to keep and bear arms in the District of Columbia, a right which was later incorporated to all States.

Justice Scalia also fought ardently for religious freedoms under the Establishment Clause and joined others in upholding freedom of association under the First Amendment.

From his earliest days on the Supreme Court, Scalia approached the Constitution and statutes passed by Congress as a textualist. He protected the vertical separation of power in our federalist system which keeps decisions closer to the people and fought for the separation of powers amongst the three branches of Federal Government.

Most recently, Justice Scalia challenged Executive overreach in the unanimous decision of the Supreme Court invalidating President Obama’s unconstitutional recess appointments to the National Labor Relations Board and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Finally, Justice Scalia’s writings, judicial philosophy, and lectures have influenced future generations of lawyers and jurists. Whether, during oral argument, asking if the government can “make people buy broccoli” or referencing Cole Porter lyrics in opinions, Scalia used words to rebut, challenge, and persuade.

Justice Scalia’s legacy and legal precedents will stand the test of time, and our Nation owes him a debt of gratitude for his service. My wife, Diana, and I send our prayers and condolences to the Scalia family.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS FOUNDATION AND 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the 40th anniversary of

the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Incorporated, CBCF. It is fitting that during the month we celebrate Black history, we commemorate the decades of service CBCF has rendered to the Nation by advancing policy issues that impact the global Black community.

Black History Month is an ideal time to reflect on the ways the law has shaped the African-American experience. Our Nation has come a long way since the time when schools were segregated by law. No longer does the law bar African Americans from the voting booth. Today we have African-American Members of Congress who help craft the law; Yet the important work of civil rights remains unfinished.

Since 1976, CBCF has been a critical partner with Congress in the fight for equal rights. As a nonpartisan non-profit institute dedicated to eliminating racial disparities, CBCF has served as an inspiration to not just African Americans, but to people across the globe. However, its legacy and impact have been far from symbolic.

From helping to make the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a Federal holiday, to rebuilding communities impacted by Hurricane Katrina, to working on major legislation like the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, to building a virtual library project to shed a spotlight on the work of Black-elected officials, CBCF has stood alongside African-American elected leaders on some of the most critical policy issues of our time.

As we move in 2016, the work of CBCF is more important than ever. Today people of color face disparities in the areas of criminal justice reform, voting rights, and economic development both at home and abroad. Its founders—Nira Hardon Long, Albert Nellum, and Congresswoman Yvonne Burke—envisioned CBCF as an important contributor in the quest for racial equality.

The need remains. The vision lives on. And we have more work to do. I am confident CBCF will continue to serve our country admirably and protect African Americans vigorously. I salute CBCF for their service and celebrate their 40th anniversary.

This year also marks the 45th anniversary of the founding of the Congressional Black Caucus, CBC. I express my appreciation to the 13 founding members of the CBC in 1971 and the 17 members of the CBC class of 1976 for paving the way for African-American Members of Congress, like me, to follow in their footsteps. Their dedication to ensuring America fulfills the promise of equal justice for all serves as a constant inspiration. I stand on the shoulders of giants in CBC, and I salute their sacrifice.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VERMONT ESSAY CONTEST

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I would like to extend my sincere thanks for the continued involvement of Vermont high school teachers and principals in my annual State of the Union essay contest. This year, 799 Vermont students from 39 high schools wrote essays detailing what they thought were the most important issues facing our country. We could not have achieved this level of participation without the help of engaged educators throughout the State.

Each and every day, teachers encourage students to think critically and develop their own ideas. I appreciate that so many teachers have used the essay contest to challenge their students to share what they consider to be priorities for the United States. This year's submissions were some of the most thoughtful to date, and I have no doubt that is because of the encouragement of engaged teachers from across the State.

The success of this essay contest also depends on a dedicated team of volunteer judges, all of whom are also high school teachers. This year, we asked our five judges—some of whom have served for many years—to read more essays in less time, and we greatly appreciate the serious consideration and commitment they brought to the task. I would like to take a moment to recognize this year's judges: Bradley Archer, Woodstock Union High School; Jason Gorczyk, Milton High School; Krista Huling, South Burlington High School; Roberta "Cookie" Steponaitis, Vergennes Union High School; and Terri Vest, Twinfield Union School.

I would also like to enter into the RECORD the names of the 39 high schools that participated this year:

Arlington Memorial High School, Bellows Falls Union High School, Bellows Free Academy—Fairfax, Blue Mountain High School, Burlington High School, Burlington Technical Center, Burr & Burton Academy, Canaan Memorial High School, Champlain Valley Union High School, Colchester High School, Enosburg Falls High School, Green Mountain Technology and Career Center, Hanover High School, Hartford High School, Harwood Union High School, Leland and Gray Union High School, Mill River Union High School, Milton High School, Missisquoi Valley Union High School, Mount Mansfield Union High School, Mt. Abraham Union High School, Mt. Anthony Union High School, North Country Union High School, Northfield High School, Peoples Academy, Rice Memorial High School, Rutland High School, South Burlington High School, South Royalton High School, Spaulding High School, St. Johnsbury Academy, Stafford Technical Center, Twinfield High School, Union High School, Vergennes Union High School, Vermont Commons

School, Whitcomb High School, Winooski High School, Woodside Juvenile Rehab Center, and Woodstock Union High School.

Additionally, I would like to thank the schools where an especially large number of students wrote essays. Vermont Commons School and Missisquoi Valley Union High School had more than 25 participants. Green Mountain Technology and Career Center and South Burlington High School both had more than 50 students write essays. Mount Abraham Union High School had more than 100 members of their freshmen class write essays. Rutland High School assigned the contest to their entire freshmen class, with more than 200 students participating.

I would like to thank all of Vermont's teachers and principals for their tireless work educating students and for helping to make the sixth annual State of the Union essay contest a success.●

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DAVID B. NORRIS

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I wish to recognize and congratulate Mr. David B. Norris, national vice chairman for legislation of Veterans of Foreign Wars, on his retirement after more than three decades of service to California veterans.

A resident of Tracy, CA, Mr. Norris enlisted in the Army in January 1966 and served his country honorably, deploying to Vietnam with the 7th Psychological Operations Group. In recognition of his contributions, he received the Vietnam Service Medal, Presidential Unit Citation with oak leaf cluster, and Good Conduct Medal with oak leaf cluster.

Following his service to the country, Mr. Norris received his associates of arts degree in business from Northwest Missouri State University in 1974 and went on to become a paralegal for Century Law Offices in Costa Mesa and San Ramon, CA, and serve on the city of Tracy planning commission.

Mr. Norris joined the VFW in 1968 at Post 9723 in Okinawa, Japan, and, as a life member, has served on several California and national committees, including as the national chaplain, national chief of staff, and national judge advocate general. He is also a member of the Vietnam Veterans of America and a life member of the American Legion.

Mr. Norris has been a tireless advocate for veterans and a leading voice on efforts to assist female and homeless veterans. I would like to thank Mr. Norris for everything he has done to advance the needs of California veterans and wish him and wife, Sandy, all the best as he retires from legislative service with the VFW.●

TRIBUTE TO ANGELA MERKLE

• Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Angela Merkle, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Angela is a graduate of Canton High School in Canton, SD. She recently graduated from Augustana University in Sioux Falls, where she studied government and international affairs. She is a positive and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience and who has been a true asset to the office.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Angela for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 6:12 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 644. An act to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. DAINES).

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4405. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Diflubenzuron; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9939-59-OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 9, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4406. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Benzyl acetate; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9941-49-OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 9, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4407. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fluridone; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9941-69-OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4408. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Conditions for Payment of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Indemnity Claims" (RIN0579-AE14)

(Docket No. APHIS-2015-0061) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 9, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4409. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Specialty Crops Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Apricots Grown in Designated Counties in Washington; Decreased Assessment Rate" (Docket No. AMS-FV-15-0033; FV15-922-1 FIR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4410. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Specialty Crops Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Paper and Paper-Based Packaging Promotion, Research and Information Order; Late Payment and Interest Charges on Past Due Assessments" (Docket No. AMS-FV-14-0082) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4411. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Exemption of Organic Products From Assessment Under a Commodity Promotion Law" (Docket No. AMS-FV-14-0032) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4412. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Specialty Crops Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Kiwi Fruit Grown in California; Increased Assessment Rate" (Docket No. AMS-FV-15-0056; FV15-920-1 FR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4413. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Livestock, Poultry and Seed Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revision to Incorporate the Electronic Submission of the Import Request of Shell Eggs" ((RIN0581-AD41) (Docket No. AMS-LPS-14-0055)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4414. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Importation of *Phalaenopsis* Spp. Plants for Planting in Approved Growing Media From China to the Continental United States" ((RIN0579-AE10) (Docket No. APHIS-2014-0106)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4415. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Logistics and Material Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the operations of the National Defense Stockpile (NDS) for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4416. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to all repairs and maintenance performed on any covered Navy vessel in any shipyard outside the United States or Guam during the preceding fiscal year; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4417. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Logistics and Material Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, the National Defense Stockpile (NDS) Annual Materials Plan (AMP) for fiscal year 2017 and the succeeding 4 years, fiscal years 2018–2021; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4418. A communication from the Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, the Annual Report of the Reserve Forces Policy Board for 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4419. A communication from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Policy), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to assistance provided by the Department of Defense (DoD) for sporting events during calendar year 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4420. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the final six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13348 of July 22, 2004, relative to the former Liberian regime of Charles Taylor; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4421. A communication from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "The CFPB strategic plan, budget, and performance plan and report"; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4422. A communication from the Chair of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's semiannual Monetary Policy Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4423. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Cuba Licensing Policy Revisions" (RIN0694-AG79) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4424. A communication from the Administrator, U.S. Energy Information Administration, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "The Availability and Price of Petroleum and Petroleum Products Produced in Countries Other Than Iran"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4425. A communication from the Executive Director, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Annual Update of Filing Fees" ((RIN1902-AF17) (Docket No. RM16-00002-000)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4426. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the progress made in licensing and constructing the Alaska Natural Gas

Pipeline; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4427. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Compliance with Order EA-12-049, Order Modifying Licenses with Regard to Requirements for Mitigation Strategies for Beyond-Design-Basis External Events" (JLD-ISC-2012-01, Revision 1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4428. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Changes to Buried and Underground Piping and Tank Recommendations" (LR-ISC-2015-01) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4429. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Clean Air Act Title V Operating Permit Program Revision; West Virginia" (FRL No. 9942-12-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 9, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4430. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval of Regional Haze BART Alternative Measure: Washington" (FRL No. 9942-15-Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 9, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4431. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Allocations of Cross-State Air Pollution Rule Allowances from New Unincorporated Areas for the 2015 Compliance Year" (FRL No. 9942-27-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4432. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; 2008 Ozone NAAQS Interstate Transport for Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota" (FRL No. 9942-31-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4433. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; New Mexico/Albuquerque-Bernalillo County; Infrastructure and Interstate Transport State Implementation Plan for the 2010 Sulfur Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standards" (FRL No. 9942-29-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4434. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division,

Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of New Mexico/Albuquerque-Bernalillo County; Infrastructure and Interstate Transport SIP 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standards" (FRL No. 9942-30-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4435. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval of Iowa's Air Quality Implementation Plans; Polk County Board of Health Rules and Regulations, Chapter V, Revisions." (FRL No. 9942-37-Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4436. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval of Iowa's State Implementation Plan (SIP); Electronic Reporting Consistent with the Cross-Media Electronic Reporting Rule (CROMERR)" (FRL No. 9942-39-Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4437. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Lead-based Paint Programs; Amendment to Jurisdiction-Specific Certification and Accreditation Requirements and Renovator Refresher Training Requirements" ((RIN2070-AK02) (FRL No. 9941-61)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4438. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Significant New Use Rule on Certain Chemical Substances" ((RIN2070-AB27) (FRL No. 9941-56)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4439. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Returning Evidence at the Appeals Council Level" (RIN0960-AH64) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4440. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Member, IRS Oversight Board, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 9, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4441. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Member, IRS Oversight Board, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 9, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4442. A communication from the Chairman of the United States International Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant

to law, the Commission's Annual Performance Report for fiscal year 2015 and Annual Performance Plan for fiscal year 2016-2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4443. A communication from the Deputy Director, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicaid Program; Reporting and Returning of Overpayments" ((RIN0938-AQ58) (CMS-6037-F)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4444. A communication from the Deputy Director, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicaid Program; Final FY 2013 and Preliminary FY 2015 Disproportionate Share Hospital Allotments, and Final FY 2013 and Preliminary FY 2015 Institutions for Mental Diseases Disproportionate Share Hospital Limits" ((RIN0983-ZB24) (CMS-2398-N)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4445. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department's Alternative Fuel Vehicle (AFV) program for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4446. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a performance report relative to the Animal Drug User Fee Act for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4447. A communication from the Inspector General of the Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's Congressional Budget Justification for fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4448. A communication from the Board Members of the Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's Congressional Justification of Budget Estimates Report for fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4449. A communication from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Valuing and Paying Benefits" (29 CFR Part 4022) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4450. A communication from the General Counsel, Department of Commerce, transmitting proposed legislation entitled "Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act of 2016"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4451. A communication from the Director, Office of Communications and Legislative Affairs, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Annual Sunshine Act Report for 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4452. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of the Eagle Foothills Viticultural Area" (RIN1513-AC18) received in the Office

of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4453. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of the Los Olivos District Viticultural Area" (RIN1513-AC11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4454. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area; New Cost Recovery Fee Programs" (RIN0648-BE05) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. McCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Robert S. Williams, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Col. Brook J. Leonard, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nomination of Col. Michael A. Guetlein, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Steven L. Basham and ending with Brig. Gen. John M. Wood, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016. (minus 1 nominee: Brig. Gen. Paul D. Nelson)

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Air Force nominations beginning with Eric R. Baugh, Jr. and ending with Jeanluc G. C. Niel, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 11, 2016.

Air Force nominations beginning with Brian J. Alent and ending with Bryan A. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 11, 2016.

Air Force nomination of Khurram A. Khan, to be Major.

Air Force nominations beginning with Bruce E. Sternke and ending with Jeffrey S. Woolford, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Air Force nominations beginning with Mary E. Clark and ending with James A. Jernigan, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Air Force nomination of Margaret C. Martin, to be Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Gregory J. Malone and ending with Gregory K. Richert, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Army nomination of Ricardo O. Morales, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Christopher W. Wendland, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Michael J. Mulcahy, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Kelly K. Greenhaw, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with George L. Barton and ending with Richard A. Wholey, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Army nomination of Nicholas H. Gist, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Matthew J. Aiesi and ending with Jason D. Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Army nomination of D012199, to be Major.

Army nomination of James C. Sullivan, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Mark R. Biehl, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Ryan P. Brennan and ending with Paul E. Patterson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 1, 2016.

Army nominations beginning with Scott F. Bartlett and ending with Kenneth G. Verboncoeur, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 1, 2016.

Marine Corps nomination of Lucas M. Chesla, to be Major.

Marine Corps nomination of Jaime A. Ibarra, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Curtis J. Smith and ending with Bryan E. Stotts, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Allen L. Lewis and ending with David Stevens, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Michael J. Malone and ending with Michael C. Rogers, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Marine Corps nomination of Conrad G. Alston, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Marine Corps nomination of James C. Rose, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Marine Corps nomination of Shawn A. Harris, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with David F. Hunley and ending with Arlie L. Miller, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Michael J. Barriball and ending with John V. Russell IV, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Jameel A. Ali and ending with Ambrosio V. Pantoja, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Isaac Rodriguez and ending with Brian G. Wisneski, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Keith D. Burgess and ending with Keith J. Luzbetak, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Christopher W. Benson and ending with Shelton Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Kevin L. Freiburger and ending with Jason H. Perry, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Charles W. Demling III and ending with Glen F. Tedtaotao, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Navy nomination of Kielly A. Andrews, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Jeffrey C. Chao and ending with Joseph A. Moore, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Navy nomination of Erik J. Kjellgren, to be Commander.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 2564. A bill to modernize prior legislation relating to Dine College; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. 2565. A bill to amend part B of title IV of the Social Security Act to reauthorize grants to assist children affected by methamphetamine, opioid, or other substance abuse under the promoting safe and stable families program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 2566. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide sexual assault survivors with certain rights, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 2567. A bill to require the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to issue guidelines relating to the prescription of opioids for acute pain; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 2568. A bill to provide for conservation, enhanced recreation opportunities, and development of renewable energy in the California Desert Conservation Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Ms. STABENOW):

S. 2569. A bill to authorize the Director of the United States Geological Survey to conduct monitoring, assessment, science, and research, in support of the binational fish-

eries within the Great Lakes Basin, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 386

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 386, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 524

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

S. 578

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 578, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 586

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 586, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to foster more effective implementation and coordination of clinical care for people with pre-diabetes, diabetes, and the chronic diseases and conditions that result from diabetes.

S. 598

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 598, a bill to improve the understanding of, and promote access to treatment for, chronic kidney disease, and for other purposes.

S. 682

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 682, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 1440

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1440, a bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to exclude a loan secured by a non-owner occupied 1- to 4-family dwelling from the definition of a member business loan, and for other purposes.

S. 1495

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1495, a bill to curtail the use of changes in mandatory programs affecting the Crime Victims Fund to inflate spending.

S. 1715

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1715, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Pilgrims.

S. 1810

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1810, a bill to apply the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to Congressional members and members of the executive branch.

S. 1831

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1831, a bill to revise section 48 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes.

S. 1883

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1883, a bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1915

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1915, a bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to make anthrax vaccines and antimicrobials available to emergency response providers, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, a bill to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the

Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance.

S. 2002

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2002, a bill to strengthen our mental health system and improve public safety.

S. 2030

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2030, a bill to allow the sponsor of an application for the approval of a targeted drug to rely upon data and information with respect to such sponsor's previously approved targeted drugs.

S. 2040

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2040, a bill to deter terrorism, provide justice for victims, and for other purposes.

S. 2226

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2226, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the residential treatment programs for pregnant and postpartum women and to establish a pilot program to provide grants to State substance abuse agencies to promote innovative service delivery models for such women.

S. 2276

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2276, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide enhanced safety in pipeline transportation, and for other purposes.

S. 2291

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2291, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish procedures within the Department of Veterans Affairs for the processing of whistleblower complaints, and for other purposes.

S. 2344

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2344, a bill to provide authority for access to certain business records collected under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 prior to November 29, 2015, to make the authority for roving surveillance, the authority to treat individual terrorists as agents of foreign powers, and title VII of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 permanent, and to modify the certification requirements for access to telephone toll and transactional records by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and for other purposes.

S. 2423

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2423, a bill making appropriations to address the heroin and opioid drug abuse epidemic for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

S. 2426

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2426, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

S. 2464

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2464, a bill to implement equal protection under the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States for the right to life of each born and preborn human person.

S. 2470

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2470, a bill to repeal the provision permitting the use of rocket engines from the Russian Federation for the evolved expendable launch vehicle program.

S. 2502

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2502, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2505

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2505, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2514

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2514, a bill to require the Bureau of Justice Statistics to report on recidivism rates of Federal prisoners who are released early, and for other purposes.

S. 2545

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2545, a bill to modify the requirements of the Department of Veterans Affairs for reimbursing health care providers under section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014, and for other purposes.

S. 2549

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2549, a bill to require the Transportation Security Administration to conduct security screening at certain airports, and for other purposes.

S. 2558

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2558, a bill to expand the prohibition on misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, and for other purposes.

S. 2559

At the request of Mr. BURR, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) were added as cosponsors of S. 2559, a bill to prohibit the modification, termination, abandonment, or transfer of the lease by which the United States acquired the land and waters containing Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

S.J. RES. 25

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 25, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency relating to "National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone".

S. CON. RES. 26

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 26, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the right of States and local governments to maintain economic sanctions against Iran.

S. RES. 362

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 362, a resolution recognizing the contributions of the Montagnard indigenous tribespeople of the Central Highlands of Vietnam to the United States Armed Forces during the Vietnam War, and condemning the ongoing violation of human rights by the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

S. RES. 368

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr.

DURBIN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 368, a resolution supporting efforts by the Government of Colombia to pursue peace and the end of the country's enduring internal armed conflict and recognizing United States support for Colombia at the 15th anniversary of Plan Colombia.

AMENDMENT NO. 3257

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3257 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 2568. A bill to provide for conservation, enhanced recreation opportunities, and development of renewable energy in the California Desert Conservation Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I am proud to introduce the California Desert Conservation and Recreation Act.

In February of 2015, I, along with Sen. BOXER, introduced a bill under the same name. That bill from 2015 included a number of conservation and recreation provisions that the President could not include in his recent designation of three national monuments.

The President's designation this past month of those new national monuments—Mojave Trails, Sand to Snow, and Castle Mountain—was a major milestone in our efforts to protect the desert. But, due to limitations under the Antiquities Act, the President's executive action left out several key parts of our desert bill from 2015. These remaining provisions were vital to many of the groups and organizations that came together to support our bill in 2015.

I made a commitment to those groups to enact the entire bill, not just parts of the bill. And I intend to fulfill that promise. The remaining provisions included in today's legislation do the following: enhance recreational opportunities by establishing 142,000 acres of permanent Off-Highway Vehicle recreation areas; further expand wilderness areas in the desert, by designating five additional wilderness areas that cover 230,000 acres of land near Fort Irwin; ensure clean and free-flowing rivers, through the designation of 77 miles of rivers as Wild and Scenic Rivers; add to our national parks, by expanding Death Valley National Park Wilderness by 39,000 acres and Joshua Tree National Park by 4,500 acres; expand National Scenic Areas, by adding 18,610

acres to the Alabama Hills National Scenic Area in Inyo County; protect important cultural resources, by requiring the Department of the Interior to protect petroglyphs and other cultural resources in San Bernardino and Imperial County; and, facilitate renewable energy development in a way that protects delicate habitat.

I want to be very clear: I intend to continue to work with my colleagues in the Senate and House to advance this important bill and the wilderness protections, national park additions, recreation area designations and other renewable energy provisions that were not implemented through the Antiquities Act.

This legislation balances the many competing uses for public lands across the California desert: It protects fragile ecosystems and significant cultural resources, provides for increased recreational opportunities, and encourages sensible renewable energy development. This current bill includes all of the carefully negotiated provisions from the bill I introduced in February, minus the three monuments.

This bill reflects our attempt to achieve consensus among the competing uses of desert land and the many stakeholders involved, including environmental groups, State and local governments, the off-road community, cattle ranchers, mining interests, the Defense Department, energy companies, California's public utility companies, and many others.

As a result of the general public's robust participation, we have put together a bipartisan proposal that charts a commonsense path forward for the California desert. We made a commitment to these stakeholders to enact these commonsense solutions, and I intend to follow through on that promise.

I want to highlight some of the key provisions of this legislation:

By designating five new wilderness areas, this bill protects fragile desert ecosystems across 230,000 acres of wilderness near Fort Irwin. This includes 88,000 acres of Awatatz Mountains, 8,000-acre Great Falls Basin Wilderness, the 80,000-acre Soda Mountains Wilderness, and the 32,500-acre Death Valley Wilderness.

These proposed wilderness areas have something for everyone: Desert solitude; abundant hiking options and rock climbing routes; and horseback riding and hunting for those that wish to experience a truly remarkable backcountry experience.

This bill is more than just wilderness, however. It also designates four new wild and scenic rivers, totaling 77 miles in length. These rivers and creeks are important, and rare, riparian areas in the heart of the arid desert. This designation will ensure that those rivers and creeks remain clean and free-flowing and that their

immediate environments are preserved. These beautiful waterways are Deep Creek and the Whitewater River in and near the San Bernardino National Forest, as well as the Amargosa River and Surprise Canyon Creek near Death Valley National Park.

Conserving pristine desert land such as this is most definitely in the interests of our country. The California desert is a very special place and it deserves to stay that way.

The legislation also provides permanent protection for five existing Off-Highway Vehicle Areas covering approximately 142,000 acres.

The bill also releases 126,000 acres of land from their existing wilderness study area designation in response to requests from local government and recreation users. This will allow the land to be made available for other purposes, including recreational off-highway vehicle use on designated routes. Although the President's recent executive action could not include these permanent protections, off-roads are a vital part of the coalition we put together. They deserve certainty about their future enjoyment of the land, just as conservationists now have certainty as a result of the monument designations. With this bill introduction, I renew my pledge to work closely with the off-road community.

We must also take into account another use of the desert land: renewable energy. And I believe that we can accomplish the twin aims of honoring our commitment to conservation and fulfilling California's pledge to develop a clean energy portfolio. Balancing conservation, development and other uses is possible, we just need to come up with the right solutions. Thankfully, some of these compromises are already in place.

By April 2009, solar and wind companies had proposed 28 projects to be included in the Mojave Trails National Monument, including sites on former Catellus lands intended for permanent conservation. I visited some of those sites at the time, including one particularly beautiful area known as the Broadwell Valley, where thousands of acres of pristine lands were proposed for development. Seeing it first hand, I quickly came to the conclusion that those lands were simply not the right place for renewable energy development.

Since then, 26 of the 28 applications have been withdrawn. Let me explain why this happened. First, the Energy and Interior Departments developed new solar energy zones. These zones allow projects to be developed on lands least likely to harm plant and wildlife species, and allow projects to be completed faster and with fewer conflicts. This is a smart compromise. Second, California has worked closely with Federal agencies to develop the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan.

This blueprint will help identify pristine lands that warrant protection and direct energy projects elsewhere. This is a fair balancing of priorities, and I think it provides a clear path forward.

The bill I am introducing also takes additional action to help promote responsible renewable energy development through state land exchanges. There are currently about 370,000 acres of isolated parcels of state lands spread across the California desert. These state-owned lands are largely unusable, due to their location inside Federal national parks, wilderness, monuments, and conservation areas. The bill addresses this problem by requiring the Department of the Interior to develop and implement a plan with the state to exchange these state lands for other BLM or General Services Administration owned property in the next ten years. By swapping state land that is often surrounded by wilderness and national parks for other federal land, these exchanges will provide California with sites for renewable energy production, recreation or other uses.

I strongly urge my colleagues in both the House and the Senate to take a hard look at this legislation. We have made great strides in the past twenty years to strike the right balance between desert conservation, recreational uses, and the development of our natural resources. I believe this legislation continues in that fine tradition. Built on a foundation of consensus and compromise, this legislation fulfills our promise to the next generation that they will have the same opportunities to indulge in the best the California desert has to offer.

I am hopeful this Congress will take this legislation up and move it forward. It's the right thing to do.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3307. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3308. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3309. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3310. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3311. Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BLUNT, and Mr. COTTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3307. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title III, add the following:

SEC. 31. NATURAL GAS PRODUCTION, TREATMENT, MANAGEMENT, AND USE, FORT KNOX, KENTUCKY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 449 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end of the following:

“§ 4781. Natural gas production, treatment, management, and use, Fort Knox, Kentucky

“(a) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of the Army (referred to in this section as the ‘Secretary’) may provide, by contract or otherwise, for the production, treatment, management, and use of natural gas located under Fort Knox, Kentucky, without regard to section 3 of the Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands (30 U.S.C. 352).

“(b) LIMITATION ON USES.—Any natural gas produced pursuant to subsection (a)—

“(1) may only be used to support activities and operations at Fort Knox; and

“(2) may not be sold for use elsewhere.

“(c) OWNERSHIP OF FACILITIES.—The Secretary may take ownership of any gas production and treatment equipment and facilities and associated infrastructure from a contractor in accordance with the terms of a contract or other agreement entered into pursuant to subsection (a).

“(d) NO APPLICATION ELSEWHERE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The authority provided by this section applies only with respect to Fort Knox, Kentucky.

“(2) EFFECT OF SECTION.—Nothing in this section authorizes the production, treatment, management, or use of natural gas resources underlying any Department of Defense installation other than Fort Knox.

“(e) APPLICABILITY.—The authority of the Secretary under this section is effective beginning on August 2, 2007.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections of chapter 449 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“4781. Natural gas production, treatment, management, and use, Fort Knox, Kentucky.”.

SA 3308. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title III, add the following:

SEC. 31. DENALI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE NATURAL GAS PIPELINE.

(a) PERMIT.—Section 3(b)(1) of the Denali National Park Improvement Act (Public Law 113-33; 127 Stat. 516) is amended by striking “within, along, or near the approximately 7-mile segment of the George Parks Highway that runs through the Park”.

(b) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—Section 3(c)(1) of the Denali National Park Improvement Act (Public Law 113-33; 127 Stat. 516) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “and” after the semicolon;

(2) by striking subparagraph (B); and

(3) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (B).

(c) APPLICABLE LAW.—Section 3 of the Denali National Park Improvement Act (Public Law 113–33; 127 Stat. 515) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) APPLICABLE LAW.—A high pressure gas transmission pipeline (including appurtenances) in a nonwilderness area within the boundary of the Park, shall not be subject to title XI of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3161 et seq.).”.

SA 3309. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 44. NATIONAL PARK CENTENNIAL

(a) NATIONAL PARK CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1049 of title 54, United States Code (as amended by section 5001(a)), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 104909. National Park Centennial Challenge Fund

“(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to establish a fund in the Treasury—

“(1) to finance signature projects and programs to enhance the National Park System as the centennial of the National Park System approaches in 2016; and

“(2) to prepare the System for another century of conservation, preservation, and enjoyment.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) CHALLENGE FUND.—The term ‘Challenge Fund’ means the National Park Centennial Challenge Fund established by subsection (c)(1).

“(2) QUALIFIED DONATION.—The term ‘qualified donation’ means a cash donation or the pledge of a cash donation guaranteed by an irrevocable letter of credit to the Service that the Secretary certifies is to be used for a signature project or program.

“(3) SIGNATURE PROJECT OR PROGRAM.—The term ‘signature project or program’ means any project or program identified by the Secretary as a project or program that would further the purposes of the System or any System unit.

“(c) NATIONAL PARK CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE FUND.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a fund, to be known as the ‘National Park Centennial Challenge Fund’.

“(2) DEPOSITS.—The Challenge Fund shall consist of—

“(A) qualified donations that are transferred from the Service donation account, in accordance with subsection (e)(1); and

“(B) such amounts as are appropriated from the general fund of the Treasury, in accordance with subsection (e)(2).

“(3) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts in the Challenge Fund shall—

“(A) be available to the Secretary for signature projects and programs under this title, without further appropriation; and

“(B) remain available until expended.

“(d) SIGNATURE PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS.—

“(1) DEVELOPMENT OF LIST.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall develop a list of signature projects and programs eligible for funding from the Challenge Fund.

“(2) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations and Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committees on Appropriations and Natural Resources of the House of Representatives the list developed under paragraph (1).

“(3) UPDATES.—Subject to the notice requirements under paragraph (2), the Secretary may add any signature project or program to the list developed under paragraph (1).

“(e) DONATIONS AND MATCHING FEDERAL FUNDS.—

“(1) QUALIFIED DONATIONS.—The Secretary may transfer any qualified donations to the Challenge Fund.

“(2) MATCHING AMOUNT.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Challenge Fund for each fiscal year through fiscal year 2020 an amount equal to the amount of qualified donations received for the fiscal year.

“(3) SOLICITATION.—Nothing in this section expands any authority of the Secretary, the Service, or any employee of the Service to receive or solicit donations.

“(f) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall provide with the submission of the budget of the President to Congress for each fiscal year a report on the status and funding of the signature projects and programs.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections affected for title 54, United States Code (as amended by section 5001(b)), is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 104908 the following:

“§104909. National Park Centennial Challenge Fund.”.

(b) SECOND CENTURY ENDOWMENT FOR THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 1011 of title 54, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 101121. Second Century Endowment for the National Park System

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The National Park Foundation shall establish an endowment, to be known as the ‘Second Century Endowment for the National Park System’ (referred to in this section as the ‘Endowment’).

“(b) CAMPAIGN.—To further the mission of the Service, the National Park Foundation may undertake a campaign to fund the Endowment through gifts, devises, or bequests, in accordance with section 101113.

“(c) USE OF PROCEEDS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—On request of the Secretary, the National Park Foundation shall expend proceeds from the Endowment in accordance with projects and programs in furtherance of the mission of the Service, as identified by the Secretary.

“(2) MANAGEMENT.—The National Park Foundation shall manage the Endowment in a manner that ensures that annual expenditures as a percentage of the principal are consistent with Internal Revenue Service guidelines for endowments maintained for charitable purposes.

“(d) INVESTMENTS.—The National Park Foundation shall—

“(1) maintain the Endowment in an interest-bearing account; and

“(2) invest Endowment proceeds with the purpose of supporting and enriching the System in perpetuity.

“(e) REPORT.—Each year, the National Park Foundation shall make publicly available information on the amounts deposited into, and expended from, the Endowment.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections affected for title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 101120 the following:

“§101121. Second Century Endowment for the National Park System.”.

(c) NATIONAL PARK SERVICE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROTECTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1049 of title 54, United States Code (as amended by subsection (a)(1)), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 104910. Intellectual property

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) SERVICE EMBLEM.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘Service emblem’ means any word, phrase, insignia, logo, logotype, trademark, service mark, symbol, design, graphic, image, color, badge, uniform, or any combination of emblems used to identify the Service or a component of the System.

“(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ‘Service emblem’ includes—

“(i) the Service name;

“(ii) an official System unit name;

“(iii) any other name used to identify a Service component or program; and

“(iv) the Arrowhead symbol.

“(2) SERVICE UNIFORM.—The term ‘Service uniform’ means any combination of apparel, accessories, or emblems, any distinctive clothing or other items of dress, or a representation of dress—

“(A) that is worn during the performance of official duties; and

“(B) that identifies the wearer as a Service employee.

“(b) PROHIBITED ACTS.—No person shall, without the written permission of the Secretary—

“(1) use any Service emblem or uniform, or any word, term, name, symbol or device or any combination of emblems to suggest any colorable likeness of the Service emblem or Service uniform in connection with goods or services in commerce if the use is likely to cause confusion, or to deceive the public into believing that the emblem or uniform is from or connected with the Service;

“(2) use any Service emblem or Service uniform or any word, term, name, symbol, device, or any combination of emblems or uniforms to suggest any likeness of the Service emblem or Service uniform in connection with goods or services in commerce in a manner reasonably calculated to convey the impression to the public that the goods or services are approved, endorsed, or authorized by the Service;

“(3) use in commerce any word, term, name, symbol, device or any combination of words, terms, names, symbols, or devices to suggest any likeness of the Service emblem or Service uniform in a manner that is reasonably calculated to convey the impression that the wearer of the item of apparel is acting pursuant to the legal authority of the Service; or

“(4) knowingly make any false statement for the purpose of obtaining permission to use any Service emblem or Service uniform.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections affected for title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 104908 (as added by subsection (a)(2)) the following:

“§104910. Intellectual property.”.

(d) NATIONAL PARK SERVICE EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Division A of subtitle I of title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after chapter 1007 the following:

“CHAPTER 1008—EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

“CHAPTER 1008—EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

“Sec.

“100801. Purposes.

“100802. Definitions.

“100803. Interpretation and education authority.

“100804. Interpretation and education evaluation and quality improvement.

“100805. Improved utilization of partners and volunteers in interpretation and education.

“§ 100801. Purposes

“The purposes of this chapter are—

“(1) to more effectively achieve the mission of the Service by providing clear authority and direction for interpretation and education programs that are carried out by the Service under separate authorities;

“(2) to ensure that the public encounters a variety of interpretive and educational opportunities and services during visits to System units;

“(3) to recognize that the Service provides lifelong learning opportunities and contributes to interdisciplinary learning in traditional and nontraditional educational settings;

“(4) to provide opportunities for all people to find relevance in the System; and

“(5) to strengthen public understanding of the natural and cultural heritage and the United States.

“§ 100802. Definitions

“In this chapter:

“(1) EDUCATION.—The term ‘education’ means enhancing public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the resources of the System through learner-centered, place-based materials, programs, and activities that achieve specific learning objectives as identified in a curriculum.

“(2) INTERPRETATION.—The term ‘interpretation’ means—

“(A) providing opportunities for people to form intellectual and emotional connections to gain awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the resources of the System; and

“(B) the professional career field of Service employees, volunteers, and partners who interpret the resources of the System.

“(3) RELATED AREA.—The term ‘related area’ means—

“(A) a component of the National Trails System;

“(B) a National Heritage Area; and

“(C) an affiliated area administered in connection with the System.

“§ 100803. Interpretation and education authority

“The Secretary shall ensure that management of System units and related areas is enhanced by the availability and utilization of a broad program of the highest quality interpretation and education.

“§ 100804. Interpretation and education evaluation and quality improvement

“The Secretary may undertake a program of regular evaluation of interpretation and education programs to ensure that the programs—

“(1) adjust to the ways in which people learn and engage with the natural world and shared heritage as embodied in the System;

“(2) reflect different cultural backgrounds, ages, education, gender, abilities, ethnicity, and needs;

“(3) demonstrate innovative approaches to management and appropriately incorporate emerging learning and communications technology; and

“(4) reflect current scientific and academic research, content, methods, and audience analysis.

“§ 100805. Improved utilization of partners and volunteers in interpretation and education

“The Secretary may—

“(1) coordinate with System unit partners and volunteers in the delivery of quality programs and services to supplement the programs and services provided by the Service as part of a Long-Range Interpretive Plan for a System unit;

“(2) support interpretive partners by providing opportunities to participate in interpretive training; and

“(3) collaborate with other Federal and non-Federal public or private agencies, organizations, or institutions for the purposes of developing, promoting, and making available educational opportunities related to resources of the System and programs.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters for division A of subtitle I of title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 1007 the following:

“1008. Education and Interpretation 100801”.

(e) PUBLIC LAND CORPS AMENDMENTS.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—Section 203(10)(A) of the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1722(10)(A)) is amended by striking “25” and inserting “30”.

(2) PARTICIPANTS.—Section 204(b) of the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1723(b)) is amended in the first sentence by striking “25” and inserting “30”.

(3) HIRING.—Section 207(c)(2) of the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C., 1726(c)(2)) is amended by striking “120 days” and inserting “2 years”.

(f) VOLUNTEERS IN PARKS PROGRAM.—Section 102301(d) of title 54, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “is” and inserting “are”;

(2) by striking “not more than \$3,500,000” and inserting “such sums as are necessary”.

(g) NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION.—

(1) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—Subchapter II of chapter 1011 of title 54, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in section 101112—

(i) by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

“(a) MEMBERSHIP.—The National Park Foundation shall consist of a Board having as members at least 6 private citizens of the United States appointed by the Secretary, with the Secretary and the Director serving as ex officio members of the Board.”; and

(ii) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(c) CHAIRMAN.—

“(1) SELECTION.—The Board shall select a Chairman of the Board from among the members of the Board.

“(2) TERM.—The Chairman of the Board shall serve for a 2-year term.”; and

(iii) in section 101113(a)—

(I) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(II) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) COORDINATION WITH SERVICE.—Activities of the National Park Foundation under

paragraph (1) shall be undertaken after consultation with the Secretary to ensure the activities are consistent with the programs and policies of the Service.”.

(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 1011 of title 54, United States Code (as amended by subsection (b)(1)), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 101122. Authorization of appropriations

“(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subchapter \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2026.

“(b) USE OF APPROPRIATED FUNDS.—Amounts made available under subsection (a) shall be provided to the National Park Foundation for use for matching, on a 1-to-1 basis, contributions (including money, services, or property) made to the National Park Foundation.

“(c) PROHIBITION OF USE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—No Federal funds made available under subsection (a) shall be used by the National Park Foundation for administrative expenses of the National Park Foundation, including for salaries, travel and transportation expenses, and other overhead expenses.”.

(B) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections affected for title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 101121 (as amended by subsection (b)(2)) the following:

“§101122. Authorization of appropriations.”.

SA 3310. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 44. CONVEYANCE OF FEDERAL LAND WITHIN THE SWAN LAKE HYDRO-ELECTRIC PROJECT BOUNDARY.

Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior, after consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall—

(1) survey the exterior boundaries of the tract of Federal land within the project boundary of the Swan Lake Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2911) as generally depicted and labeled “Lost Creek” on the map entitled “Swan Lake Project Boundary—Lot 2” and dated February 1, 2016; and

(2) issue a patent to the State of Alaska for the tract described in paragraph (1) in accordance with—

(A) the survey authorized under paragraph (1);

(B) section 6(a) of the Act of July 7, 1958 (commonly known as the “Alaska Statehood Act”) (48 U.S.C. note prec. 21; Public Law 85-508); and

(C) section 24 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 818).

SA 3311. Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BLUNT, and Mr. COTTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title II, add the following:

SEC. 23. REPORTING REQUIREMENT FOR CERTAIN TRANSMISSION INFRA-STRUCTURE PROJECTS.

Section 1222 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16421) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(h) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Before carrying out a Project under subsection (a) or (b), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that—

“(1) describes the impact that the proposed Project would have on electricity rates;

“(2) demonstrates that the proposed Project meets the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a) and paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (b); and

“(3) includes a list of utilities that have entered into contracts for the purchase of power from the proposed Project.

“(i) DECISION.—The Secretary may not issue a decision on whether to carry out a Project under subsection (a) or (b) before the date that is 90 days after the date of submission of a report required under subsection (h).”.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO OBJECT TO PROCEEDING

I, Senator JAMES LANKFORD, intend to object to proceeding to the nomination of John B. King, to be Secretary of Education; dated February 23, 2016.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 9:45 a.m., in room SR-253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a Subcommittee hearing entitled “Passenger Rail: Opportunities and Challenges for the National Network.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SR-253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a Subcommittee hearing entitled “Magnuson-Stevens Act at 40: Successes, Challenges, and the Path Forward.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Examining the Opioid Epidemic: Challenges and Opportunities.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Review of the FY 2017 State Department Budget Request.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “ESSA Implementation in States and School Districts: Perspectives from Education Leaders.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “The Unaccompanied Children Crisis: Does the Administration Have a Plan to Stop the Border Surge and Adequately Monitor the Children?”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS’ AFFAIRS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SR-418 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS’ AFFAIRS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Veterans’ Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room 345 of the Cannon House Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 23, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Mara Greenberg and Colleen Zengotita Bengoa, detailees on the Senate Judiciary Committee, be granted Senate floor privileges for the duration of the 114th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the junior Senator from Montana be authorized to sign duly-enrolled bills or joint resolutions on Tuesday, February 23.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2016

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, February 24; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, and notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the Senate

resume consideration of the Califf nomination postcloture; further, that at 11 a.m., the Senate vote on confirmation of the Califf nomination; further, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, the President be notified of the Senate's action, and upon disposition of the nomination, the Sen-

ate then resume legislative session with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:14 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, February 24, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, February 23, 2016

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BUCK).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

February 23, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable KEN BUCK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

May Your special blessings be upon the Members of this assembly as they return from a week in their home districts. Give them wisdom and charity that they might work together for the common good.

During this primary season, the American people are hearing about so many issues we face as a Nation. Our divisions come from the solutions proposed by various campaigns.

Through it all, help us to maintain civility, always presuming the best intentions in those with whom we disagree. Thus may our system of democratic participation in the forming of the executive and legislative branches reach toward a truly representative government that all Americans can support.

May all that is done this day in the people's House be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. ABRAHAM led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

REMEMBERING THE LIVES LOST FROM THE 14TH QUARTERMASTER, OPERATION DESERT STORM

(Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, at approximately 8:40 p.m. on February 25, 1991, an Iraqi Scud missile blasted through the temporary barracks of the 14th Quartermaster in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

Headquartered in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, the 69 members of the water purification unit were deployed to Saudi Arabia for just 6 days when the attack occurred. Twenty-eight soldiers died that day, and 99 were wounded, including 43 in the 14th.

The Scud attack proved to be the single most devastating attack on U.S. forces as the 14th Quartermaster suffered the single greatest number of casualties of any Allied unit during Operation Desert Storm. To commemorate the 25th anniversary of this attack, I am introducing a joint resolution that honors the soldiers who were lost and wounded and their families.

The State of Pennsylvania lost more servicemembers during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm than any other State. A monument now stands in dedication at the Greensburg Army Reserve Center commemorating the 69 names of the detachment soldiers. They were fathers, husbands, and sons. They were daughters and sisters. They were all citizen soldiers serving their communities, serving their country, and giving their lives to both.

I call on Members of Congress to co-sponsor this resolution and honor the service and sacrifice of the 14th Quartermaster of the United States Army.

THANKING MEMBERS FOR VISITING FLINT, MICHIGAN

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give some thanks to some of my fellow Members of Congress for coming to my hometown of Flint, Michigan, yesterday. Specifically, I want to thank Democratic Whip STENY HOYER, Congressman ELIJAH CUMMINGS, Congresswoman BRENDA LAWRENCE,

Congresswoman DEBBIE DINGELL, and my friend and classmate Congressman SCOTT PETERS, who spent the day with me yesterday in Flint.

I want to thank them for having the back of the people of my hometown who are suffering right now with a water crisis that makes their water, the water for 100,000 people, not just undrinkable, but very dangerous.

I also want to thank my Michigan colleagues Congressman SANDER LEVIN and Congressman JOHN CONYERS for their many visits to Flint.

The people in Flint are victims of a form of neglect that is almost unimaginable: neglect by their own government, by the State of Michigan, which was operating the city of Flint and failed to protect those citizens by ensuring clean and safe drinking water.

This is a crisis that demands a response equal to the gravity of this crisis. It demands a Federal response. It clearly demands a response from the State of Michigan far greater than what it has been given.

IN MEMORY OF LEROY "SLICK" SEAL

(Mr. ABRAHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dedicated public servant of Louisiana, Mr. Leroy "Slick" Seal, who passed away recently. He was 95 years old.

Mr. Seal was born on September 2, 1920, in Varnado, Louisiana, where he was a lifelong resident and law enforcement officer. Leroy began his career in 1950 when then-Governor Earl K. Long appointed him to serve as the first marshal in Varnado.

When he left that post in 1954, he went on to work for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries until 1979. During that time, Leroy was selected by his peers as top woodsman and earned the position of major.

Mr. Seal moved from the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to serve as chief deputy of the Washington Parish Sheriff's office from 1981 to 1991. He was elected chief of police in his hometown of Varnado in 1992, where he served until 2008, though he continued to serve Varnado as a police officer until 2012.

Mr. Seal committed 60 years of his life to protecting the people of Louisiana. While in the line of duty as a law enforcement official, he was inducted into the Louisiana Justice Hall

of Fame in 2010. In 2013, he was duly recognized by the Louisiana State Legislature where they declared September 2 Leroy "Slick" Seal Day.

Mr. Seal is survived by his children, Eathel Seal, Stanley Seal, and Randy Seal, as well as his 15 grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

I commend Mr. Seal for all the work he has done for Louisiana. May he rest in peace.

TRIBUTE TO BUNNY STEINMAN

(Mr. DEUTCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, when you run for public office, you get to meet amazing people passionate about politics at every level. But the best ones, the ones who inspire you, are the ones who remind you why you got involved in the first place: to help others.

Today I rise in memory of one of the best. Bunny Steinman passed away on January 20, but her impact on the Florida Democratic Party and our community will surely last for decades.

Bunny was a born trailblazer. Long before retiring to south Florida, she graduated from Syracuse. She earned a master's at Queens College. She worked in public education for over three decades, all while raising three kids with her late husband, Joseph.

As her family mourns the loss of a mother and a grandmother, our community mourns the loss of a friend, a leader, and a mentor.

Indeed, Bunny was so many things to so many people all at once. She was a teacher who never stopped teaching, an activist who never stopped organizing, a Democrat who never stopped believing that America is strongest when the right to vote is protected, when equal rights are respected, and when every child has the chance to thrive.

Bunny Steinman, it was an honor to know you, to work with you, to represent you, and, most of all, to be your friend. We will honor your memory by carrying forward your passion for progress and the betterment of all. You will continue to inspire us for years to come.

JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, last week our Nation lost an incredible man and jurist: Justice Antonin Scalia.

As a steadfast defender of the rule of law, Scalia was a pillar of the Supreme Court for nearly 30 years. He was a man of God and a champion of religious freedom.

In a recent speech, Justice Scalia reflected on the role of faith in society.

While discussing his time in Rome in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, he recalled watching President Bush ask God to bless our Nation and a later conversation he had with a jurist from a different country who expressed his own desire for his nation's leader to be able to publicly evoke God's name during a time of national crisis, as it was forbidden.

This moving speech serves as a reminder of the importance of fighting for our basic liberties that we hold so dearly. Justice Scalia, who consistently demonstrated a deep understanding of what our Founding Fathers intended, was a fierce and loyal leader in this fight.

It was through his strong adherence to our Constitution, his sharp analytical mind, and his unwillingness to compromise his principles that made him a brilliant jurist; though it was his unreserved vitality and unwavering love for his country that made him a widely admired and beloved friend to his supporters and adversaries alike.

I had a chance to meet Justice Scalia a couple of different times and hear him and even talk with him and ask him questions. Indeed, I was blessed by that.

I rise today to extend my deepest sympathies to his family. He will certainly be missed by our Nation.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 22, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 22, 2016 at 3:26 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 2451.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 23, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representa-

tives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 23, 2016 at 12:10 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 2234.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 4056.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 4437.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 3262.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 890.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1602

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) at 4 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

DIRECTING DOLLARS TO DISASTER RELIEF ACT OF 2015

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2109) to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2109

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Directing Dollars to Disaster Relief Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term "administrative cost"—

(A) means a cost incurred by the Agency in support of the delivery of disaster assistance for a major disaster; and

(B) does not include a cost incurred by a grantee or subgrantee;

(2) the term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Agency;

(3) the term “Agency” means the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(4) the term “direct administrative cost” means a cost incurred by a grantee or subgrantee of a program authorized by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) that can be identified separately and assigned to a specific project;

(5) the term “hazard mitigation program” means the hazard mitigation grant program authorized under section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c);

(6) the term “individual assistance program” means the individual assistance grant program authorized under sections 408, 410, 415, 416, 426, and 502(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174, 5177, 5182, 5183, 5189d, and 5192(a));

(7) the term “major disaster” means a major disaster declared by the President under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170);

(8) the term “mission assignment” has the meaning given the term in section 641 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 741); and

(9) the term “public assistance program” means the public assistance grant program authorized under sections 403(a)(3), 406, 418, 419, 428, and 502(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170b(a)(3), 5172, 5185, 5186, 5189f, and 5192(a)).

SEC. 3. INTEGRATED PLAN FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COST REDUCTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 365 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(1) develop and implement an integrated plan to control and reduce administrative costs for major disasters, which shall include—

(A) steps the Agency will take to reduce administrative costs;

(B) milestones needed for accomplishing the reduction of administrative costs;

(C) strategic goals for the average annual percentage of administrative costs of major disasters for each fiscal year;

(D) the assignment of clear roles and responsibilities, including the designation of officials responsible for monitoring and measuring performance; and

(E) a timetable for implementation;

(2) compare the costs and benefits of tracking the administrative cost data for major disasters by the public assistance, individual assistance, hazard mitigation, and mission assignment programs, and if feasible, track this information; and

(3) clarify Agency guidance and minimum documentation requirements for a direct administrative cost claimed by a grantee or subgrantee of a public assistance grant program.

(b) CONGRESSIONAL UPDATE.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall brief the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives on the plan required to be developed under subsection (a)(1).

(c) UPDATES.—If the Administrator modifies the plan or the timetable under subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and

Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report notifying Congress of the modification, which shall include the details of the modification.

SEC. 4. REPORTING REQUIREMENT.

(a) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than November 30 of each year for 7 years beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the development and implementation of the integrated plan required under section 3 for the previous fiscal year.

(b) REPORT UPDATES.—

(1) THREE YEAR UPDATE.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which the Administrator submits a report under subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit an updated report for the previous 3-fiscal-year period.

(2) FIVE YEAR UPDATE.—Not later than 5 years after the date on which the Administrator submits a report under subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit an updated report for the previous 5-fiscal-year period.

(c) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—Each report required under subsections (a) and (b) shall contain, at a minimum—

(1) the total amount spent on administrative costs for the fiscal year period for which the report is being submitted;

(2) the average annual percentage of administrative costs for the fiscal year period for which the report is being submitted;

(3) an assessment of the effectiveness of the plan developed under section 3(a)(1);

(4) an analysis of—

(A) whether the Agency is achieving the strategic goals established under section 3(a)(1)(C); and

(B) in the case of the Agency not achieving such strategic goals, what is preventing the Agency from doing so;

(5) any actions the Agency has identified as useful in improving upon and reaching the goals for administrative costs established under section 3(a)(1)(C); and

(6) any data described in section 3(a)(2), if the Agency determines it is feasible to track such data.

(d) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Administrator submits a report to Congress under this section, the Administrator shall make the report publicly available on the website of the Agency.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CARSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on S. 2109.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In the last 12 years, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or

FEMA, has provided almost \$100 billion in disaster relief and disaster assistance. However, a significant and increasing amount of these funds have gone to cover FEMA's administrative costs that support the delivery of disaster assistance.

The Government Accountability Office, or GAO, has been looking into this for some time and found that, between fiscal year 1989 and fiscal year 2011, the percentage of disaster assistance spent on administrative costs doubled from 9 to 18 percent.

While FEMA has tried to implement internal controls to keep these costs to a minimum, GAO has found that FEMA's administrative costs have not decreased. In fact, GAO estimates that internal controls could save hundreds of millions of dollars in administrative costs.

S. 2109, the Directing Dollars to Disaster Relief Act of 2015, seeks to control and reduce rising administrative costs from major disasters by requiring the administrator of FEMA to develop and implement a plan to control and reduce its internal administrative costs.

I would like to commend and thank the chairman of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs for introducing this important oversight measure, which will save taxpayer dollars.

I would also like to thank the Senate chairman for working with us to ensure that the legislation includes a sunset provision and is consistent with our House protocols.

As disasters become more frequent and severe, it will become critical to keep administrative costs in FEMA to a minimum, increase efficiencies, and ensure that resources are directed toward disaster victims and the restoration of infrastructure.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, S. 2109, the Directing Dollars to Disaster Relief Act of 2015, requires the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, to develop a plan to control and reduce its disaster-related administrative costs and other activities.

The GAO has noted that FEMA's costs incurred in administering disaster-related activities have increased substantially. FEMA has acknowledged the increase and has struggled to address this issue.

Most recently, in 2014, the GAO recommended that FEMA develop an integrated plan to control and reduce disaster-related administrative costs.

GAO also recommended that FEMA assess the feasibility of tracking administrative costs by disaster program,

such as public assistance and individual assistance.

Finally, GAO recommended that FEMA clarify its guidance and minimum documentation requirements for State and local governments with respect to their direct administrative costs.

This bill, Mr. Speaker, will codify these recommendations and statutorily require FEMA to take these actions.

I appreciate the improvements this bill will make toward reducing overall disaster costs and losses, but this is not enough. We must do more to reduce these costs and losses, Mr. Speaker. There is no better way than to invest in predisaster mitigation.

I introduced H.R. 830 to reauthorize the predisaster hazard mitigation program. We consistently talk about the potential to reduce disaster costs and save taxpayers money through predisaster mitigation.

In fact, our subcommittee has noted the reports by the Congressional Budget Office and the National Institute of Building Sciences Multihazard Mitigation Council, which found that predisaster mitigation saves \$3 to \$4 for every dollar spent on mitigation activities.

But there is more. Predisaster mitigation activities save lives and reduce injuries. It is time to stop talking and do more. Let us, Mr. Speaker, reauthorize the predisaster mitigation program at levels sufficient to significantly reduce disaster costs and save lives. Our citizens deserve this.

I look forward to working with my good colleagues on the other side of the aisle to make sure that these strides will come to fruition.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2109.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION REFORM AND IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3584) to authorize, streamline, and identify efficiencies within the Transportation Security Administration, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3584

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE*.—This Act may be cited as the “Transportation Security Administration Reform and Improvement Act of 2015”.

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS*.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; Table of contents.

Sec. 2. Definitions.

TITLE I—AVIATION SECURITY

Sec. 101. TSA PreCheck.

Sec. 102. PreCheck and general passenger biometric identification.

Sec. 103. Limitation; PreCheck operations maintained; Alternate methods.

Sec. 104. Secure Flight program.

Sec. 105. Efficiency review by TSA.

Sec. 106. Donation of screening equipment to protect the United States.

Sec. 107. Review of sustained security directives.

Sec. 108. Maintenance of security-related technology.

Sec. 109. Vetting of aviation workers.

Sec. 110. Aviation Security Advisory Committee consultation.

Sec. 111. Private contractor canine evaluation and integration pilot program.

Sec. 112. Covert testing at airports.

Sec. 113. Training for transportation security officers.

TITLE II—SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY AND OTHER MATTERS

Sec. 201. Surface Transportation Inspectors.

Sec. 202. Inspector General audit; TSA Office of Inspection workforce certification.

Sec. 203. Repeal of biennial reporting requirement for the Government Accountability Office relating to the Transportation Security Information Sharing Plan.

Sec. 204. Security training for frontline transportation workers.

Sec. 205. Feasibility assessment.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) *ADMINISTRATION; TSA*.—The terms “Administration” and “TSA” mean the Transportation Security Administration.

(2) *ADMINISTRATOR*.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration.

(3) *INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY*.—The term “intelligence community” has the meaning given such term in section 3(4) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003(4)).

(4) *DEPARTMENT*.—The term “Department” means the Department of Homeland Security.

(5) *SECURE FLIGHT*.—The term “Secure Flight” means the Administration’s watchlist matching program.

TITLE I—AVIATION SECURITY

SEC. 101. TSA PRECHECK.

(a) *TSA PRECHECK*.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(1) ensure that all screening of passengers and their accessible property shall be conducted in a risk-based, intelligence-driven manner with consideration given to the privacy and civil liberties of such passengers; and

(2) operate a trusted passenger screening program known as “TSA PreCheck” that provides expedited screening for low-risk passengers and their accessible property based on a comprehensive and continuous analysis of factors specified in subsection (b).

(b) *FACTORS*.—Factors referred to in subsection (a)(2) shall include the following:

(1) Whether passengers described in such subsection are members of other trusted traveler programs of the Department.

(2) Whether such passengers are traveling pursuant to subsection (m) of section 44903 of

title 49, United States Code (as established under the Risk-Based Security for Members of the Armed Forces Act (Public Law 112–86)), section 44927 of such title (as established under the Helping Heroes Fly Act (Public Law 113–27)), or section 44928 of such title (as established under the Honor Flight Act (Public Law 113–221)).

(3) Whether such passengers possess an active security clearance or other credential issued by the Federal Government for which TSA has conducted a written threat assessment and determined that such passengers present a low risk to transportation or national security.

(4) Whether such passengers are members of a population for whom TSA has conducted a written security threat assessment, determined that such population poses a low risk to transportation or national security, and has issued such passengers a known traveler number.

(5) The ability of the Administration to verify such passengers’ identity and whether such passengers pose a risk to aviation security.

(6) Threats to transportation or national security as identified by the intelligence community and law enforcement community.

(c) *ENROLLMENT EXPANSION*.—

(1) *IN GENERAL*.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall publish PreCheck application enrollment standards to add multiple private sector application capabilities for the TSA PreCheck program to increase the public’s enrollment access to such program, including standards that allow the use of secure technologies, including online enrollment, kiosks, tablets, or staffed computer stations at which individuals can apply for entry into such program.

(2) *REQUIREMENTS*.—Upon publication of the PreCheck program application enrollment standards pursuant to paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) coordinate with interested parties to deploy TSA-approved ready-to-market private sector solutions that meet the TSA PreCheck application enrollment standards described in paragraph (1), make available additional PreCheck enrollment capabilities, and offer secure online and mobile enrollment opportunities;

(B) partner with the private sector to collect biographic and biometric identification information via kiosks, mobile devices, or other mobile enrollment platforms to reduce the number of instances in which passengers need to travel to enrollment centers;

(C) ensure that the kiosks, mobile devices, or other mobile enrollment platforms referred to in subparagraph (E) are secure and not vulnerable to data breaches;

(D) ensure that any biometric and biographic information is collected in a manner which is comparable with the National Institute of Standards and Technology standards and ensures privacy and data security protections, including that applicants’ personally identifiable information is collected, retained, used, and shared in a manner consistent with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Privacy Act of 1974”), and agency regulations;

(E) ensure that an individual who wants to enroll in the PreCheck program and has started an application with a single identification verification at one location will be able to save such individual’s application on any kiosk, personal computer, mobile device, or other mobile enrollment platform and be able to return within a reasonable time to submit a second identification verification; and

(F) ensure that any enrollment expansion using a private sector risk assessment instead of a fingerprint-based criminal history records check is determined, by the Secretary of Homeland Security, to be equivalent to a fingerprint-

based criminal history records check conducted through the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(3) **MARKETING OF PRECHECK PROGRAM.**—Upon publication of PreCheck program application enrollment standards pursuant to paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) in accordance with such standards, develop and implement—

(i) a process, including an associated timeframe, for approving private sector marketing of the TSA PreCheck program; and

(ii) a strategy for partnering with the private sector to encourage enrollment in such program; and

(B) submit to Congress a report on any PreCheck fees collected in excess of the costs of administering such program, including recommendations for using such amounts to support marketing of such program under this subsection.

(4) **IDENTITY VERIFICATION ENHANCEMENT.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(A) coordinate with the heads of appropriate components of the Department to leverage Department-held data and technologies to verify the citizenship of individuals enrolling in the TSA PreCheck program; and

(B) partner with the private sector to use advanced biometrics and standards comparable with National Institute of Standards and Technology standards to facilitate enrollment in such program.

(5) **PRECHECK LANE OPERATION.**—The Administrator shall—

(A) ensure that TSA PreCheck screening lanes are open and available during peak and high-volume travel times at airports to individuals enrolled in the PreCheck program; and

(B) make every practicable effort to provide expedited screening at standard screening lanes during times when PreCheck screening lanes are closed to individuals enrolled in such program in order to maintain operational efficiency.

(6) **VETTING FOR PRECHECK PARTICIPANTS.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall initiate an assessment of the security vulnerabilities in the vetting process for the PreCheck program that includes an evaluation of whether subjecting PreCheck participants to recurrent fingerprint-based criminal history records checks, in addition to recurrent checks against the terrorist watchlist, could be done in a cost-effective manner to strengthen the security of the PreCheck program.

SEC. 102. PRECHECK AND GENERAL PASSENGER BIOMETRIC IDENTIFICATION.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall conduct a pilot project to establish a secure, automated, biometric-based system at airports to verify the identity of passengers who are members of TSA PreCheck. Such system shall—

(1) reduce the need for security screening personnel to perform travel document verification for individuals enrolled in TSA PreCheck;

(2) reduce the average wait time of individuals enrolled in TSA PreCheck;

(3) reduce overall operating expenses of the Administration;

(4) be integrated with the Administration's watch list and trusted traveler matching program;

(5) be integrated with other checkpoint technologies to further facilitate risk-based passenger screening at the checkpoint, to the extent practicable and consistent with security standards; and

(6) consider capabilities and policies of U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Global Entry Program, as appropriate.

(b) **ESTABLISHMENT OF SCREENING SYSTEM FOR CERTAIN PASSENGERS.**—Section 44901 of title 49, United States Code is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c) through (l) as subsections (d) through (m), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection:

“(c) **ESTABLISHMENT OF SCREENING SYSTEM FOR CERTAIN PASSENGERS.**—Not later than December 31, 2017, in accordance with the requirements of the Transportation Security Administration Reform and Improvement Act of 2015, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall establish a secure, automated system at all large hub airports for verifying travel and identity documents of passengers who are not members of the Administration's risk-based aviation passenger screening program, known as ‘TSA PreCheck’. Such system shall—

“(1) assess the need for security screening personnel to perform travel document verification for such passengers, thereby assessing the overall number of such screening personnel;

“(2) assess the average wait time of such passengers;

“(3) assess overall operating expenses of the Administration;

“(4) be integrated with the Administration's watch list matching program; and

“(5) be integrated with other checkpoint technologies to further facilitate risk-based passenger screening at the checkpoint, to the extent practicable and consistent with security standards.”.

SEC. 103. LIMITATION; PRECHECK OPERATIONS MAINTAINED; ALTERNATE METHODS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in subsection (c), the Administrator shall direct that access to expedited airport security screening at an airport security checkpoint be limited to only the following:

(1) A passenger who voluntarily submits biographic and biometric information for a security risk assessment and whose application for the PreCheck program has been approved, or a passenger who is a participant in another trusted or registered traveler program of the Department.

(2) A passenger traveling pursuant to section 44903 of title 49, United States Code (as established under the Risk-Based Security for Members of the Armed Forces Act (Public Law 112–86)), section 44927 of such title (as established under the Helping Heroes Fly Act (Public Law 113–27)), or section 44928 of such title (as established under the Honor Flight Act (Public Law 113–221)).

(3) A passenger who did not voluntarily submit biographic and biometric information for a security risk assessment but is a member of a population designated by the Administrator as known and low-risk and who may be issued a unique, known traveler number by the Administrator determining that such passenger is a member of a category of travelers designated by the Administrator as known and low-risk.

(b) **PRECHECK OPERATIONS MAINTAINED.**—In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator shall ensure that expedited airport security screening remains available to passengers at or above the level that exists on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) **FREQUENT FLIERS.**—If the Administrator determines that such is appropriate, the implementation of subsection (a) may be delayed by up to one year with respect to the population of passengers who did not voluntarily submit biographic and biometric information for security risk assessments but who nevertheless receive expedited airport security screening because such passengers are designated as frequent fliers by air carriers. If the Administrator uses the authority provided by this subsection, the Administrator shall notify the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Gov-

ernmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate of such phased-in implementation.

(d) **ALTERNATE METHODS.**—The Administrator may provide access to expedited airport security screening to additional passengers pursuant to an alternate method upon the submission to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate of an independent assessment of the security effectiveness of such alternate method that is conducted by an independent entity that determines that such alternate method is designed to—

(1) reliably and effectively identify passengers who likely pose a low risk to the United States aviation system;

(2) mitigate the likelihood that a passenger who may pose a security threat to the United States aviation system is selected for expedited security screening; and

(3) address known and evolving security risks to the United States aviation system.

(e) **INFORMATION SHARING.**—The Administrator shall provide to the entity conducting the independent assessment under subsection (d) effectiveness testing results that are consistent with established evaluation design practices, as identified by the Comptroller General of the United States.

(f) **REPORTING.**—Not later than three months after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall report to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on the percentage of all passengers who are provided expedited security screening, and of such passengers so provided, the percentage who are participants in the PreCheck program (who have voluntarily submitted biographic and biometric information for security risk assessments), the percentage who are participants in another trusted traveler program of the Department, the percentage who are participants in the PreCheck program due to the Administrator's issuance of known traveler numbers, and for the remaining percentage of passengers granted access to expedited security screening in PreCheck security lanes, information on the percentages attributable to each alternative method utilized by the Administration to direct passengers to expedited airport security screening at PreCheck security lanes.

(g) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section may be construed to—

(1) authorize or direct the Administrator to reduce or limit the availability of expedited security screening at an airport; or

(2) limit the authority of the Administrator to use technologies and systems, including passenger screening canines and explosives trace detection, as a part of security screening operations.

SEC. 104. SECURE FLIGHT PROGRAM.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(1) develop a process for regularly evaluating the root causes of screening errors at checkpoints across airports so that corrective measures are able to be identified;

(2) implement such corrective measures to address the root causes of such screening errors occurring at the checkpoint;

(3) develop additional measures to address key performance aspects related to the Secure Flight program goals and ensure that such measures clearly identify activities necessary to achieve progress towards such goals;

(4) develop a mechanism to systematically document the number and causes of Secure Flight program matching errors for the purpose of improving program performance and provide program managers with timely and reliable information;

(5) provide job-specific privacy refresher training for Secure Flight program staff to further protect personally identifiable information in the Secure Flight system program; and

(6) develop a mechanism to comprehensively document and track key Secure Flight program privacy issues and decisions to ensure the Secure Flight program has complete information for effective oversight of its privacy controls.

SEC. 105. EFFICIENCY REVIEW BY TSA.

(a) **REVIEW REQUIRED.**—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall conduct and complete a comprehensive, agency-wide efficiency review of the Administration to identify spending reductions and administrative savings through the streamlining and any necessary restructuring of agency divisions to make the Administration more efficient. In carrying out the review under this section, the Administrator shall consider each of the following:

(1) The elimination of any duplicative or overlapping programs and initiatives that can be streamlined.

(2) The elimination of any unnecessary or obsolete rules, regulations, directives, or procedures.

(3) Any other matters the Administrator determines are appropriate.

(b) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 30 days after the completion of the efficiency review required under subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that specifies the results and cost savings expected to be achieved through such efficiency review. Such report shall also include information relating to how the Administration may use efficiencies identified through such efficiency review to provide funding to reimburse airports that incurred eligible costs for in-line baggage screening systems.

SEC. 106. DONATION OF SCREENING EQUIPMENT TO PROTECT THE UNITED STATES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator is authorized to donate security screening equipment to a foreign last-point-of-departure airport operator if such equipment can be reasonably expected to mitigate a specific vulnerability to the security of the United States or United States citizens.

(b) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 30 days before any donation of equipment under this section, the Administrator shall provide to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a detailed written explanation of—

(1) the specific vulnerability to the United States that will be mitigated with such donation;

(2) an explanation as to why the recipient is unable or unwilling to purchase equipment to mitigate such threat;

(3) an evacuation plan for sensitive technologies in case of emergency or instability in the country to which such donation is being made;

(4) how the Administration will ensure the equipment that is being donated is used and maintained over the course of its life by the recipient; and

(5) the total dollar value of such donation.

SEC. 107. REVIEW OF SUSTAINED SECURITY DIRECTIVES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter, for any security directive that has been in effect for longer than one year, the

Administrator shall review the necessity of such directives, from a risk-based perspective.

(b) **BRIEFING TO CONGRESS.**—Upon completion of each review pursuant to subsection (a), the Administrator shall brief the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on—

(1) any changes being made to existing security directives as a result of each such review;

(2) the specific threat that is being mitigated by any such directive that will remain in effect; and

(3) the planned disposition of any such directive.

SEC. 108. MAINTENANCE OF SECURITY-RELATED TECHNOLOGY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Title XVI of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 561 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“Subtitle C—Maintenance of Security-Related Technology

“SEC. 1621. MAINTENANCE VALIDATION AND OVERSIGHT.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this subtitle, the Administrator shall develop and implement a preventive maintenance validation process for security-related technology deployed to airports.

“(b) **MAINTENANCE BY ADMINISTRATION PERSONNEL AT AIRPORTS.**—For maintenance to be carried out by Administration personnel at airports, the process referred to in subsection (a) shall include the following:

“(1) Guidance to Administration personnel, equipment maintenance technicians, and other personnel at airports specifying how to conduct and document preventive maintenance actions.

“(2) Mechanisms for the Administrator to verify compliance with the guidance issued pursuant to paragraph (1).

“(c) **MAINTENANCE BY CONTRACTORS AT AIRPORTS.**—For maintenance to be carried out by a contractor at airports, the process referred to in subsection (a) shall require the following:

“(1) Provision of monthly preventive maintenance schedules to appropriate Administration personnel at each airport that includes information on each action to be completed by a contractor.

“(2) Notification to appropriate Administration personnel at each airport when maintenance action is completed by a contractor.

“(3) A process for independent validation by a third party of contractor maintenance.

“(d) **PENALTIES FOR NONCOMPLIANCE.**—The Administrator shall require maintenance contracts for security-related technology deployed to airports to include penalties for noncompliance when it is determined that either preventive or corrective maintenance has not been completed according to contractual requirements and manufacturers’ specifications.”.

(b) **INSPECTOR GENERAL ASSESSMENT.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall assess implementation of the requirements under section 1621 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as added by subsection (a) of this section), and provide findings and recommendations with respect to the provision of training to Administration personnel, equipment maintenance technicians, and other personnel under such section 1621 and the availability and utilization of equipment maintenance technicians employed by the Administration.

(c) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of contents of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1616 the following:

“Subtitle C—Maintenance of Security-Related Technology

“Sec. 1621. Maintenance validation and oversight.”.

SEC. 109. VETTING OF AVIATION WORKERS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subtitle A of title XVI of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 561 et seq.) is amended by adding after section 1601 the following new section:

“SEC. 1602. VETTING OF AVIATION WORKERS.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—By not later than December 31, 2015, the Administrator, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary for Policy of the Department, shall request from the Director of National Intelligence access to additional data from the Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE) data and any other terrorism-related information to improve the effectiveness of the Administration’s credential vetting program for individuals with unescorted access to sensitive areas of airports.

“(b) **SECURITY INSPECTION.**—By not later than December 31, 2015, the Administrator shall issue guidance for Transportation Security Inspectors to annually review airport badging office procedures for applicants seeking access to sensitive areas of airports. Such guidance shall include a comprehensive review of applicants’ Criminal History Records Check (CHRC) and work authorization documentation during the course of an inspection.

“(c) **INFORMATION SHARING.**—By not later than December 31, 2015, the Administrator may conduct a pilot program of the Rap Back Service, in coordination with the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, to determine the feasibility of full implementation of a service through which the Administrator would be notified of a change in status of an individual holding a valid credential granting unescorted access to sensitive areas of airports across eligible Administration-regulated populations.

“(d) **PROCEDURES.**—The pilot program under subsection (c) shall evaluate whether information can be narrowly tailored to ensure that the Administrator only receives notification of a change with respect to a disqualifying offense under the credential vetting program under subsection (a), as specified in 49 CFR 1542.209, and in a manner that complies with current regulations for fingerprint-based criminal history records checks. The pilot program shall be carried out in a manner so as to ensure that, in the event that notification is made through the Rap Back Service of a change but a determination of arrest status or conviction is in question, the matter will be handled in a manner that is consistent with current regulations. The pilot program shall also be carried out in a manner that is consistent with current regulations governing an investigation of arrest status, correction of Federal Bureau of Investigation records and notification of disqualification, and corrective action by the individual who is the subject of an inquiry.

“(e) **DETERMINATION AND SUBMISSION.**—If the Administrator determines that full implementation of the Rap Back Service is feasible and can be carried out in a manner that is consistent with current regulations for fingerprint-based criminal history checks, including the rights of individuals seeking credentials, the Administrator shall submit such determination, in writing, to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, together with information on the costs associated with such implementation, including the costs incurred by the private sector. In preparing this determination, the Administrator shall consult with the Chief Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Officer of

the Department to ensure that protocols are in place to align the period of retention of personally identifiable information and biometric information, including fingerprints, in the Rap Back Service with the period in which the individual who is the subject of an inquiry has a valid credential.

“(f) **CREDENTIAL SECURITY.**—By not later than September 30, 2015, the Administrator shall issue guidance to airports mandating that all federalized airport badging authorities place an expiration date on airport credentials commensurate with the period of time during which an individual is lawfully authorized to work in the United States.

“(g) **AVIATION WORKER LAWFUL STATUS.**—By not later than December 31, 2015, the Administrator shall review the denial of credentials due to issues associated with determining an applicant's lawful status in order to identify airports with specific weaknesses and shall coordinate with such airports to mutually address such weaknesses, as appropriate.

“(h) **REPORTS TO CONGRESS.**—Upon completion of the determinations and reviews required under this section, the Administrator shall brief the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on the results of such determinations and reviews.”

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of contents of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1601 the following new item:

“Sec. 1602. Vetting of aviation workers.”

(c) **STATUS UPDATE ON RAP BACK SERVICE PILOT PROGRAM.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report on the status of plans to conduct a pilot program in coordination with the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the Rap Back Service in accordance with subsection (c) of section 1602 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as added by subsection (a) of this section. The report shall include details on the business, technical, and resource requirements for the Transportation Security Administration and pilot program participants, and provide a timeline and goals for the pilot program.

SEC. 110. AVIATION SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE CONSULTATION.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall consult, to the extent practicable, with the Aviation Security Advisory Committee (established pursuant to section 44946 of title 49 of the United States Code) regarding any modification to the prohibited item list prior to issuing a determination about any such modification.

(b) **REPORT ON THE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY OVERSIGHT BOARD.**—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the Transportation Security Oversight Board (established pursuant to section 115 of title 49, United States Code), the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that includes general information on how often the Board has met, the current composition of the Board, and what activities the Board has undertaken, consistent with the duties specified in subsection (c) of such section.

tion. The Secretary may include in such report recommendations for changes to such section in consideration of the provisions of section 44946 of title 49, United States Code.

(c) **TECHNICAL CORRECTION.**—Subparagraph (A) of section 44946(c)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(A) **TERMS.**—The term of each member of the Advisory Committee shall be two years but may continue until such time as a successor member begins serving on the Advisory Committee. A member of the Advisory Committee may be reappointed.”

(d) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term “prohibited item list” means the list of items passengers are prohibited from carrying as accessible property or on their persons through passenger screening checkpoints at airports, into sterile areas at airports, and on board passenger aircraft, pursuant to section 1540.111 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on January 1, 2015).

SEC. 111. PRIVATE CONTRACTOR CANINE EVALUATION AND INTEGRATION PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish a pilot program to evaluate the use, effectiveness, and integration of privately-operated explosives detection canine teams using both the passenger screening canine and traditional explosives detection canine methods.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The pilot program under subsection (a) shall include the following elements:

(1) A full-time presence in three Category X, two Category I, and one Category II airports.

(2) A duration of at least twelve months from the time private contractor teams are operating at full capacity.

(3) A methodology for evaluating how to integrate private contractor teams into the checkpoint area to detect explosive devices missed by mechanical or human error at other points in the screening process.

(4) Covert testing with inert improvised explosive devices and accurately recreated explosives odor traces to determine the relative effectiveness of a full-time canine team in strengthening checkpoint security.

(c) **QUARTERLY UPDATES.**—The Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate written updates on the procurement, deployment, and evaluation process related to the implementation of the pilot program under subsection (a) for every calendar quarter after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) **FINAL REPORT.**—Not later than 90 days after the completion of the pilot program under subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a final report on such pilot program.

(e) **FUNDING.**—Out of funds made available to the Office of the Secretary of Homeland Security, \$6,000,000 is authorized to be used to carry out this section.

SEC. 112. COVERT TESTING AT AIRPORTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter through 2020, the Administrator shall conduct covert testing on an ongoing basis to test vulnerabilities and identify weaknesses in the measures used to secure the aviation system of the United States. The Administrator shall, on a quarterly basis if practicable, provide to the Inspector General of the Department such testing results, methodology, and data.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—In carrying out the covert testing required under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) consider security screening and procedures conducted by TSA;

(2) use available threat information and intelligence to determine the types and sizes of simulated threat items and threat item-body location configurations for such covert testing;

(3) use a risk-based approach to determine the location and number of such covert testing;

(4) conduct such covert testing without notifying personnel at airports prior to such covert testing; and

(5) identify reasons for failure when TSA personnel or the screening equipment used do not identify and resolve any threat item used during such a covert test.

(c) **INDEPENDENT REVIEW.**—The Inspector General of the Department shall conduct covert testing of the aviation system of the United States in addition to the covert testing conducted by the Administrator under subsection (a), as appropriate, and analyze TSA covert testing results, methodology, and data provided pursuant to such subsection to determine the sufficiency of TSA covert testing protocols. The Inspector General shall, as appropriate, compare testing results of any additional covert testing conducted pursuant to this subsection with the results of TSA covert testing under subsection (a) to determine systemic weaknesses in the security of the aviation system of the United States.

(d) **CORRECTIVE ACTION.**—Not later than 30 days upon completion of any covert testing under subsection (a), the Administrator shall make recommendations and implement corrective actions to mitigate vulnerabilities identified by such covert testing and shall notify the Inspector General of the Department of such recommendations and actions. The Inspector General shall review the extent to which such recommendations and actions are implemented and the degree to which such recommendations and actions improve the security of the aviation system of the United States.

(e) **CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.**—

(1) **BY THE ADMINISTRATOR.**—Not later than 30 days upon completion of any covert testing under subsection (a), the Administrator shall brief the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on the results of such covert testing.

(2) **BY THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT.**—The Inspector General shall brief the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate annually on the requirements specified in this section.

(f) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section may be construed to prohibit the Administrator or the Inspector General of the Department from conducting covert testing of the aviation system of the United States with greater frequency than required under this section.

SEC. 113. TRAINING FOR TRANSPORTATION SECURITY OFFICERS.

The Administrator shall, on a periodic basis, brief the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on the status of efforts to enhance initial and recurrent training of Transportation Security Officers.

TITLE II—SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY AND OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 201. SURFACE TRANSPORTATION INSPECTORS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1304(d) of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (6 U.S.C. 1113; Public Law 110-53) is amended—

(1) by inserting “surface” after “relevant”; and

(2) by striking “, as determined appropriate”.

(b) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Administration's Surface Transportation Security Inspectors Program under subsection (d) of section 1304 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (6 U.S.C. 1113; Public Law 110-53).

(c) **CONTENTS.**—The report required under subsection (b) shall include a review of the following:

(1) The roles and responsibilities of surface transportation security inspectors.

(2) The extent to which the TSA has used a risk-based, strategic approach to determine the appropriate number of surface transportation security inspectors and resource allocation across field offices.

(3) Whether TSA's surface transportation regulations are risk-based and whether surface transportation security inspectors have adequate experience and training to perform their day-to-day responsibilities.

(4) Feedback from regulated surface transportation industry stakeholders on the benefit of surface transportation security inspectors to the overall security of the surface transportation systems of such stakeholders and the consistency of regulatory enforcement.

(5) Whether surface transportation security inspectors have appropriate qualifications to help secure and inspect surface transportation systems.

(6) Whether TSA measures the effectiveness of surface transportation security inspectors.

(7) Any overlap between the TSA and the Department of Transportation as such relates to surface transportation security inspectors in accordance with section 1310 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (6 U.S.C. 1117; Public Law 110-53).

(8) The extent to which surface transportation security inspectors review and enhance information security practices and enforce applicable information security regulations and directives.

(9) Any recommendations relating to the efficiency and effectiveness of the TSA's surface transportation security inspectors program.

SEC. 202. INSPECTOR GENERAL AUDIT; TSA OFFICE OF INSPECTION WORKFORCE CERTIFICATION.

(a) **INSPECTOR GENERAL AUDIT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department shall analyze the data and methods that the Administrator uses to identify Office of Inspection employees of the Administration who meet the requirements of sections 8331(20), 8401(17), and 5545a of title 5, United States Code, and provide the relevant findings to the Administrator, including a finding on whether such data and methods are adequate and valid.

(2) **PROHIBITION ON HIRING.**—If the Inspector General of the Department finds that the data and methods referred to in paragraph (1) are inadequate or invalid, the Administrator may not

hire any new employee to work in the Office of Inspection of the Administration until—

(A) the Administrator makes a certification described in subsection (b)(1) to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate; and

(B) the Inspector General submits to such Committees a finding, not later than 30 days after the Administrator makes such certification, that the Administrator utilized adequate and valid data and methods to make such certification.

(b) **TSA OFFICE OF INSPECTION WORKFORCE CERTIFICATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall, by not later than 90 days after the date the Inspector General of the Department provides its findings to the Assistant Secretary under subsection (a)(1), document and certify in writing to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate that only those Office of Inspection employees of the Administration who meet the requirements of sections 8331(20), 8401(17), and 5545a of title 5, United States Code, are classified as criminal investigators and are receiving premium pay and other benefits associated with such classification.

(2) **EMPLOYEE RECLASSIFICATION.**—The Administrator shall reclassify criminal investigator positions in the Office of Inspection of the Administration as noncriminal investigator positions or non-law enforcement positions if the individuals in such positions do not, or are not expected to, spend an average of at least 50 percent of their time performing criminal investigative duties.

(3) **PROJECTED COST SAVINGS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall estimate the total long-term cost savings to the Federal Government resulting from the implementation of paragraph (2), and provide such estimate to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate by not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) **CONTENTS.**—The estimate described in subparagraph (A) shall identify savings associated with the positions reclassified under paragraph (2) and include, among other factors the Administrator considers appropriate, savings from—

(i) law enforcement training;

(ii) early retirement benefits;

(iii) law enforcement availability and other premium pay; and

(iv) weapons, vehicles, and communications devices.

(c) **STUDY.**—Not later than 180 days after the date that the Administrator submits the certification under subsection (b)(1), the Inspector General of the Department shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a study—

(1) reviewing the employee requirements, responsibilities, and benefits of criminal investigators in the Office of Inspection of the Administration with criminal investigators employed at agencies adhering to the Office of Personnel Management employee classification system; and

(2) identifying any inconsistencies and costs implications for differences between the varying employee requirements, responsibilities, and benefits.

SEC. 203. REPEAL OF BIENNIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENT FOR THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE RELATING TO THE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY INFORMATION SHARING PLAN.

Subsection (u) of section 114 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by—

(1) striking paragraph (7); and

(2) redesignating paragraphs (8) and (9) as paragraphs (7) and (8), respectively.

SEC. 204. SECURITY TRAINING FOR FRONTLINE TRANSPORTATION WORKERS.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report regarding the status of the implementation of sections 1408 (6 U.S.C. 1137) and 1534 (6 U.S.C. 1184) of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-53). The Administrator shall include in such report specific information on the challenges that the Administrator has encountered since the date of the enactment of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 with respect to establishing regulations requiring the provision of basic security training to public transportation frontline employees and over-the-road bus frontline employees for preparedness for potential security threats and conditions.

SEC. 205. FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT.

Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a feasibility assessment of partnering with an independent, not-for-profit organization to help provide venture capital to businesses, particularly small businesses, for commercialization of innovative homeland security technologies that are expected to be ready for commercialization in the near term and within 36 months. In conducting such feasibility assessment, the Administrator shall consider the following:

(1) Establishing an independent, not-for-profit organization, modeled after the In-Q-Tel program, a venture capital partnership between the private sector and the intelligence community (as such term is defined in section 3(4) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003(4)), to help businesses, particularly small businesses, commercialize innovative security-related technologies.

(2) Enhanced engagement, either through the Science and Technology Directorate of the Department of Homeland Security or directly, with the In-Q-Tel program described in paragraph (1).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) and the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) each will control 20 minutes. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3584, the Transportation Security Administration Reform and Improvement Act.

This critical bipartisan piece of legislation ensures several congressional oversight priorities for the Transportation Security Administration are addressed, including the authorization of the PreCheck program, the advancement of risk-based security initiatives, the enhancement of aviation worker vetting, and the improvement of airport screening technologies.

H.R. 3584 also takes numerous steps toward augmenting the effectiveness and efficiency of various TSA security programs within both the surface and aviation transportation sectors, and it requires the administrator to conduct an efficiency review of the entire agency.

Since assuming the chairmanship of the Subcommittee on Transportation Security at the beginning of this Congress, I have worked tirelessly with my colleagues to conduct rigorous oversight of this troubled agency. This bill is a direct result of our bipartisan efforts, and I am pleased to stand before you and have the House consider this important legislation.

If signed into law, this legislation will make a direct impact on the safety and security of the traveling public and America's transportation systems. In an era of pronounced and evolving threats to the homeland, Congress must not wait to act in the best interests of transportation security.

Further, the often misdirected nature of the TSA requires that we, as legislators and overseers, fulfill our obligation to reform this fledgling agency into an intelligence-driven organization.

When I came to Congress, I pledged to my constituents that I would work hard to deliver results. I am proud of all the work the Committee on Homeland Security has done over the past year. I am honored to have the privilege to sponsor so many pieces of legislation that are helping to keep our country safe.

I would like to thank Ranking Member RICE and Ranking Member THOMPSON for their time and attention to this important piece of legislation. I would also like to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. McCAUL), the chairman of the full committee, for his continued support of the subcommittee's oversight efforts and for ensuring important pieces of legislation, such as H.R. 3584, are considered on the House floor.

The Committee on Homeland Security's legislative results under the leadership of Chairman McCAUL and Ranking Member THOMPSON are proof that, by working together in a bipartisan fashion, not only can we improve the security of our country, but we can

demonstrate to the American people that Congress can actually work together and deliver results.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in support of H.R. 3584, the Transportation Security Administration Reform and Improvement Act of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that H.R. 3584 includes language authored by Ranking Member BENNIE THOMPSON to direct TSA to move away from how it identifies low-risk passengers for expedited airport screening.

In recent years, both the Department of Homeland Security's inspector general and the comptroller general have been very critical about the security risks of the so-called managed inclusion process. In response, Ranking Member THOMPSON introduced the Securing Expedited Screening Act, which was included in this measure.

We all have an interest in TSA effectively managing airport screening. Ensuring that a robust known-traveler program for low-risk travelers is built into TSA's concept of screening operations just makes sense.

That is why I support the expansion of the PreCheck program, under which expedited screening is provided to travelers who have been fully vetted prior to arriving at the airport.

I am pleased that H.R. 3584 includes provisions to expand the public's enrollment in the PreCheck program by, among other things, coordinating with the private sector to deploy TSA-approved online and mobile enrollment centers.

Another key to the effective management of airport screening is the maintenance of the security equipment. I am pleased that H.R. 3584 includes language authored by Representative RICE, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Transportation Security, to ensure that TSA puts in place systems to ensure that when it comes to security-related technologies at our Nation's airports, timely maintenance is done and documented.

According to the DHS inspector general, without proper maintenance and documentation thereof, the TSA could possibly have to resort to using alternate screening methods, which could lead to the traveling public being less safe.

H.R. 3584 also includes language adopted in the full committee to help businesses, particularly small businesses, to be able to create innovative security technologies through public-private partnerships.

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Over the years, we have seen the limitations of various security tech-

nologies in use at our airports. It is crucial that innovators continue to push the envelope in terms of detection and mitigation capabilities.

Finally, as the Representative of a jurisdiction that relies heavily on mass transit, I am pleased that the bill seeks to ensure that frontline workers in our transportation sectors have the training needed to react in worst-case scenarios. The thwarted terrorist attack on a train traveling from Amsterdam to Paris last year underscores that mass transit continues to be a terrorist target.

Mr. Speaker, these are only a few of the examples of provisions within this bill that will help to improve TSA operations and bolster the security of the American people. I urge support for this measure.

I want to close by noting the bipartisan work that went into this legislation. There is still much to be done in the transportation security space, but the legislation before us represents a step in the right direction to address issues within the surface and aviation transportation sectors.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the issues addressed in H.R. 3584 are of vital concern to the safety of our Nation's security, and it is imperative that we send this bill to the Senate today. Congress cannot afford to wait to address critical issues that help advance and improve our security. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on H.R. 3584, the Transportation Security Administration Reform and Improvement Act, which would authorize, streamline, and identify efficiencies within the Transportation Security Administration.

As a Senior Member of the Homeland Security Committee, I served as chair of this subcommittee and continue to support its work to improve transportation security.

I currently serve as the Ranking Member on the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.

The work of the TSA is a front line Department of Homeland Security and it is not easy—it can in fact be very dangerous.

Like many of my Colleagues, I recall the shooting incident at LAX last year that killed Gerardo Hernandez, who became the first TSA officer killed in the line of duty; and the machete attack at the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport earlier this year that resulted in injuries to Senior Transportation Security Officer Carol Richel.

Each day, TSA processes an average of 1.7 million passengers at more than 450 airports across the nation.

In 2012, TSA screened 637,582,122 passengers.

The Bush Intercontinental and the William P. Hobby Airports are essential hubs for domestic and international air travel for Houston and the region:

Nearly 40 million passengers traveled through Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH) and an additional 10 million traveled through William P. Hobby (HOU).

More than 650 daily departures occur at IAH.

IAH is the 11th busiest airport in the U.S. for total passenger traffic.

IAH has 12 all-cargo airlines handling more than 419,205 metric tons of cargo in 2012.

I believe that Congress has not done all that it could to make employees' work easier—Sequestration, a government shutdown, and a delay in fully funding the Department of Homeland Security was not in the security interest of the nation.

Reports issued by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General (OIG) have identified shortcomings within the Agency, raising questions how effectively TSA is fulfilling its mission.

Allegations about mismanagement, wasteful procedures, retaliation against whistleblowers, low morale, and security gaps within the Agency are causes for concern.

Other issues related to inconsistent requirements between what is written and what employees are told is essential for them to successfully meet the agency's standards for good performance needs work.

The need for attention to TSA administrative procedures and due process within the agency to backstop decisions regarding reprimands or negative actions toward employees can be an essential step in addressing some morale issues that are related to uncertainty regarding the successful performance of duties.

In other words, the same conduct by persons holding the same level of responsibility or positions within an airport results in the same positive or negative outcome.

TSA is charged with: The protection of America's transportation systems; monitoring the movement of people and supplies during their use of our transportation systems; and ensuring the effectiveness and integrity of government agencies.

H.R. 3584, directs the TSA to: ensure that all screening of passengers and their accessible property will be done in a risk-based, intelligence-driven manner with consideration given to the privacy and civil liberties of such passengers; and operate the "TSA PreCheck" program in a manner that provides expedited screening for low-risk passengers and their accessible property based on a comprehensive and continuous analysis of factors.

More needs to be done to support the men and women working on the front lines of our nation's domestic security and that includes those who work at the TSA.

I will continue to seek out opportunities to promote the mission of the TSA and role that TSA professionals fill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3584, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL STRATEGY TO COMBAT TERRORIST TRAVEL ACT OF 2016

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4408) to require the development of a national strategy to combat terrorist travel, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4408

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "National Strategy to Combat Terrorist Travel Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. NATIONAL STRATEGY TO COMBAT TERRORIST TRAVEL.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that it should be the policy of the United States to—

(1) continue to regularly assess the evolving terrorist threat to the United States;

(2) catalogue existing Federal Government efforts to obstruct terrorist and foreign fighter travel into, out of, and within the United States, as well as overseas;

(3) identify such efforts that may benefit from reform or consolidation, or require elimination;

(4) identify potential security vulnerabilities in United States defenses against terrorist travel; and

(5) prioritize resources to address in a risk-based manner any such security vulnerabilities.

(b) NATIONAL STRATEGY AND UPDATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with paragraph (2), the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a national strategy (including, as appropriate, updates to such strategy) to combat terrorist travel. The strategy shall address efforts to intercept terrorists and foreign fighters and constrain the domestic and international travel of such persons. Consistent with the protection of classified information, the strategy shall be submitted in unclassified form, including, as appropriate, a classified annex.

(2) TIMING.—

(A) INITIAL STRATEGY.—The initial national strategy required under paragraph (1) shall be transmitted not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(B) UPDATED STRATEGIES.—Updated national strategies under paragraph (1) shall be transmitted not later than 180 days after the commencement of a new presidential administration.

(3) COORDINATION.—The President shall direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop the initial national strategy and updates required under this subsection and shall direct, as appropriate, the heads of other Federal agencies to coordinate with the Secretary in the development of such strategy and updates.

(4) CONTENTS.—The initial national strategy and updates required under this subsection shall—

(A) include an accounting and description of all Federal Government programs, projects, and activities to constrain domestic and international travel by terrorists and foreign fighters;

(B) identify specific security vulnerabilities within the United States and abroad that may be exploited by terrorists and foreign fighters;

(C) delineate goals for—

(i) closing the security vulnerabilities identified in accordance with subparagraph (B); and

(ii) enhancing the Federal Government's ability to constrain domestic and international travel by terrorists and foreign fighters; and

(D) describe actions to be taken to achieve the goals delineated in subparagraph (C), as well as the means needed to do so, including—

(i) steps to reform, improve, and streamline existing Federal Government efforts to align with the current threat environment;

(ii) new programs, projects, or activities that are requested, under development, or undergoing implementation;

(iii) new authorities or changes in existing authorities needed from Congress;

(iv) specific budget adjustments being requested to enhance United States security in a risk-based manner; and

(v) an identification of Federal departments and agencies responsible for specific actions described in this subparagraph.

(5) SUNSET.—The requirement to transmit updated national strategies under this subsection shall terminate on the date that is seven years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) DEVELOPMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION PLANS.—For each national strategy required under subsection (b), the President shall direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop an implementation plan for the Department of Homeland Security and coordinate with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies to ensure the development of implementing plans for each such agency.

(d) IMPLEMENTATION PLANS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees implementation plans for each national strategy required under subsection (b). Consistent with the protection of classified information, each such implementation plan shall be transmitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(2) TIMING.—The implementation plans referred to in paragraph (1) shall be transmitted simultaneously with each national strategy required under subsection (b). Such implementation plans shall be updated and transmitted to the appropriate congressional committees on an annual basis.

(3) SUNSET.—The requirement to transmit implementation plans under paragraph (1) shall terminate on the date that is ten years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) PROHIBITION ON ADDITIONAL FUNDING.—No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

(f) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(1) in the House of Representatives—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security;

(B) the Committee on Armed Services;

(C) the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence;

(D) the Committee on the Judiciary;

(E) the Committee on Foreign Affairs; and

(F) the Committee on Appropriations; and

(2) in the Senate—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs;

(B) the Committee on Armed Services;

(C) the Select Committee on Intelligence;

(D) the Committee on the Judiciary;

(E) the Committee on Foreign Relations; and

(F) the Committee on Appropriations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a former Federal prosecutor, I have spent much of my life focusing on keeping Americans safe; but when I assumed office, I was taken aback by the lack of a coherent strategy to stop terrorists from infiltrating our country and to keep Americans from being lured to fight with jihadists overseas.

That is why I gladly accepted the opportunity to lead the bipartisan Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel. I worked closely with my colleagues to identify our Nation's top vulnerabilities and to close them quickly.

Last September, we issued the Task Force's final report, marking the most extensive public review since the 9/11 Commission of U.S. efforts to fight foreign terrorist travel. We made 32 key findings and more than 50 recommendations in that report for enhancing our security. I am proud to say that, as of today, we have acted on almost half of those already, including with several of the bills we are considering today.

H.R. 4408 would implement one of our top recommendations. It would require the President to send to Congress a National Strategy to Combat Terrorist Travel and an actionable plan to implement it.

It has been nearly 10 years since the White House produced such a strategy, and since then, the threat has changed dramatically. Terror has gone viral, and violent extremists are recruiting at the speed of a re-tweet.

The consequences for U.S. and international security have been enormous. We have seen terrorist groups balloon into terrorist microstates capable of fielding their own armies. In fact, today in Syria and Iraq, we are witnessing the largest convergence of Islamist terrorists in history.

Reports indicate nearly 40,000 individuals from more than 120 countries have traveled there to join jihadist groups, including thousands from Western countries, like the United States. Many of these individuals have easy access to our country and could potentially return undetected to launch attacks, just as we saw happen in Paris.

Yet, many of the counterterrorism programs we created after 9/11 are not suited for this new era and have not kept pace with the evolving threat. What is worse, there is no regular process in place in the executive branch for reviewing all of our defenses against terrorist travel to find security gaps and develop a plan to close them.

Agencies are operating without clear, strategic guidance, and programs to counter terrorist travel are often not fully coordinated across the government spectrum. The result is that not only are we at greater risk that terrorists will slip through the cracks, but we also are at greater risk of government waste, overlap, and duplication.

This bill would force the administration to assess all of the efforts in place to stop terrorists from crossing borders, streamline them, identify security gaps, and prioritize taxpayer dollars where they are needed most. It would also, for the first time ever, require the White House to produce a plan for intercepting foreign fighters.

After 9/11, we spent a lot of time focused on keeping terrorists from getting into our country, but we did not spend enough time focused on stopping terrorists from recruiting our citizens to leave it and become overseas operatives. Once they travel to terrorist safe havens, these individuals become a triple threat. They strengthen jihadist groups on the ground, incite followers back home to conduct attacks, and can return battle-hardened and prepared to carry out their own acts of violence on their homeland.

Make no mistake: we are at war. ISIS has already been linked to nearly 75 plots against the West, including more than 20 against the U.S. homeland. Our adversaries are clearly dead set on attacking this country. We need to show the American people that we are dead set on defending it.

I am proud of the bipartisan work of the task force and grateful for the close collaboration of Mr. KEATING, Mr. PAYNE, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California on the Democratic side. I would like to especially thank Mr. VELA for his continued support and significant contributions. I am, of course, indebted to my Republican colleagues on the task force for their hard work as well. I also want to thank my personal office assistant Tim Wang and committee staff Tyler Lowe and Katy Flynn for their excellent work on this as well.

I urge all Members to join me in supporting this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4408, the National Strategy to Combat Terrorist Travel Act of 2016.

H.R. 4408 requires the development of a national strategy to combat terrorist travel by bolstering efforts to intercept terrorists and foreign fighters, while also constraining their domestic and international travel.

I applaud the work of the Committee on Homeland Security's Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel.

One of the many findings of the task force's final report was that it has been a decade since the executive branch produced a government-wide plan to constrain terrorist travel. In the years since the issuance of the last government-wide plan in 2006, many programs aimed at restricting or preventing terrorist travel have changed or ended and new programs have been created.

The task force found that hundreds of programs, projects, and initiatives have sprouted up to combat terrorist travel since 9/11, but there is no overarching strategy to coordinate them. Importantly, H.R. 4408 requires that the strategy include an updated, full accounting and description of America's terror travel preventative and protective measures. This accounting should provide a valuable baseline for future efforts to prevent terrorist travel.

H.R. 4408 requires the President to submit to Congress a national strategy focused on disrupting and intercepting terrorists and foreign fighters. The strategy is to include an accounting of all U.S. Government programs to constrain terrorist travel, identify gaps and how they will be closed, and describe actions to eliminate waste, overlap, and duplication of efforts.

The evolving nature of the terrorist threat demands a whole-of-government approach. A national strategy with implementation plans for each Federal agency involved, as H.R. 4408 requires, has the potential to deliver real security advances. As such, I support H.R. 4408, and I urge its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill, H.R. 4408.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4408, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, on that, I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DHS ACQUISITION DOCUMENTATION INTEGRITY ACT OF 2016

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4398) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for requirements relating to documentation for major acquisition programs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4398

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “DHS Acquisition Documentation Integrity Act of 2016”.

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY ACQUISITION DOCUMENTATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 708. ACQUISITION DOCUMENTATION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—For each major acquisition program, the Secretary, acting through the Under Secretary for Management, shall require the head of a relevant component or office to—

“(1) maintain acquisition documentation that is complete, accurate, timely, and valid and that includes, at a minimum—

“(A) operational requirements that are validated consistent with Departmental policy and changes to those requirements, as appropriate;

“(B) a complete lifecycle cost estimate with supporting documentation;

“(C) verification of the lifecycle cost estimate against independent cost estimates, and reconciliation of any differences;

“(D) a cost-benefit analysis with supporting documentation; and

“(E) a schedule, including, as appropriate, an integrated master schedule;

“(2) prepare cost estimates and schedules for major acquisition programs, as required under subparagraphs (B) and (E), in a manner consistent with best practices as identified by the Comptroller General of the United States; and

“(3) submit certain acquisition documentation to the Secretary to produce an annual comprehensive report on the status of departmental acquisitions for submission to Congress.

“(b) WAIVER.—On a case-by-case basis, the Secretary may waive the requirement under paragraph (3) of subsection (a) for a fiscal year if either—

“(1) the program has not—

“(A) entered the full rate production phase in the acquisition lifecycle;

“(B) had a reasonable cost estimate established; and

“(C) had a system configuration defined fully; or

“(2) the program does not meet the definition of capital asset, as such term is defined by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

“(c) CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT.—At the same time the President’s budget is sub-

mitted for a fiscal year under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, the Secretary shall make information available, as applicable, to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate information on the requirement under subsection (a) in the prior fiscal year that includes the following specific information regarding each program for which the Secretary has issued a waiver under subsection (b):

“(1) The grounds for granting a waiver for that program.

“(2) The projected cost of that program.

“(3) The proportion of a component’s or office’s annual acquisition budget attributed to that program, as available.

“(4) Information on the significance of the program with respect to the component’s operations and execution of its mission.

“(d) MAJOR ACQUISITION PROGRAM DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘major acquisition program’ means a Department acquisition program that is estimated by the Secretary to require an eventual total expenditure of at least \$300,000,000 (based on fiscal year 2016 constant dollars) over its lifecycle cost.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101 et seq.) is amended by adding after the item related to section 707 the following new item:

“Sec. 708. Acquisition documentation.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) and the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4398, the Department of Homeland Security Acquisition Documentation Integrity Act.

This legislation requires the Department of Homeland Security to improve management of its major purchases of systems to secure the border, better screen travelers, protect our shores, and other vital missions.

Too often DHS has failed to document what these programs will cost, when they will be complete, and what they will deliver. It is unacceptable to spend billions of taxpayer dollars and not document this important information. H.R. 4398 will help our committee and congressional watchdogs hold the Department accountable, and ensure taxpayers dollars are being spent in an efficient and effective manner.

This bill uses language similar to H.R. 3572, the DHS Headquarters Reform and Improvement Act, which also includes language that would com-

prehensively reform DHS’ acquisition process. H.R. 3572 passed the House unanimously in October of last year, but has yet to be acted upon in the Senate.

This important, bipartisan legislation will improve the oversight and management of billions of taxpayer dollars. It would empower DHS leaders to hold programs accountable, increase transparency for Congress, and require DHS to articulate a roadmap for how it spends billion of dollars to secure America.

Safeguarding Americans’ hard-earned taxpayer dollars is why our constituents sent us to Washington. I urge the Senate to act swiftly on these bills to improve the management of the Department of Homeland Security.

I commend Ranking Member WATSON COLEMAN for her leadership on this issue, and I ask all Members to join me in support of this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4398, the DHS Acquisition Documentation Integrity Act of 2016. I introduced this legislation to ensure that, when it comes to managing acquisitions, the Department of Homeland Security gets the fundamentals right.

H.R. 4398 would require “complete, accurate, timely, and valid” documentation to be maintained for each of the Department’s major acquisition programs. A major acquisition program is defined as one with a life-cycle cost estimated at \$300 million or more.

Later this week, the subcommittee on which I serve as ranking member will be conducting an oversight hearing about an acquisition that is, to my mind, a textbook case of why my legislation is so critical.

After more than 12 years of effort at delivering a Department-wide human resource IT system and the expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars, DHS has virtually nothing to show for it.

□ 1630

That acquisition, the Human Resource Information Technology program, or HRIT, lacked basic acquisition documentation, including a valid cost estimate and schedule.

Under H.R. 4398, DHS would have to maintain current cost estimates and schedules for major acquisition programs. These sources of critical information for acquisition decisionmakers would have to conform to best practices, as identified by the Government Accountability Office.

Additionally, each component head within DHS would be obligated to submit acquisition documentation to the Secretary for the production of an annual comprehensive report to Congress on the status of the acquisition. Under H.R. 4398, the Secretary could only

waive these requirements in very limited circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, for the reasons I have outlined here, I urge support for H.R. 4398.

Mr. Speaker, anything less than an up-to-date acquisition documentation increases the odds of cost and schedule overruns. It also risks delayed delivery of critical capabilities and wastefully depletes resources that could be put to better use to protect the homeland.

The Homeland Security Committee favorably reported H.R. 4398 on February 2 by a unanimous vote, and I thank my colleague for being a part of that.

The fact that this legislation is cosponsored by Representatives MCCAUL and THOMPSON, the chairman and ranking member of our committee, reflects a strong commitment to bolstering the effectiveness of DHS acquisition programs.

I urge passage of H.R. 4398, a bill that will help ensure that DHS is a good steward of taxpayer dollars and can provide DHS operators in the field with the tools they need to protect the American people.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4398.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4398, "DHS Acquisition Documentation Integrity Act of 2016."

I support this bill because it requires the DHS to produce cost estimates and schedules for all major acquisition programs and to maintain complete and accurate documentation of these projects.

Specifically, for all programs expected to cost \$300 million or more over its lifecycle, the department must maintain complete, accurate, timely and valid acquisition documentation.

This bill will set a standard for all programs under DHS to follow and will save programs money and time.

Government Accountability Office (GAO) reviewed 22 major programs in DHS and out of 22 major programs:

1. GAO was unable to access six programs (including four in Customs and Border Protection).

2. The remaining 14 programs experienced schedule slips and cost growths.

On average, these program milestones slipped more than three and a half year, and their life-cycle cost estimates increased by \$9.7 billion, or 18 percent.

As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I believe this act will maintain a standard across the board for programs to follow the Government Accountability Office's (GAO's) best practices.

The Department of Homeland Security is constantly changing to fit the needs of our ever-changing world and there is a need of transparency between the DHS and GAO.

This bill further requires that cost estimates and schedules for major acquisition programs

be consistent with best practices as identified by GAO.

Finally this bill limits the Secretary's authority to waive acquisition documentation requirements for a report to Congress on the status of major acquisition programs.

This sets forth narrow conditions where waivers could be granted for a fiscal year, and requiring the Secretary to report annually to the Congressional homeland-security committees on each use of waiver authority during the preceding fiscal year.

This bill creates an accountability model for the DHS which creates transparency between GAO and DHS and saves programs time and money, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4398.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FOREIGN FIGHTER REVIEW ACT OF 2016

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4402) to require a review of information regarding persons who have traveled or attempted to travel from the United States to support terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4402

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF CERTAIN FOREIGN FIGHTERS.

(a) REVIEW.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President, acting through the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall initiate a review of known instances since 2011 in which a person has traveled or attempted to travel to a conflict zone in Iraq or Syria from the United States to join or provide material support or resources to a terrorist organization. Such review shall—

(1) include relevant unclassified and classified information held by the United States Government related to each instance;

(2) ascertain which factors, including operational issues, security vulnerabilities, systemic challenges, or other issues that may have undermined efforts to prevent the travel of such persons to a conflict zone in Iraq or Syria from the United States, including the timely identification of suspects, information sharing, intervention, and interdiction; and

(3) identify lessons learned and areas for improvement to prevent additional travel by such persons to a conflict zone in Iraq or Syria, or other terrorist safe havens abroad, to join or provide material support or resources to a terrorist organization.

(b) INFORMATION SHARING.—If necessary, the President shall direct the heads of relevant Federal agencies to provide the appropriate information necessary for the Secretary of Homeland Security to complete the review required under subsection (a).

(c) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall, consistent with the protection of classified information, submit to the appropriate congressional committees the results of the review required under subsection (a), which may include information on travel routes of greatest concern.

(d) PROHIBITION ON ADDITIONAL FUNDING.—No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(A) in the House of Representatives—

(i) the Committee on Homeland Security;

(ii) the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence;

(iii) the Committee on the Judiciary;

(iv) the Committee on Armed Services;

(v) the Committee on Foreign Affairs;

(vi) the Committee on Financial Services; and

(vii) the Committee on Appropriations; and

(B) in the Senate—

(i) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs;

(ii) the Select Committee on Intelligence;

(iii) the Committee on the Judiciary;

(iv) the Committee on Armed Services;

(v) the Committee on Foreign Relations;

(vi) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; and

(vii) the Committee on Appropriations.

(2) MATERIAL SUPPORT OR RESOURCES.—The term "material support or resources" has the meaning given such term in section 2339A of title 18, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD) and the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, there have been over 250 cases of Americans attempting to travel to Syria and Iraq in order to support terrorist groups since 2011. Overall, 85 percent of Westerners attempting to join groups like ISIS are succeeding without being apprehended by law enforcement officials.

The ability to make it to a war zone has grave consequences. Those who have been radicalized gain firsthand knowledge and training, making them an even greater threat.

There is a clear breakdown in our ability to identify and then prevent these individuals from leaving the country in the first place. That is why I introduced the Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016.

The bill requires the Department of Homeland Security to study and identify all known foreign fighter travel in an effort to highlight the specific challenges and impediments that law enforcement faces in its attempts to stop individuals from joining terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria.

DHS should already be collecting this kind of data and conducting this type of analysis. The findings from this type of study are crucial to informing Congress on additional steps we can take to improve the security of our Nation. This was a key finding in the bipartisan Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel, of which I was a member.

It is imperative that we get the right information to the right people at the right time to catch those who have been radicalized before they leave the country, not after they have gained combat experience and returned to the homeland. The Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016 is the first step towards getting our law enforcement agencies the tools that they need to do just that.

I urge all Members to join me in supporting this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4402, the Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4402 requires the President, through the Department of Homeland Security, to review information regarding persons who have traveled or attempted to travel from the United States to Syria and Iraq since 2011 to support terrorist organizations. This legislation reflects a recommendation issued by the Committee on Homeland Security's Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel in its final report.

The report found that a large number of U.S. persons have been able to travel to dangerous terrorist safe havens in Iraq and Syria and return to the United States without interdiction. I believe there is a lot to be learned from the instances where we failed to interdict persons who traveled to terrorist safe havens. These "lessons learned" could reveal systematic weaknesses in our security programs and highlight areas for enhancements.

While many Federal agencies have completed individual reviews of cases within their purview, a coordinated and comprehensive interagency after-action review has never been undertaken. H.R. 4402 would require just such a review.

H.R. 4402 has the potential to strengthen coordination across the

Federal Government to help prevent U.S. persons from exploiting vulnerabilities in our security apparatus to travel under the radar to terrorist camps and safe havens in the future. As such, Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of H.R. 4402.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO).

Mr. KATKO. I thank the distinguished gentleman from Texas for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, after having spent much of the last year heading a bipartisan task force with the author of this bill, Mr. HURD, it became clear that we are not winning the fight to keep Americans from being recruited by terrorist groups.

The majority of our citizens who have tried to go to join ISIS have succeeded in doing so. They were not stopped by law enforcement. And while authorities have worked hard and have disrupted serious plots, we have got to do more to shut down the foreign fighter pipeline.

On the House Homeland Security Committee, we are constantly briefed about the new threat streams, the soaring number of terror investigations here at home, and the Americans being lured to fight in places like Syria alongside ISIS.

We cannot simply listen to this information and sit on our hands. We need to act. I commend my colleague for this bill and for implementing one of our important task force recommendations.

We need to conduct a top-to-bottom review of instances where Americans were recruited to fight with jihadist groups abroad, and we need to figure out where we could have done more to stop it. This is why I rise in strong support of H.R. 4402, the Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016. This legislation will ensure that our government takes a hard look at how to better deter, detect, and disrupt terrorist travel, especially when it involves our own citizens.

But this will not be some review that is ordered and then forgotten. The administration is required to return to Congress with the "lessons learned" from these recent cases so that we can fix the problem, rather than allow it to persist.

My colleague has a wealth of knowledge that proved to be invaluable during the past year on the task force when we focused on these issues. I would like to conclude by thanking Mr. HURD for his steadfast leadership, especially on national security issues.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I again urge passage of H.R. 4402, a bill that seeks to improve

the Federal Government's understanding of the circumstances surrounding travel or attempted travel from the U.S. to terrorist safe havens in Syria and Iraq.

Under this measure, the review is to be submitted to Congress within 120 days of enactment. The findings of that review have the potential to inform policymakers as we work to strengthen our ability to prevent travel to terrorist sanctuaries and terrorism at large.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4402. I would like to thank both the gentleman from New York for his leadership on the task force and my colleague from New Jersey for her work on the Homeland Security Committee.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4402 the "Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016," which requires the president, acting through the Homeland Security Secretary, to initiate a review of known instances since 2011 in which a person has traveled or attempted to travel from the United States to a conflict zone in Iraq or Syria to join or provide material support or resources to a terrorist organization.

As a senior member of the House Committee on Homeland Security and the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations, I take seriously threats to the security of the homeland and our responsibility to put in place adequate measures to defeat them.

That is why in the first session of this Congress I introduced H.R. 48 "No Fly for Foreign Fighters Act," which reviews the completeness of the Terrorist Screening Database and the terrorist watch list utilized by the Transportation Security Administration.

I support H.R. 4402 because it would evaluate any flaws in existing programs or procedures that aim to prevent such travel and identify ways to improve their effectiveness.

Since 2011, more than 30,000 foreign fighters from over 100 different countries have traveled to Syria and Iraq to fight for ISIL.

In the last 18 months, the number of foreign fighters traveling to Syria and Iraq has more than doubled.

In the first six months of 2015, more than 7,000 foreign fighters have arrived in Syria and Iraq.

According to a report issued last year by the Committee on Homeland Security's Foreign Fighter Task Force, U.S. officials apprehended less than 20 percent (28/250) of Americans who sought to travel to the region.

The report also found that while information sharing had improved, there is currently no comprehensive global database of foreign fighters.

It is estimated that at 250 persons who have traveled to Syria or Iraq to join ISIS hold American citizenship.

Since these persons who identify with the terrorist aims of ISIS can leave and enter the United States, it is critically important that American customs and security officials have the most accurate and effective terrorist screening tools available.

H.R. 4402 helps address this problem by identifying areas for improvement to prevent additional travel by "Foreign Fighters" to conflict zones in areas such as Iraq, Syria, or other terrorist safe havens abroad, to join or provide material support or resources to a terrorist organization.

Specifically, H.R. 4402 directs the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to conduct a review and report to the Congress on the following:

1. Relevant unclassified and classified information held by the U.S. government related to each instance:

2. The factors including operational issues, security vulnerabilities and systemic challenges that may have undermined efforts to prevent the travel of such persons to a conflict zone in Iraq or Syria, including the timely identification of suspects, information sharing, intervention and interdiction.

3. The lessons learned and areas for improvement to prevent additional travel by such persons to conflict zones or other terrorist safe havens.

The bill also requires the President to direct the heads of relevant federal agencies to provide to the Homeland Security Secretary the information needed to complete the review, which is due within 120 days of enactment.

Mr. Speaker, it is encouraging that progress has been made in preventing individuals inspired by the Islamic State and other Islamic extremist groups to either travel to Syria and Iraq or carry out attacks on U.S. soil, but we need to do more and remain ever vigilant to protect the security of our homeland.

H.R. 4402 is a positive step in the right direction and I urge all Members to support this important legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4402, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro

tempore (Mr. WOMACK) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 4408, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 4402, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The second electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

NATIONAL STRATEGY TO COMBAT TERRORIST TRAVEL ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4408) to require the development of a national strategy to combat terrorist travel, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 392, nays 0, not voting 41, as follows:

[Roll No. 83]

YEAS—392

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishke
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Calvert

Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney

DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Foster
Foxy
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs

Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebach
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowe

Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCauley
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam

Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schiff
Schneider
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Visclosky
Perlmuter
Walberg
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Westerman
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—41

Babin
Blackburn

Buchanan
Butterfield

Byrne
Clyburn

Cook	Grijalva	Richmond
Cummings	Hastings	Roby
Doggett	Herrera Beutler	Rohrabacher
Doyle, Michael	Huizenga (MI)	Rush
F.	Hultgren	Sanchez, Loretta
Duckworth	Kelly (IL)	Schakowsky
Fattah	Lee	Simpson
Fincher	Marchant	Smith (WA)
Fortenberry	Napolitano	Vela
Galleo	Perry	Walden
Grayson	Poe (TX)	Welch
Green, Gene	Price (NC)	Yarmuth

□ 1851

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 83 on February 23, 2016, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, February 23, 2016, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 83. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4408—National Strategy to Combat Terrorist Travel Act of 2016, as amended.

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR VICTIMS OF KALAMAZOO SHOOTINGS

(Mr. UPTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, Michigan has had some tough times lately—Flint and now Kalamazoo—which was rocked this past weekend by terrible random acts of violence that took six lives.

I rise today with my Michigan colleagues to offer support and encouragement for the victims' friends and families. We should continue to keep them in our hearts and in our minds.

I want to thank the countless folks on the front lines who helped prevent this tragedy from, yes, even being worse. The swift actions of those on the ground deserve to be commended, particularly the Kalamazoo Sheriff's Department, led by Sheriff Richard Fuller, Kalamazoo Public Safety Chief Jeff Hadley, and Mayor Bobby Howell.

I ask my colleagues and those who hear this message across the country to pray for the families of the six victims and the recovery of the two injured, including 14-year-old Abigail Kopf of Battle Creek, who is fighting for her life, and Tiana Carruthers of Richland Township, who put herself in front of two children and was shot multiple times.

It is heartbreaking, but we know that our Kalamazoo community can and will recover from this tragedy. We will never forget what happened. We remember the lives of Mary Lou Nye of Baroda; Mary Jo Nye, Dorothy Brown, and Barbara Hawthorne of Battle

Creek; and Tyler Smith and his dad, Richard Smith, of Mattawan.

This tragedy will not define us, it will not divide us, and it will not defeat us. We are Kalamazoo.

I ask that the House pause for a moment of silence in honor of those impacted by the tragic events in Kalamazoo.

FOREIGN FIGHTER REVIEW ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4402) to require a review of information regarding persons who have traveled or attempted to travel from the United States to support terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 397, nays 0, not voting 36, as follows:

[Roll No. 84]

YEAS—397

Abraham	Cárdenas	Denham	Gowdy	Lujan Grisham	Rouzer
Adams	Carney	Dent	Graham	(NM)	Royal-Ballard
Aderholt	Carson (IN)	DeSantis	Granger	Luján, Ben Ray	Royce
Aguilar	Carter (GA)	DeSaulnier	Graves (GA)	(NM)	Ruiz
Allen	Carter (TX)	DesJarlais	Graves (LA)	Lummis	Ruppersberger
Amash	Cartwright	Deutch	Graves (MO)	Lynch	Russell
Amodei	Castor (FL)	Diaz-Balart	Green, Al	MacArthur	Ryan (OH)
Ashford	Castro (TX)	Dingell	Griffith	Maloney,	Salmon
Barletta	Chabot	Doggett	Grothman	Carolyn	Sánchez, Linda
Barr	Chaffetz	Dold	Guinta	Maloney, Sean	T.
Barton	Chu, Judy	Donovan	Guthrie	Marino	Sanford
Bass	Clark (MA)	Duffy	Gutiérrez	Massie	Sarbanes
Beatty	Clarke (NY)	Duncan (SC)	Hahn	Matsui	Scalise
Becerra	Clawson (FL)	Duncan (TN)	Hanna	McCarthy	Schakowsky
Benishek	Clay	Edwards	Hardy	McCaul	Schiff
Bera	Cleaver	Ellison	Harper	McClintock	Schrader
Beyer	Coffman	Ellmers (NC)	Harris	McCollum	Schweikert
Bilirakis	Cohen	Emmer (MN)	Hartzler	McDermott	Scott (VA)
Bishop (GA)	Cole	Engel	Heck (NV)	McGovern	Scott, Austin
Bishop (MI)	Collins (GA)	Eshoo	Heck (WA)	McHenry	Scott, David
Bishop (UT)	Collins (NY)	Esty	Hensarling	McKinley	Sensenbrenner
Black	Comstock	Farenthold	Hice, Jody B.	McMorris	Serrano
Blum	Conaway	Farr	Higgins	Rodgers	Sessions
Blumenauer	Connolly	Fitzpatrick	Hill	McNerney	Sewell (AL)
Bonamici	Conyers	Fleischmann	Himes	McSally	Sherman
Bost	Cooper	Fleming	Hinojosa	Meadows	Shimkus
Boustany	Costa	Flores	Holding	Meehan	Shuster
Boyle, Brendan	Costello (PA)	Forbes	Honda	Meeks	Sinema
F.	Courtney	Fortenberry	Hoyer	Meng	Sires
Brady (PA)	Cramer	Foster	Hudson	Messer	Slaughter
Brady (TX)	Crawford	Fox	Huelskamp	Mica	Smith (MO)
Brat	Crenshaw	Frankel (FL)	Huffman	Miller (FL)	Smith (NJ)
Bridenstine	Crowley	Franks (AZ)	Hunter	Miller (MI)	Smith (TX)
Brooks (AL)	Cuellar	Frelinghuysen	Hurd (TX)	Moolenaar	Speier
Brooks (IN)	Culberson	Fudge	Hurt (VA)	Mooney (WV)	Stefanik
Brown (FL)	Curbelo (FL)	Gabbard	Issa	Moore	Stewart
Brownley (CA)	Davis (CA)	Galleo	Issa	Moulton	Stivers
Buck	Davis, Danny	Garamendi	Jackson Lee	Mullin	Stutzman
Bucshon	Davis, Rodney	Garrett	Jeffries	Mulvaney	Swalwell (CA)
Burgess	DeFazio	Gibbs	Jenkins (KS)	Murphy (FL)	Takai
Bustos	DeGette	Gibson	Jenkins (WV)	Murphy (PA)	Takano
Calvert	DeLaney	Gohmert	Johnson (GA)	Nadler	Thompson (CA)
Capps	DeLauro	Goodlatte	Johnson (OH)	Neugebauer	Thompson (MS)
Capuano	DeBene	Gosar	Johnson, E. B.	Newhouse	Thompson (PA)
			Johnson, Sam	Noem	Thornberry
			Jolly	Nolan	Tiberi
			Jones	Norcross	Tipton
			Jordan	Nugent	Titus
			Joyce	Nunes	Tonko
			Kaptur	O'Rourke	Torres
			Katko	Olson	Trott
			Keating	Palazzo	Tsongas
			Kelly (MS)	Pallone	Turner
			Kelly (PA)	Palmer	Upton
			Kennedy	Pascarella	Valadao
			Kildee	Paulsen	Van Hollen
			Kilmer	Payne	Vargas
			Kind	Pearce	Veasey
			King (IA)	Pelosi	Velázquez
			King (NY)	Perlmutter	Visclosky
			Kinzinger (IL)	Peters	Wagner
			Kirkpatrick	Peterson	Walberg
			Kline	Pingree	Walden
			Knight	Pittenger	Walker
			Kuster	Pitts	Walorski
			Labrador	Pocan	Walters, Mimi
			LaHood	Poliquin	Walz
			LaMalfa	Polis	Wasserman
			Lamborn	Pompeo	Schultz
			Lance	Posey	Waters, Maxine
			Langevin	Price (NC)	Watson Coleman
			Larsen (WA)	Quigley	Weber (TX)
			Larson (CT)	Rangel	Webster (FL)
			Latta	Ratcliffe	Welch
			Lawrence	Reed	Wenstrup
			Lee	Reichert	Westerman
			Levin	Renacci	Westmoreland
			Lewis	Ribble	Williams
			Lieu, Ted	Rice (NY)	Wilson (FL)
			Lipinski	Rice (SC)	Wilson (SC)
			LoBiondo	Richmond	Wittman
			Loeb	Rigell	Womack
			Loeb	Roe (TN)	Woodall
			Lofgren	Rogers (AL)	Yarmuth
			Long	Rogers (KY)	Yoder
			Loudermilk	Rokita	Yoho
			Love	Rooney (FL)	Young (AK)
			Lowenthal	Ros-Lehtinen	Young (IA)
			Lowey	Roskam	Young (IN)
			Lucas	Ross	Zeldin
			Luetkemeyer	Rothfus	Zinke

NOT VOTING—36

Babin	Buchanan	Byrne
Blackburn	Butterfield	Cicilline

Clyburn	Hastings	Roby
Cook	Herrera Beutler	Rohrabacher
Cummings	Huizenga (MI)	Rush
Doyle, Michael	Hultgren	Sanchez, Loretta
F.	Kelly (IL)	Simpson
Duckworth	Marchant	Smith (NE)
Fattah	Napolitano	Smith (WA)
Fincher	Neal	Vela
Grayson	Perry	Whitfield
Green, Gene	Poe (TX)	
Grijalva	Price, Tom	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote) (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1901

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 84 on February 23, 2016, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 84, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, February 23, 2016, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 84. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4402—Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016, as amended.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BABIN. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 83 and 84, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote No. 83 (H.R. 4408) and rollcall vote No. 84 (H.R. 4402). Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on both missed votes.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I request to have it noted in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD that I was unable to vote on Tuesday, February 23, 2016 due to important events in our district in Houston and Harris County, Texas. If I had been able to vote, I would have voted as follows: On passage of H.R. 4408, the National Strategy to Combat Terrorist Travel Act of 2016, as amended, I would have voted "yea." On passage of H.R. 4402, the Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016, as amended, I would have voted "yea."

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3624, FRAUDULENT JOINDER PREVENTION ACT OF 2016

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-428) on the resolution (H. Res. 618) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3624) to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2406, SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-429) on the resolution (H. Res. 619) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2406) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

EXPRESSING THE CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE ANTONIN SCALIA, ASSOCIATE JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 620

Resolved, That the House has heard with profound sorrow of the death of the Honorable Antonin Scalia, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Resolved, That the House tenders its deep sympathy to the members of the family of the late Associate Justice in their bereavement.

Resolved, That the Clerk communicate these resolutions to the Senate and to the Supreme Court and transmit a copy of the same to the family of the late Associate Justice.

Resolved, That when the House adjourns today, it adjourn as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late Associate Justice.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, we are adopting this resolution today in honor of Justice Antonin Gregory Scalia.

His passion, his eloquence, his intelligence, and, indeed, his courageous defense of our Constitution was unmatched. He exemplified how principles should be practiced and served as an irreplaceable beacon and guardian of federalism, of the separation of powers, and of liberty throughout his service on the bench.

Our country has not only lost a great man but a profound man, a principled man, and a good man.

I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER FOR A CEREMONY TO PRESENT THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL COLLECTIVELY TO THE 65TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, KNOWN AS THE "BORINQUENEERS"

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of House Concurrent Resolution 113, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 113

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR CEREMONY TO PRESENT CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO THE BORINQUENEERS.

Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used on April 13, 2016, for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal collectively to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the "Borinqueneers", in recognition of its pioneering military service, devotion to duty, and many acts of valor in the face of adversity. Physical preparations for the conduct of the ceremony shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as the Architect of the Capitol may prescribe.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled bill was signed by the Speaker on Tuesday, February 23, 2016:

H.R. 644, to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE EDEN PRAIRIE GIRLS HOCKEY TEAM

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Eden Prairie Girls Hockey Team for winning the Minnesota High School State championship last weekend.

The Eagles prevailed in a tight contest over Maple Grove in the title game when Lauren Eberle scored the game-winning goal in overtime. The 3-2 victory marks the third State title for Eden Prairie in the last 11 years. Eden

Prairie was led by goals from Anna Gravelle and Rachel Werdin, along with a strong performance between the pipes by Alexa Dobchuk.

Madam Speaker, it takes commitment, it takes hard work, and it takes teamwork and dedication to achieve a State championship. This is even more especially impressive with the amount of time that these student athletes spend together in their studying, excelling in school, and participating in other extracurricular activities.

Congratulations to the players, to the coaches, to the families, and to the fans of the Eden Prairie Girls Hockey Team. Our community is very proud of you.

GUN VIOLENCE

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, there is senseless gun violence.

Over the past weekend in our community, a young man who was 19 years old, who worked in a pizzeria, was gunned down. The story says that, during this robbery, he attempted to respond to the killer's demands. In spite of that, he was gunned down—murdered.

We have listened to the sad but eloquent comments of our colleagues from Michigan of vicious gun violence—of a person with 11 guns in his home. Yes, as many say, people kill; guns don't—but they use guns to kill.

It is time for this Congress, as many police officers have said to me, to get its hands around the rampage of guns and gun violence, of senseless killings, of bad guys—some good guys—killing people with guns. It is important to close the gun show loophole, to be able to use and to demand science and safety restraints.

I am appalled, but I am outraged. Enough is enough of innocent people being killed by gun violence.

THE HOUSE WILL STOP THE CLOSURE OF GUANTANAMO BAY

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. OLSON. Madam Speaker, today, our administration announced that they would go against the American people and shut down Guantanamo Bay Cuba, GTMO.

The detainees being held at GTMO are there for one reason—our Constitution.

The administration wants to give the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the same constitutional rights he took from nearly 3,000 innocent Americans whom he killed on September 11, 2001. All of the detainees at GTMO were captured by our military on the battleground, not by the

police. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed was never told he had the right to remain silent when he was captured. Does he go free? Is there another loophole to his freedom?

Our administration's actions are against the will of the American people and are dangerous. This House and I will stop them.

BOKO HARAM

(Ms. WILSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is Wear Red Wednesday to Bring Back Our Girls.

Right now, many female victims in Nigeria escaped the sexual violence of Boko Haram only to face ill treatment and mistrust in their communities. Even worse, the children who are the result of rape are scorned, deemed born of bad blood.

We must do what we can to ensure that the next generation of Nigerians is free of Boko Haram. I am pleased I will be joining the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade of the Committee on Foreign Affairs tomorrow as it holds a hearing on Boko Haram. I hope the rest of the Congress will also wake up to Boko Haram's atrocities. The girls are still alive, but are still missing.

Please continue to tweet, tweet, tweet #bringbackourgirls and to tweet, tweet, tweet #joinrepwilson.

Remember to wear something red every Wednesday. It can be shoes, a belt, a flower, a tie, a handkerchief, jewelry—anything. Just wear something red. We cannot forget the violence in Nigeria by Boko Haram.

HONORING PENN STATE DANCE MARATHON

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the annual Penn State Dance Marathon, or "THON," which was held over the past weekend on Pennsylvania State University's main campus in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District.

THON is the largest student-run philanthropy in the world, raising funds and awareness for the battle against pediatric cancer.

Since 1977, THON has raised more than \$127 million for the Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital. Each year, people from across Pennsylvania and even the Nation gather at the Bryce Jordan Center for THON, including Penn State students, university alum, and the parents and the children who have been impacted by childhood cancer.

To the organizers of this wonderful event, I want you to know just how proud I am of your efforts. It was just announced that this year's dance marathon raised nearly \$9.8 million.

I continue to be amazed by the good works of this student-run organization, and I wish them the best of luck in their planning for next year.

□ 1915

CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD

(Mr. LARSON of Connecticut asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend the Bipartisan Policy Center for establishing the Congressional Patriot Award and naming SAM JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS as its first recipients.

On March 15, at the Library of Congress, with David Rubenstein presiding, we will talk about their extraordinary lives and their contributions to this institution; wherein, they will be given a medal in their names which forevermore will be perpetuated by this body where both a Democrat and a Republican will receive this distinguished award based on the patriotism that they provided to their Nation.

I cannot think of two more exemplary figures in this body than SAM JOHNSON, who was nearly beaten to death in the Vietcong and imprisoned for 7 years, 42 months of solitary confinement, and JOHN LEWIS, who was nearly beaten to death by the Alabama police after crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

Please join us at the Library of Congress. We will be here on the floor every day with my co-chair, TOM COLE, to talk about this great event in their honor.

SUPPORTING GUARDIAN HANDS FOUNDATION'S 3RD ANNUAL WALK AGAINST RARE DISEASES

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to support the Guardian Hands Foundation in its 3rd Annual Walk Against Rare Diseases, taking place this Sunday, February 28th, in Hialeah Gardens.

In the United States, a disease is considered rare if it impacts less than 200,000 people, but there are over 7,000 recognized rare diseases.

So, when taken as a whole, nearly 1 in 10 Americans are living with a rare disease. Nearly 50 percent of those, Mr. Speaker, are children with rare diseases. How tragic.

The Guardian Hands Foundation continues to raise awareness about the

unique experiences of South Floridians impacted by rare diseases, and it serves as an important voice of hope and inspiration for families across our area.

So please come and enjoy some wonderful exercise this weekend. Join our community at the 3rd Annual Walk Against Rare Diseases.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today is our first opportunity to remember and honor the life and legacy of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, with a further tribute tonight by Congresswoman BARBARA COMSTOCK of Virginia.

I am grateful for Justice Scalia's lifetime of service to our country and his dedication to protecting and defending the Constitution. In the nearly three decades he served on the Supreme Court, he was renowned for his brilliant opinion, sharp wit, and engaging debate with attorneys.

His dedication to a strict interpretation of the Constitution never wavered, and he was beloved by his colleagues on the Court. He promoted the real constitutional intent, for judges to interpret the law, not legislating undermining democracy.

Nominated by President Ronald Reagan in 1986 and confirmed unanimously by the Senate, Justice Scalia was the Court's voice for opinions that upheld conservative values, such as the District of Columbia v. Heller, defending the right to bear arms by the Second Amendment.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Maureen, their children, and grandchildren.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

GUANTANAMO BAY

(Mr. ROONEY of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in response to President Obama's announcement of his plans to close the Guantanamo Bay detention facility and transfer the detainees to the United States.

We, as a Congress, made our position on the closing of Guantanamo Bay clear when we passed—and the President signed—the defense authorization and appropriations bills for 2016, which explicitly prohibit the President from closing the facility or transferring any of the detainees to the United States.

Additionally, on October 1, I joined 15 of my House colleagues who have

served or continue to serve in the military in sending a letter to the Joint Chiefs of Staff requesting that they acknowledge that the execution of any proposal put forth by the President to close GTMO would be in violation of Federal law.

In response to the letter, the Joint Chiefs of Staff confirmed that the "current law prohibits the use of funds to 'transfer, release, or assist in the transfer or release' of detainees from Guantanamo Bay to or within the United States" and that they "will not take any action contrary to those restrictions."

Mr. Speaker, the President's primary function is to enforce the law, not break it. Moving KSM to the United States and availing him to our courts to fulfill personal, political goals is not only irresponsible, but potentially extremely reckless.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

(Mr. DOLD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize February as American Heart Month.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. Every 43 seconds, someone in the United States dies of a heart attack. Fortunately, research has determined actions we can take to prevent this disease and other heart conditions.

As a member of the Fitness Caucus here in the House of Representatives, I work to promote an active lifestyle as a preventive measure for many diseases, including heart disease.

High blood pressure often shows no signs or symptoms, which is why having your blood pressure checked regularly is very important. It is easy to get your blood pressure checked.

You can get it screened at your doctor's office and drugstores. You could even check it yourself at home using a home blood pressure monitor.

The CDC and their Million Hearts effort is aiming to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes in the United States by 2017. To do that, they are encouraging Americans to make control their goal. If you know you have high blood pressure, ask your doctor what your blood pressure should be and set a goal. Together we can raise awareness and save lives.

PHILLIP RIGGS RECEIVES MUSIC EDUCATOR AWARD

(Mr. WALKER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand today to recognize my constituent, Phillip Riggs, who was the

recipient of the third annual Music Educator Award presented by the GRAMMY Foundation.

The Music Educator Award was established to recognize current educators who have made a significant contribution to the field of music education. Phillip was selected out of 4,500 nominations submitted from all 50 States.

Phillip is a native of Mount Airy, North Carolina, and is currently the music instructor at the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics in Durham, North Carolina.

Phillip was exposed to music in other traditional ways as well. His father was a leader of the church choir during childhood.

Phillip is also the recipient of the Exceptional Contribution in Outreach Award presented annually by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors.

Thank you, Mr. Riggs, for representing North Carolina honorably, for your tremendous career in music education, and for inspiring musicians across our State and our Nation.

GUANTANAMO BAY

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the safety and security of every single American, and I stand in opposition to the President's plan to close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Let me be clear. Bringing the world's most dangerous terrorists to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, or anywhere in the United States is a request that Congress cannot and shall not honor.

The President, however, continues to try to move forward on this in spite of vocal American opposition and bipartisan legislation that this Congress has passed and that this President has signed into law which prohibits bringing these known terrorists onto American soil and closing the facility in Cuba.

Mr. Speaker, nothing changes today. We will not put our national security at risk. We will not unilaterally disarm ourselves in the war on terror, voluntarily giving up intelligence-gathering capabilities and putting our communities in the cross-hairs of terrorists.

What we simply ask is that the President, as Commander in Chief, execute the law and follow the Constitution. That's why, as a Congress, we must stand up and do everything in our power to stop the administration's transfer of these terrorists to American soil and to stop the President from closing the Guantanamo Bay facility.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF SUPREME COURT JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POLIQUIN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, this Special Order is meant to honor the life and three decades of service of Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court Antonin Scalia.

Justice Scalia was a person of great joy, great intellect, great wit, and great faith. Our Nation suffered a tremendous loss on February 13 with the passing of Justice Antonin Scalia.

My husband Chip and I, my parents, and our children are deeply saddened by the passing of our friend, our neighbor, and, of course, a legal legend. He was a courageous advocate for the rule of law and the Constitution.

Justice Scalia and his wife, Maureen, raised an incredible family of 9 children and 36 grandchildren, and we have been so privileged to know and love them.

Justice Scalia was both a larger-than-life Justice, who leaves a profound legacy in the law, as well as a down-to-earth husband, father, grandfather, and absolutely delightful friend who loved his Lord and God, his wife and family, the law, the opera, his country, hunting, and a good laugh.

We have all heard the stories of his friendship across the ideological spectrum, none more famous than his friendship with Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Justice Scalia explained: "If you can't disagree ardently with your colleagues about some issues of law and yet personally still be friends, get another job, for Pete's sake."

Justice Ginsburg explained: "As annoyed as you might be about his zinging dissent, he's so utterly charming, so amusing, so sometimes outrageous, you can't help but say 'I'm glad that he's my friend or he's my colleague.'"

Justice Scalia was a shining example of fidelity, as he was ever-faithful to his oath to the law, to his family, and to his God.

He was celebrated by so many in the legal community. He was a revered mentor to the dozens and dozens of clerks who lined the steps of the Supreme Court last Friday in his honor. And every one of them, no doubt, had a

story that had profound legal discussions in it but also ended with a good laugh.

He simply will be irreplaceable and leaves a legacy that will be consequential, discussed, and debated for the ages.

On the personal front, his life was also a great and consequential life. Justice Scalia married his wife of over 55 years, Maureen, in 1960. They were set up on a blind date. He told one author that Maureen was "the product of the best decision I ever made."

His nine children—nine, how appropriate for a Supreme Court Justice—were split five and four, five boys, four girls. They became lawyers, a priest, a poet, an Army major, and parents themselves of those wonderful 36 grandchildren.

Justice Scalia proudly gave the lion's share of the credit for raising this large brood to the resourceful, talented, and very smart love of his life, Maureen, who, as her son Paul said in the homily, matched him at every step. Justice Scalia said about his children "and there's not a dullard in the bunch."

His son, Father Paul Scalia, was the celebrant for his father's beautiful funeral mass with the assistance of dozens of priests at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception this past Saturday.

Father Paul began his moving homily saying: "We are gathered here because of one man, a man known personally to many of us, known only by reputation to many more; a man loved by many, scorned by others; a man known for great controversy and for great compassion. That man, of course, is Jesus of Nazareth."

□ 1930

Father Paul continued: "In the past week, many have recounted what Dad did for them. But here today we reflect what God did for Dad, how He blessed him."

Father Paul explained how his father understood that the deeper he went into his Catholic faith, the better a citizen and public servant he became. That faith now inspires his children and grandchildren and generations to come of the Scalia family and the so many lives he touched and influenced.

Justice Scalia also had a rich tenor voice that intimidated many who came before the Court in front of him, but as his son Christopher explained, it was also perfect for reading stories to his grandchildren. His rendition of "The Night Before Christmas" was an annual tradition. He also led many sing-alongs at parties, played the piano, and also that singing would go on and on for their long car rides.

Pictures with his children and grandchildren cover the walls and the end tables and the piano of the Scalia home, and in any picture with one or more of those children or grandchildren or with

his beloved Maureen, Justice Scalia would always be beaming whenever he was around his family.

An only child himself, he loved that he gave his children the gift of many brothers and sisters. No doubt that is a great solace to all of them now, as well as a source of great strength and support for their mother.

May God bless Justice Antonin Scalia, a good and faithful son, and may God bless his wife, Maureen, and their entire family, and the scores and scores of their friends and his colleagues and the millions more of admirers, and may God bless the country that he so loved.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I especially thank Congresswoman COMSTOCK for leading this tribute to Justice Scalia.

The Nation's legal lights faded recently with the loss of the great Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, but they will not be dimmed for long, for Justice Scalia left a legacy of illumination that will continue far beyond his mortal years.

Although Justice Scalia is no longer with us on Earth, his cogent, witty, and plain-spoken writings will continue to educate law students and good citizens everywhere for centuries to come.

Justice Scalia was no mere legal technician. He was a deep thinker who had an uncommon knack for crystallizing powerful ideas into trenchant, lasting prose. The journey on which he led his readers was always a joy, always compelling, because Justice Scalia always made clear where the path started.

He once said: "More important than your obligation to follow your conscience, or at least prior to it, is your obligation to form your conscience correctly." And for Justice Scalia, as with morality, so it was with the law. Justice Scalia always made sure he built his argument on a solid foundation: the Constitution, the supreme law of the land.

As a strong defender of the rule of law, he was a gentle legal giant. Like all great educators, Justice Scalia was respectful of others, regardless of their differing views. "I attack ideas," he once said. "I don't attack people. And some very good people have some very bad ideas. And if you can't separate the two, you gotta get another day job." That is a life lesson for all of us who engage in any debates and the ideas that undergird them.

In that spirit, Justice Scalia often said: "My best buddy on the Court is Ruth Bader Ginsburg, has always been," and Justice Ginsburg's moving tribute to her own best buddy should reduce every bitter partisan to tears.

Throughout his life, Justice Scalia correctly inveighed against the notion of a living Constitution, the misguided idea that the Constitution's text and original meaning somehow shifted this way and that with changes in popular attitudes.

Justice Scalia said:

That's the argument of constitutional flexibility and it goes something like this: The Constitution is over 200 years old, and societies change. It has to change with society, like a living organism, or it will become brittle and break. But . . . the Constitution is not a living organism; it is a legal document. It says some things and doesn't say other things.

As a lifetime-appointed Supreme Court Justice, Justice Scalia, like all other lifetime-appointed judges, had the opportunity to effectively alter the meaning of the Constitution if he wanted and could garner the support of four of his colleagues. But like George Washington refusing the crown offered him, Justice Scalia rejected the notion the Supreme Court should impose its own preferred policies on the country through strained constitutional interpretations.

Instead, Justice Scalia was an ardent defender of democracy, representative democracy. As he said: "If you think aficionados of a living Constitution want to bring you flexibility, think again. You think the death penalty is a good idea? Persuade your fellow citizens to adopt it. You want a right to abortion? Persuade your fellow citizens and enact it. That's flexibility."

Justice Scalia's respect for article I of the Constitution, the article that begins with these words, "All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives," that article, which clearly sets forth the powers of the Congress to legislate, not the executive branch and not the courts, is one of Justice Scalia's greatest legacies.

As much as Justice Scalia will be remembered as an able critic of the notion of a living Constitution, he will be remembered for his own living dissents, and many majority opinions, which will live forever in the hearts and minds of lovers of the law in America and around the world.

Thank you, Justice Scalia.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. I thank the gentleman for his remarks.

I yield to my friend, the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER).

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my dear friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Virginia, BARBARA COMSTOCK, for organizing this Special Order and for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, Father Paul Scalia said in his beautiful eulogy of his father, Justice Antonin Scalia, on Saturday: "We give thanks that Jesus brought him to new life in baptism, nourished him with the Eucharist, and healed

him in the confessional. God blessed Dad with a deep Catholic faith, the conviction that Christ's presence and power continue in the world today through His body, the Church."

Mr. Speaker, last week our country lost one of its most outspoken and dedicated defenders of faith and liberty. For nearly 30 years, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia stood as a monument to a faith-based viewpoint on the Constitution that will be sorely missed.

There is no one in the history of our country who better protected the original intent of our Constitution and upheld the God-given rights of all Americans than Justice Scalia.

Shown by his fierce dedication to defending our Constitution, from protecting Americans from government intrusion to protecting the rights of the unborn, Justice Scalia was a man of conviction, a man of passion, and a man of integrity.

His honor and vigilance toward the original meaning of the Constitution and his historic dissents will ring throughout history. Every single ounce of Justice Scalia's heart and soul was devoted to our country, his faith, and his family. His wit, his candor, and his character will be missed on our Nation's highest Court. The legacy of Justice Scalia must never be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, I stand committed today to ensure we continue to prioritize faith and freedom in this country, protecting our natural-born rights as citizens of the United States of America. It is simply the right thing to do.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. I thank the gentlewoman for her remarks.

I yield to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY).

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

When I was informed of the Justice's death, it came across my electronic devices. I texted my wife back home, and I said: I just want to cry.

I had the extraordinary privilege of getting to know the Justice on a more personal basis. In western Nebraska there is a large outcropping. It is called Chimney Rock. Chimney Rock was the place that marks the halfway point across America. When the settlers crossed the great country, when they got to Chimney Rock, they knew that they were halfway along their journey.

In the shadow of that rock, just this last December, I was in a duck blind with Justice Scalia who, as we all know, had that as an avocation. When you spend a couple of days in a duck blind with somebody, it is a bonding experience. You get to know them more personally.

In my own reflections about what Chimney Rock meant to the country, a bridge between the past and the future, I thought it appropriately captured the character, the nature, the wisdom of the great Justice.

He was a great student of American history, our legal system, a great protector of the Constitution and precedents. He understood how important it was to act in a consistent manner with principle while looking forward and applying that principle in ever-changing circumstances of American life. Because he did so with continuity and with consistency, he was a man of great integrity. His inner voice matched his outer voice.

When we saw this beautiful outpouring of support at his funeral from people all across the political aisle, I think the common narrative there was a deep respect for this great man.

Mr. Speaker, when he died, I felt like America lost her grandfather. He was a soaring intellect, had an incisive wit, and had in a certain sense a humble personality. He loved to share a joke. For me to have the privilege of spending some time in a personal intimate setting with him I count as an extraordinary privilege of my time in public service.

May God rest his soul. May God grant him peace. May God continue to bless the United States of America and give us all the strength to continue to think through how we are going to elevate and form the next generation of Americans who can apply themselves in such an extraordinary, sacrificial way as Justice Scalia did.

I remember one other comment I wanted to leave with you. I remember when the Justice asked me: How many children do you have? You beautifully talked about how he was so devoted to his family and faith. He asked me, knowing that I knew he had nine, he asked me how many children. I said: I have five.

He paused. He said: Respectable.

That was it.

I thank the gentlewoman from Virginia for her beautiful remarks and for giving me this moment to honor this great American.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. I thank the gentleman for his lovely remarks. Five is a good start, right, getting to that nine.

I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. I especially thank her for arranging this Special Order tonight in memory of Justice Scalia, who was truly a legal giant. He was a man who surpassed all of the intellects that I have been aware of in my lifetime. Certainly no one in the legal profession has demonstrated more of a love for the law, more respect for the law, and more respect for the original intent of the Constitution.

Now, I have nowhere near the personal contact with Justice Scalia that the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) did or the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY). I did meet him on a number of occasions. I

had the opportunity to speak with him. Usually our conversations consisted of talking about the fact that we lived in working class neighborhoods in Queens. We grew up about a mile apart from each other. We both attended Jesuit high schools. That is about where the comparison ended as far as the Jesuit high schools, because he was val- edictorian and I was far from it. He was a person who had the strength of some- body from the neighborhood, but he had the scholar's intellect.

□ 1945

He had an intellect that went beyond tremendous intelligence. It was an intel- lect that was shaped and framed by his deep religious faith and a belief in undiminished, lasting, and immutable principles. That is what reflected throughout his opinions. Yet he never let his own feelings or prejudices influ- ence his thinking.

That was certainly proven in the flag burning case. If there is anyone who loved his country and would oppose the concept of the act of flag burning, it was Justice Scalia. Yet he upheld the act as an expression of free speech, as much as it pained him.

Something that many of us in poli- tics and government have a hard time doing is following the letter of the law, following the intent of the law, and fol- lowing the meaning of the law. Some- how, we like to put in our own feelings and beliefs. The fact is Justice Scalia told us that there is a higher principle than that.

Also he had such a respect for lan- guage. There were no easy words thrown about. There were no escape clauses or phrases. There was an intent and purpose and meaning to everything that he did. To read his opinions, whether in the majority—and knowing that he was in the majority made us feel much better—or in his dissents, you realized, again, how determined he was, how forceful he was, and how com- mitted he was to arriving at the cor- rect decision—one which, again, fol- lowed the original intent of the Con- stitution.

There were several references by BARBARA COMSTOCK to his funeral serv- ice on Saturday. Again, it was an ex- pression by so many people of their love and respect for such an out- standing human being, a person whom I doubt we will ever see the likes of again—certainly, in our lifetimes.

He was a giant of the law. He was a giant of his faith. He was a giant of his country. I am proud to join with all of my colleagues tonight—especially BAR- BARA COMSTOCK, who arranged this Special Order—in honoring the mem- ory of Justice Scalia and hoping that that memory lives forward to carry out his unmatched love for the law, love for his country, and love for his family and his religion.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. I thank the gen- tleman from New York for his kind

words and for bringing a New York fla- vor here to such a wonderful man.

I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER).

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Virginia for taking the initiative to honor such a great man.

In 1986, Antonin Scalia was nomi- nated. I was a junior in high school. I am not sure it really resonated to me at the time what the next 30 years would entail. I believe it is safe to say that not only is he one of the strongest conservative voices of our day, but he could be of all time.

I think of his life and I think of the example that he left for all of us, whether in politics or not. It is one thing to be conservative; it is another thing to be effective. He showed with his life that he did not have to compromise his principles or his values to be effec- tive.

When I look at his peers around him, Justice Ginsburg many times talked about the friendship and the relation- ship she had with him. It was genuine. He took Justice Kagan hunting. He taught her how to hunt. She killed her first big deer with Justice Scalia at her side. What does that tell me? It tells me something that we need to remem- ber: you can connect with people, you can hold your values, but you can have a genuine love for your fellow man.

There is much to be said about Antonin Scalia's faith. Obviously, he lived it, but he lived it in a way that set an example for all of us. Yes, we get frustrated. It is okay to be angry—sometimes vertically, but never hori- zontally—with our coworkers, our friends, our neighbors, and our family.

He set the mark. He set it high. He was someone that could work in, argu- ably, the toughest environment in the world, yet still gain the respect of his political archrivals. For that, I thank him. Tonight, I honor him for showing us how to be both conservative and ef- fective.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. I thank the gen- tleman for his remarks.

I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM).

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative COMSTOCK for orga- nizing this tonight.

I just have a quick personal story, Mr. Speaker.

Justice Scalia's daughter, Ann, lives in my neighborhood. I served in the State legislature, and I learned that this woman whose last name, obvi- ously, was no longer Scalia, was the daughter of Justice Scalia. So I called her up, and I said: If your dad is ever in town, I would love to meet him.

I was that guy, Mr. Speaker, who made that call, and she was very gra- cious.

Sometime later, she called me up and said: PETER, my dad is coming in. Why don't you and your family stop by.

So the Roskams ran around the cor- ner. My wife, Elizabeth, myself, and my four children, who were young at the time, went over and spent a few minutes on a Sunday afternoon with Justice Scalia. He was very magnani- mous and very gracious in his blue jeans and sweatshirt, getting up off the couch, but extending himself to us.

A couple of years later, I won a seat in the U.S. House. I thought: Well, I have got a little bit of a connection. I will reach out and call him and try to make a courtesy call.

I made some contact with his cham- bers and his staff and they said: Well, would you like to come over and listen to an argument?

As a new Member of Congress, I said: I would love to go over.

So, over I go and listen to an argu- ment in the Supreme Court. It is very dramatic, as you know. I was walking out feeling a little bit let down because I actually wanted to say hello to Jus- tice Scalia. But not to be disappointed, his staff said: Come on with us.

So I went up to his office, and there in his chambers he set out a lunch. The two of us had lunch together.

Now, who I was having lunch with was not lost on me. The magnitude, the scale, the capacity of this man and his ability to influence things on a grand scale was not lost on me. Yet he was really willing to spend some time with me that day.

I have got to tell you one other quick story.

A few years ago, I invited him to din- ner. I said: Justice Scalia, I have got a number of my colleagues that would love to have dinner with you. Would you be willing to come out?

Of course, he did.

I told my wife afterward: This guy is so interesting and so charming, if he had a radio show, you would listen to it. You would set your timer so that you could listen to him.

He was so interesting, so clever, and so quick and willing to take all kinds of questions and all kinds of debate and so forth.

I just want to close by saying this. There are many, many times when we feel overwhelmed by events that are before us in our public life. There are many times when our constituents feel overwhelmed and they get this sense of: Is there anybody out there that has got some level of judgment and wisdom and capacity here? Are there any ex- amples and role models?

The answer is: Justice Scalia. He is an example. He is an example that we are all the beneficiaries of: his clear mind; his capacity to disagree without being disagreeable; his capacity to build people up; his capacity to articu- late a world view; his capacity to be a faithful and vocal follower of his sav- ior, Jesus, and not be defensive about it; and to basically invite people along to celebrate and to participate in this great gift, which is our democracy.

Even in these short interactions that I had with him, you always got the sense—or, I did—that he got the joke. In other words, there was a twinkle in his eye.

This is a democracy and we have got roles to play. His role on the Court was to do his thing. Our role, Mr. Speaker, is to legislate with that same sense of commitment and character and tenacity and clarity that Justice Scalia brought to his role on the judiciary.

So, I want to honor Justice Scalia. I want to honor his wife, Mrs. Scalia. I want to honor his children and grandchildren. I thank them, because it is a sacrifice for them to have someone of that caliber and that capacity in that role for our country. It is not a burden that is easy, but they have been willing to bear that burden. Our country is better off for it.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. I thank the gentleman for those lovely memories.

In the outpouring that we saw in his passing, one of the pictures that I saw from a neighbor was a picture of Justice Scalia, who was probably coming home for a long day at work, and some children on our street had a lemonade stand. He had stopped and gotten out there to support those little entrepreneurs. The mom came out and took a picture of them. He was there beaming with those kids, in his suit, all dressed up, and these little kids are there with their lemonade stand and so proud.

He really did take the time that my friend, Mr. ROSKAM, spoke about and really just engaged and loved life so much.

I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS).

Mr. DESANTIS. I thank my colleague from Virginia for organizing this fitting tribute to somebody who really, really did make a difference.

Very few people who serve not only in the judiciary, but really at any level of government, leave the lasting mark that Antonin Scalia did. He will join the likes of John Marshall, Joseph Story, and Robert Jackson as one of the all-time greats in American law.

I think of all the great things you can say about him. He was sharp, he was witty, and he wrote brilliantly. I think the reason why he is a titan of modern American law is because he insisted on discharging the judicial duty in a way that strengthened our overall constitutional order.

He insisted on textualism when you are interpreting statutes. He had an originalist outlook when you are talking about the constitutional interpretation. Those frames of reference really vindicated the separation of powers.

The judicial power under Article III is to decide cases and controversy. So you have cases before you that you have got to decide. It is not to go out and be a roving superlegislature. It is not to impose your philosophy on society. You decide cases.

So, once judges free their decision-making from the objective meaning of the law in the Constitution, they are taking away power belonging to the American people that should be exercised through their Representatives. Justice Scalia always understood that. He was always insistent that judges have an objective standard when they are discharging their duty.

When you talk about textualism, you read the statute for what it says. You don't correct the statute. You don't amend the statute. You don't find subjective views of some random legislature who happened to say something in a committee hearing. You actually apply the words as written. That is the judicial task.

When you do that, you are basically vindicating the power of the Congress and of the people's elected Representatives, because they are the ones that wrote the law. If the courts depart from that, then they are departing from what the elected Representatives did.

I am sure he saw countless statutes that were asinine as a matter of policy, but he said: That is not my job to correct that. So he is absolutely vindicating the separation of powers in the constitutional order.

The same thing with constitutional interpretation. Before Justice Scalia took the bench, this was a freewheeling thing. Judges would say: Society matures and it is up to us to, effectively, update the meaning of the Constitution.

That means you have five lawyers—unelected, unaccountable—that serve as an effective roving constitutional convention that can change the Constitution based on one case that happens to come in front of them.

That was something that Justice Scalia thought was totally outside the bounds of the proper judicial role. He says the Constitution has a fixed, enduring meaning, and it is our job as judges to ascertain that meaning and apply it to the cases and controversies before us.

So, if you look at a figure that has had more impact on how we think about the law and the Constitution over the last 50 years, you are not going to find one that surpasses Justice Antonin Scalia. He was a great American in every respect. He fought the good fight. He finished the race. He kept the faith. What a good guy. What a life.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. I thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from Virginia, for organizing this Special Order on behalf of this remarkable, remarkable American.

On February 13 of this year, our country lost a giant. His legacy will never fade. Justice Scalia influenced

countless jurists, attorneys, law students, and everyday Americans. My thoughts and prayers have been with his wife, Maureen, Father Paul, and the entire Scalia family since the passing of this outstanding American statesman.

Regardless of whether one agreed with his opinions on the Supreme Court, this man's consistent integrity and admirable character cannot be denied. In both word and action, he was a man of the strongest character and deepest virtue.

□ 2000

This was evident in the commencement address he gave to the graduating class of the College of William and Mary in 1996, when he said: "Bear in mind that brains and learning, like muscle and physical skill, are articles of commerce. They are bought and sold. You can hire them by the year or by the hour. The only thing in the world that is not for sale is character."

The way he lived out the virtues of integrity and humility did not go unnoticed.

Several weeks ago, we here in Washington had the opportunity to go to the National Prayer Breakfast, which attracted Members of Congress, the President, Senators, Ambassadors, people from all over the world, and we were treated with an appearance by famed tenor Andrea Bocelli.

I think that Justice Scalia would have enjoyed his appearance and his appreciation for opera.

In addition to his wonderful renditions of "Panis Angelicus," which, again would have been another treat for Justice Scalia, and "Amazing Grace," Mr. Bocelli lamented the dark shadow that war casts on the world and expressed concern for its victims, identifying war as a major problem in our world today.

But then it was interesting. Mr. Bocelli stated: "There is that small, hateful word, 'hubris,' already known in antiquity." The ancient Greeks used it to define pride and the arrogance it entails.

Bocelli's use of the word "hubris" was compelling in that he spoke it in the center of power here in the United States.

That word conjures a theme that we have seen in Justice Scalia's work. Justice Scalia went about his task of considering significant constitutional and legal issues of the day with a profound and seldom seen humility about the role of courts in our country.

They are not there to impose their own beliefs on the people, but to adjudicate competing claims in the context of a Constitution that has enduring meaning.

To interpret the law in any other way otherwise aggrandizes power to a select few, a power that was never intended by the Founders. This humility

of position that Justice Scalia had I believe will be a lasting legacy.

Regardless of whether one agrees with Justice Scalia from a policy perspective, his writings reflect a profound respect for an understanding of our system of government and an unparalleled respect for an interpretation of the Constitution grounded in text and in history. For this our Nation should be forever grateful.

May he rest in peace.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. I thank the gentleman, and I thank all of my colleagues for their comments.

Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate this opportunity for all of our colleagues to join us in celebrating the life of this great man, Justice Scalia, who so many of us were privileged to know and count as a friend.

For anyone who would like to view the beautiful mass of Christian burial for Justice Scalia that was presided over by his son, Father Paul Scalia, who gave a beautiful homily, that can be found on C-SPAN. I appreciate that that was covered.

I also, again, appreciate this opportunity to celebrate this beautiful life, this family.

I yield back the balance of my time.

WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY ISSUES IN THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LOUDERMILK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the earlier discussion about one of America's most longstanding and most noted Justices. His passing is mourned by all of us.

I do, however, today want to move to a different subject. I want to talk about, I think, one of the two most essential things that a human being needs to live. That is water and air. But today we are going to take the former of those two subjects and really talk about water.

Two weeks ago I put this up for all to see. This is tap water from Flint, Michigan. There has been a lot of discussion over the last month, month and a half, almost 3 months now, about Flint, Michigan, about the water supply in Flint, Michigan, lead in the pipes, lead pipes, about the public health emergency that exists there, and about what we could and should do about dealing with Flint, Michigan.

However, Flint, Michigan is not unique. This is how they get water in East Porterville. In the Central Valley of California, the San Joaquin Valley, just south of Fresno, California, the water supplies in the East Porterville area ran dry, in part, because of the drought, in part, because of inadequate water systems.

So the residents of East Porterville were required to get water from a cattle water trough, pretty much like I have on my ranch, although, hopefully, this water is a whole lot cleaner. Porterville, California.

Now we have two examples, one from the Midwest, another one from the Far West.

Any other problems about water supply? Well, yes. There are other problems about water supply.

This is a list of problems that we know exist in the United States—or most recently existed:

Flint, Michigan, we just saw that picture.

Toledo, Ohio, you remember, had to shut down the water system because of problems from algae blooms.

Sebring, Ohio; Baltimore, Maryland; Brick Township, New Jersey; Washington, D.C., lead release.

Wayne County, North Carolina; Greenville, North Carolina; Lakehurst Acres, Maine; Chicago, Illinois.

I decided not to put them all up there because it would take the rest of the evening to list all the communities in America that have water issues. And certainly we do in California.

I could put up another—well, maybe I will. Let me just put up a map of California. This is the largest population in the United States, approaching 40 million people.

And far north, the Pacific Coast, San Francisco Bay, Los Angeles, down here, Santa Barbara, and way down here, San Diego, and somewhere over here, Arizona and Nevada, the Sierra Nevada mountains, the coastal range, and the great Central Valley of California, where a whole lot of America's food and food exports come from.

Down here in the Tulare Lake Basin, there are well over 100 communities who have contaminated water from nitrates and other harmful substances.

So the issue of clean water, you know, shortage of water down here, and contaminated wells up and down—oh. The Salinas Valley, Monterey Bay and the great Salinas Valley, many, many of the wells in that area are also contaminated.

So we have got a water quality problem really throughout the United States, and we certainly have one in California.

We have another problem in California. Let me put this up, a little different map. The previous map, that one, nice and green. That is not California today.

We may be and probably are in the fifth year of the great California drought. This is a picture of the California drought situation. The yellow is a little less than normal. The red, far less than normal. This brown is really the way California will be as soon as this summer comes on. And that is called exceptional drought.

So the great Central Valley of California, the coastal range down into Los

Angeles, even over to the east side of the Sierras, an exceptional drought. So the green California is really not so green.

Today we are about halfway through the rainy season in California, and the current rain for the entire State is about 75 percent of normal. That is why you see this extreme drought occurring even as of February 18, 2016.

The Sierra snowpack is less than normal but is still a whole lot better than last year, when it was zero, as in no snow.

So what are we going to do? Well, we need to do something. Otherwise, we are going to have a whole lot more pain in California.

So what Senator FEINSTEIN and I have been doing over the last several months is trying to develop a solution for the immediate drought, to make the most of the water that is available, while still protecting the endangered species, the great salmon runs of the Central Valley of California, and the coastal rivers, as well as the species that live in the delta of California.

So we have been working, trying to put together a piece of legislation that would provide as much flexibility as possible, while still protecting the fish species and the flora and fauna of the State.

We think we have done it. We think we do have a piece of legislation that will do that. We call that the operational portion of the legislation. Senator FEINSTEIN has already introduced that legislation.

I intend to do so in the very near future here in the House of Representatives so that we can have a statement from the House of Representatives about how we can solve the drought problem—well, not solve it—do the very best we can in an extreme circumstance to deliver as much water as possible to the farms and the cities of all of California, while also protecting the endangered species.

Let me just put this up. This is the essence of the legislation. I am going to start here at the bottom and work towards the top. This is the short-term provision of the bill. I will go into this in more detail in a few moments.

The bill also has what we call long-term infrastructure needs. Those long-term infrastructure needs are storage reservoirs, aquifers beneath the surface of the earth, where we have groundwater—or we used to have groundwater, surface storage.

There are several new and expanded reservoir opportunities available in the State, some of them on the streams and rivers—and, of course, those will be controversial—and one or two that are off-stream, in the valleys and the mountains where there are no active rivers, those being somewhat less controversial.

So there is surface storage. There is underground aquifer storage. That is

this one right here. Authorized \$600 million for water storage projects, both aquifer as well as surface storage.

We also have this thing called conservation. Conservation is where you can get the most water. For every gallon of water that you conserve, that is a gallon of water that would be available for other purposes or to extend what little you have available. So conservation plays a major role.

In this legislation, there is money for conservation. There is also money for this recycling. Now, much of the Midwest recycles water. In fact, the entire Mississippi River system is recycled water, water that is used upstream by some city, cleaned, put back in the river, reused again as it flows down the Mississippi River and its tributaries. California doesn't do much recycling.

I don't have a map here of the—no, I don't.

But if one were to take a look at the whole Pacific Coast of California and the United States and Alaska and Central America and South America—so from Alaska all the way south to Chile on the West Coast, the Pacific Coast, of the Western Hemisphere—you would find that the fifth biggest river in all of that vast stretch—the great rivers of Alaska and Canada, the Columbia River, the Sacramento River, the Colorado River down here, and the rivers of Central and South America—the fifth biggest happens to be right here, here, here, and here.

□ 2015

The fifth biggest rivers are the sanitation plants of California that take water from up and down the entire area and from the Colorado all the way from the Rockies, use it, clean it to a higher standard than the day it arrives in the great cities of California, clean it to a higher standard, and then they dump it in the ocean. This is utter foolishness.

So in the Garamendi-Feinstein legislation, we have \$200 million for water recycling so that we can recycle that water, reuse it, and make use of water that is already available.

We know, for example, that in Los Angeles there are approximately 1 million acre-feet of water that is not now being used. In fact, it is being dumped into the ocean. With this recycling program, 1 million acre-feet of new water can be available in southern California.

And, by the way, for those of you who are not familiar with California, we are talking about the Los Angeles basin here.

So the recycling in this basin can deliver 1 million acre-feet of water over the next decade or so, and that water can be put back into the great aquifers of southern California and even down into the San Diego area. These aquifers are now largely contaminated with various contaminants, but they can be cleaned and the water recycled, put back in the aquifers, taken out, cleaned, and round and round it goes.

One million acre-feet: What does that mean to northern California, to Colorado, our friends in Arizona, New Mexico, and Nevada? It means that that is a million acre-feet that Los Angeles, the great basin down here, does not need to take from the Sacramento River in northern California or from the Colorado River, taking pressure off those rivers. And as you saw from the drought map, those rivers are in severe trouble. So that is kind of a strategy that we put in place.

Now, we are not geniuses—well, maybe—no. We are not geniuses. But what we do know is that the State of California has already figured this out.

So what our legislation does is to tie directly to, mirror, augment, and push forward what California did in the 2014 election, which is to pass proposition 1, an almost \$7 billion proposition for the development of water supplies for California.

So, look at this: Water conservation, storm water recapturing, increase local and regional supplies, \$810 million. Our legislation would fit right in there with conservation and these other programs.

Safe drinking water. Remember talking about Porterville and water troughs for cattle from which the kids were taking water? Here you have the Safe Drinking Water Program. And guess what. It is in the Feinstein-Garamendi legislation.

Yes. There it is, money to help small communities through the Bureau of Reclamation expanding their WaterSMART and other programs so that we can mirror, augment, supplement, and advance what California already wants to do when proposition 1 goes into effect.

Let's see. Water recycling. Didn't I just talk about that? Yes, I did. So in the legislation that Senator FEINSTEIN has already introduced and what I will soon introduce here, we will be once again working with the water recycling. Not as much money, but still a major Federal effort to work with the State to maximize the water recycling.

This is also not on this list, but also desalinization, which happens to work for some parts of California as well as other parts of the United States.

I talked about groundwater. Yes. Our legislation mirrors the groundwater program that is in proposition 1, adds some additional money, and directs the Federal Government to work directly with the State on advancing the groundwater issues.

Now, for those of you that have been following the drought in California over the last several years—actually, the last several decades—California has been excessively using its groundwater so much so that, in parts of the great Central Valley of California—maybe I will put that map back up here—in the great Central Valley of California, particularly in this part of the Central Valley and the Fresno area and south,

we have seen a significant fall in the surface of the Earth.

It is literally sinking as a result of the groundwater being pumped out. In many places, you can go down through this area and you will see wells that are way, way above the ground and the ground is down here maybe 10, 20 feet. You have seen subsidence in the area.

So the over-drafting in this area and some in the Sacramento Valley as well as in the Salinas Valley is a serious problem.

Part of what we want to do, mirroring what the State has already decided to do with proposition 1, is to have the Federal Government work with the State on addressing the aquifers in this region to find ways to recharge the aquifers. There are many different ways that that can be done.

Some of it is simply pumping the water back into the ground rather than pumping it out. In other areas, the geology in various parts, particularly along the coastal mountains as well as along the Sierra Nevada mountains, there are gravel channels, old river channels that have historically recharged the groundwater basins in parts—actually, along most of the Central Valley.

So it has to be done. This is what we are trying to do with this legislation: Desalination research, which I discussed earlier, \$100 million; water storage, \$600 million; water recycling, \$200 million; and \$55 million for specific protections for the fish and wildlife species.

There is a whole series of projects that would fit into that. Once again, all of this infrastructure work is designed to coordinate specifically with what the State of California is doing with their multibillion-dollar proposition 1.

This isn't in effect yet, but this money is now working its way through the various environmental studies and various levels of government so that very soon these projects will be underway.

If we are able to pass the legislation that we want to introduce, we are going to see the Federal Government working very, very closely with the State government in addressing the California problem.

Now, who cares about California? If you care about food, your fresh veggies, you had better care about California. Over here in the Salinas Valley where lettuce comes from? Drought problems.

In the Central Valley, let's see. You name the crop, everything from rice to walnuts—oh, wine grapes are very, very important if you like your wine. In the central coast down here, the same thing.

So what we are trying to do with the legislation is to provide a long-term fix to California so that we can increase the supply of water, increase the storage during the wet years, put the storage in reservoirs and in the aquifers so

that, when the dry years come, then we will do it.

There was a fellow by the name of Steinbeck. He wrote a book, "East of Eden." In that book, he talked about the California droughts.

This is not a new situation, although 5 years and 4 years is definitely new. Usually, the droughts would be 1 or 2 years. But now we are looking at quite possibly a 5-year drought.

Steinbeck said this. It is not the exact quote, although I wish I had it. It was like this:

In the dry years, they worried about where their water would come from. Then the wet years would come and they forgot about the dry years.

That has been the story of California for too many—too many—decades. Certainly Steinbeck saw that in the early part of the 20th century.

We are now in the 21st century and we cannot—we cannot—re-live that old adage that Steinbeck wrote about.

So we need to build for the future. We need to be able to address this in the immediate as best we can and put in place the water systems.

I am going to describe those water systems to you just very briefly. Here in the north we have the great Shasta Reservoir up here on the Upper Sacramento River.

It could be raised. It could be increased. There are some environmental and certainly some cost issues associated with raising Shasta. That is one of the proposals of possibilities in our legislation.

The other one sits right about in here off stream. The Sacramento River flows down through the middle of the valley here, but off-stream over here in my district actually is a potential reservoir that has been talked about for maybe 50 years now called Sites Reservoir.

It stores about 1.8 million acre-feet of water. It could deliver annually 500,000 acre-feet of water. That is a lot of water. That is 1 foot of water across 5,000 acres. Did I say 5,000? It is 500,000 acres. So that is the Sites Reservoir over here.

That reservoir also does something really unique. Since it is off-river, it will take the water flowing down the Sacramento River during the heavy storms, put that water into the reservoir, and then, when summer comes or the drought comes, that water can be released back into the Sacramento River, providing water quality issues here in the Delta of California—and I will come to that in just a few moments—creating flexibility on the great reservoirs—Shasta, the Yuba system, the Folsom Reservoir here in Sacramento, and the big California reservoir in Oroville—allowing the operations of those reservoirs to be modified in such a way that they are able to store water rather than releasing it down the river for fish and wildlife.

It would then be able to release water from Sites Reservoir and keep that water back in these reservoirs. A major problem in Sacramento is that the Folsom Reservoir is at low tide. I will have tomorrow representatives from the east Sacramento area in my office, all of them saying: Oh, my goodness. We don't have enough water in Folsom Reservoir for our cities of Rancho Cordova, Roseville, and the like, east of Sacramento.

So Sites Reservoir could provide more water in the Sacramento region by keeping that water in the Folsom Reservoir.

Let's talk a little bit about the delta. I guess I had better finish the other reservoirs. Down here in the Fresno area on the San Joaquin River we have the big Friant Reservoir on the San Joaquin.

There is a bit of a problem with Friant. It managed to dry up the San Joaquin River, creating a big, big problem for the salmon. They don't do very well in dry rivers.

So there is an effort underway to try to restore some of the salmon on the rivers in the San Joaquin Valley, the Stanislaus, the Merced, and the other rivers as you move down towards the San Joaquin.

There would be a new reservoir that is proposed here at Temperance Flat. Is it possible? Yes. Is it environmentally controversial? Oh, yeah. No doubt about that. And it is expensive.

But, nonetheless, our legislation would authorize a continuation of the studies to see if it is worth doing. So that would be the Temperance Flat.

Over here on the hills to the east of Oakland there is another storage reservoir off-stream, and that one is called Los Vaqueros. Los Vaqueros is a reservoir that is controlled by the Contra Costa Water District.

They now have agreements with other water districts in the bay area to increase the size of that reservoir to store more water at that area. Again, that is off-stream.

It would take the high winter flows and put that water in storage off-stream as with Sites Reservoir to the north of it, all very, very important.

So these are the essential projects that would be long term for California. Again, they would be the surface storage reservoirs, two off-stream and three potentially on-stream.

They would be recharging the aquifers and the various infrastructure needed to do that, recycling in the great cities of Los Angeles, San Diego, and in the bay area to recycle water and, also, dealing with the contamination that occurs in many of the cities in the Central Valley, the San Joaquin Valley particularly, a little bit up here in the Sacramento Valley, and a lot of problems in the Salinas Valley in this area.

So those are the essential elements of the long term—I forgot conservation

and desalination. So those are the long-term projects that are both in proposition 1 of the California water bond of 2014 and, also, in our legislation.

The second piece of the legislation deals with the operation of the two great water projects. These are the largest water projects in the world, although China is building one that might actually be bigger.

But, as of today, the largest water projects in the world are in California. What they basically do—maybe I will back up here a bit. It would be great if my colleagues here really had a sense of what is happening.

The basic water projects of California take the water from the Sacramento Valley, the Sacramento River, Mount Shasta up here, and the Trinity River, bring that water in through the Shasta Reservoir, hold the water there, and then send the water down the Sacramento River to the delta.

□ 2030

From the delta, that water is picked up in canals—two of them, one operated by the Federal Government, the other one operated by the State of California—and brings that water—the Federal Government—down into the San Joaquin Valley, where it provides hundreds of thousands of acres of irrigated agricultural production.

The other part of that project is here on the San Joaquin. That takes water down the east side of the valley, all the way to Kern County, down here in the Bakersfield area, and north up into the Madera County area here. That is called the Friant-Kern system. That is the Federal water project.

The State water project, like the Federal, takes the water out of the delta here and brings it down in the canal, all the way down here, providing water to Kern County, and then pumps that water 2,000 feet over the Tehachapi Mountains through tunnels and canals into southern California. It flows down through the western part of the Mohave Desert down here, and then flows into the Los Angeles area, and also into the Palm Springs area all the way over here. That is the California water project.

Some of that water flowing into the Metropolitan Water District is then available for the cities and water districts of southern California, all the way down to San Diego and into the Coachella Valley over here in the Palm Springs area. It is one huge water project, all of it dependent on the largest estuary anywhere from Chile to Alaska as large and as important to the aquatic species and birds as the great delta of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River system.

Unlike many deltas, this is an inland delta. This is the beginning of San

Francisco Bay here. It goes on out. The Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco are just further to the west.

Once again, the water flows southward down the Sacramento River, past the city of Sacramento, and flows down through the delta, picked up by the great pumps here at Tracy into the canals, and down the canals to the San Joaquin Valley and on to southern California.

Here is the problem: the pumping has significantly altered the ecology of the delta and, when coupled with the drought, has created a situation that has led to a very serious potential of the extinction of species in the delta, particularly the delta smelt. Because of the alteration of the Sacramento River system's normal flow, the salmon, which would normally migrate up the Sacramento River all the way to Mount Shasta and beyond or down the San Joaquin River system to Fresno, that migration pattern has been seriously altered.

In normal years, the management of the river is such that the salmon are able to get along, not as well as they once did when it was said you could walk across the river on the back of salmon—you can't do that today for sure—but, nonetheless, in a normal year these river systems, excluding the Lower San Joaquin, are able to produce a significant salmon run.

In the delta, the delta smelt have been under great pressure since the pumps were put in. The smelt is a little, tiny fish, but it happens to be like the foundation fish—all the bigger fish eat it. And it is also what we call the canary in the coal mine. If you remember what that is all about, you use canaries in a coal mine. When the canary keels over, you have got a serious problem because you are the next to keel over—bad air.

Well, here these delta smelt are considered to be the canary in the water. When they are in deep trouble—and they are today—the question arises: Is the entire ecosystem of the delta going to collapse? We think not. But California is severely stressed. California is still in drought. Today, the rainfall in California is 75 percent of normal. That is for the entire State. For the Sacramento region, February is 22 percent of normal, and I think we are rapidly approaching the end of February.

What that means for the delta is extraordinary stress—extraordinary stress—and a monumental California water fight. My great-grandfather came to California in the 1860s to mine for gold. During that time, there was a fellow out there by the name of Mark Twain, who was writing about the gold rush and other things that were going on in California.

He said a couple of things that are really interesting. About San Francisco, he said that the coldest winter he ever spent was summer in San Fran-

cisco. I think he was referring to the fog. He also said that in California in the 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s, he said: "Whiskey is for drinking; water is for fighting over."

So it has been. During the Gold Rush period, it was all about water. You couldn't mine for gold unless you had water, and people fought over water. They built incredible systems to get their hands on the water that came out of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Today, it is the same. We still fight about water. What Senator FEINSTEIN and I are trying to do is to reduce the friction, reduce the fighting that has been going on for the last decade, or last 5 years, about water as it flows through the delta.

My San Joaquin Valley colleagues, Democrat and Republican, have put forth two pieces of legislation that they believe would solve the water problem for them. What they have managed to do with that legislation is to basically wipe out the environmental protection for the species—salmon, smelt, and other species in the delta—and simply say: Turn the pumps on. We need the water. We have got the votes. We are going to get the water.

Those two pieces of legislation have not become law, and they never should become law, because if they did, the largest estuary on the West Coast of the Western Hemisphere would be in serious jeopardy.

What we propose is to work within the environmental laws and the biological opinions that have been put forth by the Federal and State fish and wildlife agencies and the National Marine Fisheries Service—the National Marine Fisheries Service concerned about the salmon; the fish and wildlife agencies concerned about the endemic species of the delta—to work within those biological opinions which are designed to protect those species and say the flexibility that is allowed under the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and the biological opinions are sufficient to allow for the maximum amount of pumping to the south from the delta consistent with the protection of the species.

In order to accomplish that, we need to use science. The biological opinions are based on about 13- to 15-year-old science. What we are saying in our legislation is ramp up the science.

Senator FEINSTEIN was able to deliver \$100 million to California fish agencies to put in place realtime monitoring. She was not able to write how that could occur, so in the legislation we would direct the agencies to conduct real-time monitoring, daily monitoring. As the winter flows—and there have been winter flows thus far this year, not enough, but they are there. As those winter flows enter the delta from the north and the south, the fish agencies study where are the smelt, where are the salmon coming down the

Sacramento River, and also from the San Joaquin River.

If they are near the delta pumps, reduce the pumping, or don't pump at all, depending where those fish are. If they are not, if they have moved away from the pumps and there is water in the system, then turn the pumps on. Pretty simple: if the fish are endangered, reduce the pumping; if the fish are not endangered, then increase the pumping.

That is essentially what our legislation would accomplish. There are other elements to it, for example, putting in fish screens at the Delta Cross Channel on the Georgiana Slough, and also to improve the levee system within the delta.

We will see. We will see what happens here. We have a choice as Members of Congress and men and women that are supposed to solve problems. We can go the way of my San Joaquin Valley colleagues and simply push aside, negate, the environmental laws that provide for the protection of the salmon, the great fishing industry of California, the salmon runs up and down the coast.

By the way, the salmon that come out of the Sacramento River provide salmon all the way to the Columbia River in Oregon. So it is not just about San Francisco Bay. It is about the salmon and the fishing industry for much of the West Coast, also south through Monterey Bay.

Can we wipe out the environmental laws and simply turn the pumps on? Yes, if that legislation were to pass that has been offered by my colleagues from the San Joaquin Valley. Or we can work within the environmental laws, achieving maximum flexibility, understanding the science: Where are the salmon or the salmonoids? Those are the salmon that have hatched and are coming back down the river, little, tiny salmon. Where are they? Are they coming down the river and getting sucked to the pumps, or are they coming down the river and heading out to the bay? We don't know today. We are not doing real-time monitoring.

If we did real-time monitoring, we would know where they are. We would know where the delta smelt are and other species, and we could adjust the pumping to protect the species and to take advantage of the high flows that occur during the normal winters and also this year, even though it is well below normal.

I have confidence. I have confidence in the wisdom of the Californians who decided that they would pass a water bond to put in place long-range solutions for California—recycling, conservation, storage systems, underground aquifers—and to develop safe drinking water. I have confidence in the wisdom of California because they voted by over 60 percent for this project.

I have confidence in the Congress. I have confidence in the Senate. Senator

FEINSTEIN has come up with a good bill. I had the honor to work with her on that bill, and I will soon introduce that bill here in the House.

I have confidence that we have the wisdom and we have the understanding of the systems of California water to maximize over time the water potential of California. And in the near term, in the near term when California, this great State that we would like to see as green, when California is faced with this, I have got confidence that we are wise enough and we are smart enough politically to maneuver ourselves into a situation where we can address the current drought to the maximum extent possible, delivering water to the San Joaquin Valley and on into southern California without harming the fish, without destroying the salmon of California and the fishing, the multibillion-dollar fishing industry that goes with it, and without jeopardizing the largest estuary on the West Coast of the Western Hemisphere.

That is our challenge. This is what we are going to try to accomplish. Senator FEINSTEIN's bill has been introduced. That version will be introduced over here in the next several days as we develop a better understanding among my colleagues of what we are trying to accomplish here.

□ 2045

I have confidence that the representatives of the southern California area will see the wisdom of putting aside what Mark Twain said we always do in California: Fighting over water and getting about drinking more whiskey. Probably a pretty good idea.

I think we are going to get southern California support for this. I think the San Joaquin Valley folks will look at this and say: Well, we can continue fighting as we have for the last 5 years with no progress, none, nada, zero.

Let's see if we can figure out how to do this in a way that protects the species, the salmon, the other fish, that protects the largest estuary on the west coast of the western hemisphere, and that provides the maximum amount of water that is available to California, which, by the way, has an economy that is ranked seventh in the world. So water is really important.

I know we can do better. I know that this Nation doesn't have to have this kind of water in Flint, Michigan. I know that this Nation doesn't have to have children in the Central Valley of California getting their water out of a cattle water trough.

I know that this Nation doesn't have to destroy the largest estuary and all of the fish, all of the salmon, and all of the industry that goes with that in its quest for water and that what little is available can be shared and maximized.

That is what we are going to try to do with the Feinstein-Garamendi legislation. I know we can do it. I know we

have to do it. I know, at the end of the day, we are not going to destroy. We are going to build, we are going to create, and we are going to solve the problem.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

IN TRIBUTE TO UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA, A PRE-EMINENT MIND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight in tribute to one of the greatest jurists in this Nation's history. Justice Antonin Scalia had a preeminent mind following an excellent education. He has a beautiful family and has already been very sorely missed.

I thought it might be helpful, Mr. Speaker, to get a sense of the man and how profoundly concerned he was with the place in which this country finds itself after world wars, after depressions, after all kinds of threats: a massive civil war in the 1860s, all kinds of things that have threatened this Nation, even the War of 1812 during which this Capitol was set on fire.

There were all of these threats; yet, at this time in which we live, he could see and he tried to sound the warning alarms for what the majority of the Supreme Court was doing to this country.

It seemed to be encapsulated rather well back in the June 12, 2008, decision in the case of *Boumediene vs. George W. Bush*, President of the United States, combined with another case.

The decision of the majority of the Court, as Justice Scalia pointed out, was so totally inconsistent with the majority's own majority opinion in a prior case regarding people who were captured on the battlefield and who were clearly at war with the United States.

Throughout the history of warfare at least among civilized nations during the period of warfare, the civilized thing to do was to hold those who were at war with you until such time as the groups they represent, they come from, declare they are no longer at war with you.

Then they can be released unless they have committed some heinous crime for which they should account beyond that of being part of the war against the Nation.

The Supreme Court majority had previously said basically that, of course, the Constitution gives the Congress the power to create tribunals, to create courts.

As my former constitutional law professor said, there is only one Court in the whole country's Federal system

that owes its creation to the U.S. Constitution, and that is the U.S. Supreme Court. All other Federal courts, tribunals, owe their existences and their jurisdictions to the United States Congress.

So the majority Court had previously said, in effect, that Congress could, in cases where enemy combatants are seized on the battlefield, hold them without right of writ of habeas corpus, because that has basically been the history of civilized warfare.

Obviously, in uncivilized warfare, people were taken, abused, tortured, made slaves. That has happened throughout the history of mankind. But for nations that were civilized, you simply held them, hopefully, in humanitarian conditions.

In the *Boumediene* case, Justice Scalia starts his dissent by writing:

"I shall devote most of what will be a lengthy opinion to the legal errors contained in the opinion of the Court. Contrary to my usual practice, however, I think it appropriate to begin with a description of the disastrous consequences of what the Court has done today."

Justice Scalia goes on:

"America is at war with radical Islamists. The enemy began by killing Americans and American allies abroad: 241 at the Marine barracks in Lebanon, 19 at the Khobar Towers in Dhahran, 224 at our embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi, and 17 on the USS *Cole* in Yemen.

"On September 11, 2001, the enemy brought the battle to American soil, killing 2,749 at the Twin Towers in New York City, 184 at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and 40 in Pennsylvania.

"It has threatened further attacks against our homeland; one need only walk about buttressed and barricaded Washington or board a plane anywhere in the country to know that the threat is a serious one. Our Armed Forces are now in the field against the enemy, in Afghanistan and Iraq. Last week, 13 of our countrymen in arms were killed.

"The game of bait-and-switch that today's opinion plays upon the Nation's Commander in Chief will make the war harder on us."

What comes next is, perhaps, one of the most profound statements that any Justice on the Supreme Court ever put in writing, but he was right. And being right in his discernment of the Supreme Court's decision, he knew he needed to put this next sentence in print.

So, in talking about the majority opinion, Justice Scalia wrote this:

"It will almost certainly cause more Americans to be killed."

He wrote:

"That consequence would be tolerable if necessary to preserve a time-honored legal principle vital to our constitutional Republic. But it is this

Court's blatant abandonment of such a principle that produces the decision today. The President relied on our settled precedent in *Johnson vs. Eisentrager*"—this was back in 1950—"when he established the prison at Guantanamo Bay for enemy aliens. Citing that case, the President's Office of Legal Counsel advised him 'that the great weight of legal authority indicates that a federal district court could not properly exercise habeas jurisdiction over an alien detained at Guantanamo Bay.'"

Further down, the Justice writes:

"In the short term, however, the decision is devastating. At least 30 of those prisoners hitherto released from Guantanamo Bay have returned to the battlefield.

"But others have succeeded in carrying on their atrocities against innocent civilians. In one case, a detainee released from Guantanamo Bay masterminded the kidnapping of two Chinese dam workers, one of whom was later shot to death when used as a human shield against Pakistani commandos.

"Another former detainee promptly resumed his post as a senior Taliban commander and murdered a United Nations engineer and three Afghan soldiers. Still another murdered an Afghan judge. It was reported only last month that a released detainee carried out a suicide bombing against Iraqi soldiers in Mosul, Iraq.

"Their return to the kill illustrates the incredible difficulty of assessing who is and who is not an enemy combatant in a foreign theater of operations where the environment does not lend itself to rigorous evidence collection."

Justice Scalia goes on:

"During the 1995 prosecution of Omar Abdel Rahman, federal prosecutors gave the names of 200 unindicted co-conspirators to the 'Blind Sheikh's' defense lawyers; that information was in the hands of Osama Bin Laden within two weeks."

Justice Scalia went on to write page after page, explaining the perils that the overzealous and underthinking majority of the Court had imposed on the United States, on our military.

Justice Scalia made clear, when it comes to war, the decision that the majority made was to basically tell our military: Instead of protecting yourselves and protecting your brothers and sisters in arms, we are going to require you to go out there, gather up DNA evidence, get blood evidence, maybe just drive a forensic wagon out there onto the field of battle. Start gathering evidence because some moronic person in a palace in Washington—"palace" being what some of the Justices who first went through the new Supreme Court building said about it back in 1935, that palace in which they reside—has said that, in a time of

war, we have lost our mind in America, and we are going to now start putting our military at risk of their very lives so they can go gather up evidence to satisfy some bloated judge in a palace in Washington.

That is why he made the profound statement that he did in this dissent.

□ 2100

His words will almost certainly cause more Americans to be killed. That is extraordinary.

Dear Justice Scalia finished the dissenting opinion by saying: "Today the Court warps our Constitution in a way that goes beyond the narrow issue of the reach of the Suspension Clause, invoking judicially brainstormed separation-of-powers principles to establish a manipulable 'functional' test for the extra territorial reach of habeas corpus (and, no doubt, for the extraterritorial reach of other constitutional protections as well). It blatantly misdescribes important precedents, most conspicuously Justice Jackson's opinion for the Court in *Johnson v. Eisentrager*. It breaks a chain of precedent as old as the common law that prohibits judicial inquiry into the detention of aliens abroad absent statutory authorization. And, most tragically, it sets our military commanders the impossible task of proving to a civilian court, under whatever standards this Court devises in the future, that evidence supports the confinement of each and every enemy prisoner.

"The Nation will live to regret what the Court has done today. I dissent."

What a magnificent man. What a brilliant man with extraordinary common sense.

So, Mr. Speaker, my staff helped me. We have all been picking out favorite quotes that Justice Scalia has provided, both in written opinion and in speeches.

One of Justice Scalia's statements was: "Never compromise your principles, unless, of course, your principles are Adolph Hitler's, in which case you would be well-advised to compromise them as much as you can."

Another statement by Justice Scalia was: "More important than your obligation to follow your conscience, or at least prior to it, is your obligation to form your conscience correctly."

Justice Scalia said: "You think there ought to be a right to abortion? No problem. The Constitution says nothing about it. Create it the way most rights are created in a democratic society. Pass a law. And that law, unlike a constitutional right to abortion created by a court can compromise."

Justice Scalia said: "A Constitution is not meant to facilitate change. It is meant to impede change, to make it difficult to change."

Brilliant statement.

Some think the Constitution is a living, breathing document. I have dis-

cussed this over at the Supreme Court palace with him, and I have discussed it with him at lunches, breakfasts.

There are a handful of special privileges that I count myself blessed to have been able to enjoy, and one of those handful has been time spent with Justice Scalia. He had an incredible sense of humor. He could crack me up. Most of the time, he meant to. Sometimes his sarcasm was just too humorous not to laugh. And he attacked himself with self-effacing humor.

He said this: "I attack ideas. I don't attack people. And some very good people have some very bad ideas. And if you can't separate the two, you've gotta get another day job."

He was a funny man, but a brilliant man. God blessed that man with wisdom.

Justice Scalia said: "I love to argue. I've always loved to argue. And I love to point out the weaknesses of the opposing arguments. It may well be that I'm something of a shin kicker. It may well be that I'm something of a contrarian."

He said: "Well, we didn't set out to have nine children"—talking about his beautiful family. He said: "We're just old-fashioned Catholics, you know."

Justice Scalia said: "I think Thomas Jefferson would have said the more speech, the better. That's what the First Amendment is all about."

Today I see around our college campuses conservatives like me are often shunned. I am grateful to have been invited to speak at Oxford in England and at Cambridge. But it is amazing that places like my conservative Texas A&M, there are students there—much fewer there, but all over the country at what are supposed to be enlightened universities—that don't want to hear any view different from themselves.

When I was at A&M, I mean, I helped host Ralph Nader. I didn't agree with him on much, but I loved the exchange with him, the thoughts that went back and forth. He was a very intriguing man. We weren't afraid of discussions with liberals.

It is one of the things I loved about Justice Scalia. He was so brilliant, so grounded. His faith was so strongly standing on God's Word, the Bible. He knew who he was. He knew whose he was, and he knew whose was his, and he loved his family dearly.

Justice Scalia said: "Undoubtedly, some think that the Second Amendment is outmoded in a society where our standing army is the pride of our Nation, where well-trained police forces provide personal security, and where gun violence is a serious problem. That is perhaps debatable, but what is not debatable is that it is not the role of this Court to pronounce the Second Amendment extinct."

It was absolutely a great dissent. Pointing out the hypocrisy, the flawed thinking, the incredible poor quality of

the writing in the majority opinion in the *ObamaCare* decision, Justice Scalia said: "This Court, however, concludes that this limitation would prevent the rest of the act from working as well as hoped. So it rewrites the law to make tax credits available everywhere. We should start calling this law *SCOTUSCare* instead of *ObamaCare*."

The Supreme Court of the U.S. care, how about that?

He went on to say: "Under all the usual rules of interpretation, in short, the government should lose this case. But normal rules of interpretation seem always to yield to the overriding principle of this Court: The Affordable Care Act must be saved."

He goes on. It says: "If a bill is about to pass that really comes down hard on some minority and they think it's terribly unfair, it doesn't take much to throw a monkey wrench into this complex system. Americans should appreciate that; they should learn to love the gridlock. It's there so the legislation that does get out is good legislation."

Mr. Speaker, it brings to mind a discussion I heard him have with some people from my district, some senior citizens that were coming to Washington, 50 or 60. They had asked me: They say you are friends with Justice Scalia. Do you think we could meet him?

I felt comfortable enough to call him. He said: Sure. Bring them.

So we worked it out, brought them through the side entrance, came into a meeting room. They were all seated there when Justice Scalia came walking in. He leans up against the table in front of them, and they were kind of in awe because they knew how brilliant Justice Scalia was.

He said: Well, you wanted to meet me. Here I am. What questions have you got?

It kind of took the group aback, so people were struggling to try to come up with a question. Finally, one of them said: Well, Justice Scalia, wouldn't you say that we are the freest Nation in the history of the world because we have the best Bill of Rights?

In typical Scalia style, he said: Oh, gosh, no. The Soviet Union had a much better bill of rights than we have got. It guaranteed a lot more freedoms than we have.

And I've forgotten, but in college I made an A on a paper that discussed the Soviet constitution and the bill of rights. He was right. That old Soviet bill of rights guaranteed all kinds of rights, but it didn't protect them.

He went on to say—and I am not quoting exactly—but the gist of what he had to say is, now, the reason America is the most free Nation in the history of the world is because the Founders didn't trust the government, so they made it as difficult as they could to pass a law. It wasn't enough to have

one House; they wanted two Houses, and not like England where one of them doesn't have all that much authority. They wanted two Houses where either one of them could stop a law from being passed. So even if one House were successful in finally getting a majority of people to agree on a law, then the other House would have to agree, and they could stop it completely in its tracks.

That wasn't good enough. They wanted another check and balance, another way to stop law. They wanted to create gridlock. So they said: You know what? We don't want a parliamentary system where the legislators elect a prime minister. No. We want an executive elected totally different from the legislature. So we will have him elected in a whole different way, and then he can stop any law they may try to pass. And that is not good enough. Let's create another branch, the judiciary branch, and then they can nix anything that is passed.

No, we are the most free Nation in history because the Founders didn't trust government and they made it as hard as possible to pass laws.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 7 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOHMERT. Justice Scalia says in one of his dissents: "I have exceeded the speed limit on occasion."

He said: "A man who has no enemies is probably not a very good man."

He said: "If you read the rest of the section, you would say, to find a way to find a meaning that the language will bear that will uphold the constitutionality. You don't interpret a penalty to be a pig. It can't be a pig."

He did know how to bring things back to tangible terms.

He said: "If you're going to be a good and faithful judge, you have to resign yourself to the fact that you're not always going to like the conclusions you reach. If you like them all the time, you're probably doing something wrong."

I've experienced that myself. There were times I disagreed with the law, but it was constitutionally made and passed, and I followed the law as a judge and chief justice. That is exactly what he did.

In a dissent in 1996, Justice Scalia said: "The Court must be living in an another world. Day by day, case by case, it is busy designing a Constitution for a country I do not recognize."

Ten years later, in 2006, he says: "So the question comes up, is there a constitutional right to have homosexual conduct? Not a hard question for me. It's absolutely clear that nobody ever thought when the Bill of Rights was adopted that it gave a right to homosexual conduct. Homosexual conduct was criminal for 200 years in every State. Easy question."

He made those statements in remarks at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, back in 2006.

In 2009, he said: "The Court today continues its quixotic quest to right all wrongs and repair all imperfections through the Constitution. Alas, the quest cannot succeed."

He also said: "This case, involving legal requirements of the content and labeling of meat products such as frankfurters affords a rare opportunity to explore simultaneously both parts of Bismarck's aphorism that 'no man should see how laws or sausages are made.'"

He said: "God has been very good to us. One of the reasons God has been good to us is that we have done him honor."

Certainly, Justice Scalia did God honor.

A lot of people don't realize what a tenderhearted man he was as well. After the horrendous murder of Justice Michael Luttig's father and the assault and attempted murder of his mother in their own garage, two streets over from my house, the family did not want to call Michael and describe the horrors that had been inflicted on his father and mother.

□ 2115

Middle of the night, Justice Scalia is in bed. Justice Scalia gets called, would he go out to Michael Luttig, Judge Luttig's house, and let him know in the wee hours of the morning that his father had been killed. Justice Scalia, for whom Judge Luttig had clerked, he knew Michael Luttig loved him. He put on his warmup suit and went out in the middle of the night many miles away because he cared.

As I conclude, Mr. Speaker, I thought about the words of John Quincy Adams in the *Amistad* case. He didn't think he had won the case. He was finishing. He was afraid he had not done an adequate job defending these Africans who should be free and should be free to go where they wanted without chains, without bondage.

So he finished his argument by saying, and this is John Quincy Adams, 1841, in the Supreme Court:

"As I cast my eyes along those seats of honor and public trust, now occupied by you, they seek in vain for one of those honored and honorable persons whose indulgence listened then to my voice. Marshall, Cushing, Chase, Washington, Johnson, Livingston, Todd—where are they? Where is that eloquent statesman and learned lawyer who was my associate counsel in the management of that cause, Robert Goodloe Harper? Where is that brilliant luminary, so long the pride of Maryland and of the American Bar, then my opposing counsel, Luther Martin? Where is the excellent clerk of that day, whose name has been inscribed on the shores of Africa, as a monument of his abhorrence of the African slave trade Elias

B. Caldwell? Where is the marshal? Where are the criers of the Court? Alas, where is one of the very judges of the Court, arbiters of life and death, before whom I commenced the anxious argument, even now prematurely closed? Where are they all? Gone. Gone. All gone. Gone from the services which, in their day and generation, they faithfully rendered to their country. I humbly hope, and fondly trust, that they have gone to receive the rewards of blessedness on high."

In taking, then, his final leave of the bar there at the Supreme Court, John Quincy Adams said he hoped that every member of the Supreme Court may go to his final account with as little of earthly frailty to answer for as those illustrious dead.

And he said: "That you may, every one, after the close of a long and virtuous career in this world, be received at the portals of the next with the approving sentence: 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'"

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt whatsoever that Justice Antonin Scalia, my friend, our friend, the luminary of the Supreme Court, heard those words days ago: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. PERRY (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of attending a funeral.

Mr. HASTINGS (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today through February 26.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2451. An act to designate the area between the intersections of International Drive, Northwest and Van Ness Street, Northwest and International Drive, Northwest and International Place, Northwest in Washington, District of Columbia, as "Liu Xiaobo Plaza", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 644. An act to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 19 minutes p.m.), under its previous order and pursuant to House Resolution 620, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, February 24, 2016, at 10 a.m., for morning-hour debate, as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late Honorable Antonin Scalia, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States of America.

RULES AND REPORTS SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO THE CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT

[Omitted from the RECORD of February 8, 2016]

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(d), executive communications [final rules] submitted to the House pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1) during the period of July 21, 2015, through January 4, 2016, shall be treated as though received on February 8, 2016. Original dates of transmittal, numberings, and referrals to committee of those executive communications remain as indicated in the Executive Communication section of the relevant CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4351. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Conditions for Payment of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Indemnity Claims [Docket No.: APHIS-2015-0061] (RIN: 0579-AE14) received February 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4352. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Importation of *Phalaenopsis* Spp. Plants for Planting in Approved Growing Media From China to the Continental United States [Docket No.: APHIS-2014-0106] (RIN: 0579-AE10) received February 16, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4353. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Review Group, Farm Service Agency, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Direct Farm Ownership Microloan (RIN: 0560-A133) received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4354. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Review Group, Farm Service Agency, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Direct Farm Ownership Microloan (RIN: 0560-A133) received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C.

801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4355. A letter from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting the OMB Sequestration Preview Report to the President and Congress for Fiscal Year 2017, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 904(c)(2); Public Law 99-177, Sec. 254 (as amended by Public Law 112-25, Sec. 103(1)); (125 Stat. 246); to the Committee on Appropriations.

4356. A letter from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting the OMB Report to the Congress on the Joint Committee Reductions for Fiscal Year 2017, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 901a(9); Public Law 99-177, Sec. 251A (as added Public Law 112-25, Sec. 302(a)); (125 Stat. 256); to the Committee on Appropriations.

4357. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Logistics and Materiel Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a report entitled "Strategic and Critical Materials Operations Report To Congress: Operations under the Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act during Fiscal Year 2015", pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 98h-2(b); June 7, 1939, ch. 190, Sec. 11 (as amended by Public Law 103-35, Sec. 204(d)); (107 Stat. 103); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4358. A letter from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary, Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report on assistance provided by the Department of Defense for certain sporting events, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2564(e); Public Law 104-201, Sec. 367(a); (110 Stat. 2496); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4359. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Navy's annual report to Congress on Repair of Naval Vessels in Foreign Shipyards, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 7310(c); Public Law 110-417, Sec. 1012(c); (122 Stat. 4584); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4360. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Defense, transmitting draft of proposed legislation entitled the "Military Justice Act of 2016"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4361. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Logistics and Materiel Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting the National Defense Stockpile (NDS) Annual Materials Plan (AMP) for Fiscal Year 2017 and for the succeeding four years, FY 2018-2021, pursuant to Sec. 11(b) of the Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act, 50 U.S.C. 98h-2(b); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4362. A letter from the Chair, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Board's semiannual Monetary Policy Report to the Congress, pursuant to Public Law 106-569; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4363. A letter from the Assistant Director, Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting the Bureau's annual integrated Strategic Plan, Budget, and Performance Plan and Report, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1115(b); Public Law 111-352, Sec. 3; (124 Stat. 3867); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4364. A letter from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's Major final rule — Security-Based Swap Transactions Connected with a Non-U.S. Person's Dealing Activity That Are Arranged, Negotiated, or Executed By Personnel Located in a U.S. Branch or Office or in a U.S. Branch or Office of an Agent; Security-Based Swap Dealer De Minimis Exception [Release No.: 34-77104; File

No.: S7-06-15] (RIN: 3235-AL73) received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4365. A letter from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits received February 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4366. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's report entitled "The Availability and Price of Petroleum and Petroleum Products Produced in Countries Other Than Iran", the twenty-fifth in a series of reports, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 8513a(d)(4)(A); Public Law 112-81, Sec. 1245(d)(4)(A) (as amended by Public Law 112-158, Sec. 503(b)(1)); (126 Stat. 1261); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4367. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Department's Twenty-first Report to Congress on Progress Made in Licensing and Constructing the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 16523; Public Law 109-58, Sec. 1810; (119 Stat. 1126); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4368. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's Quarterly Report on the Transition of the Stewardship of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority ("IANA") Functions, pursuant to Public Law 114-113; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4369. A letter from the Deputy Director, ODRM, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Major rule — Medicaid Program; Final FY 2013 and Preliminary FY 2015 Disproportionate Share Hospital Allotments, and Final FY 2013 and Preliminary FY 2015 Institutions for Mental Diseases Disproportionate Share Hospital Limits [CMS-2398-N] (RIN: 0983-ZB24) received February 11, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4370. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Removal of Review and Reclassification Procedures for Biological Products Licensed Prior to July 1, 1972 [Docket No.: FDA-2015-N-2103] received February 16, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4371. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Administration's Third Annual Report on Drug Shortages for Calendar Year 2015, pursuant to Public Law 112-144, Sec. 1002; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4372. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Administration's FY 2015 Performance Report to Congress for the Animal Drug User Fee Act, pursuant to 21 U.S.C. 379j-13; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4373. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's Alternative Fuel Vehicle (AFV) program report for FY 2015, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 13218(b)(1); Public

Law 103-486, Sec. 310 (as added by Public Law 105-388, Sec. 8(a)); (112 Stat. 3481); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4374. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Allocations of Cross-State Air Pollution Rule Allowances from New Unit Set-Asides for the 2015 Compliance Year [FRL-9942-27-OAR] received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4375. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; 2008 Ozone NAAQS Interstate Transport for Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota [EPA-R08-OAR-2015-0670; FRL-9942-31-Region 8] received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4376. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; New Mexico/Albuquerque-Bernalillo County; Infrastructure and Interstate Transport State Implementation Plan for the 2010 Sulfur Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R06-OAR-2015-0431; FRL-9942-29-Region 6] received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4377. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of New Mexico/Albuquerque-Bernalillo County; Infrastructure and Interstate Transport SIP 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R06-OAR-2013-0613; FRL-9942-30-Region 6] received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4378. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Approval of Iowa's Air Quality Implementation Plans; Polk County Board of Health Rules and Regulations, Chapter V, Revisions [EPA-R07-OAR-2016-0045; FRL-9942-37-Region 7] received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4379. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Approval of Iowa's State Implementation Plan (SIP); Electronic Reporting Consistent with the Cross-Media Electronic Reporting Rule (CROMERR) [EPA-R07-OAR-2015-0840; FRL-9942-39-Region 7] received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4380. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Fluridone; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0913; FRL-9941-69] received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5

U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4381. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Lead-based Paint Programs; Amendment to Jurisdiction-Specific Certification and Accreditation Requirements and Renovator Refresher Training Requirements [EPA-HQ-OPPT-2014-0304; FRL-9941-61] (RIN: 2070-AK02) received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4382. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Significant New Use Rule on Certain Chemical Substances [EPA-HQ-OPPT-2013-0399; FRL-9941-56] (RIN: 2070-AB27) received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4383. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; District of Columbia; Interstate Pollution Transport Requirements for the 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide Standards [EPA-R03-OAR-2015-0750; FRL-9942-58-Region 3] received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4384. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; District of Columbia; Regulation to Limit Nitrogen Oxides Emissions from Large Non-Electric Generating Units [EPA-R03-OAR-2015-0666; FRL-9942-59-Region 3] received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4385. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Review of New Sources and Modifications in Indian Country: Extension of Permitting and Registration Deadlines for True Minor Sources Engaged in Oil and Natural Gas Production in Indian Country [EPA-HQ-OAR-2014-0606; FRL-9942-64-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AS27) received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4386. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Air Plan Approval; Wisconsin; Revision to the Milwaukee-Racine-Waukesha 2006 24-Hour Particulate Matter Maintenance Plan [EPA-R05-OAR-2015-0848; FRL-9942-56-Region 5] received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4387. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Air Plan Approval; Indiana; Particulate Matter Emissions Limits Revision [EPA-R05-OAR-2015-0379; FRL-9942-54-Region 5] received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by

Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4388. A letter from the Executive Director, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Annual Update of Filing Fees [Docket No.: RM16-00002-000] received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4389. A letter from the Executive Director, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Annual Update of Filing Fees [Docket No.: RM16-2-000] received February 16, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4390. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Changes to Buried and Underground Piping and Tank Recommendations [LR-ISG-2015-01] received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4391. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's interim staff guidance — Compliance with Order EA-12-049, Order Modifying Licenses with Regard to Requirements for Mitigation Strategies for Beyond-Design-Basis External Events, Revision to JLD-ISG-2012-01 received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4392. A letter from the Chairman, Southeast Compact Commission for Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management, transmitting the Commission's 2013-2014 Annual Report; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4393. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the final report on the national emergency with respect to the former Liberian regime of Charles Taylor that was declared in Executive Order 13348 of July 22, 2004, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627) and 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4394. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting notification that the national emergency with respect to Libya, that was declared in Executive Order 13566 of February 25, 2011, is to continue in effect beyond February 25, 2016, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1622(d); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 202(d); (90 Stat. 1257) (H. Doc. No. 114-101); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

4395. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting a notice of the Air Force's Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Pakistan, Transmittal No. 15-80, pursuant to Sec. 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4396. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Cuba Licensing Policy Revisions [Docket No.: 151208999-5999-01] (RIN: 0694-AG79) received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4397. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Communications and Legislative Af-

fairs, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting the Commission's Annual Sunshine Act Report for 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552b(j); Public Law 94-409, Sec. 3(a) (as amended by Public Law 104-66, Sec. 3002); (109 Stat. 734); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4398. A letter from the Secretary of the Board of Governors, U.S. Postal Service, transmitting the Service's report on postal officers and employees who received total compensation in calendar year 2015, pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3686(c); Public Law 109-435, Sec. 506; (120 Stat. 3236); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4399. A letter from the Director, U.S. Trade and Development Agency, transmitting the Agency's Fiscal Year 2015 Annual Report; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4400. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Trip Limit Adjustment for the Common Pool Fishery [Docket No.: 150105004-5355-01] (RIN: 0648-XE398) received February 16, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4401. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; North Atlantic Swordfish Fishery [Docket No.: 120627194-3657-02] (RIN: 0648-XE295) received February 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4402. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries [Docket Nos.: 120328229-4949-02 and 150121066-5717-02] (RIN: 0648-XE346) received February 12, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4403. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's inseason rule — Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; 2015 Tribal Fishery Allocations for Pacific Whiting; Reapportionment Between Tribal and Non-Tribal Sectors [Docket No.: 141219999-5432-02] (RIN: 0648-XE345) received February 16, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4404. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; 2015-2016 Biennial Specifications and Management Measures; Inseason Adjustments [Docket No.: 140904754-5188-02] (RIN: 0648-BF63) received February 16, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4405. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs,

NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area; New Coast Recovery Fee Programs [Docket No.: 140304192-5999-02] (RIN: 0648-BE05) received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4406. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Protected Resources, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Final Listing Determinations on Proposal To List the Banggai Cardinalfish and Harrison's Dogfish Under the Endangered Species Act [Docket No.: 151120999-5999-01] (RIN: 0648-XE328) received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4407. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, Office of Protected Resources, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Species; Critical Habitat for Endangered North Atlantic Right Whale [Docket No.: 100217099-5999-03] (RIN: 0648-AY54) received February 16, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4408. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf, and South Atlantic; Aquaculture [Docket No.: 080225276-5601-02] (RIN: 0648-AS65) received February 16, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4409. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone, Great Egg Harbor Bay; Somers Point, NJ [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0921] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 16, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4410. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone, Great Egg Harbor Bay; Somers Point, NJ [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0921] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 16, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4411. A letter from the Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting the Board's direct final rule — Notification and Reporting of Aircraft Accidents or Incidents and Overdue Aircraft, and Preservation of Aircraft Wreckage, Mail, Cargo, and Records [Docket No.: NTSB-AS-2012-0001] (RIN: 3147-AA11) received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4412. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel, Small Business Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule

— Federal Awarding Agency Regulatory Implementation of Office of Management and Budget's Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (RIN: 3245-AG62) received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Small Business.

4413. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel, Small Business Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Small Business Size Standards: Inflation Adjustment to Monetary Based Size Standards (RIN: 3245-AG60) received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Small Business.

4414. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel, Small Business Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Small Business Size Standards: Employee Based Size Standards in Wholesale Trade and Retail Trade (RIN: 3245-AG49) received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Small Business.

4415. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel, Small Business Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Small Business Size Standards for Manufacturing (RIN: 3245-AG50) received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Small Business.

4416. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel, Small Business Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Small Business Size Standards: Industries With Employee Based Size Standards Not Part of Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, or Retail Trade (RIN: 3245-AG51) received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Small Business.

4417. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of the Los Olivos District Viticultural Area [Docket No.: TTB-2015-0004; T.D. TTB-132; Ref: Notice No.: 148] (RIN: 1513-AC11) received February 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4418. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of the Eagle Foothills Viticultural Area [Docket No.: TTB-2015-0006; T.D. TTB-131; Ref: Notice No.: 150] (RIN: 1513-AC18) received February 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4419. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Returning Evidence at the Appeals Council Level [Docket No.: SSA-2013-0061] (RIN: 0960-AH64) received February 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4420. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting the Economic Report of the President together with the 2016 Annual Report of the Council of Eco-

nomic Advisers, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1022(a); February 20, 1946, ch. 33, Sec. 3(a) (as amended by Public Law 101-508; 13112(e)); (104 Stat. 1388-609) (H. Doc. No. 114-85); to the Joint Economic Committee and ordered to be printed.

4421. A letter from the Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting the Administration's proposed fiscal year 2017 budget, pursuant to Public Law 92-181; jointly to the Committees on Agriculture and Oversight and Government Reform.

4422. A letter from the Director of Congressional Affairs, National Endowment for the Arts, transmitting the FY 2017 Appropriations Request for the National Endowment for the Arts; jointly to the Committees on Education and the Workforce and Appropriations.

4423. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Medicare National Coverage Determinations for Fiscal Year 2015, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1395ff(f)(7); Public Law 106-554, Sec. 522(f)(7); (114 Stat. 2763A-546); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

4424. A letter from the Deputy Director, ODRM, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Medicare Program; Reporting and Returning of Overpayments [CMS-6037-F] (RIN: 0938-AQ58) received February 11, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

[Pursuant to sec. 4 of H. Res. 611 the following report was filed on February 16, 2016]

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 3624. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder; with an amendment (Rept. 114-422). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

[Submitted on February 23, 2016]

Mr. McCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4402. A bill to require a review of information regarding persons who have traveled or attempted to travel from the United States to support terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq, and for other purposes, with an amendment (Rept. 114-423). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. McCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4408. A bill to require the development of a national strategy to combat terrorist travel, and for other purposes (Rept. 114-424). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. McCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4398. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for requirements relating to documentation for major acquisition programs, and for other purposes (Rept. 114-425). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 3821. A bill to amend title XIX to require the publication of a provider

directory in the case of States providing for medical assistance on a fee-for-service basis or through a primary care case-management system, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114-426). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 3716. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114-427). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 618. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3624) to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder (Rept. 114-428). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. NEWHOUSE: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 619. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2406) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes (Rept. 114-429). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. ROYCE:

H.R. 4580. A bill to require the Secretary of State to submit an unclassified notice before the transfer of any individual detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to the custody or control of the individual's country of origin, any other foreign country, or any other foreign entity, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PASCARELL, Mr. THOMPSON of California, and Mr. RANGEL):

H.R. 4581. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent earnings stripping of corporations which are related to inverted corporations; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. DENHAM:

H.R. 4582. A bill to exclude striped bass from the anadromous fish doubling requirement in section 3406(b)(1) of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. RUSH (for himself and Mr. HUDSON):

H.R. 4583. A bill to promote a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CARTER of Texas:

H.R. 4584. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize COPS grantees to use grant funds for active shooter training, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CONNOLLY (for himself, Mr. HOYER, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. BEYER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mrs. BEATTY, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. NADLER, Mr. KEATING, Mr. MEEKS, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. YARMUTH, and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 4585. A bill to increase the rates of pay under the statutory pay systems and for prevailing rate employees by 3.9 percent, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. DOLD (for himself and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts):

H.R. 4586. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize grants to States for developing standing orders and educating health care professionals regarding the dispensing of opioid overdose reversal medication without person-specific prescriptions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GIBSON (for himself, Mr. HANNA, and Mr. MOULTON):

H.R. 4587. A bill to improve certain programs of the Small Business Administration to better assist small business customers in accessing broadband technology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas (for himself, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. TONKO, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SARBANES, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H.R. 4588. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide the same level of Federal matching assistance for every State that chooses to expand Medicaid coverage to newly eligible individuals, regardless of when such expansion takes place; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MACARTHUR:

H.R. 4589. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the cap on the Medicare Advantage star rating bonuses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4590. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out certain major medical facility projects for which appropriations are being made for fiscal year 2016, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4591. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into agreements with certain health care providers to furnish hospital care, medical services, and extended care to veterans; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. NEAL (for himself and Mr. ROONEY of Florida):

H.R. 4592. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the 60th Anniversary of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4593. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a payroll tax exemption for hiring long-term unemployed individuals; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. POLIS (for himself and Mr. REED):

H.R. 4594. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to make college affordable and accessible; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. QUIGLEY (for himself, Mr. BENISHEK, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. HIGGINS, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. KIND, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. LEVIN, and Mr. LIPINSKI):

H.R. 4595. A bill to authorize the Director of the United States Geological Survey to conduct monitoring, assessment, science, and research, in support of the binational fisheries within the Great Lakes Basin, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BARLETTA (for himself and Mr. CARSON of Indiana):

H. Con. Res. 117. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. FORBES:

H. Res. 615. A resolution expressing support for the Senate regarding the importance of selecting a Supreme Court Justice, and urging the Senate to only consider a nominee who will uphold the integrity of the Constitution in judicial decisions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DESAULNIER (for himself and Ms. LEE):

H. Res. 616. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the necessity to publically exonerate the African American sailors of the United States Navy who were tried and convicted of mutiny in connection with their service at the Port Chicago Naval Magazine in Concord, California, during World War II in order to further aid in healing the racial divide that continues to exist in the United States; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina:

H. Res. 617. A resolution providing for authority to initiate litigation for actions by the President or other executive branch officials inconsistent with their duties under the Constitution of the United States with respect to the unlawful transfer of individuals detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; to the Committee on Rules, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MCCARTHY:

H. Res. 620. A resolution expressing the profound sorrow of the House of Representatives on the death of the Honorable Antonin Scalia, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. CARTER of Texas:

H. Res. 621. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regard-

ing the future of the Supreme Court; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois (for himself and Mrs. DAVIS of California):

H. Res. 622. A resolution encouraging people in the United States to recognize March 2, 2016, as Read Across America Day; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. LIPINSKI (for himself, Mr. BARTON, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. COSTA, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HANNA, Mr. HONDA, Ms. LEE, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. POCAN, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. RUSH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. TONKO):

H. Res. 623. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Engineers Week; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

172. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Senate of the State of Michigan, relative to Senate Resolution No. 128, urging the United States Congress to overturn recent executive actions put forth by the President concerning gun control; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

173. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, relative to House Concurrent Resolution No. 7, urging the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the United States Congress to create a pilot program in Michigan instituting a flexible Veterans Choice Card system structured similar to a traditional health care program for all veterans in Michigan; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. ROYCE:
H.R. 4580.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. LEVIN:
H.R. 4581.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. DENHAM:
H.R. 4582.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 1 (relating to providing for the common defense and general welfare of the United States), Clause 3 (relating to regulating commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes) and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress).

By Mr. RUSH:
H.R. 4583.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. CARTER of Texas:
H.R. 4584.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1 Section 8, “. . . to provide the common defense and general welfare of the United States”
By Mr. CONNOLLY:
H.R. 4585.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States.
By Mr. DOLD:
H.R. 4586.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. GIBSON:
H.R. 4587.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas:
H.R. 4588.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.
By Mr. MACARTHUR:
H.R. 4589.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, of the United States Constitution
By Mr. MILLER of Florida:
H.R. 4590.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. MILLER of Florida:
H.R. 4591.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.
By Mr. NEAL:
H.R. 4592.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8. “The Congress shall have the power . . . to coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;”
By Ms. NORTON:
H.R. 4593.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.
By Mr. POLIS:
H.R. 4594.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. QUIGLEY:
H.R. 4595.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 27: Mrs. BLACK and Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 131: Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 210: Mrs. BLACK.
H.R. 249: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 267: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia and Mr. McDERMOTT.
H.R. 448: Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 546: Mr. BUCHANAN and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 563: Mr. VARGAS, Ms. GABBARD, and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 581: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 592: Mr. LAMALFA and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.
H.R. 605: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida and Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 624: Mr. MOULTON, Mr. CÁRDENAS, and Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 654: Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. MARINO, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 664: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 711: Mr. ABRAHAM.
H.R. 764: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 775: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York and Mr. CRENSHAW.
H.R. 799: Mr. BEYER.
H.R. 814: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 841: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 864: Mr. ZELDIN.
H.R. 865: Mr. ABRAHAM.
H.R. 911: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 921: Mr. GARAMENDI and Mr. HOLDING.
H.R. 927: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 997: Mr. HARPER.
H.R. 1088: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1093: Ms. KAPTUR and Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 1095: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 1098: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 1171: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 1188: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. HIGGINS.
H.R. 1218: Mr. MULLIN.
H.R. 1221: Mr. FORBES.
H.R. 1247: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 1301: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia and Mr. KNIGHT.
H.R. 1343: Mr. BUCSHON.
H.R. 1391: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 1457: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 1475: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. TURNER, Mr. LAHOOD, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. HURT of Virginia, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 1559: Mr. KNIGHT.
H.R. 1567: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 1655: Mr. TAKANO, Mr. DELANEY, and Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 1686: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 1718: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1763: Mr. McDERMOTT and Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 1769: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. DeLAURO, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. VELA, and Mr. GUTIERREZ.
H.R. 1854: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Ms. MOORE, and Mr. CUMMINGS.
H.R. 1887: Mr. ENGEL and Mr. CROWLEY.
H.R. 1941: Mr. HUDSON.
H.R. 1943: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 2102: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
H.R. 2156: Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 2170: Mr. LEVIN and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 2191: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 2193: Mr. CÁRDENAS and Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 2218: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia.
H.R. 2236: Mr. GRIJALVA and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 2257: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts and Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 2278: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 2404: Ms. ADAMS.
H.R. 2500: Mr. GRIFFITH and Mr. HENSARLING.
H.R. 2515: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia and Mr. McGOVERN.
H.R. 2516: Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 2539: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 2540: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 2622: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 2633: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2646: Mr. ZELDIN.
H.R. 2656: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia and Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 2680: Ms. HAHN.
H.R. 2711: Mr. BUCHANAN.
H.R. 2715: Mr. VELA, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. CLEAVER, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 2745: Mr. BUCSHON.
H.R. 2759: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 2799: Mr. ROE of Tennessee and Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 2802: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 2805: Mr. WENSTRUP.
H.R. 2846: Ms. EDWARDS.
H.R. 2867: Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 2894: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 2896: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 2901: Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 2903: Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. COOK, Mr. FARR, and Mr. GARRETT.
H.R. 2911: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.
H.R. 2939: Mr. MEEKS.
H.R. 2956: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 2972: Ms. MENG.
H.R. 3012: Mr. MESSER and Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 3026: Mr. DENHAM.
H.R. 3029: Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 3080: Mr. PAULSEN, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, and Mr. REED.
H.R. 3119: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, and Mr. RIGELL.
H.R. 3123: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 3137: Mr. STIVERS, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, and Mr. HUNTER.
H.R. 3150: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 3151: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 3193: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. DONOVAN.
H.R. 3225: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3299: Mr. HUDSON.
H.R. 3308: Mr. MEEKS.
H.R. 3326: Mr. PITTENGER and Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 3351: Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 3355: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 3381: Mrs. LOWEY, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MARINO, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 3399: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 3439: Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 3541: Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 3542: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 3556: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 3643: Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 3655: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 3687: Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 3694: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 3706: Ms. TSONGAS and Mr. LAHOOD.
H.R. 3710: Mr. CRAWFORD.
H.R. 3713: Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 3779: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3790: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 3799: Mr. POMPEO and Mr. RATCLIFFE.
H.R. 3805: Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 3817: Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 3892: Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. MICA, Mr. PETERSON, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. DESJARLAIS, and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
H.R. 3924: Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 3926: Mr. KILMER.
 H.R. 3946: Mr. VALADAO.
 H.R. 3977: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 3978: Mr. VELA.
 H.R. 4007: Mr. WEBER of Texas.
 H.R. 4013: Ms. KAPTUR.
 H.R. 4018: Mr. CUELLAR and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
 H.R. 4063: Mr. BUCSHON.
 H.R. 4089: Mr. HENSARLING.
 H.R. 4116: Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mr. STIVERS.
 H.R. 4126: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. FLORES, Mr. MICA, Mr. PALAZZO, and Mr. SALMON.
 H.R. 4138: Mr. GOODLATTE.
 H.R. 4140: Mr. KILMER.
 H.R. 4144: Mr. KILMER and Mr. McDERMOTT.
 H.R. 4160: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
 H.R. 4165: Mr. HANNA.
 H.R. 4167: Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. BARR, and Mr. BURGESS.
 H.R. 4172: Mr. MEEKS.
 H.R. 4183: Mr. KNIGHT.
 H.R. 4184: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
 H.R. 4212: Mr. PETERS and Mr. PASCRELL.
 H.R. 4219: Mr. MARCHANT.
 H.R. 4223: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 4230: Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, and Mr. FOSTER.
 H.R. 4238: Mr. LOEBSACK and Mr. KENNEDY.
 H.R. 4247: Mr. HUNTER and Mr. BUCHANAN.
 H.R. 4249: Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 4262: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia and Mr. HENSARLING.
 H.R. 4263: Mr. KATKO.
 H.R. 4278: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
 H.R. 4293: Mr. PAULSEN and Mr. ASHFORD.
 H.R. 4294: Mr. MACARTHUR, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. PAULSEN, and Mr. ASHFORD.
 H.R. 4298: Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 4336: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. COLE, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. HAHN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
 H.R. 4352: Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. RIGELL, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. KEATING, Mr. SALMON, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. KATKO.
 H.R. 4362: Mr. OLSON and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
 H.R. 4364: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
 H.R. 4371: Mr. HOLDING, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, and Mr. WALKER.
 H.R. 4377: Mr. MULVANEY.
 H.R. 4380: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. HIMES, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 4381: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mrs. LOVE, and Mr. KLINE.
 H.R. 4390: Mr. ELLISON.
 H.R. 4398: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi and Mr. McCAUL.
 H.R. 4400: Mr. KIND.
 H.R. 4401: Mr. HIGGINS.
 H.R. 4402: Ms. SINEMA.
 H.R. 4403: Mr. ZELDIN.
 H.R. 4408: Ms. SINEMA.
 H.R. 4420: Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Mr. BARTON.
 H.R. 4424: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. POCAN, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
 H.R. 4430: Ms. SPEIER and Mr. AMODEI.
 H.R. 4448: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
 H.R. 4456: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 4461: Mr. OLSON.
 H.R. 4465: Mr. LAMALFA.
 H.R. 4471: Mr. TAKANO.
 H.R. 4479: Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
 H.R. 4480: Mr. KILMER and Mr. FARR.
 H.R. 4488: Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. MOORE, Mr. FATTAH, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
 H.R. 4491: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRAYSON, and Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 4502: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
 H.R. 4519: Mrs. DINGELL.
 H.R. 4521: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. CLYBURN, Ms. BROWN of Florida, and Mr. GOWDY.
 H.R. 4525: Ms. MATSUI.
 H.R. 4534: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, and Mr. KATKO.
 H.R. 4537: Mr. TURNER.
 H.R. 4539: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina and Mr. DELANEY.
 H.R. 4543: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
 H.R. 4550: Mr. BRADY of Texas.
 H.R. 4552: Mr. CRENSHAW.
 H.R. 4555: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
 H.R. 4570: Mr. ROKITA and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
 H.R. 4578: Ms. HAHN and Ms. JACKSON LEE.
 H.J. Res. 23: Mr. PASCRELL.
 H.J. Res. 50: Mr. WENSTRUP.
 H. Con. Res. 19: Ms. MCCOLLUM and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
 H. Con. Res. 75: Mr. CONAWAY and Mr. CULBERSON.
 H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. MULVANEY.
 H. Con. Res. 101: Mr. MCGOVERN.
 H. Res. 28: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H. Res. 112: Mr. RANGEL.
 H. Res. 148: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mrs. LOWEY.
 H. Res. 214: Mr. JEFFRIES and Mr. VEASEY.
 H. Res. 289: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
 H. Res. 428: Mr. ELLISON.
 H. Res. 540: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
 H. Res. 541: Ms. MOORE and Ms. NORTON.
 H. Res. 551: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. COOK, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. KEATING, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. DONOVAN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. BERA, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, and Mr. LEVIN.
 H. Res. 565: Mr. CÁRDENAS.
 H. Res. 569: Mr. O'ROURKE and Mr. LEVIN.
 H. Res. 591: Mr. VELA, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. FORBES, Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Mr. GROTHMAN, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. CLEAVER, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. UPTON, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. POCAN, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.
 H. Res. 593: Mr. LOEBSACK.
 H. Res. 608: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York and Mr. VARGAS.
 H. Res. 610: Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. ELLISON, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY Mr. BUCK

The amendment to be offered by Representative Buck, or a designee, to H.R. 3624, the "Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act," does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY Mr. WITTMAN

My amendment to H.R. 2406 does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE VOCALESSENCE
WITNESS PROGRAM**HON. KEITH ELLISON**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the impact of VocalEssence, a Minneapolis-based vocal ensemble of international repute. Through their WITNESS program, they have taught, performed alongside, and serenaded more than 155,000 students throughout the Twin Cities over 26 years.

The WITNESS vision began in 1991 with one school and one teaching artist. It has since grown to more than 40 schools and 9 teaching artists, impacting more than 5,000 students annually. The program provides diverse role models and increased exposure to the arts through performances and classroom workshops. For many students, WITNESS is their first opportunity to receive professional training or perform at a major concert hall. The program celebrates the contributions of African Americans to choral music—a rich history that has led to collaborations with James Earl Jones, Rita Dove, Billy Taylor, and countless others.

This year, WITNESS is hosting the Morehouse College Glee Club. These young men from a Historically Black College are living proof of the world of possibility for students of color. Over 200 young men from six Twin Cities high schools will rehearse and perform alongside some of the brightest Black minds in our country. It is crucial that we celebrate Black culture; when we do, we must include Black youth at the helm. VocalEssence WITNESS does just that.

I commend VocalEssence for the WITNESS program's success in educating, engaging and inspiring students in the Twin Cities. VocalEssence has given our community so much beauty through their music, and they continue to better our future through their top-notch community program WITNESS. I can't wait to see what they accomplish in the future.

BRUCE DEMOLLI

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the outstanding achievements of Mr. Bruce DeMolli, who was being honored by the Murray Family and the New Jersey Department for Persons with Disabilities at their 46th Annual Dinner Dance on Sunday, February 21, 2016.

Bruce joined the Our Lady of the Highway Knights of Columbus Council 3835 in Little

Falls, based at Our Lady of the Holy Angels Church in 1984 and has been an active member ever since. He was installed as the N.J. Knights of Columbus State Deputy, becoming the state CEO of the Knights for the next two years.

Bruce became a state officer 10 years ago when he was elected State Warden. He was instrumental in forming two new councils: Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Number 11943 in Wayne, New Jersey and the Immaculate Council Number 12211 in Clifton, New Jersey.

From 2004–2006, Bruce served as the Chairman of the Paterson Federation Knights of Columbus. The Paterson Federation is a representation of the Councils in the counties of Morris, Passaic and Sussex. The Federation is dedicated to serving and providing all the councils within its boundaries the assistance needed to help them excel in all areas of Columbianism. In recognition for his faithful service to his church and community, Bruce was honored by Pope Benedict XVI as a Knight of Saint Gregory.

Bruce has been married to his wife, Anna, for more than 40 years and they have one daughter, Bree, and two grandchildren, Tyler and Maya. Bruce's wife serves as director at Diocesan Catholic Charities' La Vida Childcare Centers I & II in Paterson.

The Murray House is a great organization which supports a cause that is near and dear to me and my wife Elsie. They are the longest running group home in the State of New Jersey for adults with developmental disabilities. The fact that they have chosen to honor Bruce at their annual Dinner Dance is only fitting as he is a great servant in the cause of helping others.

The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to recognizing and commemorating the achievements of dedicated individuals such as Bruce DeMolli.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Bruce's family, friends, and all those whose lives he has touched, and me, in recognizing his leadership, dedication, and loyalty to serving his community.

IN RECOGNITION OF J. BRAD JONES FOR HIS OUTSTANDING CAREER IN FEDERAL CIVILIAN SERVICE

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor J. Brad Jones, Director of Continuous Process Improvement at Tobyhanna Army Depot. Brad will be retiring on March 3, 2016 after more than 37 years of service to

the Department of the Army and Tobyhanna Army Depot. From the rank of first line supervisor to his most recent service as a Senior Director, Brad has been a key member of Tobyhanna for decades.

Over the course of his career, Brad has made significant contributions to Tobyhanna Army Depot. His insight and input made him a valued member of each core team that developed and implemented plans to reorganize and modernize the installation as it evolved. In 1991, Brad was a member of the Department of Defense Study Team for the Consolidation of Ground Communications—Electronics, which established the foundation for pivotal Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) decisions in 1995. He developed the strategy and tactics to defend Tobyhanna from the threat of closure and resulted in the transfer of U.S. Air Force work from California to Tobyhanna. In 2005, he was Team Leader of the Tobyhanna BRAC group, which resulted in the transfer of Navy and Marine Corps workload from two sites in California to Tobyhanna. Brad helped lead Tobyhanna's effort that resulted in the award of seven Shingo medals for manufacturing excellence and the 2012 Department of Army Lean-Six Sigma Excellence Award. Brad was a team leader in attaining accreditation and the continued certification of Tobyhanna Army Depot under International Standards Organization 9001 for Quality, as well as under Aerospace Standards 9100/9110. These standards of excellence helped Tobyhanna maintain its competitive edge.

Brad was also known for his interpersonal skills with employees, labor officials, and managers. As Director of Personnel and Chief of Management Employee Relations, he was able to streamline processes and cut red tape. As Depot Operations Officer and Chief of Staff, he ensured success of the day-to-day mission and base support operations of the depot, while coordinating the administrative actions of the Tobyhanna Army Depot Command Group and Headquarters.

It is an honor to recognize J. Brad Jones for such an extraordinary career. I am grateful for all of his efforts for the sake of our nation's military. I wish him the best, and may he enjoy a long and fulfilling retirement.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. JULIA AARON HUMBLER

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, our lives have been touched by the life of Mrs. Julia Aaron Humbles, who gave of herself in order for others to stand; and

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Whereas, her dedicated service is present in New Orleans, Louisiana and Metropolitan Atlanta, for all to see her as an unwavering advocate of justice for the youth, the elderly, the poor and the downtrodden; and

Whereas, this remarkable, positive woman with a beautiful smile gave of herself, her time and her talent; never asking for fame or fortune but only to uplift those in need; and

Whereas, she led by example from behind the scenes, and was on the frontline for our nation; she was an original Freedom Rider in the 1960s, an active member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), a member of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), a Goodwill Ambassador for her community, a charter member of her beloved church, New Beginning Full Gospel Baptist Church of Decatur, Georgia, and

Whereas, this virtuous Proverbs 31 woman was a mother, a grandmother, a great-grandmother, a wife, a daughter, a friend, a warrior, a matriarch, and a woman of great integrity; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to bestow a Congressional recognition on Mrs. Julia Aaron Humbles for her leadership, friendship and service to all of the citizens in Georgia and throughout the Nation; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., do hereby attest to the 114th Congress that Mrs. Julia Aaron Humbles of DeKalb County, Georgia is deemed worthy and deserving of this "Congressional Honor": Mrs. Julia Aaron Humbles, U.S. Citizen of Distinction in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 6th day of February, 2016.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHAPEL HILL SHOOTING

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, today marks one year since three young Americans were killed for their faith.

On February 10th, 2015, Deah Barakat, Yusor Abu-Salha, and Razan Abu-Salha were murdered in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. They were shot and killed because they were Muslim.

Yusor was a graduate of North Carolina State University and planned on enrolling at the UNC Chapel Hill School of Dentistry, where her husband, Deah, was studying to become a dentist. Razan, Yusor's sister, was a student at NCSU as well. She was only 19 years old.

These murders break my heart. They should be heartbreaking to every American.

The tragedy in Chapel Hill shows us the stark reality of anti-Muslim bigotry: hate speech and scapegoating has real life consequences. Children are bullied in schools, houses of worship are vandalized, and people are killed for the way they dress or how they pray.

Candidates for public office, public officials, and leaders are spewing hatred against American Muslims, calling for Muslim refugees to

be banned from entering the country, or for Muslims living here—including some that were born and raised as American—should carry ID cards or register their names in a database. This type of rhetoric is why our young children are afraid to go to school and why people are being killed because of how they look or how they pray.

After the murder, some people in the press argued that it was over a parking dispute. I'm reminded of what Deah's brother, Farris, said: "I can only accept Deah, Yusor, and Razan's murders as being over a parking dispute, if Rosa Parks's struggle was over a bus seat."

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF BUNNY STEINMAN

HON. PATRICK MURPHY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Bunny Steinman. Bunny was a unique and wonderful soul. Hardworking, fierce, and warm-hearted, she was a pillar of the Florida Democratic Party. Her energy was contagious and if I had to pick one word to describe her, I think "sparkplug" would be most fitting.

She wanted all Democrats to work hard—and led by being an outstanding example, with strength and a big heart. And those who worked with her like I did knew that she would never hesitate to let someone know if she saw them slacking. She pushed everyone to do their best out of love—because she knew that's what our party deserved.

We are all going to miss her—not just her leadership in our party, but also her spirit that encouraged us all to do more for our community and our party. Her contributions to creating a better world for others will last forever.

Bunny took so many people under her wing, and I am honored to be one of them. And it is through all of us that her memory lives on. Our community, the state of Florida, and our nation are better because of Bunny, as are the lives of countless individuals who knew her. I know that is true for me. I would not be where I am or who I am today without her support.

Mr. Speaker, Bunny was a patriot who loved our country, and I was proud to call her my friend. Bunny, may the road rise up to meet you. You will be missed.

LARGER THAN LIFE IN MEMORY OF JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory and in sorrow of the passing of Justice Antonin Scalia, who was truly larger than life. He will go down in history as one of America's greatest Supreme Court Justices. He was a champion for freedom and the Constitution, a great family man and a devout man of faith. I submit this poem penned in his honor by Albert Carey Caswell.

Larger,
larger than life
America's son,
oh so very bright
Antonin,
for all of America you held the night
As you stood with all of our best in America's light
Same as all of our Forefathers in sight
Who shone in liberty's sheen so very bright
Of something which gleams into the night
Of this our most beloved document seen of this sight
Who'd the United States Constitution recite
Which built this country,
not out of luck or by circumstance
But by the bedrock upon which all of us have advanced
The very foundation upon which all of our freedoms so stand
Of such consequence through the decades which commands
To whether all of the storms,
and battle all of tyranny in all of its forms
For no other Nation in this entire world,
has had such freedoms upon its citizens unfurled
For you Justice Scalia,
were but the guardian for all of our children
and their future world
And even your detractors knew you were larger than life,
while upon you their arguments they hurled
As you stood there with sword in hand
With your pen, your wit, your charm, and your mind to take command
All so freedom could stand
For you had the gift,
of all of your opponents respect and love as so was this
If only we had more men like you in this world,
who against such divisiveness could rise above like a pearl,
then we'd have such the bliss
And your greatest love of all,
was that of your magnificent family we saw
Of what you left behind,
to spread out through time
Your seeds of love to remind,
that the gift of love and life are oh so very divine
And just like our Forefathers you were a true man of God
For the freedom to worship they stepped upon this very sod
No other country across the world,
has so been formed out of God
And your two greatest reads,
The Bible and The Constitution brought to your soul such glee
To arm you in the battle for all you would need
Now Marshall and all of the greats,
have another equal for history to so contemplate
Brilliant, Brilliant, Brilliant you were my son in so many ways
Your written opinions and quest for justice,
disarmed all of those arguments and held them at bay
Indeed it's a very sad day
For America's loss,
comes at such a high cost
Because such men like you Antonin are larger than life,
and keep all of our freedom's burning bright
As our world just got little bit darker this night
We pray that America too will follow your light
Supreme,
at the top,
as into the future upon lips of lawyers and law students,

your name shall never stop
 Rest
 Rest my son
 Rise up to heaven Antonin where you so be-
 long
 As an Angel in The Army of our Lord so very
 strong
 To watch over us you American song
 And larger than life,
 and your memory will ever live on
 God Bless you America's son,
 as you did her the day you were born
 Amen

A MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO
 BARBARA SYKES

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Barbara Sykes, of Burbank, California, an accomplished volunteer and community leader who passed away on Thursday, February 11, 2016.

Born in 1960, Barbara grew up in Toluca Lake, California. Barbara married Dave Golonski and they raised their three children in Burbank, where she and her husband became deeply involved in their community.

Barbara was active in various charitable organizations, before, during and after Dave's service on the Burbank City Council. Generous with their time and resources, Barbara and Dave frequently hosted events at their home for several organizations that raised money for both local causes and others in need—I always looked forward to their annual holiday party that benefitted the Burbank Coordinating Council, Five Acres, the El Faro and Hacienda Orphanages of Tijuana, Mexico and the Kids International Foundation, of which Barbara was a founding member.

Ms. Sykes had a passion for charities that benefitted children, and to that end, she was a founding board member of the Boys & Girls Club of Burbank and the Greater East Valley, an organization that she was steadfastly dedicated to and active in for over twenty years. Ms. Sykes was a longtime volunteer with the Family Service Agency of Burbank and the Burbank Coordinating Council, where she served as one of the key organizers for their holiday basket program, and created the council's "Coins for Campers" program. In addition, Barbara raised funds for the Condor Squadron, founded by her father, Richard T. Sykes, a local organization of aviation enthusiasts which flies World War II and other military airplanes in formation over veterans' events, memorial ceremonies and parades throughout the region.

Barbara is survived by her mother, JoAnn Sykes, husband, Dave Golonski, children, Randi, Russell and John, son-in-law, Nathan Lowery, grandchildren, Grant and JoAnn, and her brothers and sisters, Edmond, Jeanne, Carol, Gene, Richard, John and Mary.

Barbara is an irreplaceable member of the Burbank community, and her loss will be deeply felt by the many people whose lives she touched. I ask all Members to join me in remembering one of Burbank's most beloved citizens, Barbara Sykes.

HONORING THE RECIPIENT OF
 NASA'S SMALL BUSINESS SUB-
 CONTRACTOR EXCELLENCE
 AWARD: ARCATA ASSOCIATES,
 INC.

HON. CRESENT HARDY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Tim Wong and Arcata Associates, Inc., for receiving the Small Business Subcontractor Excellence Award as part of NASA's 2015 Small Business Industry Awards.

Under President and CEO Tim Wong's leadership, Arcata has received a NASA Small Business Industry Award five times since the program began eight years ago. By delivering outstanding support, along with on schedule and on budget results year after year, Arcata has made itself the model for small business success in Las Vegas.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to congratulate Tim and all of the Arcata employees for being awarded the Small Business Subcontractor Excellence Award.

RECOGNIZING MAYOR JAMES
 THOMAS, JR.

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize former mayor of Hinesville, James Thomas, Jr., for his exceptional job as mayor as well as his endless support for our nation's military.

Elected mayor in 2007, Mr. Thomas has dedicated his life to public service. With a graduate degree in Business Management from Central Michigan University and a graduate degree in Public Administration from Georgia Southern University, he has served the city of Hinesville and Liberty County for nearly 30 years.

Prior to being elected mayor, Mr. Thomas was a military officer and a Department of Defense civil servant where he worked as a liaison between Fort Stewart, Liberty County, and the City of Hinesville. In addition, he used his skills as a trained Engineering Project Manager to oversee the construction of "Warriors Walk," a memorial to fallen soldiers and civilians at Fort Stewart.

Mayor Thomas has also contributed to the prosperity of Hinesville and Liberty County through his numerous public service positions. He was Chairman of the Liberty County Planning Commission, member of the Liberty County Hospital Authority, Hinesville Architectural Review Board, and the Hinesville Military Affairs Committee.

His remarkable dedication and leadership to Hinesville will truly be missed.

RECOGNIZING DR. SUSAN GORDON

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Susan Gordon, a nationally recognized pediatrician, teacher, and equal rights advocate from Pomona, New York, who passed away January 25.

Dr. Gordon opened her pediatric office in Haverstraw, New York after graduating from Howard University College of Medicine in Washington, D.C. In 1958 she started a 25-year career as an associate professor of pediatrics, first at New York Medical College and then at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons. Dr. Gordon served as a member of the National Panel on the Measurement of the Program Effects of Head Start and a member of the Board of Trustees of Nyack Hospital. Dr. Gordon was also a member and past president of the board at the Lexington School for the Deaf, and the School's Health Center was named in her honor.

Dr. Gordon and her husband, Dr. Edmund W. Gordon, were champions for equal educational opportunity, working with a small group of concerned citizens in the late 50's and 60's to integrate the schools in the East Ramapo Central School District. Dr. Gordon was very active in the PTA and later was elected a member of the East Ramapo Central School District Board of Education, where she was elected and served as President for three years. The Drs. Gordon combined their medical and educational knowledge and talents to found the Harriet Tubman Child Health and Guidance Clinic in Harlem in the 1950's, and helped establish the Psycho-Educational Diagnostic Clinic for children at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center (referred to as the Ambulatory Pediatrics Division).

In addition to her work in medicine and education, Dr. Gordon devoted her time and talents to serving the Rockland County community, and her accomplishments brought her well-deserved recognition. Dr. Gordon was a long-standing board member and served as President of the Martin Luther King Multi-Purpose Center Board of Trustees, and on January 22, 2000, the classrooms and computer center at the Martin Luther King Multi-Purpose Center were dedicated as the Susan G. Gordon, M.D. Education Corridor. She was also one of three women recognized at the African American Chamber of Commerce of Westchester & Rockland Counties, Inc.'s 2000 Women's History Month luncheon. Dr. Gordon was the recipient of the 1999 "Children's Champion Award," given by the Early Child Consortium of Rockland County, and in 2006 was inducted, along with her husband, into the Rockland County Civil Rights Hall of Fame.

Most recently, the Drs. Gordon founded Gordon and Gordon Associates in Human Development, and their children established the CEJES Institute and Library in Pomona to continue their parents' life work in the promotion of social justice, particularly as it pertains to health, education, and the environmental and material well being of marginalized communities.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the many outstanding accomplishments of my constituent, Dr. Susan Gordon. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring her exceptional life.

HONORING A TRUE BEHIND-THE-SCENES HERO: LORI HENRICKSEN

HON. CRESENT HARDY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor Lori Henricksen, an instructor at the Veterans Tribute Career and Technical Academy, for her dedication and tremendous contributions toward educating Nevada's students about career opportunities in emergency telecommunications. As a former 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Dispatcher and Law Enforcement and Fire Dispatcher, Lori understands what it takes to help individuals in times of crisis and how to succeed in this field. I am grateful to have educators like Lori who can bring a wealth of knowledge and real world experience to teach our students. Lori is truly making a positive impact in our students by encouraging tomorrow's future leaders to take on these lifesaving roles for the betterment of our communities. I join all Nevadans in saying thank you for your mentorship to our students and for your passion for building up the next generation of emergency dispatchers, our behind-the-scenes heroes. Mr. Speaker, I commend Lori on her outstanding service to educating Nevada's students and for the years she has devoted to responding to the emergencies of our families. I am confident that Lori's hard work will continue to benefit our communities for many years to come.

RECOGNIZING MR. RAYMOND C. RINALDI FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR COMMUNITY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Mr. Raymond C. Rinaldi for his innumerable contributions to the constituents of my district and surrounding communities through his work with the Ronald McDonald House of Scranton. As a distinguished attorney in the region, he has consistently exemplified the partnership between private enterprise and community engagement in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Admitted to the bar in 1965 and establishing his legal practice in 1972, Raymond has worked tirelessly to establish a firm distinguished by its principles. Through hard work, client loyalty, confidentiality, and strict ethics, Rinaldi & Poveromo, P.C. has become the symbol of client-focused legal services.

Raymond's defining contribution to the community began nearly three decades ago when he embarked on a project with consequences

no one could have foreseen. After being approached by Albert and Carol Mueller about the idea of opening a local Ronald McDonald House in Scranton, personal experience inspired him to engage in this important undertaking. Raymond and his wife Rosemarie dealt with medical issues after the birth of one of their sons, and encountering firsthand the difficulties parents encounter while seeing their child undergo medical treatment, it was apparent that assisting in the implementation of this project was nothing more than a selfless duty.

Providing a "home-away-from-home" so families can stay close to their hospitalized children at no cost, the Ronald McDonald House of Scranton has assisted thousands of families in the area with food and lodging while caring for a loved one. Raymond's humble duty turned out to be a lifelong passion as he served on the organization's board of directors for nearly three decades, and continues to provide pro-bono legal services to this day.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Mr. Raymond C. Rinaldi for his continued service to the community, as he has promoted an atmosphere where families can face the weight of medical emergencies together. His selfless dedication has impacted countless lives and I express my deepest gratitude for his service with the hope that Raymond's work will continue to be the gold standard of service to the community.

IN HONOR OF LEESBURG CHIEF OF POLICE, JOSEPH PRICE

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor my constituent, Leesburg Chief of Police Joseph Price. Chief Price will retire on March 1st after serving as the Leesburg Chief of Police for 16 years. Chief Price has worked in law enforcement for over 40 years, serving in the Montgomery County Maryland Police Department for 25 years and in the U.S. Army Reserve, retiring as a Lt. Colonel. Under his leadership, the Leesburg Police Department has become an award winning organization focused on positive interactions and community policing. While serving a population that has nearly doubled in size, the department earned its first accreditation from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services in 2006, and was subsequently reaccredited in 2010 and 2014. In 2015 the International Association of Chiefs of Police and Motorola awarded the Webber-Seavey Award for Quality in Law Enforcement to the Leesburg Police Department in recognition of their success in improving quality in law enforcement through innovative projects. Needless to say, Chief Price's leadership has served a crucial role in the growth and success of the Leesburg Police Department.

Chief Price earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Scranton, and an MBA from the American University in Washington, DC. He is also a graduate of the FBI National Academy and Police Executive Research Forum's (PERF) Senior Manage-

ment Institute for Police. He currently chairs the Northern Virginia Chiefs and Sheriffs Group. Aside from his dedication to our community, Price is an active member of the Rotary Club of Leesburg. He is the devoted husband of his wife, Lori, and has three children and three grandchildren. I wish to commend Chief Price for faithfully serving the Town of Leesburg, Commonwealth of Virginia, and ensuring the continued safety of Virginia's 10th District.

HONORING THE LIFE OF
MR. BILL BLAKE

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bill Blake, who passed away January 10, 2016 surrounded by his friends and loved ones. He was 65.

Bill was born and raised in Merced. As a young man he worked on farms until joining the Merced Sheriff's Office in 1971 at the age of 21. Bill served eight sheriffs over a 38 year period, working all across Merced County including Los Banos and the surrounding West Side.

In 2003 Bill was named undersheriff by newly elected Sheriff Mark Pazin; who described Blake as an excellent undersheriff, a great friend, and "a tough, no-nonsense guy: never afraid to mix it up with anybody or to tell anybody what he thought . . . we could disagree on things and he was never shy about letting me know his thoughts; but in the end, he never, ever held a grudge".

Current Merced County Sheriff Verne Warnke, who met Blake in the 1970s, echoed that sentiment: "He taught me that you could take care of business and move on without any grudge whatsoever". Warnke credits Blake, and his manner of dealing with people, as a strong influence on him.

Former Sheriff Tom Cavallero's first supervisor in the Merced County Sheriff's department was Bill Blake, whom he described as being "without a doubt the single most influential person I've known in my whole career". Blake retired from law enforcement in 2009 after winning election to the Merced City Council, where he served two terms.

Blake is survived by numerous grandchildren and his three children Billy, Tiffany, and Kevin; who followed in his father's footsteps as a sergeant in the Sheriff's Office and current Merced City Councilmember. Bill will be remembered for his accomplishments as a family man and a public servant who leaves behind a proud legacy of fighting for public safety and social justice.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me on this day in a moment of silence in memory of the life and service of Bill Blake. The contributions that he gave throughout his life have, and will continue to have, a lasting impression on the fabric of Merced. He will be missed by many, more than he'll ever know.

CELEBRATING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF BAND OF BROTHERS BIBLE STUDY

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Band of Brothers Bible Study in Garden City and Savannah, Georgia.

Ten years ago, Pastor Kenny Grant and five others started a support group for all walks of life to study God's word and help each other grow as Christians. Today, Band of Brothers has over two hundred in attendance each Friday morning at the Garden City First Baptist Church as well as six hundred and fifty individuals receiving weekly videos, in case they miss a meeting.

Meetings every Friday morning have become a safe place for many to discuss issues in their life and to study more about the Bible and themselves in front of men who have become, for many, a second family.

Since its beginning, I have had the privilege to be a regular member of the Band of Brothers Bible Study, enjoying others' company, listening to inspirational music, and through the Bible, growing a Christian community with men that I now call my friends. I want to congratulate Band of Brothers on their achievements and wish them continued success in the Garden City and Savannah Communities.

HONORING MARGARET RESNICK AS ILLINOIS PARKS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION'S PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

HON. ROBERT J. DOLD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Illinois Parks and Recreation Association's Professional of the Year, Margaret Resnick. The award is given to professionals working in parks and recreation who have had an impact on their communities. Margaret works with other civic leaders to provide cost-effective services for the community.

Since 2007, Margaret has led the Mundelein Parks and Recreation District as director. Her smart financial management and search for alternative funding and grants has allowed the Park District to thrive. Margaret has brought innovation and technological improvements to the programs and services in Mundelein. Due to her efforts, parks have expanded, and participation has increased.

Mr. Speaker, Margaret Resnick is an inspiring community leader who has been creative and practical in providing parks and recreation services to the residents of Mundelein, Illinois. I am proud to celebrate her as the Professional of the Year and look forward to her continued service and leadership in the community.

HONORING JAHNAVI MURTHY OF SOUTH RIDING

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate and honor Jahnavi Murthy of South Riding, a young student from my district who has achieved national recognition for exemplary volunteer service in her community. The 2016 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program, an annual honor conferred on the most impressive student volunteers in each state and the District of Columbia, has named Ms. Murthy as one of their top honorees in Virginia.

Ms. Murthy has earned recognition for her input in co-funding an organization with her brother called, "Feed Hungry People." After her work to begin this organization, "Feed Hungry People" has been able to raise \$24,000. Each month, this organization sends nonperishable meal packs to impoverished areas including Zambia, Panama, Haiti and the Philippines.

It is vital that we encourage the kind of selfless contribution this young citizen has made. People of all ages need to think more about how we, as individuals, can work together at the local level to ensure the health and vitality of our towns and neighborhoods. Young volunteers like Ms. Murthy are inspiring examples to all of us.

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards was created by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals in 1995 to impress upon all youth volunteers the importance of their contributions and to inspire other young people to follow their example.

I heartily applaud Ms. Murthy for her initiative in seeking to make our community a better place to live, and for the positive impact she has had on the lives of others. Her actions show that young Americans can—and do—play important roles in our communities, and that America's community spirit continues to hold tremendous promise for the future.

HONORING SERGEANT MARCUS WRIGHT

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable law enforcer, Sergeant Marcus Wright of Byram, Mississippi.

Sergeant Wright grew up in Morton, Mississippi. He graduated from Morton High School in 1994. He moved to Jackson, Mississippi and began his law enforcement career by attending the Jackson Police Training Academy from which he graduated with honors in 2001. After graduation, he continued with JPD as a Patrolman, was promoted to Detective in 2003 and began work in the Vice and Narcotics Unit. In 2004, he completed his

training with the Federal Bureau of Investigation to become a Crisis/Hostage Negotiator. In 2005 he was selected to be part of the Dignitary Protection Team that protected the Mayor of the City of Jackson, Mississippi. Since 2011, he has proudly served with the Hinds County Sheriff's Office as a Sergeant, head of the Internal Affairs Division and now in the Patrol Division. Sergeant Wright has received extensive training during his career and has been awarded several commendations for his outstanding performance and dedication in the line of duty, and most recently receiving the Officer of the Year Award for 2014. He also serves as a Master Mason in the New Home Masonic Lodge Number 261.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Sergeant Marcus Wright for his dedication to serving our great state of Mississippi.

IN RECOGNITION OF WENDY MACKENZIE

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Wendy Mackenzie, who has dedicated much of her professional life to supporting women's right to choose and electing more pro-choice women to office. Tonight she is being honored for her work by Eleanor's Legacy, an extraordinary organization that is dedicated to electing pro-choice Democratic women in New York State. Her commitment, enthusiasm, and generous use of personal resources have helped countless women candidates succeed. She has helped women break barriers, persevere and make a difference.

Ms. Mackenzie is a public affairs and public relations consultant. In this role, she has worked with clients as diverse as Chemical Bank, community development groups, arts organizations, and Planned Parenthood.

Ms. Mackenzie serves as Executive Director of New York ChoicePac, a bi-partisan pro-choice committee for New York State, which has distributed over a quarter of a million dollars to over 70 candidates in less than 10 years.

For almost ten years, Ms. Mackenzie headed the New York office for the non-partisan Women's Campaign Fund (WCF), which works to elect women who are dedicated to working together and forging solutions. WCF supports candidates running at every level, from the school board to Congress. For two years she served as National Co-Chair for WCF. Currently, she is Co-Chair of WCF's Women's Campaign Research Fund.

Ms. Mackenzie currently serves as a Vice-Chair of the Board of Planned Parenthood of New York City (PPNYC), and Chair of PPNYC's Public Affairs Committee. She joined the board in 1991 and served as Board Chair from 1998–2000.

Ms. Mackenzie is also a member of the Advisory Committee of the New York Women's Foundation. She also serves on the Board of Advocates for the Citizens' Committee for

Children of New York and on the board of Family Planning Advocates in Albany. Ms. Mackenzie has also worked with Family Planning Advocates NARAL Pro-Choice America and the NARAL Pro-Choice America Foundation. Ms. Mackenzie is a Director at the Vira I. Heinz Endowment, which supports a wide variety of organizations devoted to arts and culture; children, youth and families; economic opportunity; education; and the environment.

Born in London, Ms. Mackenzie graduated from Radcliffe College in 1955, attended Carnegie Tech (now Carnegie Mellon) Drama School, and studied anthropology at Columbia University. While bringing up her two children, she worked in the theatre as an actress, executive assistant and casting director.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the extraordinary work of Wendy Mackenzie, a New York woman who makes a difference.

HONORING ANNABELLE SCOUT
GUNASEKARA

HON. JAMES B. RENACCI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate my Chief of Staff, Surya Gunasekara and his wife Mandy, on the birth of their daughter, Annabelle Scout Gunasekara. She was born at 11:16 a.m., on February 18, 2016 in Washington, DC. I would also like to congratulate their son, Rico Rhyder Gunasekara, on becoming a big brother who welcomed his baby sister to the world with an enthusiastic Ole Miss cheer, "Hotty Toddy."

Annabelle Scout is 8 pounds and 3 ounces of pride and joy to her loving grandparents, Ada and Michael McGrevey of Decatur, Mississippi, and Brett and Susanne Conrad of Santa Monica, California.

I am so excited for this new blessing to the Gunasekara family and wish them all the best on their future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF ELAINE MCCONNELL

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the life of my friend, Elaine McConnell. Elaine led a life of public service and dedicated her career to serving others in our community. Elaine is a Jacksonville, Florida native, but first moved to Fairfax County in 1961. Shortly thereafter, she took an interest in public service and safety. Elaine served as Springfield District Supervisor for 24 years and championed the construction of the world class McConnell Public Safety Transportation and Operations Center. She was a staunch advocate of transportation initiatives and went on to serve as the Chair of the Northern Virginia Transportation Board. Many know her as the "mother" of the Virginia Rail-

way Express because of her leadership as a founding board member. VRE serves an average of 20,000 riders per day and may not exist without Elaine's lifelong dedication to transportation infrastructure in the region. Most recently, Elaine served on the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Board as an appointee of Governor McDonnell.

Beyond her involvement in transportation initiatives, Elaine was the founder and CEO of Accotink Academy, an education center which serves children with learning disabilities throughout the region. She gained national acclaim for her study and work of handwriting and math disorders. The school has grown to 400 students and also opened a second location in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. Outside of her volunteer work, she was an avid piano player and cook. Elaine will be greatly missed by her husband, Mac, and their three children, Susan, Mark, and Matthew, nine grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. I am honored to recognize Elaine today for her outstanding display of commitment to our community. She was a true public servant and will be missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

WESTERRA CREDIT UNION

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Westerra Credit Union for receiving the Large Business of the Year award from The West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

In 1934, eight visionary leaders organized a not-for-profit financial cooperative, whose purpose was to put the members first when offering financial services and to treat them as valued owners.

Following mergers and a name change in the early 2000s, the now Westerra Credit Union ranks among the top 150 credit unions in the United States and serves more than 95,000 members.

During 80 plus years of operation, Westerra's "people helping people" philosophy continues to benefit communities across the country by providing fundraising and grant programs. These programs provide money for school art supplies, sports fees and after-school activities.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Westerra Credit Union for their honor by The West Chamber. I have no doubt they will exhibit the same commitment to the community in the future.

RECOGNIZING BRAD COOLEY

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Brad Cooley for winning the 2016 Congressional App Challenge for the Fourth

Congressional District of Colorado. This competition receives app submissions from high school students around the country, and seeks to recognize the nation's best programming talent.

Mr. Cooley designed Crunch Time, an app which allows the user to view wait times for restaurants in their area. It also allows the user to submit their wait time for restaurants they have visited.

Entrepreneurs are the backbone of our economy and communities. It is the ingenuity and hard work Mr. Cooley embodied during this competition that makes America exceptional. He has shown true leadership in his school and community.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Colorado, I extend my best wishes to Mr. Cooley as he pursues his future endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Mr. Brad Cooley for winning the Fourth Congressional District of Colorado's Congressional App Challenge.

TRIBUTE TO HAMILTON HIGH
SCHOOL CLASS OF 1965

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, The Hamilton High School Class of 1965 is celebrating its fifty year anniversary today since its commencement as graduates of the DeKalb County, Georgia school system; and

Whereas, some of the members of the 1965 Class are here today, Brenda Anderson, Jerome Anderson, James Bugs, Annie Ruth Curney, Alice Collins, Josephine Crawley, Carolyn Davis, Ella Mae Crumley, Lucille Boyd Durden, David T. Griffin, Abel Johnson, Ora J. Lewis, Willie Martin, Gloria Sutton, Mattie Ruth Crawford Stroud, Jean Thomas, Audrey Swift Wilburn, Dorothy Morton Walker, Gladys Williams, Gwendolyn White, Johnny Williams, and Patricia Woods; and

Whereas, these remarkable men and women have been educated in our local public schools, and after graduation have written their stories in assisting our nation to maintain greatness by becoming productive citizens, serving in our Armed Services, becoming small business owners, educators, mothers, fathers, civic leaders, civil servants and community advocates thus allowing our district to have pillars of wisdom and strength for many years to come; and

Whereas, The Hamilton High School Class of 1965 members are distinguished citizens of our district, they are spiritual warriors, persons of compassion, fearless leaders and servants to all, but most of all citizens that desire to improve the lives of others; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize the Hamilton High School Class of 1965 as they celebrate their 50th Anniversary in Clarkston, Georgia; Now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.,

do hereby proclaim October 3, 2015 as: The Hamilton High School Class of 1965 Day in the 4th Congressional District.

Proclaimed, this 3rd day of October, 2015.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. DAVE
HENDERSON

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dave Henderson who passed away December 27, 2015, at the age of 57.

Dave was born in Merced, California, on July 21, 1958. He attended Dos Palos High School and is the school's most celebrated athlete. During his high schools years, he was a star baseball and football player. Dave led the Dos Palos High Broncos varsity football team to two Central Valley championships. He had great success as a football player, but Dave decided to progress as a baseball player and accepted a scholarship to play baseball at California State University, Fresno.

In 1977, Dave was drafted number one overall by the Seattle Mariners, and his big league career began in 1981 as a center fielder for the Mariners. Dave played for the Mariners for six seasons.

Baseball fans will best remember Dave for his two strike, two out, ninth inning, game-tying home run as a member of the Boston Red Sox. Thanks to his heroics, the Red Sox won Game five in extra innings and completed a comeback from a three to one American League Championship Series deficit to win the pennant, earning a trip to the 1986 World Series.

Dave found his stride as a member of the Oakland Athletics where he played in three consecutive World Series and was a member of the 1989 World Series Champion team. He had career high statistics and was selected to be on the 1991 All-Star team.

In 1994, Dave ended his career as a baseball player after playing 14 seasons with five teams, including the Seattle Mariners, Boston Red Sox, San Francisco Giants, Oakland Athletics and Kansas City Royals. After retiring as player, Dave worked as a color analyst for the Seattle Mariners' broadcasts.

Dave was active in several philanthropic endeavors and believed that giving back was important. He raised money to support research for Angelman Syndrome, a rare genetic disorder. Additionally, he was also one of the founders of Rick's Toys for Kids, a charity which provides dozens of agencies with toys so that thousands of children could receive Christmas gifts who would otherwise go without receiving one.

Beginning in high school and into his career in the major leagues, Dave was known by his teammates and coaches for his ever-present smile and positive demeanor. As his former coach Mike Sparks said, "I will always remember that big smile . . . He treated everyone like they were a friend."

Dave is survived by his sisters Jeannie, Terry, Patricia, and Michelle, brother Al, first wife Loni, wife Nancy, and his two sons Chase and Trent, and Trent's wife Dani.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of a great man, Dave Henderson.

SUZIE SHRIDE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Suzie Shride for receiving the Member of the Year award from The West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Suzie is the owner of Mathnasium of Littleton. She jumped into the West Chamber with both feet and has been running ever since. Suzie has been instrumental in growing The West Chamber's presence in South Jefferson County, and helping to grow the first leads group in the area which now has two leads groups.

One of the biggest projects Suzie took on was spearheading The West Chamber's Women in Business breakfasts last year. This event has continued to grow in popularity with the first breakfast of 2016 seeing more than 80 women business owners in attendance.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Suzie Shride for her honor by The West Chamber. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and commitment to the community in the future.

HONORING JOHN A. WICKS, JR.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, John A. Wicks, Jr., who is a native of Jackson, Mississippi.

John A. Wicks, Jr., is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Wicks, Sr., of Jackson. He attended Jackson Public Schools and graduated from Murrah High School. He then matriculated at Alcorn State University in Lorman, Mississippi where he received a B.S. degree in Computer Science and Applied Mathematics and was the valedictorian of his graduating class. While at Alcorn, Brother Wicks was active in many organizations and served as president of both Alpha Kappa Mu honor society and the Alpha Zeta chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. Brother Wicks went on to obtain a M.S. degree in Electrical Engineering from North Carolina A & T State University in Greensboro, North Carolina and a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia where he also served as president of the Black Graduate Student Organization. He has taught Computer Engineering at Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama and Computer Science at Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi.

In October 1977, Brother Wicks accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, uniting with New Hope Baptist Church in Jackson,

Mississippi, where he was active in the youth department. In May 1997, while working as an instructor at Tuskegee University, he acknowledged the call to preach the gospel. Subsequently, he attended the Montgomery Bible Institute in Montgomery, Alabama and served as an associate minister at Greater Peace Baptist Church in Opelika, Alabama. In August 1998, Brother Wicks began service as an associate minister at New Hope Baptist Church in Jackson. In August 2000, he accepted the call to serve as the interim pastor of Mount Nebo Baptist Church in Jackson. On January 18, 2001, Brother Wicks was elected to serve as Mount Nebo's sixth pastor and was installed on March 25th.

In addition to his pastoral duties at Mount Nebo, Brother Wicks has served on various community boards including the Mission Mississippi Resource Development Committee. He has also served as a writer for the Clarion-Ledger Faith Forum and is currently serving as the State Director of Education for the General Missionary Baptist State Convention of Mississippi, Inc., and the Senior Vice-Moderator of the Jackson District Missionary Baptist Association.

Brother Wicks has been the recipient of various awards and accolades including the Metro-Jackson chapter of the NAACP 2008 Medgar Evers Award winner, a Mississippi Gospel Music Awards 2011 Pastor of the Year honoree, and the 2011 Image Award Winner for Religion bestowed by Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. He is married to the former Felice L. Dowd, a native of Marks, Mississippi, and they have three children, John Arthur III, Faith Alexandria and Grace Elizabeth. Finally, Brother Wicks' motto is traditional, tried and true: "To God be the glory for the many wonderful things He has done!"

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Pastor John A. Wicks, Jr., for his dedication to serving others.

RECOGNIZING JOSEPH L. CAMPBELL UPON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE CONTRA COSTA WATER DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize my friend, Joseph L. Campbell of Clayton, California, upon his retirement from the Contra Costa Water District (CCWD) Board of Directors. Mr. Campbell has been an extraordinary community leader throughout Contra Costa County, and I wish him well in retirement.

During his 21 years of service at CCWD, most recently as President of the Board, Mr. Campbell never missed a board meeting. He served as co-chairman and a key fundraiser for the successful campaign to approve bonds for the District's \$450 million Los Vaqueros Reservoir Project, and helped lead the effort against the Peripheral Canal in 1982.

Mr. Campbell served our community in innumerable leadership roles over the years at

various important community organizations, including the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission, the Walnut Creek Child Care Task Force, the Walnut Festival Association, the Northgate High School Sports Boosters, and the American Red Cross.

Mr. Campbell also leveraged his vast experience as a business owner and engineer, as a Vice President of the Concord Chamber of Commerce, and served as a member of the Concord General Plan Committee and the Founder Advisory Board of Concord Commercial Bank.

Mr. Campbell is also past president and a founder of the Concord Economic Development Corporation, a partnership of the Concord Chamber of Commerce and the City of Concord. In addition to these many roles, he is a member of the Board of Directors of the East Bay Leadership Council and a member of Concord Rotary Club. A longtime resident of the area, Mr. Campbell is an Honorary Board Member of the Concord Historical Society.

I am grateful for Mr. Campbell's many accomplishments and contributions to the success of our community. I wish Mr. Campbell all of the best in his retirement.

Congratulations, Joe, on a remarkable legacy of public service in Contra Costa.

JEFFERSON COUNTY BUSINESS
RESOURCE CENTER (JCBC)

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Jefferson County Business Resource Center (JCBC) for receiving the Nonprofit of the Year award given by The West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

JCBC is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting the small business community in Jefferson County. The group partners with businesses to find solutions for doing business in Jeffco.

JCBC helps professionals from planning a start-up enterprise to an established business. They provide a multitude of resources and services to the business community, including free business counseling, business classes and training. Through the annual business expo, JCBC brings businesses together to foster "economic gardening" where entrepreneurial activity is fostered by providing information, tools, and connections needed for business development and growth.

I extend my deepest congratulations to the Jefferson County Business Resource Center for being honored by The West Chamber. Thank you for your commitment and service to the business community of Jefferson County, Colorado.

IN HONOR OF MARIA T. VULLO

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Maria T. Vullo, who is being honored by Eleanor's Legacy as part of its New York Women Making a Difference ceremony. Maria Vullo is an accomplished litigator who is passionate about women's rights. She oversaw research which has been instrumental in documenting the many reasons why the Equal Rights Amendment is still necessary. On January 21, 2016, in recognition of her extraordinary breadth of experience in financial litigation, Governor Cuomo nominated Ms. Vullo to be Superintendent of the New York State Department of Financial Services, a position she will assume on February 23rd.

Ms. Vullo is an experienced senior litigator and manager, who has more than 25 years of trial and appellate experience in a broad range of business litigation and investigations in state and federal courts across the country. Ms. Vullo's private practice has included matters involving fraud, real estate, health care, insurance, tax, consumer protection, bankruptcy, antitrust, constitutional and environmental law. Since 2010 she has been of counsel at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, where she had been a partner for 20 years before a brief stint in the Attorney General's office.

In 2010, Ms. Vullo oversaw the Economic Justice Division in the Office of the New York State Attorney General, with a staff of approximately 200. She was responsible for numerous investor protection, antitrust and consumer fraud matters, including Martin Act investigations and settlements, investigations and litigations regarding insurance company practices, allegations of price fixing, bid rigging and other antitrust violations, deceptive consumer marketing practices, and violations relating to cooperative and condominium offerings.

Ms. Vullo has always spent a considerable amount of her time on pro bono matters. She is a recognized leader in protecting women's rights. She represented women raped by soldiers during the 1992-1995 Bosnian War—a case in which she secured a \$745 million jury verdict for the plaintiffs. She also represented abortion providers whose lives had been threatened via an online "hit list," securing a \$100 million jury verdict for the plaintiffs.

I came to know Ms. Vullo when she became involved in providing research to explain why we continue to need an Equal Rights Amendment. Her brilliance, dedication and determination were evident as she provided invaluable information on the broad range of ways in which women continue to face discrimination, including pregnancy-related discrimination, violence against women, pay inequity and other areas. I am hopeful that Ms. Vullo's research will lead to the passage of an amendment that will finally ensure that women's equality is guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.

Ms. Vullo is a member of the Boards of Directors of the National Organization of Italian-

American Women, the Women's Equality Coalition and the ERA Coalition, Inc.; and is a member of the New York Women's Bar Association and the Women Trial Lawyers Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Maria T. Vullo, a New York woman who makes an extraordinary difference.

TRIBUTE TO MS. SIDMEL ESTES

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, our lives have been touched by the life of this one woman, who gave of herself in order for others to stand; and

Whereas, Ms. Sidmel Estes' work is present in Atlanta, Georgia for all to see, as an unwavering advocate for the youth, an educator, a community leader who worked tirelessly for the rights of our citizens in our district and as a pioneer in journalism and television; and

Whereas, she was elected the first woman president of the National Association of Black Journalists; and

Whereas, Ms. Sidmel Estes led by working behind the scenes, as well as front and center as an executive producer at WAGA-TV/Fox 5 in Atlanta; as co-creator for the television show Good Day Atlanta; as adjunct professor at Emory University and Clark Atlanta University; and

Whereas, this virtuous Proverbs 31 woman was a mother, a sister, a daughter and a friend. She was a warrior, a matriarch, and a woman of great integrity; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to bestow a Congressional recognition on Ms. Sidmel Estes for her leadership, friendship and service to all of the citizens in Georgia and throughout the Nation; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., do hereby attest to the 114th Congress that Ms. Sidmel Estes of DeKalb County, Georgia is deemed worthy and deserving of this "Congressional Honor": Ms. Sidmel Estes, U.S. Citizen of Distinction in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 10th day of October, 2015.

HONORING MOTHER MATTIE MAE
AMOS-MARSHALL

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Mattie Mae Amos-Marshall, who was born in a small community in Florence, Mississippi called Steen Creek on October 15, 1915 to the late Mr. Ben and Salle White-Amos.

Mrs. Marshall married her childhood sweetheart, the late Mr. Jessie Marshall, at the age of 18 and moved to Flora, Mississippi where she began a family of her own.

Mrs. Marshall was baptized at a young age at Stokes Chapel MB Church and later moved her membership to Jones Chapel MB Church where she is a member of the Mother's Board. Mrs. Marshall moved to Canton, Mississippi as a child and was educated in the Madison County School.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mother Mattie Mae Amos-Marshall.

GEORGE VALUCK

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize George Valuck for receiving the Steve Burkholder Diamond Legacy award from The West Chamber of Jefferson County.

This award is given to an individual who is recognized as a "shining star" due to their leadership and contributions in making Jefferson County a better place to work and live.

A husband, father and grandfather, Mr. Valuck's story stretches from Alameda Avenue to serving as entertainment for the royal wedding of Lady Diana and Prince Charles.

George's recent focus has been centered on downtown Lakewood and its successful Belmar and City Commons districts. Downtown Lakewood is now home to more than 200 stores, eateries and attractions, as well as thousands of new residents and many employers, and has been cited as a world-wide example of smart new-urban living.

I extend my deepest congratulations to George Valuck for his honor by The West Chamber. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same commitment to the community in the future.

HONORING AMANDA WEINSTEIN

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Amanda Weinstein, a young student from my district who was recently recognized for exemplary volunteer service. Amanda was named one of the top honorees in Florida by the 2016 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program, an annual honor given to the most impressive student volunteers throughout our Nation.

Currently a senior at North Broward Preparatory School, Amanda founded the "Family Central Teen Advisory Board" in 2013. Since then, she has encouraged fifty teens to share in her mission to assist the parent organization Family Central, a nonprofit that helps children and families in need. Amanda, who had been volunteering with Family Central for ten years, organizes toy, food, clothing and school supply drives, and has also created a tutoring and mentoring program.

Among thousands of volunteers who participated in this year's program, Amanda's dedi-

cation and strive for excellence stood out as exceptional. I applaud Amanda for her initiative in seeking to make our community a better place to live.

I happily congratulate Amanda and wish her the best of luck in her future academic and community pursuits. It is with great pleasure that I honor her, and I know that she will continue to inspire young South Floridians to live by her example.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$19,052,403,868,282.85. We've added \$8,425,526,819,369.77 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING LIEUTENANT DENNIS HOPSON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable law enforcer, Lieutenant Dennis Hopson.

On September 25, 1977, Pink Lee Hopson and Walter Williams gave birth to Dennis Hopson. On December 17, 1980, Pink Hopson married Johnny Gibson, who at that time was a father in his life and raised Dennis. Lieutenant Hopson has resided in Tunica County for 38 years. He is a 1996 graduate of Rosa Fort High School in Tunica, Mississippi.

His first job was with Parker Tractor as a parts delivery person, where he learned how to sell parts. In March 1998, he joined the Tunica Volunteer Fire Department and attended the Mississippi Fire Academy for training. In October of 1999, Dennis began working for the Tunica County Sheriff's Department as a jailer for four years. In September of 2003, he attended the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officer Training Academy and received certification in November of that same year. At that time, he became a Deputy Sheriff with the Tunica County Sheriff's Department. Since his employment with Tunica County Sheriff's Office, he has served in many capacities, such as: County Fire Arson Investigator; Warrant Officer; Sex Offenders Registry Officer; Emergency Vehicle Operator Instructor; Field Training Officer, Task Force Team—Homeland Security; Emergency Response Team (ERT); Patrol Supervisor and Crime Stoppers Program of Tunica County. He is a member of the Tunica County Color Guard Team. At the present time, Mr. Hopson still holds these po-

sitions. In September 2014, he was assigned to the United States Marshals Task Force in Oxford, Mississippi.

Mr. Hopson is married to Stacy L. Hopson, wife of 16½ years, who works as a teacher at the Institute of Community Services (ICS Head start) for the last year. He is a devoted father of three children. Mr. Hopson's goals are to continue to serve and protect the citizens of Tunica County for many more years to come, through God and determination and will continue to make a difference in his community. Mr. Hopson possesses sound judgment, a great sense of accountability to the citizens of Tunica County and an irreproachable professionalism. He is a God-fearing individual who seeks to serve the citizens of Tunica County with the utmost respect, dignity and honesty. His reputation as a Deputy Sheriff is very well trusted and dependable.

In 2010 and 2011, he lost both of his parents, but never gave up on life. He kept the faith and allowed God to lead him.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Lieutenant Dennis Hopson for his dedication in being a respected and outstanding Law Enforcer.

FOOTHILLS CREDIT UNION

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Foothills Credit Union for receiving the Small Business of the Year award from The West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

The Small Business of the Year award is awarded to a business with 50 employees or less and is engaged in improving the business community in Jefferson County.

Offering its members a unique credit builder program, as well as bilingual services and tax refund anticipation loans, Foothills Credit Union has served the community for more than 68 years.

Foothills Credit Union has been the Donation Sponsor for The West Chamber's Celebrate Women event, donating more than \$9,000 to the honorees' non-profits.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Foothills Credit Union for their honor by The West Chamber. I have no doubt Foothills Credit Union will exhibit the same dedication and service to its community in the future.

HONORING THE CAREER OF MR. DAN NELSON

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of my good friend Dan Nelson, who is retiring after 24 years as the original Executive Director of the San Luis & Delta Mendota Water Authority. Since its inception the Water Authority has been well-served by Dan's brilliance, positive outlook, enormous knowledge and engaging personality.

Dan was educated at the University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire and Fresno State after having grown up in Los Banos, California. Dan brought the experience to the fledgling Water Authority that he gained as General Manager of the San Luis Water District (1987–1991) and the Broadview Water District (1979–1987), as well as experience in the Operations Division of the San Luis Canal Company (1977–1979).

As Executive Director Dan promoted respect, integrity, fairness, creativity, drive and a deep appreciation of family among those that he worked with. To address the complex issues before the Water Authority Dan had the vision to create a three-legged strategy for both short and long-term issues: administrative engagement, regulatory/legislative engagement, and litigation. This approach fostered a framework for thoughtful decision-making during challenging times.

Dan served the water community outside of his responsibilities with the Water Authority by participating in numerous water-related organizations such as the Land Preservation Association, California Irrigation Institute, Association of California Water Associations, California Water Education Foundation and many other boards, committees, and stakeholder groups.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me, as well as the entire San Luis Delta-Mendota Water Authority family, in recognizing Dan Nelson's 24 years of service.

IN MEMORIAL RECOGNITION OF
THOMAS TIGUE FOR A LIFETIME
OF SERVICE TO THE COMMON-
WEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Thomas Tigue, who passed away Monday, February 1, 2016. As a war veteran, school board member, state representative, father, and grandfather, Tom's life was one dedicated to helping others. Tom will be honored posthumously by the Pittston Sunday Dispatch, receiving the paper's Joseph Saporito Sr. Lifetime of Service Award.

Born and raised in Hughestown, Thomas was a graduate of St. John the Evangelist High School in Pittston in 1964. He received his degree in Government from King's College in Wilkes-Barre while also serving as a reservist in the Marine Corps. Following graduation, Tom married and deployed to Vietnam. While serving as an Infantry Platoon Commander, Thomas earned a Silver Star for gallantry in combat. He remained with the Marine Corps Reserve for 27 years before returning to work as a counselor at Hickory Run State Park in White Haven and as a computer program analyst for Metropolitan Life Insurance, both while taking business classes at King's College. From 1977–1979, Tigue served on the Pittston Area School Board.

In 1980, Tom was elected as a Representative for the 118th Legislative District in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, serv-

ing the residents of Luzerne, Lackawanna, and Monroe counties. He remained in the State House for 26 years, retiring in 2006. During his tenure, Thomas served as the Democratic Chair of the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee, where he helped establish the Military Family Relief Assistance Program which provides assistance to eligible Pennsylvania service members and their family members financially impacted by military service. After his service in the legislature, Thomas worked as Managing Director of the Delaware River Maritime Enterprise Council until his retirement in 2010.

It is an honor to recognize an individual who led a truly outstanding life. I am grateful for all of the work Thomas did for his community and for the people of Pennsylvania. His passing, only six months after his wife Dianne's passing, is deeply saddening, and he will be greatly missed by the many people he helped.

TRIBUTE TO BISHOP MILES E.
FOWLER

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, Bishop Miles E. Fowler, is celebrating thirty-eight years as pastor of Big Miller Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Lithonia, Georgia; and

Whereas, Bishop Fowler under the guidance and calling of God, began preaching the word of God forty-one years ago; and

Whereas, thirty-eight years ago upon becoming pastor at Big Miller Grove Missionary Baptist Church, he has transformed the church into a City of Refuge for Saints in DeKalb County; and

Whereas, Bishop Fowler has been a trail-blazer, teaching the gospel on a national and international level, motivating us all to live a life that is worthy of imitation of God's grace: humility, love, godliness, integrity and a commitment to prayer; and

Whereas, Bishop Fowler served our nation with honor as a member of the United States Air Force, past opening speaker for the Georgia State Senate and guest Chaplin for opening the United States Congress; and

Whereas, this remarkable and tenacious man of God continues to be a blessing to us as a spiritual leader, an educator and a community leader who not only talks the talk, but walks the walk; and

Whereas, Bishop Fowler is a spiritual warrior, a man of compassion, an author and a servant to all, but most of all a visionary who has shared with his Church, my District and the world his passion to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Bishop Miles E. Fowler, as he celebrates his 38th Pastoral Anniversary; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., do hereby proclaim October 25, 2015 as: Bishop Miles E. Fowler Day in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 25th day of October, 2015.

INTRODUCTION OF THE REDUCING
LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the Reducing Long-Term Unemployment Act, to address one of the lingering workforce tragedies in today's economy—our long-term unemployed—and to keep the economy growing. Although the overall unemployment rate has fallen below 5 percent, Americans who have remained unemployed for longer than 27 weeks have not enjoyed a similar recovery. In January 2016, the number of long-term unemployed (those jobless for 27 weeks or more) was 2.1 million, which accounted for 26.9 percent of the total unemployed population.

To make matters even worse, the long-term unemployed now face employment discrimination as employers show reluctance to hire job-seekers because of the length of their unemployment. Therefore, my bill provides a necessary incentive to hire the long-term unemployed—a \$5,000 tax credit for employers against their payroll tax liability for each (net) new long-term unemployed person they hire. The tax credit is large enough to give employers an incentive to increase the hiring and wages of those who have been unjustifiably left behind, while ensuring that the economy benefits from their participation. The credit would be available to the broadest base of employers because every employer—government, non-profit, and for-profit—pays payroll taxes, and employers could claim the credit on a quarterly rather than annual basis. According to the independent, non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, the proposal would "increase both output and employment," through four mechanisms: (1) with lower employment costs, employers would reduce the costs of their products and services, which, in turn, would first boost sales and then hiring and hours worked; (2) employers would pass on some of the tax savings to employees in the form of higher wages or other compensation, which, in turn, would increase employees' purchasing power; (3) higher profits would lead to higher stock prices for public companies, increasing shareholders' wealth and therefore their willingness to spend; and (4) with lower employment costs, employers would increase hiring. The bill has safeguards to prevent employers from gaming the system, including denying a credit to an employer that fires one employee and hires a replacement in order to take advantage of the incentive.

For some time, it has been clear that targeted policies are necessary to address today's stubborn long-term unemployment rates. Without significant targeting, the long-term unemployed are in danger of becoming permanently unemployed. This group of competent and experienced Americans deserves better.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

DUANE PATTERSON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Duane Patterson, owner of Body & Sole Connection, for receiving the Ambassador of the Year award from the West Chamber of Jefferson County.

The West Chamber Ambassadors are the hospitality arm of the Chamber. They help members by inviting them to events, introducing them to other members and making new members feel a part of the West Chamber family.

Duane Patterson embodies all the qualities of a great ambassador. His dedication to the West Chamber is evident in his diligent attention to his Ambassador duties. Duane is simply everywhere there is a West Chamber function—whether it's a ribbon cutting registering and greeting guests, or helping to set up for major events.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Duane Patterson for his well-deserved honor by The West Chamber serving Jefferson County. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same commitment to the community in the future.

HONORING REV. ROBERT L.
MILLER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a God-fearing and impressionistic man Rev. Robert L. Miller. Rev. Miller has shown what can be done through tenacity, dedication and a desire to serve God.

Rev. Miller has done many things throughout his life, but inside he has always been a preacher. At 89 years old, he can't see himself ever hanging it up because it's his calling. Some of the members of the church have said their church will close its doors if he leaves.

He is currently serving five churches on a rotation schedule where he will do two services a Sunday except one Sunday a month, he only does one service.

Forty years ago in July is when he first took the pulpit at New Mount Zion M. B. Church. Eleven years later in June 1986, he began serving his fifth church, Locust Grove M. B. Church.

He also preached at Providence M. B. Church from 1971 until 1986. He has served as vice moderator of the Sharkey County Baptist Association and is currently the moderator of the Warren County Baptist Association.

He was ordained in December 1968 and started serving his first church just weeks later.

The profession is so much a part of his soul; oftentimes he slides into preacher mode mid-conversation. The only job Rev. Miller has ever had besides being a preacher was a letter carrier for 25 years.

At 18, Miller was drafted and left high school to join World War II. He spent time in France, England, Belgium and Germany as a medic. Once the war was over, he returned to Vicksburg to finish his high school degree at Bowman High School.

Rev. Miller married two years later and had eight children with his wife of almost 30 years. She passed away in 1979. He was remarried in August 2013 to Eleese Fisher Miller.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Rev. Robert L. Miller for 40 years of service to New Mount Zion M. B. Church.

RECOGNIZING THE TOWN OF
HAVERSTRAW

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Town of Haverstraw in Rockland County, New York, as it begins the celebration of its 400th anniversary year. I am honored to represent in the Congress this community with its richly diverse population, historic brick homes, beautiful views of the Hudson River, and a growing business district.

Haverstraw is a Dutch name which means "Oat Straw," referring to the straw of the river meadows that once filled Haverstraw Bay. Balthazar de Harte, a New York merchant, purchased the tract of land along the river that would become Haverstraw in 1666 from the Lenni Lenape confederation of the Algonquin Indians. The precinct of Haverstraw was created in 1719 when it separated from Orangetown, and officially became a town in 1788. Today, the Town includes the Village of Haverstraw, the Village of West Haverstraw, and part of the Village of Pomona.

In 1780, Haverstraw was the scene of a major plot, which if it had succeeded, could have changed the course of the Revolutionary War. American General Benedict Arnold had convinced George Washington to give him command of the fort at West Point, but secretly was involved in treasonable negotiations with English Emissary Major John Andre to sell the plans to West Point to the British. Arnold and Andre met during the night on the beach of Haverstraw, but the negotiations were not completed by dawn. Arnold and Andre fled, and Andre was captured in Tarrytown on his way back to British lines.

Haverstraw is located in the widest point of the Hudson River, which was the main artery of trade between New York City and Albany, as well as the dividing line between New England and other colonies. In the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries, Haverstraw was home to several key industries. It became the greatest center of brick production in the nation, one year shipping out more than 300 million bricks from Haverstraw Bay for the New York City area. The Rockland Print Works incorporated in 1853 to print and dye woolen, cotton and linen goods, and the current owner, Garnerville Holding Company, now rents space to businesses, artists and craftsmen. These buildings are some of the few examples

of the 19th century factory architecture still in use in the United States.

Haverstraw has a diverse history, rich with culture. Central Presbyterian Church was founded in 1846 and moved to its present location with its beautiful Tiffany windows in 1909. The Congregation of the Sons of Jacob, established in 1877, is the oldest Jewish congregation in Rockland County. In 1905 the New York State Hospital for the Care of Crippled and Deformed Children purchased 48 acres of land in West Haverstraw, known as the Lilburn Estate, opening a facility that became world famous for its rehabilitation and research programs. In 1974, the hospital was renamed the Helen Hayes Hospital to recognize the great contributions of the famous actress to the institution. The Haverstraw King's Daughters Public Library was chartered in 1895 and opened its present building on Main Street in 1903.

Today, Haverstraw is a shining example of a diverse community working together to better the Town as a whole. Residents hail from Latin America, Russia, India, and all over the world, giving Haverstraw a global culture all its own.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting the Town of Haverstraw on this special anniversary as its residents celebrate its distinguished past and look ahead to a strong future.

TRIBUTE TO PASTOR CLINTON
MCFARLAND

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, in the Fourth Congressional District of Georgia, there are many individuals who are called to contribute to the needs of our community through leadership and service; and

Whereas, one of those individuals, Pastor Clinton McFarland, has given of himself to preach the word of God for twenty-five years; and

Whereas, under the guidance of God he has pioneered and sustained Grace Baptist Church as an instrument in our community that betters the spiritual, physical and mental welfare of our citizens; and

Whereas, this remarkable and tenacious man of God has shared his time and talents for the betterment of our community by preaching, singing and being a living example of the Gospel; and

Whereas, Pastor Clinton McFarland is a spiritual warrior, a man of compassion and great courage, a fearless leader, and above all, a visionary who has shared not only with his church, but with our District and the world, the passion to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Pastor Clinton McFarland for his leadership and service for our District as he celebrates his 25th Pastoral

Anniversary; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., do hereby proclaim January 17, 2016 as: Pastor Clinton McFarland Day in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 17th day of January, 2016.

NAISMITH MEMORIAL BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame Commemorative Coin Act, a bill that would have the U.S. Treasury mint coins in recognition of the Hall of Fame's 60th anniversary. These unique dome-shaped coins that would come at no expense to the taxpayers is the ideal symbol for the first and only museum that honors the sport on all levels around the world.

In my hometown of Springfield, Massachusetts in 1891, a young physical education teacher by the name of James Naismith introduced this simple game to his class that he called, "basket ball." Since then, the world of sports has never been the same. The Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame was founded in his honor in 1959, even though all they had was a couple of displays at Springfield College. The Hall of Fame has since grown into one of the most impressive structures on the Springfield skyline, where more than 6 million visitors a year get to see hundreds of thousands of items of memorabilia spanning the past hundred years. More than 300 people have been enshrined at the Hall of Fame since its inception. Some of the great players of all time such as Michael Jordan, Larry Bird, and Wilt Chamberlain, along with some of the legendary coaches like Pat Summitt and John Wooden will forever be immortalized for their contribution to this sport. As importantly, the Hall of Fame has always been an advocate for good sportsmanship and promoting respect on and off the court.

Mr. Speaker, what began as a simple game in a gym has transformed into a worldwide sensation that attracts millions of spectators every night. It is for this reason that I ask that the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame receive this great recognition and I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

DR. JACKIE O'BEIRNE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Jackie O'Beirne for receiving the Woman-Owned Business of the Year award given by The West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Growing up with an orthodontist as a dad, Dr. Jackie was fascinated by his profession

and went to work with him on weekends. This grew into a lifelong love for the profession, especially interacting and caring for the patients.

In her practice today, Dr. Jackie enjoys helping people get healthy by providing them with education and evidence-based treatment. She has seen firsthand how lives can be transformed by bringing people to optimum health so they can keep their teeth for life. She gets the most satisfaction when patients leave her office with a smile and appreciation for her dental care.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Dr. Jackie O'Beirne for her well-deserved honor from The West Chamber. Thank you for your continued commitment to the community.

HONORING FRED JONES, JR.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Fred Jones, Jr.

From a little boy, Mr. Jones wanted to serve his country. At the age of 18, after graduating from school, Mr. Jones enlisted in the United States Air Force. He served in the 2nd Airborne Command and Control Squadron in several capacities, retiring at the rank of MSgt after 21 years. Mr. Jones continued serving his country for an additional 30 years, in the Federal Government with the Internal Revenue Service.

Mr. Jones worked tirelessly in his community as a barber, donating haircuts to neighborhood kids in need.

A native of Sharkey County, Mr. Jones is an active member of Aldersgate United Methodist Church, where he served as Deacon. Mr. Jones and his wife of 59 years, Clementine Jones, are the proud parents of 4 children, 16 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Fred Jones, Jr., for his tireless dedication.

90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LOUISIANA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

HON. GARRET GRAVES

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise with every member of the Louisiana House delegation to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Louisiana Municipal Association. On January 28, 1926, the first Louisiana Conference of Mayors was held to adopt their Constitution, and elect Mayor F.J. Foisy of Alexandria the first president of the organization. That group would eventually become what is known today as the Louisiana Municipal Association. Since its inception, the LMA has tirelessly served municipalities of our state, thereby improving the quality of life for the citizens of our cities, towns, and villages. Today, the LMA zealously represents the interest of its 305 members, in-

cluding 127 villages, 112 towns, 64 cities, and 2 parishes. It is my honor to commend this great organization for its non-partisan commitment to legislative advocacy, education, technical assistance, and a myriad of member services that enable municipal governments to run efficiently and effectively. One of the great advantages of the LMA, is that it provides a forum for municipal leaders to meet and assist each other in solving problems common to all municipalities.

To help fulfill its three-fold mission of education, advocacy, and service, the LMA has created a variety of initiatives. The LMA holds several events each year; an annual convention, a Mid-Winter Conference, ten district meetings, a Municipal Day during the state's legislative session, and 15 or more annual webinars. 2016 has been deemed the "Year of Education" to launch the initiative for enhanced education benefitting municipal entities and their employees. It will be a year-long celebration commencing with the LMA's Mid-Winter Conference in February.

The LMA has staff dedicated to state and federal legislative advocacy, an effort that has been successful on both fronts. On the federal level, the LMA played a critical role in the enactment of the Homeowners Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 by joining forces with the National League of Cities and other coastal state municipal leagues to lead the charge in lobbying Congress to enact critical reforms to the Biggert Waters Act of 2012, thereby facilitating affordable homeowner flood insurance in Louisiana and across the country. On the state level, the LMA has been a strong voice for Louisiana municipalities in efforts to fight blight, promote law enforcement, maintain funding, and enhance economic growth.

To provide excellent member services, the LMA has formed two wholly-owned subsidiaries: Risk Management, Inc., which manages a self-insurance fund that addresses the insurance and liability needs of members; and the Louisiana Municipal Advisory and Technical Services Bureau, Inc., which provides outstanding and economical operational support programs to its members. In addition, the LMA boasts two political subdivisions: Unemployment Compensation Fund and the Louisiana Municipal Gas Authority. Other notable services, affiliate organizations, and advisory organizations include: the Computer and Internet Technology Assistance Program, which provides municipalities with free computer equipment and internet access to link them to the digital world; the Municipal Employees Retirement System; Louisiana Association of Chiefs of Police; Louisiana Conference of Mayors; Louisiana City Attorneys Association; Louisiana Recreation and Parks Association; Louisiana Municipal Clerks Association; Louisiana Association of Tax Administrators, Louisiana Fire Chiefs Association, Louisiana Airport Managers and Associates, Louisiana Municipal Black Caucus Association, Louisiana Rural Water Association, Louisiana Association of Municipal Secretaries and Assistants, and the Building Officials Association of Louisiana.

The Louisiana Municipal Association's Executive Board is currently under the direction of President Mayor Carroll Breaux of Springhill. President Breaux's Executive Committee is

composed of First Vice President Mayor Barney Arceneaux of Gonzales; Second Vice President Mayor Lawrence Henagan of DeQuincy; Immediate Past President Mayor David Camardelle of Grand Isle; and District A Vice President Mayor Jimmy Williams of Sibley. The Executive Director is Ronnie Harris, former mayor of Gretna for 28 years.

From its humble beginnings consisting of only 29 forward-thinking mayors seeking to empower their communities, the LMA has evolved into an exemplary organization earning the esteem and trust of local, state, and federal elected officials.

The LMA exemplifies the enthusiastic cooperation that is necessary to achieve a better and brighter Louisiana. For 90 years, they have advanced with technology, all while maintaining the core values that drive their success. Let's all send our warmest congratulations to the Louisiana Municipal Association for 90 years of excellence in the State of Louisiana.

HONORING THE LIFE OF
DR. ALEX MOIR

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Dr. Alex Moir, who passed away on December 19, 2015, at the age of 53. Dr. Moir was an extraordinary individual and he will always be remembered as someone who lived his life with purpose and great dedication to his family, patients, and community.

Dr. Moir attended the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he received a bachelor's degree, prior to attending the University of Miami, where he received his medical degree. Upon graduating from the University of Miami, Dr. Moir completed his residency in Family and Community Medicine at the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) Fresno and joined the faculty after graduating.

Among his many contributions to the Valley, Dr. Moir focused his work on rural and small communities, the education of resident medical students, midlevel providers in the practice of full scope family medicine, and Latino and medically underserved health care. Dr. Moir also taught and practiced rural medicine in the Selma area for twenty years, serving as the Director for Selma Pathway from 1995 until he took on the role of Chief at UCSF Fresno. Furthermore, he was active on the medical staff of Selma Hospital (now Adventist Medical Center, Selma), previously serving as Chief of Staff and Chief of Medicine.

Throughout his career, Dr. Moir received many teaching awards and was recognized by the Adventist/Central Valley Network with the Physician of the Year Mission award. He received this award for his commitment in providing physical, mental, and spiritual care to his patients, something for which he was well known. As an advocate of health awareness, Dr. Moir frequently spoke to high school and college students about healthcare and medi-

cally underserved communities. Furthermore, he was also a member of the American Academy of Family Medicine, the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine, the American Medical Association, the Children's Medical Associates and the Fresno-Madera Medical Society.

Dr. Moir's contributions to the people he touched will be his legacy. He clearly was a patient's doctor and was viewed as an excellent teacher and well-respected practitioner of medicine by all his peers. While he administered to his patients, he also found joy in teaching his students. More important, while he could have taught and practiced medicine in many places, he chose to be where he was most needed, in our Valley. He is survived by his wife Elise Hallowell Moir and their sons Taylor and Alden Moir.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life of Dr. Moir. Dr. Moir touched and aided so many throughout his much too short life. His loving nature and genuine character will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

TRIBUTE TO T.A.D.A.

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, this year we celebrate the 104th anniversary of the Republic of China, the National Day of the Republic also known as Double Ten Day; and

Whereas, the Taiwanese American Diversity Associates for the past ten (10) years have continuously assisted new Taiwanese American immigrants in our community through domestic support, cultural support, technical assistance in education, business, government and daily activities; and

Whereas, the Taiwanese American Diversity Associates are working with a coalition of business, political, educational, and community leadership to foster economic development in the metro area of Washington, D.C., at its community service center; and

Whereas, through the work of the Taiwanese American Diversity Associates, our community has been educated and strengthened, and the lives of many Taiwanese Americans have been touched, and their spirits uplifted; and

Whereas, the board, staff, supporters and friends of the Taiwanese American Diversity Associates have gathered today to celebrate the 104th year of the Republic of China and the 10th Anniversary of this essential organization; and

Whereas the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia wishes to honor and recognize the Taiwanese American Diversity Associates for their long history of outstanding service to our Community; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., do hereby proclaim October 10, 2015 as: Taiwanese American Diversity Associates Day in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 10th day of October, 2015.

RECOGNIZING AMANDA HALLMAN

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Amanda Hallman of West Chatham Elementary School in Pooler, Georgia, for winning the 2017 Savannah-Chatham County Teacher of the Year Award.

Ms. Hallman is a 10-year teaching veteran and has been teaching math and science to 5th graders at West Chatham Elementary School for 3 years. Ms. Hallman says she was inspired to be a great teacher after her grandmother and co-teacher died within two days of each other last year.

Ms. Hallman's inspiration is certainly noticeable in her enthusiastic commitment to motivate as well as educate using funny accents and dressing up in costumes while teaching classes. She explores almost any avenue to help her students learn. On February 11th, Ms. Hallman was recognized at the Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools Teacher of the Year Gala at the Savannah International Trade Center during which she was presented the Teacher of the Year Award.

Competition for the award is fierce since the award is presented a year in advance due to the time consuming and rigorous selection process. Fifty-five of the top teachers from the Savannah-Chatham County area wrote essays, were observed in the classroom, and were personally interviewed by community leaders and former Teachers of the Year. Ms. Hallman was also presented with a flag of Liberty and Learning which will be flown above her school, given the opportunity to lead the Professional Senate, and will now compete for the Georgia State Teacher of the Year Award.

I am thankful to have Ms. Hallman teaching in Georgia's First Congressional District and wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

HONORING MR. CLEVELAND
PEPPER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a multi-talented gentleman, Mr. Cleveland Pepper, owner of Pepper's Upholstery and More.

Mr. Cleveland Pepper is a resident of Cary, Mississippi. He graduated in 1959 from N.D. Taylor High School located in Yazoo City, Mississippi.

He started upholstery in October of 1986 under the leadership of Mr. Fritz Johnson of Hamilton, Michigan. He worked as a trainer for two years and was able to pass all requirements receiving a Certificate in Upholstery in 1987.

Mr. Pepper is a good steward of the community and enjoys learning new information and techniques. He attended a government program at Mississippi Christian Family Center.

He taught upholstery classes through the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) to assist the unemployed to seek employment and become employable through training and assistance. In 2003 he decided to open Pepper's Upholstery and More in Rolling Fork, Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Cleveland Pepper for his hard work, dedication and a strong desire to achieve.

HONORING THE CAREER OF MR.
JACOB CHAPMAN BELIN, JR.

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative MCCARTHY and Representative VALADAO, rise today to congratulate Mr. Jacob Chapman Belin, Jr., on his well-deserved retirement as President of Kern Oil & Refining Co. He deserves to be commended for his tireless work within the petroleum industry and for his outstanding work with Kern Oil for the past forty-four years.

Mr. Belin was born in Port St. Joe, Florida on March 31, 1948 to Jacob Chapman Belin, Sr. and Myrle Fillingim Belin. As a young student, Mr. Belin was actively engaged in his studies and was well-known for his passion for basketball. He attended Port St. Joe High School where he was recognized as Florida's second-leading scorer in basketball, served as President of his senior class, and graduated as valedictorian in 1966.

Upon graduation from high school, Mr. Belin attended North Carolina State University (NCSU) where he graduated in 1970 and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Sciences and Applied Mathematics, with a dual minor in Engineering Mechanics and Economics. While at NCSU, Mr. Belin was also a member of Phi Kappa Phi, one of the nation's oldest multidisciplinary collegiate honor societies. Mr. Belin went on to attend Georgia Institute of Technology from 1970-1972 in pursuit of a Master's Degree in Industrial Management.

During the summer of 1972, Mr. Belin began to work at Charter Oil Company in Jacksonville, Florida. While at Charter Oil Company, Mr. Belin had the opportunity to work with different Charter Oil Company subsidiaries, which included Kern County Refinery (now known as Kern Oil and Refining Co.). The work that Mr. Belin did with Kern County Refinery led him to accept a job offer at the Kern County Refinery office in Cerritos, California in April of 1974. Mr. Belin worked in the Refinery's crude oil and products supply marketing department until 1977.

While pursuing his career in the petroleum industry, Mr. Belin married the love of his life Betty Grace Phillips on June 29, 1974. Together they had one son, Phillip Andrew Belin who was born on October 5, 1977. Mr. and Mrs. Belin always ensured that Phillip was involved in sports and recreational activities. Furthermore, Mr. Belin was very active in young Phillip's Little League baseball program,

was a manager of several of Phillip's youth baseball teams, and coached his youth basketball team for several years alongside his good friends, Tom Jensen and Ed Lassiter. Phillip married Marie Milligan and has blessed Mr. Belin and Betty with four grandchildren, Simon, James, Whitney and Serena. In addition to being a family man, Mr. Belin is a man of faith and has been heavily involved in faith-based activities within the communities he lived in over the past years. These activities include serving as an adult Sunday school teacher at Champion Forest Baptist Church and being a member of Rolling Hills Covenant Church as well as Peninsula Community Church.

By mid-1977, Mr. Belin had opened a crude oil, products and LPG trading office for Kern County Refinery in Houston, Texas. He served in the Houston office until 1984 and was then relocated back to Long Beach, California to what was known as Kern Oil and Refining Co. It was in Long Beach, in 1985 that Mr. Belin was promoted and became President of Kern Oil and Refining Co.

Mr. Belin received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences at NCSU in 1993. Furthermore, Mr. Belin was a huge factor in the growth of Kern, transitioning the company from a 10,000 barrel per day plant to the safe, competitive, and compliant, 27,000 barrel-per-day small and independent California refinery that it is today.

Over the past forty-four years, Mr. Belin has been a great leader and extremely dedicated to Kern, which has ultimately brought the company to success. In Mr. Belin's words, "I gave everything I could to Kern; as one might say in the game of basketball, I left it all on the court! My career goals were simple: work hard; ask others their opinion/thoughts; listen to them; be decisive; show others the respect they deserve; and defend Kern."

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that we ask our colleagues in the House of Representatives to join us in paying tribute to the career of Mr. Jacob Chapman Belin, Jr. We thank him for his service and lasting contributions to California's petroleum industry.

TRIBUTE TO BISHOP PRESTON
WARREN WILLIAMS

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, Bishop Preston Warren Williams, II is celebrating years of service to the African Methodist Episcopal Church in ministry and has provided stellar leadership to his church on an international level as the 119th consecrated bishop of the A.M.E. Church 6th Episcopal District, of Georgia; and

Whereas, Bishop Williams, with the support of his wife, Supervisor Dr. Wilma Delores Webb Williams, and under the guidance of God, has pioneered and sustained the 6th Episcopal District, as an instrument in our nation that uplifts the spiritual, physical and mental welfare of our citizens; and

Whereas, this remarkable and tenacious man of God has given hope to the hopeless, fed the hungry and is a beacon of light to those in need; and

Whereas, Bishop Williams is a spiritual warrior, a man of compassion, a fearless leader and a servant to all, but most of all a visionary who has shared not only with his Church, but with my District and the world his passion to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Bishop Preston Warren Williams, II, as he celebrates service in ministry and to salute him as he retires from pastoral leadership; A true Man of Excellence; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., do hereby proclaim October 22, 2015 as: Bishop Preston Warren Williams, II Day in the 4th Congressional District.

Proclaimed, this 22nd day of October, 2015.

TRIBUTE TO DR. FRANCINE R.
KAUFMAN

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Francine R. (Fran) Kaufman, renowned pediatric endocrinologist, author, consultant, professor, researcher, and corporate officer in the medical field of diabetes. Dr. Kaufman is being honored by The Executives of the Los Angeles Jewish Homes at their 19th Annual Circle of Life Gala, for her extraordinary contributions in the medical field.

Born in 1951, Fran grew up in Chicago with her parents and two siblings. According to Fran, she believes she decided to become a doctor when she was about four years old, under the direction of her father, who was a physician. After attending Northwestern University, she obtained her medical degree from Chicago Medical School, specializing in Pediatric Medicine with a sub specialty of Endocrinology and Metabolism.

In 1980, Dr. Kaufman was appointed as an Instructor in Clinical Pediatrics at the University of Southern California (USC); in 1997 she became Professor of Pediatrics at USC; and in 2001 she accepted the position as the Head of the Center of Diabetes, Endocrinology, and Metabolism at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. Currently, Fran is the Chief Medical Officer and Vice President of Global, Medical, and Health Affairs at Medtronic, Inc., a Distinguished Professor Emerita of Pediatrics at the Keck School of Medicine of USC and at Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

Some of Fran's professional volunteer positions include serving as a Delegate to the World Health Organization Assembly in Switzerland, a California Delegate to the Healthy School Summit in Washington, D.C. and the California Task Force on Childhood Obesity. In addition, she was President of the American Diabetes Association, Chair of the Youth Consultative Section of the International Diabetes Federation, Chair of the National Diabetes Education Program, a member of the Advisory Council of the Diabetes Branch of the National

Institutes of Health, and is currently a member of the National Association of Medicine, among other organizations.

Dr. Kaufman has received numerous awards, including the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award, the American Association of Diabetes Educators Living Legend Award, the McGovern American Medical Writers Award, the California Public Health Advocacy Award, and the Charles Siegel Disability Rights Legal Center Award of Loyola Law School. Consistently included in the annual "Best Doctors in America" list, she has been recognized by the California State Senate and the Los Angeles City Council for her health advocacy efforts, and nominated by former Congressman Henry Waxman as a Local Legend of Medicine. She is also a member of Phi Kappa Phi, USC's honorary society, and was awarded their Undergraduate Writers Humanitarian Award. In 2009, she received a Telly Award for starring in and authoring Diabetes: The Global Epidemic, the Discovery Health Documentary.

Dr. Kaufman is married to Dr. Neal Kaufman, MD. She and her husband have two sons, Adam and Jonah, and four grandchildren, Maya, Dylan, Logan and Cassia.

I ask all Members to join me in recognizing Dr. Francine R. Kaufman for her significant contributions to the medical field for more than three decades.

HONORING MAMIE OSBORNE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mamie Osborne, who is an assistant professor of English and has devoted herself to teaching and research since she began working at MVSU in 1999. She completed post-graduate studies at the University of Toledo, University of Louisville, and University of Mississippi in American literature, rhetoric and composition, children's and young adult literature, and received an undergraduate degree in English from MVSU.

As a professor, Osborne assisted the Department of English and Foreign Languages' English Education program successfully by drafting two NCATE self-study reports and earning the program the status of "Nationally Recognized" twice; she is a member of Valley's Quality Enhancement Plan faculty team; and she holds membership in the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the Black Caucus of NCTE.

Osborne is a scholar and creative writer. Her scholarly and creative works have been published in national and international scholarly and literary journals including: The Southern Quarterly, Valley Voices, Black Magnolias, The Kentucky River, and Renditions (Hong Kong). Her interview with Sterling Pluppp will be published in Conversations with Sterling Pluppp by the University Press of Mississippi in spring, 2016. She has also made numerous presentations at professional conferences and serves as an editor for Valley Voices, a national journal for criticism and writing published at MVSU.

The assistant professor devotes herself to community service. Osborne has volunteered to help the City of Itta Bena address its community's literacy problem by volunteering during the summer and after school at the Itta Bena Public Library and for the past two years conducted workshops for the MVSU Reading Institute in children and young adult literature and writing.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mamie Osborne, a professor, writer, researcher and educator, for her dedication to serving others and giving back to the African American community.

CONGRATULATING ROBOTHINK ON THEIR GRAND OPENINGS IN MUNDELEIN AND BUFFALO GROVE

HON. ROBERT J. DOLD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize RoboThink on their grand opening in the Mundelein and Buffalo Grove communities. RoboThink's mission is to provide an engaging, effective, and innovative way to introduce this STEM education program to young individuals K-12 and even beyond.

RoboThink creatively teaches students how to build robots and how to code, while being challenged to use their critical thinking, problem solving and visual spatial abilities. They hope to inspire our next generation to pursue career paths in engineering.

Mr. Speaker, this incredible program would not be possible without two inspiring young individuals, Danny Park, the President, and Anthony Shvets, Program Director, of RoboThink. I wish them continued success in the future and look forward to working with them in growing and expanding their program to thousands of other students.

TRIBUTE TO THE BRUCE STREET SCHOOL

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, in 1938, the first school for African American children was established in Lithonia, Georgia under the name of the Lithonia Colored School which would become the Lithonia Colored High School and today is known as the Bruce Street School, the only school for African American children in Lithonia until 1968; and

Whereas, we celebrate and honor all of the graduates of the Bruce Street School; and

Whereas, we recognize them for their tenacity, community service and leadership in building a strong community that promotes education and family; and

Whereas, upon graduation, these students wrote their own stories by becoming produc-

tive citizens, serving in the Armed Services, as small business owners, educators, civic leaders, civil servants and community advocates, thus allowing our district to have pillars of wisdom and strength for many years to come; and

Whereas, the Bruce Street School graduates are distinguished citizens of our district, spiritual warriors, persons of compassion, fearless leaders and servants to all, but most of all citizens that desire to improve the lives of others; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize the Bruce Street School Classes of 1938 through 1968 as they celebrate their All Classes Reunion in Stone Mountain, Georgia; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., do hereby proclaim November 7, 2015 as: The Bruce Street School Day in the 4th Congressional District.

Proclaimed, this 7th day of November, 2015.

RECOGNIZING HISTORICAL BAYTOWN MEXICAN SCHOOL

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Baytown Mexican School for its distinction as an Official Texas Historical marker.

The Baytown Mexican School was founded in 1923 with the mission of teaching and nurturing Mexican-American children as they transitioned to English. The school, which was staffed by local students from Robert E. Lee High School, taught Mexican-American children until its closing in 1969.

In 1992, a new school was built as the successor to the Baytown Mexican School. Although the original three room schoolhouse has since been demolished, the dedication of this historical site will serve as an appropriate and lasting tribute to the Baytown Mexican School.

HONORING VETERAN EDISON THOMAS BROWN, JR.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable veteran, Mr. Edison Thomas Brown, Jr.

U.S. Army Veteran Edison Thomas Brown, Jr., is a Mississippi native who was born and reared in the hills of Holmes County within the U.S. Second Congressional District.

Born in the very late 1950's, Mr. Brown, and other youth like him, grew up during the heat of oppression, segregation and poverty of the Holmes County 1960s civil rights movement. Yet, Mr. Brown says, he nor his family ever viewed themselves as underclass.

Although poor by economic standards and conditions, he and his siblings learned early of

the importance of working hard to make a decent living by two nurturing parents, who were farmers themselves and who also worked for white farmers as well, picking cotton and such. His parents were Edison Thomas Brown, Sr. and Ednora Randle Brown (both now deceased).

His father was also a U.S. Army veteran who served in World War II. In fact, Mr. Brown says he was inspired to volunteer to serve his country in the military by his father and eldest brother James, a U.S. Army Vietnam veteran. After graduating from high school at what is formerly known as Tchula Attendance Center (TAC) in Tchula, MS, he began his military career in July, 1975 at Fort Knox, Ky.

During his tour of duty, he was trained and served as a Track Vehicle Mechanic, specializing in diesel repairs. His U.S. military career also included service in Gelnhausen, Germany.

While in the military, he earned the rank of Specialist 4th Class (SPEC 4). Proud to serve his country, Mr. Brown is grateful that his military career afforded him many travels that he would not have afforded to make and opportunities he possibly would not have had.

Mr. Brown's tour of duty concluded at Fort Stewart, GA in 1979; however, he remained in reserve status until 1981, when he received an Honorable Discharge.

After the military, Mr. Brown took advantage of the GI Bill and began to educate himself (part-time) in Electronic Service Technology coursework. Over the years, he has served in several employment capacities in the Metro Jackson area. His longest stint was with McRaes Distribution and its merging operations, 1985–2001.

Today, a Clinton, Miss, resident in the Second Congressional District, Mr. Brown spends most of his time actively serving in Holy Temple Baptist Church of West Jackson, pastored by the history-making Rev. Audrey Lynne Hall. At Holy Temple as a deacon, he is Chairman and also serves as Sunday School Superintendent and teacher. He, his wife, Gail, and son, Edison, III, have also participated in the church's ongoing Homeless Outreach Ministry in which the church gives toiletries, snacks and other needful items to the homeless once a month at Poindexter Park near Downtown Jackson.

Mr. Brown's favorite scripture of the Bible in which he tries to live by is Proverbs 3:5–6—"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a special Veteran, Mr. Edison Thomas Brown, Jr., for his dedication and support to the Holmes County Community.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF AUGUSTINE "GUS" ORTIZ VEGAS

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. DeSAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I, along with my colleague Congressman MIKE THOMP-

SON, rise to recognize the life and service of Augustine "Gus" Ortiz Vegas, who served honorably for fifteen years with the Richmond Police Department in Contra Costa County.

A lifelong Bay Area resident, Mr. Vegas was born on August 8, 1957, in San Francisco and moved to nearby Vallejo as a young child. He was a member of the 1976 graduating class of St. Patrick's High School in Vallejo, where he excelled at track, football, and wrestling.

Those who knew Mr. Vegas admired him for his generosity and his empathy. Together with his wife Sandra, he ran a non-profit called Fostering Greatness that offered mentoring, clothing, and other resources to children in the local foster care system.

In his professional career, Mr. Vegas always focused on keeping others safe. His first job was as Operator at the Equilon refinery in Martinez, California, where he was also a rescue team member and auxiliary firefighter. In 1990, he graduated as the Valedictorian of the Napa Valley College Police Academy, and in 2001, began his career with the Richmond Police Department.

Officer Vegas applied his tremendous ability to connect with others to his work where he fully embodied the ideals of community policing. He went beyond simply deterring crime and arresting suspects to having genuine empathy and a connection to the community he served.

Officer Vegas's aptitude was recognized within the department and he became a property crimes detective rising through the department to become a homicide detective. In these roles, he was not only adept at solving crimes, but shined in his ability to provide empathy and closure for victims' families. Officer Vegas was versatile in his professional abilities due to his gift to connect with others. In his last assignment, he worked closely with agencies like the Richmond City Attorney's Office and the Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) to enforce the City of Richmond's Municipal Codes.

Officer Vegas cared deeply about his family and considered them the most important part of his life. Congressman THOMPSON and I send our deepest condolences to Officer Vegas' family, including Sandra, his wife of 32 years, their five sons, five daughters, and 22 grandchildren. Officer Vegas made a lasting impression on our community, and he will be greatly missed.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. BETTY DIXON

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, Mrs. Betty Dixon was born on October 23, 1950 in Atlanta, Georgia and this year she is celebrating a remarkable milestone reaching 65 years young; and

Whereas, Mrs. Dixon has been blessed with a long, happy life, devoted to God and credits it all to the Will of God, serving faithfully as a Deaconess and on the Hospitality Committee at Welcome Friend Baptist Church in Ellenwood, Georgia; and

Whereas, Mrs. Dixon is celebrating this day on her 65th Birthday with family, church members and friends at the Lou Walker Senior Center in Lithonia, Georgia; and

Whereas, she celebrates a life of blessings as a Wife, Mother, Grandmother, friend, community servant and leader; and

Whereas, the Lord has been her Shepherd, guiding her life for 65 years allowing her to lead by example, serve as one of God's chosen servants as a faithful matriarch and a community leader; and

Whereas, we are honored that she is celebrating today with family and friends giving generations of loved ones the opportunity to give thanks and display their love for the blessings that God has bestowed upon the Dixon family; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Mrs. Betty Dixon for an exemplary life which is an inspiration to all, now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., do hereby proclaim October 23rd, 2015 as: Mrs. Betty Dixon Day in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 23rd day of October, 2015.

IN HONOR OF THE HONORABLE JOHN E. McDONALD, JR., FIRST JUSTICE, EAST BOSTON MUNICIPAL COURT

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of John E. McDonald, Jr., First Justice, East Boston Municipal Court, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to his hometown of Braintree and commend him for being named to the Judges Wall at The Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law.

John Jr. is the son of John E. and Patricia M. McDonald who raised John Jr. in the Town of Braintree. John relocated to South Boston where he made his residence from 1984–2011. There he met and married his lovely wife Melissa and had three children, Andrew 13, Jack 5, and Kathryn 4, before moving back to Braintree in 2011, where he and his family now reside.

John attended Boston College High School graduating in 1984. Upon graduating Boston College High School, John was accepted to Boston College where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree, in 1988. John was then accepted at prestigious Columbus School of Law at The Catholic University of America where he obtained his Juris Doctor in 1991.

Upon his passing the Massachusetts Bar Exam, John worked in the Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General as a Law Clerk. In 1991, John joined the Norfolk County District Attorney's Office as an Assistant District Attorney where he served from 1991 until 1994. In 1994, John went into private practice by opening the Law Office of John E. McDonald, Jr., focusing on his practice as a Sole Practitioner of Criminal and Civil Litigation from 1994–2008. Upon completing his successful private practice, John was named Assistant Clerk Magistrate, Boston Municipal

Court, Central Division, where he served until his appointment by Governor Deval Patrick as an Associate Justice of the Central Division of the Boston Municipal Court in May of 2013. In February 2014, John served as the Presiding Justice of the Dorchester Division Drug Court until his appointment as the First Justice of East Boston Division Drug Court where he presently serves.

John E. McDonald, Jr., has dedicated his entire professional career to the field of Law. His reputation is impeccable as a judge who goes above and beyond in helping others. John's commitment to the East Boston Community is only exceeded by his love for family, and the betterment of those less fortunate. John has served as the keynote speaker at the Norfolk County Bar Association, The Salvation Army Recovery Program, The East Boston Chamber of Commerce, and has volunteered his time in speaking at many Boston area schools on the issue of substance abuse, and the law. In addition, The Honorable Judge John E. McDonald was also named as a panel member of the highly prestigious "Panel on Recovery" and was asked by Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh to speak before the City of Boston "Recovery Forum."

Mr. Speaker, John is known for his quick sense of humor, and is a true gentleman in every sense of the word. He has earned the respect of his peers, and when people look back on Judge McDonald's legacy they will remember him as a person who was there for those struggling in the most difficult circumstances. Although the honor of being named to the Judges Wall will be one highlight of many in John's career, he will most assuredly be known for his caring and positive impact on the families of East Boston, South Boston, and Braintree.

Mr. Speaker it is my distinct honor to take the floor of the House today to join with John E. McDonald's family, friends, and contemporaries to thank him for his remarkable service and to commend him for the difference he has made to the families of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

HONORING MR. VERNON AND
MRS. SHIRLEY HILL

HON. THOMAS MacARTHUR

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Vernon and Mrs. Shirley Hill of New Jersey's Third Congressional District as recipients of the Greater Philadelphia Area Leadership Award, and to express my sincerest gratitude to them for their continued service to our community.

The Greater Philadelphia Area Leadership Award recognizes business and community leaders who have demonstrated a strong commitment to the area through distinguished service and steadfast philanthropy. The Hill family has been active in various charitable projects in the region through the operation of their family foundation. Whether it be their work with the University of Pennsylvania School Of Veterinary Medicine, or in sup-

porting our troops through Operation Helmet, this award stands as a testament to their dedication to using their resources and experience to help promote the growth of society.

Mr. Speaker, the people of New Jersey's Third Congressional District are tremendously proud to have Vernon and Shirley Hill as involved members of their community. It is my honor to celebrate their recent Greater Philadelphia Area Leadership Award and recognized their personal and professional accomplishments, as well as their significant contributions to our community, before the United States House of Representatives.

HONORING DR. WILLIAM B.
BYNUM, JR.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. William B. Bynum, Jr., a 25-year higher education professional, who was unanimously selected to be the 7th President of Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU) by the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning Board on October 8, 2013 and he began his presidency at "The Valley" on November 6, 2013.

A native of Rocky Mount, N.C., Dr. Bynum earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Davidson College while on a student-athlete scholarship. While at Davidson, he also minored in Education and passed the National Teachers Exam. He was subsequently licensed and certified to teach Social Studies and Math in N.C. and Georgia. Dr. Bynum went on to earn his masters and Ph.D. in Sociology from Duke University while serving as a Duke Endowment Fellow. Dr. Bynum was also a member of the inaugural class of the NAFEO-Kellogg Leadership Fellows Program, a year-long program specifically designed to train the next generation of presidents/chancellors for minority serving institutions, which was led by then NAFEO president—Dr. Frederick Humphries; NAFEO chairman—Dr. Joe Johnson, and executive director—Dr. Arthur Thomas. As part of the program, Dr. Bynum "shadowed" Dr. Harold Martin, then chancellor of Winston-Salem State University and now chancellor of N.C. A & T State University.

As the 7th President, Dr. Bynum's vision for the University is to uplift 6 powerful words that are already deeply rooted in "The Valley" culture. The vision is: ONE GOAL. ONE TEAM. ONE VALLEY. The ONE GOAL is Student Success (increased enrollment, retention and graduation; holistic student development and career advancement); The ONE TEAM is University and Community Stakeholders Working Together; And the ONE VALLEY is students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends actively demonstrating School Pride and Spirituality that is second to none!

Prior to his appointment at MVSU, Dr. Bynum served as the Vice President for Enrollment Management & Student Services at Morehouse College (2009–2013), where he was mentored by Morehouse's 10th president

Dr. Robert Michael Franklin. While serving at Morehouse, Dr. Bynum significantly enhanced student-administration relations, improved the efficiency and effectiveness of student services, started, envisioned and led the initiative which established the Parents Council and implemented the nationally acclaimed Morehouse "Appropriate Attire Policy."

Prior to Morehouse, Dr. Bynum served as the Vice President for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management (2000–2009) at The Lincoln University (PA). During his nine years of service, he was successful in nearly doubling Lincoln's enrollment and recruited the 4 largest new student classes (900+) in the University's 150 year history. Dr. Bynum also led the Board approved Student Enhancement Initiative, which entailed elevating Lincoln from NCAA Division III to NCAA Division II athletics, reactivated Lincoln's membership in the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) conference, returned football to the campus after a 40 year absence and started the University's first marching band program: "The Orange Crush." At Lincoln, Dr. Bynum was mentored by Dr. Ivory Nelson, the University's 12th president, who garnered over \$200 million in capital construction to transform the campus physical plant.

Prior to LU, Dr. Bynum served as the Associate Vice President and Dean of Students at Clark Atlanta University (1993–2000), and he was the Number 2 person in the division that recruited the 4 largest classes (1500+) in the then 125 year history of CAU. While at CAU, Dr. Bynum was mentored by and developed strong strategic planning and assessment skills from Dr. Doris Walker Weathers. During his CAU days, Dr. Bynum was nicknamed "Bye-Bye Bynum" for his no-nonsense approach to judicial affairs and enhancing the campus culture and environment.

In addition to his enrollment management and student affairs work, Dr. Bynum has lectured and/or taught as well. He served as the Covington Distinguished Professor of Sociology at Davidson and at Morehouse, he was an adjunct professor in the Leadership Studies program and Sociology department. Dr. Bynum's other professional experience includes research and teaching positions at the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech), Duke University and Durham and Edgecombe Community Colleges. He started his educational career as a teacher, football and wrestling coach in the Rocky Mount (N.C.) City School System (1984–87) and the Dekalb County (GA) School System (1987–88). Dr. Bynum has represented his institutions in numerous external programs and at professional conferences, while serving as a presenter or moderator. He has authored refereed articles in professional journals and presented papers with academic and social themes. Trained as a Quantitative Sociologist, Dr. Bynum still remains active in research and teaching. His research and teaching interests center around: (1) Black Church Studies; (2) Race, Gender and Ethnicity; and (3) Organizations, Markets and Work.

His publications include: A co-authored article with Duke colleagues in the sociology journal *Social Forces* entitled "Race and Formal Volunteering"; a chapter entitled "The Black Church in America: Demography and Current

Trends" in the book: Exploring The African American Experience (3rd edition); and a short story entitled "For the Love of J-Ski" in the NASPA produced book: Stories of Inspiration: Lessons and Laughter in Student Affairs. Dr. Bynum is a member of Omicron Delta Kappa, Chi Alpha Epsilon and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

A God-loving, God-fearing man, he is married to Deborah Elaine Bynum, a manager and 34 year employee with AT&T Mobility Services, and they are the proud parents of six children—Tyrone (a student at Georgia State University), Tyler (a student-athlete graduate of Truett-McConnell College), Chelsea (a student at Clark Atlanta University and Army Reservist), Zack (a student at Morehouse College), Jordan and Jazz (both of whom are Atlanta Public high school students).

Dr. Bynum's personal and professional motto is "Look back and thank God. Look forward and trust God. Look around and serve God. Look within and find God."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Dr. William B. Bynum, Jr., a teacher, professional and educator for his contribution to serving others and giving back to the African American community.

LAKE ARROWHEAD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO HOST AWARDS GALA

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in special recognition of the Lake Arrowhead Chamber of Commerce Awards Gala that was held on February 20, 2016. Lake Arrowhead is an unincorporated mountain community in San Bernardino County and is located in my district.

This year, Billie and Harold Weiss will be honored as "Citizens of the Year" for their contributions to their community. This amazing couple volunteers countless hours to several organizations, including Meals on Wheels, Arrowhead Arts Association, Operation Provider, and the Rim of the World School District. I would like to thank Billie and Harold for the positive influence they've provided mountain residents.

I would like to congratulate LouEddie's Pizza for receiving recognition as the "Business of the Year." Located in Skyforest, LouEddie's is not only well known for their delicious cuisine but also for their contributions to local causes, which include the Skyforest Festival and the Special Olympian dinner.

Finally, it is an honor to recognize the Rim Educational Foundation as the "Non-Profit of the Year." Founded in 1987, the foundation raises money for local schools to cover gaps in state public education funding. Last year the foundation raised \$450,000, with 75 percent of those funds going directly to classrooms and the remainder was donated to the Advancement through Individual Determination (AVID) program. This certainly is a remarkable achievement. Congratulations to all the honorees who make the 8th Congressional District of California a special place to live.

HONORING BARBARA CHRISTENSEN UPON HER RETIREMENT FROM THE SAN MATEO COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Ms. Barbara Christensen upon her retirement as a senior administrator in the San Mateo County Community College District. In the manner of an Olympic decathlon athlete, Barbara Christensen has exceeded the bar in the full range of professional activities over the years, and the people of San Mateo County have been the beneficiary.

Hired forty years ago by the district to handle public affairs, Barbara performed her job well but quickly realized that a reorganization was needed. Soon, each campus of the community college district was communicating professionally with the public, leading to greater responsiveness to the public and to the development of an individual identity for each campus. It is a brave professional who defines her way out of a job, but Barbara quickly moved on to even greater challenges.

This job title doesn't formally exist at the college district, and I'll admit that it's a mouthful, but Barbara Christensen should bear the title of "Chief Land Use Work and Go-To-Person With Respect to Frogs and Butterflies." While guiding the district's various developments, she oversaw the creation of four CEQA compliance documents, one of which involved the creation of a habitat conservation plan for frogs and butterflies. Her leadership in the development of apartments for faculty and staff of the district, renting at 50% of market rate in the Bay Area's challenging housing market, has thrilled employees and concretely demonstrated that the district cares about them and their families. The two developments that she shepherded through sometimes contentious public hearings earned national recognition and have inspired other local agencies to seriously consider constructing affordable housing for public employees.

Barbara Christensen led the effort to establish the relationship between the universities and community colleges in San Mateo, and we now have four year degree programs taught at Canada College, offering this campus' diverse student body, many of them first-generation college students, an affordable, convenient option to obtain a four year college degree. She secured a \$1 million state grant to begin this University Center at Canada College.

As our community colleges flourished, Barbara's contribution to their success became even greater. She spearheaded three successful bond measures totaling \$1 billion. Today, the stunning community college campuses of San Mateo County look like every modern and highly selective college in the nation.

The list of Barbara's successes in the community college professional decathlon is too long to recite, but her willingness to find "win-win" choices for contentious issues placed her

at the center of four decades of successful negotiations with local taxing entities, nearby homeowners, other districts, and the State of California's personnel. She has been recognized professionally by national public information officer associations and served on the statewide board of the community college public relations professionals.

Mr. Speaker and members, a college education empowers a student to be a better citizen and a stronger participant in our nation's economy. Our community colleges are at the center of our nation's college system, offering affordable college and technical degrees to millions annually.

Given the importance of our district and the hundreds of thousands who have been educated during her service, Barbara Christensen's contribution to San Mateo County over four decades will be felt for at least another four decades. We celebrate her retirement, wish her well, and hope that she can now have more time for friends and family. She has sculpted both the educational and physical landscape of San Mateo County. There will be big shoes to fill, and a big smile to emulate. Her example will inspire others because San Mateo County's residents are all the beneficiaries of the career of Barbara Christensen.

TRIBUTE TO MS. GWENDOLYN MASON

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, the lives of many in my district have been touched by the life of one—Ms. Gwendolyn Mason; and

Whereas, she was born January 11, 1966 in Atlanta, Georgia, today she celebrates a milestone in her life, her 50th Birthday; and

Whereas, this phenomenal woman has shared her time and talents for the betterment of our community and our nation through her tireless works, words of encouragement and inspiration; and

Whereas, Gwendolyn Mason is a warrior for those in need, a woman of compassion, a fearless leader, a mother, a daughter, a sister, a servant to all and truly a friend; her dedicated service is present throughout my district, she is an unwavering advocate for youth, the elderly, the less fortunate and small businesses; and

Whereas, she leads by example from behind the scenes, as well as front and center as the Co-founder and Executive Director of the Hank Stewart Foundation, Founder of G.A.B.B., an employee of Yellow Pages, an advocate in the fight against Breast Cancer, as a member and minister for her beloved church, Solid Rock Ministries and as a member in her beloved Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Ms. Gwendolyn Mason on the anniversary of her birth and for

her outstanding leadership and service to our District; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., do hereby proclaim January 11, 2016 as: Ms. Gwendolyn Mason Day in the 4th Congressional District.

Proclaimed, this 11th day of January, 2016.

HONORING THE ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENTS OF KEIANA CAVÉ

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the academic achievement of a bright young lady from my Congressional district, Keiana Cavé. Keiana is just a senior at Lusher Charter School in New Orleans, Louisiana, but she has accomplished more than many college graduates.

Keiana has excelled in and out of the classroom. She has studied engineering while at Lusher, and has been dual enrolled at Tulane University, where she has taken biological anthropology and environmental geology courses. She is on a fast track to earn her Ph.D. and has already been recruited by other notable institutions.

Keiana is no stranger to the laboratory. She is currently a member of Tulane University's Van Bael lab and has previously served as a lab technician with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and a nanotechnology researcher at the University of New Orleans. She has been acknowledged many times for her work, including 1st Place U.S. Navy/U.S. Marine Corps Office of Naval Research Scholarship and 1st Place United States Air Force Certificate of Achievement. Keiana's chemical research project won second place out of 2,600 competitors at the 2015 International Science and Engineering Fair, winning \$1,500.00 as well as receiving honorable mention from the Consortium for Ocean Leadership.

Keiana designed a method that allows the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop certain aldehydes or toxins that form as photo-products during oil spills. The MIT Lincoln Laboratory and NASA have named the orbiting rock "2000 GD136" after Keiana, an honor shared by fewer than 15,000 people. The planet was discovered in 2000 by the Lincoln Laboratory team.

Keiana's accomplishments are a testament to the fact that she is a true leader and an ideal role model for other young people in the community. I am confident that she will take that responsibility seriously, that she will be able to rise to any challenge, and will work hard to improve the world around her. I would like to congratulate Keiana Cavé on her remarkable accomplishments and wish her the best in her future endeavors.

HONORING ALHAJI SACCOH

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Alhaji Saccoh for his outstanding humanitarian work. A volunteer firefighter in Collingdale, PA, Mr. Saccoh has led an effort to provide undersupplied firefighters in his native Sierra Leone with desperately needed equipment.

In June of 2013, Mr. Saccoh made his first trip to Sierra Leone since fleeing the country's civil war in 2000. A chance visit to Sierra Leone's National Fire Service in Freetown brought him face to face with the state of his homeland's fire departments. The firefighters he met lacked even the most basic protective gear and would frequently respond to calls in their street clothes.

This encounter inspired Mr. Saccoh to spearhead an effort to collect used fire gear for his counterparts in Sierra Leone. He recently returned from a trip to Sierra Leone, during which he volunteered for two months with local firefighters and distributed approximately \$50,000 worth of equipment donated by several fire companies in Delaware County.

Mr. Saccoh's humanitarian work extends beyond his work with Sierra Leonean firefighters. A graduate of University of Pennsylvania, Mr. Saccoh is also the founder of the Sierra Leone Children's Fund, a nonprofit organization that promotes health and primary education in rural Sierra Leone. For his work, Mr. Saccoh has been awarded the Legion of Honor from the Chapel of the Four Chaplains and recently received a Wells Fargo Community Connections Grant.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Mr. Saccoh for his tireless humanitarian efforts, both in the United States and abroad.

RECOGNIZING MRS. CHARLOTTE
WADSWORTH AS THE OKALOOSA
COUNTY, FLORIDA TEACHER OF
THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mrs. Charlotte Wadsworth as the Okaloosa County, Florida Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Wadsworth has been an inspiration to her students, her colleagues, and her community, and I am privileged to recognize her success and myriad of achievements.

Mrs. Wadsworth began her teaching career homeschooling her own children and then working as an hourly teacher for the Blended School for two years. In 2009, she began working full time as a 2nd Grade Teacher at Walker Elementary School before transferring to Baker School as a 4th grade teacher in October 2011. Since August 2012, she has served in her current capacity as a high school English teacher at Baker High School.

Northwest Florida has been blessed with an abundance of exemplary educators. First as a teacher homeschooling her children, then during her tenure teaching elementary school, and now in her current role as a high school teacher, Mrs. Wadsworth has proven time and again that she understands and values the critical role that educators play in the journey, development, and success of their pupils. Throughout her teaching career, Mrs. Wadsworth has shown an unwavering commitment to inspiring her students to reach their highest potential. Most recently, she has demonstrated her leadership as yearbook advisor, where she enjoys celebrating life's milestones, rejoicing in students' athletic and academic accomplishments, and capturing events in the Baker community.

Teachers are amongst our most valuable public servants, and they play an integral role in shaping the future of our Nation. The Okaloosa County Teacher of the Year award is a reflection of Mrs. Wadsworth's tireless work ethic and steadfast dedication to the Okaloosa County community. She has proven to be among the many exceptional teachers in Northwest Florida, and her contributions to her students and community are unparalleled.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize Charlotte Wadsworth as the Okaloosa County, Florida Teacher of the Year and thank her for her commitment to service to Northwest Florida. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Mrs. Wadsworth, and we wish her all the best for her continued success.

RECOGNIZING THE NOBEL PRIZE
IN CHEMISTRY BEING AWARDED
TO DR. AZIZ SANCAR

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the tremendous accomplishment of Dr. Aziz Sancar for winning the Nobel Prize in Chemistry. He and his team have been working for decades to understand human DNA more thoroughly, and have recently made a breakthrough in mapping DNA repair.

Originally from Turkey, Dr. Sancar earned his Ph.D. in molecular and cell biology from the University of Texas at Dallas in 1977. It was during his time at UT-Dallas that Dr. Sancar successfully purified and described a bacterial enzyme called photolyase. This discovery was integral to his work that won him the Nobel Prize. Dr. Sancar was granted the status as a distinguished alumnus of UT-Dallas in 2009. His Nobel Prize is the icing atop the cake of his everlasting contribution to UT-Dallas and its doctoral program in molecular and cell biology. He is the first alumnus to win a Nobel Prize.

Dr. Sancar is the Sarah Graham Kenan Professor of Biochemistry and Biophysics at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine. He has been there since 1982. The work he has done at his lab on mapping the cellular mechanisms that underlie DNA repair, which

occurs every single minute of the day in response to damage caused by outside forces, such as ultraviolet radiation and other environmental factors, is the reason he won the Nobel Prize. In particular, Sancar mapped nucleotide excision repair, which is vital to DNA subjected to UV damage. His work will create a better system of identifying how cancer drugs target cancer cells, and will improve treatment.

Mr. Speaker, as a Member of the U.S. Turkish Congressional Caucus, I want to express how much I value Turkish Americans' scientific, political, athletic and artistic contributions to America's rich mosaic. I congratulate Dr. Sancar for his hard work in mapping DNA repair, potential for advancements in cancer treatment, and pride he has brought UT-Dallas and the greater Dallas community in winning the Nobel Prize. And therefore, I want to formally recognize the brilliant Dr. Aziz Sancar in the U.S. House of Representatives.

HONORING GRACE H. DANIELS

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Grace H. Daniels for her service to the city of Philadelphia. A force in Philadelphia politics and an unwavering advocate for Philadelphia's African American community from the late 1940s until her death in 1980, Grace's lifetime of service to the people of Philadelphia will be recognized this month when 46th Street is renamed Grace H. Daniels Way in her honor.

Shortly after becoming one of the first African-American women to graduate from Duke University, Grace came to Philadelphia in the 1940s with her husband Otis and their large family. Settling into their new home on 46th Street, Grace quickly became active in the community and as a parent of nine children in the Philadelphia School District.

It should be no surprise that Grace's desire to help better her community led her to develop an interest in politics. She was elected Democratic Committeewoman of Philadelphia's 44th Ward in 1947. She later became chairperson of the 44th Ward in 1967 and a member of the Democrat State Committee in 1977, positions she would hold until her death in 1980. During her time in Philadelphia politics, Grace developed a reputation as a loyal and dedicated leader who always paid close attention to the needs of her constituents.

Although she is no longer with us, Grace left behind an enduring legacy of strong leadership and activism. She is an important part of Philadelphia's history and I am proud that 46th Street will be renamed in her honor.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues help me in honoring the life and memory of Grace H. Daniels.

RESTORE THE VOTE

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise on #RestorationTuesday to honor the foot soldiers of the Voting Rights Movement. On March 7th of last year, while aboard Air Force One en route to Selma for the 50th Anniversary of Bloody Sunday, President Obama signed the legislation I introduced to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the Foot Soldiers who participated in Bloody Sunday, Turnaround Tuesday, and the final Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights Marches in 1965.

On that day, 50 years after the march, thousands of grateful Americans gathered in my hometown to celebrate and honor the brave foot soldiers and all they sacrificed in pursuit of equality, justice, and voting rights. Democrats stood side by side with Republicans, and the first African American President in our nation's history stood next to President George W. Bush who reauthorized the Voting Rights Act just nine years earlier. On that day, we shed our party loyalties and came together as Americans.

Sadly, I stand on the floor of the House almost one year later, and Republicans continue to refuse to bring legislation to restore voting rights to the floor for a simple up or down vote. The progress that was paid for with the blood of the foot soldiers is being rolled back, and Congress has done nothing.

Tomorrow, Republicans and Democrats will come together again, this time in our Nation's Capitol, to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the foot soldiers who showed such bravery 50 years ago. They deserve to be recognized by our country's leaders, but this Congress should be giving them much more than a medal. They should protect the sacred voting rights that these brave men and women marched for 50 years ago.

As we are joined tomorrow by the foot soldiers of the Civil Rights Movement, I beg my colleagues to reflect on the sacrifice they made, as well as the ideals they fought for. These heroic everyday Americans were confronted with violence and injustice, but were not discouraged from fighting for their God given rights. I hope that their presence can inspire every member of this Congress to #RestoreTheVote.

COMMEMORATING 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF A PIVOTAL MOMENT IN MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, 60 years ago today, a pivotal event occurred in Montgomery, Alabama, the birthplace of the modern Civil Rights Movement.

On this day 60 years ago, the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which began on December 5,

1955, after Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white man and move to "Colored" section in the back of the bus, was in its 57th day.

To that point, the boycott had enjoyed remarkable success.

Morning buses that normally would be crowded with African Americans heading to work throughout the city were essentially empty.

Instead, many African Americans gathered near the bus stops, waiting for rides, many of which came from whites whose primary interest was getting their domestic employees to their homes or other workers to their places of business.

Others rode Negro taxis, with many drivers giving reduced fares that day.

But thousands more walked to work and school.

An estimate that some 17,000 African Americans took part in the boycott initially, a number that would grow to 42,000, aided in part by the action by the bus system itself.

In particular, within days after the boycott began, bus officials asked the Montgomery City Commission for permission to close routes to many of the primary black communities, arguing that the boycott had made service to those areas no longer financially attractive.

So in those parts of town, even the handful of African Americans who might have wanted to use the buses could not do so.

In the early days of the boycott African American taxi companies helped transport former bus riders and did so for the reduced fare of 10 cents per ride.

In retaliation, city officials began strictly enforcing a long dormant city ordinance that set minimum fares at 45 cents, which priced taxi rides on a daily basis out of the reach of many working-class African Americans.

But despite the backlash, retaliation, and harassment by the local police, the boycott would not be broken.

The most sweeping official action designed to intimidate boycott leaders came in February 1956, when the Montgomery grand jury indicted 89 boycott leaders, including the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; Rosa Parks; Rev. Ralph David Abernathy; and several other participating black ministers.

The charges were based on a seldom-enforced 1921 state statute that barred boycotts without, "just cause."

Those indicted were arrested over the next few days, booked and released on bond.

But as official tactics failed to discourage the boycott, unofficial intimidation would soon take a more dangerous turn such as the bombing of the parsonage in which King and his family lived was bombed.

Mr. Speaker, the Montgomery Bus Boycott showed the nation and the world that there is a limit to a people's patience and tolerance in the face of injustice.

In rebelling against the unjust, unfair, dehumanizing, and discriminatory practice of racial segregation, the Montgomery Bus Boycotters were acting in the finest American tradition, following the admonition in the Declaration of Independence that:

[A]ll experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are

sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.

Mr. Speaker, the books of literature are filled with stories about the plucky underdog striving and succeeding against the odds but what is amazing and remarkable about the Montgomery Bus Boycott is that it is a modern day story of little David felling mighty Goliath that has the advantage of being true and inspired other successful social movements around the world.

The Montgomery Boycott shows that one person can make a difference and can inspire similar acts of courage in others which when combined send out ripples of hope that, as Robert Kennedy, said "can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

Rosa Parks said she acted because she wanted to be free:

Whatever my individual desires were to be free, I was not alone. There were many others who felt the same way.

And inspired by her example, others acted, and then joined by the actions of others, and then still others, the bus boycott succeeded.

Mr. Speaker, 60 years has passed since a small band of committed activists, armed only

with their faith in a righteous cause, won the battle of Montgomery and set in motion a movement that tore down the walls of legalized injustice across the South.

They changed America for the better and for that we owe them an eternal debt of gratitude.

TRIBUTE TO ACEL MOORE, SR.

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the life of Acel Moore Sr., a journalist who was a trailblazing change agent who died on Jan. 12. Born in South Philadelphia in 1940, he joined the U.S. Army after graduating high school. And then he decided to set his sights on a career in journalism and was hired as a clerk at the Philadelphia Inquirer. During his 43-year career at the Inquirer, he rose through the ranks from clerk to reporter, columnist, member and associate editor of the editorial board and ultimately was named the newspaper's Associate Editor Emeritus. Along the way he was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for investigative reporting and was named a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University.

While his primary focus was reporting the news, he also dedicated himself to opening

the doors of the esteemed fourth estate to minorities. He was a founder of the Association of Black Journalists and the National Association of Black Journalists. And, because of his advocacy the complexion of journalists in newsrooms across the nation changed. He also co-produced and hosted a groundbreaking television program, on PBS, "Black Perspective on the News." The program attracted African American journalists from across the country, focusing on national issues.

In spite of his accomplishments he never stopped being a man of the people, proudly representing his community. He was as comfortable interviewing mayors, judges and congresspersons as he was interviewing sanitation workers and the lady on the block holding a bat as she attempted to rid her neighborhood of gang violence.

Today there are hundreds of young people of color who are working journalists because they were mentored by Mr. Moore, or they were part of minority high school journalism programs he began or were simply inspired by his advocacy to make American journalism more inclusive.

With his death we have lost a powerful voice, but he has left such a legacy of dedication to journalism, justice and inclusion that we are all forever changed.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, February 24, 2016

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 24, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR. to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

BROAD AND DIVERSE SEGMENT OF VOTERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I am not here to give a political speech. This is not the right venue for that. But I would like to share some observations I have about visiting Nevada last week.

The first observation is that among a broad and diverse segment of voters, there is a great deal of excitement about the political process. It almost doesn't matter which candidate people prefer or even which party, there is so much enthusiasm to participate.

In Nevada, the form of participation is the caucus, and it requires a greater time commitment than simply punching a ballot at your local precinct. Yet, I witnessed thousands of people who were taking hours away from their jobs, at their own expense in many cases, to participate in that process.

You can't come away from that kind of activity and not be inspired that Americans are taking their right to vote, their opinions about who should be the next nominee of their party or the next President very seriously. It was really remarkable.

Still, there were some people I spoke with who could not afford to take hours away from their jobs, some because they couldn't get permission and others because they simply could not afford to give up a couple of hours of wages, clock out to vote, even when it means not having your vote count.

Las Vegas, where I was, is a 24/7 working city; and for many, Saturday is the busiest day of the week, especially for tips.

This election year, as we travel around our districts or campaign in other States, I hope my colleagues in both parties will really examine how local governments and States are facilitating or disenfranchising American citizens who are eligible to vote.

In Nevada, participation in a caucus at a set time of the day with little or no flexibility serves almost like a poll tax for hourly workers. Voters have to weigh the power of their vote against dollars that would not be in their pockets if they exercise that vote.

If you can vote, you should vote, and we should make sure that the laws of our Nation and our communities encourage rather than discourage the participation of every citizen.

Another striking observation I made over the weekend was the diversity of the American electorate: women and men, straight and gay, U.S.-born and naturalized, old and young, working class, retired, students, military, executives. Nevada put on a display of how much progress our Nation has made in a few decades.

I saw the energy and the determination of young voters, new voters, newly 18, newly citizens, newly engaged in the political process. Everywhere I have traveled, including the high schools in my district in Illinois, I see 17- and 18-year-old Latinos anxious and eager to participate, and they are motivated to register and vote and inspired by their candidates and their parties.

Today, tomorrow, and every day for decades about 2,000 U.S.-born Latino citizens of the United States will turn 18 and be eligible to vote. Every day, 2,000 of them turn 18, and they are eager to get involved.

There is a similar energy in the people I meet who are applying for citizenship. There are over 8 million immigrants with green cards who are eligible to apply for citizenship right now. And with fee waivers for those with limited funds, many of them can apply for free. And they are applying in droves.

This coming Saturday, I will be at a workshop in Denver, Colorado, for people learning about the process and applying for citizenship.

A coalition of groups led by the National Partnership for New Americans but also encompassing Mi Familia Vota, a range of labor unions, and advocacy groups large and small across 30 States have invited me to participate in this nonpartisan activity to promote civic engagement and citizenship in immigrant communities across this country. Their goal is to help 1 million eligible immigrants become citizens so they can vote in primaries and general elections this year and make sure they are at America's table.

In communities like Denver and Chicago, there is a hunger for citizenship despite all the barriers, despite the costs, and despite the anti-immigrant tone coming from our TVs and candidates. In fact, it is the anti-immigrant tone that people tell me over and over is what is motivating them to apply, study for the tests, and better their English.

It is that energy that gives me great confidence in our Nation and in the direction our Nation is heading this year.

Immigrants are a part of a growing American coalition of working class voters: women, straight people and LGBT, environmentalists, Latino, Asians, Black, White, old and young, Muslim and Christians, Jewish and agnostic. They are coming together and mobilizing.

Together, even as some politicians push them away and try to divide up with suspicions of our fellow Americans, together, their diversity and dedication to democracy is a beautiful thing to witness.

AMERICA: LEARN FROM GREECE INSOLVENCY DAMAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office data reveals that America's financial condition has taken a sharp, ugly turn for the worse. America's estimated 2016 deficit is \$105 billion worse than 2015's already dangerous \$439 billion deficit.

America's debt has blown through the \$19 trillion mark and is projected to blow through the \$29 trillion mark in a decade.

America's Comptroller General and CBO warn that America's financial

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

path is “unsustainable,” meaning America faces a debilitating insolvency unless we get our financial house in order.

Mr. Speaker, those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

In that vein, America must learn from Greece, a country betrayed by decades of financially irresponsible leadership. In the past 5 years, Greece has repeatedly failed to meet its debt obligations and subsisted on three bailouts from the European Union.

The result?

The Greek economy is in a shambles. Greece has a 52 percent labor participation rate, 10 points worse than here in America. Greece's unemployment rate was recently 25 percent, approximating America's worse unemployment rate in the Great Depression. Worse yet, Greeks under the age of 25 suffer from a 48 percent unemployment rate.

Financial irresponsibility ultimately forces draconian austerity spending cuts. Greece has cut public health care spending from 6.8 percent of GDP in 2010 to roughly 5 percent today, thereby risking Greek lives. Cancer screening has been cut. HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria rates have surged as fewer Greeks receive proper treatment.

The public pensions Greek elderly citizens rely on for survival have been cut an average of almost 50 percent since 2010 and are again on the chopping block.

Greek tax rates are exploding. Income taxes on farmers have doubled from 13 percent to 26 percent. Self-employed professionals and farmers say proposed social security and income tax increases will combine to consume as much as 75 percent of their incomes.

Greece's banking system is on the brink. In the summer of 2015, pre-European bailout, the Greek Government froze citizens' bank accounts, limiting cash withdrawals from ATMs to \$67 per day. Greeks could not even access their own money.

Post-bailout and as Greeks began fearing their savings accounts would be confiscated to pay for government debt, as occurred in nearby Cyprus—yet another insolvent country—Greeks withdrew cash from banks.

The run on banks caused the Greek Government to intervene and limit the right of Greek citizens to withdraw their own money, which caused citizens to cut deposits into Greek banks, which undermined the Greek banking system, which dried up the availability of loans for new business needed to create jobs in a rebounding economy.

Violent demonstrations are resulting. For example, on February 4, 2016, Athens, Greece, ABC News reported:

“Riot police have used tear gas in clashes with protesters during a mass rally in Athens as Greeks demonstrated against government pension reforms needed to meet demands of international creditors.”

Mr. Speaker, there is an old adage that ignorance is bliss. I don't know about that, but I do know that ignorance is dangerous.

In 2009, Greece spent 3.2 percent of GDP on its national defense. Five years later, Greek defense spending was cut to 2.3 percent of GDP, a 28 percent cut.

Now, perhaps the world will not suffer from Greece's defense spending cuts, but what would be the effect on world peace if America's defense spending suffered a similar fate?

Mr. Speaker, time is running out. Washington must balance the budget before America's debt burden spirals out of control before it is too late to prevent the debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy that awaits us.

I pray the American people will be good stewards of our Republic in 2016 and elect Washington officials who both understand the threat posed by deficits and debt and have the backbone to fix it. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, America's future depends on it.

OPIOID ABUSE/MEDICAL MARIJUANA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, last night Frontline on PBS had a compelling documentary on the opioid and heroin epidemic. We are now seeing politicians diving in. Governors across the country are sounding the alarm. It is being featured by Presidential candidates in both parties.

President Obama's budget has some very good suggestions highlighting tools to reduce drug overuse, overdose, evidence-based prevention programs, prescription drug monitoring, and prescription take-back events. There are a variety of things that are going in the right direction.

Yet, it is a little frustrating for me that the simplest, cheapest, safest solution to help these troubled people is not embraced: medical marijuana.

Actually, the public is largely there. For the last 20 years, the tide has been building for medical marijuana, even as the crisis on opioids has slowly started to take hold. It began with voter approval in California in 1996 and in Oregon 2 years later. Now 23 States have legalized medical marijuana, and two-thirds of Americans live in States where at least some form of medical marijuana is authorized.

There is a reason for this movement. A meta-analysis of 79 studies in The Journal of the American Medical Association found solid evidence that medical marijuana is effective in treating chronic pain. There is no evidence of serious side effects among medical marijuana users who are actually less likely to drink alcohol or take other

painkillers. And those States with medical marijuana actually have fewer overdose deaths.

Isn't this worth exploring? Especially when there is evidence that availability of medical marijuana dispensaries is associated with a significant decrease in substance abuse admissions and a reduction in opioid overdose deaths.

Recently, we have even had former NFL players come out and describe how they used medical marijuana to self-medicate rather than being shot up with painkillers by team doctors and being prescribed opioid pills.

What is perhaps most frustrating for me is the wrong-headed approach that prohibits Veterans Administration doctors from even talking to their patients about medical marijuana in the States where it is legal. That is ironic because the VA has its own veterans health crisis because their patients are dying from prescription overdoses at rates twice the national average. Opioid prescriptions by VA doctors have surged 270 percent over the last 12 years. They are prescribing significantly more opioids to patients suffering from PTSD and depression than other veterans, even though those are the patients most at risk of overdose and suicide. Nearly 1 million veterans who receive treatment for pain continue to consume those pills beyond 90 days.

It is clear that most veterans would probably be better off if we more fully utilized medical marijuana to treat conditions of pain, depression, and PTSD.

□ 1015

At the very least, we ought to allow the Veterans Administration doctors to work with their patients on this matter. That is why I will again be introducing my amendment that would make it clear that VA doctors in States where it is legal can work with their patients on medical marijuana.

Since I first introduced this legislation, I have watched growing support on the floor of the House for an amendment that would accomplish this. There has been interest in the Senate. Veterans groups are aware of this discrimination and the Veterans Administration's sorry record when it comes to helping our veterans with these chronic conditions by using conventional painkillers that lead to addiction and death.

Medical marijuana appears safer, effective, and is a low-cost way to deal with chronic pain. Nobody dies from an overdose of medical marijuana. Let's add this to our discussion, promote more effective research, and let VA doctors meet with their patients to talk about this as an alternative.

SUPPORTING THE RIGHTS OF THE WOMEN AIRFORCE SERVICE PILOTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as the author of legislation that awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to the Women Airforce Service Pilots, better known as the WASP, I rise in strong support of this bill, H.R. 4336, the Women Airforce Service Pilots Arlington Inurnment Restoration Act, presented by the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY), my great friend and colleague. This legislation seeks to restore eligibility to these brave women pioneers for burial at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors.

The WASP were the first women in U.S. history to fly our military aircraft. During World War II, a time of great global conflict, these courageous women volunteered to fly noncombat missions so that every available male pilot could be deployed in combat.

The WASP served our Nation without hesitation and with no expectation of recognition or praise. More than 25,000 women applied for the program, but only 1,074 selected women earned their wings. Between the years 1942 and 1944, the WASP logged more than 60 million miles. With the exception of direct combat missions, the WASP flew the same aircraft as male pilots.

Although they took the military oath, the WASP were not recognized as military personnel for their time in service. Their patriotic contributions went unrecognized for many decades. It wasn't until 1977 that Congress granted them veteran status; and then in 2002, the Arlington National Cemetery decided to allow the WASP, among others listed as Active Duty designees, to receive benefits consistent with the status that they had so rightfully earned. Unfortunately, last year, the Department of the Army rescinded this decision and ruled that the WASP were ineligible for burial at that site, citing a lack of space.

This is simply unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. These women deserve to be treated honorably, and our military branch should allocate the necessary space to accommodate these courageous women who sacrificed so much for our country.

We cannot just consider these women to be ineligible. These honorable women answered the call to serve during World War II. They did not turn their backs on the American people nor on their fellow servicemen. Their rights at Arlington National must be restored. We have to do this for the present and future generations to come.

Today, women in our military fly every type of aircraft, from the F-15 to

the space shuttle, and I know this because my daughter-in-law, Lindsay Nelson Lehtinen, has flown combat missions both in Iraq and Afghanistan for the Marines. This opportunity was afforded to Lindsay thanks to the service of the Women Airforce Service Pilots. They were the trailblazers. They set the stage for women in the military.

I have been fortunate enough to personally meet some of these heroic women. As pictured in this poster, I presented south Florida WASP Ruth Shafer Fleisher and Frances Sargent with copies of the bill that I introduced and passed in Congress with the help of SUSAN DAVIS, and which was signed by the President, that honored the invaluable contributions of these heroic female pilots. We had this celebration at the Wings Over Miami Air Museum, which has served as the foundation for our community to learn more about veterans and aviators, including our proud WASP.

Throughout my years in Congress, I have also had the pleasure of meeting other south Florida WASP, including Shirley Kruse, pictured here, Bee Haydu, and Helen Wyatt Snapp. Although Frances and Helen are no longer with us, they still live in our hearts and in our minds, and they are embedded in the rich history of our great Nation.

Mr. Speaker, we need to do what is right for our valiant, patriotic women and their wonderful families. The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs will bring up Congresswoman MCSALLY's bill tomorrow, Thursday, during a markup. I encourage all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support and pass this important and necessary bill so that we can continue to honor these women pioneers.

These women must receive the recognition that they are due. We must give them back the right that they earned, to be buried at Arlington. Thank you very much to these brave patriots.

REAUTHORIZATION OF CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of efforts to reauthorize child nutrition programs.

Last year the House and the Senate worked together in a bipartisan fashion to reauthorize our elementary and secondary education programs. I rise today to urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to carry forward that momentum to complete a much-needed review and renewal of Federal child nutrition programs. In doing so, Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to

employ similar goals and objectives: simplify, streamline, and empower State and local education agencies when reauthorizing these programs.

In particular, this approach can benefit our students and families by finding a path forward to simplify and streamline existing Federal nutrition and meal requirements without sacrificing the beneficial dietary value that school meals bring to students' daily lives. Much like we empowered our teachers to establish the curriculum and standards to best teach students they know so well, we likewise should empower those who know what our students will actually eat: the school professionals who work with the goal of making sure our children are able to enjoy healthy, nutritious meals.

Likewise, we can use this opportunity to continue efforts to ensure that our existing Federal nutrition programs are providing adequate and appropriate training to school professionals, as well as the resources necessary to improve and enhance our school meal delivery system.

Mr. Speaker, this opportunity will allow us to strengthen existing programs that strive to get nutritious meals to children year-round, and at earlier ages. Existing programs like the Summer Food Service Program can be enhanced and made more efficient to make sure they effectively reach those children who are most in need of quality, healthy meals. We can collaborate with Head Start, afterschool, and early childhood programs to better engage them in existing Federal programs that offer nutritious meals to young children most in need.

We have a strong infrastructure in place to provide children and families with quality, healthy meals, and we have an excellent opportunity to improve these programs. I respectfully call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to work together to accomplish this effort before another school year comes to a close.

LEVERAGING AND ENERGIZING AMERICA'S APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS ACT

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Leveraging and Energizing America's Apprenticeship Programs Act, legislation that I have cosponsored.

In the midst of a slow economic recovery, one of the issues plaguing both our workforce and our job creators is a persistent mismatch of employer needs and employee skills. Right now, 10 million unemployed Americans are seeking work, while 4 million jobs remain unfilled. Fortunately, this problem can be solved with a bipartisan commitment to commonsense workforce development initiatives, as demonstrated by the Leveraging and Energizing America's Apprenticeship Programs bill.

By promoting apprenticeship programs, this legislation creates opportunities for highly motivated workers to

earn a salary, while gaining the skills they need to succeed in high-demand fields.

I am proud to say that employers in my congressional district in southeastern Pennsylvania have already recognized the value of apprenticeship programs by making hundreds of these opportunities available to those looking to build their job training and skills.

I commend Congressman RODNEY DAVIS for his efforts on this legislation, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of reauthorizing the Older Americans Act.

The Older Americans Act provides social and nutritional support to members of our senior population and their caregivers. Enacted in 1965, this legislation has improved health outcomes, independence, and quality of life by offering meal delivery, respite care, and other essential services to the most vulnerable members of our population.

Reauthorization of this legislation gives Congress an opportunity to modernize multipurpose senior centers; improve falls prevention and chronic disease self-management training; strengthen laws to combat abuse, neglect, and exploitation; and support our local Area Agencies on Aging.

Mr. Speaker, I offer my support to work with my colleagues to review and advance the legislation passed by the United States Senate last year, as it is an effort that will not only help protect seniors across my district and the U.S., but will ensure that our existing Federal support programs are appropriately tailored to meet the present-day needs of our senior citizens.

PENTAGON WASTEFULNESS IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I have been coming to the floor for weeks and months to complain about the waste of money and life in Afghanistan. In the last couple weeks, I had an opportunity to read two articles. The first is titled, "This is How the Pentagon Wasted \$17 Billion in Afghanistan," by Emily Leayman. I would like to quote a couple of examples of the Pentagon's waste that she describes in her article.

The Pentagon spent "\$8 billion for a failed drug war: Despite a 14-year effort, Afghanistan now leads the world in heroin production." The Pentagon also spent "\$486 million for useless aircraft: Speaking of planes, 20 planes could not be flown, and most were sold for scrap . . . Legislators like Senators John McCain and James Lankford are

fed up with the lack of accountability in spending."

Senators MCCAIN and LANKFORD have joined me in bringing to the public's attention the lack of accountability in Afghanistan. It is astounding, to say the least.

Mr. Speaker, last month John Sopko, the Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, testified before the Senate Committee on Armed Services about a recent report he wrote on the waste in Afghanistan. In that report, he exposed that the Pentagon paid \$6 million to buy nine male Italian goats—the reason they bought the goats from Italy was because they are blond in color—to send to western Afghanistan to set up a farm and try to boost the cashmere industry there in Afghanistan. Now, the Pentagon doesn't even know where the goats are. And the sad thing is, as Mr. Sopko said to the Senate, "We don't know where the goats are. They might have been eaten"—\$6 million. Mr. Speaker, American people could do a lot with \$6 million, I assure you. And they wouldn't be spending \$6 million for nine goats, that I am certain.

The report that Mr. Sopko made reference to is titled, "Report Cites Wasted Pentagon Money in Afghanistan." Mr. Speaker, the waste goes on and on and on, and yet we in the House every year will send more and more money to Afghanistan. We have already been there 14 years. We are going to be there another 8 years because President Obama signed an agreement with Mr. Ghani to be there for 9 more years. We have already been there 1 year, and that means 8 more years. That is 22 years.

□ 1030

General Campbell, who has been the leader in Afghanistan, but is leaving, says that we need more years to train the Afghans to have a security force. I guess we are going to be there 30 years. I will be dead and gone, for sure, by then.

What a waste of life and money in Afghanistan. It is time for this Congress to meet its responsibility and put pressure on the administration and stop funding Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, I have a poster here. The reason I bring this poster to the floor is to show the sad tragedy of war. There is a wife and a little girl. The husband and daddy is in a flag-draped casket.

The reason I bring this matter to the floor is that I have signed over 11,000 letters to families and extended families who died in Afghanistan and Iraq. Last Sunday I signed one letter for an Army sergeant who died in Afghanistan. Mr. Speaker, I thought: How sad. How sad it is for that family. It is just so sad.

It doesn't have to happen. We need to debate bringing our troops home from

Afghanistan, and we need to debate stopping the funding for the war in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, before closing, I want to remind the House that this is the longest war in the history of America. I don't know who said it, but they said it right: Afghanistan is the graveyard of empires.

I know there is going to be a headstone that says that the empire known as America spent so much blood and money in Afghanistan. It is financially broke. We are \$19.1 trillion in debt right now.

Let's bring our troops out of Afghanistan. Let them fight the civil war themselves and decide what they want for Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform, bless the families of our men in uniform. And, God, please continue to bless America.

STOP ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. JOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about an important congressional reform initiative that I have introduced in this body.

I have had the opportunity to study Congress from virtually every angle. I graduated from college as a young intern who drove up here having never been north of Tennessee. As my predecessor said and I shared: I never thought I would meet a Member of Congress, much less have the great opportunity and honor to be one.

Through virtually every staff role over the past 15 or 20 years, I have had a chance to study this body. There are a few experiences now, as a sitting Member of Congress, that I simply cannot accept.

One of them—the most pressing one—is the amount of time that Members of Congress are expected or, in some cases, directed to spend on raising money.

We all know it. Every Member of Congress understands that you arrive with great expectations only to learn the obligation to spend time raising money. There is a quiet anger among many Members about that.

It is not comfortable to talk about, frankly. This is one of the more uncomfortable speeches I will ever give in the well of this House. We must talk about it. Because when does this become the expectation?

This is an orientation slide for freshmen Members of Congress that was produced by one of the two major parties of this Congress a few years back, suggesting that, as a Member of Congress, your first responsibility is 4 hours a day not in your office, but across the street in a call suite asking people for money, another 1 to 2 hours

a day networking and raising money, and only 2 hours a day doing your job.

Members of Congress might have a quiet anger, but the American people will have a very loud anger when they understand that we are not accomplishing things here because we are spending too much time raising money. Let's turn that anger into resolve and change this body and change Washington forever.

Former Members of Congress are happy to talk about this, retiring Members who write confessions saying they spent 4,200 hours raising money, former majority leaders of the other body now writing a book lamenting how much time they spent raising money, a colleague of ours leaving this House calling fundraising the main business of Congress.

But what do they all have in common? They are all retiring or retired. Why don't we do something about it, as sitting Members of Congress? Why don't we fix this now when we have the opportunity instead of lamenting it when we are gone?

This is why I have introduced what I call the Stop Act. It is very simple. It is 3 or 4 pages. Every Member of this body can read it before they vote on it. It simply prohibits direct solicitation of a campaign contribution by a sitting Member of Congress.

State legislators in the State of Florida and across the country are often prohibited from directly soliciting. There are 30 States where judges are elected, and they are prohibited from directly soliciting contributions.

I want to say thank you to my colleagues who have cosponsored this. In just over 3 weeks, we have six cosponsors: Mr. NOLAN of Minnesota, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Messrs. DUFFY and RIBBLE of Wisconsin, and Messrs. MICA and NUGENT from my State of Florida.

The message is very simple on this. It says to Congress to get back to work. Let's do our job, the job we were elected to do. We will never solve border security and immigration reform. We will never balance the budget. We will never address national security and foreign policy. We will never address tax reform if we have a part-time Congress in a full-time world.

In any other profession, if you spend 20 to 30 hours a week doing a job other than you are hired to do, you would be fired. But, in Washington, we accept this as the political culture.

Many will say the issue is dark money, the issue is transparency. Fine. We can have a campaign finance debate. But that is not what this is about. This is about congressional reform.

I will close with this, Mr. Speaker. Each one of us made a promise to roughly 700,000 people in the community from which we come and represent. We made a promise to do our

job, not to ask them for money. We took an oath.

We each took an oath, swearing to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States. The last line of our oath says: "I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of this office on which I am about to enter."

Friends, we are not well and faithfully discharging the duties of this body when we are spending 20 hours a week asking people for money and not doing our job.

We are not well and faithfully discharging the duties of this office when fundraising is the main business, when we have Members missing votes to raise money, when the most important question sometimes among colleagues is not what legislation you are working on, but how much money you have raised. We are not well and faithfully executing the duties of this House when we are not doing our job.

I stand here not to judge my colleagues. I stand here to try to change the system. Let's restore credibility to this House. Let's honor the greatness of this body with greatness of integrity, greatness of commitment, greatness of resolve.

Let's recognize the great calling of this body and the even greater calling of this Nation. Let's stand together today and change Washington forever.

Friends, colleagues, I urge you, while you are here and before retiring and lamenting the amount of time you spent raising money, cosponsor the Stop Act. Join me in this effort to change Washington.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

HARPERS FERRY, WEST VIRGINIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, there are few places in our country that have both strong historical significance and scenic beauty. Harpers Ferry is perhaps the greatest example of both.

Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, was founded in 1734 by Robert Harper, who purchased the land for 50 guineas, or around \$262. Over the next 282 years, this quaint town was the backdrop for some of the most important events in American history.

From the earliest settlement of this great Nation through the founding of the railroads, the beginning of Meriwether Lewis' adventure with William Clark out West, John Brown's raid, numerous Civil War battles and skirmishes, and the beginning of the

civil rights movement, Harpers Ferry has stood the test of time and watched our American history unfold.

As for the scenic beauty, none have described it better than one of our Nation's great founders, President Thomas Jefferson. After visiting Harpers Ferry on October 25, 1783, the author of the Declaration of Independence said he viewed "the passage of the Potomac River through the Blue Ridge as perhaps one of the most stupendous scenes in nature."

Let me tell you, this picture does not do the town justice.

Harpers Ferry is a national treasure that has been enjoyed by millions of families for centuries. This past July, however, this quaint town of only 283 residents was struck by a large fire that swept through the downtown business district and destroyed 10 businesses, which is 30 percent of the commercial district, and 2 apartments.

Even before the embers from the fire cooled, members of the community had begun to take action and began making plans to rebuild.

The town council, the Merchants Association, and the community at large stepped up to take care of the people who were displaced by the fire. Jobs and housing were found for everyone who needed them, and space was offered for businesses that were able to immediately reopen.

The Harpers Ferry Historical Town Foundation established a fund to collect and distribute money to help displaced residents, businessowners, and employees meet their most immediate needs.

Over the past several months, in addition to the support the fund received from people who live in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia, thousands of visitors from across the country and some from abroad have contributed to this fund.

The president of West Virginia University, Dr. G. Gordon Gee, brought a team to Harpers Ferry to help the town and the town council establish a plan. This plan enabled property owners to rebuild and restore their buildings, to develop a marketing plan, and to provide engineering and archeological services to prevent the demolition of their historical treasures.

The superintendent of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, Rebecca Harriott, stepped forward with meeting spaces, security services, and additional personnel to protect town residents and visitors from the fragile, burned-out spaces.

The Jefferson County Commission provided in-kind and financial support to reimburse the town for the unanticipated expenses of fighting the fire and providing for safety in the middle of Harpers Ferry's busiest part of the tourist season. Local, State, and Federal officials were a constant and reassuring presence for the town.

The town council and the Historic Landmarks and Planning Commissions have worked together to streamline processes and enable property owners to quickly move ahead with the restoration of the burned buildings.

This past Monday I personally visited Harpers Ferry in Jefferson County, where I live with my wife and three children, to see the progress that is being made to repair the structures.

The mayor, Greg Vaughn, was kind enough to show me around the damaged buildings and introduce me to those who were impacted by the fire. I can't tell you how encouraging it was to see how the town has come together to rebuild after the fire.

Harpers Ferry is no stranger to disaster: war, fire, floods. This is a town that endures. Today, Mr. Speaker, Harpers Ferry is still open for business, still thriving, still an elegant and evocative journey into the formative years of our Nation. I invite you to come visit.

HEROIN EPIDEMIC

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss a problem that is near and dear to my heart.

Cheaper than cigarettes and more accessible than alcohol, heroin has become a plague on communities all across our country. Heroin takes a life every 3 days in the Chicago suburbs. Unfortunately, a similarly deadly trend is taking place all over our Nation.

Although heroin is not often considered a serious suburban problem, statistics show the epidemic is quickly growing. Nearly one-quarter of the people who try heroin become addicted, and heroin deaths have literally quadrupled in the United States in less than a decade.

But the statistics don't even begin to tell the whole story. As the co-chair of the Suburban Anti-Heroin Task Force in the State of Illinois, I have seen firsthand the deadly impact of these drugs.

But I still can't even begin to fathom the pain of losing one of my children to a drug overdose. I can't imagine what families throughout the country have been put through because of this terrible drug.

There is hope. Thanks to the great work of the Lake County Opioid Initiative, Live4Lali, and many other organizations in the 10th Congressional District, we have already had tremendous success saving lives with an overdose reversal aid called naloxone.

□ 1045

When used properly, naloxone helps restore breathing that has been stopped by an overdose. First respond-

ers in Lake County, Illinois, have now saved over 56 lives in just a little over 1 year. That is 56 families who won't have to experience the same type of unbearable pain as those who have lost a loved one.

With increased access, the World Health Organization predicts that naloxone could save an additional 20,000 lives each and every year. That is why I introduced a new bipartisan piece of legislation this week with Congresswoman KATHERINE CLARK.

Our bill, Lali's Law, will help States increase access to naloxone. The bill is named in memory of Stevenson High School graduate Alex Laliberte, who, sadly, passed away from a drug overdose.

Alex, like many high school students, played sports at Stevenson High School. He did well at school. He cared about his friends. He cared about his family. But during his sophomore year of college, he began being hospitalized for what was a mysterious illness.

Unknown to his family and to the doctors, Alex had an addiction to prescription drugs and was being hospitalized for his withdrawal. He would stay in the hospital until he received his fix, leave the hospital, and repeat the cycle again and again. He continued this pattern until he died of an overdose a few days after his final exams.

The primary purpose, Mr. Speaker, of this bill, is to help fund State programs that allow pharmacists to distribute naloxone without a prescription so that we can prevent the repeat of Alex's story.

Many States use these programs to allow local law enforcement officers to carry and use naloxone, just like the success we have already seen in Lake County.

The police officers in Lake County asked to be able to carry it because they would come to a scene often faster than the paramedics. They could respond within 5 minutes and refused to sit idly by and watch these people die of an overdose.

Lali's Law is an example of what is possible when we set aside partisanship and get to work for the people that we represent. Lali's Law will bring Alex's story to the United States Congress, here, and amplify the lifesaving benefits of Live4Lali's hard work and the work that they did to pass a similar piece of legislation in the Illinois State Legislature.

It is my hope that, through this bipartisan bill, Alex's lasting legacy will include helping countless people get a second chance at recovery and saving their families from unbearable heartbreak.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan initiative and join us in the fight against heroin and prescription drug abuse. Together we can truly save lives.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 47 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Bishop Perry Thompson, Freedom Chapel International Christian Center, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Emmanuel, the God of creation, presence, and power, we honor You, the true and only wise God, as Christ and Lord and decree and declare Your principles and patterns to be the common thread through these walls and this august assembly of Representatives.

We declare this day that the Lord has made a day of excellence and cooperation and decree it to be like no other day. We remorse of all sin and shortcomings and acquiesce to the unction of the Shekinah glory of the Most High.

With expediency, deliver us from our enemies, for we flee unto Thee to hide us. Teach us to do Thy will, for Thou art our God. Thy spirit is good. Lead us into the land of uprightness.

We declare these blessings in the name of the Lord and Savior.

Amen in Jesus' name.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Ms. HAHN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. HAHN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING BISHOP PERRY THOMPSON

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Bishop Perry N. Thompson of Richmond, Virginia, for offering the opening prayer.

A graduate of DeVry Institute of Technology and Norfolk State University, Bishop Thompson is the senior pastor of the Freedom Chapel International Christian Center here in Washington, D.C., and Bishop Thompson oversees ministries abroad in Brazil, Ecuador, Liberia, Mexico, Russia, and Ukraine.

Mr. Speaker, Bishop Thompson is the Admissions and Financial Officer for the Supreme Court of the United States, the First Vice President of Administration for RBI Institute, and serves on the Executive Board of the Apostolic World Christian Fellowship.

Mr. Speaker, Bishop Thompson is also the pastor of our beloved colleague Joyce Hamlett, Assistant Sergeant at Arms in charge of floor security.

Mr. Speaker, again I thank Bishop Perry N. Thompson for his excellent work and for his being here today.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S PLAN TO CLOSE GUANTANAMO

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, yesterday President Obama announced his plan to close Guantanamo.

As a 29-year Air Force veteran and POW, I speak from experience when I say that the President's decision is wrong and it will endanger our homeland.

As a Congressman who helped pass the law to protect American citizens by ensuring Obama doesn't release terrorists from GTMO, I would like to remind the President that his decision goes against the will of the American people. Furthermore, it is illegal.

Radical Islamic terrorists who are hell-bent on the destruction of our democracy and way of life belong in only one place, Guantanamo.

The President is clearly in denial about these terrorists, but Americans can rest assured we will do everything in our power to keep our country safe.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

SUPPORT FUNDING FOR GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of Great Lakes Day, hundreds of advocates are in Washington to support funding for the restoration of the Great Lakes.

Fortunately, after years of neglect, Congress is starting to meet its responsibilities to protect and to restore this irreplaceable resource.

In 1968, the Buffalo River, which drains into Lake Erie, was so contaminated that it was declared biologically dead.

Today, funded by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, the Federal Government, local businesses, and the Buffalo Niagara RIVERKEEPER are working on a massive undertaking to clean up and restore the river. Now we expect it will be fishable and swimmable within the next decade.

In the coming weeks, Congress will begin to devise its spending plan for the year. I urge my colleagues to support programs like the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which support local economies, natural habitats, and public health throughout the region.

CLOSING GUANTANAMO

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the President announced a dangerous proposal, to close Guantanamo and bring terrorists to America. One of the proposed locations is near Charleston, South Carolina, creating a risk of attacks to adjacent schools, churches, neighborhoods, and ports.

I have visited Guantanamo twice. This is the right location to house terrorists who are obsessed to kill American families.

The 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, signed by the President, bars the closure of Guantanamo. Congress voted that remote Guantanamo is the safest location for mass murderers of American families, which discourages further attacks, and no one wants to be in Communist Cuba.

I appreciate Speaker PAUL DAVIS RYAN, Senators TIM SCOTT and LINDSEY GRAHAM, Governor Nikki Haley, Attorney General Alan Wilson, and the South Carolina House delegation for their efforts to prevent the closure of Guantanamo to protect American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

A NEW SUPREME COURT JUSTICE

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, all of us were saddened in the last 2 weeks at the loss of the longest serving jurist, Justice Scalia. There is no doubt he loved the law and he loved the Court.

With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that, in recognition of Justice Scalia's love of the law and the love of that Court, we honor his memory by fulfilling the constitutional duty that the other body has to and the constitutional duty that the President has to, which is to advise and consent on a nomination made by the President or not consent made by the President of a Supreme Court Justice.

The claim that this is an 80-year precedent that has not been broken based upon the time that the President is now serving—332 days—there is no such term as a lame duck in the United States Congress is incorrect. It was recently done in 1988, under President Reagan, with Justice Kennedy, when he was nominated by a Democrat-controlled Senate, 97-0.

It is important that we express to the American people that we are willing to do our duty. I would adhere to the Latin term in English: the last expression of the people prevail. The President of the United States was duly elected in 2012. His term has not ended.

I applaud the President for doing his constitutional duty. I think it is important for us to do our constitutional duty, the Congress of the United States, and address the question on making sure the Court is full to do its duty.

A TRIBUTE TO HARPER LEE

(Mr. BYRNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, last week the world lost a literary giant and Alabama lost a legend. A native of Alabama's First Congressional District, Nelle Harper Lee was born and died in Monroeville, Alabama, the city that served as an inspiration for the town of Maycomb in her legendary novel "To Kill a Mockingbird."

Nelle received many honors throughout her life, including being inducted into the Alabama Academy of Honor, receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and being awarded the National Medal of Arts.

She was known as a private woman, but her writings inspired generations, promoted acceptance, and taught us all important life lessons.

Sadly, she passed away in Monroeville on February 19 at the age of 89.

One of the best lessons Nelle taught us was about tolerance. As she wrote in "To Kill a Mockingbird," "You never

really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view . . . until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.”

May we all take time to reflect on the life of Nelle Harper Lee, and may we all continue to live out her lesson of tolerance each and every day.

AUTUMN JOHNSON KILLED BY GUN VIOLENCE

(Ms. HAHN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, on the evening of February 9, this little precious angel, 1-year-old Autumn Johnson, was in her crib when a gunman approached her family's Compton home and opened fire on the converted garage where they lived.

Autumn was struck by a single bullet to her head. Two sheriff's deputies on the scene didn't think they could wait for the paramedics and rushed little Autumn in her father's arms to the hospital in their squad car. She was declared dead at the hospital.

Yesterday sheriffs arrested her suspected killer. The motive is still unknown, but law enforcement suspects gang involvement. I hope that justice is served, but I know that nothing can make up for what Autumn's parents have lost.

I attended her funeral on Saturday, and my heart broke into a million pieces when I saw Autumn in her little lavender casket. Before she was buried, her young father put her pink teddy bear in beside her.

When is the breaking point? When will we decide that our communities have seen enough bloodshed? When will we get serious about investing in our young people and giving them better opportunities than gangs? When will we in Congress finally do our part to prevent gun violence?

Autumn's life mattered, and it is time we started acting like it.

HONORING CAROL MOONEY, PRESIDENT OF SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE

(Mrs. WALORSKI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to a champion of higher education in my district.

For the last 12 years, Dr. Carol Mooney has honorably served as president of Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana. She is beloved by her peers and praised for strengthening Saint Mary's fiscal and academic standings. Her work has directly impacted the lives of students on campus, providing them with the highest quality education possible.

As its first lay alumna president, Mooney spearheaded Saint Mary's most successful fund-raising campaign, raising over \$105 million in gifts and pledges. She also oversaw the expansion of numerous undergraduate and graduate programs. Clearly, her dedication to and passion for education has been felt far and wide.

On behalf of the people of Indiana's Second Congressional District, I thank President Mooney for her commitment to improving the state of our community and society at large and wish her all the best as she enters retirement later this year.

□ 1215

RECOGNIZING THE WORLD WAR II GHOST ARMY

(Ms. KUSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor a group of men who played a crucial and unique role in the Allied victory in World War II.

The Army's 23rd Headquarters Special Troops, also known as the Ghost Army, used tactical deception to divert enemy troops. Recruited from art schools and ad agencies, these men created false radio transmissions, along with decoy tanks, planes, and other vehicles, to deceive German soldiers while concealing the true movement of our Allied troops.

The unit's members included celebrated artists like Bill Blass and Ellsworth Kelly, and men like the late Mickey McKane, who lived in my district. Mickey was recruited from the Pratt Institute and put his expertise in architectural design to good use on the battlefields of Europe.

The Ghost Army's activities were classified until 1996, which meant that for years their heroics went largely unrecognized. Last year, my colleague PETER KING and I introduced legislation to collectively award a Congressional Gold Medal to the unit.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and give the Ghost Army the recognition it deserves. I hope you will join me tomorrow night on the Hill, where I will be hosting a screening of an acclaimed 2013 PBS documentary, "The Ghost Army."

As the proud daughter and daughter-in-law of World War II veterans, I am honored to advocate for those who sacrificed so much for our victory. I urge my colleagues to join me in these efforts.

LACONIA PD

(Mr. GUINTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the Laconia, New Hamp-

shire, Police Department helping combat our State's growing heroin epidemic.

Even in picturesque communities like Laconia, New Hampshire's Lakes Region, heroin abuse is afflicting everyone from kids to adults. Laconia is taking a new approach to the problem, however.

In addition to locking up drug dealers, the Laconia Police Department named former undercover officer Eric Adams as a prevention and treatment coordinator. In his new job, Officer Adams builds relationships with heroin users, often at their most vulnerable moments, convincing them to seek treatment.

Sometimes his cell phone rings in the middle of the night. A desperate caller pleads with Eric for help. He arrives with compassion and information. Just last year, he helped 78 Granite Staters seek treatment.

In Congress, members of the Bipartisan Task Force to Combat the Heroin Epidemic are working to direct more resources to innovative programs like Laconia's. The Laconia Police Department is providing a model for others and saving lives.

GUN VIOLENCE

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, last weekend, six people were murdered by a gunman on the streets of Kalamazoo, Michigan. So far this year, we have had more than 1,800 people die at the hands of a gun and more than 30 mass shootings. Congress has done nothing in the face of this continued bloodshed.

What will it take for us to act?

Today I will introduce the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, a bill that closes the hate crimes loophole and will prevent those convicted of hate crimes from possessing or purchasing a gun.

I have proposed the assault weapons ban, a bill to end the purchase of firearms by dangerous individuals, to close the fire sale loophole. My colleagues have introduced many other bills to fix our broken background check system.

It is important that we take up this legislation and vote on these bills to let our constituents know where we stand in this fight to reduce gun violence in our country.

HONORING THE LIFE OF RAY WEST

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of my constituent Ray West, who passed away last week at the age of 89.

Ray was a U.S. Navy veteran who served during World War II. He went on to have a successful career in the film industry, earning an Academy Award and a Grammy for his work as a sound engineer.

Ray and his wife, Jean, were married in 1950. The two honeymooned in Yosemite National Park and celebrated each anniversary by returning there.

Ray became ill and the Dream Foundation stepped in. The Dream Foundation is a wish-granting organization for terminally ill adults that is based in Santa Barbara, California. They ensured that Ray and Jean would be able to visit Yosemite for their 65th wedding anniversary.

Last September I had the privilege of meeting Ray and his son David when they traveled to Washington, D.C., for the launch of the Dream Foundation's Dreams for Veterans Program. I was honored to be able to recognize him for his outstanding military service and his extraordinary life.

So today, my thoughts are with Ray's family. I pray they find comfort as they celebrate the life of this remarkable man.

CENTRAL INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

Founded in 1912, the CIAA is our Nation's first historically Black collegiate athletic conference and one of our country's oldest athletic conferences. The CIAA is being held in Charlotte, North Carolina, this week, which I have the pleasure of representing.

As co-chair of the Bipartisan Congressional HBCU Caucus, I am proud of the mission of the CIAA, which encourages educational advancements for student athletes, promotes positive competitive sportsmanship, and highlights HBCUs and other member institutions.

The Queen City has hosted this conference for more than 10 years, and the CIAA has had a positive impact on Charlotte's economy over the last decade, generating more than \$325 million. It continues to generate more than \$55 million annually. CIAA's sponsors, along with the city of Charlotte, have also provided \$1.5 million annually in scholarship funding for member schools.

I thank CIAA for being such a positive force in the Charlotte area, and for students, families, and supporters across the country. I wish the best to all of the male and female athletes competing for titles this week.

AIPM ACT/NATIONAL INVASIVE SPECIES WEEK

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of National Invasive Species Awareness Week, this is a great opportunity to call attention to the more than 4,300 invasive species that harm our domestic agriculture, local landowners, and communities throughout the United States.

So, what are invasive species?

In my home State of Hawaii, the coffee berry borer, coconut rhinoceros beetle, macadamia nut felted coccid, and others cost our local economy millions and threaten our unique ecosystem, our agriculture and waterways, as well as our food supply and public health.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution to combat the thousands of noxious species that are present across the country. That is why I strongly encourage my colleagues to cosponsor and pass H.R. 3893, a bill I sponsored, the Areawide Integrated Pest Management Act, which would bring local stakeholders together with researchers and other key players in order to find sustainable, cost-effective, and comprehensive solutions that will better help all of us to manage and prevent the spread of these harmful pests and invasive species.

DEADLINE FOR A STRATEGY TO COMBAT ISLAMIC EXTREMISM

(Mr. LAHOOD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, last week the Obama administration failed to meet a congressionally mandated deadline to submit a strategy to combat Islamic terrorism.

To comply with the 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, President Obama was required to submit to Congress a comprehensive strategy to defeat ISIS by Monday, February 15, 2016. That was over a week ago. We still have not received his strategy. Confronting this threat is of utmost importance to the safety and security of the United States and our allies.

While there is an absence of leadership from our Commander in Chief, the House has taken several steps to keep America safe from terrorism. We passed the Visa Waiver Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act to help prevent foreign terrorists from entering the United States. We also passed the American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act, a bill to pause the government's Syrian refugee program.

Just yesterday the House passed two additional measures to ensure our Federal agencies are working to disrupt

the travel of terrorists and those seeking help from terrorists.

The House alone cannot keep America safe. We need action from this administration, and submitting an incomplete plan to remove dangerous terrorists to the United States from Guantanamo Bay doesn't count. It just threatens our security more. ISIS is a very grave threat that is clearly not contained.

Today I urge the President to comply with the National Defense Authorization Act and submit a plan to Congress.

HEALTH SAVINGS ACT GIVES MORE FLEXIBILITY TO MEET HEALTH CARE NEEDS

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, hard-working families in Minnesota and around the country want more flexibility, more choice, and lower costs when it comes to their own health care. Instead of a top-down approach, patients should be able to work with their doctor to determine what is best to meet their health care needs.

One of the best tools to provide more flexibility for patients are health savings accounts and flexible spending accounts. HSAs and FSAs are a great way to save for future medical expenses.

However, due to certain loopholes in current law, employers are often discouraged from contributing to their employees' accounts. That is why I have introduced legislation, the Health Savings Act, that would remove this loophole and encourage companies to contribute directly to their employees' HSAs and FSAs.

The bill also would bring in seniors and Active Duty military personnel into the mix by allowing contributions to be made to those accounts under Medicare and TRICARE. It also makes commonsense fixes to the current rules regarding HSAs and FSAs. For instance, patients would now be able to purchase over-the-counter medications such as aspirin or allergy medicine without getting a prescription from their doctor first.

Mr. Speaker, let's give the American people more choice and more flexibility. Let's pass the Health Savings Act.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

ERIC WILLIAMS CORRECTIONAL OFFICER PROTECTION ACT OF 2015

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 238) to amend title 18, United States Code, to authorize the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to issue oleoresin capsicum spray to officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 238

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Eric Williams Correctional Officer Protection Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE BUREAU OF PRISONS AUTHORIZED TO CARRY OLEORESIN CAPSICUM SPRAY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 303 of part III of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 4049. Officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons authorized to carry oleoresin capsicum spray

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Bureau of Prisons shall issue, on a routine basis, oleoresin capsicum spray to—

“(1) any officer or employee of the Bureau of Prisons who—

“(A) is employed in a prison that is not a minimum or low security prison; and

“(B) may respond to an emergency situation in such a prison; and

“(2) to such additional officers and employees of prisons as the Director determines appropriate, in accordance with this section.

“(b) TRAINING REQUIREMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In order for an officer or employee of the Bureau of Prisons, including a correctional officer, to be eligible to receive and carry oleoresin capsicum spray pursuant to this section, the officer or employee shall complete a training course before being issued such spray, and annually thereafter, on the use of oleoresin capsicum spray.

“(2) TRANSFERABILITY OF TRAINING.—An officer or employee of the Bureau of Prisons who completes a training course pursuant to paragraph (1) and subsequently transfers to employment at a different prison, shall not be required to complete an additional training course solely due such transfer.

“(3) TRAINING CONDUCTED DURING REGULAR EMPLOYMENT.—An officer or employee of the Bureau of Prisons who completes a training course required under paragraph (1) shall do so during the course of that officer or employee's regular employment, and shall be compensated at the same rate that the officer or employee would be compensated for conducting the officer or employee's regular duties.

“(c) USE OF OLEORESIN CAPSICUM SPRAY.—Officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons issued oleoresin capsicum spray pursuant to subsection (a) may use such spray to reduce acts of violence—

“(1) committed by prisoners against themselves, other prisoners, prison visitors, and officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons; and

“(2) committed by prison visitors against themselves, prisoners, other visitors, and officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 303 of part III of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 4048 the following:

“4049. Officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons authorized to carry oleoresin capsicum spray.”.

SEC. 3. GAO REPORT.

Not later than the date that is 3 years after the date on which the Director of the Bureau of Prisons begins to issue oleoresin capsicum spray to officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons pursuant to section 4049 of title 18, United States Code, as added by this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report that includes the following:

(1) An evaluation of the effectiveness of issuing oleoresin capsicum spray to officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons in prisons that are not minimum or low security prisons on—

(A) reducing crime in such prisons; and
(B) reducing acts of violence committed by prisoners against themselves, other prisoners, prison visitors, and officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons in such prisons.

(2) An evaluation of the advisability of issuing oleoresin capsicum spray to officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons in prisons that are minimum or low security prisons, including—

(A) the effectiveness that issuing such spray in such prisons would have on reducing acts of violence committed by prisoners against themselves, other prisoners, prison visitors, and officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons in such prisons; and
(B) the cost of issuing such spray in such prisons.

(3) Recommendations to improve the safety of officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons in prisons.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on S. 238, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Today I rise in support of S. 238, the Eric Williams Correctional Officer Protection Act of 2015.

Eric Williams was born on August 24, 1978, in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. He was the son of Donald and Jean Williams. Eric spent most of his life in Nanticoke, Pennsylvania, where he attended the Nanticoke public schools

and graduated from Greater Nanticoke Area High School in 1996.

Eric was an avid soccer player. He played youth soccer, was a member of the high school team, and continued playing in adult leagues. In addition, to his love of soccer, Eric was an avid sportsman. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, and bowling.

Eric graduated with a criminal justice degree from King's College in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and was a graduate of Lackawanna College's police program. He went on to become a security specialist and then a police officer with Jefferson Township, Pennsylvania.

In September of 2011, Eric began his career as a corrections officer at the U.S. Penitentiary in Canaan. In his spare time, he volunteered by visiting jails, talking to inmates about health and spiritual issues.

On the night of February 25, 2013—3 years ago tomorrow—Eric was supervising more than 100 high-security inmates at the USP in Canaan. While making his rounds for nightly lockdown just before 10 p.m., inmate and gang member Jesse Con-ui launched an unprovoked, brutal, and cowardly attack against Senior Officer Williams. Con-ui knocked Eric down a staircase, fracturing his skull. He proceeded to stab Eric more than 200 times with a homemade prison shank.

When authorities found Eric's body, he had only a set of keys, a pair of handcuffs, and a handheld radio on him, clearly not enough to defend himself against such a brutal attack. Eric was 34 years old when he was murdered.

The Eric Williams Correctional Officer Protection Act of 2015 will ensure that our brave corrections officers have the necessary equipment to properly defend themselves from this type of attack in the future.

S. 238 requires the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to issue pepper spray to any Bureau of Prisons officer or employee who may have to respond to an emergency situation to reduce acts of violence committed by prisoners.

□ 1230

This is a much-needed piece of legislation to ensure the safety and security of Bureau of Prisons employees as well as the inmates in their facilities. This bill passed the Senate 2 months ago and, if passed today, will be presented to the President.

I want to particularly thank Congressman MARINO, who represents the district where Eric lived and who has been a staunch advocate for making pepper spray available to Bureau of Prisons employees.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important piece of legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as the senior member of the House Judiciary Committee and as the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, as the Representative of Houston, I am privileged to be able to support this legislation, legislation that, I am very glad to say, had been included in our draft prison bill, a bipartisan bill. But because of the urgency of this matter, I am very glad to be on the floor of the House with the cosponsors, sponsors, and the chairman of the full committee, Mr. GOODLATTE; and the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. CONYERS, as well, joins in the importance of this effort.

My heart aches for Eric Williams' family, and it aches for the circumstance that caused him to lose his life. Obviously, this young man was committed to public safety, the criminal justice system, and, in fact, the rehabilitation of those who were incarcerated, even in high-risk circumstances.

I rise to support S. 238, the Eric Williams Correctional Officer Protection Act of 2015, to make sure that this provision, providing a tool of safety for these brave corrections officers, does not go out of existence.

I want to extend my thanks again to Judiciary Chairman GOODLATTE and Ranking Member CONYERS, as I indicated, for their ongoing, bipartisan leadership.

But again, let me refer back to Eric Williams, the namesake of this legislation and the tragedy of his death. I want to offer my sympathy to the family members and to again say that this death did not have to happen.

As I discuss the bill, I want to make the point that we should not short-change the resources needed for the men and women who are on the front lines of protecting us and securing a criminal justice system to make it work. In this instance, that is what happened.

A death had occurred earlier, but the pilot program did not reach to Eric's facility, and that is inexcusable. But, fortunately, this permanent adding or expanding of this bill will make sure that every high-risk facility under the Bureau of Prisons will have this pepper spray.

The Judiciary Committee unanimously passed the groundbreaking prison reform bill, as I said, 2 weeks ago. This measure was included.

S. 238 codifies a pilot program that has increased Federal prison safety nationwide. It is crucial. However, it is set to expire in a few days, and I look forward to my colleagues bringing forth the criminal justice bill.

It is important to move this bill now. Tomorrow marks 3 years since the death of Correctional Officer Eric Williams, who was stabbed by an inmate at a high-security facility. He was

working alone, as I said, with 100 inmates, high risk. Armed with only a radio, keys, and handcuffs, he was unable to defend himself against the aggressive attack. If Officer Williams was equipped with pepper spray, then he might still be here with us today.

Passing S. 238 will honor Officer Williams. The provisions of this bill require BOP to issue oleoresin capicum spray, known as pepper spray, to certain staff at a higher security prison. This requirement is truly common sense and does not apply to minimum or low-security facilities. It only applies to staff that may respond to an emergency situation in the prison.

S. 238 includes critical safeguards to ensure pepper spray is used appropriately and only when necessary to prevent acts of violence, it is determined that pepper spray is not dangerous, only in limited circumstances.

The legislation requires the officer or employee to complete a pepper spray training course before being issued the spray, annually thereafter.

It establishes parameters for using the spray, and it may only be used to reduce acts of violence. In doing so, S. 238 makes it clear that pepper spray may not be used to punish or coerce inmates, or in an excessive, inappropriate fashion.

Finally, let me say that it is with sadness, but with pleasure, that we provide this legislation and move it quickly so that we can provide that permanent armor, if you will, to protect these officers who are dealing with high-risk inmates.

I ask my colleagues to support this legislation.

As a senior Member of the House Judiciary Committee; as the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations; as the representative from Houston and as a co-sponsor of legislation that includes this same measure, I rise in support of S. 238, the "Eric Williams Correctional Officer Protection Act of 2015."

Let me extend my thanks to Judiciary Chairman GOODLATTE and Ranking Member CONYERS for their ongoing leadership on bipartisan criminal justice reform.

When the Judiciary Committee unanimously passed a groundbreaking prison reform bill just two weeks ago, that bill included the measure before us today.

S. 238 codifies a pilot program that has increased federal prison safety nationwide.

This crucial program, however, is set to expire in just a few days.

While I look forward to working with my colleagues to bring our bipartisan criminal justice reform bills before this Chamber soon, we must pass S. 238 now to avoid letting this important program expire.

Tomorrow marks three years since the death of Correctional Officer Eric Williams, who was stabbed by an inmate at a high security facility in Waymart, PA.

Officer Williams was working alone in a unit of more than 100 inmates.

Armed only with a radio, keys, and handcuffs, he was unable to defend himself against the aggressive attack.

If Officer Williams was equipped with pepper spray, then he might still be here with us today.

Passing S. 238 will honor Officer Williams.

The Eric Williams Correctional Officer Protection Act of 2015 provides officers in higher security facilities with the means to protect themselves when necessary.

S. 238 requires BOP to issue oleoresin capicum spray, known as pepper spray, to certain staff at higher security prisons.

This requirement is truly common sense: it does not apply to minimum or low security facilities; and it only applies to staff that "may respond to an emergency situation" in the prison.

S. 238 includes critical safeguards to ensure pepper spray is used appropriately and only when necessary to prevent acts of violence.

Specifically, this legislation: requires the officer or employee to complete a pepper spray training course before being issued the spray, and annually thereafter; and establishes perimeters for using the spray—it may only be used to reduce acts of violence committed by prisoners against themselves or others.

In doing so, S. 238 makes it clear that pepper spray may not be used to punish or coerce inmates, or in an excessive and inappropriate fashion.

The need to provide permanent protective equipment cannot be overstated.

Mass incarceration has led to dangerously overcrowded federal prisons.

Such conditions can frequently lead, or at least contribute to, unnecessary violence.

High and medium security level facilities make up 42 percent of the total BOP population.

In FY2013 these facilities were operating 52 percent and 45 percent over capacity, respectively.

Officers in these facilities must be equipped to protect themselves and others.

In 2010, there were almost 1,700 assaults on BOP staff—about 49 per 5,000 inmates.

BOP requires officers on regular duty to carry a radio, body alarm, and keys.

Outside the pilot program and aside from emergency situations and special teams, officers do not carry pepper spray or batons.

Officers must rely on communication skills and training to de-escalate confrontations.

These are critically important skills and we know that our well-trained federal correctional officers are generally able to use these skills to avoid violence.

In some instances, however, these skills may not be enough and, when they are not, these officers must not be defenseless.

The issuance of pepper spray, alongside proper training, will go a long way to assisting these officers when all else fails.

We ask a lot of federal correctional officers.

We support these officers with training and skills, but that is not always enough.

When faced with acts of violence against themselves and others, they must be well-positioned to cut that violence short.

It is therefore vital that we pass S. 238 now.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to join me; the National Association of Police Organizations; Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association; American Federation of Government Employees, and Council of Prison Locals; in

supporting the Eric Williams Correctional Officer Protection Act of 2015.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO), a member of the Judiciary Committee and a subcommittee chairman who has been an advocate on this issue and whose district was directly impacted by the murder of Eric Williams.

Mr. MARINO. I thank Chairman GOODLATTE for bringing this legislation to the floor, and I thank Mr. CONYERS for supporting this as well.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Eric Williams Correctional Officer Protection Act.

I was not fortunate enough to know Eric Williams while he lived, but, as I have met and worked with his parents, his coworkers and friends, I have come to grasp the depth of his loss to them all.

As the chairman stated before me, on the night he was brutally murdered, Eric was alone and outnumbered, over 100 to 1, in a high-security Federal penitentiary.

USP Canaan, where Eric was murdered, is one of three such high-security institutions in my congressional district. And I might add that Congressman GOODLATTE and I toured the facilities at Lewisburg and at Allenwood several months ago and saw firsthand what takes place there. In each of them, corrections officers and other prison staff are constantly outnumbered while they work among the most violent criminals in the Federal prison system.

Until the BOP implemented its OC spray pilot program, each of these correctional officers was also completely unarmed. Inmates, on the other hand, constantly find ingenious ways to fabricate weapons for use against BOP employees and other inmates.

But, as I have visited and met with corrections officers at USP Canaan, FCC Allenwood, and USP Lewisburg, I have heard firsthand accounts why OC spray is a necessary tool for their job. It is a sign of why this proven pilot program must be permanently authorized.

I want to thank Chairman GOODLATTE for his support and assistance on this critical piece of legislation, and my colleagues sitting with me here today and on the other side of the aisle. Over many months now, he and the staff have worked with mine to ensure that we bring this to the floor.

I also want to thank my colleague from Pennsylvania, Senator TOOMEY, for his efforts to push the bill through the Senate.

While straightforward and short, the bill means life and/or death for corrections officers and BOP employees across the Nation. The loss of Eric Williams and two other Federal corrections officers in recent years is tragic and absolutely preventable.

Tomorrow, February 25, marks 3 years since Eric's death. To honor his service and his memory, I urge my colleagues to do right for those who protect us and support this bill.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA).

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Eric Williams Correctional Officer Protection Act.

First, let me explain the title of the bill.

Eric Williams was a constituent of mine from Nanticoke, a senior correctional officer at the U.S. Prison at Canaan in Waymart, Pennsylvania, which is just outside of my district. On February 25, 2013, that is 3 years ago tomorrow, Eric Williams was working in the prison when he was suddenly attacked by an inmate. The inmate knocked Officer Williams down a flight of steps. He then stabbed him more than 200 times with a homemade shank. That inmate is now charged with first degree murder, first degree murder of a United States corrections officer, and possessing contraband in prison. Prosecutors are seeking the death penalty.

Needless to say, at the time of the attack, Officer Williams was unarmed. Now, it makes sense that officers don't carry firearms into areas where inmates could gain access to them, but this bill tells the Bureau of Prisons to supply pepper spray to prison officers or other employees who could be involved in emergency situations with inmates.

If Officer Williams had been equipped with pepper spray 3 years ago, he might have been able to defend himself against that cowardly, ambush-style attack, and perhaps he would be alive today. This will give correctional officers that fighting chance that Officer Williams did not have.

I have had the privilege of meeting with Eric Williams' parents, Don and Jean. They are now part of an organization called Voices of JOE. The letters of J-O-E stand for Jose Rivera, Osvaldo Albarati, and Eric Williams. They were killed because of their jobs in the correctional system.

For them, Mr. Speaker, and all of our correctional officers who risk their lives every day, I urge support of the bill.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY), who is the chief sponsor of the House version of this bill.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 238, the Eric Williams Correctional Officer Protection Act, and urge its immediate adoption.

Two years ago, our office met with the family of Eric Williams. We heard

the tragic story of how he was brutally murdered in the line of duty at the penitentiary at Canaan.

In coordination with Senator TOOMEY's office, we then introduced the bill, in concert with Congressmen BARLETTA and MARINO, the companion bill in the House. We reintroduced it again this past year and are thrilled that the Toomey bill has passed the Senate and has come before the House today. This bill will permanently authorize Federal correction officers to routinely carry pepper spray in medium-, high-, and maximum-security prisons.

Think about what we heard a minute ago. At the time of his death, Officer Williams was only equipped with a radio, a set of keys, and some handcuffs.

Any worker should feel safe and secure when they go to work, but that is not the case in our Federal correctional institutions. These men and women have no line of defense against conflicts within the prison walls. This bill will go far in providing Federal correctional workers a much-needed tool so that they may defend themselves and others if attacked by violent prison inmates.

I thank the Judiciary Committee and leadership for their quick action in bringing this issue to the floor, and I urge all my colleagues to honor the memory of Officer Eric Williams by voting "yes" and sending this bill to the President's desk.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time to close.

□ 1245

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, let me state the obvious. All of us are appalled and saddened by the loss of this correctional officer. We express again our sadness and sympathy to his family although 3 years later. Eric Williams did not deserve to die.

Our Federal prisons across America are dangerously overcrowded. Such conditions can frequently lead or at least contribute to unnecessary violence. High- and medium-level security facilities make up 42 percent of the total Bureau of Prisons population.

In FY 2013, these facilities were operating 52 percent and 45 percent over capacity, respectively. Officers in these facilities must be equipped to protect themselves.

In 2010, there were almost 1,700 assaults on BOP staff and about 49 per 5,000 inmates. BOP requires officers of regular duty to carry a radio, body alarm, and keys.

Outside the pilot program and aside from the emergency situation and special teams, officers do not carry pepper

spray all the time. Officers must rely on communication skills and training to deescalate confrontations. Sometimes that is not enough. These are important skills.

We know that well-trained Federal correctional officers are generally able to use these skills to avoid violence, but not all the time. We must not have one single time where we have an officer at the risk of losing their life and they have no protection.

In some instances, however, these skills may not be enough. When they are not, these officers must not be defenseless. Issuance of pepper spray alongside proper training will go a long way to assist these officers.

We ask a lot of Federal correctional officers. In the comments made about Mr. Williams, he was engaged in counseling and rehabilitation discussions.

We support these officers with training and skills. We do expect for them to interact. When faced with acts of violence against themselves and others, they must be well positioned to cut that violence short.

So I ask my colleges to join in passing S. 238. I thank the author of the bill who persisted in introducing it on many occasions, my colleagues on the Judiciary Committee, including Mr. MARINO, and others, our chairman and ranking member.

I urge my colleagues to join me, the National Association of Police Organizations, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the American Federation of Government Employees, and the Council of Prison Locals in supporting the Eric Williams Correctional Officer Protection Act of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Very simply, a few weeks ago I had the opportunity to meet Mr. and Mrs. Williams, Eric's parents. They came to the House Judiciary Committee on the day that we marked up our prison reform legislation and included matters related to protecting the security officers in that legislation.

They came after Eric had been brutally murdered. So they knew that nothing they did there that day would save him, that he had already been lost. But they came for one important reason. They don't want to see that happen to any other Federal prison security guards anywhere anytime. They strongly support this legislation.

I ask my colleagues to pass this legislation in Eric Williams' name and out of respect for the concern his parents have that officers who serve their country in our Federal prisons are kept safe.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 238.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3624, FRAUDULENT JOINDER PREVENTION ACT OF 2016

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 618 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 618

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3624) to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on House Resolution 618, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring forward this rule on behalf of the Rules Committee.

It is a structured rule that provides 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee for H.R. 3624, the Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act of 2016.

In addition to consideration of H.R. 3624, the House will also debate and vote on two amendments on the House floor.

Yesterday the Rules Committee received testimony from the sponsor of the bill and a minority representative of the Judiciary Committee. Subcommittee hearings were held on this legislation, and it was marked up and reported by the Judiciary Committee. This bill went through regular order and enjoyed meaningful discussion at the subcommittee and full committee level.

H.R. 3624 is strongly supported by the National Federation of Independent Business and the Chamber of Commerce because of the significance of this issue to small businesses in northeast Georgia and across the Nation.

This legislation will protect innocent local parties, often small business-owners, from being dragged into expensive lawsuits. It achieves this goal in two specific ways.

First, the bill empowers judges to exercise greater discretion to free an innocent local party from a case where the judge finds there is no plausible case against that party.

It applies the same plausibility standard that the Supreme Court has said should be used to dismiss pleadings for failing to state a valid legal claim, and we believe the same standard should apply to release innocent parties from lawsuits.

Second, the bill allows judges to look at evidence that the trial lawyers aren't acting in good faith in adding local defendants. This is a standard some lower courts already use to determine whether a trial lawyer really intends to pursue claims against the

local defendant or is just using them as part of their forum shopping strategy.

It is important to emphasize that Congress has the authority to regulate the jurisdiction of the lower Federal courts. The present standard has been described as poorly defined and subject to inconsistent interpretation and application and the consequences significant and real.

H.R. 3624 is consistent with the views of our Founding Fathers and the principles of federalism enshrined in the Judiciary Act of 1789.

I would like to thank Chairman GOODLATTE, Congressman BUCK, and their staff for their work in bringing forth this important litigation reform.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this rule and in strong opposition to the underlying legislation. In short, this is a lousy bill.

At the end of last year, Republicans and Democrats came together to pass four major pieces of legislation that were sent to President Obama's desk and enacted into law.

We passed a bipartisan budget agreement, a multiyear tax package, a highway bill, and legislation to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that had all been stalled for years.

That is how Congress is supposed to work, Mr. Speaker. Quite frankly, I thought at the end of last year that maybe these successes would be contagious and that it would become the norm to actually work together in a bipartisan way and to pass meaningful legislation that would actually become law.

But this Republican leadership, I am sad to say, has returned from the holiday break with more of the same tired ideas and partisan legislation that is going nowhere. We are wasting time with this legislation today, which is going nowhere. We are wasting taxpayer dollars spending our time dealing with legislation that is going nowhere.

Instead of considering legislation to create jobs, boost our economy, or lift struggling Americans out of poverty, this Republican leadership is once again bringing to the floor a completely unnecessary bill that puts the interests of large corporations ahead of the rights of the American people to pursue justice through our court system.

It is not even the first time this week Republicans have played politics with our judicial system. Just yesterday Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL and Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee confirmed that

Senate Republicans will not hold hearings or any votes on any nominee by President Obama to fill the current vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court, leaving a vacancy on our highest court for at least a year or more.

Mr. Speaker, for the life of me, I can't understand why my Republican friends have spent so much time during the last 7 years doing everything they can to try to obstruct this President's agenda and every idea that this President has had.

The contempt that Republicans have demonstrated for this President from day one, when the Senate majority leader made clear that they wanted to make President Obama a one-term President and that the Republicans were going to do everything they could to stop every piece of legislation that he proposed because they wanted him to have no success stories, I think illustrates why this place has become the Congress of dysfunction.

We need to do better. We need to understand that, in Washington, D.C., our job is to try to get things done, not simply put roadblocks in the way.

Interfering with our judicial system to score political points sets a dangerous precedent, and the underlying bill that we are set to consider later today is just one more attempt to unbalance the scales of justice.

H.R. 3624, the so-called Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act, works to create a wild west environment for big corporations by making it harder for ordinary citizens to hold them accountable for their actions. It is simply another Republican handout to big business.

H.R. 3624 is an attempt to create a solution to a problem that doesn't exist. The issue of determining if a local party has improperly joined a case is already dealt with in our judicial system. There is no real evidence that the current system is failing to address any fraudulent joinders.

This bill creates redtape and bureaucracy, something I am constantly hearing my Republican friends complain about, all to make our courts friendlier to big business.

H.R. 3624 looks to move judicial cases that are supposed to be handled in State courts up to the Federal system, where trials take longer and are more expensive.

This makes it significantly harder for an individual who has been injured by a corporation to take them to court and to be able to receive the compensation that they may be entitled to, that they deserve.

The costs are even higher for those seeking justice when you consider that this change would force many individuals to travel long distances.

This is unjust and unfair. Maybe it pleases a certain group of contributors, but it is certainly not in the interests of the average American citizen.

Clogging up our Federal court system with unnecessary cases that should be handled in State courts is simply not in the best interest of the American people. Congress should not be taking away the power of the courts to determine where a case should be heard.

Mr. Speaker, Americans would be outraged to learn that we are even considering a bill that would tilt the scales even more in the direction of big corporations.

This is the people's House. We are supposed to be on the side of the people, not on the side of big corporations.

So I urge my colleagues to reject this rule, to reject this underlying bill, and to get on the side of the American people. If we want to do something constructive, maybe what we ought to do is pass a bill that allows the American people to sue the Congress for malpractice because that is what this is about.

This really is malpractice, that we are wasting our time on a bill that essentially is a giveaway to big corporations and we are not doing the business that the people sent us here to do.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this rule.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1300

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I am going to urge that we defeat the previous question. If we do defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule to bring up a resolution that would require the Republican majority to stop its partisan games and finally hold hearings on the President's budget proposal.

I don't know why this is so controversial. We ought to have a hearing, and we ought to talk about various ideas on how to deal with our budget. The President of the United States is entitled to have a hearing up here in the House of Representatives.

I urge my colleagues again not to follow suit of the Senate, which is, again, blocking any hearings on a new Supreme Court nominee.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) to discuss this proposal.

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding time.

This is my eighth year in service on the House Budget Committee. For the last 7 years, every year, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget

has come to the House Budget Committee and has presented the budget of the President of the United States—the President of the United States, who has been duly elected by the people of this country for two terms.

Now the House Budget Committee decides that it wants to break 40 years of tradition and not allow the administration to present the President's budget to not just the committee, but also to the country. This isn't just unprecedented, this is disrespectful to the members of the committee and the Members of this House. It is certainly disrespectful to our President and the office of the Presidency. And above all, it is disrespectful to the American people who expect their elected leaders to at least review the budget of the President they elected.

As I have said before, the American people have elected President Obama twice. They did it for a reason. One of the reasons was that we were facing one of the greatest financial crises in the history of this country. The record since President Obama has taken office is pretty good. During his time in office, he has overseen one of the most monumental recoveries in our Nation's history.

Consider some of the things that have happened over the past two terms of the Obama administration. Over the last 6 years, 14 million new jobs have been created; unemployment is now down to 5 percent; our budget deficit is at the smallest it has been in 8 years, down \$1 trillion from the year President Obama took office; corporate profits are up more than 165 percent; the Dow Jones average has doubled; the S&P 500 has more than doubled, up 140 percent; the NASDAQ has tripled, rising 222 percent; more than 16 million Americans now have health coverage who previously didn't; and new business formations are running at their highest rate in 17 years.

With that record of economic leadership, you would think that not just the American people, but certainly the House Budget Committee members would want to hear what this President has to say about his vision for the economy going forward and for the budget of this government. But no, once again, for the first time in 40 years, we don't have time or, apparently, the interest to listen to what the President has to say.

I shouldn't say "we." This is the Republicans on the Budget Committee.

Budgets are the way we prioritize our values and our preferences for future action. I know why the Republicans don't want to hear the President's budget, because they don't want the American people to compare what the President would like to do with what their own budget will do. Now, we don't know exactly what that Republican budget is going to look like this year, but we do know that the Republican

budget is going to resemble the Paul Ryan budget of 2012 and 2011.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman from Kentucky an additional 1 minute.

Mr. YARMUTH. That budget was so distasteful to the American people that his running mate in 2012, Mr. Romney, was forced to disavow it. We can make our own judgments, but we can't make our own judgments if we can't see and we don't let the American people see the administration discuss their priorities versus the Republican priorities.

This really is an insult, once again, to the American people that Republicans are too scared of the contrast that will be presented to even allow the President's budget, the constitutionally elected President of the United States, to have his budget discussed in front of the American people. It is shameful.

I urge my colleagues to reject the previous question.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I include in the RECORD an editorial that appeared in the New York Times, entitled, "Republican Budget Tantrum." The editorial concludes with this paragraph saying:

"The President's budget request is a detailed and worthy entry in the contest of ideas. Its aim is to move the Nation forward. If Republicans had compelling ideas and a similar commitment to progress, they would engage with the proposals in the budget. But they don't. So they won't."

[From the New York Times, Feb. 9, 2016]

REPUBLICAN BUDGET TANTRUM (By The Editorial Board)

By law, dating back to 1921, the president of the United States must submit an annual budget request to Congress. On Tuesday, President Obama submitted his eighth and final budget. And like all presidential budgets, it is a statement of values and priorities, a blueprint for turning ideas into policies, a map of where the president wants to lead the country.

This week, even before the president's budget was released, the Republican chairmen of the budget committees announced they would not even hold hearings with the White House budget director to discuss the proposal.

Their decision is more than a break with tradition. It is a new low in Republican efforts to show disdain for Mr. Obama, which disrespects the presidency and, in the process, suffocates debate and impairs governing.

Mr. Obama's budget proposes to spend \$4 trillion in the 2017 fiscal year (slightly more than for 2016). That total would cover recurring expenses, including Medicare and Social Security, as well as new initiatives to fight terrorism, poverty and climate change, while fostering health, education and environmental protection. If Republicans find those efforts objectionable—as their refusal to even discuss them indicates—they owe it to

their constituents and other Americans to say why.

Would they prefer to renege on Social Security benefits? Do they think \$11 billion to fight ISIS, as the budget proposes, is too much? Is \$4.3 billion to deter Russian aggression against NATO allies a bad idea? Does \$19 billion for cybersecurity to protect government records, critical infrastructure and user privacy seem frivolous? And is \$1.2 billion to help states pay for safe drinking water or \$292 million to send more preschoolers to Head Start really unaffordable?

Republicans have objected that the president's budget does not do enough to tackle the nation's borrowing. But according to the White House's estimate, the proposal would reduce deficits by \$2.9 trillion over the next 10 years. That would be sufficient to hold deficits below 3 percent of the economy, a level that is widely considered manageable and even desirable, because a wealthy and growing nation can afford to borrow for projects that would be financially burdensome if paid for all at once.

If Republicans have a plan to pay for the necessary work of government while eliminating deficits entirely, they should present it.

The problem is that Republicans do not have viable alternatives. The budget proposes a \$10-a-barrel tax on crude oil to help pay for \$320 billion in new spending over 10 years on clean-energy transportation projects. Congressional Republicans, unable to break free of their no-new-taxes-ever stance, have derided the oil tax. But what is their plan to pay for projects to modernize transportation and promote green technology in the absence of a new tax?

The budget would also raise \$272 billion over the next decade by closing tax loopholes that let high-income owners of limited-liability companies and other so-called pass-through businesses avoid investment taxes that apply to all other investors. Most of the money would be used to strengthen Medicare's finances. What is the Republican plan to strengthen Medicare?

The president's budget request is a detailed and worthy entry in the contest of ideas. Its aim is to move the nation forward. If Republicans had compelling ideas and a similar commitment to progress, they would engage with the proposals in the budget. But they don't. So they won't.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I would just say that we are reading in the press that the chairman of the Budget Committee, the Republican chairman of the Budget Committee, is now punting on the Republican budget because apparently there is not enough red meat in there to satisfy the Tea Party—or the Freedom Caucus or whatever they call themselves this particular week—which is very, very disturbing. But I think it is important that the Republicans do their job, just like the President did his job. And while you are waiting to do your job, I think you should maybe have a hearing on the President's budget so that maybe some of these ideas, my friends might be able to react to and maybe even find some agreement.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, the refusal of my friends on the other side of

the aisle to hold a hearing on the President's budget is an unprecedented show of disrespect. The lack of respect I have seen for this President is abominable, it is disgraceful, and it does not represent the American character.

Chairman PRICE of the Budget Committee, Mr. Speaker, recently remarked he wanted to "save the President the embarrassment" of having his Budget Director come testify before the Congress.

Save him the embarrassment? He should be embarrassed.

This is the first time, Mr. Speaker, since 1975 that the Budget Committee has not given the basic courtesy of reviewing the President's budget, regardless of politics, regardless of whether we had a Democratic President or a Republican President, or regardless of whether we had a Democratic Congress or we had a Republican Congress—since 1975.

This crass display of partisanship diminishes the ability of Congress to do its job. It certainly doesn't help us in reaching across the aisle, or maybe I am missing something. Had the committee held a hearing on the President's budget, you would know that it creates opportunity for all, not just those at the top. It invests in growing the economy and ensuring the United States is competitive in the 21st century.

Look, we set the parameters in December, just a few months ago, and now what you want to do politically is tell us you can't live within those parameters. That is what you are telling the American people. We agreed to that. We voted on it.

Now the majority has punted—to use the term—its responsibility and postponed releasing a budget as it tries to cater to the extreme rightwing of its party.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman from New Jersey an additional 1 minute.

Mr. PASCRELL. By the way, we were going to be marking up that budget this week; am I correct? I will stand corrected, Mr. Speaker, if I am wrong. We were supposed to be marking up that budget. Now, we have to ask: Why aren't we marking up that budget?

We call on you to use this extra time during this delay to do your job and hold a hearing on the President's budget. It is the right thing to do. It is the moral thing to do.

Gee, what does that mean? I asked you if you want to work in a bipartisan way. This would be a demonstration of how to do that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

Mr. Speaker, let me close by saying again to my colleagues that they should defeat this rule, which is a restrictive rule. They should vote against the previous question so we can actually bring forward the resolution that would allow for there to be a hearing on the President's budget proposal, and we should defeat the underlying bill.

We should defeat the underlying bill because it is a giveaway to big corporations and big special interests. It is a bill that seems like it was written in the Republican congressional campaign committee to make big contributors happy. It does nothing to protect the well-being and the interests of average Americans, of small businesses, and of people who do not have a lot of wealth.

For those reasons, we ought to reject the underlying bill, we ought to have a debate on the President's budget proposal, and we ought to have a debate on whatever the Republicans come up with on their budget proposal.

Speaker RYAN said that this would be the year of ideas, but it seems that any idea that isn't the idea of a small group of very, very rightwing Republicans is not welcome to be talked about, never mind deliberated on, in this Congress. We need to listen to all ideas, and that includes what the President has proposed.

By the way, this is a President who, notwithstanding all of the attempts by my Republican friends to try to frustrate all of his legislative efforts, has a record of accomplishment nonetheless, and one that I think we Democrats are very, very proud of.

But the fact of the matter is he is the President. He was elected not once, but he was elected twice. The American people elected him twice. He is our President for another year, whether my friends like it or not. He ought to be given the respect—and not just him, but the Presidency ought to be given the respect—to not play these kinds of political games when it comes to the budget.

I hope that the previous question will be defeated so that we can bring this amendment to the floor for a vote.

Again, I urge my colleagues, we have a lot to do. Let's stop bringing press releases to the floor for votes, and let's start doing business that will actually help the American people. This has become a place where trivial issues get debated passionately but important ones not at all. We need to change that. There is a reason why Congress is so low in the public opinion polls. What is happening today is an example of that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

It has been interesting. Again, I want to just remind everyone, Mr. Speaker,

that this is a rule debate about a bill that is coming forward to discuss a fraudulent joinder, which is something that impacts our communities and impacts our legal system. Just as a reminder, I am going to ask that you vote for the rule and for the underlying bill, H.R. 3624, which will have plenty of debate forthcoming.

It has been an interesting thing in the last few minutes to discuss with my colleagues across the aisle and talk about real ideas and press releases. Well, it is interesting. It has always been the prerogative of Congress and committee chairmen to invite whom they want and how they run their committees, and that is continuing in that tradition.

I think it is interesting that at the time it was announced, no hearing on the President's budget was needed; we had no reason to believe the President's budget would balance or show any real interest in doing the fiscal challenge.

If you want to talk about press releases, go look at what was handed out just a few weeks ago. In the President's budget, it had a great picture of a mountain on the front. It was great symbolism because it basically just symbolized that this is a budget of debt; it is a mountain of debt; it has no hope, no promise—never will—to balance our budget.

Do you want to talk about real ideas? It reminds me of when I was going back and I was raising my children when they were smaller, and I would say it is time to eat and they would say: Daddy, we want candy. Daddy, we want this.

I would say: You have to eat real food.

Real ideas mean that in this country we take them seriously.

□ 1315

It means a budget that can actually balance.

When you have military leaders, business leaders, and community leaders saying that the greatest threat to America right now is our debt and deficit situation, and, yet, the President, in his own press release—if you would, a large budget—says that we are never going to balance, that we don't hope to balance, I do not understand the disconnect from the kitchen table to the White House's kitchen table. Undoubtedly, there is a disconnect, because you put forth an idea that is not serious, and you are not putting forth an idea that balances. It is the compelling idea that makes us move forward.

The budget debate that Congress is having right now is one that the American people are demanding. It is about how we advance a budget that balances and that addresses fiscal challenges so we can have a strong national defense, a healthy economy, and healthy retirements and security for seniors and families. The President's "status quo"

budget doesn't do that. In fact, it doesn't do anything with regard to what we have talked about.

Mr. Speaker, I was back in my district last week, as many of us were. One of the many things we are hearing in this election season is the reality that there is a disconnect between Main Street and inside this beltway. As long as there are ideas down a certain avenue called Pennsylvania that say we want to put a budget up that has no hope of helping this country out of the situation it is in, then we are not dealing in reality, then we are not dealing in real ideas. We are simply dealing in the fantasy that, one day, it will all just be better.

Mr. Speaker, I remind our Democrat friends who are adamant about bringing the President's budget into the mix that they are welcome to offer it up when a vote comes; but the last time the President's budget hit the floor, it got all of two votes.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 618 OFFERED BY
MR. MCGOVERN

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Immediately upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 624) Directing the Committee on the Budget to hold a public hearing on the President's fiscal year 2017 budget request with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget as a witness. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of the resolution specified in section 2 of this resolution.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT
IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry,

asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 237, nays 180, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 85]

YEAS—237

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen

Amash
Amodei
Babin

Barletta
Barr
Barton

Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fox
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy

Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaull
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry

Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—180

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos

Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn

Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene

DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe y
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Neal
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmut ter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley

NOT VOTING—16

Blumenauer
Buck
Cook
Green, Gene
Hastings
Herrera Beutler
Huizenga (MI)
Kelly (IL)
Murphy (PA)
Napolitano
Rice (SC)
Robby

□ 1340

Messrs. CÁRDENAS, LYNCH, RUSH, and FARR changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, February 24, 2016, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 85. Had I been present, I would have voted “no” on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3624.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 238, noes 180, not voting 15, as follows:

Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Slaught er
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth
Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fox
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)

[Roll No. 86]

AYES—238

Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Davis, Rodney
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Gosar
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—180

Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)

Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe y
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmut ter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—15

Buck
Cook
Green, Gene
Hastings
Herrera Beutler
Huizenga (MI)
Kelly (IL)
Napolitano
Robby
Rooney (FL)
Sanchez, Loretta
Sewell (AL)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Speier

□ 1347

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, February 24, 2016, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 86. Had I been present, I would have voted “no” on H. Res. 618—Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3624—Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act of 2015.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 86 on February 24, 2016, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. I was unable to vote on Wednesday, February 24, 2016, due to important events being held today in our district in Houston and Harris County, Texas. If I had been able to vote, I would have voted as follows: On the motion on ordering the previous question on the rule for consideration of H.R. 3624, the Fraudulent Joinder

Prevention Act of 2015, I would have voted "no." On passage of H. Res. 618, the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3624, I would have voted "no."

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H. RES. 571

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H. Res. 571. The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEWART). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

MODIFYING AND CONTINUING THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO CUBA AND CON- TINUING TO AUTHORIZE THE REGULATION OF THE ANCHOR- AGE AND MOVEMENT OF VES- SELS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114-102)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 1 of title II of Public Law 65-24, ch. 30, June 15, 1917, as amended (50 U.S.C. 191), sections 201, 202, and 301 of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby report that I have issued a Proclamation to modify and continue the national emergency declared in Proclamations 6867 and 7757.

The Proclamation recognizes that certain descriptions of the national emergency set forth in Proclamations 6867 and 7757 no longer reflect the international relations of the United States related to Cuba. Further, the Proclamation recognizes the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba, and that the United States continues to pursue the progressive normalization of relations while aspiring toward a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic Cuba.

The Proclamation clarifies the national emergency related to Cuba and specifically provides the following statements related to U.S. national security and foreign policy:

- It is U.S. policy that a mass migration from Cuba would endanger the security of the United States by posing a disturbance or threatened disturbance of the international relations of the United States.

- The unauthorized entry of vessels subject to the jurisdiction of the

United States into Cuban territorial waters is in violation of U.S. law and contrary to U.S. policy.

- The unauthorized entry of U.S.-registered vessels into Cuban territorial waters is detrimental to U.S. foreign policy, and counter to the purpose of Executive Order 12807, which is to ensure, among other things, safe, orderly, and legal migration.

- The possibility of large-scale unauthorized entries of U.S.-registered vessels would disturb the international relations of the United States by facilitating a possible mass migration of Cuban nationals.

I have directed the Secretary of Homeland Security (the "Secretary") to make and issue such rules and regulations as the Secretary may find appropriate to regulate the anchorage and movement of vessels, and authorize and approve the Secretary's issuance of such rules and regulations, as authorized by the Act of June 15, 1917.

I am enclosing a copy of the Proclamation I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 24, 2016.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on additional motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

GULLAH/GEECHEE CULTURAL HERITAGE ACT AMENDMENT

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3004) to amend the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Act to extend the authorization for the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3004

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF THE AUTHORIZATION FOR THE GULLAH/GEECHEE CUL- TURAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR COM- MISSION.

Section 295D(d) of the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Act (Public Law 109-338; 120 Stat. 1833; 16 U.S.C. 461 note) is amended by striking "10 years" and inserting "15 years".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 3004, introduced by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN), amends the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Act by extending the authorization for the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission.

The corridor exists to preserve and foster the unique cultural communities formed by Americans of African descent along the Atlantic coastal islands of four States and that existed in relative isolation for many generations.

During those years, a distinct and uniquely American culture evolved, a culture that is gradually slipping from us in the march of the modern world.

Although the heritage corridor was authorized through October 12, 2021, the Commission was only authorized through October 12, 2016. Without any legislative change, the corridor will have to be managed by a different, as yet unconstituted, entity.

I urge passage of the measure.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill simply extends the authorization of the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission from 10 to 15 years.

Congress designated the Gullah/Geechee Heritage Corridor in 2006 to promote and interpret the story of African Americans known as Gullah/Geechee who settled along the coast of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

The enabling legislation for the corridor, while providing a 15-year authority for technical and financial assistance, only gave the identified local coordinating entity a 10-year authorization. This bill matches up the two authorities so the Commission can continue its work.

I want to thank the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN) for bringing this issue to our attention and all of his work on behalf of the Gullah/Geechee Heritage Corridor.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3004,

which would extend authorization for the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission through October of 2021.

The low country and sea islands of our southeastern States, including the First Congressional District of Georgia, are home to some of our Nation's most treasured cultures. One of the most unique is the Gullah/Geechee people.

Over the past three centuries, the Gullah/Geechee people have developed and preserved their own distinct language and culture that retains many of their African traditions. The Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor was created to recognize the cultural contributions of the Gullah/Geechee and to assist in preserving and interpreting their history, language, folklore, art, and music.

The Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission coordinates with local officials and communities to preserve and honor the Gullah/Geechee heritage for years to come.

H.R. 3004 would extend the Commission's authorization for an additional 5 years so that they may continue their mission of preserving the valuable contributions of the Gullah/Geechee culture.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN), my distinguished colleague.

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3004, a bill that makes a technical change to the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Act.

Gullah/Geechee is a blend of African and European language, culture, and traditions found along the coast and sea islands of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, where former slaves began their freedom in isolated and remote communities and nurtured unique cultural traditions.

The Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Act, signed into law in 2006, created the Gullah/Geechee Heritage Corridor to preserve and protect the remaining vestiges of this living culture, which has been threatened by development in these coastal communities.

Called Gullah in the Carolinas and Geechee in Georgia and Florida, these enclaves of language and culture provide a significant link to African American heritage. As a former history teacher and historic preservation advocate, the establishment of the heritage corridor is one of my proudest achievements in Congress.

This bill before us corrects a technical issue by extending the authorization of the Commission created by the original legislation to coincide with the heritage corridor, which runs to

2021. Without this change, the heritage corridor would continue to exist but would need to be managed by a new entity, eroding the progress the current Commission has made toward implementing its management plan. Enacting this legislation will ensure continuity in the management of the corridor so that its mission is carried out as efficiently and effectively as possible.

I want to thank the chairman and ranking members of the Committee on Natural Resources and Subcommittee on Federal Lands for their support of this bill and for moving it swiftly to the House floor today for consideration.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. RICE).

□ 1400

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. I thank the distinguished gentleman for yielding.

The Gullah/Geechee culture is infused throughout the low country of South Carolina. In fact, it is a big part of what makes the low country of South Carolina so unique. From Daufuskie on the southern end to Little River Neck on the northern end, that culture permeates our geography and our people.

My father's family, my grandfather's family, my brother, and myself were raised in the midst of the Gullah/Geechee culture. In all of our cities—again, from north to south; in Charleston, Myrtle Beach, and Georgetown—you can see those traditions infused throughout those communities.

The traditions of the Gullah/Geechee arts, oral history, literature, music, cuisine, and others, have made a distinctive impact on the coastal Carolina culture. Growing up on the coast, I have fond memories of the Gullah/Geechee people and their way of life.

Authorizing the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission is important to preserving and managing the uniqueness of their important traditions. I support the reauthorization of the Commission and the passage of H.R. 3004.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3004, to amend the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Act to extend the authorization for the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission.

In 2005, Congress passed legislation—H.R. 694, preserving the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage.

This law also established a Commission, nominated and appointed by the Secretary of Interior.

At the passage of the original Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Act, the membership of the commission was limited to a 3 year term.

The Commission is comprised of 15 members who are recognized experts in historic preservation, anthropology, and folklore.

The Commissioners assist in identifying and preserving sites, historical data, artifacts, and objects associated with the Gullah/Geechee for the benefit and education of the public.

The purpose of the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission is to assist Federal, State, and local authorities in the development and implementation of a management plan for those land and waters of the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor.

H.R. 3004 would ensure the continued protection and preservation of the history and contributions of the Gullah/Geechee people of Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Florida.

Lastly, the law stated that the Commission should be terminated after 10 years.

H.R. 3004 will extend the authorization of the Gullah/Geechee Commission from "10 years" to "15 years".

This Black History, the work of the Commission is imperative in facilitating the enhancement and preservation of the Gullah/Geechee cultural heritage.

It also continues to facilitate highlighting the important history of African Americans with Gullah/Geechee heritage.

Indeed, the original Act, H.R. 694 as passed was intended to recognize the seminal contribution of African American Gullah/Geechee made to American culture and history.

These African Americans settled in the coastal states of South Carolina, Georgia, North Carolina, and Florida.

Since its passage, the Act has facilitated efforts in these identified coastal states in interpreting the story and role of the Gullah/Geechee.

Additionally, through the work of the Commission, efforts are now underway to preserve the Gullah/Geechee folklore, arts, crafts, and music.

Most critically, the Act and extension of the authorization of the tenure of the Commission will further support the work of continued identification and preservation of sites, gathering of historical data, protection of artifacts, and objects associated with the Gullah/Geechee.

The extension of the work of the Commission under the original Act and this current legislation will yield benefits of education of the general public on the important contribution of the Gullah/Geechee.

Through the educational outreach work alone, our nation will learn about the Heritage Corridor which comprises those lands and waters generally depicted on a map entitled "Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor."

This is just one prime example of the benefit of the original Act and this current extension of the tenure of the Commission, which I rise in support of.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3004.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK ACT OF 2016

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2880) to redesignate the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2880

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act of 2016”.

SEC. 2. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK.

The Act entitled “An Act to establish the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, and for other purposes” (Public Law 96–428) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a) of the first section, by striking “the map entitled ‘Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site Boundary Map’, number 489/80,013B, and dated September 1992” and inserting “the map entitled ‘Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Proposed Boundary Revision’, numbered 489/128,786 and dated June 2015”;

(2) by striking “Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site” each place it appears and inserting “Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park”;

(3) by striking “national historic site” each place it appears and inserting “national historical park”;

(4) by striking “historic site” each place it appears and inserting “historical park”; and

(5) by striking “historic sites” in section 2(a) and inserting “historical parks”.

SEC. 3. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law (other than this Act), map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to “Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site” shall be deemed to be a reference to “Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2880, introduced by our colleague, JOHN LEWIS, redesignates the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia as the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. It also authorizes the National Park Service to include the Prince Hall Masonic Temple in the Historical Park's boundaries.

The Prince Hall Masonic Temple long served as the headquarters of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. This historic and distinguished civil rights organization was cofounded by Dr. King, who also served as its first president. Including the Prince Hall Masonic Temple within the unit's boundary allows the National Park Service to provide technical assistance to the building's owners with respect to repairs, renovations, and maintenance that would preserve its historic integrity.

It can be said that every American figuratively walks in the footsteps of the American Founders and those who followed them and who perfected their vision. Because of their work, we enjoy the blessings of a free government that exists to protect the God-given natural rights of every person and a free society where every person will be judged, in Dr. King's words, “on the content of his character.”

Our historical parks give us the opportunity literally to walk in the footsteps of these great Americans who have struggled over the centuries to secure this vision. Those who gathered around Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in the 1950s walked the streets of this neighborhood, and its preservation gives us and future generations a tangible link with them.

One of them was our distinguished colleague, Congressman LEWIS, and I commend him for his work. It is altogether fitting that a man who did so much to establish this legacy brings to the House today a bill to further preserve it, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 2880 is a simple piece of legislation that has broad bipartisan support. The bill will accomplish two primary goals: to redesignate the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in Atlanta, Georgia, as a National Historical Park, and to adjust the boundary of the park to include the Prince Hall Masonic Temple. These actions will enhance the ability of the National Park Service and the community to tell the very important story of Dr. King.

The site, which is the final resting place of the great civil rights leader, continues to connect visitors with the historical and contemporary struggles for civil rights in this country. These stories are as relevant today as they were half a century ago. This legislation will provide the site with the proper acknowledgment that it deserves.

I want to thank Congressman LEWIS, who remains an important civil rights leader, for bringing this important bill forward.

I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS).

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise as the proud sponsor of this legislation.

First, let me thank Chairman BISHOP, Ranking Member GRIJALVA, and all the staff of the Natural Resources Committee for their hard work and support of this act.

Mr. Speaker, my bipartisan bill will create the first National Historic Park in the State of Georgia. This technical change from a “Site” to a “Park” will make it easier for the National Park Service to share the history of the American civil rights movement with national and international visitors to Atlanta.

These historic spaces are located in my congressional district in downtown Atlanta, on and around Auburn Avenue. This is where Dr. King was born and raised, where he was nurtured and taught, where he preached and loved.

I was a teenager when I first met Dr. King in 1958, at the age of 18. This conversation forever changed my life, but I was not the only one. Many, many people were touched by this man's genius and compassion for all humankind. Dr. King's mission was to create the beloved community, a community of justice, a community at peace with itself.

Dr. King had the power to bring people together to do good. His message was love, his weapon was truth, and the method was the way of nonviolence and passive resistance.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., led a nonviolent movement that changed the face of our Nation. He inspired people from all over our country and from all over the world.

My simple act will improve the services and educational opportunities for visitors to this wonderful space and this wonderful piece of history. It will preserve this important part of our history for generations yet unborn.

Again, I would like to thank the chair and ranking member for their support, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this simple, commonsense legislation.

Ms. TSONGAS. I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, there is no greater voice of the civil rights movement here in this Congress and in this Nation than our dear friend, Congressman JOHN LEWIS.

I am both excited and honored to be able to support this legislation that changes what was a “Site” in its early beginnings to the important designation of a National Historic Park honoring Martin Luther King, Jr.

I first want to thank JOHN LEWIS for his conscientious and hard work on behalf of the King family. As I sat here

and listened to Congressman LEWIS relaying his story, I had the slight privilege to have worked for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference on the very street that he has mentioned. After him, I was able to come to the then-offices of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in this historic area.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROTHFUS). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. TSONGAS. I yield the gentleman an additional 2 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. It was a small office where so many historic persons were, in essence, able to walk in the midst of those hallowed streets. Dr. King came. I don't know whether he parked a car or walked into that office. Of course, we have all of the other surrounding areas and other names of historic persons that had the ability to walk down those streets and into that area.

We take great pride in the preservation of our National Park areas. And I must compliment the National Park Service, because it has a love and affection for all those lands that it takes care of. You can see it when you are able to visit these national sites throughout our country that we have had a chance to visit.

In my colleague's district will be an added place for Dr. Martin Luther King's resources and things his hands touched. What an appropriate time in our history to be able again to thank this man of peace, of nonviolence, and to remind ourselves that America is really a great country to have given birth to him. Along with the plight and conditions in which he lived in at the time and the conditions which he was subjected to, to our knowledge, he never became embittered. He always, although frustrated at moments, recognized love and nonviolence.

I hope that with the recognition he will get and the protection of these wonderful assets, people will come there for solace. It will be another place, along with the monument here in Washington, where people will come here for solace and the recognition that nonviolence and peace and the human dignity of all people are virtues of this Nation carried forward by a great and wonderful and heroic leader—someone whom I at least had a small moment to be associated with through his organization after his death. And I thank him.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2880, the "Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act."

In 1980, Congress passed legislation (P.L. 96-428), establishing the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site.

H.R. 2880 redesignates the "Martin Luther King Junior, National Historic Site" as the "Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park."

This name change is important because it recognizes the greater physical extent that the

site represents not only for African American history, but American history.

This legislation will improve the preservation and ensure the continuous protection of this historic district.

When passed, in 1980, the law set the boundaries of the site along a portion of Auburn Avenue in Atlanta.

This area includes the birthplace of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; the Ebenezer Baptist Church, where both he and his father preached; and the immediate surrounding area.

That law also designated a preservation district that extended protection beyond the immediate neighborhood surrounding the birthplace and church to include the broader Sweet Auburn commercial district.

Since 1980, Congress has twice modified the boundaries of the site and preservation district (P.L. 102-575 and P.L. 108-314).

H.R. 2880 will extend the boundaries of the site to include the Prince Hall Masonic Temple, which is where the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) established its initial headquarters in 1957.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a co-founder and the first president of the SCLC.

It is fitting that we remember the life and legacy of a man who brought hope and healing to America.

The life of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. reminds us that nothing is impossible when we are guided by the better angels of our nature.

Dr. King walked the walk, going to jail 29 times to achieve freedom for others.

He knew he would pay the ultimate price for his leadership, but kept on marching and protesting and organizing anyway.

It is proper that we remember this man of action, who put his life on the line for freedom and justice every day.

So it is fitting that we pass H.R. 2880 and expand, protect, and preserve the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Park so that for generations to come it remains a living memorial to the men and women who led the movement that helped our nation live up to the true meaning of its creed and inspired non-violent movements for social change the world over.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I would urge adoption of the measure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2880, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

KOREAN WAR VETERANS MEMORIAL WALL OF REMEMBRANCE ACT OF 2016

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the

bill (H.R. 1475) to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund that Wall of Remembrance, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1475

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Korean War Veterans Memorial Wall of Remembrance Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. WALL OF REMEMBRANCE.

Section 1 of the Act titled "An Act to authorize the erection of a memorial on Federal Land in the District of Columbia and its environs to honor members of the Armed Forces of the United States who served in the Korean War", approved October 25, 1986 (Public Law 99-572), is amended by adding at the end the following:

"Such memorial shall include a Wall of Remembrance, which shall be constructed without the use of Federal funds. The American Battle Monuments Commission shall request and consider design recommendations from the Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation, Inc. for the establishment of the Wall of Remembrance. The Wall of Remembrance shall include—

"(1) a list by name of members of the Armed Forces of the United States who died in theatre in the Korean War;

"(2) the number of members of the Armed Forces of the United States who, in regards to the Korean War—

"(A) were wounded in action;

"(B) are listed as missing in action; or

"(C) were prisoners of war; and

"(3) the number of members of the Korean Augmentation to the United States Army, the Republic of Korea Armed Forces, and the other nations of the United Nations Command who, in regards to the Korean War—

"(A) were killed in action;

"(B) were wounded in action;

"(C) are listed as missing in action; or

"(D) were prisoners of war."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

□ 1415

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1475, introduced by Congressman SAM JOHNSON, would permit a privately funded addition of a Wall of Remembrance to the Korean War Veterans Memorial.

The Wall would list the names of all members of the U.S. Armed Forces who were killed in theater during the Korean war as well as the number of all of the American POWs and MIAs.

They call the Korean war America's forgotten war. During the 3 years of that war, 5.8 million Americans worldwide served in the U.S. armed services, 22 nations fought alongside us to preserve the freedom of South Korea. 54,246 Americans died worldwide during this conflict, 8,200 were missing in action, and an additional 103,284 were wounded.

The sacrifice they made and the freedom they secured for the people of South Korea must never be forgotten. This measure assures the names of the fallen shall live on.

This bill comes to us from one of only three Korean war veterans who still serve their country today in this House, the legendary Congressman SAM JOHNSON of Texas, from whom we will be hearing shortly.

Representatives CHARLES RANGEL and JOHN CONYERS, Jr., also distinguished themselves in that war, as they have in this House, and are original cosponsors.

I urge passage of the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the construction of a Wall of Remembrance at the Korean War Veterans Memorial on the National Mall.

Similar to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Wall will list the names of the U.S. military personnel killed in action during the Korean war, along with the number of servicemen and -women wounded in action, listed as missing in action, and those who were listed as prisoners of war.

Construction of the current Korean War Veterans Memorial was finished in 1992, and it is considered a complete work of civic art. However, the Korean war veterans' community has identified the addition of a Wall of Remembrance as a priority, and they have advocated for legislation to authorize its construction for years.

Their hard work and dedication has led to this bill before us today, which is currently cosponsored by 291 Members of the House.

The National Park Service, the agency responsible for the management of the current memorial, has expressed concern with the idea of adding a new feature in an area of the National Mall known as the Reserve, where Congress has prohibited the construction of new memorials.

As this bill moves forward, I encourage the sponsors to work with the National Park Service and other relevant stakeholders to make sure that the new feature complements the current memorial.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, we are all deeply honored to serve in this House with the author of this measure, a genuine hero who served courageously in both the Korean and Vietnam wars and who endured many years of suffering as a prisoner of war in Vietnam. He not only saw the courage and heroism of those who fought in Korea, he was one of them.

I am honored to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON).

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to start off by thanking my fellow Korean war veterans, Congressman CHARLIE RANGEL and Congressman JOHN CONYERS, for their support.

I also want to thank Chairman ROB BISHOP, the Natural Resources Committee, and the House leadership for bringing the bill to the floor.

Additionally, I want to thank my fellow Korean war veterans who have tirelessly advocated for this bill. It has been a long time coming.

Mr. Speaker, sadly, the Korean war is often referred to as the forgotten war; yet, the magnitude of sacrifice made by Americans during this conflict was enormous. More than 36,000 Americans gave their lives.

My fellow Korean war veterans and I believe that the magnitude of this enormous sacrifice is not yet fully conveyed by the memorial in Washington, D.C. That is where this bill, H.R. 1475, the Korean War Veterans Memorial Wall of Remembrance Act, comes into play.

This bill, which already has the support of over 300 of my colleagues, would allow for the creation of a Wall of Remembrance at the site of the Korean War Veterans Memorial on the National Mall.

Similar to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, the Korean War Veterans Memorial Wall of Remembrance would eternally honor the brave Americans who gave their lives in defense of freedom during the Korean war. It would list their names as a visual record of their sacrifice.

Furthermore, the Wall would also list the total number of all of America's wounded, missing in action, and prisoners of war.

As a veteran and POW, I can tell you that these memorials are a special place for servicemembers and their families to pay their respect to fallen comrades and loved ones.

As a constitutional conservative who values our great Nation's history, I believe these memorials also serve as a unique and physical reminder that freedom is not free.

Future generations need to know and appreciate the sacrifices made by the servicemembers who fought and died to protect freedom. These memorials can physically convey what oftentimes our words fail to do.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, as a fiscal conservative, I am proud to say this project will not cost taxpayers one dime. In fact, the cost has been 100 percent privately fund-raised, and this bill prohibits any Federal funding for this project.

Mr. Speaker, as we remember the service and sacrifice of those who gave their lives in the Korean war, we can only humbly acknowledge that we are the land of the free because of our brave men and women.

These heroes are shining examples of everything great that America stands for. I can't think of a better way to individually honor each man and woman who gave their life in Korea than through this Wall of Remembrance.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCARELL).

Mr. PASCARELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the soldiers who fought to ensure that South Korea could achieve the prosperity and the fulfillment it enjoys today. Without our soldiers, that would not have happened. These soldiers deserve to be recognized for their contributions.

That is why I am proud to cosponsor this legislation, which would expand the current Korean War Memorial to include a Wall of Remembrance in our Nation's Capital. This addition will honor the service and sacrifice of those who fought in the Korean War.

I want to thank my good friend and committee mate, Congressman SAM JOHNSON, for introducing this legislation and, also, for his heroic military service to our country in both the Korean and Vietnam wars.

Through the Speaker, SAM, we owe you so much, and we could never repay you and the likes of RANGEL and CONYERS, et cetera, who put their lives on the line to not only defend America, but to defend the Korean people.

In addition to a wall, this legislation will allow us to demonstrate our Nation's appreciation for the service of the Korean Augmentation to the United States Army, the Republic of Korean Armed Forces, and the nations of the United Nations Command, who were killed in action, wounded, listed as missing in action, or were prisoners of war.

The Korean War Memorial Wall can ensure that future generations remember and honor the pride and dedication of those who served, the legacy they continued, and the freedom they preserved.

You have heard the numbers about how many folks served, how many of our own brave soldiers and sailors and marines fought in the Korean war: almost 6 million; over 100,000 were wounded and over 36,000 gave their lives. So this is a fitting recognition

for those who bravely served in defense of our Nation.

I visited my brother-in-law the other day, who lives in a veterans' nursing home. He was a soldier in the Korean war, a victim. Many in that home fought in the same war, those who are still alive.

Talking to them, one thing I noticed is they don't want to talk about their experiences ever. I remember talking to my brother-in-law, Joe, 30 years ago. He didn't want to talk about it. His brother, who served there, didn't want to talk about it. His other brother, Freddie, did not want to talk about it. He served there, also.

So this is not only remembrance. More importantly, it is thank you. Thank you so much for what you did.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned their names before, Congressmen RANGEL and CONYERS. We owe them so much. I read Congressman RANGEL's book twice about the experiences that he had in service to our country. We can never forget this. God bless, and I thank them.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), a distinguished veteran of the Korean war.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentlewoman for making this possible, Colonel Bill Weber, of the Korean Memorial Foundation, and, of course, my buddies and colleagues, Congressmen JOHNSON and CONYERS.

Why this is so important to me is not for those who are living, but for the memories of our colleagues who died overseas and whose family have very little to explain as to why they were there.

I really think that this Congress and Congresses before us have lost all of the meaning of having the power and the only power to support the declaration of war.

When I went overseas in 1950, I hadn't the slightest idea as to why I was going. Quite frankly, I didn't even know where Korea was.

But because of my age and having been in combat, I have received more accolades from the grateful people from the country of South Korea than I deserve. But I know that they are thanking the United States and the United Nations for saving them from coming under communism.

I could not possibly have any bad feelings. Indeed, it is a great sense of honor that I could have played some small part in preserving democracy in South Korea, albeit as a volunteer to the Army, but certainly not a volunteer to go into combat.

But the truth of the matter is that we shouldn't have young men and women being placed in harm's way in any situation without men and women

and their families knowing that they did this because the security of our great Republic was threatened.

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Each time I feel heavily and scream out that we should have a draft instead of an All Volunteer Army, I know that it appears as though I am putting a burden on so many people who don't necessarily want to belong to the military. But serving our great country is a privilege, and all people should share if indeed there is a threat to our national security. If there isn't a threat to our national security, there is no reason in the world morally or legally that our troops should be there.

So putting up this wall, to me, is symbolic because they can call it the forgotten war. And, believe it or not, after seeing how some of our Vietnam veterans were treated when they came home, you can almost thank God that no one missed you. They didn't know where you were, or didn't care about the Korean war, because politics got in the way of how we treated those people who fought, got wounded, and died in Vietnam.

Of course, since then, we have had dozens of times where we have heard Members of Congress say that we have to have more boots on the ground, that we can't win a war by air, that we have to be there, we have to intervene, and we have to show how strong America is. And they know in their hearts that no one from their families, their communities, or even anyone they know will be included in that number of Americans that they are asking to go.

So I think when you put the names of people who have actually lost their lives, which means destroyed the lives of so many other people who loved them, when you think of those who got wounded, they should at least be able to say what they did for their families, community, and their country. They shouldn't just be used as pawns on the board to fulfill the political commitments of a party or a cause that doesn't involve the security of the United States. Maybe, just maybe, when people come to sightsee, and they see the names of people that they don't know, it could remind them that these are not just human beings; these are Americans who had the same dreams as they did, except they made a sacrifice.

So let me laud and thank the Members of Congress that have caused the casualties of the forgotten war not to be forgotten. Let us try to do something about those that follow those of us that were in combat in Korea and explain how wrong we were in Vietnam and we should have said, never, never, never again.

Let us look at the ways we have just sent troops who, like me, saw the flag go up and heard the President say that we have to go, and we never asked, and we couldn't legitimately ask why, but

we did. Let us preserve the American lives for those causes that at least if they don't come back home or they don't come back normal, that we can say that it was protecting the flag, it was protecting our country, and it was protecting our national security.

Right now, with all the fears we have that are going on in the Middle East, I am not certain whether or not that will impact our great country, but I am prepared to listen to those who know better than I. And if, indeed, there is a threat to our country, then everyone should be prepared to be called, even by lottery, because it is not just for the wealthy and the educated to be excluded. It shouldn't be just those who need a job that get the opportunity to defend our country. But every time you say "troops on the ground," "boots on the ground," "lives on the ground," I truly think that just putting their names on a memorial wall should mean something for generations that follow.

I hope and pray that we don't have names that go on boards. But if there is a reminder of how many people died over the years to keep this country great, let us be in the position as a Congress to say that we know specifically why they died and we gave them all the support that they needed to make the sacrifice.

Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that we remember those who died in the war and those who served in the war because their achievement remains alive today. It is personified in a free and prosperous Republic of Korea that has been a beacon of hope to the oppressed people throughout the Asian Continent and a steady counterbalance to the malignant presence of the North Korean dictatorship.

From the dais in this Chamber, Douglas MacArthur paid tribute to these brave souls with these words. He said: "I have just left your fighting sons in Korea. They have met all tests there, and I can report to you without reservation that they are splendid in every way . . . Those gallant men will remain often in my thoughts and in my prayers always."

And so should they with us. This bill assures that this will not be a forgotten war, and our honored dead will not be forgotten by name.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1475, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

INDIAN TRUST ASSET REFORM ACT

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 812) to provide for Indian trust asset management reform, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 812

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Indian Trust Asset Reform Act”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—RECOGNITION OF TRUST RESPONSIBILITY

Sec. 101. Findings.

Sec. 102. Reaffirmation of policy.

TITLE II—INDIAN TRUST ASSET MANAGEMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Sec. 201. Short title.

Sec. 202. Definitions.

Sec. 203. Establishment of demonstration project; selection of participating Indian Tribes.

Sec. 204. Indian trust asset management plan.

Sec. 205. Forest land management and surface leasing activities.

Sec. 206. Effect of title.

TITLE III—IMPROVING EFFICIENCY AND STREAMLINING PROCESSES

Sec. 301. Purpose.

Sec. 302. Definitions.

Sec. 303. Under Secretary for Indian Affairs.

Sec. 304. Office of Special Trustee for American Indians.

Sec. 305. Appraisals and valuations.

Sec. 306. Cost savings.

TITLE I—RECOGNITION OF TRUST RESPONSIBILITY

SEC. 101. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) there exists a unique relationship between the Government of the United States and the governments of Indian tribes;

(2) there exists a unique Federal responsibility to Indians;

(3) through treaties, statutes, and historical relations with Indian tribes, the United States has undertaken a unique trust responsibility to protect and support Indian tribes and Indians;

(4) the fiduciary responsibilities of the United States to Indians also are founded in part on specific commitments made through written treaties and agreements securing peace, in exchange for which Indians have surrendered claims to vast tracts of land, which provided legal consideration for permanent, ongoing performance of Federal trust duties; and

(5) the foregoing historic Federal-tribal relations and understandings have benefitted the people of the United States as a whole for centuries and have established enduring

and enforceable Federal obligations to which the national honor has been committed.

SEC. 102. REAFFIRMATION OF POLICY.

Pursuant to the constitutionally vested authority of Congress over Indian affairs, Congress reaffirms that the responsibility of the United States to Indian tribes includes a duty to promote tribal self-determination regarding governmental authority and economic development.

TITLE II—INDIAN TRUST ASSET MANAGEMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Indian Trust Asset Management Demonstration Project Act of 2016”.

SEC. 202. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) **INDIAN TRIBE.**—The term “Indian tribe” has the meaning given the term in the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

(2) **PROJECT.**—The term “Project” means the Indian trust asset management demonstration project established under section 203(a).

(3) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 203. ESTABLISHMENT OF DEMONSTRATION PROJECT; SELECTION OF PARTICIPATING INDIAN TRIBES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall establish and carry out an Indian trust asset management demonstration project, in accordance with this title.

(b) **SELECTION OF PARTICIPATING INDIAN TRIBES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—An Indian tribe shall be eligible to participate in the project if—

(A) the Indian tribe submits to the Secretary an application under subsection (c); and

(B) the Secretary approves the application of the Indian tribe.

(2) **NOTICE.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall provide a written notice to each Indian tribe approved to participate in the project.

(B) **CONTENTS.**—A notice under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) a statement that the application of the Indian tribe has been approved by the Secretary; and

(ii) a requirement that the Indian tribe shall submit to the Secretary a proposed Indian trust asset management plan in accordance with section 204.

(c) **APPLICATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—To be eligible to participate in the project, an Indian tribe shall submit to the Secretary a written application in accordance with paragraph (2).

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—The Secretary shall consider an application under this subsection only if the application—

(A) includes a copy of a resolution or other appropriate action by the governing body of the Indian tribe, as determined by the Secretary, in support of or authorizing the application;

(B) is received by the Secretary after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(C) states that the Indian tribe is requesting to participate in the project.

(d) **DURATION.**—The project—

(1) shall remain in effect for a period of 10 years after the date of enactment of this Act; but

(2) may be extended at the discretion of the Secretary.

SEC. 204. INDIAN TRUST ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN.

(a) **PROPOSED PLAN.**—

(1) **SUBMISSION.**—After the date on which an Indian tribe receives a notice from the Secretary under section 203(b)(2), the Indian tribe shall submit to the Secretary a proposed Indian trust asset management plan in accordance with paragraph (2).

(2) **CONTENTS.**—A proposed Indian trust asset management plan shall include provisions that—

(A) identify the trust assets that will be subject to the plan;

(B) establish trust asset management objectives and priorities for Indian trust assets that are located within the reservation, or otherwise subject to the jurisdiction, of the Indian tribe;

(C) allocate trust asset management funding that is available for the Indian trust assets subject to the plan in order to meet the trust asset management objectives and priorities;

(D) if the Indian tribe has contracted or compacted functions or activities under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.) relating to the management of trust assets—

(i) identify the functions or activities that are being or will be performed by the Indian tribe under the contracts, compacts, or other agreements under that Act, which may include any of the surface leasing or forest land management activities authorized by the proposed plan pursuant to section 205(b); and

(ii) describe the practices and procedures that the Indian tribe will follow;

(E) establish procedures for nonbinding mediation or resolution of any dispute between the Indian tribe and the United States relating to the trust asset management plan;

(F) include a process for the Indian tribe and the Federal agencies affected by the trust asset management plan to conduct evaluations to ensure that trust assets are being managed in accordance with the plan; and

(G) identify any Federal regulations that will be superseded by the plan.

(3) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND INFORMATION.**—On receipt of a written request from an Indian tribe, the Secretary shall provide to the Indian tribe any technical assistance and information, including budgetary information, that the Indian tribe determines to be necessary for preparation of a proposed plan.

(b) **APPROVAL AND DISAPPROVAL OF PROPOSED PLANS.**—

(1) **APPROVAL.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 120 days after the date on which an Indian tribe submits a proposed Indian trust asset management plan under subsection (a), the Secretary shall approve or disapprove the proposed plan.

(B) **REQUIREMENTS FOR DISAPPROVAL.**—The Secretary shall approve a proposed plan unless the Secretary determines that—

(i) the proposed plan fails to address a requirement under subsection (a)(2);

(ii) the proposed plan includes 1 or more provisions that are inconsistent with subsection (c); or

(iii) the cost of implementing the proposed plan exceeds the amount of funding available for the management of trust assets that would be subject to the proposed plan.

(2) **ACTION ON DISAPPROVAL.**—

(A) **NOTICE.**—If the Secretary disapproves a proposed plan under paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary shall provide to the Indian tribe a written notice of the disapproval, including any reason why the proposed plan was disapproved.

(B) ACTION BY TRIBES.—If a proposed plan is disapproved under paragraph (1)(B), the Indian tribe may resubmit an amended proposed plan by not later than 90 days after the date on which the Indian tribe receives the notice under subparagraph (A).

(3) FAILURE TO APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE.—If the Secretary fails to approve or disapprove a proposed plan in accordance with paragraph (1), the plan shall be considered to be approved.

(4) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—An Indian tribe may seek judicial review of a determination of the Secretary under this subsection in accordance with subchapter II of chapter 5, and chapter 7, of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Administrative Procedure Act”), if—

(A) the Secretary disapproves the proposed plan of the Indian tribe under paragraph (1); and

(B) the Indian tribe has exhausted all other administrative remedies available to the Indian tribe.

(c) APPLICABLE LAWS.—Subject to section 205, an Indian trust asset management plan, and any activity carried out under the plan, shall not be approved unless the proposed plan is consistent with any treaties, statutes, and Executive orders that are applicable to the trust assets, or the management of the trust assets, identified in the plan.

(d) TERMINATION OF PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An Indian tribe may terminate an Indian trust asset management plan on any date after the date on which a proposed Indian trust asset management plan is approved by providing to the Secretary—

(A) a notice of the intent of the Indian tribe to terminate the plan; and

(B) a resolution of the governing body of the Indian tribe authorizing the termination of the plan.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—A termination of an Indian trust asset management plan under paragraph (1) takes effect on October 1 of the first fiscal year following the date on which a notice is provided to the Secretary under paragraph (1)(A).

SEC. 205. FOREST LAND MANAGEMENT AND SURFACE LEASING ACTIVITIES.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) FOREST LAND MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY.—The term “forest land management activity” means any activity described in section 304(4) of the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act (25 U.S.C. 3103(4)).

(2) INTERESTED PARTY.—The term “interested party” means an Indian or non-Indian individual, entity, or government the interests of which could be adversely affected by a tribal trust land leasing decision made by an applicable Indian tribe.

(3) SURFACE LEASING TRANSACTION.—The term “surface leasing transaction” means a residential, business, agricultural, or wind or solar resource lease of land the title to which is held—

(A) in trust by the United States for the benefit of an Indian tribe; or

(B) in fee by an Indian tribe, subject to restrictions against alienation under Federal law.

(b) APPROVAL BY SECRETARY.—The Secretary may approve an Indian trust asset management plan that includes a provision authorizing the Indian tribe to enter into, approve, and carry out a surface leasing transaction or forest land management activity without approval of the Secretary, regardless of whether the surface leasing transaction or forest land management activity would require such an approval under

otherwise applicable law (including regulations), if—

(1) the resolution or other action of the governing body of the Indian tribe referred to in section 203(c)(2)(A) expressly authorizes the inclusion of the provision in the Indian trust asset management plan; and

(2) the Indian tribe has adopted regulations expressly incorporated by reference into the Indian trust asset management plan that—

(A) with respect to a surface leasing transaction—

(i) have been approved by the Secretary pursuant to subsection (h)(4) of the first section of the Act of August 9, 1955 (25 U.S.C. 415(h)(4)); or

(ii) have not yet been approved by the Secretary in accordance with clause (i), but that the Secretary determines at or prior to the time of approval under this paragraph meet the requirements of subsection (h)(3) of the first section of that Act (25 U.S.C. 415(h)(3)); or

(B) with respect to forest land management activities, the Secretary determines—

(i) are consistent with the regulations of the Secretary adopted under the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act (25 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.); and

(ii) provide for an environmental review process that includes—

(I) the identification and evaluation of any significant effects of the proposed action on the environment; and

(II) a process consistent with the regulations referred to in clause (i) for ensuring that—

(aa) the public is informed of, and has a reasonable opportunity to comment on, any significant environmental impacts of the proposed forest land management activity identified by the Indian tribe; and

(bb) the Indian tribe provides responses to relevant and substantive public comments on any such impacts before the Indian tribe approves the forest land management activity.

(c) TYPES OF TRANSACTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—At the discretion of the Indian tribe, an Indian trust asset management plan may authorize the Indian tribe to carry out a surface leasing transaction, a forest land management activity, or both.

(2) SELECTION OF SPECIFIC TRANSACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES.—At the discretion of the Indian tribe, the Indian tribe may include in the integrated resource management plan any 1 or more of the transactions and activities authorized to be included in the plan under subsection (b).

(d) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may provide technical assistance, on request of an Indian tribe, for development of a regulatory environmental review process required under subsection (b)(2)(B)(ii).

(2) INDIAN SELF-DETERMINATION AND EDUCATION ASSISTANCE ACT.—The technical assistance to be provided by the Secretary pursuant to paragraph (1) may be made available through contracts, grants, or agreements entered into in accordance with, and made available to entities eligible for, contracts, grants, or agreements under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.).

(e) FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.—Notwithstanding subsection (b), if an Indian tribe carries out a project or activity funded by a Federal agency, the Indian tribe shall have the authority to rely on the environmental review process of the applicable Federal agency, rather than any tribal environmental review process under this section.

(f) DOCUMENTATION.—If an Indian tribe executes a surface leasing transaction or forest land management activity, pursuant to tribal regulations under subsection (b)(2), the Indian tribe shall provide to the Secretary

(1) a copy of the surface leasing transaction or forest land management activity documents, including any amendments to, or renewals of, the applicable transaction; and

(2) in the case of tribal regulations, a surface leasing transaction, or forest land management activities that allow payments to be made directly to the Indian tribe, documentation of the payments that is sufficient to enable the Secretary to discharge the trust responsibility of the United States under subsection (g).

(g) TRUST RESPONSIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The United States shall not be liable for losses sustained—

(A) by an Indian tribe as a result of the execution of any forest land management activity pursuant to tribal regulations under subsection (b); or

(B) by any party to a lease executed pursuant to tribal regulations under subsection (b).

(2) AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY.—Pursuant to the authority of the Secretary to fulfill the trust obligation of the United States to Indian tribes under Federal law (including regulations), the Secretary may, on reasonable notice from the applicable Indian tribe and at the discretion of the Secretary, enforce the provisions of, or cancel, any lease executed by the Indian tribe under this section.

(h) COMPLIANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An interested party, after exhausting any applicable tribal remedies, may submit to the Secretary a petition, at such time and in such form as the Secretary determines to be appropriate, to review the compliance of an applicable Indian tribe with any tribal regulations approved by the Secretary under this subsection.

(2) VIOLATIONS.—If the Secretary determines under paragraph (1) that a violation of tribal regulations has occurred, the Secretary may take any action the Secretary determines to be necessary to remedy the violation, including rescinding the approval of the tribal regulations and reassuming responsibility for the approval of leases of tribal trust land.

(3) DOCUMENTATION.—If the Secretary determines under paragraph (1) that a violation of tribal regulations has occurred and a remedy is necessary, the Secretary shall—

(A) make a written determination with respect to the regulations that have been violated;

(B) provide to the applicable Indian tribe a written notice of the alleged violation, together with the written determination; and

(C) prior to the exercise of any remedy, the rescission of the approval of the regulation involved, or the reassumption of the trust asset transaction approval responsibilities, provide to the applicable Indian tribe—

(i) a hearing on the record; and

(ii) a reasonable opportunity to cure the alleged violation.

SEC. 206. EFFECT OF TITLE.

(a) LIABILITY.—Subject to section 205 and this section, nothing in this title or an Indian trust asset management plan approved under section 204 shall independently diminish, increase, create, or otherwise affect the liability of the United States or an Indian tribe participating in the project for any loss resulting from the management of an Indian trust asset under an Indian trust asset management plan.

(b) DEVIATION FROM STANDARD PRACTICES.—The United States shall not be liable

to any party (including any Indian tribe) for any term of, or any loss resulting from the terms of, an Indian trust asset management plan that provides for management of a trust asset at a less-stringent standard than the Secretary would otherwise require or adhere to in absence of an Indian trust asset management plan.

(c) **EFFECT OF TERMINATION OF PLAN.**—Subsection (b) applies to losses resulting from a transaction or activity described in that subsection even if the Indian trust asset management plan is terminated under section 204(d) or rescinded under section 205(h).

(d) **EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in sections 204 and 205 and subsection (e), nothing in this title amends or otherwise affects the application of any treaty, statute, regulation, or Executive order that is applicable to Indian trust assets or the management or administration of Indian trust assets.

(2) **INDIAN SELF-DETERMINATION ACT.**—Nothing in this title limits or otherwise affects the authority of an Indian tribe, including an Indian tribe participating in the project, to enter into and carry out a contract, compact, or other agreement under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.) (including regulations).

(e) **SEPARATE APPROVAL.**—An Indian tribe may submit to the Secretary tribal regulations described in section 205(b) governing forest land management activities for review and approval under this title if the Indian tribe does not submit or intend to submit an Indian trust asset management plan.

(f) **TRUST RESPONSIBILITY.**—Nothing in this title enhances, diminishes, or otherwise affects the trust responsibility of the United States to Indian tribes or individual Indians.

TITLE III—IMPROVING EFFICIENCY AND STREAMLINING PROCESSES

SEC. 301. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this title is to ensure a more efficient and streamlined administration of duties of the Secretary of the Interior with respect to providing services and programs to Indians and Indian tribes, including the management of Indian trust resources.

SEC. 302. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) **BIA.**—The term “BIA” means the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

(2) **DEPARTMENT.**—The term “Department” means the Department of the Interior.

(3) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(4) **UNDER SECRETARY.**—The term “Under Secretary” means the Under Secretary for Indian Affairs established under section 303(a).

SEC. 303. UNDER SECRETARY FOR INDIAN AFFAIRS.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF POSITION.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may establish in the Department the position of Under Secretary for Indian Affairs, who shall report directly to the Secretary.

(b) **APPOINTMENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Under Secretary shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(2) **EXCEPTION.**—The individual serving as the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs on the date of enactment of this Act may assume the position of Under Secretary without appointment under paragraph (1), if—

(A) that individual was appointed as Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs by the

President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate; and

(B) not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary approves the assumption.

(c) **DUTIES.**—In addition to any other duties directed by the Secretary, the Under Secretary shall—

(1) coordinate with the Special Trustee for American Indians to ensure an orderly transition of the functions of the Special Trustee to one or more appropriate agencies, offices, or bureaus within the Department, as determined by the Secretary;

(2) to the maximum extent practicable, supervise and coordinate activities and policies of the BIA with activities and policies of—

(A) the Bureau of Reclamation;

(B) the Bureau of Land Management;

(C) the Office of Natural Resources Revenue;

(D) the National Park Service; and

(E) the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and

(3) provide for regular consultation with Indians and Indian tribes that own interests in trust resources and trust fund accounts.

(d) **PERSONNEL PROVISIONS.**—

(1) **APPOINTMENTS.**—The Under Secretary may appoint and fix the compensation of such officers and employees as the Under Secretary determines to be necessary to carry out any function transferred under this section.

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—Except as otherwise provided by law—

(A) any officer or employee described in paragraph (1) shall be appointed in accordance with the civil service laws;

(B) the compensation of such an officer or employee shall be fixed in accordance with title 5, United States Code; and

(C) in appointing or otherwise hiring any employee, the Under Secretary shall give preference to Indians in accordance with section 12 of the Act of June 18, 1934 (25 U.S.C. 472).

SEC. 304. OFFICE OF SPECIAL TRUSTEE FOR AMERICAN INDIANS.

(a) **INFORMATION TO CONGRESS.**—Notwithstanding sections 302 and 303 of the American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 4042 and 4043), not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prepare and, after consultation with Indian tribes and appropriate Indian organizations, submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate, and the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate—

(1) an identification of all functions, other than the collection, management, and investment of Indian trust funds, that the Office of the Special Trustee performs independently or in concert with the BIA or other Federal agencies, specifically those functions that affect or relate to management of nonmonetary trust resources;

(2) a description of any functions of the Office of the Special Trustee that will be transitioned to other bureaus or agencies within the Department prior to the termination date of the Office, as described in paragraph (3), together with the timeframes for those transfers; and

(3) a transition plan and timetable for the termination of the Office of the Special Trustee, to occur not later than 2 years after the date of submission, unless the Secretary determines that an orderly transition cannot be accomplished within 2 years, in which case the Secretary shall include—

(A) a statement of all reasons why the transition cannot be effected within that time; and

(B) an alternative date for completing the transition.

(b) **FIDUCIARY TRUST OFFICERS.**—Subject to applicable law and regulations, the Secretary, at the request of an Indian tribe or a consortium of Indian tribes, shall include fiduciary trust officers in a contract, compact, or other agreement under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.).

(c) **EFFECT OF SECTION.**—Nothing in this section or the submission required by this section—

(1) shall cause the Office of the Special Trustee to terminate; or

(2) affect the application of sections 302 and 303 of the American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 4042 and 4043).

SEC. 305. APPRAISALS AND VALUATIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding section 304, not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with Indian tribes and tribal organizations, shall ensure that appraisals and valuations of Indian trust property are administered by a single bureau, agency, or other administrative entity within the Department.

(b) **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish and publish in the Federal Register minimum qualifications for individuals to prepare appraisals and valuations of Indian trust property.

(c) **SECRETARIAL APPROVAL.**—In any case in which an Indian tribe or Indian beneficiary submits to the Secretary an appraisal or valuation that satisfies the minimum qualifications described in subsection (b), and that submission acknowledges the intent of the Indian tribe or beneficiary to have the appraisal or valuation considered under this section, the appraisal or valuation—

(1) shall not require any additional review or approval by the Secretary; and

(2) shall be considered to be final for purposes of effectuating the transaction for which the appraisal or valuation is required.

SEC. 306. COST SAVINGS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—For any program, function, service, or activity (or any portion of a program, function, service, or activity) of the Office of the Special Trustee that will not be operated or carried out as a result of a transfer of functions and personnel following enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(1) identify the amounts that the Secretary would otherwise have expended to operate or carry out each program, function, service, and activity (or portion of a program, function, service, or activity); and

(2) provide to the tribal representatives of the Tribal-Interior Budget Council or the representative of any other appropriate entity that advises the Secretary on Indian program budget or funding issues a list that describes—

(A) the programs, functions, services, and activities (or any portion of a program, function, service, or activity) identified under paragraph (1); and

(B) the amounts associated with each program, function, service, and activity (or portion of a program, function, service, or activity).

(b) **TRIBAL RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of receipt of a list under subsection (a)(2), the tribal representatives of the Tribal-Interior Budget Council

and the representatives of any other appropriate entities that advise the Secretary on Indian program budget or funding issues may provide recommendations regarding how any amounts or cost savings should be reallocated, incorporated into future budget requests, or appropriated to—

- (1) the Secretary;
- (2) the Office of Management and Budget;
- (3) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives;
- (4) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives;
- (5) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and
- (6) the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 812, which is sponsored by our respected colleague from Idaho, Congressman SIMPSON. This measure reforms tribal sovereignty made to America's Indian nations.

Specifically, this bill provides new authority to tribal governments to manage and develop their trust assets according to their own best judgment and the wishes of their own constituencies rather than an historically inept and often clueless bureaucracy in Washington. These nations are either sovereign or they are not, and the essence of sovereignty is self-determination.

Under this act, participating tribes will have the option of entering into disagreements with the Department of the Interior to take over management of the resources within their own jurisdictions. This bill also builds upon other congressional initiatives like the HEARTH Act of 2012, which deferred to a tribe's own judgment about what is in the best interests for their own lands.

This bill has strong bipartisan support both here in the House as well as the U.S. Senate. Additionally, the bill is supported by the National Congress of American Indians, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Intertribal Timber Council, and the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, which include 57 tribal governments in Oregon, Idaho, Washington, southeast Alaska, northern California, and Montana.

I urge passage of the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 812 will take an important step in fulfilling our fiduciary responsibility to Indian tribes by modernizing the Indian trust asset management system.

The Indian Trust Asset Reform Act will streamline the bureaucratic process that has often been a hindrance to successful trust management, while also rightfully giving tribes the options to manage their own assets.

Through the trust asset demonstration project created in the bill, tribes can, at their own election, develop asset management plans with the Secretary of the Interior in order to better manage and develop their lands and natural resources.

As has been shown time and time again, tribal governments are the ones best suited to make decisions for their own people and their own communities.

Additionally, while the Office of the Special Trustee, or OST, has implemented positive reforms since its creation in 1994, the time has come to transition to a more modern, efficient, and accountable system for the management of Indian trust resources.

To that end, H.R. 812 would consolidate the functions of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the OST into one office within the Department of the Interior, headed by a new undersecretary of Indian Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, we fully support H.R. 812, and I urge its swift adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON), the author of this measure and an indefatigable fighter for the Indian nations of our country.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the full committee chairman, Mr. BISHOP; the ranking member, Mr. GRIJALVA; the subcommittee chairman, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, and the ranking member, Ms. TSONGAS, for considering this bill.

The relationship between Native Americans and the United States Government is complicated, not well understood, and filled with inconsistencies. Today Indian Country faces a number of serious challenges, ranging from addressing abject poverty to trying to promote economic development in the face of inefficient bureaucracy.

The Federal Government has a trust responsibility to meet its commitments to Indian Country. Yet in many cases, Federal agencies hinder, rather than help, tribes provide for their members. This is illustrated by the settlement of the Cobell litigation and the scores of tribal trust lawsuits over the past few years, which have cost taxpayers more than \$5.5 billion.

A number of tribes, including many in the Northwest, have been working to address some of the challenges that they face in managing tribal trust assets. Many tribes are capable of effectively and efficiently managing their own assets—and often are better equipped to do so than the agencies currently responsible for that management. Yet, in order to have a say in how these assets are managed, they must swim upstream against a muddled Federal bureaucracy.

This is why I introduced H.R. 812, the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act. This legislation had its origins with the tribes themselves, which is where Congress should always start when it takes up issues affecting Indian Country. H.R. 812 was developed and has been endorsed by the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, the National Congress of American Indians, the United South & Eastern Tribes, the Intertribal Timber Council, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

H.R. 812 will do several things to modernize the Federal Government's role in managing Indian trust property. First, it would establish a voluntary demonstration project to give Indian tribes more control over the management of their trust assets. This will provide Indian tribes with new flexibility to direct management of these assets under tribal standards rather than Federal standards that are often outdated and inefficient.

As part of the negotiated demonstration project, Indian tribes would be able to conduct forest management activities on their own tribal lands through a process similar to the HEARTH Act of 2012, which the administration has strongly supported and has proven successful in promoting tribal self-determination and self-governance.

H.R. 812 would also authorize the Indian tribes and Indian beneficiaries, on a voluntary basis, to obtain appraisals of their trust property without having to wait for the Department of the Interior to approve them. This new authority would provide relief to all in Indian Country who currently endure lengthy delays in selling or leasing their trust land while they wait for the Department to review and approve appraisals.

Finally, the bill would direct the Secretary of the Interior to consult with Indian Country and provide certain information to Congress about the Office of the Special Trustee. OST was originally intended as a temporary entity to oversee certain financial reforms of Indian trust funds at the Department of the Interior. More than 20 years later, OST has significant involvement in the day-to-day transactions. Tribes have long complained about the miscommunications, delays, and inefficiencies that result from trying to navigate the processes of both OST and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The information the bill requires the Secretary to provide will assist Congress in determining the future of OST.

It is worth noting that this bill has undergone a number of changes since introduction. The bill has been revised to incorporate input not only from the committees of jurisdiction in both Chambers, but also from the Department of the Interior, the Department of Justice, tribal organizations, and individual Indian tribes.

The Congressional Budget Office has found that H.R. 812 would not affect the Federal Government's overall costs.

I would also point out that H.R. 812 is a voluntary program intended to provide tribes with new flexibility to promote economic development. Where tribes are not willing or able to take on these responsibilities, they will not have to.

H.R. 812 is just one aspect in a larger conversation on improving the management of tribal trust assets. If enacted into law, this bill would be an important step in providing tribes with the autonomy they need to manage their assets and spur economic growth in their communities.

I want to thank Chairman MCCLINTOCK and his committee, and Chairmen BISHOP and YOUNG and their staffs for their work on this bill. They have held two hearings and graciously taken input from tribes and the administration, which is why we are here today with this legislation.

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Finally, I want to thank the tribes that have offered their expertise in the crafting of this bill. Just like the intentions of the underlying bill, Indian Country deserves to be in the driver's seat when making decisions about their own future.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK).

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 812, the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act, and I commend it to you for your positive consideration.

When you stop and think about it, this word "trust" actually has two pretty distinct meanings. It can be the belief that someone or something is honest, trustworthy, the belief that you can take them at their word.

On the other hand, "trust" can also be a financial or a property arrangement. A trust is legally held or managed by someone else. It could be for your kids or your grandkids or any beneficiary.

But the irony is a trust in the property management sense is that that often arises out of a lack of trust, as in honesty, when it comes to the person or source receiving the money. It is not a check handed over. It is a financial

arrangement with conditions or requirements.

When it comes to Indian Country, they have plenty of historical reasons to lack trust when it comes to the Federal Government; but, the Federal Government does not have reasons to not trust Indian Country's ability to manage their own resources, and natural resources are what have always been the most important asset in Indian Country.

The Indian Trust Asset Reform Act is based on the simple notion that Indian Country prospers when tribes have the opportunity to make their own decisions and chart their own paths. This is what self-determination looks like. This is what sovereignty looks like.

Many tribes, particularly those in my home State of Washington, are among the largest employers and natural resource managers in the entire region. Tribes in the Pacific Northwest have an abundance of trust resources on their land, from timber to rangeland, to fishery resources.

These tribes count on the ability to make decisions quickly to adjust to changing circumstances and to maintain vibrant communities for their members and the region as a whole.

H.R. 812 advances this idea by giving tribes new authority to propose and enter into management plans with the Department of Interior, plans that put the tribes in the driver's seat.

H.R. 812 also returns more control to tribal members, who are often frustrated by, as has been noted earlier, years-long delays that they must go through in obtaining Federal approval to sell or lease or otherwise manage their trust lands.

H.R. 812 would give individuals and tribes a new option to complete these transactions without having to wait for the Department of Interior to go through all that lengthy review and approval process.

Accordingly, it will save time, it will save money, but, most importantly, it will allow the tribes to make their own decisions about how to use their historic lands.

When we find commonsense fixes like this, we restore some of the trust, in the first meaning of the word, and build upon the trust that is already there.

Twenty-seven years ago, if I may make a personal note, I had the privilege to join the office of Governor Booth Gardner in a role that would quickly become chief of staff. Fairly shortly, we signed off on a document known as the Centennial Accord. My good friend and colleague from Washington State will recall it well.

Basically, it was the first memorialization in the history of the United States that recognized the government-to-government relationship between the tribes and the State of Washington.

I have said regularly since, in an intermittent public service career extending back 40-some years, I have no higher point of pride than the small role I played in that, lo, those many years ago.

Accordingly, I would like to thank Congressman SIMPSON very much for his leadership on this bill and for allowing me the privilege to be the Democratic lead cosponsor.

I would like to add my expression of gratitude to Chairman MCCLINTOCK and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) as well as our ranking member, all those involved.

I would like to thank the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians and its Trust Reform Committee. Let it not go unsaid that there was a decade of work leading up to today, a decade of work.

"Sovereignty" means sovereignty. "Government-to-government" means just exactly that. The fact of the matter is we have a moral and a legal and sometimes a treaty obligation to fulfill that government-to-government relationship. It is the right thing to do.

It is in that spirit that I submit H.R. 812 for your favorable consideration.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE), my colleague on the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, last summer more than 400,000 acres of tribal land in the Northwest burned with the Colville and the Yakama Tribes, which are in my district, enduring the worst fire season in a generation.

The Colville Indian Reservation alone saw 250,000 acres burned, consumed, by that blaze, much of which consisted of commercial timber.

The Indian Trust Asset Reform Act, H.R. 812, will authorize Indian tribes on a voluntary basis to carry out forest management activities on their own tribal lands without requiring review and approval by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. It will allow the Colville, the Yakama, and other tribes across the West to move salvage log sales more quickly than is possible under the current BIA process.

Providing tribes who maintain their timber resources with the authority to make these management decisions will expedite on-the-ground activity and open new doors to attract investment. In fact, I would argue that we should also give more control to States and localities in addition to these tribes.

The new authority derived in H.R. 812 will provide additional benefits to tribes with timber resources. The Colville Tribe has been attempting to reopen a sawmill in Omak, Washington, also in my district, since 2009.

One of the primary impediments to reopening has been the BIA's unwillingness to approve longer term agreements between the tribe and third-

party investors. This new authority in this bill will allow tribes to enter into these type of agreements on their own, resulting in the creation of additional jobs as well as economic activity.

Last September, while catastrophic wildfires continued to burn across central Washington, Secretary Jewell visited the Colville Reservation and saw the devastation firsthand. Mr. Speaker, before the next fire season begins, significant resources will be needed to replant these forests as well as rehabilitate these landscapes.

The administration has not done enough to provide these tribes with the resources they need. We must correct that. We must make this change in order to ensure that these forests can continue to be a viable and productive resource for the tribes and communities in my district, my State, and the rest of the country.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 812, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

KENNESAW MOUNTAIN NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3371) to adjust the boundary of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park to include the Wallis House and Harriston Hill, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3371

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park Boundary Adjustment Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park was authorized as a unit of the National Park System on June 26, 1935. Prior to 1935, parts of the park had been acquired and protected by Civil War veterans and the War Department.

(2) Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park protects Kennesaw Mountain and Kolb's Farm, which are battle sites along the route of General Sherman's 1864 campaign to take Atlanta.

(3) Most of the park protects Confederate positions and strategy. The Wallis House is

one of the few original structures remaining from the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain associated with Union positions and strategy.

(4) The Wallis House is strategically located next to a Union signal station at Harriston Hill.

SEC. 3. BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT; LAND ACQUISITION; ADMINISTRATION.

(a) BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.—The boundary of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park is modified to include the approximately 8 acres identified as “Wallis House and Harriston Hill”, and generally depicted on the map titled “Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, Proposed Boundary Adjustment”, numbered 325/80,020, and dated February 2010.

(b) MAP.—The map referred to in subsection (a) shall be on file and available for inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

(c) LAND ACQUISITION.—The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to acquire, from willing owners only, land or interests in land described in subsection (a) by donation or exchange.

(d) ADMINISTRATION OF ACQUIRED LANDS.—The Secretary of the Interior shall administer land and interests in land acquired under this section as part of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

(e) WRITTEN CONSENT OF OWNER.—No non-Federal property may be included in the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park without the written consent of the owner. This provision shall apply only to those portions of the Park added under subsection (a).

(f) NO USE OF CONDEMNATION.—The Secretary of the Interior may not acquire by condemnation any land or interests in land under this Act or for the purposes of this Act.

(g) NO BUFFER ZONE CREATED.—Nothing in this Act, the establishment of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, or the management plan for the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park shall be construed to create buffer zones outside of the Park. That activities or uses can be seen, heard, or detected from areas within the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park shall not preclude, limit, control, regulate or determine the conduct or management of activities or uses outside the Park.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 3371, introduced by our colleague BARRY LOUDERMILK, expands the boundary of the Kennesaw National Battlefield Park.

It also authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to acquire approximately 8 acres of land only by donation or exchange from willing sellers. The expanded area includes the historic Wallis House and Harriston Hill.

Wallis House is one of the few remaining structures associated with the Kennesaw Mountain Civil War battle, while Harriston Hill was strategically significant as the Union signal station.

The Battle of Kennesaw Mountain in June of 1864 was critical to the Union campaign to split the Confederacy, and although it was a tactical victory for the Confederate, it opened the way for the Union's strategic victory of taking Atlanta.

The sacrifices of more than 3,000 Union troops on Kennesaw Mountain made possible Sherman's famous telegram to Lincoln 3 months later that “Atlanta is ours, and fairly won.”

These battlefields remind succeeding generations of Americans of the price paid by so many for the preservation of our Constitution and the liberty it protects and the enormous responsibility that each of us has to maintain and defend that same Constitution today.

I urge passage of the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill adjusts the boundary of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park in Georgia to include two historically significant structures, the Wallace House and Kolb's Farm, and to assist in the preservation of the story of the Atlanta Campaign.

Between June 19 and July 2, 1864, a series of battles occurred here between Union and Confederate forces. The loss of Kennesaw Mountain removed one of the last major geographic obstacles protecting Atlanta, which eventually fell to the Union Army in September of 1864.

The bill will allow for the donation of approximately 8 acres to Kennesaw National Battlefield Park, a unit of the National Park Service.

I want to thank my colleague from Georgia, Representative BARRY LOUDERMILK, for continuing to support the preservation of the history of this great country.

The Civil War was a significant event in the history of this country and remains relevant as we grapple with civil rights discussions today.

The preservation of these sites reinforces Congress' dedication to equality and enables the National Park Service to interpret and tell our national story.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK), the author of this measure.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 3371, a bill that will add valuable historical property to the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park.

This park, which is located in Georgia's 11th Congressional District, is a site of significant battles that took place during America's bloodiest conflict, the Civil War.

Our Nation has long recognized the importance of preserving historical sites, especially those battlefields where Americans fought and died for freedom. Sites such as Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park allow us to look back in time and get a glimpse of events that help shaped our Nation.

It is extremely important that we understand our history; otherwise, we will be destined to repeat the mistakes of the past.

A recent study of American history education revealed that, while 98 percent of college students could identify that Snoop Doggy Dogg was a rapper, only 23 percent of college seniors could identify that James Madison was the father of the Constitution.

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Mr. Speaker, it is now more important than ever that the generations following us have access to these historic sites and to the educational opportunities they provide, or we risk losing touch with our history. It is extremely important to restore the comprehensive study of American history in our schools. However, it is equally important to preserve the places at which significant events in our history took place.

This bill that I have sponsored will simply allow Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park to acquire two pieces of property that will add to the historic and educational value of this battlefield.

One of the properties this bill will preserve is a home that was built in 1853 by Mr. Josiah Wallis. Mr. Wallis built this home for his family, but it was eventually used as a hospital by the Confederate Army during the Civil War.

In 1864, the Wallis House fell into the hands of General William Sherman of the Union Army during his campaign to take Atlanta. The house served as Sherman's headquarters during the Battle of Kolb's Farm, which was a resounding victory for the Union Army; but the victory was not without cost. When the smoke cleared, over 350 Union soldiers and over 1,000 Confederate soldiers lay dead.

Five days later, Union General Oliver Howard used the Wallis House as his headquarters and communications center during the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain, one of the bloodiest 1-day battles of the entire war. This was also the last major battle before Atlanta

fell to Union forces. While the assault by General Sherman was a tactical failure in its costing the lives of 3,000 of his men, the battle also inflicted heavy losses on the Confederates. After losing another 1,000 men, the Confederate Army could not stop General Sherman on his march to Atlanta.

Adjacent to the Wallis House are 8 acres of land, known as Harriston Hill. This property offers a sweeping view of the valley leading to the Confederate line on top of Kennesaw Mountain, and it was used by the Union as a signaling position during the battle. This location is essential for park visitors to understand the strategic positions taken by the Union and Confederate Armies during the battle.

In addition to being critical sites in Civil War history, the Wallis House and Harriston Hill are two of the few original locations remaining from the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain that are associated with the Union Army. Most of the park's current attractions correspond with Confederate history, so these additions will prove to be major historical acquisitions that will enhance the value of the park and provide insight into the Union's side of the story.

In 2002, the Cobb County Government purchased the Wallis House and Harriston Hill in order to prevent the house from being demolished. Since then, the county has been seeking to transfer the property to the park. My bill simply modifies the boundary of Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park to include the house and the hill, and it authorizes the park to acquire the property by donation. Along with the Cobb County Government, this bill is supported by the National Park Service, by Kennesaw Mountain Park, and by several park volunteer organizations and historical societies in my district.

This legislation is an essential step toward preserving our Nation's heritage, and it is a valuable part of Civil War history. The Wallis House and Harriston Hill will provide tremendous educational and historical value to Kennesaw Mountain Park; and it is my hope that the park will quickly acquire this property and will restore it to its original condition for visitors to enjoy for generations to come.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3371.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DELAWARE WATER GAP NATIONAL RECREATION AREA IMPROVEMENT ACT AMENDMENT

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3620) to amend the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act to provide access to certain vehicles serving residents of municipalities adjacent to the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3620

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. VEHICULAR ACCESS AND FEES.

Section 4 of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act (Public Law 109-156) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 4. USE OF CERTAIN ROADS WITHIN THE RECREATION AREA.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, Highway 209, a federally owned road within the boundaries of the Recreation Area, shall be closed to all commercial vehicles.

"(b) EXCEPTION FOR LOCAL BUSINESS USE.—Until September 30, 2020, subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to the use of commercial vehicles that have four or fewer axles and are—

"(1) owned and operated by a business physically located in—

"(A) the Recreation Area; or

"(B) one or more adjacent municipalities; or

"(2) necessary to provide services to businesses or persons located in—

"(A) the Recreation Area; or

"(B) one of more adjacent municipalities.

"(c) FEE.—The Secretary shall establish a fee and permit program for the use by commercial vehicles of Highway 209 under subsection (b). The program shall include an annual fee not to exceed \$200 per vehicle. All fees received under the program shall be set aside in a special account and be available, without further appropriation, to the Secretary for the administration and enforcement of the program, including registering vehicles, issuing permits and vehicle identification stickers, and personnel costs.

"(d) EXCEPTIONS.—The following vehicles may use Highway 209 and shall not be subject to a fee or permit requirement under subsection (c):

"(1) Local school buses.

"(2) Fire, ambulance, and other safety and emergency vehicles.

"(3) Commercial vehicles using Federal Road Route 209, from—

"(A) Milford to the Delaware River Bridge leading to U.S. Route 206 in New Jersey; and

"(B) mile 0 of Federal Road Route 209 to Pennsylvania State Route 2001."

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

Section 2 of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act (Public Law 109-156) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (5) as paragraphs (2) through (6), respectively; and

(2) by inserting before paragraph (2) (as so redesignated by paragraph (1) of this section) the following:

“(1) **ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES.**—The term ‘adjacent municipalities’ means Delaware Township, Dingman Township, Lehman Township, Matamoras Borough, Middle Smithfield Township, Milford Borough, Milford Township, Smithfield Township and Westfall Township, in Pennsylvania.”.

SEC. 3. CONFORMING AMENDMENT.

Section 702 of the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-333) is repealed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 3620, introduced by Congressman TOM MARINO, amends the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act to allow a road in the recreation area to continue to be used by commercial vehicles that serve the local communities adjoining this federally designated land. It is entirely in keeping with one of our principal objectives for Federal land use policy: to restore the Federal Government as a good neighbor to the communities impacted by the Federal lands.

Before the Federal Government took control of 70,000 acres of land adjacent to the Delaware River in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, highway 209 served as a major trucking route for commerce. Legislation that created the recreation area and implemented it sought to prohibit commercial vehicles from using this public highway, promising to establish alternate routes. Yet, despite three extensions of the deadline, local residents and businesses in the communities of Delaware Township, Dingman Township, Lehman Township, Metamoras Borough, Middle Smithfield Township, Milford Borough, Milford Township, Smithfield Township, and Westfall Township in Pennsylvania are directly threatened by the impending limitation.

H.R. 3620 would protect the people of these communities from this unnecessary disruption and inconvenience by allowing commercial vehicles serving these communities to continue to use this long-established highway. Specifically, it directs the Department of the Interior to establish a fee and permit

program for commercial vehicles serving these communities.

This bill enjoys broad support in the affected communities, and Congressman MARINO should be commended for his efforts to resolve this vexing issue for his constituents.

I urge the passage of the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill amends the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act to extend the authorization of a waiver for certain commercial traffic on U.S. Route 209, a federally owned highway that runs through the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

When Congress decided to restrict commercial traffic on the portion of the highway that runs through the recreation area, the law included an exemption for certain vehicles that belong to nearby businesses and municipal governments. This bill provides a 5-year extension of that exemption in order to facilitate continued access for local residents.

It is supported by the National Park Service, and I urge my colleagues to support its adoption.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the author of this measure, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO).

Mr. MARINO. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my bill to reauthorize commercial traffic along Route 209 through the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

For nearly 5 months now, uncertainty has reigned over this 21-mile stretch of road that is running through my district. Over 30 years ago, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania—as the chairman so eloquently stated—transferred Route 209, then a State road, to the National Park Service.

As commercial thru traffic is banned on roads within our national parks, it would also be so on this stretch of Route 209; but, at that time, a 10-year exemption was made to support the local freight transportation industry and because acceptable alternative routes were unavailable. After multiple extensions, the most recent commercial vehicle authorization expired at the end of September of 2015.

To address the problem, county and township officials from the surrounding areas met with the National Park Service and my staff to negotiate a new plan. They recognized the continued need to allow some commercial vehicle access, and they settled on the carefully crafted language we are considering today.

The work to produce this extension acknowledges the continued need of employers, businesses, and homeowners I represent in Pike and Monroe Coun-

ties. The expiration in September cast a cloud on the local business community and put countless jobs in jeopardy. Passing this bill so that it can be swiftly considered by the Senate is imperative as the weather warms and business activity increases through the region.

I thank Chairman BISHOP for his support and assistance in bringing this bill to the floor as quickly as possible. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3620.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING PENN STATE'S MIKE HERR, “MIKE THE MAILMAN”

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Mike Herr on his retirement from the United States Postal Service. For generations of students at Penn State University, Mike is lovingly known as “Mike the Mailman.”

Mike's first day with the Postal Service was April 1, 1968—48 years to the day of his expected retirement this year. In his nearly five decades of working at the university's main campus in State College, he has formed bonds with countless students and has become a fixture at the school's annual dance marathon, also known as THON—the largest student-run philanthropy in the world. In fact, Mike has become known for delivering Mack Trucks that are full of letters and packages for dancers who are participating in the event.

When asked about becoming a Penn State campus institution, Mike said: “My secret is fairly simple: kindness matters; humor always helps; staying enthusiastic about the big and little things and showing compassion to every single person that I meet.”

Mr. Speaker, these are words that we can all live by, and I wish “Mike the Mailman” the best of luck in his retirement.

THE GENOCIDE OF CHRISTIANS AND OTHER RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I had the extraordinary privilege of being in the room when Pope Francis was given a small cross, a crucifix. This crucifix belonged to a young Syrian man who had been captured by the jihadis and then given a choice—convert or die—and he chose. He chose his ancient faith tradition.

He chose Christ.

And he was beheaded.

His mother was able to recover his body and the crucifix that he wore and bury him, and then she subsequently made her way to Austria by which this cross came into the possession of the Holy Father.

This type of incident—the killings, the beheadings, the crucifixions, the immolations—occurs day, after day, after day to the beleaguered religious minorities of the Middle East—the Christians, the Yazidis, and others—who have ancient faith traditions, who have every right to be in their ancient homelands as does anyone else.

□ 1515

This is a genocide. This is a deliberate attempt to exterminate an entire set of peoples based upon their faith.

Mr. Speaker, in the year 2004, then-Secretary of State Colin Powell came to the United States Congress and in a committee hearing—the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—he declared what was happening in Darfur in Sudan a genocide. In making that simple declaration, using that powerful word, he helped put an end to that grim reality.

Thankfully, what is happening now that should give the beleaguered communities of the Middle East some hope is that there is an international coalition developing that has recognized the fact that this is a genocide being committed.

Nearly 200 Members of the United States Congress, this body, have signed on and are cosponsoring a resolution that declares this a genocide. The International Association of Genocide Scholars has stated it as such.

Others, including the Yazidi community, the United States Catholic

bishops, Pope Francis himself, Hillary Clinton and MARCO RUBIO, both Presidential candidates, have declared this to be a genocide.

Genocide is a powerful word. It evokes special meaning. It creates the conditions for when there hopefully is inevitably and perhaps miraculously some proper settlement in the Middle East—security arrangements, political, economic, and cultural settlement—that the religious minorities of that area who once made up the rich tapestry of that region will have their rightful place restored and re-integrated back into those communities.

This would give hope again to persecuted peoples. It provides a gateway for the discussion of further policy recommendations, for instance, that could place people who are being forced to flee under the threat of genocide in proximity to where their ancient homeland is so that, once stability is restored, they can return and reclaim what is rightfully theirs.

A little while back when the Yazidi community, primarily women and children, were trapped on Mount Sinjar, President Obama, to his credit, acted quickly.

The House of Representatives had passed a resolution calling for additional humanitarian assistance, and the President, with great deliberateness, decided to save their lives. I want to personally state that I am grateful for that.

I represent the largest Yazidi refugee community in America. This is an ancient faith tradition that usually enjoyed a quiet and peaceable life in areas of Iraq and who began to come under increasing pressure during the Iraq war and now are, of course, subjected to ISIL's attempt to exterminate them. They were saved by quick action.

So in an exchange with Secretary Kerry today, I commended the administration for that quick action to save the Yazidis and I asked the administration to actively consider and call this what it is, a genocide.

When we do so, again we create the conditions not only for which the international consciousness on this problem will be raised and other international organizations, including the European Union Parliament who have spoken to it. Other parliaments around the world have also declared this a genocide.

However, in our complicated times, we rush from urgency to urgency. It is difficult to keep the mind focused because the horrors that continue to come at us are so extreme we almost get numb to it all. Yet, we have to act. In doing so, we can save lives.

We can reposition and potentially preserve the remnant of the rich tapestry of minority voices that are critical to stability in the Middle East and

are critical to saving civilization itself and stopping this grievous assault on human dignity.

That is why I urged the Secretary to make the declaration of genocide. It was a thoughtful exchange, but we will continue to do so.

I am so grateful to so many of my colleagues who, again, have signed onto this resolution that calls it such, a genocide against the Christian Yazidis and others.

I am also grateful to have some colleagues here, including my good friend, Congressman DAN LIPINSKI of Illinois, who has tirelessly spoken to the issue of human rights and stood for life, stood for stability, stood for justice on the whole spectrum of issues that are facing humanity now.

I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) so that he may give us his consideration on this essential topic.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I only have a few minutes this afternoon. No matter how busy things get, there has to be time to come here to stand up for basic human rights.

I thank Congressman FORTENBERRY and, also, Congresswoman ESHOO for organizing today's Special Order and for all the work that they have done to speak out on this issue of protecting all of those minority groups who are under threat, so many murdered, driven from their homes.

It is very important that we focus the eyes of Congress and the Nation on this humanitarian tragedy that is happening in Syria and Iraq. I think it is very important. It is really past time, as far as I am concerned, but it is never too late.

We need to stand up and pass H. Con. Res. 75 for this Congress to declare that there is a genocide that is going on. The genocide is against not just Yazidis, but also Christians, Turkmen, and other groups in Syria and Iraq and in the region.

Since 2013, when ISIL began their murderous march through Syria and northern Iraq, the world has witnessed the targeted killing of all of these groups that I have mentioned. As I said, we should have done this a while ago. The United States should have stood up and declared this a genocide.

Now, it seems there are reports, at least, that the United States may be declaring that there is a genocide of the Yazidis. While certainly no one is going to downplay that, as my colleague mentioned, we all remember what happened with the Yazidis trapped on Mount Sinjar and the quick intervention that helped to save so many lives and the continued genocide going on against the Yazidis.

We don't want to downplay that in any way, but I think it is important that we recognize it is not just the Yazidis who are suffering from genocide.

In fact, the State Department's report on International Religious Freedom for 2014 acknowledged that ISIL was systematically targeting religious minorities it considered heretical and that their abuses disproportionately affected religious minorities, with between 100,000 and 200,000 Christians and an estimated 300,000 Yazidis displaced in Iraq.

Now, these numbers have only gotten greater since that time. In Syria, that same report states that ISIL has executed Christians, kidnapped priests, and forced tens of thousands to flee across the desert or face ISIL's genocidal campaign.

Leaders across the world, including the European Union Parliament and Pope Francis, have recognized that genocide is being committed by ISIL against many ethno-religious groups, and the United States must join them in condemning these crimes as a genocide.

Here in Congress, we remain in a critical position to promote religious freedom and ensure that it remains a priority in our foreign policy.

That is why I was an original cosponsor of Congressman FORTENBERRY and Congresswoman ESHOO's H. Con. Res. 75, which expresses that Congress views the attacks on Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities as war crimes, crimes against humanity, and, yes, genocide. We must not wait or be apprehensive about speaking the truth.

The administration and Congress must prioritize religious freedom and protect all minorities in the Middle East from the ongoing genocide. It should begin here in Congress by passing H. Con. Res. 75. I certainly want to ask all of my colleagues to join us in cosponsoring this resolution.

Again, we continue to see the horrible crimes being committed in Syria and Iraq. We are not here today to say that there are easy solutions, that any of this is easy to solve.

We have to not look away, but we need to look at what is going on in Syria and Iraq and call it for what it is, a genocide. It is a genocide against a number of groups, including Christians there in Syria and Iraq.

By Congress standing up, it means something. The world takes notice when it happens. We must do more. It is our duty to do more to protect these people, starting out with this declaration of genocide.

I want to again thank Congressman FORTENBERRY for all the work he is doing on this issue and many other human rights issues, standing up for life itself, which is something critically important that we all must do here.

I thank Congressman FORTENBERRY for organizing this Special Order and for all of his work on this issue.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman LIPINSKI as well

for his tireless commitment to justice, to human dignity, to human flourishing.

Really, ultimately, that is what this resolution is intended to do, to call it what it is, a genocide, in order that there might be the proper settlement, when we finally come to the day when there is a proper security arrangement in the Middle East, when there is a reintegration of the religious minorities who, again, made up the rich diversity of the Middle East in a prior time who are critical to the ongoing stability of Iraq and Syria and other places.

I am grateful as well that the gentleman pointed out the extraordinary work of our colleague, Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO, a Democrat from California. I am a Republican.

We have other Republicans here who will speak in a time when Congress seems so divided on every issue—again, we have 200 of our colleagues—in a transpartisan initiative to say that this is unjust, this must be stopped.

By our actions of calling it a genocide, we not only elevate international consciousness, but again we create the conditions for the proper redress once we come to some proper settlement in the Middle East.

I am so grateful for the gentleman's time and efforts on this behalf and for his leadership in Congress. I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI.)

Let me turn to my good friend as well, Congressman JODY B. HICE, a new Member of Congress from Georgia, who has shown initiative, entrepreneurial endeavor, integrating quickly as an impact player, if you will, in the proceedings here in Congress. I am grateful for his willingness to speak on this topic, but, more than that, grateful for our growing friendship.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE).

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO) for bringing attention to this incredibly important issue and the absolute carnage that is occurring in the Middle East against Christians, Yazidis, and people of other religious faiths and minorities.

You know, the right to practice a chosen religion is a right that I—and I believe all of us—believe should be universal. Yet, the religious persecution, especially by such violent means that is occurring now, is absolutely deplorable.

ISIS has shown its true nature in the treatment of these religious minorities. We have all witnessed in recent months the violent expansion of ISIS in the Middle East as they have single-mindedly persecuted those who adhere to different faiths.

In fact, those who refuse to convert have been driven from their homes, brutally tortured, crucified, raped,

murdered, enslaved, and not by just few in number. We are talking thousands that fall under this horrific scenario.

□ 1530

The systematic violence of ISIS toward communities of Yazidis, Christians, Kurds, Turkmen, whatever it may be, as you have well mentioned, goes far beyond war crimes. We are talking absolute genocide.

In looking at all this, it was interesting to me that, when the world came together after the atrocities of the Second World War in an effort to define genocide, they actually defined it as an actor committing certain acts against a designated group with an intent to destroy the group in whole or in part.

ISIS has. They absolutely have the intent to destroy, in whole, Christians, Yazidis, and all religious groups throughout the Middle East. In fact, their entire propaganda even brags about the abhorrent crimes that they are committing, and they show absolutely no signs of willingness to stop these atrocities.

It is clear to me that we have an obligation—not only a moral one, but a legal obligation—to prevent these atrocities from occurring. In fact, 3 weeks from now this administration must fulfill its own legal obligation to make a determination on whether it will name ISIS' crimes as acts of genocide or not.

The time has come. In fact, the time is long past for our Nation and our world to officially recognize these crimes by ISIS for what they truly are and to commit fully to defeating ISIS. We simply cannot ignore this any longer, and we must bring H. Con. Res. 75 to the House floor as soon as possible.

Again, I thank you for yielding this time and thank you for your leadership in this regard.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his thoughtful commentary and leadership as well on this essential issue. In fact, it is not an issue at all. This is an assault on all humanity. This is a threat to civilization itself.

If a group of people can succeed in exterminating another group because they have the power to do so, because they do not believe in another's religion, they violate that sacred space that is essential to all persons and, therefore, the conditions of liberty that are necessary for human flourishing.

This goes beyond the grotesque tragedy in the Middle East. It is a call to the entire responsible community of nations to act, to say that we will not allow eighth-century barbarism that happens to have 21st-century weaponry to rule in a land, destroy, kill, maim, and exterminate entire groups of people because of their religious tradition.

It is wrong. It is unjust. If not addressed, all of civilization is at threat. That is the core of the problem here.

I thank you so much for your willingness to spend a little bit of time and your leadership on these critical points. Thank you so much.

Mr. Speaker, again, it is H. Con. Res. 75, House Concurrent Resolution 75. It has been introduced here in the House, and there is a similar resolution in the Senate. It will be forthcoming in the coming weeks. The House Committee on Foreign Affairs will be considering this resolution soon.

I am hopeful that, again, with my colleague, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO), and others, who have shown just extraordinary leadership and deep concern and compassion for those who are in need, we can continue to build the numbers and make the case to all of our colleagues and our government that it is time to call this genocide and, by declaring such, again setting the conditions that will be necessary to reintegrate people, those who have survived, back into their ancient lands for which they have a rightful claim.

I heard a story recently from a commander who had been in Mosul during the height of the Iraq war. Part of their obligation and responsibility was to protect the various religious minorities who were there. He talked about seeing the very beautiful Christian church that was there.

All the Christians are gone from Mosul. The remaining ones had the Arabic letter N, Nun, spray-painted on their door in blood red. That is a symbol for the word Nazarene, which some use as a derogatory term to Christians. They were told: Convert, leave, or die. Many had to flee with whatever they had on their back.

Of course, we know the horrific stories of those who gave their life in fidelity to their faith. This is a systematic attempt to wipe certain peoples off the map. It is not fair. It is unjust. It must be countered with a worldwide response.

The designation of genocide is that critical first step, again, toward the possibility of restoring some tranquility of order whenever there is the right type of security and economic and cultural settlement that must come to the Middle East if it has any chance, again, to flourish.

We can lead in this regard. We must lead. Other countries around the world have already taken up this banner. As I said earlier, the European Parliament has declared it so.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the ability to converse today with my colleagues on this threat, this threat to civilization itself, and our need to act.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BUCK (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of illness.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2234. An act to award the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in recognition of their superior service and major contributions during World War II; to the Committee on Financial Services; in addition to the Committee on House Administration for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 487. An act to allow the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma to lease or transfer certain lands.

H.R. 890. An act to revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida.

H.R. 3262. An act to provide for the conveyance of land of the Illiana Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Danville, Illinois.

H.R. 4056. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States to the property known as "The Community Living Center" at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida.

H.R. 4437. An act to extend the deadline for the submittal of the final report required by the Commission on Care.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on February 23, 2016, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 644. To reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 37 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, February 25, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4425. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Rules of Practice and Procedure; Civil Money Penalty Inflation Adjustment (RIN: 2590-AA77) received February 19, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4426. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval and Air Quality Designation; GA; Redesignation of the Atlanta, GA, 1997 Annual PM2.5 Nonattainment Area to Attainment [EPA-R04-OAR-2013-0084; FRL-9942-61-Region 4] received February 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4427. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Missouri; Emissions Inventory and Emissions Statement for the Missouri Portion of the St. Louis MO-IL Ozone Nonattainment Area [EPA-R07-OAR-2015-0438; FRL-9942-76-Region 7] received February 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4428. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Clarification of Requirements for Method 303 Certification Training [EPA-HQ-OAR-2014-0492; FRL-9940-76-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AR97) received February 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4429. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Pyriproxyfen; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-1012; FRL-9941-38] received February 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4430. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Triclopyr; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0314 and EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0489; FRL-9941-87] received February 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4431. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Interim Staff Guidance — Clarification of Licensee Actions in Receipt of Enforcement Discretion Per Enforcement Guidance Memorandum EGM 15-002, "Enforcement Discretion for Tornado-Generated Missile Protection Noncompliance" [DSS-15G-2016-01] received February 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4432. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-318, "Private Security Camera Incentive Program Temporary Act of 2016", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4433. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-317, “Emery Heights Community Center Designation Act of 2016”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4434. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-316, “LGBTQ Cultural Competency Continuing Education Amendment Act of 2016”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4435. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-319, “Marijuana Possession Decriminalization Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2016”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4436. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-315, “Tip’s Way Designation Act of 2016”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4437. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-320, “Certificate of Good Standing Filing Requirement Temporary Amendment Act of 2016”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4438. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-321, “Presidential Primary Ballot Access Temporary Amendment Act of 2016”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4439. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-322, “Wage Theft Prevention Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2016”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4440. A letter from the Federal Register and Regulatory Liaison Officer, Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting the Administration’s final rule — Discrimination on the Basis of Disability in Federally Assisted and Federally Conducted Programs and Activities [Document No.: NASA-2015-0008] (RIN: 2700-AD85) received February 19, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4441. A letter from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Management, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department’s interim final rule — Department of the Treasury Employee Rules of Conduct received February 19, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4442. A letter from the Acting Unified Listing Team Manager, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department’s final rule — Interagency Cooperation-Endangered Species Act of 1973, as Amended; Definition of Destruction or Adverse Modification of Critical Habitat [Docket No.: FWS-R9-ES-2011-0072] (RIN: 1018-AX88) received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4443. A letter from the Unified Listing Team Manager, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department’s final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for *Consoletia corallicola* (Florida Semaphore Cactus) and *Harrisia aboriginum* (Aboriginal Prickly-apple) [Docket No.: FWS-R4-ES-2014-0057; 4500030113] (RIN: 1018-AZ92) received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4444. A letter from the Acting Unified Listing Chief, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department’s final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; 4(d) Rule for the Northern Long-Eared Bat [Docket No.: FWS-R5-ES-2011-0024; 4500030113] (RIN: 1018-AY98) received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4445. A letter from the Chief, Branch of Recovery and State Grants, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department’s final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Reclassifying *Hesperocyparis abramsiana* (= *Cupressus abramsiana*) as Threatened [Docket No.: FWS-R8-ES-2013-0092; 4500030113] (RIN: 1018-AY77) received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4446. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration’s temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Inseason Adjustment to the 2016 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Pollock, Atka Mackerel, and Pacific Cod Total Allowable Catch Amounts [Docket No.: 141021887-5172-02] (RIN: 0648-XE367) received February 23, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4447. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration’s temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Pot Catcher/Processors in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 141021887-5172-02] (RIN: 0648-XE418) received February 23, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4448. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration’s final rule — Pacific Island Pelagic Fisheries; Exemption for Large U.S. Longline Vessels To Fish in Portions of the American Samoa Large Vessel Prohibited Area [Docket No.: 15062552-6043-02] (RIN: 0648-BF22) received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4449. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration’s temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Eco-

nomie Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 610 in the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 140918791-4999-02] (RIN: 0648-XE420) received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4450. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration’s temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Directed Fishing With Trawl Gear by Fisheries Act Catcher Processors in Bycatch Limitation Zone 1 of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 141021887-5172-02] (RIN: 0648-XE429) received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4451. A letter from the Chief, Branch of Recovery and State Grants, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department’s direct final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife; Technical Corrections for Eight Wildlife Species on the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife [Docket No.: FWS-R1-ES-2016-0006; FXES1113090000C6-167-FF09E42000] (RIN: 1018-BB28) received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4452. A letter from the Acting Unified Listing Team Manager, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department’s final rule — Listing Endangered and Threatened Species and Designating Critical Habitat; Implementing Changes to the Regulations for Designating Critical Habitat [Docket No.: FWS-HQ-ES-2012-0096] [Docket No.: 120106025-5640-03] [4500030114] (RIN: 1018-AX86) (RIN: 0648-BB79) received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4453. A letter from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the Fiscal Assistant Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department’s final rule — Department of the Treasury Regulations for the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund (RIN: 1505-AC44) received February 19, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4454. A letter from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the Fiscal Assistant Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department’s Major final rule — Department of the Treasury Regulations for the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund (RIN: 1505-AC44) received February 19, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4455. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service’s IRB only rule — Transition Relief for Certain Section 529 Qualified Tuition Programs Required to File Form 1099-Q, Payments From Qualified Education Programs (Under Sections 529 and 530) [Notice 2016-13] received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4456. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service’s IRB only

rule — 2016 Cost-of-Living Adjustments for certain items resulting from the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015 (Rev. Proc. 2016-14) received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4457. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Maximum Vehicle Values for 2016 for Use With Vehicle Cents-Per-Mile and Fleet-Average Valuation Rules [Notice 2016-12] received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4458. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Credit for Indian Coal Production and Inflation Adjustment Factor for Calendar Year 2015 [Notice 2016-11] received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4459. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Timing of Submitting Preexisting Accounts and Periodic Certifications; Reporting of Accounts of Nonparticipating FFIs; Reliance on Electronically Furnished Forms W-8 and W-9 [Notice 2016-08] received February 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 3004. A bill to amend the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Act to extend the authorization for the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission (Rept. 114-430). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2880. A bill to redesignate the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114-431). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 812. A bill to provide for Indian trust asset management reform, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114-432). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1475. A bill to reauthorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund that Wall of Remembrance; with an amendment (Rept. 114-433). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 3371. A bill to adjust the boundary of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park to include the Wallis House and Harriston Hill, and for other purposes (Rept. 114-434). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 3620. A bill to amend the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act to provide access to certain vehicles serving residents of municipalities adjacent to the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and for other purposes (Rept. 114-435). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. WALDEN:

H.R. 4596. A bill to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BROOKS of Alabama:

H.R. 4597. A bill to provide resources and incentives for the enforcement of immigration laws in the interior of the United States and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BROOKS of Alabama:

H.R. 4598. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to improve the H-1B visa program, to repeal the diversity visa lottery program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts (for herself and Mr. STIVERS):

H.R. 4599. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to permit certain partial fillings of prescriptions; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. THOMPSON of California (for himself, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. VELA, and Mr. FARR):

H.R. 4600. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to protect the well-being of soldiers and their families, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK):

H.R. 4601. A bill to transfer the reverential interest of the United States between certain land in Flagstaff, Arizona, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. POE of Texas (for himself and Mr. COSTA):

H.R. 4602. A bill to protect crime victims' rights, to eliminate the substantial backlog of DNA and other forensic evidence samples to improve and expand the forensic science testing capacity of Federal, State, and local crime laboratories, to increase research and development of new testing technologies, to develop new training programs regarding the collection and use of forensic evidence, to provide post-conviction testing of DNA evidence to exonerate the innocent, to support accreditation efforts of forensic science laboratories and medical examiner offices, to address training and equipment needs, to improve the performance of counsel in State capital cases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for

a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. NADLER, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. LEE, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. RANGEL, and Ms. JUDY CHU of California):

H.R. 4603. A bill to prevent a person who has been convicted of a misdemeanor hate crime, or received an enhanced sentence for a misdemeanor because of hate or bias in its commission, from obtaining a firearm; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas (for himself, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. GIBSON):

H.R. 4604. A bill to require the Secretary of Labor to maintain a publicly available list of all employers that relocate a call center overseas, to make such companies ineligible for Federal grants or guaranteed loans, and to require disclosure of the physical location of business agents engaging in customer service communications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, Oversight and Government Reform, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BLUM (for himself, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, and Mr. KING of Iowa):

H.R. 4605. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 615 6th Avenue SE in Cedar Rapids, Iowa as the "Sgt. 1st Class Terryl L. Pasker Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. DEUTCH (for himself, Mr. CHABOT, and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 4606. A bill to require the Governor of a State to submit to the Attorney General an annual report on the number of individuals who represented themselves in court in criminal matters or juvenile delinquency matters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself and Mr. DENHAM):

H.R. 4607. A bill to amend the Estuary Restoration Act of 2000 to modify requirements that apply to projects carried out under the estuary habitat restoration program established by the Secretary of the Army, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ISRAEL:

H.R. 4608. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish small business savings accounts; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KILMER (for himself and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia):

H.R. 4609. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to modify the provisions governing employment of nonimmigrants

under section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of that Act to prevent the transfer of knowledge from United States workers for the purpose of facilitating their jobs being moved abroad; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KNIGHT:

H.R. 4610. A bill to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in a series of water reclamation projects to provide a new water supply to communities previously impacted by perchlorate contamination plumes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TED LIEU of California (for himself, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Mr. GALLEGO):

H.R. 4611. A bill to discourage the use of payment of money as a condition of pretrial release in criminal cases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN:

H. Res. 624. A resolution directing the Committee on the House of Representatives to hold a public hearing on the President's fiscal year 2017 budget request with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget as a witness; to the Committee on Rules.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. WALDEN:

H.R. 4596.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BROOKS of Alabama:

H.R. 4597.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BROOKS of Alabama:

H.R. 4598.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 4599.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. THOMPSON of California:

H.R. 4600.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.R. 4601.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (the Property Clause). Under this clause, Congress has the power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States. By virtue of this enumerated power, Congress has governing authority over the lands, territories, or other property of the United States- and with this authority Congress is vested with the power to all owners in fee, the ability to sell, lease, dispose,

exchange, convey, or simply preserve land. The Supreme Court has described this enumerated grant as one "without limitation" *Kleppe v New Mexico*, 426 U.S. 529, 542-543 (1976) ("And while the furthest reaches of the power granted by the Property Clause have not been definitely resolved, we have repeatedly observed that the power over the public land thus entrusted to Congress is without limitation.")

Historically, the federal government transferred ownership of federal property to either private ownership or the states in order to pay off large Revolutionary War debts and to assist with the development of infrastructure. The transfer of reversionary interest by this legislation is thus constitutional and necessary to ensure private property owners are able to utilize and control their private property.

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 4602.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. CICILLINE:

H.R. 4603.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas:

H.R. 4604.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 ("the Commerce Clause") of the United States Constitution

By Mr. BLUM:

H.R. 4605.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 7 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. DEUTCH:

H.R. 4606.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the U.S. Constitution and Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 4607.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States, or of any particular state. [Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2 of the United States Constitution]

By Mr. ISRAEL:

H.R. 4608.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the powers granted to the Congress by Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 4609.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. KNIGHT:

H.R. 4610.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 1, 3, and 18 of section 8 and clause 7 of section 9 of article I, of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. TED LIEU of California:

H.R. 4611.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 188: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr.

LOWENTHAL, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 192: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 303: Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 448: Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 472: Mr. SRES, Mr. GIBSON, and Mr. GRIFFITH.

H.R. 546: Mr. MEEHAN.

H.R. 662: Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 664: Mr. COHEN, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. GALLEGO, and Mr. TED LIEU of California.

H.R. 726: Mr. TED LIEU of California.

H.R. 759: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 781: Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 816: Mr. HOLDING.

H.R. 842: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 885: Mrs. DAVIS of California and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 953: Mr. CUMMINGS, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. BARR, Mr. KILMER, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 969: Mr. BECERRA and Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 986: Mr. DENHAM.

H.R. 1117: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 1174: Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. LAMBORN, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. ADAMS, and Mr. CLAY.

H.R. 1188: Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 1192: Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 1197: Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. KNIGHT, and Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 1301: Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 1309: Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 1336: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.

H.R. 1453: Mr. STIVERS and Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 1459: Mr. PASCRELL and Ms. FUDGE.

H.R. 1588: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 1942: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 1945: Ms. LEE and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 1948: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 2058: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio and Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 2059: Ms. MCCOLLUM and Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 2083: Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 2093: Mr. POSEY.

H.R. 2167: Mr. MOULTON.

H.R. 2260: Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 2698: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. HARDY.

H.R. 2713: Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 2737: Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. VELA, Ms. KAPTUR, and Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

H.R. 2759: Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 2844: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 2858: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 2903: Mr. ROYCE.

H.R. 2908: Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 2939: Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 2948: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 3012: Mr. SCHWEIKERT and Mr. PALMER.

H.R. 3048: Mr. REED, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 3088: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3099: Mr. MEEHAN and Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 3135: Mr. DENT.

H.R. 3190: Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 3323: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 3481: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 3502: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 3515: Mr. STEWART, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. JONES, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mrs. WAGNER, and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
 H.R. 3520: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
 H.R. 3521: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
 H.R. 3556: Mr. CONNOLLY.
 H.R. 3713: Ms. FUDGE.
 H.R. 3722: Mr. LANCE.
 H.R. 3723: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 3779: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
 H.R. 3808: Mr. TURNER.
 H.R. 3846: Mr. CHABOT.
 H.R. 3852: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
 H.R. 3952: Mr. ELLISON and Ms. HAHN.
 H.R. 3956: Mr. SHIMKUS.
 H.R. 3970: Mr. BEYER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. HIMES, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SCHIFF, and Ms. SINEMA.
 H.R. 4006: Mr. WALKER.
 H.R. 4007: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
 H.R. 4087: Mr. HILL.
 H.R. 4133: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
 H.R. 4200: Mr. KLINE.
 H.R. 4262: Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, and Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 4277: Mrs. BEATTY and Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 4352: Ms. KUSTER, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, and Mr. SIRE.
 H.R. 4442: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
 H.R. 4447: Mr. HIMES, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. HIGGINS, and Mr. NORCROSS.
 H.R. 4461: Mr. HENSARLING.
 H.R. 4462: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York and Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 4469: Mr. KLINE.
 H.R. 4490: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.
 H.R. 4514: Mr. ROSKAM and Mrs. LOWEY.
 H.R. 4521: Mr. BEYER.
 H.R. 4522: Mr. LAMBORN.
 H.R. 4523: Mr. CHAFFETZ.
 H.R. 4540: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. HARRIS.
 H.R. 4542: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. HASTINGS.
 H.R. 4549: Mr. CHAFFETZ.
 H.R. 4553: Mr. MCKINLEY.
 H.R. 4561: Ms. PLASKETT.
 H.R. 4562: Ms. PLASKETT.
 H.R. 4563: Ms. PLASKETT.

H.J. Res. 55: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
 H. Con. Res. 19: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
 H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee and Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
 H. Res. 207: Mr. JOYCE and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
 H. Res. 541: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
 H. Res. 551: Mr. FLORES, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. GOSAR, and Mr. MICA.
 H. Res. 600: Ms. KUSTER.
 H. Res. 610: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.
 H. Res. 615: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. PALAZZO, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.
 H. Res. 623: Mr. KENNEDY and Mr. SWALWELL of California.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H. Res. 571: Mr. CHABOT.

SENATE—Wednesday, February 24, 2016

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, we would rest in You, for You alone can bring order to our world.

Reveal Yourself to our Senators, guiding them on the path of peace. May they place behind them disappointed hopes, fruitless labor, and trivial aims as they lean on You for comfort and strength. Rebuke their doubts. Strengthen the good in them so that nothing may hinder the outflow of Your power in their lives.

Give might to the weak and renew the strength of the strong.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

GUANTANAMO DETAINEES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, President Obama has left the American people to wait for many years for a serious plan—one that poses no additional risk to our Nation or our Armed Forces, for instance—in pursuit of his desire to close a secure detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. Americans have been waiting for 7 long years to find out what the serious plan might look like. They are still waiting today.

What the President sent to Congress yesterday isn't a plan. It is more of a research project than anything. It does call on Congress, however, to act. It turns out we already have. Congress has repeatedly, over and over again, voted to enact clear, bipartisan prohibitions on the very thing the President is again calling for, and that is the transfer of Guantanamo Bay terrorists into our local communities. We have enacted bipartisan prohibitions in Congresses with split party control. We have enacted bipartisan prohibitions in Congresses with massive, overwhelming Democratic majorities. Just

a couple of months ago, Members of Congress in both parties expressed themselves clearly one more time—not once, but twice, and on an overwhelming bipartisan basis. President Obama signed these bipartisan prohibitions into law as well. So let's not pretend there is even the faintest of pretenses for some pen-and-phone gambit here.

Congress has acted clearly, repeatedly, and on a bipartisan basis. The President now has the duty to follow the laws he himself signed. It shouldn't be that hard when you consider his admonition yesterday about "upholding the highest standards of rule of law." He said: "As Americans, we pride ourselves on being a beacon to other nations, a model of the rule of law." That is interesting in light of a recent GAO ruling that the administration's detainee swap of Taliban prisoners for Bowe Bergdahl violated the law. It is especially interesting in light of the President's continuing refusal to rule out breaking the law if he doesn't get his way on Guantanamo. President Obama's own Attorney General says he cannot unilaterally do that. It is clear. President Obama's own Defense Secretary says he cannot unilaterally do that. President Obama's own top military officer says he cannot unilaterally do that. In the words of one of our Democratic colleagues, "He's going to have to comply with the legal restrictions." It is as simple as that—"going to have to comply with the legal restrictions."

Breaking the law as a way to supposedly uphold the rule of law is just as absurd as it sounds. It is time that the President finally ruled that option out categorically, and then he should finally move on from a years-old campaign promise and focus on the real problem that needs solving today.

My own hope is that the Commander in Chief will not put his own chain of command in the position of having to carry out an unlawful direct order.

But, look, closing Guantanamo and transferring terrorists to the United States didn't make sense in 2008, and it makes even less sense today. We are a nation at war. The administration's efforts to contain ISIL thus far have not succeeded. The next President may very well want to pursue operations that target, capture, detain, and interrogate terrorists because that is how terrorist networks are defeated. Why would we take that option away from the next Commander in Chief now?

Let's be clear: The two options on the table are not keeping Guantanamo open or closing it, but keeping Guanta-

namo terrorists at Guantanamo or moving them to some Guantanamo North based in a U.S. community. Changing the detention center's ZIP Code is not a solution. It is not even serious.

The fact that the President missed a deadline for submitting a plan to defeat ISIL last week—presumably because he was just too busy working on his ancient campaign promise—is completely unacceptable.

Some of the most senior national security officials within President Obama's own administration are already working to better position the next President for the national security challenges we will face in 2017. It is time President Obama finally joined them and us in the serious work of keeping Americans safe in a dangerous world.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we are going to move the confirmation vote back closer to noon in order to accommodate some important hearings that are going on this morning in several of our committees.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The Democratic leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, yesterday the senior Senator from Iowa, along with other Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee, announced that they won't be holding a hearing on President Obama's eventual nominee to the Supreme Court. They won't give the eventual nominee the common courtesy of even a meeting—no hearings, no meeting—and this was all done even before the President sent a name to us. This is historically unbelievable and historically unprecedented.

Republicans don't know who the nominee will be, and they have already mentioned that. Already they have decided they won't even start the confirmation process. Why? Because the person was nominated by President Obama. Remember, the Republican leader said many years ago that the No. 1 goal he had was to make sure President Obama was not reelected. That failed miserably. The President

won by more than 5 million votes. Everything has been done by the Republicans in the Senate to embarrass, obstruct, filibuster—anything that could be done to focus attention on President Obama, none of which has helped the country.

Senator GRASSLEY has surrendered every pretense of independence and let the Republican leader annex the Judiciary Committee into a narrow, partisan mission of obstruction and gridlock—so partisan, in fact, that the senior Senator from Iowa won't respond to a personal invitation from the President inviting him to the White House to discuss the vacancy. Think about that. The President of the United States calls a very senior Senator, and he hasn't even responded to the President. This is a sad day for one of the proudest committees in the Senate. So I ask, is this the legacy he wants? Is this how he wants his committee work remembered—as a chairman who refused his duty and instead allowed the Republican leader to ride roughshod over the Judiciary Committee's storied history?

The strength of committee chairmen in the U.S. Senate has been legendary. No majority leader or minority leader could tell a chair what to do with his committee. That was off bounds, but it doesn't appear so now.

In abdicating this responsibility, which the Senate has always upheld—never in the history of the country has a Senate simply refused to do anything, even meet with the person who has been nominated. So Republicans are setting a dangerous precedent for future nominations, not only for the Supreme Court but for the Senate itself as an institution.

Yesterday the Senate Historian's office reported that the denial of committee hearings for a Supreme Court nominee is unprecedented. If that is unprecedented, how about the fact that he won't even meet with the person who has been nominated? If that is unprecedented, how about the fact that a Member of the Senate won't even go to the White House to talk to the President about filling the Supreme Court seat?

The senior Senator from Iowa will be the first Judiciary Committee chairman ever to refuse to hold a hearing on a Supreme Court nominee. That is quite an achievement, but not one of which he should be proud. That sort of wanton obstruction is not what the American people want. It is not what the people of Iowa want. Last week no fewer than six Iowa newspapers issued scathing editorials calling on Senator GRASSLEY to change course and give the President's Supreme Court nominee the respect he or she deserves.

For example, the *Mason City Globe Gazette* wrote:

We were especially disappointed to see Iowa's own Chuck Grassley join the partisan

crowd calling for a delay. . . . There is no constitutional or even historical precedent for such flagrant, outrageous, shameful, bald-faced partisanship.

The *Gazette* in Cedar Rapids, IA, wrote of Senator GRASSLEY's actions:

It's hard to conclude this is anything but political maneuvering meant to meet partisan objectives at the expense of the Supreme Court, our constitutional process and the common good.

The headline of the *Des Moines Register* editorial reads, "Grassley's Supreme Court stance is all about politics."

Is that the legacy the chairman wants for Iowa and our Nation? I certainly hope not. Does he want to be remembered as the least productive Judiciary Committee chairman in history? At his current pace, he will be remembered as the most obstructive chairman in history.

Instead of studying what the Vice President said a quarter of a century ago, perhaps Senator GRASSLEY should take note of what Senator BIDEN did 25 years ago or generally as a member and chairman of that committee.

In 1992, under Senator BIDEN's leadership, the Judiciary Committee confirmed 64 circuit and district court nominations. All of the judicial nominations were made by a President of the opposite party—President George H.W. Bush. In 2015, Senator GRASSLEY's first year as chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the Senate confirmed 11 judicial nominations. That was the fewest judicial nominations confirmed ever. We were a much smaller country, perhaps, so "ever" might be a little much, but certainly in the last 50 or 75 years. That is quite a comparison: BIDEN, 64; GRASSLEY, 11.

It gets even worse than that for my friend from Iowa. In the entire 102nd Congress, when JOE BIDEN was chair, the Senate confirmed 120 nominees—120 judicial nominations under BIDEN. Compare that to 16 under Chairman GRASSLEY. The difference is stunning.

I would encourage my friend from Iowa to focus on Vice President BIDEN's actions and results, rather than cherry picking remarks of 25 years ago. The Judiciary Committee of JOE BIDEN honored its constitutional obligations by considering and confirming—even visiting with nominees—in a timely fashion, even though they were a Republican President's nominees. I can't say the same for the committee today. No one can.

As chairman, JOE BIDEN did his constitutional duty and processed four nominations from Republican Presidents to the Supreme Court, including Justice Kennedy—that vote occurred in the last year of President Reagan's Presidency—Souter and Thomas.

Let us focus on Thomas just a little bit. Thomas got 52 votes. He squeaked through the Senate. Any one Senator could have forced a cloture vote. Any

one Democrat could have done that. We didn't do that. It was never done until the Republicans showed up here in the last few years.

Now, Bork was a very controversial person, but he received a long, long hearing before the committee and a long debate here in the Senate. He was voted down. That is how this place is supposed to work. Other nominees have been voted down. But we didn't say we are not going to hold a hearing on Bork. We didn't say we are not going to take the committee's actions and just leave it at that. Listen to this: Bork was turned down in the Judiciary Committee by an overwhelming margin. In spite of that, we brought it to the Senate floor and it was debated, and he won by two votes—no filibusters. He was defeated in the committee. We didn't look for an excuse. That is the way it used to be done.

With the Republican leadership now they will not meet with the nominee, even though they do not know who it will be; they won't hold a hearing; and the chairman of the committee will not even go to the White House and visit with the President.

As chairman, Senator BIDEN did his constitutional duty and processed nominations, even though they were Republican nominations. So we don't have to go back to 1988 or 1992 to prove the current Judiciary Committee chairman's ineptness. Look at the spike in judicial emergencies that have occurred on Chairman GRASSLEY's watch just in the past year.

What is an emergency? It means there are not enough judges—too many cases for a judge to do the work. A vacant judgeship is automatically declared an emergency, as it should be. When the Republicans assumed control of the Senate last year there were 12 emergencies nationwide. Today, a year later, that number has almost tripled to 31.

By nearly every metric, the Judiciary Committee under Chairman GRASSLEY is failing dramatically, setting all records of failure in this great body. The committee is failing the people of Iowa and the Nation.

To the senior Senator from Iowa, I stress, I plead, don't continue down this path. Reject this record-setting obstruction and simply do your job as a powerful chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. President, I see no one on the floor. Will the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, of South Carolina, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the confirmation vote scheduled for 11 a.m. this morning be moved until 12 noon, with all other provisions of the previous order remaining in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, every Member of the Senate stands in the well of the Senate when they are elected, takes an oath of office. That oath of office, required by the Constitution, is our statement to not only the people we represent but to the Nation, that we will uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States.

Article II, section 2 of that Constitution empowers the President. Those powers include the President's power to fill vacancies on the Supreme Court. It is not permissive language. The word "shall" can be found in this paragraph. It basically says that the President of the United States shall nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint judges of the Supreme Court.

For the first time in the history of the United States of America, Senate Republicans are prepared to defy this clear statement of the U.S. Constitution. What an irony that filling the vacancy on the Court by the untimely death of Antonin Scalia—filling the vacancy on the Court of a man who prided himself throughout his judicial

career as being what he termed an "originalist," sticking to the strict letter of the law, as spelled out in the Constitution—in filling that vacancy, the Senate Republicans have basically decided to reach a new low; in fact, to make history in a very sad way. A seat on the U.S. Supreme Court lies vacant because of the death of Justice Scalia. The President has the constitutional obligation, as I have read, to name a nominee to fill that vacancy. Senate Republicans are now saying they will not even hold a hearing on that nominee.

If the President sends a name—and he will—to the Senate to fill that vacancy, they have said they will not hold a hearing, they will not schedule a vote, and, listen to this, yesterday Senator McConnell said: I will not even meet with that person.

This is a new low. Since the Senate Judiciary Committee started holding hearings on Supreme Court nominees a century ago, the Senate of the United States of America has never—never—denied a hearing to a pending Supreme Court nominee. It has never happened, but that is what Senate Republicans are saying they will do.

This level of obstruction, of ignoring the clear language of the Constitution, is unprecedented, and it is dangerous. This goes beyond any single vote for any Supreme Court nominee. This is an abdication of the Senate's responsibility under article II, section 2 of the Constitution to provide advice and consent on Supreme Court nominations, which the President shall appoint and shall nominate.

Senate Republicans want to keep the Supreme Court seat vacant for more than 1 year. They want this vacancy to continue for more than 1 year. That will encompass two terms of the Supreme Court. This is demeaning to the institution of the Supreme Court, and unfair to millions of Americans who rely on that Court to resolve important legal questions.

In the coming days, the President will name a nominee, as the Constitution requires him to do. Senate Republicans should meet their responsibility under the Constitution, do their jobs, and give the President's nominee a fair hearing and a vote.

Yesterday, the Republican members of the Senate Judiciary Committee sent a letter to the majority leader, and here is what they said: "This Committee will not hold hearings on any Supreme Court nominee until after our next President is sworn in on January 20, 2017."

Why did they take this unusual position in defiance of the Constitution? They said: "The presidential election is well underway. Americans have already begun to cast their votes. . . . The American people are presented with an exceedingly rare opportunity to decide, in a very real and concrete

way, the direction the Court will take over the next generation."

This argument is specious. The American people have already voted; they voted to elect our President, Barack Obama, and they voted to elect 100 Senators who currently serve in this body. President Obama was elected to a 4-year term, and 11 months remain. The American people voted for each of us to do our jobs for as long as we serve in office. By a margin of 5 million votes, the American people have chosen the President. Did they elect the President for 3 years, or 3 years and 2 months? No. They elected a President for 4 years, and this President's term continues until January 20, 2017.

The Republicans conveniently ignore the obvious. The will of the American people was expressed in that election, and the election of Barack Obama as President of the United States empowers him under the Constitution to fill this vacancy with an appointment. They didn't vote in that election for us to sit on our hands for over a year while the Supreme Court twists in the wind and while the Republican Senators pray every night that President Donald Trump will somehow give America a different Supreme Court nominee. Not a single American, incidentally, has yet cast a vote for President of the United States—not one—in the next election, despite the statement of the Judiciary Committee Republicans that says otherwise.

It is February of this year. The nomination conventions are scheduled for late July. The modern Supreme Court confirmation process has taken an average of 67 days. There is more than adequate time to hold a hearing on this nominee and get this done properly. All we need is for the Senate Republicans to do their jobs.

Yesterday on the Senate floor, I urged my Republican colleagues not to duck a vote on the President's nominee. They could vote yes, they could vote no, but they shouldn't abdicate their constitutional responsibility for political advantage. I am amazed that my Republican colleagues now say that not only do they want to duck that vote, but they also want to avoid even having a hearing on the nominee. And they are afraid to even meet with this nominee for fear that maybe they might think he or she is a good nominee.

Even more shockingly, the Republican leader and several Republican members of the Judiciary Committee said yesterday they would not even meet with the President's nominee. One of our colleagues in the Senate last night on television was asked pointedly or directly: If the President nominates someone from your State to the Supreme Court vacancy, are you saying you wouldn't meet with that person? My colleague on the other side of the aisle ducked the question. This is stunning.

Remember, the President is obligated by article II, section 2 of the Constitution to send a nominee to the Senate. That is the process the Founding Fathers established. That is the President's responsibility. How can Senate Republicans refuse to even meet with the person selected under this constitutional process? How is that being faithful to the terms of the Constitution? How are Senate Republicans upholding and defending this Constitution by this evasive, historically unprecedented action?

Sadly, it appears that Senate Republicans have calculated it is in their best political interests to keep the nominee out of the spotlight. They were hoping that, with this letter and by saying yesterday we will have nothing to do with it, they are going to turn out the lights on this issue. That is not what is going to happen. This issue is going to be there and remembered, and it is going to be recalled on the floor of the Senate repeatedly. They thought they could close down the government when Senator CRUZ of Texas sat here for, I don't know how many hours, reading Dr. Seuss while we shut down the government, and they thought people would forget Senator CRUZ shutting down the government; they didn't, and he is finding on this campaign trail that a lot of people have remembered that. The American people are not going to forget what Senate Republicans are trying to do with the Supreme Court.

I have served on the Judiciary Committee for the hearings and confirmation votes of four of the eight sitting Supreme Court Justices. Let me state clearly that this Senator is more than happy to meet with the President's Supreme Court nominee, as I have on all such nominees—Republican and Democrat alike—and I will consider that nominee on his or her merits, as I have always tried to do in the past.

Yesterday, Senate Republicans also tried to deflect attention from their unprecedented obstruction by pointing to quotes from some Democrats years ago. But the record is clear: Democrats have never, never blocked a Supreme Court nominee from having a hearing. Republicans are breaking new ground with this obstructionism. The American people deserve better.

The bottom line is there is no excuse for the Senate to fail to do its job. Once the President has named his nominee, the Senate must give that nominee a fair hearing and a timely vote. If the Constitution means anything to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, they understand that what they are doing is unprecedented. It has never happened once in American history. We are now finding the obstructionism of Senate Republicans reaching a new low. They are ignoring the clear wording of our Constitution, which they have sworn to uphold and

defend, and they are obstructing in a way that we have never seen before in the history of the United States. That is the reality—a reality that will not be lost on the American people.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about a drug abuse problem that is literally hurting millions of Americans. There has been a dramatic rise in the use and misuse of prescription painkillers. These prescription painkillers—and I tell you this as a doctor—are known as opioids.

Between 1999 and 2013, sales of prescription painkillers in the United States have quadrupled. It is no coincidence that over that same number of years overdose deaths from these drugs have also quadrupled. This is how we know there has been a huge shift from the appropriate use to abuse of these medications. People in rural areas like my own are almost twice as likely to overdose on prescription painkillers as people in large cities. Some people think these problems are only a problem in the big cities. That is not the case with these opioids.

I can tell you as a doctor who practiced medicine in Casper, WY, for 25 years, treating pain in our patients is one of the most difficult things we do. When we have a patient who is in pain, we want to help relieve that pain. Opioids are a very effective way to help patients with pain, and doctors use these medications through prescriptions to help manage the pain. It is important that we have the capacity to do that as long as it is done appropriately. This can be a very good option for someone suffering from chronic pain, such as pain from cancer. It can be appropriate for someone who is suffering from acute, temporary pain, such as someone who just had surgery.

The problem is that these are extremely powerful narcotics. Chemically, they are not that different from heroin, and they can become addictive. Some patients have no problem at all taking these painkillers for the proper amount of time, while other patients might develop a problem and actually have trouble getting off the pain pills. As they get accustomed to the drugs, sometimes they may seek out stronger and more addictive drugs to get the same pain relief. That is why doctors have to be very careful about prescribing the right medicine for each patient and each situation. They have to

balance the risk of the drug with the reward of easing the patient's pain.

Not every doctor in this country has been as careful as they should be. We didn't get into this difficult situation because of a handful of doctors writing too many prescriptions. These prescriptions are being written by doctors in communities all across the country. It is happening in emergency rooms, with family doctors, with specialists, and even with dentists.

I believe Washington policies have inadvertently contributed to the problem. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid have made payments to hospitals partly based on how well the specific hospital has scored on surveys filled out by the patients—the patients who have been in those hospitals. Here are some examples of questions that are asked on these surveys: During this hospital stay, how often was your pain well controlled? Some patients are asked that. They are also asked: How often did the hospital staff do everything they could to help you with your pain?

Well, you can see how doctors might feel pressure to prescribe more and stronger opioid pain relievers to make sure their hospital doesn't get low scores and get penalized by the bureaucrats here in Washington. The Department of Health and Human Services is looking into whether these surveys are contributing to this rise in prescriptions and what can be done about it.

Earlier this month I was 1 of 26 Senators, Republicans and Democrats alike, who wrote to the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make sure she keeps us apprised on the effects these regulations might be having. If these pain relievers are being prescribed inappropriately, they can do more harm than good. That's the problem. Some of these people who get these prescriptions for all the right reasons end up being addicted. When the prescription runs out, they may actually experience withdrawal symptoms, and I have seen it happen.

So what do the people who become addicted to these opioids do? Well, they seek pills on the black market or they turn to other drugs, including heroin. Heroin is often cheaper than the actual prescription opioid and, of course, more deadly.

From 2002 to 2013, heroin use in the United States has nearly doubled. The deaths from heroin overdoses have quadrupled. Why? One of the reasons seems to be that because heroin has become much cheaper on the street, it has also become a more attractive drug for addicts to buy and use. At the same time, the heroin today is believed to be much more powerful than it used to be, and so it may be that people who use it are much more likely to overdose.

When we see statistics like these—or just talk to people, such as those who work in the emergency room, who have

to deal with the drug addictions, 911 calls, opioid abuse, heroin abuse, and see all these problems—it is time for Congress to act. We can't turn a blind eye to Americans who are suffering and dying. That is why I think it is important that the Senate needs to take up action to help stop the damage being done.

Recently the Senate Judiciary Committee passed the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. It has bipartisan support, and it is one more sign that the Senate has gotten back to work on behalf of the American people. Just as the name of the legislation says, it actually addresses both problems—addiction and recovery. It will increase education and prevention efforts to help keep people from becoming addicted to painkillers in the first place. It is also going to strengthen State programs to monitor prescription drugs and to track when these drugs end up in the wrong hands.

For the people who have already passed from use of the medications to abuse and addiction, this legislation will help to launch treatment programs that are based on actual evidence of what works. There are a lot of treatment programs out there and lots of different opportunities to seek treatment. We want to make sure we can identify the ones that are actually succeeding and helping people and then make sure these programs are available to more people. These are just a few of the positive ideas in the legislation.

Senator KELLY AYOTTE, who is one of the main sponsors of this legislation, has said that we can't arrest our way out of this problem. She is exactly right. The misuse and abuse of these drugs is illegal. We must acknowledge that fact. We must still try to do everything in our power to keep this misuse from turning into addiction and even death. There are States and communities and families suffering because of the abuse of these drugs. We can all be part of the solution, and we must all be part of the solution.

I know that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is looking into another aspect of this subject, as is the Finance Committee. There are lots of ideas out there, and I am glad to see Members taking the issue so seriously. I am glad we are moving forward with bipartisan legislations and solutions.

Senator AYOTTE has been a major force in talking about this problem. Senators WHITEHOUSE, KIRK, PORTMAN, and others have addressed this issue.

Another good, commonsense idea is looking into changing Medicare Part D and Medicare Advantage. This legislation has been introduced by Senator PAT TOOMEY of Pennsylvania. I am a cosponsor of that legislation. The bill is called the Stopping Medication Abuse and Protecting Seniors Act.

That is it: Stopping Medication Abuse and Protecting Seniors. It allows Part D and Medicare Advantage plans to lock in patients to a single prescriber, a single pharmacy, for their opioid pain medicine. This is going to do a couple of things. It will deal with the issue of doctor shopping. That is when a patient goes to multiple providers to get duplicate prescriptions if they become addicted. Many private insurance companies already do this and so does Medicaid. So we should allow and encourage Medicare to do it as well.

These are all ideas with bipartisan support in the Senate. They are examples of ways that Democrats and Republicans are working together to help Americans who need and deserve help. The abuse of prescription drugs and heroin is happening everywhere in America. It is harming our Nation. Congress must do what it can to stop it.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, our Republican colleagues have decided that the Senate should not hold a hearing or vote on any Supreme Court nominee this year. The reason? It is an election year. That is a breathtakingly candid but utterly irresponsible reason for the Senate not to do its job. That decision may not surprise those who have followed the Senate in recent years, as our Republican colleagues have time and again chosen to obstruct President Obama's agenda.

We can disagree on legislation, we can disagree on policies, we can certainly disagree on judicial nominations, but the idea that the Senate should not take any action on a Supreme Court vacancy is unprecedented.

In the last 100 years, the Senate has taken action on every Supreme Court nominee whether it is an election year or not. The Senate has not only taken action, but the Senate has confirmed more than a dozen Supreme Court Justices in the final year of a Presidency. In fact, a Democratic Senate confirmed Justice Anthony Kennedy in the final year of President Reagan's term. Yet roughly 9 months before the next election, the Republican position is that the Senate should not do its job because 11 months from now, we will have a new President. I ask you, what has that got to do with us doing our jobs?

Under the Republican timeline, the Supreme Court will be left with only

eight Justices for over a year. The last time it took so long for the Senate to fill a vacancy on the Court was during the Civil War. The rationale that the Senate should not act because of an upcoming election is not only stunning, but I think most Americans would agree is absurd. In what other workplace can employees announce that they don't plan to fulfill their responsibilities for 9 months and still get paid? But that is exactly what Republicans are saying to the American people.

We work for the American people. The American people elect Senators, Representatives, and Presidents. Through elections, the people shape the direction of our country.

While Republicans may want to forget it, in 2012 the people elected President Obama to a full 4-year term. That term doesn't end for nearly a year. His responsibilities as President don't stop because a Republican Senate says so.

The Constitution requires a President to nominate someone to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court. The Constitution requires the Senate to provide advice and consent on the President's nominee. That is our job as Senators.

The President hasn't nominated anyone to fill the current Supreme Court vacancy. When he does, no Senator is required to vote for that nominee, but what is required is for the Senate to fulfill its constitutional duties. The President's nominee deserves a hearing and a vote. No excuses. Let's do our job.

Mr. President, I wish to now turn to another subject.

(The remarks of Ms. HIRONO pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 373 are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday it was my privilege to say a few words honoring Justice Antonin Scalia, known to his friends as "Nino," a man whose intellect, wit, and dedication to our Constitution have served our country for decades. I am pleased that others have said appropriate words honoring his memory and the many ways he helped strengthen our constitutional self-government and our democracy.

As we know, the Constitution gives the Senate an equal role in deciding who eventually is to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States. President Obama called me and other

members of the Judiciary Committee yesterday, saying he intends to exercise his constitutional authority, and I recognize his right to make that nomination. But not since 1932 has the Senate, in a Presidential election year, confirmed a Supreme Court nominee to a vacancy that arose in that Presidential election year. And it is necessary to go even further back—I believe to the administration of Grover Cleveland in 1888—to find an election-year nominee who was nominated and confirmed under a divided government, such as we have now.

So I found it very curious that some of our colleagues across the aisle are effusive in their criticism of our decision to withhold consent until we have a new President and in effect say this ought to be a choice not just confined to the 100 Members of the Senate and the President but to the American people.

We are not saying—we are not foreclosing the possibility that a member of one party or another party would be the one to make that nominee. This isn't a partisan issue. This is about the people having a chance to express their views and raising the stakes and the visibility of the Presidential election to make the point that this isn't just about the next President who will serve 4 years, maybe 8 years; this will likely be about who will serve the next 30 years on the Supreme Court of the United States.

I am going to remind our colleagues of some of the things they have said in the past for which they have so roundly criticized us. People understand when there are differences of opinion. It is a little harder to understand hypocrisy when you have taken just the opposite position when it suited your purposes in the past to the position you take today. So let me just be charitable and say maybe they have just forgotten.

For example, the minority leader, Senator REID of Nevada, the Democratic leader, said on May 19, 2005, when George W. Bush was President of the United States:

The duties of the Senate are set forth in the U.S. Constitution. Nowhere in that document does it say the Senate has a duty to give Presidential appointees a vote.

That was Senator REID. I agree with him. That is exactly right, but that is not the position he appears to be taking today.

The President has every right to nominate someone, but the Senate has the authority to grant consent or to withhold consent. And what I and the other members of the Judiciary Committee on the Republican side said yesterday in a letter to the majority leader is that we believe unanimously—all the Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee—that we should withhold consent, exercising a right and an authority recognized by Senator REID in 2005.

I have read some of the press clips. People recoil in mock horror: Well, you are not even going to have a hearing? You are not even going to meet with the President's proposed nominee?

Well, that is right, for a very good reason—because it is not about the personality of that nominee. So it would be pretty misleading for us to take the same position that Senator REID has taken and then to say: Well, we are going to go through this elaborate dance of having courtesy meetings, maybe even having a hearing, when we have already decided—as Senator REID acknowledged is the right of the Senate—not to bring up this President's nominee for a vote. And not to pre-ordain who that next nominee will be, whether they will be nominated by a Republican or Democratic President—we don't know what the outcome of the Presidential election is going to be. But this is too important for the Congress and for the Senate to be stamped into a rubberstamp of President Obama's selection on the Supreme Court as he is heading out the door—a decision that could well have an impact on the balance of power on the Supreme Court for the next 30 years.

I am not through with my charts.

The next Democratic leader in the Senate, Senator SCHUMER—first, I guess you could call this the Reid standard. We call it the Reid rule and the Schumer standard. That rolls off the tongue better.

So this is what Senator SCHUMER said 18 months before President George W. Bush left office. We are only looking at, what, 10 or 11 months until President Obama leaves. In 2007, Senator CHUCK SCHUMER said: “[F]or the rest of this President's term. . . . We should reverse the presumption of confirmation.”

I, frankly, don't know what he is talking about. The Constitution doesn't talk about a presumption of confirmation. But it is pretty clear to me that he wants a presumption that the nominee will not be confirmed for the next 18 months.

Senator SCHUMER, one of the Democratic leaders, said: “I will recommend to my colleagues that we should not confirm a Supreme Court nominee except in extraordinary circumstances.”

So what we are doing is what Senator REID and Senator SCHUMER advocated back when it was convenient and served their purposes way back when. They are now taking a different position because, of course, their interests are different. They want to make sure President Obama gets a chance to nominate and the Senate confirm President Obama's nominee, who will serve for perhaps the next quarter of a century or more on the Supreme Court. But it is pretty clear that the Senate is not bound to confirm a Supreme Court nominee or even hold a vote.

Finally, I wish to point out—we will call it the Reid rule, the Schumer standard, and the Biden benchmark.

This is what the Vice President of the United States, JOE BIDEN, said in 1992 when he was chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. He gave a long speech, of which this is an excerpt. He said: “[T]he Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination until after the political campaign season is over.” He went on to say: “[A]ction on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over.”

That is the Biden benchmark—the Reid rule, the Schumer standard, and the Biden benchmark.

I read a statement from the Vice President that he issued after he saw that this old news clip and his statement had been made public. He quite conveniently said this was “not an accurate description of my views on the subject.” Well, I think the words are very clear. I think what he might have said is “These are no longer my views on the subject” because, of course, he would like President Obama to be able to make that nomination.

So I wish to reject this myth that many of our Democratic colleagues are spreading that what we are doing here and now is somehow unprecedented. Quite the contrary. What we are doing is what the Democrats' top leadership has advocated in the past. What do they think we are? They think we are going to abide by a different set of rules than they themselves advocated? How ridiculous would that be? I could not explain that to my constituents back home in Texas. If I were going to say: Well, the Democrats can apply one set of rules, but then when the Republicans are in the majority, the Republicans must apply a different set of rules—well, the fact is, the rule book has been burned by the Democrats, and what we are operating under is the status quo they advocated back in 1992, 2005, and 2007.

The Senate has every right under the Constitution not to have a hearing, and we shouldn't go through some motions pretending like we are or that this is really about the personality of whom-ever the President nominates. I have confidence that the President will nominate somebody who he thinks is qualified to be on the Supreme Court. I would point out, though, that this nominee will not be confirmed. I don't know many leading lawyers, scholars, and judges who would want to be nominated for the U.S. Supreme Court to a seat that President Obama will never fill.

So during this already very heated election year—and the election is already underway. Democrats are voting in Democratic primaries, and Republicans are voting in Republican primaries and caucuses. The election is already underway, and the Supreme

Court can function in the vast majority of cases with eight members. It frequently does anyway because most cases are not decided 5 to 4; most cases are decided on a consensus basis.

But let's say, for the six or so cases in which Justice Scalia was a deciding vote on a 5-to-4 case last year—if there is a deadlock, those cases can simply be held over until the next year when there is a new Justice or the Court can come up with some other way to dispose of it as it sees fit. That frequently happens. For example, Justice Kagan was Solicitor General of the United States. She was recused from and could not sit on cases that she handled as an advocate for the U.S. Government once she got to the Supreme Court. So the Court operated with eight Justices for a long time because of Justice Kagan's recusal. Similarly, Justice Anthony Kennedy served on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Once he got to the Supreme Court of the United States, he couldn't then sit on those cases and decide them once as a circuit court judge and another time as a Supreme Court Justice. He recused, which means there were eight Justices to decide those cases. That is not extraordinary; that is not uncommon. And it is not going to paralyze the Supreme Court of the United States from doing its job. It has all the tools it needs at its disposal to handle these cases as it sees fit—either to dismiss them as improvidently granted, to hold them over if they are truly deadlocked, or to find some other perhaps more narrow basis upon which to decide the case, which would command a five-vote majority with eight members of the Court.

So Mr. President, I would like our colleagues to come out here and explain this apparent contradiction in the position they took in 2007, 2005, and 1992. Because if they can't explain that, then it looks to me like this is pure hypocrisy—holding Republicans, when we are in the majority, to a different standard than they themselves were willing to embrace when they were in power.

As I said, people may not understand a lot of the nitty-gritty details of this, but they do have a strong sense of fairness and evenhandedness, and they do smell hypocrisy and see it when it is right before their eyes.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I come to the floor today with what I think is a pretty simple message—a message the American people have

been delivering to me and the people of North Dakota and which reflects exactly why I wanted to come to Washington, DC—which is that Congress needs to do its job. Whether it is legislating on WOTUS or making sure we are moving appointments properly or taking votes that may make some of us uncomfortable, that is our job. That is why the American taxpayers pay us. So I come today to say: Congress, do your job. Senate, do your job.

Every day families across this country go to work and fulfill their responsibilities and obligations. They do their jobs to put food on the table for their family, and they pay their bills. Imagine a construction worker in North Dakota telling his boss he didn't want to do his job for the rest of the year until conditions are probably more favorable. He might get a good laugh. He might be told to go back to work. If he was serious, he wouldn't have a job very long.

Everyone here knows American workers can't go to their jobs and just announce: I don't want to do that today. They can't just say: I am not going to do my job for the rest of the year. I am going to wait to find out who might be the new boss. That is not how it works for the American people, and it is certainly not how it should work for the Senate.

In many ways, I think it is an embarrassment that some of my colleagues would not only ask the President not to do his job—a job our Constitution instructs him to do—but they would also shirk their own duties to provide advice and consent to the President simply because it is not a good political time to do it.

It says something pretty terrible about Congress if the Senate now is making determinations about how a popularly elected President, regardless of political party—regardless of whether that President is popular in this Chamber or not—is no longer allowed to perform the duties of that office and nominate and receive a vote on the Supreme Court nominee of his choosing.

It is a disappointing day when some Senators will tell the President: Don't even bother because we will not even consider or even talk to your nominee. This is before the President has even announced or named a nominee. It is particularly frustrating to those of us who really want the Senate to work that some Senators are willing to hamper the functioning of yet another branch of our Federal Government simply to play politics, with the hope that those politics will benefit one party—to maintain and possibly take control of the other two branches of government.

I don't think anyone can dispute the facts. The Supreme Court considers some of the most critical issues facing our country, and the American people deserve a fully functioning Court. To

insist the Court go through potentially two terms without a full slate of Justices is an abdication of our responsibility as Senators. That responsibility is to make sure that America's three branches of government are fully functioning.

Just yesterday, we heard that our colleagues are not even going to entertain the thought of a hearing before the Judiciary Committee for any nominee the President puts forward. I don't know how to explain that decision. I don't know how one can say that for the next 10 months that doesn't matter. I don't know how to explain that to people back in North Dakota.

In the last 100 years, the full Senate has taken action on every pending Supreme Court nominee to fill a vacancy, regardless of whether the nomination was made in a Presidential election year. According to CRS—Congressional Research Service—since 1975 the average number of days from nomination to final Senate confirmation is 67 days or just over 2 months.

Since committee hearings began in 1916, every pending Supreme Court nominee has received a hearing, except nine nominees who were all confirmed within 11 days. In addition to holding hearings on the nominations, the Senate Judiciary Committee has a longstanding bipartisan tradition of sending to the full Senate all pending nominees to the Supreme Court for a Supreme Court vacancy, even when the majority of the committee may not have supported that nominee.

If, in fact, this Supreme Court vacancy is held open until the next President makes the nomination, that will mean it is vacant for well over a year. Not since the Civil War—not since the Civil War—has the Senate taken longer than 1 year to fill a Supreme Court vacancy.

An extended period of time with only eight members of the Supreme Court sitting would delay or prevent justice from being served. There are American citizens across the country who need decisions from the Court on a variety of issues. In fact, what we have done is we have elevated the circuit courts—the courts that have made the decisions that are currently pending—to the position of the Supreme Court of the United States, denying access to those claimants one way or the other—whether the court agreed with them or the court disagreed with them in the circuit courts—denying them access to that final appeal, to that Supreme Court decision.

So I simply want to say: Let's do our job. Let's give the nominee a hearing. Let's vote in committee. Let's all do our job to vet the candidates. Let's not prejudice this. Let's do the responsible thing and vote yes or no. Let's take a look at the candidate to be nominated, and let's get a fully functioning Supreme Court.

I want to close with just one reminder. The last time we went through a very contentious hearing was the hearing for Justice Thomas, and I think my colleague from Washington, who is on the floor, well remembers that, as do a lot of people here remember that. I want to remark that Justice Thomas was sent to this floor without a positive vote out of committee. But his nomination was sent to the floor, and the nomination of Justice Thomas, at the urging of then-majority leader Mitchell, was not filibustered. So probably the most contentious nominee in my lifetime certainly—and it certainly raised some very interesting gender issues—did not even get filibustered.

Let's do our job. Let's do the work the people sent us here to do. Let's vet this candidate, whoever it might be, and let's move forward so that every person who has a case pending before the Supreme Court or will have a case pending before the Supreme Court is given access to justice by providing a fully functioning Supreme Court.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak on behalf of the nomination before the vote for 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, the role of the FDA Commissioner is central to the health and safety of every family and community nationwide, from a dad making his daughter's peanut butter sandwich in the morning to a patient headed into an operating room. I know this is a nomination we all take very seriously.

After careful review, I believe Dr. Califf's experience and expertise will allow him to lead the FDA in a way that puts patients and families first and upholds the highest standards of patient and consumer safety. Dr. Califf has led one of our country's largest clinical research organizations, and he has a record of advancing medical breakthroughs on especially difficult-to-treat illnesses.

He has a longstanding commitment to transparency in relationships with industry and to working to ensure academic integrity. He has made clear he will continue to prioritize independence at the FAA as the Commissioner and always put science over politics. His nomination received letters of support from over 128 different physician and patient groups.

He earned the strong bipartisan support of the members of the HELP Committee. There is a lot the FDA needs to get done in the coming months, including building a robust postmarket surveillance system for medical devices, making sure families have access to nutritional information, putting all of the agency's tools to work to stop to-

bacco companies from targeting our children, and playing a part in addressing the epidemic of opioid abuse that is hurting so many communities so deeply.

I believe Dr. Califf will be a valuable partner to Congress in taking on these challenges and the many others the FDA faces. I am here to encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this nomination. I look forward to continued work with all of the Members on ways to strengthen health and well-being for the families and communities we all serve.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Califf nomination?

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 25 Ex.]

YEAS—89

Alexander	Flake	Nelson
Baldwin	Franken	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Booker	Grassley	Reed
Boozman	Hatch	Reid
Boxer	Heinrich	Risch
Brown	Heitkamp	Roberts
Burr	Heller	Rounds
Cantwell	Hirono	Sasse
Capito	Hoeven	Schatz
Cardin	Inhofe	Schumer
Carper	Isakson	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Cassidy	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Cochran	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Lankford	Sullivan
Coons	Leahy	Tester
Cornyn	Lee	Thune
Cotton	McCain	Tillis
Crapo	McConnell	Toomey
Daines	Menendez	Udall
Donnelly	Merkley	Vitter
Durbin	Mikulski	Warren
Enzi	Moran	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murkowski	Wicker
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden
Fischer	Murray	

NAYS—4

Ayotte
Blumenthal

Manchin
Markey

NOT VOTING—7

Corker
Cruz
Johnson

McCaskill
Rubio
Sanders

Warner

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Missouri.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I wish to address the Senate in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA AND FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I wish to talk about Judge Scalia for a few minutes, and then I will address the vacancy on the Court.

There is no question that the Supreme Court has lost a strong and thoughtful voice. No matter what issues the Justices on the Court might have disagreed with, or even when there was a disagreement on how to interpret the Constitution, there is no question that Judge Scalia had a unique capacity to get beyond that. He will be missed by the Court for both his intellect and his friendship. He was an Associate Justice on the Court for almost 30 years. He was a true constitutional scholar, both in his work before the Court and on the Court, and he brought a lifetime of understanding of the law to the Court.

He began his legal career in 1961, practicing in private practice. In 1967, he became part of the faculty of the University of Virginia School of Law. In 1972, he joined the Nixon administration as General Counsel for the Office of Telecommunications Policy, and from there he was appointed Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel. He brought a great deal of knowledge to his work and finished the first part of his career as a law professor at the University of Chicago, and

that is the point where he became a judge.

In 1982, President Reagan appointed him to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, a court that gets many of the cases that wind up on the Supreme Court. He was on that court for a little more than 4 years.

In 1986, President Reagan nominated him to serve as an Associate Justice. He was an unwavering defender of the Constitution, and as a member of the Supreme Court, he had the ability to debate as perhaps no one had in a long time—and perhaps no one will for a long time. He had a sense of what the Constitution was all about and a sense of what the Constitution meant, and by that he meant what the Constitution meant to the people who wrote it.

There is a way to change the Constitution. If the country and the Congress think that the Constitution is outmoded in the way that it would have been looked at by the people who wrote it, there is a process to do something about that. That process was immediately used when the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution and can still be used if people feel as though the Constitution no longer has the same meaning as what the people who wrote it and voted on it thought it meant. Justice Scalia had the ability to bring that up in every argument and would sometimes argue against his own personal views. He argued for what the Constitution meant and what it was intended to mean. His opinions were well reasoned, logical, eloquent, and often laced with both humor and maybe a little sarcasm, but they were grounded with the idea that judges should interpret the Constitution the way it was written.

His contributions to the study of law left a profound mark on the legal profession. Lawyers, particularly young lawyers in many cases, talk about the law differently than they did before Justice Scalia began to argue his view of what the Constitution meant and what the Court meant. He had a great legal mind.

He was fun to be with. I will personally miss the opportunity to talk to him about the books we were reading or books the other one should read or maybe books that the other one should avoid reading because of the time required to read it. He had a broad sense of wanting to challenge his own views and was able to challenge other people's views not only in a positive way but in a way that he thought advanced the Constitution and what the Constitution meant to the country.

As I stand here today, I am sure many people all over America and the people who the Scalias came into contact with are continuing to remember his family. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Maureen, their nine children, and their literally dozens of grandchildren. I am not sure if the

number is 36 or 39, but it is an impressive number.

Those who had a chance to see, be there, or read his son's eloquent handling of the funeral service and the eulogy can clearly see the great legacy he and Maureen Scalia left to the country.

I am not a lawyer, which is often the most popular thing I say, so I don't want to pretend to be a lawyer here talking about the law and the Constitution, but you don't really need to be a brilliant lawyer to understand the Constitution or understand what Justice Scalia was going to be.

I was a history teacher before I came here, and I know the Presiding Officer was a university president. I was the first person in my family to graduate from college. I had unbelievable opportunities because of where we live.

We have the Constitution, and there is no magic as to the number of Justices that should be sitting on the Court at any given time. In fact, the Constitution doesn't even suggest what the number should be, and there have been different numbers over time. For some years now the number has been nine, but there have often not been nine Justices sitting. In the event of a recusal or some other reason that a Justice has to leave, such as resigning to do something else, there has often not been nine Justices. In fact, there have often been eight Justices. There has often been a Court that could easily wind up in a 4-to-4 tie. In fact, since World War II, the Court has had only 8 Justices 15 times.

Right after World War II and about a month after Harry Truman became President—when he was a Member of the Senate, he used the desk that I now get to use—he asked Justice Robert Jackson to be the chief prosecutor at Nuremberg. Justice Jackson then went to Nuremberg, and for the better part of a year and a half—from May of 1945 until October of 1946—he was not sitting on the Court and wasn't making decisions on the Court. He was the chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials.

A tie on the Court can do a lot of things. It can uphold a lower court decision. A tied Court can decide to rehear a case, which is also not unusual in the history of the country. Again, you can be tied even if there are nine Justices and one of them, for whatever reason, decides not to participate in that case. When that happens, the Court can do a number of things and will.

This is an important decision, and it is a decision in the shadow of the next election. We are 9 months and a few days away from people getting a chance to vote, and a lifetime appointment on the Court is an important thing.

Justice Scalia was appointed by Ronald Reagan and served for three decades. He served for a quarter of a cen-

tury after Ronald Reagan left the White House and for a decade after President Reagan died. This is something worth thinking about, and frankly at this moment in history and in other moments in history when a vacancy has occurred in an election year, it has often been the case that the decision is that the American people ought to have a say on who sits in that Supreme Court seat. That is what will happen this time, and I think it is the best thing to happen this time.

There is a lot at stake. The Court has had 5-to-4 votes on decision after decision. What the Court does on the Second Amendment matters, and what the Court does on the First Amendment matters. The first freedom in the First Amendment is freedom of religion. No other country was ever founded on the principle that the right to pursue your conscience and the right to pursue your faith is a principal tenant of the founding of this government. It was a principal tenet in the Revolution. More importantly, it was immediately added to the Constitution when there was some concern that maybe the Constitution was not clear enough about this fundamental principle.

During a time when the Obama administration is suing the Little Sisters of the Poor because the Little Sisters of the Poor doesn't want their health care plan to be a plan that includes things that are different than their faith beliefs, freedom of religion is very important.

That is one of the cases before the Court right now. I don't know how the Court will decide to determine it. I do know there is a reason we should be concerned about freedom of religion, the right of conscience. President Jefferson, in writing to a church that asked him about individual freedom, said to that church—I think it might have been late in his administration, might have been an 1808 letter—of all the rights we have, right of conscience is the one we should hold most dear. The American people need to be thinking about that as they determine the next President, who is likely to not just fill this vacancy but likely to fill more than one vacancy during their time in office.

Mrs. Clinton says if she is elected President, she will not appoint anybody to the Supreme Court who will not reverse the freedom of speech case in *Citizens United*. Sounds to me as though the Presidential candidates are willing to make the Court a major issue in this campaign. Voters should have the right to make the Court a major issue in this campaign as well—freedom of religion, freedom of speech, the Second Amendment, the Tenth Amendment that says anything the Constitution doesn't say the Federal Government is supposed to do is left to the States. The closer you are to where a problem is, when solving that problem, the more likely you are going to

get a commonsense solution. That is why that Tenth Amendment is there and why it needs to be vigorously adhered to.

These are important times. Anytime we have an election in the country, there is always a sense that this may be the most important election we have ever had. They all are and particularly an election where the constitutional principles of government, where Executive overreach, where regulators who are unaccountable and out of control are one of the big concerns in America today. It is an important time to be thinking about the Supreme Court and an important time to be thinking about the responsibilities of citizens and the responsibilities of the next President of the United States. This President has every constitutional right and obligation to nominate somebody to a vacancy on the Supreme Court, but there is a second obligation in the Constitution; that is, the obligation of the Senate to confirm that nomination. I have a view that the answer to that question is not this person, not right now because we are too close to making a big decision about the future of the country to not include this process of what happens to the Supreme Court in that process.

I wish the process of democracy well, the American people well as they think about these things, and the Senate well as we do the other work that the Constitution requires us to do.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

OUR "WE THE PEOPLE" DEMOCRACY

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, today I rise to address a topic under the broad notion of the first three words of our Constitution: "We the People." These are the most important three words because they set out the theory, the strategy for our entire Constitution and what it is all about, which is to ensure that we do not have government of, by, and for the most affluent in our society; or government of, by, and for the titans of commerce and industry; but instead a government of, by, and for the people, the citizens. It is within the framework of this Constitution that we find many elements designed to preserve this "we the people" purpose.

In recent years, in recent decades, we have had major attacks on the theory

of our Constitution, "we the people." We had the *Buckley v. Valeo* Supreme Court decision 40 years ago that said it is all right for the most affluent citizens in our society to drown out the people in the election process. We had *Citizens United*, which said the Constitution doesn't say "we the people"; it says "we the titans of commerce and industry; we the corporations." So the Supreme Court has made several decisions that have taken us far afield, and we see the results of this. We see the impact of policies crafted by a legislature elected with fabulous sums of money from the people at the height of our society, the height of power and influence, of wealth and connections.

Somehow, we have to reclaim our Constitution. In fact, this understanding is something that is way off base, is the foundation of the frustration we see across our Nation. We see it reflected in the Presidential campaigns this year on the Democratic side and on the Republican side. People know that something is wrong when over the last four decades virtually all additional income in our economy has gone to the top 10 percent. People understand that the middle class is being squeezed and crushed. People are starting to see tent cities pop up in cities across our Nation because policies made here are no longer crafted for "we the people" but instead for "we the titans."

Well, I am going to rise repeatedly to address this challenge that is at the core of who we are as a nation, the core of our Constitution. Our Constitution is being attacked continuously, and we the people must fight back to reclaim it.

The most recent attack has come from colleagues in this body who said they don't want to honor the responsibilities that they took on when they took the oath of office. One of those responsibilities is to give advice and consent on nominations. Recently, we have the majority leader who said: I don't even want to talk to a nominee from the President, let alone take my responsibilities under the Constitution seriously to give advice and consent.

So I thought it might be useful to go back and think a little bit about this advice-and-consent power and how it came to be, what it meant, and what it means for us to honor our responsibility today as Members of the U.S. Senate.

In those days in which the Founders were crafting the Constitution, they had a couple of different theories about how they might possibly create this power, and some said it should go solely to the Executive, solely to the President. Others said that is too much power to concentrate in single hands, that it should go to the body of a legislature, it should go to an assembly.

Some decades after our Constitution was signed, they had a Federalist

Paper written by Alexander Hamilton that laid out this discussion. He noted—and I am going to quote at some length here—that the argument for the Executive is as follows:

The sole and undivided responsibility of one man will naturally beget a livelier sense of duty and a more exact regard to reputation. He will, on this account, feel himself under stronger obligations, and more interested to investigate with care the qualities requisite to the stations to be filled, and to prefer with impartiality the persons who may have the fairest pretensions to them.

So that was the argument for the President to exercise these powers.

In addition, there was discussion of the weaknesses of an assembly, a body like the U.S. Senate having that responsibility all to itself. Again, I will quote Alexander Hamilton:

Hence, in every exercise of the power of appointing to offices, by an assembly of men, we must expect to see a full display of all the private and party likings and dislikes, partialities and antipathies, attachments and animosities, which are felt by those who compose the assembly. The choice which may at any time happen to be made under such circumstances, will of course be the result either of a victory gained by one party over the other, or of a compromise between the parties. In either case, the intrinsic merit of the candidate will be too often out of sight.

So thus the argument for the Executive over the assembly to have these appointing powers. But there was a concern, and that was, what if the Executive, the President, goes off track? Wouldn't it be useful to have a check on nominations when the Executive goes off track? So Hamilton explained why this check on the President's nomination power was placed into the Constitution.

Once more I quote:

To what purpose then require the co-operation of the Senate? I answer, that the necessity of their concurrence would have a powerful, though, in general, a silent operation. It would be an excellent check upon a spirit of favoritism in the President, and would tend greatly to prevent the appointment of unfit characters from State prejudice, from family connection, from personal attachment, or from a view to popularity. In addition to this, it would be an efficacious source of stability in the administration.

He goes on to note that the body would be expected to approve most nominations, except when there are special and strong reasons for the refusal.

So that is our job. That is how it is laid out, that we are to make sure the power the President has is not exercised in a way that results in unfit characters being appointed. Thus, this mutual system that took the strengths of the assembly as a check—that is, of the Senate—and the strength of the President in terms of accountability was combined. And Hamilton notes: "It is not easy to conceive a plan better calculated than this to promote a judicious choice of men for filling the offices of the Union."

So that is where we fit in. That is our role. We are to make sure that a nomination—an individual has the preparation, the qualifications, the character, if you will, to fill an office effectively. Hamilton points out in his conversation that just the fact that the Senate will be reviewing the nominations will serve as a check for, if you will, off-track nominations, inappropriate nominations.

During the time I have had a chance to be connected to the Senate—and that now spans four decades; it was 1976 when I came here as an intern for Senator Hatfield—I have seen this body operate as envisioned in the Constitution. I saw this body operate as a simple majority, with rare exception. The use of the filibuster was not used to paralyze, and the power of confirmation—of advice and consent of the Constitution—was not used to systematically undermine the President because he simply happened to be of a different party. It was not used to undermine the judiciary by keeping judicial vacancies open. Indeed, when this body starts to operate in that fashion—as it has been during the time I have been here as a Senator, seeing across the aisle the effort to systematically change the makeup of the core by undermining the responsibility to give advice and consent—then we deeply polarize and undermine this important institution that is our judiciary.

I must say, even though I have seen for years the effort to really harness some gain through the strategy of undermining the ability of the President to appoint, I never thought it would come to this.

Article 2, section 2, declares that “the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States.”

It is a responsibility of the President to nominate. It is a responsibility of the Members of this body to give advice and consent on that nomination. Yet here we are today with the majority of this body saying we do not take seriously our responsibility under the Constitution to give advice and consent.

We have seen the process of really slowing—slow-walking nominations, but this is on a different scale of magnitude.

It is our responsibility to have a committee vet the nominees, our responsibility to have a floor debate on the floor, our responsibility to have a vote, and that certainly is a way the Senate has operated decade after decade, century after century.

I just have to ask each of my colleagues across the aisle, do you find in this beautiful Constitution any phrase that says the President shall nominate but only in the first 3 of the 4 years he

or she is in office? Can you find that in the Constitution? Can you truly raise your head and say you are doing your responsibility when you say: I only want to exercise my constitutional responsibility of advice and consent 3 out of every 4 years, and then I will take a year off. I think if you read the Constitution you will find that is not what it says, and the American people know this. They know the Supreme Court is very important to calling the balls and strikes when actions or laws move into areas that are out of bounds. That is what the Supreme Court does. It makes sure our structure of laws and regulations stay within the bounds of the rights and rules of our Constitution.

This is a critical part of the construction of American democracy. The Supreme Court serves as a check on the overreach of the President, the overreach of this body, and the overreach of its regulators. It cannot do its job if it does not have a full set of members.

Not since the Civil War has the Supreme Court been left with a vacancy for more than a year, and of course the Civil War was a very unusual situation. Since the 1980s, every person appointed to the Supreme Court has been given a hearing and a vote within 100 days. Since 1975, on average, it has taken 2 months to confirm Supreme Court nominees.

Despite what some of my colleagues claim, the President's duty to make nominations to the Supreme Court does not disappear during a Presidential election year. Our responsibility to do advice and consent does not disappear in a Presidential year. Let's look to history. More than a dozen Supreme Court Justices have been confirmed in the final year of a Presidency. More recently, Justice Kennedy, who is still on the bench, was confirmed in the last year of President Reagan's final term. That was done by a Senate led by the opposite party. It was a Democratically controlled Senate that honored its responsibility to give advice and consent.

The American people spoke overwhelmingly when they reelected President Obama in 2012 to a 4-year term. They expect him to fulfill his duties for a full 4 years. They expect us to do our duties under the Constitution. The current campaign events do not stop the responsibilities of the U.S. Senate. For the last 200 years, the Senate has carried out its duty to give a fair and timely hearing and a floor vote to the President's Supreme Court nominees. Let us not change that position today, this week or this year. Let's not only honor the tradition, let's honor the constitutional responsibility.

I note it is not only the Supreme Court we have to worry about. Last year the Senate confirmed just 11 Federal judges, the fewest in any year since 1960—in the last 56 years. Only

one Court of Appeals judge was confirmed, the lowest in any given year since 1953. The number of judicial emergencies, where there are not enough judges confirmed to do the workload, has nearly tripled over the past year, from 12 in January 2015 to 31 judicial emergencies today.

The obstruction is not limited simply to the judicial branch. The abuse of advice and consent or disregard for the responsibility extends to the executive branch. When we elect a President, the President is not a President of the party, he or she is the President of a nation. Whether you are a Democrat or Republican, the President is our President. Systematically using party politics to undermine the individual because they were elected from the opposite party diminishes the individuals who serve in this body, it diminishes the stature of this institution, and it diminishes the function of our Nation so carefully crafted in our Constitution.

Let's ponder the path forward this year. Let's not diminish this institution by forsaking our responsibility. Let's not politically polarize the Court that is so essential to making sure our laws and regulations and attitudes stay within the bounds of the Constitution. Let's instead restore this institution. Let's restore the Senate. Let it be at least as healthy as it was when we were youngsters serving here as interns, coming to DC for the first time or simply reading about it in a book back home.

Let's restore the effectiveness of our judiciary. When we have judicial emergencies, we have justice delayed, and justice delayed is justice denied, and that does not honor the vision of the role of justice in the United States of America.

So I call on my colleagues to end this obstruction that diminishes your service, diminishes this institution, and damages our Nation. In short, do your jobs. Work together as 100 Senators for the future of our Nation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I rise today to address the recent vacancy on

the U.S. Supreme Court and to urge my colleagues to grant swift consideration of the President's eventual nominee.

Make no mistake, the passing of Justice Antonin Scalia came as a great shock. Although Justice Scalia and I did not share a common view of the Constitution or of the country, I recognized that he was a man of great conviction and, it should be said, a man of great humor. My thoughts and prayers are with his family, his friends, his clerks, and his colleagues. But we must now devote ourselves to the task of helping to select his successor.

The Constitution—so beloved by Justice Scalia—provides that the President “shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court.”

Let us all remember that each and every Senator serving in this body swore an oath to support and defend that same Constitution. It is our duty to move forward. We must fulfill our constitutional obligation to ensure that the highest Court in the land has a full complement of Justices. Unfortunately, it would seem that some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle do not agree, and they wasted no time in making known their objections.

Less than an hour after the news of Justice Scalia's death became public, the majority leader announced that the Senate would not take up the business of considering a replacement until after the Presidential elections. “The American people should have a voice in the selection of their next Supreme Court justice,” he said.

The only problem with the majority leader's reasoning is that the American people have spoken. Twice. President Barack Obama was elected and then re-elected by a solid majority of the American people, who correctly understood that elections have consequences, not the least of which is that when a vacancy occurs, the President of the United States has the constitutional responsibility to appoint a Justice to the Supreme Court. The Constitution does not set a time limit on the President's ability to fulfill this duty, nor, by my reading, does the Constitution set a date after which the President is no longer able to fulfill his duties as Commander in Chief or to exercise his authority to, say, grant pardons or make treaties. It merely states that the President shall hold office for a term of 4 years, and by my count, there are in the neighborhood of 11 months left.

If we were truly to subscribe to the majority leader's logic and extend it to the legislative branch, it would yield an absurd result. Senators would become ineffective in the last year of their terms. The 28 Senators who are now in the midst of their reelection campaigns and the 6 Senators who are stepping down should be precluded

from casting votes in committee or on the Senate floor. Ten committee chairs and 19 subcommittee chairs should pass the gavel to a colleague who is not currently running for reelection or preparing for retirement. Bill introduction and indeed the cosponsorship of bills should be limited to those Senators who are not yet serving in the sixth year of their terms. If the majority leader sincerely believes the only way to ensure that the voice of the American people is heard is to lop off the last year of an elected official's term, I trust he will make these changes, but I suspect he does not. Rather, it seems to me that the majority leader believes the term of just one elected official in particular should be cut short, which begs the question, just how should it be cut? As I said, by my count, approximately 11 months remains in Barack Obama's Presidency. Now, 11 months is a considerable amount of time. It is sizeable. It has left, but I wouldn't call it vast.

Then again, there is a certain arbitrariness to settling on 11 months. After all, it is just shy of a full year. Perhaps, in order to simplify matters, an entire year would be proper or maybe just 6 months, half a year. It is a difficult decision. If only the American people had a voice in selecting precisely how much time we should shave off the President's term.

Of course, now that I mention it, there is a way to give the American people a voice in this decision. The majority leader could propose a constitutional amendment. It would, of course, have to pass both Houses of Congress with a two-thirds majority, but that is not an insurmountable obstacle. Provided it clears Congress, the amendment would then bypass the President—which, in this case, would be very apt—and be sent to the States for their ratification. So if the majority leader truly wants the voters to decide how best to proceed, our founding document provides a way forward.

Suggesting that the Senate should refuse to consider a nominee during an election year stands as a cynical affront to our constitutional system, and it misrepresents our history. The Senate has a long tradition of working to confirm Supreme Court Justices in election years. One need look no further than sitting Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy, a Supreme Court nominee appointed by a Republican President and confirmed by a Democratic Senate in 1988—President Reagan's last year in office—during an election year. So when I hear one of my colleagues say “It's been standard practice over the last 80 years to not confirm Supreme Court nominees during a presidential election year,” I know that is not true.

I am not the only one who knows that is not true. The fact-checking publication PolitiFact recently ob-

served that “[s]hould Republican lawmakers refuse to begin the process of confirming a . . . nomination, it would be the first time in modern history.” SCOTUSblog, an indisputable authority on all matters related to the Court, confirmed that the “historical record does not reveal any instances [in over a century] of the . . . Senate failing to confirm a nominee in a presidential year because of the impending election.”

The fact is that there is a bipartisan tradition—a bipartisan tradition—of giving full and fair consideration to Supreme Court nominees. Since the Judiciary Committee began to hold hearings in 1916, every pending Supreme Court nominee, save nine, has received a hearing. And what happened to those nine nominees? They were confirmed within 11 days of being nominated.

In 2001, during the first administration of President George W. Bush, then-Judiciary Committee Chairman LEAHY and Ranking Member HATCH sent a letter to their Senate colleagues making clear that the committee would continue its longstanding, bipartisan practice of moving pending Supreme Court nominees to the full Senate, even when the nominees were opposed by a majority of the committee, but, regrettably, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are leaving that long tradition behind.

Yesterday, every Republican member of the Senate Judiciary Committee sent a letter to the majority leader vowing to deny a hearing to the President's eventual nominee. “This committee,” they wrote, “will not hold hearings on any Supreme Court nominee until after our next President is sworn in on January 20th, 2017.” This marks a historic dereliction of the Senate's duty and a radical departure not just from the committee's past traditions but from its current practices.

I know that my good friend Chairman GRASSLEY cares a great deal about maintaining the legacy of the Judiciary Committee and the propriety of its proceedings. Under his leadership, we have seen the committee put country before party and move consensus, bipartisan proposals. I had hoped Chairman GRASSLEY would approach the task of confirming our next Supreme Court Justice with the same sense of fairness and integrity. I still hope that. But I was very disappointed to learn that yesterday Chairman GRASSLEY gathered only Republican committee members in a private meeting where they unilaterally decided behind closed doors to refuse consideration of a nominee. The decision to foreclose even holding a hearing for a nominee to our Nation's highest Court is shameful, and I suspect the American people share that view.

The Supreme Court is a central pillar of our democracy. The women and men who sit on that bench make decisions

that touch the lives of every single American, regardless of party or political persuasion. Now the Senate must do the same. We must honor our solemn duty to uphold the Constitution and to ensure that Americans seeking justice are able to have their day in court before a full bench of nine Justices.

I urge my colleagues to reject the impulse to put politics before our sworn duty to uphold the Constitution.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor to my colleague from Utah.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia was an extraordinary man whose contributions to this country and the American people, whom he faithfully served from the bench, are so prodigious that it will take generations for us to fully comprehend our debt of great gratitude to him. His untimely, recent death is a tragedy, and his legacy is a blessing to friends of freedom throughout this country and everywhere.

Justice Scalia was a learned student of history and a man who relished, perhaps more than any other, a spirited, lively debate, so it is fitting that his passing has sparked a conversation in America, a spirited conversation about the constitutional powers governing the appointment of Supreme Court Justices and the historical record of Supreme Court vacancies that happen to open up during a Presidential election year.

This debate gives the American people and their elected representatives in the Senate a unique opportunity to discuss our Nation's founding charter and history at a time when our collective choices have very real consequences, so it is important that this debate proceed with candor, mutual respect, and deference to the facts. In that spirit, I wish to address and correct a few of the most pernicious errors, inaccuracies, fallacies, and fabrications we have heard from some of the loudest voices in this debate over the last few days.

From the outset, I have maintained that the Senate should withhold its consent of a Supreme Court nomination to fulfill Justice Scalia's seat and wait to hold any hearings on a Supreme Court nominee until the next President, whether it is a Republican or a Democrat, is elected and sworn in. This position is shared by all of my Republican colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee, consistent with the Senate's powers in the appointment of Federal judges and supported by historical precedent.

In response, some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and many in the media have resorted to all manner of counterarguments, ranging from the historically and constitutionally inaccurate to the absurd, and in many

cases, the claims made by some of my colleagues today flatly contradict their own statements from the past.

I believe the plain meaning of the Constitution and the historical record are sufficiently clear to stand on their own as evidence that there is absolutely nothing unprecedented and absolutely nothing improper about the Senate choosing to withhold its consent of a President's nominee to the Supreme Court, so I would like to focus on one particular allegation offered by some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

With the letter and the spirit of the Constitution, as well as their own words standing against them, many have turned to fearmongering in a last-ditch effort to win the debate. They claim that leaving Justice Scalia's seat vacant until the next President nominates a replacement would somehow inflict a profound institutional injury on the Supreme Court by disrupting the resolution of this term's cases before the Court, a term including important cases on abortion, immigration, religious liberty, and mandatory union dues, among others, ensnaring the Court in endless gridlock with an evenly split eight Justices on the bench and leaving it short-staffed for an unprecedented and potentially prolonged period. Here, the doomsayers are on weak ground, indeed. Let's look at each of these claims in turn.

First, is it true—as many have claimed—that the business of the Supreme Court will be obstructed or otherwise disrupted if the Senate withholds its consent of President Obama's nominee? Absolutely not.

In recent history—in fact, since the nomination of Justice Scalia to the Supreme Court in 1986—it has taken more than 70 days on average for the Senate to confirm or reject a nominee after that nominee has been formally submitted by the President to the Senate for its advice and consent—more than 70 days on average. In many cases, it has taken far longer for the Senate to grant or withhold its consent. It took this body 108 days to reject Judge Robert Bork and 99 days to confirm Justice Clarence Thomas.

Presuming the modern historic average would hold true for any future nominee, even if President Obama were to announce and refer a nominee to the Senate today for our advice and consent, the process would carry through until at least early May. But, significantly, the Supreme Court stops hearing cases in April, which means that even if President Obama were to announce a nominee today, right now, and even if the Senate were to confirm that nominee in a period of time consistent with historical standards, that individual would not be seated in time to hear and rule upon any of the cases that are currently on the Court's docket or any of the cases that are before

the Court in this term. In other words, it would be historically anomalous for any of the cases currently pending before the Court to be decided this term by a nine-member Supreme Court no matter what the Senate chooses to do regarding any future nominee.

Let's put this in perspective. In this scenario—a scenario endorsed by Senate Democrats—it is highly unlikely that the nominee to fill Justice Scalia's seat would hear oral arguments until the beginning of October, literally just a few weeks before the Presidential election. This proves that the main argument made by President Obama and his allies is based on a myth. In their telling, the Senate's choice to withhold consent of a nominee would deny President Obama a Supreme Court Justice who will serve during his final year in the White House, but in reality, it is unlikely that the President's nominee will join the Supreme Court until the country is just weeks away from choosing President Obama's replacement. I think most Americans recognize the problem of a President having the ability to reshape the Supreme Court in his image on his way out of office, and that is exactly why the Senate is choosing to withhold its consent in this case. This is the right course not because of anything the Senate does or does not do and not because of anything the President does or does not do, it is simply a function of the unfortunate timing of Justice Scalia's death. Claims to the contrary are flatly contradicted by an empirical analysis of the Court's history.

Second, the Senate's decision to withhold consent will not lead to an intractable impasse or hopeless gridlock, even if the eventual appointee were to miss the entirety of the next term, which starts in October of 2016 and runs until the end of June 2017.

In each of its previous 5 terms, the current Court has decided only 16 cases on average—or 23 percent of its caseload—by a 5-to-4 majority, and Justice Scalia was 1 of the 5 Justices in the majority in those 5-to-4 cases only about half of the time on average. That means that the vacancy left by Justice Scalia would result in about eight cases out of dozens being decided by a 4-to-4 split. In fact, in the last term served by Justice Scalia, the last complete term, he was in the majority in only six of those 5-to-4 cases, and in the year before that, the preceding term, Justice Scalia's second to last term, he was in the majority in only five of the cases decided by a 5-to-4 majority. What does this mean? Well, it means that it is likely that the effect of his absence on the final vote and ultimate disposition of cases will be lower than even the average suggests. Instead of eight cases being decided by a 4-to-4 split in Justice Scalia's absence, it is likely to be closer to five or

six, as it has been in the last two full terms of Justice Scalia's service on the Court.

Let's not forget what should be obvious: The sky does not fall when a 4-to-4 split occurs on the Supreme Court; rather, the decision of the lower court is left standing. And if there is the prospect of a 4-to-4 split on a particularly salient matter, the Court always has the option of scheduling or rescheduling the hearing for a later time when the Court will have all nine Justices presiding and hearing the case.

Finally, a vacancy on the Court lasting through the Presidential election season will have no greater effect on the Court's ability to decide cases than any number of instances in the past where the Court has had to decide matters with eight Justices or even fewer.

As recently as the Court's 2010-to-2011 term, the Court had to decide over 30 cases with eight or fewer Justices, almost entirely as a result of recusals arising from Justice Kagan's nomination.

Likewise, following the retirement of Justice Powell in 1987, the Court had to act on 80 cases with 8 or fewer justices. This was a result of Democratic opposition to Judge Bork and the eventual late-February confirmation of Anthony Kennedy, coupled with dozens of recusals by Kennedy and other Justices later in that term.

In the October term of 1945, the Court functioned as an eight-member body while Justice Robert Jackson was serving as a prosecutor in Nuremberg, acting on a full term's caseload without him. Tellingly, when Justice Jackson expressed concern about missing so many cases and actually considered returning early for that reason, Justice Felix Frankfurter wrote to encourage Justice Jackson to stay on as a prosecutor, stating that his absence was not "sacrificing a single interest of importance." Compared to today, the Court had a larger workload and issued many more opinions during that term in which Justice Jackson was absent. This suggests that a vacancy of a similar duration as Jackson's full-term sabbatical would be even less damaging to the Court's functioning than the absence of Justice Jackson—an absence that, to reiterate, did not sacrifice "a single interest of importance."

The next President's future nominee is unlikely to miss as many cases as Justices Kennedy or Jackson missed.

These are the facts, Mr. President. They can't be ignored nor can they be wished away. If we are going to have a serious, honest debate about the vacancy left by Justice Scalia's tragic passing, we must proceed on the basis of these facts.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, since the beginning of our Nation, the U.S.

Senate has maintained an important bipartisan tradition of giving fair consideration to Supreme Court nominees. Article II, section 2 of the Constitution is unambiguous about the respective duties and responsibilities of the President and the Senate when there is a Supreme Court vacancy. The Founders did not intend these roles to be optional or something to be disregarded. Article II also states that the President shall hold his office during the term of 4 years, not 3 years or 3 years and 1 month, but 4 full years.

The Constitution plainly says that it is the President's duty to nominate a Supreme Court Justice and it is the Senate's duty to provide advice and consent on that nomination. Throughout our history, Senators have done their constitutional duty by considering and confirming Supreme Court Justices in the final year of a Presidency. In fact, the Senate has done that 14 times, most recently in 1988, when the Senate confirmed Justice Anthony Kennedy, who was President Reagan's nominee to the Supreme Court. He sent that nomination over to the Democratic majority in this body. Almost 28 years ago exactly to the day in February of 1988, the Democratic majority in the Senate confirmed Republican President Ronald Reagan's judicial nomination, Anthony Kennedy, unanimously 97-0. They didn't debate whether it was a Presidential year and whether they could act. It was in the middle of a hard-fought election. It was not at all clear what the outcome of that election was going to be.

Since 1975, the average length of time from nomination to a confirmation vote for the Supreme Court—that is the average length of time; sometimes it has taken longer and sometimes it has been shorter—but since 1975, the average length of time has been 67 days because our predecessors in the Senate recognized how important it is for the Supreme Court to be fully functioning.

Unfortunately, this week we are seeing this bipartisan tradition regarding the Court being put at risk. Yesterday we heard the majority leader say that if the President nominates a person to the Supreme Court—any person, no matter how superbly qualified—there will be no hearings and no vote. We even heard some Senators say they would refuse to meet with any potential nominee. I think that is very unfortunate.

It is unfortunate for a number of reasons, probably first and foremost because the people of the United States expect us to work together here in Washington to do the job of the country—to do the jobs we were elected to do—and because the current President's term ends in January of 2017. That is more than 300 days from now. During that time, the Supreme Court will hear many important cases, but if the majority in the Senate has their

way, the Court will do so without a full roster of Justices.

As Brianne Gorod of the Constitution Accountability Center has said, and I quote:

The consequences of the Supreme Court being without all nine justices for so long can hardly be overstated. Most significant, a long-standing vacancy would compromise the Court's ability to perform one of its most important functions, that is, establishing a uniform rule of law for the entire country.

Every Senator here has sworn to support and defend the Constitution—full stop. That is the oath we have taken. Our oath doesn't say to uphold the Constitution most of the time or only when it is not a Presidential election year or only when it is convenient for us or only when we like the ideology that is being presented to us. Our oath says to uphold and defend the Constitution every day, no matter what the issue is that comes before us. The American people expect us as Senators to be faithful to our oath. They also expect us to do our jobs regardless of whether it is a Presidential election year.

I believe we should respect our oath of office. I believe we should do the job we were sent here to do by the American people. I believe we should follow the Constitution. As former Justice Sandra Day O'Connor said last week, and I quote again, "I think we need somebody [on the Supreme Court] now to do the job, and let's get on with it."

I say, let's get on with it.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I join the Nation in offering my heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Justice Scalia, who was an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. For more than three decades, Justice Scalia devoted himself to the rule of law and public service at the highest levels. Whether you agreed or disagreed with his decisions, there is no debate about Justice Scalia's profound impact on the Supreme Court. He served his country with great honor.

I was privileged to serve as a member of the Judiciary Committee when I first joined the Senate. I participated in confirmation hearings for judicial nominees for both President Bush and President Obama, including the hearings for Justices Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan.

The Constitution spells out quite clearly what happens when a vacancy

occurs on the Supreme Court. Article II, section 2, of the Constitution states that the President “shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court.”

The American people twice elected President Obama to 4-year terms in office. Their voices have been heard very clearly. Elections have consequences, and President Obama must carry out the constitutional responsibilities and duties of his office by nominating a successor for Justice Scalia. The President is simply doing the job that the American people elected him to do. The President doesn't stop working simply because it is an election year. He has more than 300 days left in office, as do the Senators who will face the voters this November. Congress should not stop working, either, in this election year and should earn their full paycheck.

So my message is clear. Do your job. It is our responsibility to take up the nominations the President will submit to us. And I think the American people will ultimately demand that the Senate do its job and not threaten to stop working simply to coddle and pander to the most extreme fringe elements of its base, as was done when the government shut down a few years ago with the flirtation of a default on the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government.

Just as the President is carrying out his constitutional duties, so should the Senate. My colleagues in the Senate took an oath to support the Constitution. It is only February, leaving the Senate plenty of time before the elections to consider a nomination that President Obama will make in the coming weeks.

I find it disgraceful that my Republican colleagues would try to obstruct the nomination before the nominee has even been named. Our job as Senators is to examine the qualifications of the nominee for the position. The Senate should get to work once President Obama makes his nomination, in a process that usually takes around two months.

If you look over the history of nominations that have been made by a President on Supreme Court nominees in the amount of time the Senate has considered those nominations, the average is 2 to 3 months. Let me remind you, we have almost a year left in this term of Congress. There is plenty of time. The Senate Judiciary Committee has historically reported nominees to the floor even if the nominee did not garner a majority vote in the committee. And then let the Senate work its will to either confirm or reject the President's nominee.

The tradition of the Senate is to allow each Senator to vote yea or nay on a nomination to the Supreme Court of the United States. That has been the tradition of the Senate. Of course,

every Senator has the right to vote no. Senators were elected for 6-year terms by the citizens of their State and have the right and obligation to vote. President Obama was elected by the people of the United States for a 4-year term and has the right and obligation to nominate.

History has shown that when the roles were reversed and the Democrats held the majority in the Senate, Supreme Court and judicial nominees for Republican Presidents were given hearings and up-and-down votes regardless of when the vacancy occurred. Justice Kennedy was confirmed to the Supreme Court in the last year of President Ronald Reagan's final term in 1988. Other examples of Presidential election-year confirmations include Justice Murphy in 1940, Justice Cardozo in 1932, and Justice Brandeis in 1916. And the Democratic-controlled Senate confirmed numerous judicial nominees of President George W. Bush throughout his final year in office, including nearly a dozen judges in September 2008, just weeks before the election of President Obama.

While I might have picked different judges as a Senator, I voted to confirm the vast majority of President Bush's judicial nominations in his final year in office. I will continue to carry out my constitutional responsibilities that I undertook when I became Senator and swore to support the Constitution. In my view, Justice Scalia would expect nothing less than for the President and the Congress to follow the letter and spirit of the Constitution, our Nation's most fundamental legal document. Justice Scalia wrote a 2004 opinion about the importance of having all nine Justices on the Supreme Court. He stated that without a full complement of Justices, the Court—I am quoting from Justice Scalia—“will find itself unable to resolve the significant legal issues” in pending cases and that a vacancy “impairs the functioning of the Court.”

Justice Scalia understood the importance to have nine Supreme Court Justices. Are we really going to allow there to be a vacancy for that ninth seat for a year?

Former Justice Rehnquist, when he was an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court in 1972, wrote that the prospect of affirming lower court judgments by an equally divided court was “undesirable” because “the principle of law presented by [each] case is left unsettled.” When there is a circuit split, Justice Rehnquist continued, “the prospect of affirmance by an equally divided Court, unsatisfactory enough in a single case, presents even more serious problems where companion cases reaching opposite results are heard together here. . . . [A]ffirmance of each of such conflicting results by an equally divided Court would lay down ‘one rule in Athens, and another rule in Rome’ with a vengeance.”

What Justice Rehnquist was saying is when we have different appellate court decisions—one circuit ruling one way and another circuit ruling another way—they come to the Supreme Court, we have conflicting interpretations, and we have the Supreme Court of the United States to resolve that difference.

What happens if there is a 4-to-4 vote? We have different rules in the Fourth Circuit than in the Third Circuit. That is why we have a Supreme Court. And for a year-plus we are going to say we are not going to allow the full complement to be there?

I am also privileged to serve as the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and the ranking member and former chair of the Helsinki Commission. I must tell my colleagues, as I meet with heads of foreign governments, parliamentarians and judges overseas, I feel great pride in that America has created independent judges where a neutral factfinder decides the case based on the law and the facts and cannot be fired for making a decision that offends the government or the politically powerful. I really do believe the Supreme Court and Federal judiciary are some of the crown jewels of our American system of government and the envy of the world. That is why I am so disgusted and disappointed today with the majority's attempt to abdicate their responsibilities as Senators and as Americans by not doing their job and simply obstructing the operation of good governance for partisan political purposes. I say that because the Republican members of the Judiciary Committee have written a letter saying they are not even going to take up this nomination. There will not even be any hearings.

Do your job. Our job is to consider a nomination that is submitted by the President.

What the Republicans are effectively trying to do is to temporarily shrink the Supreme Court from nine to eight Justices and shorten the term of the President from 4 years to 3 years. That is not in the Constitution. This is disgraceful and indefensible. Frankly, it reminds me of the arguments Republicans used in 2013 when they accused President Obama of trying to pack the court when they announced they would not support further nominees to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. No, President Obama was not trying to pack the court by changing the number of seats on the court. He was merely nominating individuals to existing vacancies on the court that were authorized by Congress by an enacted statute. That is the President's responsibility.

Let me remind my colleagues that Congress has the authority to pass a statute that is signed into law by the President or by overriding his veto. What Congress cannot and the Senate

should not do is purport to shrink the size of the court, be it the Supreme Court or district court or circuit court, by simply refusing to even consider a nominee until the next President takes office.

If this decision by the Republicans is allowed to stand, it would create an artificial vacancy for over a full year, spanning two terms of the Court, which would be unprecedented since the Civil War. We recall that after the last century, Supreme Court nominees have received timely hearings and considerations by the Senate Judiciary Committee and the full Senate.

It matters if the Supreme Court is not fully operational and gridlocks in 4-to-4 ties. Under that scenario, the division of the lower court stands, even when there is a split among the circuits where only the Supreme Court could and should clarify the law. This will lead to more uncertainty, litigation, wasted time and resources, and ultimately delay and deny justice for the American people.

It would be a great tragedy—and potentially do long-term damage to the Supreme Court and the independent judiciary—if the Republican strategy of delay and obstruction prevails. I urge my colleagues: Do your job. Do your job. When the President submits the nomination for the Supreme Court vacancy created by the death of Justice Scalia, schedule a timely hearing and establish a reasonable schedule for the Senate and each of its 100 Members to vote yea or nay on the person the President submits as a nominee for the Supreme Court. That is our responsibility. We need to do our job.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, former Chief Justice Warren Burger once explained the historical significance of the U.S. Constitution as follows. He wrote that “in the last quarter of the 18th century, no nation in the world was governed with separated and divided powers providing checks and balances on the exercise of authority by those who governed.”

The Chief Justice went on to call the Constitution “a remarkable document—the first of its kind in all of human history.”

Chief Justice Burger was right. The Constitution is remarkable, and it is remarkable not only for what it says but how it says it.

In some places the Constitution speaks in poetry, like the Preamble that begins with “We the People of the United States,” and talks of “a more perfect Union” and “the Blessings of Liberty.”

In other places, the Constitution is simple prose, but given the importance of every single word in the text of the Constitution, the Founding Fathers wrote in plain, concise, and understandable language.

That clarity can be found in the advice and consent clause of article II, section 2. Its words could not be clearer. It simply states that the President of the United States “shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, and Judges of the supreme Court.”

There is no ambiguity there. It is not an invitation to reinterpretation. The President's obligation under the Constitution is crystal clear. He shall nominate someone to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court.

President Obama has stated that he will fulfill his obligation and send the Senate an eminently qualified nominee to fill the vacancy created by the unfortunate passing of Justice Antonin Scalia.

When President Obama does that, it will be the Senate's turn to fulfill its obligation under the Constitution.

The text of the Constitution on the Senate's responsibility is similarly clear. The Senate is to provide its advice and consent. Let me repeat that. The Senate is to provide its advice and consent.

Advice and consent does not mean the Senate disregards the Constitution and ignores a nomination to the Supreme Court. It is advice and consent, not avoid and contempt.

The advice and consent clause is not the constitutional equivalent of Roger Maris's home run statistics. There is no asterisk in the Constitution that directs readers to small print that says “except in an election year.” There is no fine print in the Constitution that says the Senate is to give its advice and consent except in the last year of a President's term.

Despite the clear constitutional instruction on how the executive and legislative branches are to handle a vacancy on the Supreme Court, the Republicans on the Judiciary Committee yesterday unilaterally decided they would not hold a hearing on a Supreme Court nominee to fill Justice Scalia's seat until after the upcoming Presidential election. This partisan decision to obstruct is a drastic departure from long-established practice and procedure in filling Supreme Court vacancies. The Senate has routinely confirmed Supreme Court Justices in the final year of a Presidency. In fact, it has happened more than a dozen times, most recently with the confirmation of Justice Anthony Kennedy during the last year of Ronald Reagan's second term as President. In the last 100 years, the Senate has taken action on every Supreme Court nominee regardless of whether the nomination was made in a Presidential election year.

So the American people now have to deal with two vacancies: one on the Supreme Court and the other in the judgment of Senate Republicans because

they seem willing to go to unprecedented lengths to stop this constitutionally mandated process from moving forward.

Republican Senators' reading words into the Constitution to reach the result they want is no different from the so-called judicial activism on the bench they routinely decry.

The Republicans would rather shirk their constitutional responsibility than let President Obama appoint another Justice to the Court. They would rather deprive the country of a fully functioning Supreme Court than fulfill their constitutional duty, not just for the remainder of this term but for the next term of the Supreme Court as well.

Now, why is that? Well, because a Justice of the Supreme Court has only one vote, but a single seat on the Court and a single vote that comes with it can carry enormous significance. We need only look at this divided Supreme Court's recent 5-to-4 decisions to understand why Republicans prefer a vacancy on the Supreme Court. With only eight justices instead of nine, the Court's decisions can deadlock with a 4-to-4 vote. A tie vote leaves in place the lower court decision that has been appealed to the Supreme Court. A 4-to-4 deadlock can have far-reaching consequences.

Take *Bush v. Gore*, the 2000 decision that stopped Florida's vote recount in the 2000 Presidential election. *Bush v. Gore* was decided by a 5-to-4 vote. If a seat on the Supreme Court had been vacated, resulting in a 4-to-4 vote, then the outcome of that election could have been different.

So that is pretty much the consequence here. It is going to have, without question, some impact on how these decisions are going to be made, but it is without any full comprehension of what that change could be, only because nine human beings are involved, but there is a responsibility that we have in the Senate to ensure that we, in fact, have a full Supreme Court.

The President shall nominate. That is without question the duty he has. We shall provide advice and consent. That is our duty. We don't have to give consent at the end of the day. We can have a vote on the Senate floor to determine whether someone is, in fact, going to be confirmed, but we have that constitutional responsibility.

There is still ample time for the President to submit a nomination, for the Judiciary Committee to hold hearings on it, and for the full Senate to vote on it.

The U.S. Constitution remains a remarkable document. Let us treasure it, not twist it. Let us respect it, not run from it. Let us fulfill our constitutional obligations and have a hearing on the President's nominee and a vote by the Senate. In other words, to the

U.S. Senate: Do your job. It is in the Constitution. There is no way you can run from a clear interpretation of what the Constitution requires us to do once the President has nominated a new candidate for the Supreme Court. There are direct instructions for the President in the Constitution and there are direct instructions for us in the Senate.

Let us hope that after the President nominates a candidate, that this body deliberates, listens to all the testimony, and then has a vote on whether that person is qualified to serve on the Supreme Court, but the only way that is going to happen is if this body does its job. So we ask the Members of the majority to ensure that happens.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am here today to urge this body to fulfill its constitutional duty and take action on the Supreme Court nominee who shortly will be submitted by President Obama. I come here not only as a U.S. Senator but also as a former Federal prosecutor, a U.S. attorney in Connecticut from 1977 to 1981, a former State attorney general for 20 years, and a veteran of four arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court. I am also here as a former law clerk to Justice Harry Blackmun, and I share with the Presiding Officer the experience of having had that supremely important and formative experience, and, of course, it shapes my view as well of the Court.

I have immense respect and awe for the position and power and eminence of the U.S. Supreme Court, its role in our democracy, and its history of scholarship and public service. I have the same admiration for Justice Antonin Scalia, and I take this moment to remember his uniquely American life.

As the son of an immigrant, he was a dedicated public servant, a gifted writer, and a powerful speaker. I heard him speak on a number of occasions and argued before him in the Court in a number of memorable exchanges. His sense of humor and his quickness of wit and insight remain with me now. As all of my colleagues will attest, he dedicated his life to serving the public, which can be demanding and difficult at times, but his life showed, as we know, that the difficulties and the demands are well worth the rewards. My thoughts are with his wife Maureen and his entire family.

My personal view, speaking only for myself, is that one way to honor Justice Scalia is to adhere to the Constitu-

tion, to follow its words, which are very explicit on the topic of nominating and confirming a Supreme Court Justice and which give us the role of advising and consenting after the President has nominated. I hope we will fulfill our constitutional duty to advise and consent—to do our job, literally, to do our job as we were elected and took an oath of office to do. That is what we are paid to do—our job as prescribed by the Constitution. I fundamentally reject the notion that the Senate's refusal to act, as laid out in no uncertain terms by my Republican colleagues, fulfills this obligation. In fact, the abdication of responsibility through this rejection is disrespectful to that document and to the Court itself.

President Obama has indicated that he is currently engaged in a thoughtful and deliberative process, working to select a nominee with the intellect and integrity that will persuade the American public and hopefully also the Senate to support his suggestion. His nomination would allow the Supreme Court to function again with the nine members who are essential to its deliberation.

The conclusions my colleagues advance during such a process will, of course, be to each of them to decide. I will be, in fact, among the most exacting and demanding of our colleagues who question that nominee in a hearing, who seek answers in screening and researching the expertise and experience of that person. In no way should the Judiciary Committee, on which I serve, or the U.S. Senate, where we all serve, act as a rubberstamp. No way. No rubberstamp. We must advise as well as consent, and advising means being demanding and careful. But I think we have an obligation to go through that process. We can't just say, sight unseen, no. We can't say that we are going to leave it to the next elected Senate or the next elected President. We have been elected and he has been elected to do our job.

The Supreme Court must have a full complement of Justices to effectively address some of the most complex issues and consequential legal challenges our Nation faces today. Put aside the merits of each—whether it is immigration or affirmative action, women's reproductive rights, voting rights—decisions are needed. The lack of decision has consequences, just as elections have consequences.

Obstruction has consequences, too, and we cannot afford to weaken the Federal judiciary's capacity for effective governance. We can't allow a manufactured crisis in the Senate to plunge another branch of government into gridlock and to plague the judiciary with the same partisan paralysis that is so detested by the American people. In fact, the rejection of our constitutional responsibility to do our job

would epitomize the gridlock and partisan contention that America finds so abhorrent today. Like my colleagues, I go around the State of Connecticut, and what people say to me more commonly than anything else is "Why can't you do your job? Why can't you get stuff done?" Let's get this done.

Statements by Majority Leader MCCONNELL and Chairman GRASSLEY, as well as a number of my other colleagues, have indicated that President Obama's nominee to the highest Court in the land should not even be considered, but turning our backs on that constitutional obligation to act would be equivalent to shutting down the government. It is of exactly the same kind of consequence. It may not be as far-reaching in its immediate effect, but it has the same long-term consequences, which are not merely to prevent decisions and actions from happening—necessary decisions and actions—but also to undermine credibility and faith and trust in our government.

When it comes to the Congress or the President, maybe that credibility is of lesser importance, but it is a chief asset of our judiciary. The Supreme Court of the United States has no armies or police force. It commands the Nation's respect through its credibility. It enforces obedience by virtue of that credibility.

This posture by my Republican colleagues threatens to drag a vital, non-partisan institution into the morass of procedural gamesmanship and electoral mudslinging—the kind of game playing and gamesmanship that has so disillusioned and dismayed Americans more broadly.

As I have discussed this process with the people of Connecticut, I have heard outrage over this attempt to hamstring the Supreme Court, which looks like the recent, similarly illogical process of shutting down the government.

If my Republican colleagues want to reject a nominee, that is their right. After a hearing, they can vote no. They may have reason, and those reasons may be subjective or fact-based and objective. But to simply deny any consideration—even a meeting with a nominee—is stark obstructionism. It is an extreme version of the phenomenon that has frozen this body for much too long.

The majority campaigned in 2014 on restoring law and getting things done. They promised Americans everywhere that the new Senate majority would usher in an end to gridlock on Capitol Hill. We made some progress—too slow, too little—but moving in the right direction will be forestalled, if not doomed, by this obstructionism, and these promises would be broken if the Senate refuses to act.

At this critical time, we cannot hold the highest level of an entire branch of government hostage because of political gamesmanship. That is not what

the American people elected us to do, and it is not what the American people deserve. Doing so would dishonor the bipartisan tradition of providing a hearing and a vote for a Supreme Court nominee, which is our constitutional obligation and has been followed by past Senates.

Even when a nominee during President Reagan's Presidency was nominated 14 months before the election and even though the vote came during the last year of that President's term in office, Justice Kennedy was confirmed. We should do the same. Why not? There is plenty of time between now and then to give deliberate due consideration to the President's nominee.

I hope that the outrage and outcry from the American people will persuade my colleagues to reconsider, reflect, and reverse this disastrous course. In fact, I believe they will relent because this course is dangerous to the Court, damaging to our Nation, and ultimately destructive to our democracy.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, we are here on this conflict we have over a Supreme Court nominee, which has turned into a considerable, unprecedented fuss, I believe, for a fairly simple reason. The elephant, so to speak, in the room is that the Court has become a political actor under Chief Justice Roberts. The rightwing bloc on the Court delivered politically because it had a 5-to-4 majority. Now their rightwing majority is gone, and Republicans are predictably upset.

Justice Frankfurter admonished:

But it is not the business of this Court to pronounce policy. It must observe a fastidious regard for limitations on its own power, and this precludes the Court's giving effect to its own notions of what is wise or politic.

Well, that was then. The five-judge bloc on the Roberts Court, of which Justice Scalia was an essential part, systematically and predictably pronounced policy in favor of three things: No. 1, conservative ideology; No. 2, the welfare of big corporations; and No. 3, the electoral well-being of the Republican Party. And people noticed. Linda Greenhouse wrote that it is "impossible to avoid the conclusion that the Republican-appointed majority is committed to harnessing the Supreme Court to an ideological agenda." Other noted Court watchers, such as Norm Ornstein and Jeffrey Toobin, agree. As Jeffrey Toobin noted, the pattern of decisions "has served the interests, and reflected the values, of the contem-

porary Republican party." Columnist Dana Milbank observed of a recent decision that "the Roberts Court has found yet another way to stack the deck in favor of the rich." The Court has become so political that Justices Scalia and Thomas have attended the Koch brothers' secretive annual political conference. Just this week, Ms. Greenhouse wrote, "[T]he conservative majority is permitting the court to become an agent of partisan warfare to an extent that threatens real damage to the institution."

It is not just the Court watchers who have noticed; less than one-third of Americans have confidence in the Supreme Court. Americans massively oppose its Citizens United decision—80 percent against, with 71 percent strongly opposed. Most tellingly, by a ratio of 9 to 1, Americans now believe the Court treats corporations more favorably than individuals. Even conservative Republicans agree, by a 4-to-1 margin, that this Court treats corporations more favorably than individuals.

Let's take a look at the Court's decisions in these three areas: election politics, corporate interests, and the conservative social agenda.

In elections decisions, the Court's Republican-appointed majority always seems to come down on the side that helps the election prospects of the Republican Party.

The Voting Rights Act, for example, protects minority access to the ballot, and in States that had long histories of discriminating against minority voters, it required preclearance of voting restrictions. In the 5-to-4 Shelby County decision, the Republican-appointed Justices gutted that preclearance requirement. Predictably, the result was almost immediate enactment across many States of voter-suppression laws. The Washington Post described, for instance, the "surgical precision with which North Carolina Republicans approved certain forms of photo IDs for voting and excluded others." Texas, for another instance, allowed gun permits for voting but not State university IDs. And even where these voter-suppression laws ultimately fail in court, Republicans still gain the benefit of fewer Democrats in the electorate while they are litigated.

The conservative judges' decisions on gerrymandering are a second example. "Gerrymandering" is named after Massachusetts Governor Elbridge Gerry and his efforts to shape the district of a State senator he needed to protect. A clever modern variant of gerrymandering has emerged—bulk gerrymandering—which looks at the whole congressional delegation of a State. This tactic isolates Democrats into small, supersaturated Democratic districts so that majority-Republican districts can be created out of the remainder of the State.

By manipulating the districts this way through its so-called REDMAP project, Republicans delivered congressional delegations that didn't reflect the State's popular vote, over and over. For instance, when Pennsylvania voters went to the polls in 2012, Democratic votes for Congress outnumbered Republican votes by a little over 80,000. Pennsylvania also reelected President Obama that year and our colleague, Democratic Senator BOB CASEY. But Pennsylvania at that ballot sent a House delegation to Congress of 5 Democrats and 13 Republicans—more votes for Democrats, more Republicans in the delegation by 13 to 5.

This was not just a Pennsylvania fluke. In 2012, Ohio voted for Barack Obama for President and returned our Democratic colleague SHERROD BROWN to the Senate but sent 12 Republicans to Congress and only 4 Democrats. Wisconsin voted for Obama in 2012 and elected progressive Senator TAMMY BALDWIN to the Senate but sent five Republicans and only three Democrats to Congress.

The Republican organization behind REDMAP bragged of this achievement. I will quote REDMAP's memo:

[A]ggregated numbers show voters pulled the lever for Republicans only 49 percent of the time in congressional races, [but] Republicans enjoy a 33-seat margin in the U.S. House seated yesterday in the 113th Congress, having endured Democratic successes atop the ticket and over one million more votes cast for Democratic House candidates than Republicans.

This gerrymandering ran wild because in a Supreme Court case called *Vieth v. Jubelirer*, four Republican Justices announced that they would no longer question whether gerrymandering interfered with any constitutional voting rights. One, Justice Kennedy, left a glimmer of light, but the practical effect was to announce open season for gerrymandering. As the American Bar Association's publication on redistricting has noted, "The Court's recent decisions appear to give legislators leeway to preserve partisan advantage as zealously as they like when drawing district lines." In practice, gerrymandering of Congress squarely benefited Republicans.

A third example is campaign finance decisions, the most noticeable being *Citizens United*, but a constellation of decisions surrounds *Citizens United*, beginning with Justice Powell's 1978 opinion in *First National Bank of Boston v. Bellotti*. The careful work of Republican appointees on the Court over many years to open American politics to corporate spending has conferred obvious political advantage to the Republican Party, and, as many news outlets reported, it was Republicans who cheered the *Citizens United* decision.

So, in elections, it is three for three in favor of the Republican Party.

Turning from elections to the conservative agenda on social issues, such

as religion and abortion and gun control, let's start with the District of Columbia v. Heller decision, a Second Amendment decision in which this same five-man bloc created, for the first time in our history, an individual right to keep firearms for self-defense. As recently as 1991, this doctrine was such a fringe theory that it was publicly described by retired Chief Justice Warren Burger as "one of the greatest pieces of fraud, I repeat the word 'fraud,' on the American public by special interest groups that I have ever seen in my lifetime." That was the theory which five on the Court adopted. As one author noted, "Five Justices on the Supreme Court were able to reinterpret, by some standards radically, the Second Amendment's right to keep and bear arms as a personal, not a collective right in Heller."

At the wall separating church and state, the bloc of five chipped steadily away: Christian crosses in public parks, Federal tax credits funding religious schools, Christian prayer at legislative meetings. As constitutional scholar Erwin Chemerinsky summed it up: "Rather than obliterating the wall separating church and state all at once, the Roberts Court's opinions are dismantling it brick by brick."

Four decades ago, *Roe v. Wade* recognized a wall of privacy in the Constitution between the government and a woman's private medical decisions. In this context, the court has long required State laws barring late-term abortions to have an exception to protect the health of the mother. Then the Roberts Court upheld a ban on the procedure that had no exception for the health of the mother.

As Justice Ginsburg stated in her dissent: "[T]he Act and the Court's defense of it cannot be understood as anything other than an effort to chip away at a right declared again and again by this Court—and with increasing comprehension of its centrality to women's lives."

If the conservative win rate in the Court is striking, the corporate one is even more so. A recent study found the Roberts Court more favorable to business interests than its predecessors, with all five members of the recent rightwing bloc among the top 10 most business-friendly judges in the last 65 years. Chief Justice Roberts was No. 1 and Justice Alito No. 2.

Studies showed the Roberts Court following the legal position of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which is a de facto organ of the National Republican Party, 69 percent of the time, up from 56 percent during the Rehnquist Court and 43 percent during the Burger Court. Connect the dots. The Republicans are the party of the corporations, the judges are the appointees of the Republicans, and the judges are delivering for the corporations. It is being done in plain view.

Many Chamber victories were significant, such as making employment discrimination harder to prove, letting manufacturers and distributors fix minimum prices for retail goods, letting mutual funds advisers include misstatements made by others in the documents they prepare for investors, and even Hobby Lobby, where the Court put the religious rights of corporate entities over the rights of employees.

Big corporations hate being hauled into court and having to face juries, and the five Republican appointees protected them by raising pleading standards for victims, letting companies push disputes into corporate-favored arbitration, restricting Americans' ability to press cases of large-scale wrongdoing in class actions, making it more difficult for workers to hold employers accountable for workplace harassment, and making it harder for consumers with serious side effects to sue the drug companies.

Now before the Court is a case the five-man bloc has pursued for some time. It was expected that the five would use it to deal a significant blow to the political and economic clout of unions, a great boon for the big corporations. It also looked like the five were teeing up for the fossil fuel industry, a big victory against the President's Clean Power Plan.

There was a lot at stake in that fifth vote. There was a lot that was delivered because of that fifth vote. At 4 to 4, the circuit court decision below stands. At 4 to 4, the challenged regulation ordinarily prevails.

I will close with the big sockdolager: *Citizens United*. It was once the opinion of the U.S. Supreme Court that "to subject the state governments to the combined capital of wealthy corporations [would] produce universal corruption." No more. The five judges behind *Citizens United* opened the floodgates for unlimited anonymous corporate spending in elections. They found that corporate corruption of elections was near impossible, and they caused a tsunami of slime—to use a phrase that I borrow—that we have seen in recent election cycles. Such a brute role for big corporations in our American Government would shock the Founding Fathers who foresaw no important role in our Republic for the corporations of the time.

To unleash that corporate power in our elections, the five conservative justices had to go through some remarkable contortions. They had to reverse previous decisions where the Court had said the opposite. They had to make up facts that were then predictably and are now demonstrably wrong. They had to create a make-believe world of independence and transparency in election spending that present experience belies, and they had to maneuver their own judicial procedures to forestall a

factual record belying the facts they were making up.

It was a dirty business with a lot of signs of intent, and it has produced evil results that we live with every day. All of this—Republican election advantage, corporate welfare, the conservative social agenda—is because the activists, corporatists, and rightwing bloc had a fifth vote. That bloc of five did more for the far right, for the Republican Party, and for its corporate backers than all of the Republicans in the House and Senate have been able to do. They delivered. Now it is 4 to 4 and that advantage is gone; hence the panic on the Republican side; hence the departure from plain constitutional text.

Imagine any other constitutional duty of the President that he failed to do that would not cause uproar and outrage. There would be nobody on the floor here because everybody would have run off to FOX News to get their talking headshot in and talk about what a terrible thing the President had done by violating his constitutional duty. Well, the President has a constitutional duty—he shall nominate.

They are in a political pickle, but the Constitution doesn't care about the politics. From the Constitution's point of view, the politics are just too darn bad. The Constitution directs the President to make the appointment, and he should do his job. The Constitution gives the Senate the job of advice and consent to the President's nominee. We should do our job just as the Constitution provides.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING WILLIAM USHER

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate the life and legacy of a distinguished Kentuckian who has sadly passed away. William "Bill" Usher of Paducah died this February 14, 2016, after a short illness. He was 86 years old.

Bill was the owner and manager for many years of Usher Transport, a family-owned and operated Kentucky business founded in the 1940s. He was well known in Paducah and western Kentucky as a community leader, and he was a friend of mine whom I saw often in my travels through Paducah.

Bill gave generously of his time and resources to many organizations, charities, and causes. He served as both president and chairman of the Greater Paducah Chamber of Commerce. He

served with Greater Paducah Industrial Development, the Paducah Rotary Club, the Kentucky Motor Transport Association, and National Tank Truck Carriers.

Bill was a board member of Citizens Bank and helped found Paducah's first industrial development group. He was the chairman of the Barkley Regional Airport board of directors. He was also the chairman of the Board of Exhibit Management in Louisville.

Bill understood what it means to serve from a young age. While studying at the University of Kentucky, he was named outstanding cadet of the Air Force ROTC. Upon graduation in 1952, he served as a fighter pilot in the U.S. Air Force and Air Force Reserves for several years, retiring as a major.

While in the military, he served as an air combat and gunner instructor at Luke Air Force Base in Phoenix, AZ, and with the 417th Tactical Fighter Squadron based in France and Germany flying F-100s. He was awarded the Commendation Medal. In the 1960s, he moved back to Paducah to help build the family business.

Bill was a native of Graves County and attended the First United Methodist Church in Mayfield, KY.

He leaves behind his wife Virginia "Ginger" Sabel Usher; two sons, William A. Usher, Jr., and Alan W. Usher; a stepdaughter, Karen Elizabeth Reed Alpers; a stepson, James Boone Reed; three grandsons, Ryan Lunsford Usher, William Patrick Usher, and William A. Usher III; three stepgrandsons, David Roscoe Reed II, William Murphy Reed, and Ely E. Mazmanians; a stepgranddaughter, Avary Frazier; extended family members Gabriel Vieira, Kathleen Overlin, Sabel Overlin, Max Overlin, Elise Overlin, and Stacy Overlin; and many more beloved family members and friends.

The Paducah Sun recently published an article highlighting the impact Bill Usher had on his friends, family, and community. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Paducah Sun, Feb. 15, 2016]

BILL USHER REMEMBERED AS BENEVOLENT
PUBLIC SERVANT

(By Kaylan Thompson)

Paducah leaders and friends remember William "Bill" Usher as a driving force of leadership and benevolence throughout the area and say his impact will be felt throughout the community for years to come.

"He's a rare breed of community leader in Paducah," said Bill Bartleman, McCracken County commissioner and friend of Usher for nearly 40 years. "He was the old kind of leadership, the behind-the-scenes leader that we used to have, the kind of people who weren't in the limelight. They just did what they thought was right for the community."

Usher died early Sunday morning at Morningside Assisted Living. He was 86.

Bartleman, a former legislative reporter with The Sun, first got to know Usher while covering community and political movements in the 1970s. During that time, Usher proved a helpful source and political liaison.

"He was a major force for our community," Bartleman said. "He did a lot to help the community and did it quietly. He had contacts with political leaders, and he worked with them to get benefits for the community. He did things that people probably didn't know about and would have been hard to document because he worked so humbly."

Usher's political and civic resume includes an array of titles, including chairman of the McCracken County Democratic Party, president of the Greater Paducah Chamber of Commerce, president of the Paducah Rotary Club, and chairman of the Barkley Regional Airport Board of Directors.

"He was always supportive and always encouraged good government," Bartleman said. "He wanted people to do the right thing. He didn't use his influence to benefit himself, he used it solely to benefit the community through the bureaucracy of government."

During Bartleman's campaign for political office, he added, Usher often reached out to him.

"He said he was supportive of me as long as I would do what's right for the community and the people," he said. "Even in his senior years he was involved in politics and wanted things done right, not to see people elected to help himself, but to see people elected who would do good government."

That inspiration, Bartleman said, is the torch Usher passed on to him and others, encouraging them to lead with humility.

"What I learned from him is to just do the right thing and don't seek publicity," Bartleman said. "In the long run you'll be rewarded, at least in knowing you benefited the community. Your involvement in anything should be to do what's right and not seek self-gratification."

Usher, a Mayfield native, was a graduate of Mayfield High School and the University of Kentucky.

He came to Paducah in 1960 following eight years of service in the U.S. Air Force, then taking on the family business, Usher Transportation Co., as president.

In recent years, he strongly supported several charitable organizations and the Paducah Police Department.

While most of his work remained anonymous, his chief involvement with the department was with Christmas Cops, a program engaging police with area families and youth through shopping for gifts and necessities.

"Bill, being a huge supporter of the mission of the police department to build relationships with the community and the children, has been instrumental in affecting many, many lives in this community positively by either financial support or being there to support our efforts," said Paducah Police Chief Brandon Barnhill, a friend of his for many years.

Usher's support of the department began when he initiated an annual fundraiser in support of the program in the 1990s. His efforts remained largely anonymous until the early 2000s, when he became a member of the Christmas Cops board.

"Whether it was financial or moral, he was always there in a supporting nature," Barnhill said. "He was a big driving force behind much of what we do during the Christmas season. He was a well-grounded individual, and he stayed true to his principles. He would give you the shirt off his back if

that's what it took, and that's putting it lightly."

A healthy community with thriving individuals was Usher's goal, believing connections and relationships were key to achieving it.

"He fully understood the value of mentoring and fostering a positive relationship with the police and youth," said Stacey Grimes, retired assistant chief of criminal investigations with the Paducah Police Department. "We're not always arresting people or writing tickets, and he wanted them to see us in a different light."

Grimes met Usher in 1994 at a Christmas Cops fundraiser, then called Shop with a Cop.

"He and his wife didn't want any praise or publicity for hosting the fundraiser," Grimes said. "He was extremely humble and was probably the most benevolent man that I've ever met. He never sought praise for what he did, not even a pat on the back."

"He always worked everything behind the scenes. His work helped ensure the program is sustainable for the future. Because of what Bill set up, I think it will be there for generations to come."

Usher's friends agree that helping others was always his top priority.

"The hardest part of this is that we will never know how many lives Bill has positively affected," Barnhill said. "But we do know there are many, many out there. It's just the person that he was."

TRIBUTE TO LESLIE PROLL

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to recognize Leslie Proll, the director of policy for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., for her years of excellent public service as she begins a new chapter in her career. Since 1998, Leslie has served as policy director at LDF, where she has advocated for the organization's policy and legislative priorities. She has brought her expertise to bear on advancing important Federal civil rights legislation and advocating for well-qualified, diverse nominees to serve in our Federal judiciary and the executive branch.

My staff has worked closely with her over the years, and she has been steadfast and unwavering in her commitment to civil rights. Leslie provided invaluable support when Congress reauthorized the Voting Rights Act in 2006 and passed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act in 2009. Her contributions to these two critical legislative initiatives, along with the civil rights community, proved instrumental in moving these two bills through Congress.

Leslie has been an effective and tireless advocate in promoting diversity in our Federal judiciary so that our courts are more representative of the citizenry they serve. Our justice system has been made a better one because of her contributions. I commend Leslie for her years of service and wish her the best as she moves forward in her career.

CONFIRMATION OF ROBERT CALIFF

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Robert Califf on his confirmation today as Food and Drug Administration, FDA, Commissioner. Dr. Califf is a well-respected cardiologist that hails from Anderson, SC,—very close to where I grew up. He has served our country and its medical needs in a variety of capacities. As a faculty member and professor at Duke University, he founded the Duke Clinical Research Institute and served as vice chancellor for clinical research. In addition to his accomplishments during his tenure at Duke, he is an active member of several professional organizations, including committees of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies and the FDA.

In 2015, Dr. Califf was named Deputy Commissioner for Medical Products and Tobacco for the FDA. In this role, Dr. Califf is responsible for overseeing and directing the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, the Center for Devices and Radiological Health, and the Center for Tobacco Products. He also oversees the Office of Special Medical Programs.

The broad bipartisan support for Dr. Califf's nomination is testament to his strong, transparent leadership and record of advancing medical breakthroughs. The FDA has been operating without a confirmed Commissioner for the past year, and I applaud the Senate's confirmation of Dr. Califf. I look forward to working with Dr. Califf as he brings his expertise to addressing challenges facing the FDA and our Nation.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, today the Senate voted on the confirmation of Dr. Robert Califf to serve as Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services. While I was unable to vote today, I would have supported Dr. Califf's nomination, just as I supported proceeding to cloture on his nomination in Monday evening's vote.

The Food and Drug Administration has lacked a permanent Commissioner for almost a year, despite its role overseeing the safety of 25 percent of goods sold in the United States, including food, drugs, medical devices, cosmetics, and vitamin supplements.

I believe that Dr. Califf, a Duke cardiologist and clinical trial researcher endorsed by over 100 physician and patient groups, is well qualified to oversee this critical mission.

I look forward to working with Dr. Califf to implement key public health priorities, including examining ways to tackle rising prescription drugs prices, improve clinical trials, and combat the opioid epidemic.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for today's vote on the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

I would have voted nay. •

BUDGET SCOREKEEPING REPORT

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to submit to the Senate the budget scorekeeping report for February 2016. The report compares current law levels of spending and revenues with the amounts provided in the conference report to accompany S. Con. Res. 11, the budget resolution for fiscal year 2016. This information is necessary to determine whether budget points of order lie against pending legislation. It has been prepared by the Republican staff of the Senate Budget Committee and the Congressional Budget Office, CBO, pursuant to section 308(b) of the Congressional Budget Act, CBA.

This is the second scorekeeping report for this calendar year but the sixth report I have made since adoption of the fiscal year 2016 budget resolution on May 5, 2015. My last filing can be found in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on January 11, 2016. The information contained in this report is current through February 22, 2016.

Table 1 gives the amount by which each Senate authorizing committee is below or exceeds its allocation under the budget resolution. This information is used for enforcing committee allocations pursuant to section 302 of the CBA. Over the fiscal year 2016–2025 period, which is the entire period covered by S. Con. Res. 11, Senate authorizing committees have spent \$147.9 billion more than the budget resolution calls for.

Table 2 gives the amount by which the Senate Committee on Appropriations is below or exceeds the statutory spending limits. This information is used to determine points of order related to the spending caps found in section 312 and section 314 of the CBA. On December 18, 2015, the President signed H.R. 2029, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, P.L. 114–113, into law. This bill provided regular appropriations equal to the levels set in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, P.L. 114–74, specifically \$548.1 billion in budget authority for defense accounts, revised security category, and \$518.5 billion in budget authority for nondefense accounts, revised nonsecurity category.

Table 3 gives the amount by which the Senate Committee on Appropriations is below or exceeds its allocation for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism, OCO/GWOT, spending. This separate allocation for OCO/GWOT was established in section

3102 of S. Con. Res. 11 and is enforced using section 302 of the CBA. The consolidated appropriations bill included \$73.7 billion in budget authority and \$32.1 billion in outlays for OCO/GWOT in fiscal year 2016. This level is equal to the revised OCO/GWOT levels that I filed in the RECORD on December 18, 2015.

The budget resolution established two new points of order limiting the use of changes in mandatory programs in appropriations bills, CHIMPS. Tables 4 and 5 show compliance with fiscal year 2016 limits for overall CHIMPS and the Crime Victims Fund CHIMP, respectively. This information is used for determining points of order under section 3103 and section 3104, respectively. Enacted CHIMPS are under both the broader CHIMPS limit, \$1.3 billion less, and the Crime Victims Fund limit, \$1.8 billion less.

In addition to the tables provided by the Senate Budget Committee Republican staff, I am submitting additional tables from CBO that I will use for enforcement of budget levels agreed to by the Congress.

For fiscal year 2016, CBO estimates that current law levels are \$138.9 billion and \$103.6 billion above the budget resolution levels for budget authority and outlays, respectively. Revenues are \$155.2 billion below the level assumed in the budget resolution. Finally, Social Security outlays are at the levels assumed in the budget resolution for fiscal year 2016, while Social Security revenues are \$23 million below assumed levels for the budget year.

CBO's report also provides information needed to enforce the Senate's pay-as-you-go rule. The Senate's pay-as-you-go scorecard currently shows deficit reduction of \$20.4 billion over the fiscal year 2015–2020 period and \$95.7 billion over the fiscal year 2015–2025 period. Over the initial 6-year period, Congress has enacted legislation that would increase revenues by \$17 billion and decrease outlays by \$3.3 billion. Over the 11-year period, Congress has enacted legislation that would increase revenues by \$36.8 billion and decrease outlays by \$59 billion. The Senate's pay-as-you-go rule is enforced by section 201 of S. Con. Res. 21, the fiscal year 2008 budget resolution.

All years in the accompanying tables are fiscal years.

I ask unanimous consent that the accompanying tables be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

TABLE 1.—SENATE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES—ENACTED DIRECT SPENDING ABOVE (+) OR BELOW (–) BUDGET RESOLUTIONS

(In millions of dollars)			
	2016	2016–2020	2016–2025
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry			
Budget Authority	0	0	0

TABLE 1.—SENATE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES—ENACTED DIRECT SPENDING ABOVE (+) OR BELOW (–) BUDGET RESOLUTIONS—Continued

	(In millions of dollars)		
	2016	2016–2020	2016–2025
Outlays	0	0	0
Armed Services			
Budget Authority	–66	–518	–1,117
Outlays	–50	–476	–1,099
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Commerce, Science, and Transportation			
Budget Authority	130	650	1,300
Outlays	0	0	0
Energy and Natural Resources			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Environment and Public Works			
Budget Authority	2,880	19,432	9,459
Outlays	252	1,147	–8,801
Finance			
Budget Authority	365	41,116	152,815
Outlays	365	41,116	152,815
Foreign Relations			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	–1	0
Judiciary			
Budget Authority	–3,358	5,962	4,833
Outlays	1,713	5,862	4,082
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions			
Budget Authority	0	208	278
Outlays	0	208	278
Rules and Administration			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Intelligence			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Veterans' Affairs			
Budget Authority	–2	–1	–1
Outlays	388	644	644
Indian Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Small Business			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	1	2	2
Total			
Budget Authority	–51	66,849	167,567
Outlays	2,669	48,502	147,921

TABLE 2.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED REGULAR DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS ¹

	(Budget authority, in millions of dollars)		
	2016		
	Security ²	Nonsecurity ²	
Statutory Discretionary Limits	548,091	518,491	
Amount Provided by Senate Appropriations Subcommittee			
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0	21,750	
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	5,101	50,621	
Defense	514,000	136	
Energy and Water Development	18,860	18,325	
Financial Services and General Government	44	23,191	
Homeland Security	1,705	39,250	
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0	32,159	
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	0	162,127	
Legislative Branch	0	4,363	
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	8,171	71,698	
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0	37,780	
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	210	57,091	
Current Level Total	548,091	518,491	

TABLE 2.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED REGULAR DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS ¹—Continued

	(Budget authority, in millions of dollars)	
	2016	
	Security ²	Nonsecurity ²
Total Enacted Above (+) or Below (–) Statutory Limits	0	0

¹ This table excludes spending pursuant to adjustments to the discretionary spending limits. These adjustments are allowed for certain purposes in section 251(b)(2) of BBEDCA.

² Security spending is defined as spending in the National Defense budget function (050) and nonsecurity spending is defined as all other spending.

TABLE 3.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS/GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS

	(In millions of dollars)	
	2016	
	BA	OT
OCO/GWOT Allocation ¹	73,693	32,079
Amount Provided by Senate Appropriations Subcommittee		
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0	0
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	0	0
Defense	58,638	27,354
Energy and Water Development	0	0
Financial Services and General Government	0	0
Homeland Security	160	128
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0	0
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	0	0
Legislative Branch	0	0
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	0	0
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	14,895	4,597
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0	0
Current Level Total	73,693	32,079
Total OCO/GWOT Spending vs. Budget Resolution	0	0

BA = Budget Authority; OT = Outlays

¹ This allocation may be adjusted by the Chairman of the Budget Committee to account for new information, pursuant to section 3102 of S. Con. Res. 11, the Concurrent Resolution of the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

TABLE 4.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED CHANGES IN MANDATORY SPENDING PROGRAMS (CHIMPS)

	(Budget authority, millions of dollars)	
	2016	
CHIMPS Limit for Fiscal Year 2016	19,100	
Senate Appropriations Subcommittees		
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	600	
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	9,458	
Defense	0	
Energy and Water Development	0	
Financial Services and General Government	725	
Homeland Security	176	
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	28	
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	6,799	
Legislative Branch	0	
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	0	
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0	
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0	
Current Level Total	17,786	
Total CHIMPS Above (+) or Below (–) Budget Resolution	–1,314	

TABLE 5.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED CHANGES IN MANDATORY SPENDING PROGRAM (CHIMP) TO THE CRIME VICTIMS FUND

	(Budget authority, millions of dollars)	
	2016	
Crime Victims Fund (CVF) CHIMP Limit for Fiscal Year 2016	10,800	
Senate Appropriations Subcommittees		
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0	
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	9,000	
Defense	0	
Energy and Water Development	0	
Financial Services and General Government	0	
Homeland Security	0	
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0	
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	0	
Legislative Branch	0	
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	0	
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0	
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0	
Current Level Total	9,000	
Total CVF CHIMP Above (+) or Below (–) Budget Resolution	–1,800	

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, February 24, 2016.Hon. MIKE ENZI,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The enclosed report shows the effects of Congressional action on the fiscal year 2016 budget and is current through February 22, 2016. This report is submitted under section 308(b) and in aid of section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended.

The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the technical and economic assumptions of S. Con. Res. 11, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

Since our last letter dated January 11, 2016, the Congress has cleared for the President's signature the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 (H.R. 644). That act would affect budget authority, outlays, and revenues for fiscal year 2016.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL,
Director.

Enclosure.

TABLE 1.—SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016, AS OF FEBRUARY 22, 2016

	(In billions of dollars)		
	Budget Resolution	Current Level ^a	Current Level Over/Under (–) Resolution
On-Budget			
Budget Authority	3,069.8	3,208.7	138.9
Outlays	3,091.2	3,194.9	103.6
Revenues	2,676.0	2,520.7	–155.2
Off-Budget			
Social Security Outlays ^b	777.1	777.1	0.0
Social Security Revenues	794.0	794.0	0.0

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

^a Excludes emergency funding that was not designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.^b Excludes administrative expenses paid from the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund of the Social Security Administration, which are off-budget, but are appropriated annually.

TABLE 2.—SUPPORTING DETAIL FOR THE SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016, AS OF FEBRUARY 22, 2016

	(In millions of dollars)		
	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Previously Enacted ^a			
Revenues	n.a.	n.a.	2,676,733
Permanents and other spending legislation	1,968,496	1,902,345	n.a.

TABLE 2.—SUPPORTING DETAIL FOR THE SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016, AS OF FEBRUARY 22, 2016—

Continued

(In millions of dollars)

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Appropriation legislation	0	500,825	n.a.
Offsetting receipts	– 784,820	– 784,879	n.a.
Total, Previously Enacted	1,183,676	1,618,291	2,676,733
Enacted Legislation:			
An act to extend the authorization to carry out the replacement of the existing medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Denver, Colorado, to authorize transfers of amounts to carry out the replacement of such medical center, and for other purposes (P.L. 114–25)	0	20	0
Defending Public Safety Employees' Retirement Act & Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–26)	0	0	5
Trade Preferences Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–27)	445	175	– 766
Steve Gleason Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–40)	5	5	0
Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–41) ^b	0	0	99
Continuing Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114–53)	700	775	0
Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–55)	130	0	0
Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–58)	– 2	368	0
Protecting Affordable Coverage for Employees Act (P.L. 114–60)	0	0	40
Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–74)	3,424	4,870	269
Recovery Improvements for Small Entities After Disaster Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–88)	0	1	0
National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (P.L. 114–92)	– 66	– 50	0
Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (P.L. 114–94)	2,880	252	471
Federal Perkins Loan Program Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–105)	269	269	0
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114–113) ^b	2,008,016	1,563,177	– 156,107
Patient Access and Medicare Protection Act (P.L. 114–115)	32	32	0
Total, Enacted Legislation	2,015,833	1,569,894	– 155,989
Passed, Pending Signature:			
Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 (H.R. 644)	20	20	– 7
Entitlements and Mandatories:			
Budget resolution estimates of appropriated entitlements and other mandatory programs	9,170	6,674	0
Total Current Level ^c	3,208,699	3,194,879	2,520,737
Total Senate Resolution ^d	3,069,829	3,091,246	2,675,967
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	138,870	103,633	n.a.
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	155,230
Memorandum:			
Revenues, 2016–2025:			
Senate Current Level	n.a.	n.a.	31,755,050
Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	32,233,099
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	478,049

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

Notes: n.a. = not applicable; P.L. = Public Law.

a. Includes the following acts that affect budget authority, outlays, or revenues, and were cleared by the Congress during this session, but before the adoption of S. Con. Res. 11, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016: the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2014 (P.L. 114–1); the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2015 (P.L. 114–4), and the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–10).

b. Emergency funding that was not designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 shall not count for certain budgetary enforcement purposes. These amounts, which are not included in the current level totals, are as follows:

Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–41)	0	917	0
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114–113)	– 2	0	0
Total	– 2	917	0

c. For purposes of enforcing section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act in the Senate, the resolution, as approved by the Senate, does not include budget authority, outlays, or revenues for off-budget amounts. As a result, current level does not include these items.

d. Periodically, the Senate Committee on the Budget revises the budgetary levels in S. Con. Res. 11, pursuant to various provisions of the resolution. The Initial Senate Resolution total below excludes \$6,872 million in budget authority and \$344 million in outlays assumed in S. Con. Res. 11 for disaster-related spending. The Revised Senate Resolution total below includes amounts for disaster-related spending:

Initial Senate Resolution:	3,032,343	3,091,098	2,676,733
Revisions:			
Pursuant to section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and section 4311 of S. Con. Res. 11	445	175	– 766
Pursuant to section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and S. Con. Res. 11	700	700	0
Pursuant to section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and S. Con. Res. 11	0	1	0
Pursuant to section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and section 4313 of S. Con. Res. 11	269	269	0
Pursuant to section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and section 3404 of S. Con. Res. 11	36,072	– 997	0
Revised Senate Resolution	3,069,829	3,091,246	2,675,967

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE 114TH CONGRESS, AS OF FEBRUARY 22, 2016

(In millions of dollars)

	2015–2020	2015–2025
Beginning Balance ^a	0	0
Enacted Legislation: ^{b,c,d}		
Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–17) ^e	n.e.	n.e.
Construction Authorization and Choice Improvement Act (P.L. 114–19)	20	20
Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–22)	1	2
Uniting and Strengthening America by Fulfilling Rights and Ensuring Effective Discipline Over Monitoring Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–23)	*	*
An act to extend the authorization to carry out the replacement of the existing medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Denver, Colorado (P.L. 114–25)	150	150
Defending Public Safety Employees' Retirement Act & Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–26)	– 1	5
Trade Preferences Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–27)	– 640	– 52
Boys Town Centennial Commemorative Coin Act (P.L. 114–30) ^f	0	0
Steve Gleason Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–40)	13	28
Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–41)	– 1,552	– 6,924
Agriculture Reauthorizations Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–54)	*	*
Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–58)	624	624
Protecting Affordable Coverage for Employees Act (P.L. 114–60)	– 32	– 2
Gold Star Fathers Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–62)	*	*
Ensuring Access to Clinical Trials Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–63)	*	*
Adoptive Family Relief Act (P.L. 114–70)	*	*
Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–73)	*	*
Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–74)	– 15,050	– 71,315
Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing Enforcement Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–81)	*	*
A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to clarify waiver authority regarding programs for all-inclusive care for the elderly (PACE programs) (P.L. 114–85)	*	*
Recovery Improvements for Small Entities After Disaster Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–88)	2	2
Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act (P.L. 114–89)	*	*
National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (P.L. 114–92)	– 194	– 10

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE 114TH CONGRESS, AS OF FEBRUARY 22, 2016—Continued

(In millions of dollars)

	2015–2020	2015–2025
Equity in Government Compensation Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–93)	*	*
Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (P.L. 114–94) ^a	–3,845	–18,144
Improving Access to Emergency Psychiatric Care Act (P.L. 114–97)	*	*
Breast Cancer Research Stamp Reauthorization Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–99)	–1	0
Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–102)	*	*
Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Reauthorization Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–104)	*	*
Federal Perkins Loan Program Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–105)	–14	–13
Securing Fairness in Regulatory Timing Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–106)	*	*
National Guard and Reservist Debt Relief Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–107)	*	*
Federal Improper Payments Coordination Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–109)	*	*
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114–113) ^b	2	4
Patient Access and Medicare Protection Act (P.L. 114–115)	36	–1
District of Columbia Courts, Public Defender Service, and Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–118)	*	*
International Megan's Law to Prevent Child Exploitation and Other Sexual Crimes Through Advanced Notification of Traveling Sex Offenders (P.L. 114–119)	*	*
Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–120)	*	*
North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (P.L. 114–122)	*	*
Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 (H.R. 644)	104	–116
Judicial Redress Act of 2015 (H.R. 1428)	*	*
To revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida. (H.R. 890)	*	*
Current Balance	–20,377	–95,742
Memorandum:		
Changes to Revenues	17,037	36,750
Changes to Outlays	–3,340	–58,992

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

Notes: n.e. = not able to estimate; P.L. = Public Law.

* = between –\$500,000 and \$500,000.

^a Pursuant to S. Con. Res. 11, the Senate Pay-As-You-Go Scorecard was reset to zero.^b The amounts shown represent the estimated impact of the public laws on the deficit. Negative numbers indicate an increase in the deficit; positive numbers indicate a decrease in the deficit.^c Excludes off-budget amounts.^d Excludes amounts designated as emergency requirements.^e P.L. 114–17 could affect direct spending and revenues, but such impacts would depend on future actions of the President that CBO cannot predict. (<http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/s615.pdf>)^f P.L. 114–30 will cause a decrease in spending of \$5 million in 2017 and an increase in spending of \$5 million in 2019 for a net impact of zero over the six-year and eleven-year periods.^g The budgetary effects associated with the Federal Reserve Surplus Funds are excluded from the PAYGO Scorecard in P.L. 114–94 pursuant to section 232(b) of H.C. Res. 290, the Concurrent Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2001 (106th Congress).^h The budgetary effects of divisions M through Q are not reflected in the PAYGO Scorecard pursuant to section 1001(b) of Title X of Division O of P.L. 114–113.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING JUDGE DAN KEMP NALL

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Judge Dan Kemp Nall of Sheridan, AR, who passed away on Sunday, February 14, 2016.

Judge Nall was a beloved husband, brother, father, and grandfather. He was also a dedicated public servant, especially to his friends and neighbors in Grant County where he served as county judge for 10 terms after serving for 20 years on the Grant County Quorum Court. He was also active in many civic organizations, including the Jaycees and the Sheridan Rotary Club, further demonstrating his commitment to the people of his community. A graduate of the University of Arkansas, Judge Nall was a dedicated Razorback fan.

I admire his dedication to serving his lifelong home of Grant County. I know his leadership, dedication, and commitment to the community will be missed by many. I join with them in praying for comfort for Judge Nall's friends and loved ones. We will remember the valuable contributions he made which enriched the lives of those he served, and we honor his enduring legacy as a public servant.●

TRIBUTE TO TOM KUNTZ

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Tom Kuntz of Red Lodge, MT, for his company's generous donations to nonprofits throughout Carbon County.

Tom is the owner of local pizza shop Red Lodge Pizza Co., which contributed \$11,700 of its profits to 20 various nonprofits to help support their goals and missions. His contributions make up the largest portion of \$34,000 raised during this year's third annual charitable contribution program on behalf of the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation.

His generous giving is not just a one-time occurrence. Throughout his 20 years in business, Red Lodge Pizza Co. has made supporting community organizations a priority.

Some of the organizations profiting from Red Lodge Pizza Co.'s donations include Boys and Girls of Carbon County, Domestic & Sexual Violence Services, Red Lodge Public Schools Foundation, Beartooth Humane Alliance, and Bridger Community Food Bank.

Tom is also the Red Lodge fire chief and was gracious enough to give me a tour of an area fire discussing fuels reduction in August of 2013. I am grateful for Tom's dedication to his hometown, his generosity and selfless actions benefiting the people and organizations that make up his community. It's people like Tom that make me proud to call Montana home. I agree with Tom when he says "it is great to give back to people that make this place so wonderful."●

RECOGNIZING ROSECRANCE HEALTH NETWORK

• Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Rosecrance

Health Network for providing 100 years of high-quality care for Illinois residents. As the Senate considers legislation to address the heroin and opioid epidemic, including S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which I was proud to introduce with Senators WHITEHOUSE, PORTMAN, KLOBUCHAR, AYOTTE, and COONS, we should consider successful organizations like Rosecrance who have been treating individuals with addiction for decades.

Rosecrance Memorial Home for Children was established in 1916 to care for neglected and dependent children in New Milford, IL. In 1982, after moving to Rockford, IL, in the 1970s, they recognized growing substance abuse rates among teenagers and created a first-of-its-kind chemical dependency treatment program in northern Illinois specifically for this population. In 1992, this program expanded to serve adults as well.

Five years ago, they recognized the importance of integrating addiction and mental health treatment and merged with the Janet Wattles Center in Rockford. This has enabled them to treat individuals with co-occurring disorders that require behavioral health and addiction treatment more effectively. They now provide critical services for over 22,000 children, adolescents, adults, and families at over 40 locations in Illinois and Wisconsin annually.

I congratulate Rosecrance Health Network on a century of success and look forward to working with them to address substance abuse in my State.●

TRIBUTE TO BUFFALO GALS

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the Buffalo Gals, a monthly gathering of women in the Rapid City, SD, area that are hosts of the International Women's Day celebration starting on March 4, 2016, in Rapid City.

The Buffalo Gals are a motivated group of over 100 women who have gathered once a month in Rapid City over the past year. Their mission is to create a community of driven, like-minded women who share their experiences with one another and act as role models for people of all ages. This inspirational group spreads awareness of worthy causes and empowers its members to accomplish their goals, which benefits the community as a whole.

This year's theme for the International Women's Day celebration is "Celebrate our Legacy." This exciting 2-day event will honor the accomplishments and promising futures of the Buffalo Gals and women everywhere, and it will feature guest speakers, meals, and a live concert that will inspire women to continue to be leaders that seek to address complex community and family challenges.

These remarkable women have achieved a great deal in the past year, and I am excited to see what they do in the future. I wish them continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO JULIA BROECHER

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Julia Broecher from my hometown of Murdo, SD, as she celebrates her 100th birthday. Julia was born in Kimball, SD, to Thomas and Sophia Lebeda. At the age of 3, her family moved to Murdo, where she has lived ever since. Julia is the oldest of 14 children, and five of her siblings are still living today.

Julia married Carroll Broecher in 1937. The couple had four children, three girls and one boy. Today, Julia has 15 grandchildren and numerous great- and great-great-grandchildren.

In her youth, Julia worked as a country school teacher for several years, and later in life, she was the head custodian for the Jones County courthouse and a well-known restaurant in Murdo.

Over the years, Julia has had a significant impact on the Murdo community and has been a fixture at school and community functions. She is a charter member of the Community Bible Church where she taught Sunday school to many children. One of those children was me. She was known in the area as being a master seamstress, making many wedding and prom dresses for young women, as well as teaching young women how to sew. Julia loves to fish and play cards and dominoes with family at the Murdo Senior Center.

Julia has always welcomed challenges with a loving and caring attitude and is the embodiment of the American values of faith, family, friends and freedom.

Happy birthday, Julia.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT ON THE MODIFICATION AND CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO CUBA AND OF THE EMERGENCY AUTHORITY RELATING TO THE REGULATION OF THE ANCHORAGE AND MOVEMENT OF VESSELS, AS AMENDED—PM 42

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 1 of title II of Public Law 65-24, ch. 30, June 15, 1917, as amended (50 U.S.C. 191), sections 201, 202, and 301 of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby report that I have issued a Proclamation to modify and continue the national emergency declared in Proclamations 6867 and 7757.

The Proclamation recognizes that certain descriptions of the national emergency set forth in Proclamations 6867 and 7757 no longer reflect the international relations of the United States related to Cuba. Further, the Proclamation recognizes the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba, and that the United States continues to pursue the progressive normalization of relations while aspiring toward a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic Cuba.

The Proclamation clarifies the national emergency related to Cuba and specifically provides the following statements related to U.S. national security and foreign policy:

• It is U.S. policy that a mass migration from Cuba would endanger the security of the United States by posing a disturbance or threatened disturbance of the international relations of the United States.

• The unauthorized entry of vessels subject to the jurisdiction of the United States into Cuban territorial waters is in violation of U.S. law and contrary to U.S. policy.

• The unauthorized entry of U.S.-registered vessels into Cuban territorial waters is detrimental to U.S. foreign policy, and counter to the purpose of Executive Order 12807, which is to ensure, among other things, safe, orderly, and legal migration.

• The possibility of large-scale unauthorized entries of U.S.-registered vessels would disturb the international relations of the United States by facilitating a possible mass migration of Cuban nationals.

I have directed the Secretary of Homeland Security (the "Secretary") to make and issue such rules and regulations as the Secretary may find appropriate to regulate the anchorage and movement of vessels, and authorize and approve the Secretary's issuance of such rules and regulations, as authorized by the Act of June 15, 1917.

I am enclosing a copy of the Proclamation I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 24, 2016.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:40 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 2109. An act to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3584. An act to authorize, streamline, and identify efficiencies within the Transportation Security Administration, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4398. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for requirements relating to documentation for major acquisition programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4402. An act to require a review of information regarding persons who have traveled or attempted to travel from the United States to support terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4408. An act to require the development of a national strategy to combat terrorist travel, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following resolution:

H. Res. 620. Resolution relative to the death of the Honorable Antonin Scalia, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 113. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal collectively to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the "Borinqueneers".

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 12:56 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 487. An act to allow the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma to lease or transfer certain lands.

H.R. 890. An act to revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida.

H.R. 3262. An act to provide for the conveyance of land of the Illiana Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Danville, Illinois.

H.R. 4056. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States to the property known as "The Community Living Center" at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida.

H.R. 4437. An act to extend the deadline for the submittal of the final report required by the Commission on Care.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3584. An act to authorize, streamline, and identify efficiencies within the Transportation Security Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 4398. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for requirements relating to documentation for major acquisition programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4402. An act to require a review of information regarding persons who have traveled or attempted to travel from the United States to support terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4408. An act to require the development of a national strategy to combat terrorist travel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURE HELD AT THE DESK

The following resolution was ordered held at the desk, by unanimous consent:

S. Res. 374. Resolution relating to the death of Antonin Scalia, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4455. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pyriproxyfen; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9941-38-OCSP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 19, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4456. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Triclopyr; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9941-87-OCSP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 19, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4457. A communication from the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting the Administration's proposed fiscal year 2017 budget; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4458. A communication from the Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, transmitting, authorization of Lieutenant General John W. Nicholson, Jr., United States Army, to wear the insignia of the grade of general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4459. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran as declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4460. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Libya declared in Executive Order 13566; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4461. A communication from the General Counsel of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rules of Practice and Procedure; Civil Money Penalty Inflation Adjustment" (RIN2590-AA77) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4462. A communication from the Director, Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Bank Enterprise Award Program" (RIN1505-AA91) (12 CFR Part 1806) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 22, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4463. A communication from the Director, Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Community Development Financial Institutions Program" (RIN1505-AA92) (12 CFR Part 1805) received in the Office of the President of the Senate

on February 22, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4464. A communication from the Director, Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Capital Magnet Fund" (RIN1559-AA00) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 22, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4465. A communication from the Executive Director, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Annual Update of Filing Fees" ((RIN1902-AF17) (Docket No. RM16-2-000)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4466. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Review of New Sources and Modifications in Indian Country: Extension of Permitting and Registration Deadlines for True Minor Sources Engaged in Oil and Natural Gas Production in Indian Country" ((RIN2060-AS27) (FRL No. 9942-64-OAR)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 17, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4467. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; District of Columbia; Regulation to Limit Nitrogen Oxides Emissions from Large Non-Electric Generating Units" (FRL No. 9942-59-Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 17, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4468. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; District of Columbia; Interstate Pollution Transport Requirements for the 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide Standards" (FRL No. 9942-58-Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 17, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4469. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Wisconsin; Revision to the Milwaukee-Racine-Waukesha 2006 24-Hour Particulate Matter Maintenance Plan" (FRL No. 9942-56-Region 5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 17, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4470. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Indiana; Particulate Matter Emissions Limits Revision" (FRL No. 9942-54-Region 5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 17, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4471. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division,

Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Clarification of Requirements for Method 303 Certification Training" (RIN2060-AR97) (FRL No. 9940-76-OAR)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 19, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4472. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Missouri; Emissions Inventory and Emissions Statement for the Missouri Portion of the St. Louis-MO-IL Ozone Nonattainment Area" (FRL No. 9942-76-Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 19, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4473. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval and Air Quality Designation; GA; Redesignation of the Atlanta, GA, 1997 Annual PM_{2.5} Nonattainment Area to Attainment" (FRL No. 9942-61-Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 19, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4474. A communication from the Acting Unified Listing Chief, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; 4(d) Rule for the Northern Long-Eared Bat" (RIN1018-AY98) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4475. A communication from the Acting Unified Listing Chief, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Listing Endangered and Threatened Species and Designating Critical Habitat; Implementing Changes to the Regulations for Designating Critical Habitat" (RIN1018-AX86 and RIN0648-BB79) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4476. A communication from the Acting Unified Listing Chief, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for *Consolea Corallicola* (Florida Semaphore Cactus) and *Harrisia aboriginum* (Aboriginal Prickly-apple)" (RIN1018-AZ92) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4477. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Clarification of Licensee Actions in Receipt of Enforcement Discretion Per Enforcement Guidance Memorandum EGM 15-002, 'Enforcement Discretion for Tornado-Generated Missile Protection Noncompliance'" (DSS-ISG-2016-01) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 19, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4478. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Bogue Banks project in Carteret County, North Carolina; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4479. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a project for Flagler County, Florida; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4480. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a project for Edisto Beach, Colleton County, South Carolina; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4481. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Recovery and State Grants, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife; Technical Corrections for Eight Wildlife Species on the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife" (RIN1018-BB28) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4482. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Recovery and State Grants, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Reclassifying *Hesperocyparis abramsiana* (=Cupressus abramsiana) as 'Threatened'" (RIN1018-AY77) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4483. A communication from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Fiscal Assistant Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Department of the Treasury Regulations for the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund" (RIN1505-AC44) (31 CFR Part 34) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4484. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Maximum Vehicle Values for 2016 for Use With Vehicle Cents-Per-Mile and Fleet-Average Valuation Rules" (Notice 2016-12) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4485. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "2015 Inflation Adjustment Factor for the Indian Coal Production Credit" (Notice 2016-11) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4486. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Timing of Submitting Preexisting Accounts and Periodic Certifications" (Notice 2016-08) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4487. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "2016 Cost-of-Living Adjustment for Certain Items Resulting from the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015" (Rev. Proc. 2016-14) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4488. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Transition Relief for Certain Section 529 Qualified Tuition Programs Required to File Form 1099-Q" (Notice 2016-13) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4489. A communication from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Management, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Department of the Treasury Employee Rules of Conduct" (31 CFR Part 0) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 22, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4490. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2016-0164); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4491. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2016-0112); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4492. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2016-0167); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4493. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2016-0111); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4494. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15-123); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4495. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report prepared by the Department of State on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period August 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4496. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Economic Report of the President together with the 2016 Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisers; to the Joint Economic Committee.

EC-4497. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Removal of Review and Reclassification Procedures for Biological Products Licensed Prior to July 1, 1972" (Docket No. FDA-2015-N-2103) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 16, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4498. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) annual report on Drug Shortages for Calendar Year 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4499. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Fiscal Year 2014 Report on the Preventive Medicine and Public Health Training Grant and Integrative Medicine Programs"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4500. A communication from the Secretary of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Implementation of the Short-Time Compensation (STC) Program Provisions in the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4501. A communication from the Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the cost of response and recovery efforts for FEMA-3374-EM in the State of Missouri having exceeded the \$5,000,000 limit for a single emergency declaration; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4502. A communication from the Secretary of the Board of Governors, U.S. Postal Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4503. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "The Durability of Police Reform: The Metropolitan Police Department Use of Force: 2008-2015"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4504. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the semi-annual reports of the Attorney General relative to enforcement actions taken by the Department of Justice under the Lobbying Disclosure Act for the periods beginning on January 1, 2012; July 1, 2012; January 1, 2013; July 1, 2013; January 1, 2014; July 1, 2014; and January 1, 2015; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4505. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to grants made under the Paul Coverdell National Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4506. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of Size Standards, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Small Business Size Standards: In-

flation Adjustments to Monetary Based Size Standards" (RIN3245-AG60) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 17, 2016; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC-4507. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of Size Standards, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Small Business Size Standards: Industries With Employee Based Size Standards Not Part of Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, or Retail Trade" (RIN3245-AG51) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 17, 2016; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC-4508. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of Size Standards, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Small Business Size Standards for Manufacturing" (RIN3245-AG50) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 17, 2016; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC-4509. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of Size Standards, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Small Business Size Standards: Employee Based Size Standards in Wholesale Trade and Retail Trade" (RIN3245-AG49) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 17, 2016; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC-4510. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of Grants Management, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Awarding Agency Regulatory Implementation of Office of Management and Budget's Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards" (RIN3245-AG62) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 17, 2016; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC-4511. A communication from the Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Notification and Reporting of Aircraft Accidents or Incidents and Overdue Aircraft, and Preservation of Aircraft Wreckage, Mail, Cargo, and Records" (RIN3147-AA11) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4512. A communication from the Federal Register and Regulatory Liaison Officer, Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Discrimination on the Basis of Disability in Federally Assisted and Federally Conducted Programs and Activities" (RIN2700-AD85) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 16, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4513. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf, and South

Atlantic; Aquaculture" (RIN0648-AS65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 22, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4514. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pacific Island Pelagic Fisheries; Exemption for Large U.S. Longline Vessels To Fish in Portions of the American Samoa Large Vessel Prohibited Area" (RIN0648-BF22) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4515. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program" (RIN0648-BF68) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4516. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Trip Limit Adjustment for the Common Pool Fishery" (RIN0648-XE398) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 22, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4517. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2015 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Greater Amberjack" (RIN0648-XE397) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 19, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4518. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 610 in the Gulf of Alaska" (RIN0648-XE420) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4519. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Directed Fishing With Trawl Gear by Fisheries Act Catcher Processors in Bycatch Limitation Zone 1 of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area" (RIN0648-XE429) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4520. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled

"Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Pot Catcher/Processors in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area" (RIN0648-XE418) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4521. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Inseason Adjustment to the 2016 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Pollock, Atka Mackerel, and Pacific Cod Total Allowable Catch Amounts" (RIN0648-XE367) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 22, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4522. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; 2015-2016 Biennial Specifications and Management Measures; Inseason Adjustments" (RIN0648-BF63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 22, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4523. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Inseason Adjustment to the 2016 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Pollock, Atka Mackerel, and Pacific Cod Total Allowable Catch Amounts" (RIN0648-XE367) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 19, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2276. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide enhanced safety in pipeline transportation, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-209).

By Mr. INHOFE, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 659. A bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-210).

S. 1024. A bill to authorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-211).

By Mr. INHOFE, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, without amendment:

S. 1674. A bill to amend and reauthorize certain provisions relating to Long Island Sound restoration and stewardship (Rept. No. 114-212).

S. 2143. A bill to provide for the authority for the successors and assigns of the Starr-Camargo Bridge Company to maintain and operate a toll bridge across the Rio Grande near Rio Grande City, Texas, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-213).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. PORTMAN:

S. 2570. A bill to amend the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 to provide for regulatory impact analyses for certain rules and consideration of the least burdensome regulatory alternative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. CORTON, and Mrs. ERNST):

S. 2571. A bill to provide for the eligibility for airport development grants of airports that enter into certain leases with components of the Armed Forces; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. REED, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 2572. A bill to make demonstration grants to eligible local educational agencies or consortia of eligible local educational agencies for the purpose of increasing the numbers of school nurses in public elementary schools and secondary schools; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 2573. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax credit for taxpayers who remove lead-based hazards; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 2574. A bill to amend title IV of the Social Security Act to require States to adopt a centralized electronic system to help expedite the placement of children in foster care or guardianship, or for adoption, across State lines, and to provide grants to aid States in developing such a system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MURPHY:

S. 2575. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax credit for property owners who remove hazards relating to lead, asbestos, and radon; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. AYOTTE:

S. 2576. A bill to permit the Attorney General to authorize a temporary transfer of funds from Department of Justice accounts in the amount necessary to restore Department of Justice Asset Forfeiture Program equitable sharing payments to participating law enforcement agencies; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 2577. A bill to protect crime victims' rights, to eliminate the substantial backlog of DNA and other forensic evidence samples to improve and expand the forensic science testing capacity of Federal, State, and local crime laboratories, to increase research and development of new testing technologies, to develop new training programs regarding the collection and use of forensic evidence, to provide post-conviction testing of DNA evidence to exonerate the innocent, to support accreditation efforts of forensic science laboratories and medical examiner offices, to address training and equipment needs, to improve the performance of counsel in State capital cases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 2578. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to permit certain partial fillings of prescriptions; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. REED, Mr. BURR, Mr. DURBIN, and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 2579. A bill to provide additional support to ensure safe drinking water; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. PAUL:

S.J. Res. 30. A joint resolution relating to the disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the Government of Pakistan of F-16 Block 52 aircraft; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. REID, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. WICKER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. KAINE, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BENNET, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. BURR, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PAUL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. Res. 372. A resolution celebrating Black History Month; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. REID, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 373. A resolution recognizing the historical significance of Executive Order 9066 and expressing the sense of the Senate that policies that discriminate against any individual based on the actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion of that individual would be a repetition of the mistakes of Executive Order 9066 and contrary to the values of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE,

Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 374. A resolution relating to the death of Antonin Scalia, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; ordered held at the desk.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 239

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) were added as cosponsors of S. 239, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, with respect to apportionments under the Airport Improvement Program, and for other purposes.

S. 353

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 353, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prevent unjust and irrational criminal punishments.

S. 441

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 441, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to clarify the Food and Drug Administration's jurisdiction over certain tobacco products, and to protect jobs and small businesses involved in the sale, manufacturing and distribution of traditional and premium cigars.

S. 524

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 524, *supra*.

S. 578

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 578, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 1131

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1131, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the incidence of diabetes among Medicare beneficiaries, and for other purposes.

S. 1358

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1358, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to inter in national cemeteries individuals who supported the United States in Laos during the Vietnam War era.

S. 1555

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1555, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 1874

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1874, a bill to provide protections for workers with respect to their right to select or refrain from selecting representation by a labor organization.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1913

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1913, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish programs to prevent prescription drug abuse under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 2041

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2041, a bill to promote the development of safe drugs for neonates.

S. 2185

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2185, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

S. 2268

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas

(Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2268, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the United States Army Dust Off crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their extraordinary heroism and lifesaving actions in Vietnam.

S. 2276

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2276, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide enhanced safety in pipeline transportation, and for other purposes.

S. 2426

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2426, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

S. 2427

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2427, a bill to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities who need long-term services and supports, and for other purposes.

S. 2455

At the request of Mr. VITTER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2455, a bill to expand school choice in the District of Columbia.

S. 2474

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2474, a bill to allow for additional markings, including the words "Israel" and "Product in Israel," to be used for country of origin marking requirements for goods made in the geographical areas known as the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

S. 2512

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2512, a bill to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus.

S. 2531

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2531, a bill to authorize State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 2540

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr.

WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2540, a bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations.

S. 2558

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2558, a bill to expand the prohibition on misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, and for other purposes.

S. 2559

At the request of Mr. BURR, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) were added as cosponsors of S. 2559, a bill to prohibit the modification, termination, abandonment, or transfer of the lease by which the United States acquired the land and waters containing Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

S. 2563

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2563, a bill to affirm the importance of the land forces of the United States Armed Forces and to authorize fiscal year 2016 end-strength minimum levels for the active and reserve components of such land forces, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 21

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, her name was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 21, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States authorizing the Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States.

S. CON. RES. 4

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 4, a concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act.

S. RES. 346

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 346, a resolution expressing opposition to the European Commission interpretive notice regarding labeling Israeli products and goods manufactured in the West Bank and other areas, as such actions undermine the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 2577. A bill to protect crime victims' rights, to eliminate the substan-

tial backlog of DNA and other forensic evidence samples to improve and expand the forensic science testing capacity of Federal, State, and local crime laboratories, to increase research and development of new testing technologies, to develop new training programs regarding the collection and use of forensic evidence, to provide post-conviction testing of DNA evidence to exonerate the innocent, to support accreditation efforts of forensic science laboratories and medical examiner offices, to address training and equipment needs, to improve the performance of counsel in State capital cases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2577

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS.

(a) RESTITUTION DURING SUPERVISED RELEASE.—Section 3583(d) of title 18, United States Code, is amended in the first sentence by inserting " , that the defendant make restitution in accordance with sections 3663 and 3663A, or any other statute authorizing a sentence of restitution," after "supervision".

(b) COLLECTION OF RESTITUTION FROM DEFENDANT'S ESTATE.—Section 3613(b) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following: "The liability to pay restitution shall terminate on the date that is the later of 20 years from the entry of judgment or 20 years after the release from imprisonment of the person ordered to pay restitution. In the event of the death of the person ordered to pay restitution, the individual's estate will be held responsible for any unpaid balance of the restitution amount, and the lien provided in subsection (c) of this section shall continue until the estate receives a written release of that liability."

(c) VICTIM INTERPRETERS.—Rule 28 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure is amended in the first sentence by inserting before the period at the end the following: " , including an interpreter for the victim".

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR GRANTS FOR CRIME VICTIMS.

(a) CRIME VICTIMS LEGAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS.—Section 103(b) of the Justice for All Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-405; 118 Stat. 2264) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking "2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009" and inserting "2017 through 2021";

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking "2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009" and inserting "2017 through 2021";

(3) in paragraph (3), by striking "2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009" and inserting "2017 through 2021";

(4) in paragraph (4), by striking "2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009" and inserting "2017 through 2021"; and

(5) in paragraph (5), by striking "2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009" and inserting "2017 through 2021".

(b) CRIME VICTIMS NOTIFICATION GRANTS.—Section 1404E(c) of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10603e(c)) is amended by striking "2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009" and inserting "2017 through 2021".

SEC. 4. REDUCING THE RAPE KIT BACKLOG.

Of the amounts made available to the Attorney General for a DNA Analysis and capacity enhancement program and for other local, State, and Federal forensic activities under the heading "STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT" under the heading "OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS" under the heading "DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE" in a fiscal year—

(1) not less than 75 percent of such amounts shall be provided for grants for direct testing activities described under paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of section 2(a) of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 14135(a)); and

(2) not less than 5 percent of such amounts shall be provided for grants for law enforcement agencies to conduct audits of their backlogged rape kits, including through the creation of a tracking system, under section 2(a)(7) of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 14135(a)(7)), and to prioritize testing in those cases in which the statute of limitation will soon expire.

SEC. 5. SEXUAL ASSAULT NURSE EXAMINERS.

Section 304 of the DNA Sexual Assault Justice Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 14136a) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

"(c) PREFERENCE.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—In reviewing applications submitted in accordance with a program authorized, in whole or in part, by this section, the Attorney General shall give preference to any eligible entity that certifies that the entity will use the grant funds to—

"(A) operate or expand forensic nurse examiner programs in a rural area or for an underserved population, as those terms are defined in section 4002 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 13925);

"(B) hire full-time forensic nurse examiners to conduct activities under subsection (a); or

"(C) sustain or establish a training program for forensic nurse examiners.

"(2) DIRECTIVE TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Attorney General shall coordinate with the Secretary of Health and Human Services to inform Federal Qualified Health Centers, Community Health Centers, hospitals, colleges and universities, and other appropriate health-related entities about the role of forensic nurses and existing resources available within the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Human Services to train or employ forensic nurses to address the needs of communities dealing with sexual assault, domestic violence, and elder abuse. The Attorney General shall collaborate on this effort with nongovernmental organizations representing forensic nurses."

SEC. 6. PROTECTING THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT.

Section 8(e)(1)(A) of the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (42 U.S. 15607(e)(1)(A)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in clause (ii), by striking the period and inserting "; and"; and

(3) by inserting at the end the following:

“(iii) the program is not administered by the Office on Violence Against Women of the Department of Justice.”

SEC. 7. CLARIFICATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT HOUSING PROTECTIONS.

Section 41411(b)(3)(B)(ii) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e-11(b)(3)(B)(ii)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting “or resident” after “any remaining tenant”; and

(2) in the second sentence, by inserting “or resident” after “tenant” each place it appears.

SEC. 8. STRENGTHENING THE PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION ACT.

The Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (42 U.S.C. 15601 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 6(d)(2) (42 U.S.C. 15605(d)(2)), by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

“(A)(i) include the certification of the chief executive that the State receiving such grant has adopted all national prison rape standards that, as of the date on which the application was submitted, have been promulgated under this Act; or

“(ii) demonstrate to the Attorney General, in such manner as the Attorney General shall require, that the State receiving such grant is actively working to adopt and achieve full compliance with the national prison rape standards described in clause (i);” and

(2) in section 8(e) (42 U.S.C. 15607(e))—

(A) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) ADOPTION OF NATIONAL STANDARDS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For each fiscal year, any amount that a State would otherwise receive for prison purposes for that fiscal year under a grant program covered by this subsection shall be reduced by 5 percent, unless the chief executive officer of the State submits to the Attorney General proof of compliance with this Act through—

“(i) a certification that the State has adopted, and is in full compliance with, the national standards described in subsection (a); or

“(ii) an assurance that the State intends to adopt and achieve full compliance with those national standards so as to ensure that a certification under clause (i) may be submitted in future years, which includes—

“(I) a commitment that not less than 5 percent of such amount shall be used for this purpose; or

“(II) a request that the Attorney General hold 5 percent of such amount in abeyance pursuant to the requirements of subparagraph (E).

“(B) RULES FOR CERTIFICATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—A chief executive officer of a State who submits a certification under this paragraph shall also provide the Attorney General with—

“(I) a list of the prisons under the operational control of the executive branch of the State;

“(II) a list of the prisons listed under subclause (I) that were audited during the most recently concluded audit year;

“(III) all final audit reports for prisons listed under subclause (I) that were completed during the most recently concluded audit year; and

“(IV) a proposed schedule for completing an audit of all the prisons listed under subclause (I) during the following 3 audit years.

“(ii) AUDIT APPEAL EXCEPTION.—Beginning on the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2016, a chief executive officer

of a State may submit a certification that the State is in full compliance pursuant to subparagraph (A)(i) even if a prison under the operational control of the executive branch of the State has an audit appeal pending.

“(C) RULES FOR ASSURANCES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—A chief executive officer of a State who submits an assurance under subparagraph (A)(ii) shall also provide the Attorney General with—

“(I) a list of the prisons under the operational control of the executive branch of the State;

“(II) a list of the prisons listed under subclause (I) that were audited during the most recently concluded audit year;

“(III) an explanation of any barriers the State faces to completing required audits;

“(IV) all final audit reports for prisons listed under subclause (I) that were completed during the most recently concluded audit year;

“(V) a proposed schedule for completing an audit of all prisons under the operational control of the executive branch of the State during the following 3 audit years; and

“(VI) an explanation of the State’s current degree of implementation of the national standards.

“(ii) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT.—A chief executive officer of a State who submits an assurance under subparagraph (A)(ii)(I) shall, before receiving the applicable funds described in subparagraph (A)(ii)(I), also provide the Attorney General with a proposed plan for the expenditure of the funds during the applicable grant period.

“(iii) ACCOUNTING OF FUNDS.—A chief executive officer of a State who submits an assurance under subparagraph (A)(ii)(I) shall, in a manner consistent with the applicable grant reporting requirements, submit to the Attorney General a detailed accounting of how the funds described in subparagraph (A) were used.

“(D) SUNSET OF ASSURANCE OPTION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—On the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2016, subclause (II) of subparagraph (A)(ii) shall cease to have effect.

“(ii) ADDITIONAL SUNSET.—On the date that is 6 years after the date of enactment of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2016, clause (ii) of subparagraph (A) shall cease to have effect.

“(iii) EMERGENCY ASSURANCES.—

“(I) REQUEST.—Notwithstanding clause (ii), during the 2-year period beginning 6 years after the date of enactment of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2016, a chief executive officer of a State who certifies that the State has audited not less than 90 percent of prisons under the operational control of the executive branch of the State may request that the Attorney General allow the chief executive officer to submit an emergency assurance in accordance with subparagraph (A)(ii) as in effect on the day before the date on which that subparagraph ceased to have effect under clause (ii) of this subparagraph.

“(II) GRANT OF REQUEST.—The Attorney General shall grant a request submitted under subclause (I) within 60 days upon a showing of good cause.

“(E) DISPOSITION OF FUNDS HELD IN ABEYANCE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—If the chief executive officer of a State who has submitted an assurance under subparagraph (A)(ii)(II) subsequently submits a certification under subparagraph (A)(i) during the 3-year period beginning on the date of enactment of the Jus-

tice for All Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Attorney General will release all funds held in abeyance under subparagraph (A)(ii)(II) to be used by the State in accordance with the conditions of the grant program for which the funds were provided.

“(ii) RELEASE OF FUNDS.—If the chief executive officer of a State who has submitted an assurance under subparagraph (A)(ii)(II) is unable to submit a certification during the 3-year period beginning on the date of enactment of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2016, but does assure the Attorney General that $\frac{3}{4}$ of prisons under the operational control of the executive branch of the State have been audited at least once, the Attorney General shall release all of the funds of the State held in abeyance to be used in adopting and achieving full compliance with the national standards, if the State agrees to comply with the applicable requirements in clauses (ii) and (iii) of subparagraph (C).

“(iii) REDISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—If the chief executive officer of a State who has submitted an assurance under subparagraph (A)(ii)(II) is unable to submit a certification during the 3-year period beginning on the date of enactment of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2016 and does not assure the Attorney General that $\frac{3}{4}$ of prisons under the operational control of the executive branch of the State have been audited at least once, the Attorney General shall redistribute the funds of the State held in abeyance to other States to be used in accordance with the conditions of the grant program for which the funds were provided.

“(F) PUBLICATION OF AUDIT RESULTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Attorney General shall request from each State, and make available on an appropriate Internet website, all final audit reports completed to date for prisons under the operational control of the executive branch of each State. The Attorney General shall update such website annually with reports received from States under subparagraphs (B)(i) and (C)(i).

“(G) REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL STANDARDS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Attorney General shall issue a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives on the status of implementation of the national standards and the steps the Department, in conjunction with the States and other key stakeholders, is taking to address any unresolved implementation issues.”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(8) BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR AUDITORS.—An individual seeking certification by the Department of Justice to serve as an auditor of prison compliance with the national standards described in subsection (a) shall, upon request, submit fingerprints in the manner determined by the Attorney General for criminal history record checks of the applicable State and Federal Bureau of Investigation repositories.”

SEC. 9. ADDITIONAL REAUTHORIZATIONS.

(a) DNA RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—Section 305(c) of the Justice for All Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 14136b(c)) is amended by striking “\$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2005 through 2009” and inserting “\$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021”.

(b) FBI DNA PROGRAMS.—Section 307(a) of the Justice for All Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-405; 118 Stat. 2275) is amended by striking

“\$42,100,000 for each of fiscal years 2005 through 2009” and inserting “\$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021”.

(c) DNA IDENTIFICATION OF MISSING PERSONS.—Section 308(c) of the Justice for All Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 14136d(c)) is amended by striking “fiscal years 2005 through 2009” and inserting “fiscal years 2017 through 2021”.

SEC. 10. PAUL COVERDELL FORENSIC SCIENCES IMPROVEMENT GRANTS.

(a) GRANTS.—Part BB of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797j) is amended—

(1) in section 2802(2) (42 U.S.C. 3797k(2)), by inserting after “bodies” the following: “and is accredited by an accrediting body that is a signatory to an internationally recognized arrangement and that offers accreditation to forensic science conformity assessment bodies using an accreditation standard that is recognized by that internationally recognized arrangement, or attests, in a manner that is legally binding and enforceable, to use a portion of the grant amount to prepare and apply for such accreditation not more than 2 years after the date on which a grant is awarded under section 2801”;

(2) in section 2803(a) (42 U.S.C. 3797l(a))—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “Seventy-five percent” and inserting “Eighty-five percent”; and

(ii) by striking “75 percent” and inserting “85 percent”;

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “Twenty-five percent” and inserting “Fifteen percent”; and

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking “0.6 percent” and inserting “1 percent”;

(3) in section 2804(a) (42 U.S.C. 3797m(a)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by inserting “impression evidence,” after “latent prints,”; and

(ii) by inserting “digital evidence, fire evidence,” after “toxicology.”;

(B) in paragraph (3), by inserting “and medicolegal death investigators” after “laboratory personnel”;

(C) by inserting at the end the following:

“(4) To address emerging forensic science issues (such as statistics, contextual bias, and uncertainty of measurement) and emerging forensic science technology (such as high throughput automation, statistical software, and new types of instrumentation).

“(5) To educate and train forensic pathologists in the United States.

“(6) To work with the States and units of local government to direct funding to medicolegal death investigation systems to facilitate accreditation of medical examiner and coroner offices and certification of medicolegal death investigators.”; and

(4) in section 2806(a) (42 U.S.C. 3797o(a))—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) the progress of any unaccredited forensic science service provider receiving grant funds toward obtaining accreditation; and”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 1001(a)(24) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3793(a)(24)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (H), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (I), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(J) \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021.”.

SEC. 11. IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF REPRESENTATION IN STATE CAPITAL CASES.

Section 426 of the Justice for All Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 14163e) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “\$75,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2005 through 2009” and inserting “\$30,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021”; and

(2) in subsection (b), by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, or upon a showing of good cause, and at the discretion of the Attorney General, the State may determine a fair allocation of funds across the uses described in sections 421 and 422”.

SEC. 12. POST-CONVICTION DNA TESTING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3600 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “under a sentence of” in each place it appears and inserting “sentenced to”;

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B)(i), by striking “death”; and

(B) in paragraph (3)(A), by striking “and the applicant did not—” and all that follows through “knowingly fail to request” and inserting “and the applicant did not knowingly fail to request”;

(3) in subsection (b)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) order the Government to—

“(i) prepare an inventory of the evidence related to the case; and

“(ii) issue a copy of the inventory to the court, the applicant, and the Government.”;

(4) in subsection (e)—

(A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

“(1) RESULTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The results of any DNA testing ordered under this section shall be simultaneously disclosed to the court, the applicant, and the Government.

“(B) RESULTS EXCLUDE APPLICANT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—If a DNA profile is obtained through testing that excludes the applicant as the source and the DNA complies with the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s requirements for the uploading of crime scene profiles to the National DNA Index System (referred to in this subsection as ‘NDIS’), the court shall order that the law enforcement entity with direct or conveyed statutory jurisdiction that has access to the NDIS submit the DNA profile obtained from probative biological material from crime scene evidence to determine whether the DNA profile matches a profile of a known individual or a profile from an unsolved crime.

“(ii) NDIS SEARCH.—The results of a search under clause (i) shall be simultaneously disclosed to the court, the applicant, and the Government.”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “the National DNA Index System (referred to in this subsection as ‘NDIS’)” and inserting “NDIS”; and

(5) in subsection (g)(2)(B), by striking “death”.

(b) PRESERVATION OF BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE.—Section 3600A of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “under a sentence of” and inserting “sentenced to”;

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking paragraphs (1) and (2); and

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) as paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), respectively.

SEC. 13. KIRK BLOODSWORTH POST-CONVICTION DNA TESTING PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 413 of the Justice for All Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 14136 note) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “fiscal years 2005 through 2009” and inserting “fiscal years 2017 through 2021”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) for eligible entities that are a State or unit of local government, provide a certification by the chief legal officer of the State in which the eligible entity operates or the chief legal officer of the jurisdiction in which the funds will be used for the purposes of the grants, that the State or jurisdiction—

“(A) provides DNA testing of specified evidence under a State statute or a State or local rule or regulation to persons sentenced to imprisonment or death for a State felony offense, in a manner intended to ensure a reasonable process for resolving claims of actual innocence that ensures post-conviction DNA testing in at least those cases that would be covered by section 3600(a) of title 18, United States Code, had they been Federal cases and, if the results of the testing exclude the applicant as the source of the DNA, permits the applicant to apply for post-conviction relief, notwithstanding any provision of law that would otherwise bar the application as untimely; and

“(B) preserves biological evidence, as defined in section 3600A of title 18, United States Code, under a State statute or a State or local rule, regulation, or practice in a manner intended to ensure that reasonable measures are taken by the State or jurisdiction to preserve biological evidence secured in relation to the investigation or prosecution of, at a minimum, murder, nonnegligent manslaughter and sexual offenses.”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 412(b) of the Justice for All Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 14136e(b)) is amended by striking “\$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2005 through 2009” and inserting “\$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021”.

SEC. 14. ESTABLISHMENT OF BEST PRACTICES FOR EVIDENCE RETENTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle A of title IV of the Justice for All Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-405; 118 Stat. 2278) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 414. ESTABLISHMENT OF BEST PRACTICES FOR EVIDENCE RETENTION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Institute of Justice, in consultation with Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies and government laboratories, shall—

“(1) establish best practices for evidence retention to focus on the preservation of forensic evidence; and

“(2) assist State, local, and tribal governments in adopting and implementing the best practices established under paragraph (1).

“(b) DEADLINE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Director of the National Institute of Justice shall publish the best practices established under subsection (a)(1).

“(c) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require or obligate compliance with the best practices established under subsection (a)(1).”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b)

of the Justice for All Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-405; 118 Stat. 2260) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 413 the following:

“Sec. 414. Establishment of best practices for evidence retention.”.

SEC. 15. EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Effective Administration of Criminal Justice Act of 2015”.

(b) **STRATEGIC PLANNING.**—Section 502 of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3752) is amended—

(1) by inserting “(A) IN GENERAL.—” before “To request a grant”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) A comprehensive Statewide plan detailing how grants received under this section will be used to improve the administration of the criminal justice system, which shall—

“(A) be designed in consultation with local governments, and representatives of all segments of the criminal justice system, including judges, prosecutors, law enforcement personnel, corrections personnel, and providers of indigent defense services, victim services, juvenile justice delinquency prevention programs, community corrections, and reentry services;

“(B) include a description of how the State will allocate funding within and among each of the uses described in subparagraphs (A) through (G) of section 501(a)(1);

“(C) describe the process used by the State for gathering evidence-based data and developing and using evidence-based and evidence-gathering approaches in support of funding decisions;

“(D) describe the barriers at the State and local level for accessing data and implementing evidence-based approaches to preventing and reducing crime and recidivism; and

“(E) be updated every 5 years, with annual progress reports that—

“(i) address changing circumstances in the State, if any;

“(ii) describe how the State plans to adjust funding within and among each of the uses described in subparagraphs (A) through (G) of section 501(a)(1);

“(iii) provide an ongoing assessment of need;

“(iv) discuss the accomplishment of goals identified in any plan previously prepared under this paragraph; and

“(v) reflect how the plan influenced funding decisions in the previous year.

“(b) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—

“(1) **STRATEGIC PLANNING.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Attorney General shall begin to provide technical assistance to States and local governments requesting support to develop and implement the strategic plan required under subsection (a)(6).

“(2) **PROTECTION OF CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Attorney General shall begin to provide technical assistance to States and local governments, including any agent thereof with responsibility for administration of justice, requesting support to meet the obligations established by the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall include—

“(A) public dissemination of practices, structures, or models for the administration of justice consistent with the requirements of the Sixth Amendment; and

“(B) assistance with adopting and implementing a system for the administration of justice consistent with the requirements of the Sixth Amendment.

“(3) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021 to carry out this subsection.”.

(c) **APPLICABILITY.**—The requirement to submit a strategic plan under section 501(a)(6) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by subsection (b), shall apply to any application submitted under such section 501 for a grant for any fiscal year beginning after the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 16. OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

All grants awarded by the Department of Justice that are authorized under this Act shall be subject to the following:

(1) **AUDIT REQUIREMENT.**—Beginning in fiscal year 2016, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall conduct audits of recipients of grants under this Act to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

(2) **MANDATORY EXCLUSION.**—A recipient of grant funds under this Act that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive grant funds under this Act during the 2 fiscal years beginning after the 12-month period described in paragraph (5).

(3) **PRIORITY.**—In awarding grants under this Act, the Attorney General shall give priority to eligible entities that, during the 3 fiscal years before submitting an application for a grant under this Act, did not have an unresolved audit finding showing a violation in the terms or conditions of a Department of Justice grant program.

(4) **REIMBURSEMENT.**—If an entity is awarded grant funds under this Act during the 2-fiscal-year period in which the entity is barred from receiving grants under paragraph (2), the Attorney General shall—

(A) deposit an amount equal to the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

(B) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

(5) **DEFINED TERM.**—In this section, the term “unresolved audit finding” means an audit report finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of the Department of Justice that the grantee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within a 12-month period beginning on the date when the final audit report is issued.

(6) **NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS.**—

(A) **DEFINITION.**—For purposes of this section and the grant programs described in this Act, the term “nonprofit organization” means an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

(B) **PROHIBITION.**—The Attorney General shall not award a grant under any grant program described in this Act to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(C) **DISCLOSURE.**—Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a grant under a grant

program described in this Act and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees and key employees, shall disclose to the Attorney General, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, the Attorney General shall make the information disclosed under this subsection available for public inspection.

(7) **ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.**—Unless otherwise explicitly provided in authorizing legislation, not more than 7.5 percent of the amounts authorized to be appropriated under this Act may be used by the Attorney General for salaries and administrative expenses of the Department of Justice.

(8) **CONFERENCE EXPENDITURES.**—

(A) **LIMITATION.**—No amounts authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Justice under this Act may be used by the Attorney General or by any individual or organization awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under this Act, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than \$20,000 in Department funds, unless the Deputy Attorney General or the appropriate Assistant Attorney General, Director, or principal deputy as the Deputy Attorney General may designate, provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host a conference.

(B) **WRITTEN APPROVAL.**—Written approval under subparagraph (A) shall include a written estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food and beverages, audio/visual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and any entertainment.

(C) **REPORT.**—The Deputy Attorney General shall submit an annual report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives on all conference expenditures approved by operation of this paragraph.

(9) **PROHIBITION ON LOBBYING ACTIVITY.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Amounts authorized to be appropriated under this Act may not be utilized by any grant recipient to—

(i) lobby any representative of the Department of Justice regarding the award of grant funding; or

(ii) lobby any representative of a Federal, State, local, or tribal government regarding the award of grant funding.

(B) **PENALTY.**—If the Attorney General determines that any recipient of a grant under this Act has violated subparagraph (A), the Attorney General shall—

(i) require the grant recipient to repay the grant in full; and

(ii) prohibit the grant recipient from receiving another grant under this Act for not less than 5 years.

SEC. 17. NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF FORENSIC LABORATORIES.

(a) **STUDY AND REPORT.**—Not later than October 1, 2018, the Attorney General shall conduct a study and submit a report to the Committee of the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives on the status and needs of the forensic science community.

(b) **REQUIREMENTS.**—The report required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) examine the status of current workload, backlog, personnel, equipment, and equipment needs of public crime laboratories and medical examiner and coroner offices;

(2) include an overview of academic forensic science resources and needs, from a broad forensic science perspective, including non-traditional crime laboratory disciplines such as forensic anthropology, forensic entomology, and others as determined appropriate by the Attorney General;

(3) consider—

(A) the National Institute of Justice study, *Forensic Sciences: Review of Status and Needs*, published in 1999;

(B) the Bureau of Justice Statistics census reports on Publicly Funded Forensic Crime Laboratories, published in 2002, 2005, 2009, and 2014;

(C) the National Academy of Sciences report, *Strengthening Forensic Science: A Path Forward*, published in 2009; and

(D) the Bureau of Justice Statistics survey of forensic providers recommended by the National Commission of Forensic Science and approved by the Attorney General on September 8, 2014;

(4) provide Congress with a comprehensive view of the infrastructure, equipment, and personnel needs of the broad forensic science community; and

(5) be made available to the public.

SEC. 18. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the Sense of Congress that—

(1) the authority of the Director of the Office of Victims of Crime under section 1404 of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10603) includes funding ongoing projects that provide services to victims of crime on a nationwide basis or Americans abroad who are victims of crimes committed outside of the United States; and

(2) the proposed rule entitled “VOCA Victim Assistance Program” published by the Office of Victims of Crime of the Department of Justice in the Federal Register on August 27, 2013 (78 Fed. Reg. 52877) is consistent with section 1404 of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10603).

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, I am proud to introduce the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2016 with Senator CORNYN. The Justice for All Act, originally enacted in 2004, was an unprecedented bipartisan piece of criminal justice legislation. It has improved many aspects of our criminal justice system, and this reauthorization includes critical updates to ensure public confidence in the integrity of the American justice system.

The bill builds on the work I began in 2000, when I introduced the Innocence Protection Act. That measure was designed to ensure that defendants receive competent representation in criminal cases and have access to post-conviction DNA testing in those cases where the system got it wrong. The Innocence Protection Act became a key component of the Justice for All Act, and is reauthorized in the bill we introduce today.

We know our justice system is imperfect and that innocent people are sometimes convicted, and even sentenced to death. There were 149 people exonerated just last year, the highest number on record. They spent an average of 15 years in prison before their names were cleared. There have been 337 post-conviction DNA exonerations in the United States since 1989. Twenty of them were sentenced to death.

The first person exonerated from a death row crime by DNA evidence was a man named Kirk Bloodworth. Kirk was a young man just out of the Marines when he was arrested, convicted, and sentenced to death for a heinous crime that he did not commit. Now the Kirk Bloodworth Post Conviction DNA Testing Grant Program is a cornerstone of the Justice for All Act. This program provides grants to States for testing in cases like Kirk’s where someone has been convicted, but where significant DNA evidence was not tested.

This bill expands access to post-conviction DNA testing so that more innocent people will have a chance at the redemption they deserve. For example, this reauthorization will permit individuals to access DNA testing even if they previously waived their right to testing as part of a guilty plea. This change is critical because we know that people sometimes pled guilty or confess to crimes they did not commit. In fact, of the 337 people who have been freed based on DNA evidence, 88 falsely confessed or pled guilty. That is almost 30 percent of DNA exonerations. Had it not been for DNA testing, they would likely still be behind bars, or worse.

The bill also takes steps to encourage prosecutors to search for additional leads when the DNA evidence tested excludes an individual. Under the legislation, the government must run that DNA through the national database to see if it matches someone else in the system who might be the actual perpetrator. Unfortunately, this is not always done. This commonsense measure will increase public safety by getting the true criminals off the street.

Even in cases that do not involve DNA, it is imperative that every criminal defendant, including those who cannot afford a lawyer, receive effective representation. This bill requires the Department of Justice to assist states in developing a proficient system of indigent defense. I know as a former prosecutor, that the system only works as it should when each side is well represented by competent and well-trained counsel. This helps prevent wrongful convictions in the first place.

The Justice for All Reauthorization Act also increases resources for public forensic laboratories. Prosecutors and police officers depend on the efficient and accurate testing of evidence to solve cases. Putting more resources into forensic testing will also help reduce rape kit backlogs and ensure that survivors of this terrible crime are able to see their cases prosecuted and begin to feel safe again.

This bill further addresses the needs of sexual assault survivors by directing grants to forensic exam programs, prioritizing those that operate in rural areas or provide assistance to underserved populations. Timely access to

forensic exams is a critical first step in ensuring perpetrators are held accountable and taken off the streets. We must also ensure that the evidence collected from these exams in the form of rape kits are processed quickly. To help with that effort, the bill also provides support for law enforcement to create evidence tracking systems for rape kits, so their processing can be monitored and accounted for.

Finally, we must ensure that law enforcement and victim services programs have the resources they need to move these cases through our justice system and assist these survivors.

This bill also strengthens some key provisions of the Prison Rape Elimination Act, a bill I strongly supported when it was enacted in 2003. Specifically, changes imposed by this bill will require that states comply with regulations designed to prevent sexual assaults in our jails and prisons or lose Federal grant money. The Department of Justice will work with the states to assist them, but ultimately states will be penalized if they do not act. This bill imposes the true accountability required to eradicate this awful crime.

This reauthorization also expands rights for victims of all crime. It builds upon the success of the Crime Victims’ Rights Act by making it easier for crime victims to have an interpreter present during court proceedings and to obtain court-ordered restitution.

I firmly believe that improving our criminal justice system is a priority and a place we should not be afraid to invest additional resources. There are parts of this legislation that I would like to see receive more funding, but this bill, like most legislation, is a compromise. As a result, this bill does reduce the total authorized funding under the Justice for All Act, but I believe it does so responsibly. I also believe that many of the changes advanced by this legislation will help states, communities, and the federal government save money in the long term.

The programs created by the Justice for All Act have had an enormous impact, and it is crucial that we reauthorize and improve them. It has been 12 years since this law was updated, and we must work together to address the challenges currently facing our Nation’s justice system.

I thank the many law enforcement and criminal justice organizations that have helped to pinpoint the needed improvements that this law attempts to solve and I appreciate their ongoing support in seeing it passed.

Today, we rededicate ourselves to building a criminal justice system in which the innocent remain free, the guilty are punished, and all sides have the resources they need to advance justice. Americans deserve a criminal justice system which keeps us safe, ensures fairness, and fulfills the promise

of our constitution. This bill will bring us closer to that goal.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 372—CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. REID, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. WICKER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. KAINE, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BENNET, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. BURR, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PAUL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. LEAHY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 372

Whereas in 1776, people envisioned the United States as a new nation dedicated to the proposition stated in the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness . . .";

Whereas Africans were first brought involuntarily to the shores of America as early as the 17th century;

Whereas African Americans suffered enslavement and subsequently faced the injustices of lynch mobs, segregation, and denial of the basic and fundamental rights of citizenship;

Whereas in 2016, inequalities and injustices in the society of the United States continue to exist;

Whereas in the face of injustices, people of good will and of all races in the United States have distinguished themselves with a commitment to the noble ideals on which the United States was founded and have fought courageously for the rights and freedom of African Americans and others;

Whereas African Americans, such as Lieutenant Colonel Allen Allensworth, Maya Angelou, Arthur Ashe Jr., James Baldwin, James Beckwourth, Clara Brown, Blanche Bruce, Ralph Bunche, Shirley Chisholm, Holt Collier, Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. Du Bois, Ralph Ellison, Medgar Evers, Alex Haley, Dorothy Height, Lena Horne, Charles Hamilton Houston, Mahalia Jackson, Stephanie Tubbs Jones, B.B. King, Martin Luther King, Jr., Thurgood Marshall, Constance Baker Motley, Rosa Parks, Walter Payton, Bill Pickett, Homer Plessy, Bass Reeves, Hiram Revels, Amelia Platts Boynton Robinson, Jackie Robinson, Aaron Shirley, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Booker T. Washington, the Greensboro Four, and the Tuskegee Airmen, along with many others, worked against racism to achieve success and to make significant contributions to the economic, educational, political, artistic, athletic, literary, scientific, and technological advancements of the United States;

Whereas the contributions of African Americans from all walks of life throughout

the history of the United States reflect the greatness of the United States;

Whereas many African Americans lived, toiled, and died in obscurity, never achieving the recognition they deserved, and yet paved the way for future generations to succeed;

Whereas African Americans continue to serve the United States at the highest levels of business, government, and the military;

Whereas the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass inspired the creation of Negro History Week, the precursor to Black History Month;

Whereas Negro History Week represented the culmination of the efforts of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the "Father of Black History", to enhance knowledge of Black history through the Journal of Negro History, published by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, which was founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson and Jesse E. Moorland;

Whereas Black History Month, celebrated during the month of February, originated in 1926 when Dr. Carter G. Woodson set aside a special period in February to recognize the heritage and achievement of Black people of the United States;

Whereas Dr. Carter G. Woodson stated: "We have a wonderful history behind us. . . . If you are unable to demonstrate to the world that you have this record, the world will say to you, 'You are not worthy to enjoy the blessings of democracy or anything else.'";

Whereas since the founding of the United States, the Nation has imperfectly progressed toward noble goals; and

Whereas the history of the United States is the story of people regularly affirming high ideals, striving to reach those ideals but often failing, and then struggling to come to terms with the disappointment of that failure, before committing to trying again: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) acknowledges that all people of the United States are the recipients of the wealth of history provided by Black culture;

(2) recognizes the importance of Black History Month as an opportunity to reflect on the complex history of the United States, while remaining hopeful and confident about the path ahead;

(3) acknowledges the significance of Black History Month as an important opportunity to commemorate the tremendous contributions of African Americans to the history of the United States;

(4) encourages the celebration of Black History Month to provide a continuing opportunity for all people in the United States to learn from the past and understand the experiences that have shaped the United States; and

(5) agrees that, while the United States began as a divided country, the United States must—

(A) honor the contribution of all pioneers in the United States who have helped to ensure the legacy of the great United States; and

(B) move forward with purpose, united tirelessly as a nation "indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

SENATE RESOLUTION 373—RECOGNIZING THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066 AND EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT POLICIES THAT DISCRIMINATE AGAINST ANY INDIVIDUAL BASED ON THE ACTUAL OR PERCEIVED RACE, ETHNICITY, NATIONAL ORIGIN, OR RELIGION OF THAT INDIVIDUAL WOULD BE A REPETITION OF THE MISTAKES OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066 AND CONTRARY TO THE VALUES OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. REID, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 373

Whereas on December 7, 1941, the Imperial Japanese Navy launched a surprise attack against the United States naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, which led to—

(1) increased prejudice and suspicion toward Japanese Americans; and

(2) calls from civilians and public officials to remove Japanese Americans from the west coast of the United States;

Whereas on February 19, 1942, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 (7 Fed. Reg. 1407; relating to authorizing the Secretary of War to prescribe military areas) (referred to in this preamble as "Executive Order 9066"), which led to—

(1) the exclusion of 120,000 Japanese Americans and legal resident aliens from the west coast of the United States; and

(2) the incarceration of United States citizens and lawful permanent residents of Japanese ancestry in incarceration camps during World War II;

Whereas President Gerald Ford formally rescinded Executive Order 9066 in Presidential Proclamation 4417, dated February 19, 1976 (41 Fed. Reg. 7741) (referred to in this preamble as "Presidential Proclamation 4417");

Whereas Presidential Proclamation 4417—

(1) states that Japanese Americans were and are loyal people of the United States who have contributed to the well-being and security of the United States;

(2) states that the issuance of Executive Order 9066 was a grave mistake in United States history; and

(3) resolves that actions such as the actions authorized by Executive Order 9066 shall never happen again;

Whereas in 1980, Congress established the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians to investigate the circumstances surrounding the issuance of Executive Order 9066;

Whereas in 1983, the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians issued a report entitled "Personal Justice Denied" in which the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians concluded that—

(1) the promulgation of Executive Order 9066 was not justified by military necessity; and

(2) the decision to issue Executive Order 9066 was shaped by “race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership”;

Whereas on August 10, 1988, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-383; 102 Stat. 903) was enacted—

(1) to apologize for “fundamental violations of the basic civil liberties and constitutional rights of these individuals of Japanese ancestry”; and

(2) to establish the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund, to ensure that “the events surrounding the exclusion, forced removal, and incarceration of civilians and permanent resident aliens of Japanese ancestry will be remembered, and so that the causes and circumstances of this and similar events may be illuminated and understood”;

Whereas the terrorist attacks carried out in the United States on September 11, 2001, have led to heightened levels of suspicion and hate crimes, xenophobia, and bigotry directed toward the Arab, Middle Eastern, South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu American communities, including—

(1) on August 5, 2012, an attack on the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, which led to several injuries and the death of 6 Sikh Americans; and

(2) on February 10, 2015, the execution-style shooting of 3 Muslim American students in Chapel Hill, North Carolina;

Whereas the terrorist attacks carried out in Paris, France, on November 5, 2015, have led to renewed calls from public officials and figures to register Muslim Americans and bar millions from entering the United States based solely on the religion of those individuals, repeating the mistakes of 1942: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the historical significance of February 19, 1942, as the date on which President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 (7 Fed. Reg. 1407; relating to authorizing the Secretary of War to prescribe military areas) (referred to in this resolving clause as “Executive Order 9066”), which restricted the freedom of Japanese Americans;

(2) recognizes the historical significance of February 19, 1976, as the date on which President Gerald Ford issued Presidential Proclamation 4417 (41 Fed. Reg. 7741), which formally terminated Executive Order 9066;

(3) supports the goals of the Japanese American community in recognizing a National Day of Remembrance to increase public awareness about the unjust measures taken to restrict the freedom of Japanese Americans during World War II;

(4) expresses the sense that the National Day of Remembrance is an opportunity—

(A) to reflect on the importance of upholding justice and civil liberties for all people of the United States; and

(B) to oppose hate, xenophobia, and bigotry;

(5) recognizes the positive contributions that people of the United States of every race, ethnicity, religion, and national origin have made to the United States;

(6) steadfastly confirms the dedication of the Senate to the rights and dignity of all people of the United States; and

(7) expresses the sense that policies that discriminate against any individual based on the actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion of that individual would be—

(A) a repetition of the mistakes of Executive Order 9066; and

(B) contrary to the values of the United States.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, 74 years ago, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. That order led to the mass internment of nearly 120,000 Japanese Americans. Executive Order 9066 is an example of what can happen when a government acts out of fear.

Today I am submitting a resolution that recognizes this dark chapter and calls for the Senate and all Americans to uphold the lessons learned from the issuance of Executive Order 9066.

In the wake of the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, Americans of Japanese ancestry living in the United States became a target of paranoia, suspicion, and fear. Without any evidence of subterfuge, the government classified Japanese Americans as “enemy aliens” based purely on race and removed Japanese families from the west coast in the name of national security. These were families like yours and mine—farmers, students, shop owners, Buddhist priests, and teachers, parents and grandparents working toward the American dream of giving their children a better future. The majority were American citizens. These families were forced to abandon or sell for a pittance homes and businesses they had spent decades building. Many destroyed family treasures that could link them to Japan.

Thousands of college students had their educations cut short when they were forced to leave school for the internment camps.

One University of Washington student who was forced to leave school, Gordon Hirabayashi, would go on to challenge the legality of the internment all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Gordon’s parents had emigrated from Japan and settled in Washington State, where they were farmers.

Upon the signing of Executive Order 9066 and subsequent orders, the Hirabayashi family and tens of thousands of other Japanese American families were forced to pack up only what they could carry for a long train ride to unknown destinations. Upon arriving at barren and isolated internment camps, including Honouliuli Internment Camp in Waipahu, Oahu, these families passed through barbed-wire fences and armed guards. They settled in cramped, hastily constructed shanties that let in the elements. There was little privacy. And until these internment camps were built, many families were forced to live in horse stalls. The shame and humiliation were extreme. Nearly 120,000 men, women, and children did the best they could under harsh circumstances, persevering through what at the time seemed unbearable.

Despite this treatment at the hands of their own government, the time came when many joined the war effort. From behind barbed wire, these young Japanese American men fought for their country and in the process, in

doing so, proved their loyalty to the United States.

The Army agreed to form the segregated 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the 100th Battalion, and the Military Intelligence Service. Thousands of men in Hawaii and across the internment camps, including our late colleague Senator Daniel K. Inouye, volunteered to take on the most dangerous missions in Europe. Today, the 442nd and the 100th Battalion remain the most decorated units in the Army’s history. These units, as well as the Military Intelligence Service, were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 2011.

After the war ended, for all of the sacrifice Japanese Americans were forced to make, for all they had to give up, each internee was then given \$25 and a train ticket to their prewar residences. Many of them never returned to their homes because there was nothing to return to.

It was not until 34 years later, due to the work of the Japanese American Citizens League and other individuals and groups, that President Gerald Ford issued Proclamation 1447, which formally terminated the authority of Executive Order 9066. The Ford proclamation read, in part, “I call upon the American people to affirm with me this American Promise . . . to treasure liberty and justice for each individual American, and resolve that this kind of action shall never again be repeated.”

While the internment is now recognized as one of the darkest periods in our Nation’s history, we must not forget that Executive Order 9066 had widespread support at the time. The fight for formal recognition of these injustices has been a long and challenging road that continues to this day.

I wish to recognize the efforts of three Japanese Americans—Gordon Hirabayashi, Minoru Yasui, and Fred Korematsu—who were convicted and imprisoned while bravely challenging the constitutionality of internment during the war. They were right, but it took decades of work to achieve justice for these individuals who took their cases all the way to the Supreme Court.

In the majority opinion of *Korematsu v. U.S.* in 1944, the Supreme Court found that the internment was justified during a time of war—a ruling that further underscores what can only be characterized as the rampant fear and racism at the time.

I had the privilege of meeting Fred Korematsu and his family several times before his passing in 2005. After the war, he, Gordon, and Minoru continued to fight for others’ civil rights their whole lives. Fred’s work is carried on by his daughter, Karen Korematsu, through the Korematsu Institute. These three individuals were years later awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and in Minoru Yasui’s case, only last year.

It was not until the 1980s—almost 40 years after internment ended—that a new generation of attorneys and scholars took up their fight. They uncovered evidence that the government hid information that proved that Japanese Americans were not a threat to the United States. Gordon, Minoru, and Fred appealed their earlier convictions, and the Ninth Circuit Court vacated all of their convictions in the 1980s.

Gordon said after the Ninth Circuit overturned his earlier conviction:

There was a time when I felt that the Constitution failed me. But with the reversal in the courts and in public statements from the government, I feel that our country has proven that the Constitution is worth upholding. The U.S. Government admitted it made a mistake. A country that can do that is a strong country. I have more faith and allegiance to the Constitution than I ever had before.

Today, I call upon all of my colleagues to uphold Gordon's faith in our Constitution.

Undoubtedly, the U.S. Government must keep people safe. However, as we learned with the internment, a government gripped by fear and hysteria can make terrible mistakes. Not one American of Japanese ancestry who was interned has ever been found guilty of sabotage or espionage.

Focusing on the most vulnerable of targets—usually a minority group—does not make our Nation safe or more secure. Actions like the internment betray our values and undermine our strength as a people.

We are often reminded to learn from history. That presumes we are aware of the relevant history. The story of internment remains one still unfamiliar to many Americans—for instance, Mayor David Bowers of Roanoke, VA, who used the internment as justification to suspend assistance to Syrian refugees. He later apologized. More recently, George Takei's play "Allegiance," which just ended its Broadway run, depicted the shock, humiliation, anger, and resolve of one family—the Kimuras—who were interned in Heart Mountain, WY. Their internment was like that of thousands of other Japanese Americans, and, like too many others, the internment didn't end for the Kimuras when World War II ended. Their family relations were irreparably damaged.

Yet, despite efforts to educate a new generation of Americans through efforts like "Allegiance," today we hear echoes of the sentiments of 1942 directed toward members of the South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Arab, and Middle Eastern communities. There are reports of children from these communities beaten up in schools, families being threatened in their homes, and houses of worship vandalized and set on fire. We hear calls from public figures and officials to racially profile and conduct surveillance on Muslim Americans, as well as to bar their entry into our country.

While the security of the American people is a top priority, divisive proposals to ban all Muslims, for example, from entering the United States do nothing to make us safer; rather, they take us back to a time when our policies were guided by fear, stereotypes, and mistrust.

Now is not the time to turn on one another. Now is the time to stand together against the hate and fear that divides our country.

In affirming our commitment to liberty and justice for all, let us remember that the United States is a diverse country in which individuals of all backgrounds have and continue to make positive contributions to the well-being and security of our Nation. It is important to speak out against hateful rhetoric and divisive policy proposals that prey on people's fears and instead promote our American values that are rooted in compassion, respect for others, justice, and equality.

I am joined today in the Gallery by advocates from the Asian American and Pacific Islander and Muslim communities. Mahalo to all of you for the work you do every day to advance equality, liberty, and justice for all. These values are the strength of America.

Let's stand together in solidarity, that in this new century, we will not give in to old fears, old prejudices, and unjustified actions.

SENATE RESOLUTION 374—RELATING TO THE DEATH OF ANTONIN SCALIA, ASSOCIATE JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN,

Mr. SHELBY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. SUL-LIVAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was ordered held at the desk:

S. RES. 374

Whereas Antonin Scalia, the late Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, was born in Trenton, New Jersey, to Salvatore Eugene Scalia and Catherine Panaro Scalia and raised in Queens, New York;

Whereas Antonin Scalia enrolled in Georgetown University, where he graduated valedictorian and summa cum laude and earned a bachelor's degree in history;

Whereas Antonin Scalia graduated magna cum laude from Harvard Law School, where he was a notes editor for the Harvard Law Review;

Whereas Antonin Scalia married Maureen McCarthy, with whom he raised 9 children, Ann, Eugene, John, Catherine, Mary Claire, Paul, Matthew, Christopher, and Margaret;

Whereas Antonin Scalia was an accomplished attorney in Cleveland, Ohio, and a law professor at the University of Virginia and the University of Chicago;

Whereas President Richard Nixon selected Antonin Scalia to be General Counsel for the Office of Telecommunications Policy;

Whereas Antonin Scalia served as chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States;

Whereas President Richard Nixon selected Antonin Scalia to be Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel of the Department of Justice, and President Gerald Ford resubmitted the nomination of Antonin Scalia to serve in that position;

Whereas President Ronald Reagan nominated Antonin Scalia to be a judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit;

Whereas President Ronald Reagan nominated Antonin Scalia to serve as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States;

Whereas Antonin Scalia had a profound love for hunting and the arts, in particular opera;

Whereas Antonin Scalia was a man of enormous intellect, incisive analytical skill, and tremendous wit, a combination reflected in the clarity of his judicial opinions;

Whereas the record of Antonin Scalia illustrates a belief in judicial restraint, judicial independence, and the rule of law;

Whereas Antonin Scalia moved public discussion toward a greater appreciation of the text and original meaning of the Constitution as a basis for interpreting the terms of the Constitution;

Whereas Antonin Scalia enforced the separation of powers contained in the Constitution as a bulwark for individual freedom;

Whereas Antonin Scalia raised the level of the quality of oral argument and judicial decisionmaking;

Whereas Antonin Scalia was highly regarded by each of his colleagues, including colleagues with a judicial philosophy that differed from his own;

Whereas Antonin Scalia served with distinction on the Supreme Court for more than 29 years;

Whereas Antonin Scalia was 1 of the most influential and memorable Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States;

Whereas Antonin Scalia was the embodiment of each of the ideal qualities of a judge: fairness, openmindedness, and above all commitment to intellectual rigor in application of the Constitution and the rule of law;

Whereas Antonin Scalia will be remembered as 1 of the great Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States;

Whereas Antonin Scalia passed away on February 13, 2016; and

Whereas the nation is deeply indebted to Antonin Scalia, a truly distinguished individual of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) extends heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends of Antonin Scalia;

(2) acknowledges the lifetime of service of Antonin Scalia to the United States as a talented attorney, a learned law professor, a dedicated public servant, a brilliant jurist, and 1 of the great Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States; and

(3) commends Antonin Scalia for the 29-year tenure on the Supreme Court of the United States.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3312. Mr. UDALL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3313. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3314. Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3315. Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. COONS, Mr. REED, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3316. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3317. Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3318. Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. UDALL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3319. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3320. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3321. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment

SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3322. Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3323. Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. REED, Mr. BURR, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. BOXER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4470, to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act with respect to the requirements related to lead in drinking water, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3312. Mr. UDALL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . CLEAN ENERGY VICTORY BONDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than July 1, 2016, the Secretary of the Treasury, in coordination with the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of Defense, shall submit a report to Congress that provides recommendations for the establishment, issuance, and promotion of Clean Energy Victory Bonds by the Department of the Treasury (referred to in this section as the “Clean Energy Victory Bonds Program”).

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—For purposes of subsection (a), the Clean Energy Victory Bonds Program shall be designed to—

(1) ensure that any available proceeds from the issuance of Clean Energy Victory Bonds are used to finance clean energy projects (as defined in subsection (c)) at the Federal, State, and local level, which may include—

(A) providing additional support to existing Federal financing programs available to States for energy efficiency upgrades and clean energy deployment, and

(B) providing funding for clean energy investments by the Department of Defense and other Federal agencies,

(2) provide for payment of interest to persons holding Clean Energy Victory Bonds through such methods as are determined appropriate by the Secretary of the Treasury, including amounts—

(A) recaptured from savings achieved through reduced energy spending by entities receiving any funding or financial assistance described in paragraph (1), and

(B) collected as interest on loans financed or guaranteed under the Clean Energy Victory Bonds Program,

(3) issue bonds in denominations of not less than \$25 or such amount as is determined appropriate by the Secretary of the Treasury to make them generally accessible to the public, and

(4) collect not more than \$50,000,000,000 in revenue from the issuance of Clean Energy Victory Bonds for purposes of financing clean energy projects described in paragraph (1).

(c) CLEAN ENERGY PROJECT.—The term “clean energy project” means a project which provides—

(1) performance-based energy efficiency improvements, or

(2) clean energy improvements, including—

(A) electricity generated from solar, wind, geothermal, hydropower, and hydrokinetic energy sources,

(B) fuel cells using non-fossil fuel sources,

(C) advanced batteries,

(D) next generation biofuels from non-food feedstocks, and

(E) electric vehicle infrastructure.

SA 3313. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 42 ____ . SENSE OF THE SENATE ON ACCELERATING ENERGY INNOVATION.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) although important progress has been made in cost reduction and deployment of clean energy technologies, accelerating clean energy innovation will help meet critical competitiveness, energy security, and environmental goals;

(2) accelerating the pace of clean energy innovation in the United States calls for—

(A) supporting existing research and development programs at the Department and the world-class National Laboratories (as defined in section 2 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15801)); and

(B) exploring and developing new pathways for innovators, investors, and decision-makers to leverage the resources of the Department for addressing the challenges and comparative strengths of geographic regions;

(3) the energy supply, demand, policies, markets, and resource options of the United States vary by geographic region;

(4) a regional approach to innovation can bridge the gaps between local talent, institutions, and industries to identify opportunities and convert United States investment into domestic companies; and

(5) Congress and the Secretary should advance efforts that promote international, domestic, and regional cooperation on the research and development of energy innovations that—

(A) provide clean, affordable, and reliable energy for everyone;

(B) promote economic growth; and

(C) are critical for energy security.

SA 3314. Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 359, strike line 7 and insert the following:

SEC. 4204. AGREEMENTS FOR COMMERCIALIZING TECHNOLOGY PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITION OF NATIONAL LABORATORY.—In this section:

(1) IN GENERAL.—The term “National Laboratory” means a nonmilitary national laboratory owned by the Department.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—The term “National Laboratory” includes—

(A) Ames Laboratory;
 (B) Argonne National Laboratory;
 (C) Brookhaven National Laboratory;
 (D) Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory;
 (E) Idaho National Laboratory;
 (F) Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory;
 (G) National Energy Technology Laboratory;
 (H) National Renewable Energy Laboratory;
 (I) Oak Ridge National Laboratory;
 (J) Pacific Northwest National Laboratory;
 (K) Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory;
 (L) Savannah River National Laboratory;
 (M) Stanford Linear Accelerator Center;
 (N) Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility; and

(O) any laboratory operated by the National Nuclear Security Administration, with respect to the civilian energy activities conducted at the laboratory.

(b) AGREEMENTS FOR COMMERCIALIZING TECHNOLOGY PILOT PROGRAM.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall carry out the Agreements for Commercializing Technology pilot program of the Department, as announced by the Secretary on December 8, 2011, in accordance with this subsection.

(2) **TERMS.**—Each agreement entered into pursuant to the pilot program referred to in paragraph (1) shall provide to the contractor of the applicable National Laboratory, to the maximum extent determined to be appropriate by the Secretary, increased authority to negotiate contract terms, such as intellectual property rights, indemnification, payment structures, performance guarantees, and multiparty collaborations.

(3) ELIGIBILITY.—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law (including regulations), any National Laboratory may enter into an agreement pursuant to the pilot program referred to in paragraph (1).

(B) **AGREEMENTS WITH NON-FEDERAL ENTITIES.**—To carry out subparagraph (A) and subject to subparagraph (C), the Secretary shall permit the directors of the National Laboratories to execute agreements with non-Federal entities, including non-Federal entities already receiving Federal funding that will be used to support activities under agreements executed pursuant to subparagraph (A).

(C) **RESTRICTION.**—The requirements of chapter 18 of title 35, United States Code (commonly known as the “Bayh-Dole Act”) shall apply if—

(i) the agreement is a funding agreement (as that term is defined in section 201 of that title); and

(ii) at least 1 of the parties to the funding agreement is eligible to receive rights under that chapter.

(4) **SUBMISSION TO SECRETARY.**—Each affected director of a National Laboratory shall submit to the Secretary, with respect to each agreement entered into under this subsection—

(A) a summary of information relating to the relevant project;

(B) the total estimated costs of the project;

(C) estimated commencement and completion dates of the project; and

(D) other documentation determined to be appropriate by the Secretary.

(5) **CERTIFICATION.**—The Secretary shall require the contractor of the affected National Laboratory to certify that each activity carried out under a project for which an agreement is entered into under this subsection—

(A) is not in direct competition with the private sector; and

(B) does not present, or minimizes, any apparent conflict of interest, and avoids or neutralizes any actual conflict of interest, as a result of the agreement under this subsection.

(6) **EXTENSION.**—The pilot program referred to in paragraph (1) shall be extended for a term of 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(7) REPORTS.—

(A) **INITIAL REPORT.**—Not later than 60 days after the date described in paragraph (6), the Secretary, in coordination with directors of the National Laboratories, shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report that—

(i) assesses the overall effectiveness of the pilot program referred to in paragraph (1);

(ii) identifies opportunities to improve the effectiveness of the pilot program;

(iii) assesses the potential for program activities to interfere with the responsibilities of the National Laboratories to the Department; and

(iv) provides a recommendation regarding the future of the pilot program.

(B) **ANNUAL REPORTS.**—Annually, the Secretary, in coordination with the directors of the National Laboratories, shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report that accounts for all incidences of, and provides a justification for, non-Federal entities using funds derived from a Federal contract or award to carry out agreements entered into under this subsection.

(C) **SAVINGS CLAUSE.**—Nothing in this section abrogates or otherwise affects the primary responsibilities of any National Laboratory to the Department.

SEC. 4205. MICROLAB TECHNOLOGY COMMERCIALIZATION.

SA 3315. Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. COONS, Mr. REED, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 67, lines 3 and 4, strike “not less than”.

SA 3316. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title II, add the following:

SEC. 23. MODEL GUIDANCE FOR COMBINED HEAT AND POWER SYSTEMS AND WASTE HEAT TO POWER SYSTEMS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) **ADDITIONAL SERVICES.**—The term “additional services” means the provision of supplementary power, backup or standby power, maintenance power, or interruptible power to an electric consumer by an electric utility.

(2) WASTE HEAT TO POWER SYSTEM.—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term “waste heat to power system” means a system that generates electricity through the recovery of waste energy.

(B) **EXCLUSION.**—The term “waste heat to power system” does not include a system that generates electricity through the recovery of a heat resource from a process the primary purpose of which is the generation of electricity using a fossil fuel.

(3) OTHER TERMS.—

(A) **PURPA.**—The terms “electric consumer”, “electric utility”, “interconnection service”, “nonregulated electric utility”, and “State regulatory authority” have the meanings given those terms in the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2601 et seq.), within the meaning of title I of that Act (16 U.S.C. 2611 et seq.).

(B) **EPCA.**—The terms “combined heat and power system” and “waste energy” have the meanings given those terms in section 371 of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6341).

(b) REVIEW.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and other appropriate entities, shall review existing rules and procedures relating to interconnection service and additional services throughout the United States for electric generation with nameplate capacity up to 20 megawatts to identify barriers to the deployment of combined heat and power systems and waste heat to power systems.

(2) **INCLUSION.**—The review under this subsection shall include a review of existing rules and procedures relating to—

(A) determining and assigning costs of interconnection service and additional services; and

(B) ensuring adequate cost recovery by an electric utility for interconnection service and additional services.

(c) MODEL GUIDANCE.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and other appropriate entities, shall issue model guidance for interconnection service and additional services for use by State regulatory authorities and nonregulated electric utilities to reduce the barriers identified under subsection (b)(1).

(2) **CURRENT BEST PRACTICES.**—The model guidance issued under this subsection shall reflect, to the maximum extent practicable, current best practices to encourage the deployment of combined heat and power systems and waste heat to power systems while ensuring the safety and reliability of the interconnected units and the distribution and transmission networks to which the units connect, including—

(A) relevant current standards developed by the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers; and

(B) model codes and rules adopted by—

(i) States; or

(ii) associations of State regulatory agencies.

(3) **FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION.**—In establishing the model guidance under this subsection, the Secretary shall take into consideration—

(A) the appropriateness of using standards or procedures for interconnection service that vary based on unit size, fuel type, or other relevant characteristics;

(B) the appropriateness of establishing fast-track procedures for interconnection service;

(C) the value of consistency with Federal interconnection rules established by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission as of the date of enactment of this Act;

(D) the best practices used to model outage assumptions and contingencies to determine fees or rates for additional services;

(E) the appropriate duration, magnitude, or usage of demand charge ratchets;

(F) potential alternative arrangements with respect to the procurement of additional services, including—

(i) contracts tailored to individual electric consumers for additional services;

(ii) procurement of additional services by an electric utility from a competitive market; and

(iii) waivers of fees or rates for additional services for small electric consumers; and

(G) outcomes such as increased electric reliability, fuel diversification, enhanced power quality, and reduced electric losses that may result from increased use of combined heat and power systems and waste heat to power systems.

SA 3317. Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 42. RESTORATION OF LABORATORY DIRECTED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

The Secretary shall ensure that laboratory operating contractors do not allocate costs of general and administrative overhead to laboratory directed research and development.

SA 3318. Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. UDALL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 42. RESTORATION OF LABORATORY DIRECTED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

The Secretary shall ensure that the laboratory operating contractors for Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory, and Sandia National Laboratories do not allocate costs of general and administrative overhead to laboratory directed research and development.

SA 3319. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 3017 and insert the following:

SEC. 3017. WOODY BIO-POWER.

Section 803 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17282) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “this section” and inserting “paragraph (5)”;

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “this section” and inserting “this subsection”; and

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “or to receive any form of Federal assistance under subsection (c)” after “paragraph (1)”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking “a grant under this section” and inserting “a grant under this subsection or any form of Federal assistance under subsection (c)”;

(2) by redesignating subsection (c) as paragraph (5), and indenting appropriately;

(3) in paragraph (5) (as so redesignated), by striking “this section” and inserting “this subsection”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) WOODY BIO-POWER.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) WOODY BIOMASS.—The term ‘woody biomass’ means any material derived from trees and brush in forest ecosystems that is considered to be biomass (as defined in section 203(b) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15852(b))).

“(B) WOODY BIOMASS-DERIVED THERMAL ENERGY.—The term ‘woody biomass-derived thermal energy’ means the use of woody biomass—

“(i) to generate heat; or

“(ii) for cooling purposes.

“(C) WOODY BIO-POWER.—The term ‘woody bio-power’ means the use of woody biomass to generate electricity.

“(2) WOODY BIO-POWER AND WOODY BIOMASS-DERIVED THERMAL ENERGY.—The Secretary shall coordinate research and development activities relating to woody bio-power and woody biomass-derived thermal energy projects with other departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

“(3) WOODY BIO-POWER AND WOODY BIOMASS-DERIVED THERMAL ENERGY GRANTS.—

“(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary shall establish a program under which the Secretary shall provide grants to support innovation, market development, and expansion for woody bio-power and woody biomass-derived thermal energy in the commercial, institutional, industrial, and residential bioenergy sectors.

“(B) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this paragraph, the owner or operator of a relevant project shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

“(C) ALLOCATION.—Of the amounts appropriated each fiscal year to carry out this paragraph, the Secretary shall not provide more than—

“(i) \$15,000,000 for projects that develop innovative techniques to preprocess woody biomass for use in woody bio-powered and woody biomass-derived thermal energy and for lowering the costs of—

“(I) distributed preprocessing technologies, including technologies designed to promote densification, torrefaction, and the broader commoditization of bioenergy feedstocks; and

“(II) transportation;

“(ii) \$15,000,000 for woody bio-power and woody biomass-derived thermal development projects, including—

“(I) district energy projects;

“(II) combined heat and power;

“(III) small-scale gasification;

“(IV) innovation in the transportation of woody biomass; and

“(V) projects addressing the challenges of retrofitting existing electricity generation facilities, including coal-fired facilities, to use biomass; and

“(iii) \$5,000,000 for research and development of residential wood heaters towards meeting all targets established by the most recent standards of performance established by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency under section 111 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7411).

“(D) REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION.—In selecting projects to receive grants under this paragraph, the Secretary shall ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, diverse geographical distribution among the projects.

“(E) COST SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of a project carried out using a grant under this paragraph shall be 50 percent.

“(F) DUTIES OF RECIPIENTS.—As a condition of receiving a grant under this paragraph, the owner or operator of a relevant project shall—

“(i) participate in the applicable working group under subparagraph (G);

“(ii) submit to the Secretary a report that includes—

“(I) a description of the project and any relevant findings; and

“(II) such other information as the Secretary determines to be necessary to complete the report of the Secretary under subparagraph (H); and

“(iii) carry out such other activities as the Secretary determines to be necessary.

“(G) WORKING GROUPS.—The Secretary shall establish 3 working groups to share best practices and collaborate in project implementation, of which—

“(i) 1 shall be comprised of representatives of projects that receive grants under subparagraph (C)(i);

“(ii) 1 shall be comprised of representatives of projects that receive grants under subparagraph (C)(ii); and

“(iii) 1 shall be comprised of representatives of projects that receive grants under subparagraph (C)(iii).

“(H) REPORTS.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing—

“(i) each project for which a grant has been provided under this paragraph;

“(ii) any findings as a result of those projects; and

“(iii) the state of market and technology development, including market barriers and opportunities.

“(I) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection \$35,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2026, to remain available until expended.

“(4) PROMOTING BIOENERGY IN FEDERAL FACILITIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to fund woody bio-power and woody biomass-derived thermal energy system installations for new or existing Federal facilities \$20,000,000, to remain available until expended.

“(B) CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—The Secretary and the Administrator of General Services shall consult regularly to ensure optimal success of the activities described in subparagraph (A).

“(5) DOE CHP TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PARTNERSHIPS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out the

Combined Heat and Power Technical Assistance Partnerships of the Department \$5,000,000 to increase the capacity and expertise of the Department to provide technical and other assistance for combined heat and power systems that use wood as a fuel source.

“(6) DOE RESEARCH ON SMALL GASIFIER SYSTEMS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary \$5,000,000 to assess and develop market opportunities for small gasifiers, turbines, and other small-scale thermal energy and combined heat and power systems that use wood as a fuel source.

“(7) WOOD ENERGY WORKS PROGRAM.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Of the amounts appropriated to carry out this paragraph, the Secretary shall grant funding to a non-Federal organization to create and deliver an initiative for the purpose of providing free assistance from the design phase through the construction phase for wood energy projects and education, training, and resources related to the design of wood energy systems for a wide range of building types including mid-rise, multi-residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial buildings.

“(B) REPORTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—A non-Federal organization described in subparagraph (A) shall report quarterly to the Secretary on the progress and accomplishments of the initiative.

“(ii) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—For each fiscal year in which funding is appropriated to carry out this paragraph, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the progress and accomplishments of the funded initiatives.

“(C) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this paragraph—

“(i) \$2,000,000 for fiscal year 2017; and

“(ii) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2027.

“(8) COORDINATION OF EFFORTS TO CREATE INTERAGENCY WOOD ENERGY POLICY REPORT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, in consultation with other relevant Federal agencies, shall conduct an evaluation of Federal policies as of the date of enactment of this subsection and make recommendations on how Congress can better support the industrial, commercial, and residential wood energy sectors in the United States.

“(B) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the evaluation conducted and recommendations made under subparagraph (A).

“(C) FUNDING.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this paragraph \$1,000,000.

“(9) REGIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a regional woody biomass energy program that provides technical assistance to install woody bio-power or woody biomass-derived thermal energy systems for heating, cooling, or electricity at new or existing facilities.

“(B) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this paragraph \$75,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2017 through 2026.

“(10) STRATEGIC ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting jointly with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall estab-

lish a woody biomass thermal and woody bio-power research program—

“(i) the costs of which shall be divided equally between the Department and the Environmental Protection Agency;

“(ii) to carry out projects and activities to advance research and analysis on the environmental, social, and economic impacts of the United States woody bio-power and woody biomass-derived thermal energy industries, including—

“(I) full accounting of greenhouse gas emissions;

“(II) net energy analysis; and

“(III) advanced modeling of future climate impacts coupled with land use changes on future forest health and biomass production;

“(iii) to provide recommendations for policy and investment in those areas; and

“(iv) to identify and assess, through a joint effort between the Secretary and the regional combined heat and power groups of the Department and the Environmental Protection Agency, the feasibility of thermally led district wood energy opportunities in all regions, including by conducting—

“(I) broad regional assessments; and

“(II) feasibility studies and preliminary engineering assessments for individual facilities.

“(B) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency—

“(i) \$2,000,000 to carry out clauses (ii) and (iii) of subparagraph (A); and

“(ii) \$1,000,000 to carry out subparagraph (A)(iv).”.

SA 3320. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 3009 and insert the following:

SEC. 3009. LARGE-SCALE GEOTHERMAL ENERGY.

Section 803 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17282) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “this section” and inserting “paragraph (5)”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “this section” and inserting “this subsection”; and

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “or to receive a grant under subsection (c)” after “paragraph (1)”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking “a grant under this section” and inserting “a grant under this subsection or subsection (c)”; and

(2) by redesignating subsection (c) as paragraph (5), and indenting appropriately;

(3) in paragraph (5) (as so redesignated), by striking “this section” and inserting “this subsection”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) LARGE-SCALE GEOTHERMAL ENERGY.—

“(1) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this subsection are—

“(A) to improve the components, processes, and systems used for geothermal heat pumps and the direct use of geothermal energy; and

“(B) to increase the energy efficiency, lower the cost, increase the use, and improve and demonstrate the applicability of geothermal heat pumps to, and the direct use of geothermal energy in, large buildings, com-

mercial districts, residential communities, and large municipal, agricultural, or industrial projects.

“(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) DIRECT USE OF GEOTHERMAL ENERGY.—The term ‘direct use of geothermal energy’ means systems that use water that is at a temperature between approximately 38 degrees Celsius and 149 degrees Celsius directly or through a heat exchanger to provide—

“(i) heating to buildings; or

“(ii) heat required for industrial processes, agriculture, aquaculture, and other facilities.

“(B) GEOTHERMAL HEAT PUMP.—The term ‘geothermal heat pump’ means a system that provides heating and cooling by exchanging heat from shallow ground or surface water using—

“(i) a closed loop system, which transfers heat by way of buried or immersed pipes that contain a mix of water and working fluid; or

“(ii) an open loop system, which circulates ground or surface water directly into the building and returns the water to the same aquifer or surface water source.

“(C) LARGE-SCALE APPLICATION.—The term ‘large-scale application’ means an application for space or process heating or cooling for large entities with a name-plate capacity, expected resource, or rating of 10 or more megawatts, such as a large building, commercial district, residential community, or a large municipal, agricultural, or industrial project.

“(3) PROGRAM.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a program of research, development, and demonstration for geothermal heat pumps and the direct use of geothermal energy.

“(B) AREAS.—The program may include research, development, demonstration, and commercial application of—

“(i) geothermal ground loop efficiency improvements through more efficient heat transfer fluids;

“(ii) geothermal ground loop efficiency improvements through more efficient thermal grouts for wells and trenches;

“(iii) geothermal ground loop installation cost reduction through—

“(I) improved drilling methods;

“(II) improvements in drilling equipment;

“(III) improvements in design methodology and energy analysis procedures; and

“(IV) improved methods for determination of ground thermal properties and ground temperatures;

“(iv) installing geothermal ground loops near the foundation walls of new construction to take advantage of existing structures;

“(v) using gray or black wastewater as a method of heat exchange;

“(vi) improving geothermal heat pump system economics through integration of geothermal systems with other building systems, including providing hot and cold water and rejecting or circulating industrial process heat through refrigeration heat rejection and waste heat recovery;

“(vii) advanced geothermal systems using variable pumping rates to increase efficiency;

“(viii) geothermal heat pump efficiency improvements;

“(ix) use of hot water found in mines and mine shafts and other surface waters as the heat exchange medium;

“(x) heating of districts, neighborhoods, communities, large commercial or public buildings (including office, retail, educational, government, and institutional

buildings and multifamily residential buildings and campuses), and industrial and manufacturing facilities;

“(xi) geothermal system integration with solar thermal water heating or cool roofs and solar-regenerated desiccants to balance loads and use building hot water to store geothermal energy;

“(xii) use of hot water coproduced from oil and gas recovery;

“(xiii) use of water sources at a temperature of less than 150 degrees Celsius for direct use;

“(xiv) system integration of direct use with geothermal electricity production; and

“(xv) coproduction of heat and power, including on-site use.

“(C) ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall identify and mitigate potential environmental impacts in accordance with section 614(c).

“(4) GRANTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make grants available to State and local governments, institutions of higher education, nonprofit entities, utilities, and for-profit companies (including manufacturers of heat-pump and direct-use components and systems) to promote the development of geothermal heat pumps and the direct use of geothermal energy.

“(B) PRIORITY.—In making grants under this paragraph, the Secretary shall give priority to proposals that apply to large buildings (including office, retail, educational, government, institutional, and multifamily residential buildings and campuses and industrial and manufacturing facilities), commercial districts, and residential communities.

“(C) NATIONAL SOLICITATION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall conduct a national solicitation for applications for grants under this paragraph.

“(5) REPORTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this subsection and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on progress made and results obtained under this subsection to develop geothermal heat pumps and direct use of geothermal energy.

“(B) AREAS.—Each of the reports required under this paragraph shall include—

“(i) an analysis of progress made in each of the areas described in paragraph (3)(B); and

“(ii) (I) a description of any relevant recommendations made during a review of the program; and

“(II) any plans to address the recommendations under subclause (I).”.

SA 3321. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VI—SPORTSMEN AND WILDLIFE

SEC. 601. TARGET PRACTICE AND MARKSMANSHIP.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to facilitate the construction and expansion of public target ranges, including ranges on Federal land managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

(b) DEFINITION OF PUBLIC TARGET RANGE.—In this section, the term “public target range” means a specific location that—

(1) is identified by a governmental agency for recreational shooting;

(2) is open to the public;

(3) may be supervised; and

(4) may accommodate archery or rifle, pistol, or shotgun shooting.

(c) AMENDMENTS TO PITTMAN-ROBERTSON WILDLIFE RESTORATION ACT.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—Section 2 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669a) is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (2) through (8) as paragraphs (3) through (9), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) the term ‘public target range’ means a specific location that—

“(A) is identified by a governmental agency for recreational shooting;

“(B) is open to the public;

“(C) may be supervised; and

“(D) may accommodate archery or rifle, pistol, or shotgun shooting.”.

(2) EXPENDITURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE AREAS AND RESOURCES.—Section 8(b) of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669g(b)) is amended—

(A) by striking “(b) Each State” and inserting the following:

“(b) EXPENDITURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE AREAS AND RESOURCES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), each State”;

(B) by striking paragraph (1) (as so designated), by striking “construction, operation,” and inserting “operation”;

(C) in the second sentence, by striking “The non-Federal share” and inserting the following:

“(3) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The non-Federal share”;

(D) in the third sentence, by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(4) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary”;

(E) by inserting after paragraph (1) (as designated by subparagraph (A)) the following:

“(2) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding the limitation described in paragraph (1), a State may pay up to 90 percent of the cost of acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range.”.

(3) FIREARM AND BOW HUNTER EDUCATION AND SAFETY PROGRAM GRANTS.—Section 10 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669h-1) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following:

“(3) ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS.—Of the amount apportioned to a State for any fiscal year under section 4(b), the State may elect to allocate not more than 10 percent, to be combined with the amount apportioned to the State under paragraph (1) for that fiscal year, for acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range.”;

(B) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

“(b) COST SHARING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out using a grant under this section shall not exceed 75 percent of the total cost of the activity.

“(2) PUBLIC TARGET RANGE CONSTRUCTION OR EXPANSION.—The Federal share of the cost of acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range in a State on Federal or non-Federal land pursuant to this section or section 8(b) shall not exceed 90 percent of the cost of the activity.”; and

(C) in subsection (c)(1)—

(i) by striking “Amounts made” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), amounts made”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) EXCEPTION.—Amounts provided for acquiring land for, constructing, or expanding a public target range shall remain available for expenditure and obligation during the 5-fiscal-year period beginning on October 1 of the first fiscal year for which the amounts are made available.”.

(d) SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING COOPERATION.—It is the sense of Congress that, consistent with applicable laws (including regulations), the Chief of the Forest Service and the Director of the Bureau of Land Management should cooperate with State and local authorities and other entities to carry out waste removal and other activities on any Federal land used as a public target range to encourage continued use of that land for target practice or marksmanship training.

SEC. 602. NORTH AMERICAN WETLANDS CONSERVATION ACT.

Section 7(c) of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4406(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4), by striking “and”;

(2) in paragraph (5), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021.”.

SEC. 603. MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUNDS REAUTHORIZATION.

(a) REAUTHORIZATION OF AFRICAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ACT.—Section 2306(a) of the African Elephant Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4245(a)) is amended by striking “2007 through 2012” and inserting “2016 through 2020”.

(b) REAUTHORIZATION OF RHINOCEROS AND TIGER CONSERVATION ACT OF 1994.—Section 10(a) of the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994 (16 U.S.C. 5306(a)) is amended by striking “2007 through 2012” and inserting “2016 through 2020”.

(c) REAUTHORIZATION OF ASIAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ACT OF 1997.—Section 8(a) of the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 4266(a)) is amended by striking “2007 through 2012” and inserting “2016 through 2020”.

(d) AMENDMENT AND REAUTHORIZATION OF GREAT APE CONSERVATION ACT OF 2000.—The Great Ape Conservation Act of 2000 is amended as follows:

(1) MULTIYEAR GRANTS.—In section 4 (16 U.S.C. 6303), by adding at the end the following new subsections:

“(j) MULTIYEAR GRANTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award a multiyear grant under this section to a person who is otherwise eligible for a grant under this section, to carry out a project that the person demonstrates is an effective, long-term conservation strategy for great apes and their habitats.

“(2) ANNUAL GRANTS NOT AFFECTED.—This subsection shall not be construed as precluding the Secretary from awarding grants on an annual basis.”.

(2) PANEL OF EXPERTS.—In section 4(i) (16 U.S.C. 6303(i))—

(A) in paragraph (1), by—

(i) striking “Every 2 years” and inserting “Within one year after the date of the enactment of the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016, and every 5 years thereafter”;

(ii) striking “may convene” and inserting “shall convene”;

(iii) inserting “and priorities” after “needs”; and

(iv) adding at the end the following new sentence: "The panel shall, to the extent practicable, include representatives from foreign range states with expertise in great ape conservation."; and

(B) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (4), and inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraphs:

"(2) In identifying conservation needs and priorities under paragraph (1), the panel shall consider relevant great ape conservation plans or strategies including scientific research and findings related to—

"(A) the conservation needs and priorities of great apes;

"(B) regional or species-specific action plans or strategies;

"(C) applicable strategies developed or initiated by the Secretary; and

"(D) any other applicable conservation plan or strategy.

"(3) The Secretary, subject to the availability of appropriations, may pay expenses of convening and facilitating meetings of the panel."

(3) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES LIMITATION.—In section 5(b)(2) (16 U.S.C. 6304(b)(2)), by striking "\$100,000" and inserting "\$150,000".

(4) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In section 6 (16 U.S.C. 6305), by striking "2006 through 2010" and inserting "2016 through 2020".

(e) AMENDMENT AND REAUTHORIZATION OF MARINE TURTLE CONSERVATION ACT OF 2004.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Marine Turtle Conservation Act of 2004 is amended—

(A) in sections 2(b) and 3(2) (16 U.S.C. 6601(b), 6602(2)), by inserting "and territories of the United States" after "foreign countries" each place it occurs;

(B) in section 3 (16 U.S.C. 6602) by adding at the end the following:

"(7) TERRITORY OF THE UNITED STATES.—The term 'territory of the United States' means each of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and any other territory or possession of the United States."; and

(C) in section 4 (16 U.S.C. 6603)—

(i) in subsection (b)(1)(A), by inserting "or territory of the United States" after "foreign country"; and

(ii) in subsection (d) by inserting "and territories of the United States" after "foreign countries".

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES LIMITATION.—Section 5(b)(2) of the Marine Turtle Conservation Act of 2004 (16 U.S.C. 6604(b)(2)) is amended by striking "\$80,000" and inserting "\$150,000".

(3) REAUTHORIZATION.—Section 7 of the Marine Turtle Conservation Act of 2004 (16 U.S.C. 6606) is amended by striking "each of fiscal years 2005 through 2009" and inserting "each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020".

SEC. 604. NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION ESTABLISHMENT ACT.

(a) BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE FOUNDATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3 of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3702) is amended—

(A) in subsection (b)—

(i) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

"(2) IN GENERAL.—After consulting with the Secretary of Commerce and considering the recommendations submitted by the Board, the Secretary of the Interior shall appoint 28 Directors who, to the maximum extent practicable, shall—

"(A) be knowledgeable and experienced in matters relating to the conservation of fish, wildlife, or other natural resources; and

"(B) represent a balance of expertise in ocean, coastal, freshwater, and terrestrial resource conservation."; and

(ii) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

"(3) TERMS.—Each Director (other than a Director described in paragraph (1)) shall be appointed for a term of 6 years."; and

(B) in subsection (g)(2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking "(A) Officers and employees may not be appointed until the Foundation has sufficient funds to pay them for their service. Officers" and inserting the following:

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Officers"; and

(ii) by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

"(B) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.—The Foundation shall have an Executive Director who shall be—

"(i) appointed by, and serve at the direction of, the Board as the chief executive officer of the Foundation; and

"(ii) knowledgeable and experienced in matters relating to fish and wildlife conservation.".

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 4(a)(1)(B) of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4403(a)(1)(B)) is amended by striking "Secretary of the Board" and inserting "Executive Director of the Board".

(b) RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE FOUNDATION.—Section 4 of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3703) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking "(c) POWERS.—To carry out its purposes under" and inserting the following:

"(c) POWERS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—To carry out the purposes described in";

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (11) as subparagraphs (A) through (K), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(C) in subparagraph (D) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B)), by striking "that are insured by an agency or instrumentality of the United States" and inserting "at 1 or more financial institutions that are members of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the Securities Investment Protection Corporation";

(D) in subparagraph (E) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B)), by striking "paragraph (3) or (4)" and inserting "subparagraph (C) or (D)";

(E) in subparagraph (J) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B)), by striking "and" and inserting a semicolon;

(F) by striking subparagraph (K) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B)) and inserting the following:

"(K) to receive and administer restitution and community service payments, amounts for mitigation of impacts to natural resources, and other amounts arising from legal, regulatory, or administrative proceedings, subject to the condition that the amounts are received or administered for purposes that further the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, plants, and other natural resources; and

"(L) to do acts necessary to carry out the purposes of the Foundation."; and

(G) by striking the undersigned matter at the end and inserting the following:

"(2) TREATMENT OF REAL PROPERTY.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this Act, an interest in real property shall be treated as including easements or other rights for preservation, conservation, protec-

tion, or enhancement by and for the public of natural, scenic, historic, scientific, educational, inspirational, or recreational resources.

"(B) ENCUMBERED REAL PROPERTY.—A gift, devise, or bequest may be accepted by the Foundation even though the gift, devise, or bequest is encumbered, restricted, or subject to beneficial interests of private persons if any current or future interest in the gift, devise, or bequest is for the benefit of the Foundation.

"(3) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—The acceptance and administration of amounts by the Foundation under paragraph (1)(K) does not alter, supersede, or limit any regulatory or statutory requirement associated with those amounts.";

(2) by striking subsections (f) and (g); and

(3) by redesignating subsections (h) and (i) as subsections (f) and (g), respectively.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 10 of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3709) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021—

"(A) \$15,000,000 to the Secretary of the Interior;

"(B) \$5,000,000 to the Secretary of Agriculture; and

"(C) \$5,000,000 to the Secretary of Commerce.";

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

"(1) AMOUNTS FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the amounts authorized to be appropriated under subsection (a), Federal departments, agencies, or instrumentalities may provide Federal funds to the Foundation, subject to the condition that the amounts are used for purposes that further the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, plants, and other natural resources in accordance with this Act.

"(B) ADVANCES.—Federal departments, agencies, or instrumentalities may advance amounts described in subparagraph (A) to the Foundation in a lump sum without regard to when the expenses for which the amounts are used are incurred.

"(C) MANAGEMENT FEES.—The Foundation may assess and collect fees for the management of amounts received under this paragraph.";

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the paragraph heading, by striking "FUNDS" and inserting "AMOUNTS";

(ii) by striking "shall be used" and inserting "may be used"; and

(iii) by striking "and State and local government agencies" and inserting "State and local government agencies, and other entities"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(3) ADMINISTRATION OF AMOUNTS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—In entering into contracts, agreements, or other partnerships pursuant to this Act, a Federal department, agency, or instrumentality shall have discretion to waive any competitive process applicable to the department, agency, or instrumentality for entering into contracts, agreements, or partnerships with the Foundation if the purpose of the waiver is—

"(i) to address an environmental emergency resulting from a natural or other disaster; or

“(ii) as determined by the head of the applicable Federal department, agency, or instrumentality, to reduce administrative expenses and expedite the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, plants, and other natural resources.

“(B) REPORTS.—The Foundation shall include in the annual report submitted under section 7(b) a description of any use of the authority under subparagraph (A) by a Federal department, agency, or instrumentality in that fiscal year.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(d) USE OF GIFTS, DEVISES, OR BEQUESTS OF MONEY OR OTHER PROPERTY.—Any gifts, devises, or bequests of amounts or other property, or any other amounts or other property, transferred to, deposited with, or otherwise in the possession of the Foundation pursuant to this Act, may be made available by the Foundation to Federal departments, agencies, or instrumentalities and may be accepted and expended (or the disposition of the amounts or property directed), without further appropriation, by those Federal departments, agencies, or instrumentalities, subject to the condition that the amounts or property be used for purposes that further the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, plants, and other natural resources.”.

(d) LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY.—Section 11 of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3710) is amended by inserting “exclusive” before “authority”.

SEC. 605. REAUTHORIZATION OF NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION ACT.

Section 10 of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 6109) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act \$6,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021.

“(b) USE OF FUNDS.—Of the amounts made available under subsection (a) for each fiscal year, not less than 75 percent shall be expended for projects carried out at a location outside of the United States.”.

TITLE VII—NATIONAL FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION

SEC. 701. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “National Fish Habitat Conservation Through Partnerships Act”.

SEC. 702. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this title is to encourage partnerships among public agencies and other interested parties to promote fish conservation—

(1) to achieve measurable habitat conservation results through strategic actions of Fish Habitat Partnerships that lead to better fish habitat conditions and increased fishing opportunities by—

(A) improving ecological conditions;

(B) restoring natural processes; or

(C) preventing the decline of intact and healthy systems;

(2) to establish a consensus set of national conservation strategies as a framework to guide future actions and investment by Fish Habitat Partnerships;

(3) to broaden the community of support for fish habitat conservation by—

(A) increasing fishing opportunities;

(B) fostering the participation of local communities, especially young people in local communities, in conservation activities; and

(C) raising public awareness of the role healthy fish habitat play in the quality of life and economic well-being of local communities;

(4) to fill gaps in the National Fish Habitat Assessment and the associated database of the National Fish Habitat Assessment—

(A) to empower strategic conservation actions supported by broadly available scientific information; and

(B) to integrate socioeconomic data in the analysis to improve the lives of humans in a manner consistent with fish habitat conservation goals; and

(5) to communicate to the public and conservation partners—

(A) the conservation outcomes produced collectively by Fish Habitat Partnerships; and

(B) new opportunities and voluntary approaches for conserving fish habitat.

SEC. 703. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

(2) BOARD.—The term “Board” means the National Fish Habitat Board established by section 704(a)(1).

(3) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

(4) EPA ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “EPA Assistant Administrator” means the Assistant Administrator for Water of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(5) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian tribe” has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

(6) NOAA ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “NOAA Assistant Administrator” means the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(7) PARTNERSHIP.—The term “Partnership” means a self-governed entity designated by the Board as a Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership pursuant to section 705(a).

(8) REAL PROPERTY INTEREST.—The term “real property interest” means an ownership interest in—

(A) land; or

(B) water (including water rights).

(9) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(10) STATE.—The term “State” means each of the several States.

(11) STATE AGENCY.—The term “State agency” means—

(A) the fish and wildlife agency of a State; and

(B) any department or division of a department or agency of a State that manages in the public trust the inland or marine fishery resources or sustains the habitat for those fishery resources of the State pursuant to State law or the constitution of the State.

SEC. 704. NATIONAL FISH HABITAT BOARD.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) FISH HABITAT BOARD.—There is established a board, to be known as the “National Fish Habitat Board”, whose duties are—

(A) to promote, oversee, and coordinate the implementation of this title;

(B) to establish national goals and priorities for fish habitat conservation;

(C) to approve Partnerships; and

(D) to review and make recommendations regarding fish habitat conservation projects.

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—The Board shall be composed of 25 members, of whom—

(A) 1 shall be a representative of the Department of the Interior;

(B) 1 shall be a representative of the United States Geological Survey;

(C) 1 shall be a representative of the Department of Commerce;

(D) 1 shall be a representative of the Department of Agriculture;

(E) 1 shall be a representative of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies;

(F) 4 shall be representatives of State agencies, 1 of whom shall be nominated by a regional association of fish and wildlife agencies from each of the Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, and Western regions of the United States;

(G) 1 shall be a representative of either—

(i) Indian tribes in the State of Alaska; or

(ii) Indian tribes in States other than the State of Alaska;

(H) 1 shall be a representative of either—

(i) the Regional Fishery Management Councils established under section 302 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1852); or

(ii) a representative of the Marine Fisheries Commissions, which is composed of—

(I) the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission;

(II) the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission; and

(III) the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission;

(I) 1 shall be a representative of the Sportfishing and Boating Partnership Council;

(J) 7 shall be representatives selected from each of—

(i) the recreational sportfishing industry;

(ii) the commercial fishing industry;

(iii) marine recreational anglers;

(iv) freshwater recreational anglers;

(v) habitat conservation organizations; and

(vi) science-based fishery organizations;

(K) 1 shall be a representative of a national private landowner organization;

(L) 1 shall be a representative of an agricultural production organization;

(M) 1 shall be a representative of local government interests involved in fish habitat restoration;

(N) 2 shall be representatives from different sectors of corporate industries, which may include—

(i) natural resource commodity interests, such as petroleum or mineral extraction;

(ii) natural resource user industries; and

(iii) industries with an interest in fish and fish habitat conservation; and

(O) 1 shall be a leadership private sector or landowner representative of an active partnership.

(3) COMPENSATION.—A member of the Board shall serve without compensation.

(4) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—A member of the Board may be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for an employee of an agency under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from the home or regular place of business of the member in the performance of the duties of the Board.

(b) APPOINTMENT AND TERMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, a member of the Board described in any of subparagraphs (F) through (N) of subsection (a)(2) shall serve for a term of 3 years.

(2) INITIAL BOARD MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The initial Board will consist of representatives as described in subparagraphs (A) through (F) of subsection (a)(2).

(B) REMAINING MEMBERS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the representatives of the initial Board pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall appoint the remaining members of the Board described in subparagraphs (H) through (N) of subsection (a)(2).

(C) TRIBAL REPRESENTATIVES.—Not later than 60 days after the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall provide to the Board a recommendation of not fewer than 3 tribal representatives, from which the Board shall appoint 1 representative pursuant to subparagraph (G) of subsection (a)(2).

(3) TRANSITIONAL TERMS.—Of the members described in subsection (a)(2)(J) initially appointed to the Board—

(A) 2 shall be appointed for a term of 1 year;

(B) 2 shall be appointed for a term of 2 years; and

(C) 3 shall be appointed for a term of 3 years.

(4) VACANCIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A vacancy of a member of the Board described in any of subparagraphs (H) through (N) of subsection (a)(2) shall be filled by an appointment made by the remaining members of the Board.

(B) TRIBAL REPRESENTATIVES.—Following a vacancy of a member of the Board described in subparagraph (G) of subsection (a)(2), the Secretary shall recommend to the Board a list of not fewer than 3 tribal representatives, from which the remaining members of the Board shall appoint a representative to fill the vacancy.

(5) CONTINUATION OF SERVICE.—An individual whose term of service as a member of the Board expires may continue to serve on the Board until a successor is appointed.

(6) REMOVAL.—If a member of the Board described in any of subparagraphs (H) through (N) of subsection (a)(2) misses 3 consecutive regularly scheduled Board meetings, the members of the Board may—

(A) vote to remove that member; and

(B) appoint another individual in accordance with paragraph (4).

(c) CHAIRPERSON.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The representative of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies appointed pursuant to subsection (a)(2)(E) shall serve as Chairperson of the Board.

(2) TERM.—The Chairperson of the Board shall serve for a term of 3 years.

(d) MEETINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall meet—

(A) at the call of the Chairperson; but

(B) not less frequently than twice each calendar year.

(2) PUBLIC ACCESS.—All meetings of the Board shall be open to the public.

(e) PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall establish procedures to carry out the business of the Board, including—

(A) a requirement that a quorum of the members of the Board be present to transact business;

(B) a requirement that no recommendations may be adopted by the Board, except by the vote of $\frac{2}{3}$ of all members;

(C) procedures for establishing national goals and priorities for fish habitat conservation for the purposes of this title;

(D) procedures for designating Partnerships under section 705; and

(E) procedures for reviewing, evaluating, and making recommendations regarding fish habitat conservation projects.

(2) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

SEC. 705. FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIPS.

(a) AUTHORITY TO APPROVE.—The Board may approve and designate Fish Habitat Partnerships in accordance with this section.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of a Partnership shall be—

(1) to work with other regional habitat conservation programs to promote cooperation and coordination to enhance fish and fish habitats;

(2) to engage local and regional communities to build support for fish habitat conservation;

(3) to involve diverse groups of public and private partners;

(4) to develop collaboratively a strategic vision and achievable implementation plan that is scientifically sound;

(5) to leverage funding from sources that support local and regional partnerships;

(6) to use adaptive management principles, including evaluation of project success and functionality;

(7) to develop appropriate local or regional habitat evaluation and assessment measures and criteria that are compatible with national habitat condition measures; and

(8) to implement local and regional priority projects that improve conditions for fish and fish habitat.

(c) CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.—An entity seeking to be designated as a Partnership shall—

(1) submit to the Board an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Board may reasonably require; and

(2) demonstrate to the Board that the entity has—

(A) a focus on promoting the health of important fish and fish habitats;

(B) an ability to coordinate the implementation of priority projects that support the goals and national priorities set by the Board that are within the Partnership boundary;

(C) a self-governance structure that supports the implementation of strategic priorities for fish habitat;

(D) the ability to develop local and regional relationships with a broad range of entities to further strategic priorities for fish and fish habitat;

(E) a strategic plan that details required investments for fish habitat conservation that addresses the strategic fish habitat priorities of the Partnership and supports and meets the strategic priorities of the Board;

(F) the ability to develop and implement fish habitat conservation projects that address strategic priorities of the Partnership and the Board; and

(G) the ability to develop fish habitat conservation priorities based on sound science and data, the ability to measure the effectiveness of fish habitat projects of the Partnership, and a clear plan as to how Partnership science and data components will be integrated with the overall Board science and data effort.

(d) APPROVAL.—The Board may approve an application for a Partnership submitted under subsection (c) if the Board determines that the applicant—

(1) identifies representatives to provide support and technical assistance to the Partnership from a diverse group of public and private partners, which may include State or local governments, nonprofit entities, Indian tribes, and private individuals, that are focused on conservation of fish habitats to achieve results across jurisdictional boundaries on public and private land;

(2) is organized to promote the health of important fish species and important fish habitats, including reservoirs, natural lakes, coastal and marine environments, and estuaries;

(3) identifies strategic fish and fish habitat priorities for the Partnership area in the form of geographical focus areas or key stressors or impairments to facilitate strategic planning and decisionmaking;

(4) is able to address issues and priorities on a nationally significant scale;

(5) includes a governance structure that—

(A) reflects the range of all partners; and

(B) promotes joint strategic planning and decisionmaking by the applicant;

(6) demonstrates completion of, or significant progress toward the development of, a strategic plan to address the decline in fish populations, rather than simply treating symptoms, in accordance with the goals and national priorities established by the Board; and

(7) promotes collaboration in developing a strategic vision and implementation program that is scientifically sound and achievable.

SEC. 706. FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION PROJECTS.

(a) SUBMISSION TO BOARD.—Not later than March 31 of each calendar year, each Partnership shall submit to the Board a list of priority fish habitat conservation projects recommended by the Partnership for annual funding under this title.

(b) RECOMMENDATIONS BY BOARD.—Not later than July 1 of each calendar year, the Board shall submit to the Secretary a priority list of fish habitat conservation projects that includes the description, including estimated costs, of each project that the Board recommends that the Secretary approve and fund under this title for the following fiscal year.

(c) CRITERIA FOR PROJECT SELECTION.—The Board shall select each fish habitat conservation project to be recommended to the Secretary under subsection (b) after taking into consideration, at a minimum, the following information:

(1) A recommendation of the Partnership that is, or will be, participating actively in implementing the fish habitat conservation project.

(2) The capabilities and experience of project proponents to implement successfully the proposed project.

(3) The extent to which the fish habitat conservation project—

(A) fulfills a local or regional priority that is directly linked to the strategic plan of the Partnership and is consistent with the purpose of this title;

(B) addresses the national priorities established by the Board;

(C) is supported by the findings of the Habitat Assessment of the Partnership or the Board, and aligns or is compatible with other conservation plans;

(D) identifies appropriate monitoring and evaluation measures and criteria that are compatible with national measures;

(E) provides a well-defined budget linked to deliverables and outcomes;

(F) leverages other funds to implement the project;

(G) addresses the causes and processes behind the decline of fish or fish habitats; and

(H) includes an outreach or education component that includes the local or regional community.

(4) The availability of sufficient non-Federal funds to match Federal contributions for the fish habitat conservation project, as required by subsection (e);

(5) The extent to which the local or regional fish habitat conservation project—

(A) will increase fish populations in a manner that leads to recreational fishing opportunities for the public;

(B) will be carried out through a cooperative agreement among Federal, State, and local governments, Indian tribes, and private entities;

(C) increases public access to land or water for fish and wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities;

(D) advances the conservation of fish and wildlife species that have been identified by the States as species of greatest conservation need;

(E) where appropriate, advances the conservation of fish and fish habitats under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.) and other relevant Federal law and State wildlife action plans; and

(F) promotes strong and healthy fish habitats so that desired biological communities are able to persist and adapt.

(6) The substantiality of the character and design of the fish habitat conservation project.

(d) LIMITATIONS.—

(1) REQUIREMENTS FOR EVALUATION.—No fish habitat conservation project may be recommended by the Board under subsection (b) or provided financial assistance under this title unless the fish habitat conservation project includes an evaluation plan designed using applicable Board guidance—

(A) to appropriately assess the biological, ecological, or other results of the habitat protection, restoration, or enhancement activities carried out using the assistance;

(B) to reflect appropriate changes to the fish habitat conservation project if the assessment substantiates that the fish habitat conservation project objectives are not being met;

(C) to identify improvements to existing fish populations, recreational fishing opportunities and the overall economic benefits for the local community of the fish habitat conservation project; and

(D) to require the submission to the Board of a report describing the findings of the assessment.

(2) ACQUISITION AUTHORITIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A State, local government, or other non-Federal entity is eligible to receive funds for the acquisition of real property from willing sellers under this title if the acquisition ensures 1 of—

(i) public access for compatible fish and wildlife-dependent recreation; or

(ii) a scientifically based, direct enhancement to the health of fish and fish populations, as determined by the Board.

(B) STATE AGENCY APPROVAL.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—All real property interest acquisition projects funded under this title are required to be approved by the State agency in the State in which the project is occurring.

(ii) PROHIBITION.—The Board may not recommend, and the Secretary may not provide any funding for, any real property interest acquisition that has not been approved by the State agency.

(C) ASSESSMENT OF OTHER AUTHORITIES.—The Fish Habitat Partnership shall conduct a project assessment, submitted with the funding request and approved by the Board, to demonstrate all other Federal, State, and local authorities for the acquisition of real property have been exhausted.

(D) RESTRICTIONS.—A real property interest may not be acquired pursuant to a fish

habitat conservation project by a State, local government, or other non-Federal entity, unless—

(i) the owner of the real property authorizes the State, local government, or other non-Federal entity to acquire the real property; and

(ii) the Secretary and the Board determine that the State, local government, or other non-Federal entity would benefit from undertaking the management of the real property being acquired because that is in accordance with the goals of a partnership.

(e) NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), no fish habitat conservation project may be recommended by the Board under subsection (b) or provided financial assistance under this title unless at least 50 percent of the cost of the fish habitat conservation project will be funded with non-Federal funds.

(2) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The non-Federal share of the cost of a fish habitat conservation project—

(A) may not be derived from another Federal grant program; but

(B) may include in-kind contributions and cash.

(3) SPECIAL RULE FOR INDIAN TRIBES.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1) or any other provision of law, any funds made available to an Indian tribe pursuant to this title may be considered to be non-Federal funds for the purpose of paragraph (1).

(f) APPROVAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of receipt of the recommended priority list of fish habitat conservation projects under subsection (b), subject to the limitations of subsection (d), and based, to the maximum extent practicable, on the criteria described in subsection (c), the Secretary, after consulting with the Secretary of Commerce on marine or estuarine projects, shall approve or reject any fish habitat conservation project recommended by the Board.

(2) FUNDING.—If the Secretary approves a fish habitat conservation project under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall use amounts made available to carry out this title to provide funds to carry out the fish habitat conservation project.

(3) NOTIFICATION.—If the Secretary rejects any fish habitat conservation project recommended by the Board under subsection (b), not later than 180 days after the date of receipt of the recommendation, the Secretary shall provide to the Board, the appropriate Partnership, and the appropriate congressional committees a written statement of the reasons that the Secretary rejected the fish habitat conservation project.

SEC. 707. TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director, the NOAA Assistant Administrator, the EPA Assistant Administrator, and the Director of the United States Geological Survey, in coordination with the Forest Service and other appropriate Federal departments and agencies, may provide scientific and technical assistance to the Partnerships, participants in fish habitat conservation projects, and the Board.

(b) INCLUSIONS.—Scientific and technical assistance provided pursuant to subsection (a) may include—

(1) providing technical and scientific assistance to States, Indian tribes, regions, local communities, and nongovernmental organizations in the development and implementation of Partnerships;

(2) providing technical and scientific assistance to Partnerships for habitat assessment, strategic planning, and prioritization;

(3) supporting the development and implementation of fish habitat conservation projects that are identified as high priorities by Partnerships and the Board;

(4) supporting and providing recommendations regarding the development of science-based monitoring and assessment approaches for implementation through Partnerships;

(5) supporting and providing recommendations for a national fish habitat assessment;

(6) ensuring the availability of experts to assist in conducting scientifically based evaluation and reporting of the results of fish habitat conservation projects; and

(7) providing resources to secure state agency scientific and technical assistance to support Partnerships, participants in fish habitat conservation projects, and the Board.

SEC. 708. COORDINATION WITH STATES AND INDIAN TRIBES.

The Secretary shall provide a notice to, and cooperate with, the appropriate State agency or tribal agency, as applicable, of each State and Indian tribe within the boundaries of which an activity is planned to be carried out pursuant to this title, including notification, by not later than 30 days before the date on which the activity is implemented.

SEC. 709. INTERAGENCY OPERATIONAL PLAN.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 5 years thereafter, the Director, in cooperation with the NOAA Assistant Administrator, the EPA Assistant Administrator, the Director of the United States Geological Survey, and the heads of other appropriate Federal departments and agencies (including at a minimum, those agencies represented on the Board) shall develop an interagency operational plan that describes—

(1) the functional, operational, technical, scientific, and general staff, administrative, and material needs for the implementation of this title; and

(2) any interagency agreements between or among Federal departments and agencies to address those needs.

SEC. 710. ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING.

(a) REPORTING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 5 years thereafter, the Board shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report describing the progress of this title.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) an estimate of the number of acres, stream miles, or acre-feet, or other suitable measures of fish habitat, that was maintained or improved by partnerships of Federal, State, or local governments, Indian tribes, or other entities in the United States during the 5-year period ending on the date of submission of the report;

(B) a description of the public access to fish habitats established or improved during that 5-year period;

(C) a description of the improved opportunities for public recreational fishing; and

(D) an assessment of the status of fish habitat conservation projects carried out with funds provided under this title during that period, disaggregated by year, including—

(i) a description of the fish habitat conservation projects recommended by the Board under section 706(b);

(ii) a description of each fish habitat conservation project approved by the Secretary

under section 706(f), in order of priority for funding;

(iii) a justification for—

(I) the approval of each fish habitat conservation project; and

(II) the order of priority for funding of each fish habitat conservation project;

(iv) a justification for any rejection of a fish habitat conservation project recommended by the Board under section 706(b) that was based on a factor other than the criteria described in section 706(c); and

(v) an accounting of expenditures by Federal, State, or local governments, Indian tribes, or other entities to carry out fish habitat conservation projects.

(b) **STATUS AND TRENDS REPORT.**—Not later than December 31, 2016, and every 5 years thereafter, the Board shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that includes—

(1) a status of all Partnerships approved under this title;

(2) a description of the status of fish habitats in the United States as identified by established Partnerships; and

(3) enhancements or reductions in public access as a result of—

(A) the activities of the Partnerships; or

(B) any other activities carried out pursuant to this title.

(c) **REVISIONS.**—Not later than December 31, 2016, and every 5 years thereafter, the Board shall consider revising the goals of the Board, after consideration of each report required by subsection (b).

SEC. 711. EFFECT OF TITLE.

(a) **WATER RIGHTS.**—Nothing in this title—

(1) establishes any express or implied reserved water right in the United States for any purpose;

(2) affects any water right in existence on the date of enactment of this Act;

(3) preempts or affects any State water law or interstate compact governing water; or

(4) affects any Federal or State law in existence on the date of enactment of the Act regarding water quality or water quantity.

(b) **AUTHORITY TO ACQUIRE WATER RIGHTS OR RIGHTS TO PROPERTY.**—Under this title, only a State, local government, or other non-Federal entity may acquire, under State law, water rights or rights to property.

(c) **STATE AUTHORITY.**—Nothing in this title—

(1) affects the authority, jurisdiction, or responsibility of a State to manage, control, or regulate fish and wildlife under the laws and regulations of the State; or

(2) authorizes the Secretary to control or regulate within a State the fishing or hunting of fish and wildlife.

(d) **EFFECT ON INDIAN TRIBES.**—Nothing in this title abrogates, abridges, affects, modifies, supersedes, or alters any right of an Indian tribe recognized by treaty or any other means, including—

(1) an agreement between the Indian tribe and the United States;

(2) Federal law (including regulations);

(3) an Executive order; or

(4) a judicial decree.

(e) **ADJUDICATION OF WATER RIGHTS.**—Nothing in this title diminishes or affects the ability of the Secretary to join an adjudication of rights to the use of water pursuant to subsection (a), (b), or (c) of section 208 of the Department of Justice Appropriation Act, 1953 (43 U.S.C. 666).

(f) **DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AUTHORITY.**—Nothing in this title affects the authority, jurisdiction, or responsibility of the Department of Commerce to manage, control, or regulate fish or fish habitats under the

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.).

(g) **EFFECT ON OTHER AUTHORITIES.**—

(1) **PRIVATE PROPERTY PROTECTION.**—Nothing in this title permits the use of funds made available to carry out this title to acquire real property or a real property interest without the written consent of each owner of the real property or real property interest.

(2) **MITIGATION.**—Nothing in this title permits the use of funds made available to carry out this title for fish and wildlife mitigation purposes under—

(A) the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.);

(B) the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.);

(C) the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-662; 100 Stat. 4082); or

(D) any other Federal law or court settlement.

(3) **CLEAN WATER ACT.**—Nothing in this title affects any provision of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), including any definition in that Act.

SEC. 712. NONAPPLICABILITY OF FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to—

(1) the Board; or

(2) any Partnership.

SEC. 713. FUNDING.

(a) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—

(1) **FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION PROJECTS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary \$7,200,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021 to provide funds for fish habitat conservation projects approved under section 706(f), of which 5 percent shall be made available for each fiscal year for projects carried out by Indian tribes.

(2) **ADMINISTRATIVE AND PLANNING EXPENSES.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021 an amount equal to 5 percent of the amount appropriated for the applicable fiscal year pursuant to paragraph (1)—

(A) for administrative and planning expenses; and

(B) to carry out section 210.

(3) **TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ASSISTANCE.**—There is authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021 to carry out, and provide technical and scientific assistance under, section 707—

(A) \$500,000 to the Secretary for use by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service;

(B) \$500,000 to the NOAA Assistant Administrator for use by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(C) \$500,000 to the EPA Assistant Administrator for use by the Environmental Protection Agency; and

(D) \$500,000 to the Secretary for use by the United States Geological Survey.

(b) **AGREEMENTS AND GRANTS.**—The Secretary may—

(1) on the recommendation of the Board, and notwithstanding sections 6304 and 6305 of title 31, United States Code, and the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note; Public Law 106-107), enter into a grant agreement, cooperative agreement, or contract with a Partnership or other entity for a fish habitat conservation project or restoration or enhancement project;

(2) apply for, accept, and use a grant from any individual or entity to carry out the purposes of this title; and

(3) make funds available to any Federal department or agency for use by that depart-

ment or agency to provide grants for any fish habitat protection project, restoration project, or enhancement project that the Secretary determines to be consistent with this title.

(c) **DONATIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may—

(A) enter into an agreement with any organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of that Code to solicit private donations to carry out the purposes of this title; and

(B) accept donations of funds, property, and services to carry out the purposes of this title.

(2) **TREATMENT.**—A donation accepted under this section—

(A) shall be considered to be a gift or bequest to, or otherwise for the use of, the United States; and

(B) may be—

(i) used directly by the Secretary; or

(ii) provided to another Federal department or agency through an interagency agreement.

SA 3322. Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5 _____. U.S. CIVIL RIGHTS NETWORK PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subdivision 1 of Division B of subtitle III of title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after chapter 3083 the following:

“CHAPTER 3084—U.S. CIVIL RIGHTS NETWORK

“§ 308401. Definition of Network

“In this chapter, the term ‘Network’ means the U.S. Civil Rights Network established under section 308402(a).

“§ 308402. U.S. Civil Rights Network

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall establish, within the Service, a program to be known as the ‘U.S. Civil Rights Network’.

“(b) **DUTIES OF SECRETARY.**—In carrying out the Network, the Secretary shall—

“(1) review studies and reports to complement and not duplicate studies of the historical importance of the African American civil rights movement that may be underway or completed, such as the Civil Rights Framework Study;

“(2) produce and disseminate appropriate educational materials relating to the African American civil rights movement, such as handbooks, maps, interpretive guides, or electronic information;

“(3) enter into appropriate cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding to provide technical assistance under subsection (c); and

“(4)(A) create and adopt an official, uniform symbol or device for the Network; and

“(B) issue regulations for the use of the symbol or device adopted under subparagraph (A).

“(c) **ELEMENTS.**—The Network shall encompass the following elements:

“(1) All units and programs of the Service that are determined by the Secretary to relate to the African American civil rights movement during the period from 1939 through 1968.

“(2) Other Federal, State, local, and privately owned properties that—

“(A) relate to the African American civil rights movement;

“(B) have a verifiable connection to the African American civil rights movement; and

“(C) are included in, or determined by the Secretary to be eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places.

“(3) Other governmental and nongovernmental facilities and programs of an educational, research, or interpretive nature that are directly related to the African American civil rights movement.

“§ 308403. Cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding

“To achieve the purposes of this chapter and to ensure effective coordination of the Federal and non-Federal elements of the Network described in section 308402(c) with System units and programs of the Service, the Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding with, and provide technical assistance to the heads of other Federal agencies, States, units of local government, regional governmental bodies, and private entities.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters for title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 3083 the following:

“3084. U.S. Civil Rights Network.”.

SA 3323. Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. REED, Mr. BURR, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. BOXER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4470, to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act with respect to the requirements related to lead in drinking water, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike out all after the enacting clause, and insert the following:

TITLE —PREVENTION OF AND PROTECTION FROM LEAD EXPOSURE

SEC. —01. DRINKING WATER INFRASTRUCTURE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(2) ELIGIBLE STATE.—The term “eligible State” means a State for which the President has declared an emergency under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) relating to the public health threats associated with the presence of lead or other contaminants in a public drinking water supply system.

(3) ELIGIBLE SYSTEM.—The term “eligible system” means a public drinking water supply system that is the subject of an emergency declaration referred to in paragraph (2).

(b) STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible system shall be—

(A) considered to be a disadvantaged community under section 1452(d) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–12(d)); and

(B) eligible to receive loans with additional subsidization under that Act (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.), including forgiveness of principal under section 1452(d)(1) of that Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–12(d)(1)).

(2) AUTHORIZATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Using funds provided under subsection (e)(1)(A), an eligible State may provide assistance to an eligible system within the eligible State, for the purpose of addressing lead or other contaminants in drinking water, including repair and replacement of public and private drinking water infrastructure.

(B) INCLUSION.—Assistance provided under subparagraph (A) may include additional subsidization under the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.), as described in paragraph (1)(B).

(C) EXCLUSION.—Assistance provided under subparagraph (A) shall not include assistance for a project that is financed (directly or indirectly), in whole or in part, with proceeds of any obligation issued after the date of enactment of this Act—

(i) the interest of which is exempt from the tax imposed under chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; or

(ii) with respect to which credit is allowable under subpart I or J of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of such Code.

(3) LIMITATION.—Section 1452(d)(2) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–12(d)(2)) shall not apply to—

(A) any funds provided under subsection (e)(1)(A); or

(B) any other loan provided to an eligible system.

(c) WATER INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING.—

(1) SECURED LOANS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Using funds provided under subsection (e)(2)(A), the Administrator may make a secured loan under the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014 (33 U.S.C. 3901 et seq.) to—

(i) an eligible State to carry out a project eligible under paragraphs (2) through (9) of section 5026 of that Act (33 U.S.C. 3905) to address lead or other contaminants in drinking water in an eligible system, including repair and replacement of public and private drinking water infrastructure; and

(ii) any eligible entity under section 5025 of that Act (33 U.S.C. 3904) for a project eligible under paragraphs (2) through (9) of section 5026 of that Act (33 U.S.C. 3905).

(B) AMOUNT.—Notwithstanding section 5029(b)(2) of the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014 (33 U.S.C. 3908(b)(2)), the amount of a secured loan provided under subparagraph (A)(i) may be equal to not more than 80 percent of the reasonably anticipated costs of the projects.

(2) FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT.—Notwithstanding section 5029(b)(9) of the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014 (33 U.S.C. 3908(b)(9)), any costs for a project to address lead or other contaminants in drinking water in an eligible system that are not covered by a secured loan under paragraph (1) may be covered using amounts in the State revolving loan fund under section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–12).

(d) NONDUPLICATION OF WORK.—An activity carried out pursuant to this section shall not duplicate the work or activity of any other Federal or State department or agency.

(e) FUNDING.—

(1) ADDITIONAL DRINKING WATER STATE REVOLVING FUND CAPITALIZATION GRANTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall make available to the Administrator a total of \$100,000,000 to provide additional grants to eligible States pursuant to section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–12), to be available during the period of fiscal years 2016 and 2017 for the purposes described in subsection (b)(2).

(B) SUPPLEMENTED INTENDED USE PLANS.—From funds made available under subpara-

graph (A), the Administrator shall obligate to an eligible State such amounts as are necessary to meet the needs identified in a supplemented intended use plan by not later than 30 days after the date on which the eligible State submits to the Administrator a supplemented intended use plan under section 1452(b) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–12(b)) that includes preapplication information regarding projects to be funded using the additional assistance, including, with respect to each such project—

(i) a description of the project;

(ii) an explanation of the means by which the project will address a situation causing a declared emergency in the eligible State;

(iii) the estimated cost of the project; and

(iv) the projected start date for construction of the project.

(C) UNOBLIGATED AMOUNTS.—Any amounts made available to the Administrator under subparagraph (A) that are unobligated on the date that is 18 months after the date on which the amounts are made available shall be available to provide additional grants to States to capitalize State loan funds as provided under section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–12).

(D) APPLICABILITY.—Section 1452(b)(1) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–12(b)(1)) shall not apply to a supplement to an intended use plan under subparagraph (B).

(2) WIFIA FUNDING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury shall make available to the Administrator \$70,000,000 to provide credit subsidies, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, for secured loans under subsection (c)(1)(A) with a goal of providing secured loans totaling at least \$700,000,000.

(B) USE.—Secured loans provided pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall be available to carry out activities described in subsection (c)(1)(A).

(3) APPLICABILITY.—Unless explicitly waived, all requirements under the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.) and the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014 (33 U.S.C. 3901 et seq.) shall apply to funding provided under this subsection.

(f) HEALTH EFFECTS EVALUATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to section 104(i)(1)(E) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 U.S.C. 9604(i)(1)(E)), and on receipt of a request of an appropriate State or local health official of an eligible State, the Director of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry of the National Center for Environmental Health shall in coordination with other agencies, as appropriate, conduct voluntary surveillance activities to evaluate any adverse health effects on individuals exposed to lead from drinking water in the affected communities.

(2) CONSULTATIONS.—Pursuant to section 104(i)(4) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 U.S.C. 9604(i)(4)), and on receipt of a request of an appropriate State or local health official of an eligible State, the Director of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry of the National Center for Environmental Health shall provide consultations regarding health issues described in paragraph (1).

SEC. —02. LOAN FORGIVENESS.

The matter under the heading “STATE AND TRIBAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS” under the heading “ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY” in title II of division G of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Public

Law 114-113), is amended in paragraph (1), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting the following: “or, if a Federal or State emergency declaration has been issued due to a threat to public health from heightened exposure to lead in a municipal drinking water supply, before the date of enactment of this Act: *Provided further*, That in a State in which such an emergency declaration has been issued, the State may use more than 20 percent of the funds made available under this title to the State for Drinking Water State Revolving Fund capitalization grants to provide additional subsidy to eligible recipients.”.

SEC. 03. DISCLOSURE OF PUBLIC HEALTH THREATS FROM LEAD EXPOSURE.

(a) EXCEEDANCE OF LEAD ACTION LEVEL.—Section 1414(c) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300g-3(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end the following:

“(D) Notice of any exceedance of a lead action level or any other prescribed level of lead in a regulation issued under section 1412, including the concentrations of lead found in a monitoring activity or any other level of lead determined by the Administrator to warrant notice, either on a case-specific or more general basis.”;

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (D) and (E) as subparagraphs (E) and (F), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

“(D) EXCEEDANCE OF LEAD ACTION LEVEL.—Regulations issued under subparagraph (A) shall specify notification procedures for an exceedance of a lead action level or any other prescribed level of lead in a regulation issued under section 1412.”;

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively; and

(4) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) NOTIFICATION OF THE PUBLIC RELATING TO LEAD.—

“(A) EXCEEDANCE OF LEAD ACTION LEVEL.—Not later than 15 days after the date of being notified by the primary agency of an exceedance of a lead action level or any other prescribed level of lead in a regulation issued under section 1412, including the concentrations of lead found in a monitoring activity or any other level of lead determined by the Administrator to warrant notice, either on a case-specific or more general basis, the Administrator shall notify the public of the concentrations of lead found in the monitoring activity conducted by the public water system if the public water system or the State does not notify the public of the concentrations of lead found in a monitoring activity.

“(B) RESULTS OF LEAD MONITORING.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may provide notice of any result of lead monitoring conducted by a public water system to—

“(I) any person that is served by the public water system; or

“(II) the local or State health department of a locality or State in which the public water system is located.

“(ii) FORM OF NOTICE.—The Administrator may provide the notice described in clause (i) by—

“(I) press release; or

“(II) other form of communication, including local media.

“(C) PRIVACY.—Notice to the public shall protect the privacy of individual customer information.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 1414 (c) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300g-3(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(C), by striking “paragraph (2)(E)” and inserting “paragraph (2)(F)”;

(2) in paragraph (2)(B)(i)(II), by striking “subparagraph (D)” and inserting “subparagraph (E)”;

(3) in paragraph (3)(B), in the first sentence, by striking “(D)” and inserting “(E)”.

SEC. 04. REGISTRY FOR LEAD EXPOSURE AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CITY.—The term “City” means a city exposed to lead contamination in the local drinking water system.

(2) COMMITTEE.—The term “Committee” means the Advisory Committee established under subsection (c).

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(b) LEAD EXPOSURE REGISTRY.—The Secretary shall establish within the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry or another relevant agency at the discretion of the Secretary, or establish through a grant award or contract, a lead exposure registry to collect data on the lead exposure of residents of a City on a voluntary basis.

(c) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

(1) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish an Advisory Committee in coordination with the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other relevant agencies as determined by the Secretary consisting of Federal members and non-Federal members, and which shall include—

- (i) an epidemiologist;
- (ii) a toxicologist;
- (iii) a mental health professional;
- (iv) a pediatrician;
- (v) an early childhood education expert;
- (vi) a special education expert;
- (vii) a dietician; and
- (viii) an environmental health expert.

(B) REQUIREMENTS.—Membership in the Committee shall not exceed 15 members and not less than ½ of the members shall be Federal members.

(2) CHAIR.—The Secretary shall designate a chair from among the Federal members appointed to the Committee.

(3) TERMS.—Members of the Committee shall serve for a term of not more than 3 years and the Secretary may reappoint members for consecutive terms.

(4) APPLICATION OF FACAA.—The Committee shall be subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

(5) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Committee shall, at a minimum—

(A) review the Federal programs and services available to individuals and communities exposed to lead;

(B) review current research on lead poisoning to identify additional research needs;

(C) review and identify best practices, or the need for best practices, regarding lead screening and the prevention of lead poisoning;

(D) identify effective services, including services relating to healthcare, education, and nutrition for individuals and communities affected by lead exposure and lead poisoning, including in consultation with, as appropriate, the lead exposure registry as established in subsection (b); and

(E) undertake any other review or activities that the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(6) REPORT.—Annually for 5 years and thereafter as determined necessary by the Secretary or as required by Congress, the Committee shall submit to the Secretary, the Committees on Finance, Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, and Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and the Committees on Education and the Workforce, Energy and Commerce, and Agriculture of the House of Representatives a report that includes—

(A) an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Federal programs and services available to individuals and communities exposed to lead;

(B) an evaluation of additional lead poisoning research needs;

(C) an assessment of any effective screening methods or best practices used or developed to prevent or screen for lead poisoning;

(D) input and recommendations for improved access to effective services relating to healthcare, education, or nutrition for individuals and communities impacted by lead exposure; and

(E) any other recommendations for communities affected by lead exposure, as appropriate.

(d) MANDATORY FUNDING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—On the date of enactment of this Act, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the Secretary, to be available during the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2020—

(A) \$17,500,000 to carry out subsection (b); and

(B) \$2,500,000 to carry out subsection (c).

(2) RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.—The Secretary shall be entitled to receive, shall accept, and shall use to carry out subsections (b) and (c) the funds transferred under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1), respectively, without further appropriation.

SEC. 05. ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR CERTAIN CHILDHOOD HEALTH PROGRAMS.

(a) CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING PREVENTION PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—On the date of enactment of this Act, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to be available during the period of fiscal years 2017 and 2018, \$10,000,000 for the childhood lead poisoning prevention program authorized under section 317A of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247b-1).

(2) RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.—The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shall be entitled to receive, shall accept, and shall use to carry out the childhood lead poisoning prevention program authorized under section 317A of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247b-1) the funds transferred under paragraph (1), without further appropriation.

(b) HEALTHY HOMES PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—On the date of enactment of this Act, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, to be available during the period of fiscal years 2017 and 2018, \$10,000,000 to carry out the Healthy Homes Initiative of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(2) RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall be entitled to receive, shall accept, and shall use to carry out the Healthy Homes Initiative of the Department of Housing and Urban Development the funds transferred under paragraph (1), without further appropriation.

(C) HEALTHY START PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—On the date of enactment of this Act, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, to be available during the period of fiscal years 2017 and 2018, \$10,000,000 to carry out the Healthy Start Initiative under section 330H of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254c-8).

(2) RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.—The Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration shall be entitled to receive, shall accept, and shall use to carry out the Healthy Start Initiative under section 330H of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254c-8) the funds transferred under paragraph (1), without further appropriation.

SEC. 06. REVIEW AND REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General and the Inspector General of the Environmental Protection Agency shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations, Environment and Public Works, and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committees on Appropriations, Energy and Commerce, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report on the status of any ongoing investigations into the Federal and State response to the contamination of the drinking water supply of the City of Flint, Michigan.

(b) REVIEW.—Not later than 30 days after the completion of the investigations described in subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the United States shall commence a review of issues that are not addressed by the investigations and relating to—

(1) the adequacy of the response by the State of Michigan and the City of Flint to the drinking water crisis in Flint, Michigan, including the timeliness and transparency of the response, as well as the capacity of the State and City to manage the drinking water system; and

(2) the adequacy of the response by Region 5 of the Environmental Protection Agency to the drinking water crisis in Flint, Michigan, including the timeliness and transparency of the response.

(c) CONTENTS OF REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after commencing each review under subsection (b), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) a statement of the principal findings of the review; and

(2) recommendations for Congress and the President to take any actions to prevent a similar situation in the future and to protect public health.

SEC. 07. OFFSET.

None of the funds available to the Secretary of Energy to provide any credit subsidy under subsection (d) of section 136 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17013) as of the date of enactment of this Act shall be obligated for new loan commitments under that subsection on or after October 1, 2020.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET**COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS**

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public

Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 24, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Oversight of the Renewable Fuel Standard.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 24, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Ending Modern Slavery: Now is the Time.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 24, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled “Zika Virus: Addressing the Growing Public Health Threat.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS’ AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 24, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SH-216 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 24, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Opioid Use Among Seniors: Issues and Emerging Trends.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 24, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL MANAGEMENT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on

February 24, 2016, at 10:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act: Opportunities for Improvement to Support State and Local Governments.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the privileges of the floor be granted to Manisha Gupta, a fellow on my staff for the remainder of the 114th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my intern, Bayley Sandy, be granted privileges of the floor for the remainder of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. RES. 374

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 1:45 p.m. tomorrow, Thursday, February 25, the Senate proceed to consideration of S. Res. 374, which is at the desk, and I ask that it be held, and that the Senate then vote on the resolution, and that if the resolution is agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR PRINTING OF TRIBUTES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators be permitted to submit tributes to Justice Scalia for the RECORD until March 10, 2016, and that all tributes be printed as a Senate document.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, February 25; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:22 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 25, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

CARLA D. HAYDEN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS FOR A TERM OF TEN YEARS, VICE JAMES H. BILLINGTON.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. MICHAEL K. NAGATA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS/COMMANDING GENERAL, UNITED STATES ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, AND APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 3036:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. TODD T. SEMONITE

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 271(D):

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) MEREDITH L. AUSTIN
REAR ADM. (LH) PETER W. GAUTIER
REAR ADM. (LH) MICHAEL J. HAYCOCK
REAR ADM. (LH) JAMES M. HEINZ
REAR ADM. (LH) KEVIN E. LUNDAY
REAR ADM. (LH) TODD A. SOKALZUK
REAR ADM. (LH) PAUL F. THOMAS

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate February 24, 2016:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ROBERT MCKINNON CALIFF, OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO BE COMMISSIONER OF FOOD AND DRUGS, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING JUSTICE MARSHA
SLOUGH

HON. PETE AGUILAR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. AGUILAR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Justice Marsha Slough, who earlier this week was sworn in to serve on the Fourth District Court of Appeal. Prior to this landmark achievement, Justice Slough served as Presiding Judge and Court of Appeal Justice Appointee of the San Bernardino County Superior Court. I speak with the utmost confidence that Justice Slough will continue to serve the people of the Inland Empire proudly in her unwavering commitment to carrying out justice in our community.

A graduate of Ottawa University and Whittier Law School, and a seasoned attorney in the Inland Empire, Justice Slough has devoted her life and career to our community and residents for decades. Justice Slough is a resident of Redlands and has honorably served the people of San Bernardino County on the County Superior Court since 2003 when she was appointed by Governor Gray Davis before becoming Presiding Judge of the San Bernardino County Superior Court in 2012.

As a fellow public servant and as her representative in Congress, I commend Justice Slough on her latest achievement and am grateful to see someone of her integrity and leadership attain such a prestigious position in our community.

RECOGNIZING MAJOR MICHAEL F. COPELAND OF THE FRANKLIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR 49 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Major Michael F. Copeland. He is retiring from the Franklin County Sheriff's Office after 49 years of dedicated service.

Major Copeland began his service in the Franklin County Sheriff's Office during his high school years. He graduated from Union High School in 1969 and continued dispatching through his college years. Major Copeland graduated from Meramec Community College with an Associate of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice in 1971. Major Copeland was the first civilian dispatcher in Franklin County. In 1997, he was a National Academy graduate from the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The leadership and commitment Major Copeland has shown throughout the years is

evident by the positions he has held. From 1971 to present, he has served as Deputy Sheriff (Detective Sgt.—1975, Captain—1981, and Major/Chief Deputy—1989). In 1975, Major Copeland, was the first K-9 handler, his partner was "Smokey", for the Franklin County Sheriff's Office.

Major Copeland is a member of the St. Louis Major Case Investigations Squad and was the Lead Investigator starting in 1975 to 1983. He also served as a Death Investigator with the St. Louis County Medical Examiner's Office from 1993 to 2015. Major Copeland led the Missouri Deputy Sheriff's Association as its President starting in 2000 until 2002. Starting in 1975, he was the Coordinator for the Franklin County Law Enforcement Training Center and completed that position in 1983. During the years 1988 thru 1999, Major Copeland was the leader of the Franklin County "Emergency Response Team". In addition to the numerous positions he has held—since 1971, Major Copeland has worked on every major case and homicide case in Franklin County.

With this retirement, Major Michael F. Copeland can now spend more time with his family which includes: his wife Laura, son Jon, and his daughter Tamara.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Major Michael F. Copeland on his retirement of 49 years of service to his community.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HEATING, REFRIGERATING, AND AIR-CONDITIONING AND NATIONAL ENGINEERS WEEK

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Anthracite Chapter of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) as they celebrate National Engineers Week. ASHRAE was originally formed in 1894 as the American Society of Heating and Ventilating Engineers. With more than 50,000 members spanning the globe, ASHRAE aims to advance the arts and sciences of heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration to serve humanity and promote a sustainable world.

Established in 1951, National Engineers Week is dedicated to ensuring a diverse and well-educated future engineering workforce by promoting careers in engineering and technology. National Engineers Week represents a formal coalition of more than 70 engineering, education, and cultural societies, with over 50 corporations and government agencies dedicated to raising public awareness on the effect

engineering plays in our daily life. National Engineers Week honors the parents, teachers, and mentors who instill the importance of a math, science, and technological literacy in students and motivate them to pursue careers in engineering.

Modern engineering has solved many of the major challenges we face in the modern world. From designing efficient building systems to rebuilding towns devastated by natural disasters, the efforts of our engineers contribute to our nation's well-being and quality of life. It is a great privilege to recognize these honorable men and women, who are committed to using their scientific skills and specialized knowledge to create and innovate in order to fulfill society's growing needs.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$19,053,381,143,534.21. We've added \$8,426,504,094,621.13 to our debt in 7 years. This is over \$8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

RECOGNIZING SHERIFF GARY F. TOELKE OF THE FRANKLIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR 41 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Sheriff Gary F. Toelke. He is retiring from the Franklin County Sheriff's Office after 41 years of dedicated service. In addition to his 41 years of service in law enforcement, Sheriff Toelke is also the longest serving sheriff in Franklin County history. He has served seven terms spanning 28 years. In 1969, Sheriff Toelke graduated from Union High School. A few years later, in 1991, he graduated from the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy.

Sheriff Toelke has worked in numerous leadership positions. He is the Past President of the Missouri Sheriff's Association and received the Sheriff of the Year award from the

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Missouri Deputy Sheriff's Association. Currently, he is a board member with the Major Case Squad of Greater St. Louis. During the years of 1970–1976, he served in the Missouri National Guard with the Military Police. In March 1975 until March 1977, Sheriff Toelke was the Deputy Sheriff in the Franklin County Sheriff's Office. Then starting in 1988 to present, Sheriff Toelke has been the Sheriff of Franklin County, Missouri.

Most notably, during his time serving the people of Franklin County, Sheriff Toelke led the case when Abigale Woods "Baby Abby" was abducted. This case had national attention and ultimately ended with a successful recovery of Abigale Woods. Sheriff Toelke also successfully led the recovery of Ben Owenby "Missouri Miracle" which then led to the recovery of Shawn Hornbeck. These cases were emotional situations and Sheriff Toelke handled the situations with compassion and expertise which the families of the children will be forever grateful.

With this retirement, Sheriff Toelke can now spend more time with his family which includes: his wife Sandy, daughters Carrie and Holly.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Sheriff Toelke on his retirement after 41 years of commitment to his community.

IN MEMORIAM OF GEORGE RAY
WEST

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of my constituent Ray West, who passed away last week at the age of 89.

Ray was a U.S. Navy veteran who served during World War II.

He went on to have a successful career in the film industry, earning an Academy Award and GRAMMY for his work as a sound engineer.

Ray and his wife Jean were married in 1950.

The two honeymooned in Yosemite National Park, and celebrated each anniversary by returning there.

When Ray became ill, the Dream Foundation—a wish granting organization for terminally ill adults based in Santa Barbara, California—stepped in to ensure that Ray and Jean would be able to visit Yosemite for their 65th wedding anniversary.

I had the privilege of meeting Ray and his son David when they traveled to Washington, DC last September for the launch of the Dream Foundation's "Dreams for Veterans" program.

I was honored to be able to recognize him for his outstanding military service and his extraordinary life.

My thoughts are with Ray's family—I pray they find comfort as they celebrate the life of this remarkable man.

IN RECOGNITION OF DREXEL HILL
MIDDLE SCHOOL

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Drexel Hill Middle School on the awards earned by its seventh and eighth grade engineering team in the 2016 Future Cities regional contest this week.

The Future City competition engages students and teaches math, science and engineering concepts by challenging them with issues engineers and city planners face every day: urban management, planning and environmental sustainability issues to name just a few. The theme for this year's contest was "Waste Not, Want Not" and forced students to tackle complex waste management issues.

Drexel Hill Middle School's team was selected by its peers for the People's Choice Award, which is given to the best model city. It was also recognized with the Best Residential Zone award for the placement of residences in a way that would improve the quality of life for families.

Mr. Speaker, education in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields are crucial if our students are to be able to compete in the modern global economy. The Future City competition is an innovative way for students to learn these skills and their real world applications. I congratulate Drexel Hill Middle School's students for their awards.

HONORING THE 2016 ACADEMY
NOMINEES OF THE 11TH CON-
GRESSIONAL DISTRICT NEW JER-
SEY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, every year, more high school seniors from the 11th Congressional District trade in varsity jackets for navy pea coats, Air Force flight suits, and Army brass buckles than most other districts in the country. But this is nothing new—our area has repeatedly sent an above average portion of its sons and daughters to the nation's military academies for decades.

This fact should not come as a surprise. The educational excellence of area schools is well known and has long been a magnet for families looking for the best environment in which to raise their children. Our graduates are skilled not only in mathematics, science, and social studies, but also have solid backgrounds in sports, debate teams, and other extracurricular activities. This diverse upbringing makes military academy recruiters sit up and take note—indeed, many recruiters know our towns and schools by name.

Since the 1830s, Members of Congress have enjoyed meeting, talking with, and nominating superb young people to our military academies. But how did this process evolve? In 1843, when West Point was the sole acad-

emy, Congress ratified the nominating process and became directly involved in the makeup of our military's leadership. This was not an act of an imperial Congress bent on controlling every aspect of Government. Rather, the procedure still used today was, and is, a further check and balance in our democracy. It was originally designed to weaken and divide political coloration in the officer corps, provide geographical balance to our armed services, and to make the officer corps more resilient to unfettered nepotism and handicapped European armies.

In 1854, Representative Gerritt Smith of New York added a new component to the academy nomination process—the academy review board. This was the first time a Member of Congress appointed prominent citizens from his district to screen applicants and assist with the serious duty of nominating candidates for academy admission. Today, I am honored to continue this wise tradition in my service to the 11th Congressional District.

My Academy Review Board is composed of seven local citizens who have shown exemplary service to New Jersey, to their communities, and to the continued excellence of education in our area—many are veterans. Though from diverse backgrounds and professions, they all share a common dedication that the best qualified and motivated graduates attend our academies. And, as true for most volunteer panels, their service goes largely unnoticed.

I would like to take a moment to recognize these men and women and thank them publicly for participating in this important panel. Being on the board requires hard work and an objective mind. Members have the responsibility of interviewing upwards of 50 outstanding high school seniors every year in the academy review process.

The nomination process follows a general timetable. High school seniors mail personal information directly to the Military Academy, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy, and the Merchant Marine Academy once they become interested in attending. Information includes academic achievement, college entry test scores, and other activities. At this time, they also inform my office of their desire to be nominated.

The academies then assess the applicants, rank them based on the data supplied, and return the files to my office with their notations. In late November, our Academy Review Board interviews all of the applicants over the course of 2 days. They assess a student's qualifications and analyze character, desire to serve, and other talents that may be hidden on paper.

This year the board interviewed over 40 applicants. The Board's recommendations were then forwarded to the academies, where recruiters reviewed files and notified applicants and my office of their final decision on admission.

As these highly motivated and talented young men and women go through the academy nominating process, never let us forget the sacrifice they are preparing to make: to defend our country and protect our citizens. This holds especially true at a time when our nation is fighting the war against terrorism. Whether it is in the Middle East, Africa or

other troubled spots around the world, no doubt we are constantly reminded that wars are fought by the young. And, while our military missions are both important and dangerous, it is reassuring to know that we continue to put America's best and brightest in command.

ACADEMY NOMINEES FOR 2016 11TH DISTRICT
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

AIR FORCE ACADEMY

John Dennehy, Rockaway, Morris Hills HS; Jason Kaynak, Pompton Plains, Pequannock HS; Pranay Malla, Chatham, Chatham HS; Michael Matarazzo, Cedar Grove, Cedar Grove HS; Garrett O'Shea, Butler, Morris Knolls HS; Jacob Scheidman, Wayne, Wayne Valley HS; Joshua Vinoya, West Orange, West Orange HS.

MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

Bryan Deterle, Nutley, Nutley HS; Ryan Griffin, Kinnelon, Kinnelon HS; Tanner Grevesan, Boonton, Montville HS; Isaiah Rodriguez, Fairfield, West Essex HS; Megan Rudio, Byram, Lenape Valley HS; Christopher Schlegel, Mendham, West Morris Mendham HS.

NAVAL ACADEMY

Michael Corbett, Florham Park, Hanover Park HS; Matthew Critchley, Morristown, Morristown HS; Sofia Farrell, Nutley, Nutley HS; Matthew Gallo, Whippany, Whippany Park HS; Kristine Gurcan, Whippany, Whippany Park HS; Marisa Lakin, Verona, Verona HS; Adam Magistro, Morristown, Newark Academy; Courtney McKenna, Sparta, Sparta HS; Robert White, Pompton Plains, Pequannock HS; Alexander Wang, Parsippany, Parsippany HS.

MILITARY ACADEMY

Taylor Carmichael, Pompton Plains, Pequannock HS; William Gault, Verona, Verona HS; Mitchell Haddad, Fairfield, Eastern Christian School; Christopher Morgan, West Orange, West Orange HS; Christopher Papa, Chatham, Chatham HS; Ivan Peters, Boonton, Mountain Lakes HS, US Army; John Rogacki, North Caldwell, Seton Hall Prep; Justice Rooney, West Orange, West Orange HS; Sean Schoch, Sparta, Sparta HS; Alexander Zevits, Montville, Montville HS.

NAVAL ACADEMY PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Dean C. Caravela, West Caldwell; James Caldwell High School

TRIBUTE TO MR. SIMON PHILLIP
"PHIL" LEVETAN

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, our lives have been touched by the leadership and service of Mr. Simon Phillip "Phil" Levetan; and

Whereas, Mr. Simon Phillip "Phil" Levetan served our nation with honor and valor in the United States Army Air Corps Division during World War II. He was responsible for maintaining the electrical and mechanical systems of B29 airplanes, which served as powerful tools for the Allies, aiding in the destruction of the Axis powers; and

Whereas, Mr. Levetan served and led our district in DeKalb County, as a steadfast pillar

of our community, a business owner and operator of his family's scrap metal business, Dixie Iron and Metal Company. He was a community leader and First Gentleman of DeKalb County as he served the citizens by partnering with his wife former C.E.O. of DeKalb County and State Senator Liane Levetan. He was the wind beneath her wings for sixty one (61) years in marriage; and

Whereas, Mr. Levetan was a lifetime member of Ahavath Achim Synagogue and a member of Congregation Beth Jacob. He also planned weekly Lunch and Learn sessions for Chabad with Rabbi Yossi New for more than two decades. In addition, he was a member of the Jewish War Veterans and a member of the Elks 78 organizations; and

Whereas, he never asked for fame or fortune, nor found a job too small or too big; he gave of himself, his time, his talent and his life to uplift those in need by demonstrating unwavering commitment to protecting and serving the citizens of the United States of America; and

Whereas, he was a husband, a father, a brother and a friend; he was also a man of great integrity who remained true to the uplifting and service of my district; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia recognizes Mr. Simon Phillip "Phil" Levetan as a citizen of great worth and so noted distinction; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., do hereby attest to the 114th Congress that Mr. Simon Phillip "Phil" Levetan is deemed worthy and deserving of this "Congressional Honor" by declaring Mr. Simon Phillip "Phil" Levetan U.S. Citizen of Distinction in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 4th day of January, 2016.

IN RECOGNITION OF HOMES FOR
HEROES

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Homes for Heroes, the Mission First Housing Group's Fund for Veterans' fundraising event for housing for homeless veterans.

Homelessness among veterans is a tragic problem nationwide, and many veterans struggle with addiction and other issues that make keeping their own homes difficult. The federal government estimates that nearly 50,000 veterans are homeless on any given night, and another 1.4 million are at risk of homelessness. Seventy percent of homeless veterans face substance abuse issues.

And it's a problem that seems to be getting worse: Pennsylvania's homeless population increased by 46 percent from 2009 to 2013.

The service of our veterans should never be forgotten, and organizations like Mission First do much to ensure that those individuals and their families who have sacrificed so much for our country have a safe place to call home.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Mission First on its work to honor our nation's veterans. Working with groups like Mission First, we can help

get veterans off the streets and into safe homes. We owe it to the many veterans who served and sacrificed.

HONORING BUFFALO MANUFACTURING WORKS FOR RECEIVING THE INNOVATION AWARD FROM THE AMHERST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Buffalo Manufacturing Works as the Amherst Chamber of Commerce presents the organization with the Innovation Award. Their cooperative and supportive mission plays an important role in bolstering Western New York's manufacturing community.

Buffalo Manufacturing Works is a collaborative organization that exists to serve the needs of the Buffalo Niagara manufacturing community. Previously known as the Buffalo Niagara Institute for Advanced Manufacturing Competitiveness, it was established with \$45 million from the Buffalo Billion Investment Plan.

Working with their operational partner EWI, Buffalo Manufacturing Works has met with over 150 local manufacturers and business officials to gather input and develop a shared vision. A critical piece of their model is the Buffalo Manufacturing Works Founders Council, a dedicated group of local manufacturing companies that represent the industry and focus on fostering long-term sustainability.

Buffalo Manufacturing Works enables local manufacturers and businesses to grow and develop through a strong network of support from industry, research, and academic partners. Their partners include the University at Buffalo for fundamental research, Insyte Consulting for process excellence, EWI applied research and development, and the World Trade Center Buffalo Niagara for market expansion.

In addition, Buffalo Manufacturing Works provides insight into workforce development practices to companies. To help companies manufacture products in the most efficient way possible, the organization also develops its own new technologies.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me a few moments to recognize Buffalo Manufacturing Works as they receive the Innovation Award from the Amherst Chamber of Commerce. I wish the organization continued success and commend their commitment to building a strong present and future for Western New York's economy.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 84, I was absent on account of attending a funeral.

Had I been present, I would have voted Yes.

HONORING THE NICHOLAS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADERS

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a very special group of young people. The Nicholas County High School Cheerleaders, coached by Jessica Letcher Hamilton, recently won the Universal Cheerleaders Association's National High School Cheerleading Competition.

This event is very competitive and involves young women from across the nation. Like any successful endeavor, the victory was won by dedication, hours of practice, determination, and teamwork. The young women worked very hard for this accomplishment and they learned lessons that will benefit them as they become adults.

Nicholas County High School is a small but proud high school in Carlisle, Kentucky. The community was very supportive of this group of young women. The girls represented themselves and their county very well at the national competition in Orlando, Florida. I congratulate the students and their coaches on the national championship and I am proud to honor them before the United States House of Representatives.

HONORING BRIAN HAYDEN UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE CITY OF BUFFALO

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Mr. Brian Hayden as he retires from the City of Buffalo. Brian's career with the City spanned over forty years.

Brian was born on February 8th, 1954 at Our Lady of Victory Hospital in Lackawanna, New York to his beloved parents John & Dorothy (Norton) Hayden. He has two siblings, Dennis and Susan.

Growing up, Brian graduated from Holy Family Grammar School in 1968, one of several Catholic schools in the close-knit community of South Buffalo. He went on to attend Father Baker High School, becoming Senior Class President for the class of 1972. Brian attended Brockport College.

Brian first worked as a pool attendant at the Boone Street Playground during the summer of 1973, transitioning into a rink guard at Cazenovia Ice Rink. The next year, he started as a Laborer with the Carpenters for the Buffalo Board of Education. In 1979 he became co-owner of the Ounce and a Half, a favorite neighborhood gathering spot on Abbott Road in South Buffalo.

In 1983 Brian became a Building Inspector for the City of Buffalo. As an inspector, he en-

sured structures were safe and compliant with local, state, and federal regulations. Working his way up through the ranks, in 1990 he moved to the role of Director of Building Safety & Health for the Buffalo Board of Education. In 1993 he began his service as the Director of Building Inspections for one year, continuing to serve as a Building Inspector afterwards.

A family man, Brian is married to Jean Ann Kalec, with whom he has 2 sons, Matthew and John. He is also known for his community involvement, and volunteers for many races, organizations, and groups. He is a founding member of the Connors, Kait, Hartry Memorial Race, which went on for twenty-five years. Brian won the prestigious Irishman of the Year award in 1995 and the St. Thomas Aquinas Parishioner of the Year in 1996.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me a few moments to honor Brian Hayden upon the occasion of his well-deserved retirement. His service to the City of Buffalo and our community are worthy of recognition. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors and a fulfilling, relaxing retirement.

U.S. LNG EXPORTS TO THE BLACK SEA

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of U.S. Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) exports.

U.S. LNG is of vital importance to our friends around the world, specifically those in the Black Sea.

Currently, our European allies are stuck in a struggle for energy independence from Russia.

More critically, the burgeoning democracies in Ukraine, Bulgaria and Romania are largely dependent on Gazprom for their crucial gas supplies, and we are all well aware Russia is seeking to influence its neighbors' political process by threatening their gas supply.

American LNG could give Ukraine and the other Black Sea nations a real alternative.

In fact, there are Texas companies already engaged in negotiations with the Ukrainian state gas companies to build Ukraine's Black Sea LNG receiving terminal and supply U.S. LNG to Ukraine.

There exists a concern that an impediment to Ukraine receiving U.S. LNG is the uncertainty surrounding the passage of LNG tankers through the Bosphorus Straits.

Under the 1936 Montreux Convention, which controls how the Bosphorus Straits are to be used in peacetime, the LNG tanker issue should already be resolved.

Article 1 provides that "The High Contracting Parties recognize and affirm the principle of freedom of transit and navigation by sea in the Straits."

Article 2 states that "In time of peace, merchant vessels shall enjoy complete freedom of transit and navigation in the Straits, by day and by night, under any flag with any kind of cargo."

Even with the clear language of the Treaty, debate continues as to governmental authorities over the waters of the Bosphorus.

It is time to bring clarity to this important issue and open the Black Sea to U.S. LNG exports.

U.S. LNG exports will play an important role in the future of our allies.

It is my hope we can develop a reasonable, consensus approach to allow LNG to pass through the Bosphorus Straits.

HONORING LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS FELLED BY GUN VIOLENCE

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, it is with a deep sadness and a heavy heart that I rise today to pay tribute to the individuals in law enforcement who have fallen in the line of duty while serving and protecting their communities.

It is important to acknowledge that no one is immune from gun violence, including our law enforcement officers stepping in the line of danger to protect us.

While overall rates of officers killed by gun violence have declined over the years, we continue to see and hear about horrific cases of officers falling victim to gun violence.

Since 2005, shooting-related deaths account for approximately 37 percent of officer fatalities in the line of duty.

In the past five years, 259 police officers have died by gunfire across the nation.

Thirteen of those deaths were accidental.

Sadly, Texas had the highest number of fatalities, losing 12 officers in 2015.

This year, we have already lost nine officers to senseless gun violence across the nation in Utah, Oregon, Colorado, North Dakota, Ohio, Georgia, Mississippi and two in Maryland.

Five of these shootings occurred in just three days in February.

The recent incident that occurred on February 10, 2016, in Harford County, Maryland, accounting for two of five officers killed in less than a week is particularly alarming and egregious.

Senior Deputy Patrick Dailey and Senior Deputy Mark Logsdon of the Harford County Sheriff Department were killed upon approaching a troubled and wanted man in a local restaurant.

They were the first Harford County Sheriff's deputies to be shot and killed in the line of duty since 1899.

The suspect, who legally purchased the weapon used in shooting these officers, had a history of domestic violence including stalking and a suspected shooting of his estranged wife, substance abuse, and a criminal record including assault on an officer.

Awarded Medals of Honor, Deputy Dailey and Deputy Logsdon paid the ultimate sacrifice for responding to a call of need, and encountering an individual who should have never been in legal possession of a firearm.

Mr. Speaker, this tragic event highlights the desperate need for mental health and common sense gun reform in this country.

We do not need any more first tragedies for communities and law enforcement agencies, and we do not need to repeat history as this year sets a shocking pace for increased officer killings by gunfire.

There is no place in a civilized society for such senseless and preventable acts of violence in this country.

As Members of Congress we have a solemn obligation to pass legislation that improves the safety and respect between every law enforcement officer and the communities they serve to protect.

I ask the House to observe a moment of silence in memory of the fallen police officers in this nation.

HONORING MATTHEW PELKEY FOR RECEIVING THE EMERGING BUSINESS LEADER AWARD FROM THE AMHERST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Mr. Matthew Pelkey as he is presented with the Emerging Business Leader Award by the Amherst Chamber of Commerce. Matthew, through his extensive and distinguished work, has proven to be a leader in his community.

Matthew is an attorney and recent partner with Colligan Law LLP. Matthew's practice relates to counseling startups, entrepreneurs and businesses. His practice includes land use, commercial real estate and regulatory compliance for businesses and political groups.

An active member of the Western New York startup community, Matthew was co-founder and co-director of the Buffalo Chapter of Startup Grind. In that role, he also co-founded the monthly #LaunchHour entrepreneur Twitter chat in partnership with Launch NY. He serves as a member of FIKA Buffalo and the 43 North WeMakeBuffalo Team.

Additionally, Matthew sits on the advisory board of the ECIDA Venture Capital Fund, a board responsible for making recommendations to the ECIDA Board of Directors on how to form and operate a ten year, multi-million dollar early stage venture fund focusing on local emerging companies with high growth potential. An entrepreneur himself, Matthew is a co-founder and Chief Financial Officer of Black Squirrel Distillery, a New York State craft distillery. In that role he also co-founded the WNY Craft Beverage Alliance, Inc.

Outside of the startup community, Matthew is a strong advocate for sustainable development and has served as a member of the Smart Growth Work Group of the WNY Regional Economic Development Council and the One Region Forward Land Use & Development Working Team.

As the former Chair of The Emerging Business Leaders, Matthew served on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of the Amherst Chamber of Commerce, as well as the Chamber's Public Policy Committee. He volunteers for B-Team Buffalo and the

Parkside Community Association. Matthew also serves as a member of the Professional Panel for the Cancer Legal Resource Center, and as an advisory board member for WomenElect.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me a few moments to honor Matthew Pelkey as he receives the Emerging Business Leader Award from the Amherst Chamber of Commerce. His personal contribution of time and effort towards the progress and enhancement of our community is admirable, and I wish him much continued success in all his future endeavors.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF PAUL TRANBARGER

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a heroic individual, Mr. Paul Tranbarger, of Flemingsburg, Kentucky.

Mr. Tranbarger served in World War II as part of what we consider the Greatest Generation in our nation's history. Please join me today in honoring a man who has displayed selflessness, courage, commitment, and dedication to our beautiful country.

Paul Tranbarger was born in Bristol, Virginia in 1926. He left home at the early age of 17 when he enlisted in the United States Navy. As a Seaman First Class aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Shamrock Bay*, he participated in the Philippines Campaign: Phase 2, the Battle of Iwo Jima, and the Okinawa Campaign. He was part of a crew that earned the USS *Shamrock* three battle stars. As if the military battles were not enough, he and his crew endured a typhoon while onboard the ship.

After his military service, Paul returned home in 1946 to Virginia where he began working for Crosley Refrigeration. It was there he met and married his first and only love, Sadie. The two moved to Kentucky in 1952. Determined to live the American dream, Mr. Tranbarger fell in love with farming and owned and operated his own service station.

Paul and his late wife Sadie have three children. He is an elder at the Mt. Pisgah Christian Church and is still very active in his community. He attributes his faith in God and love of family as the reason for his existence at age 90.

Words can never express our gratitude or convey the honor so richly deserved. His service and sacrifice will be remembered and honored for generations to come.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. JENNIE MCIVOR RICHARDSON CAMPBELL

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, the lives of many in my district have been touched by the life of one—Mrs. Jennie McIvor Richardson Campbell; and

Whereas, she was born January 15, 1926 in Mount Vernon, New York, and today she celebrates a milestone in her life, her 90th Birthday; and

Whereas, this phenomenal woman has shared her time and talents for the betterment of our community and our nation through her tireless works, words of encouragement and inspiration; and

Whereas, Mrs. Campbell is a warrior for those in need, a woman of compassion, a fearless leader, a mother, a grandmother, an aunt, a servant to all and truly a friend; her dedicated service is present throughout my district, she is an unwavering caregiver; and

Whereas, she is a blessing to us all. She gives advice on life, sewing and culture. She is a member of her beloved Greenforest Community Baptist Church in Decatur, Georgia; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Mrs. Jennie McIvor Richardson Campbell on the anniversary of her birth and for her outstanding leadership and service to our District; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., do hereby proclaim January 15, 2016 as Mrs. Jennie McIvor Richardson Campbell Day in the 4th Congressional District.

Proclaimed, this 15th day of January, 2016.

HONORING BENJAMIN T. JEALOUS

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Mr. Benjamin T. Jealous as he is the keynote speaker for the Canisius College Academic Talent Search Black History Month event. Mr. Jealous and his years of experience in civil and human rights will bring invaluable insight to the students of Canisius College and to the Buffalo community, and we are honored to have him with us today.

The Academic Talent Search (ATS) Program at Canisius College identifies and provides services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, helping students progress through the academic pipeline from middle school through post-baccalaureate programs. The program serves approximately 600 youths recruited from area schools and community service organizations, giving educational, social, and career support as well as co-curricular and cultural enhancement.

Mr. Jealous has previously served as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the NAACP. He recently began working in the Silicon Valley venture capital firm Kapor Capital, where he plans to continue his goal of growing opportunities for minorities in the tech economy. A Rhodes Scholar, Mr. Jealous was named by both Forbes and TIME magazine to their "Top 40 under 40" lists, as well as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum.

The youngest president in the NAACP's history, Mr. Jealous began his career at 18 opening mail at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. Under his leadership, the NAACP grew to be

the largest civil rights organization online and on mobile, and became the largest community-based nonpartisan voter registration operation in the country. In addition, the NAACP experienced their first multi-year membership growth in over 2 decades. A builder of robust coalitions, Mr. Jealous's leadership included bringing environmentalist organizations into the fight to protect voting rights, and convincing several well-known conservatives to join the NAACP in challenging mass incarceration.

Prior to leading the NAACP, Mr. Jealous spent 15 years as a journalist and community organizer. Throughout his entire career, he has been the leader of successful state and local movements to ban racial profiling, defend voting rights, secure marriage equality, and free multiple wrongfully incarcerated people. Mr. Jealous has built a legacy on fighting for justice, and has made a career out of helping the disadvantaged and less fortunate.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me a few moments to honor Mr. Benjamin T. Jealous for all of the work that he has done. The ATS Program and Canisius College is honored to have such a distinguished and honorable speaker for their event. His personal contribution of time and effort towards the progress of justice in our nation is admirable, and I am grateful for his unwavering commitment to such noble causes. I wish him much continued success in all his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 83, I was absent on account of attending a funeral.

Had I been present, I would have voted Yes.

HONORING THE ESTILL COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL BAND

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a very special group of young people. Members of the Estill County High School Marching Engineers won the Class AA Kentucky Music Educators Association state competition. The band is directed by Jason Bowles.

This event is very competitive and involves young men and women from across Kentucky. Like any successful endeavor, the victory was won by dedication, hours of practice, determination, and teamwork. The young people worked very hard for this accomplishment and they learned many lessons that will benefit them as they become adults.

Estill County High School is a small but proud high school in Irvine, Kentucky. The community was very supportive of this group of students. The young people represented

themselves and their county very well at the state competition. I congratulate the students and their director on the Class AA KMEA state championship and I am proud to honor them before the United States House of Representatives.

HONORING NEW ERA CAP CO, INC. FOR RECEIVING THE COMMIT- MENT TO EXCELLENCE AWARD FROM THE AMHERST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and honor New Era Cap Co, Inc. for receiving the Commitment to Excellence Award from the Amherst Chamber of Commerce. For nearly a century, New Era has helped people express their unique passion, pride, and style.

Now a brand recognized around the world, New Era came from humble beginnings. In 1920, Ehrhardt Koch founded the company out of the back room of a rented company on Genesee Street in Buffalo, New York. The company is family-owned to this day.

Each generation of the Koch family has embraced and grown New Era's legacy. The company started with a focus on making a high-quality men's fashion headwear, entering the market with a cap known as the "Gatsby." After a few years, Ehrhardt Koch and his son Harold developed their next business venture, the baseball cap. Under Harold's leadership, New Era built relationships with baseball teams from Little League to college and professional leagues.

Harold Koch's son David continued to develop the baseball cap, growing New Era from a company supplying a few teams with caps to providing almost every Major League Baseball (MLB) and their Minor League affiliates with its 59FIFTY fitted cap. It was David's dedication to building relationships with partners like MLB that helped create the reputation New Era has today.

Chris Koch, David's son and the fourth generation Koch to lead the company, picked up where his father left off. With his knowledge of New Era's uniqueness, he secured a partnership with the National Football League in 2010. With the addition of apparel and accessories to its portfolio and having New Era products sold in over 70 countries has transformed New Era from a manufacturing company to a global lifestyle brand.

A search for a new headquarters in 2005 led the company to the ex-Federal Reserve Bank building in downtown Buffalo. Today, the company has 1100 employees and 17 offices, producing 50 million caps per year to be sold in 81 countries.

I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating New Era on their accomplishment of Commitment to Excellence award and their continuous dedication and contributions to the community at large.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF DR. BERNADITA "BENIT" CAMACHO-DUNGCA

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Bernadita "Benit" Camacho-Dungca. Benit was a daughter of Guam, passionate advocate of the Chamorro language and culture, and a dedicated life-long educator. She passed away on February 15, 2016 at the age of 74.

Benit was born and raised in Dededo, Guam and was the eldest daughter of ten children of Ignacio Rivera Camacho and Maria Pocaigue Rosario. She was married to the late Vicente Taitingfong Dungca and together they had one son, John. Benit graduated from George Washington High School and received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Linguistics and Anthropology from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She went on to receive her Master of Arts degree in Education in Reading from the University of Guam, and her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Oregon.

Benit began working at the University of Guam in 1973 after creating the books, "Chamorro Reference Grammar" and the "Chamorro-English Dictionary." Both books are crucial resources for teaching and revitalizing the Chamorro language. She was also an associate professor at the University of Guam's School of Education. She taught Chamorro and trained bilingual, bicultural teachers from the Guam Department of Education, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia. Benit initiated the Bilingual Bicultural Teacher Education Program and brought distance education to the University of Guam. She was the recipient of the University of Guam Faculty Award for Excellence in Service. Benit also served as a government representative for various international conferences on language. Most notably, Benit was the author of the Inifresi, or Guam Pledge, which is recited in many schools, public events, and meetings.

In addition to work at the University of Guam, Benit was also very active in the community. She hosted a television program on KGTF Public Television called *Fino' Chamorro*. Benit also served as a Girl Scout leader, Tamuning Youth Program summer camp director, was a member of the Tamuning Community Council, and was involved in her parish as a Confraternity of Christian Doctrine teacher and a member of various church ministries.

I am deeply saddened by the passing of Dr. Bernadita "Benit" Camacho-Dungca, and I join the people of Guam in celebrating her life, and recognizing and remembering her dedicated service to Guam. I thank her for sharing her knowledge and tirelessly passing down all she could for our future generations. I extend my condolences to her son, John and his family. My thoughts and prayers are with her family, loved ones and friends. She will be missed, and her memory and legacy will live on in the hearts of the people of Guam.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 83, I missed the vote as I was unavoidably detained due to traffic getting on to the Capitol Grounds.

Had I been present, I would have voted Yes.

HONORING WEST HERR AUTOMOTIVE GROUP FOR RECEIVING THE RETAIL AWARD FROM THE AMHERST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor West Herr Automotive Group for receiving the Retail Award from the Amherst Chamber of Commerce. West Herr's history of and dedication to good corporate citizenship as well as their continued success is worthy of recognition and praise.

West Herr Automotive Group, established in 1950, is the largest automotive group in New York State and the 24th largest in the nation. West Herr is a long-time contributor and supporter of many worthwhile organizations in Western New York, demonstrating their generosity and commitment to giving back to the community that supports them.

With 21 locations in Erie, Niagara, and Monroe Counties, West Herr has 23 franchises and over 1,900 employees. In 2015, the company sold more than 46,000 new and used vehicles. West Herr prides itself on dealing honestly and fairly with customers and employees, a philosophy shared throughout all levels of the organization. West Herr builds their reputation on excellence, customer satisfaction and an understanding of their roots. All owners live in Western New York and actively manage the 21 locations on a daily basis.

Their customer and employee satisfaction efforts have earned them countless awards. West Herr has received Business First of Buffalo "Best Place to Work in WNY" Award for eleven consecutive years and the Better Business Bureau's "Torch Award for Marketplace Ethics" six times. In 2012, the group was recognized nationally as one of the "Best Dealerships to Work For" through Automotive News. Additionally, the Buffalo News recognized West Herr as a Top Workplace in its inaugural year for the program.

I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating West Herr on receiving the Retail Award from the Amherst Chamber of Commerce. Their contributions to Western New York and commitment to quality service is commendable and I wish them continued success.

IN RECOGNITION OF DANA NESSEL

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dana Nessel, whose commitment to justice and equality has impacted the people of Michigan and citizens across the United States.

Dana is a graduate of the University of Michigan and Wayne State University Law School and spent more than a decade working as an assistant prosecuting attorney for Wayne County, serving much of her tenure in special assignment units. She specialized in domestic homicides, child physical and sexual abuse cases, and investigations into police shootings and in-custody deaths of civilians. She is currently managing partner at Nessel and Kessel in Detroit, where she specializes in criminal defense and family law.

In 2012, Dana championed the cause of marriage equality by initiating the case which challenged Michigan's ban on same-sex second party adoption, the case which would ultimately bring this important issue before the Supreme Court. The landmark decision of this case granted the dignity so many sought for so long: the right to commit to the person they love. Today, Dana continues to defend the rights of the LGBT community by pushing for protections against discrimination in state law across the country.

Dana is this year's recipient of the Honorable Kaye Tertzag Purple Sport Coat Award. Given to those, who, like Judge Tertzag, show devotion and service to our Michigan community, Dana exemplifies his well-known motto: "Be Prompt. Be Prepared. Be Polite."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor Dana Nessel for her service to Michigan and our nation and wish her many years of success.

HONORING LESLIE ZEMSKY FOR RECEIVING THE AMHERST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE WOMAN OF DISTINCTION AWARD

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Mrs. Leslie Zemsky as she receives the Amherst Chamber of Commerce's Woman of Distinction Award. An artist, community leader, and Director of Fun for Larkin Square, Leslie has played an instrumental role in revitalizing the Larkin District and the City of Buffalo.

As Larkin Square's Director of Fun, Leslie partners with her husband Howard Zemsky and Joe Petrella to lead the Larkin Development Group. The group has renovated a number of former warehouse buildings which were once part of the Larkin Soap Company.

Since 2002, the Larkin Development Group's renovations include more than 800,000 square feet of office space, more than a half mile of streetscape improvements

and a public gathering space for events called Larkin Square. Thanks to their creative vision, the Larkin District, now known fondly as Larkinville, has returned to its roots as a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood, home to offices, residences, restaurants, parks and public gathering spaces like Larkin Square.

Under Leslie's leadership Larkinville has become a destination. Nearly every day of the week, thousands gather in Larkin Square for events such as Food Truck Tuesdays, Live at Larkin Wednesdays and the Larkin Square Author Talks. The neighborhood continues to evolve and grow with the opening of Flying Bison Brewery and Hydraulic Hearth Restaurant & Brewery, run by Leslie's son Harry.

The rebirth of Larkinville has played a leading role in the rebirth of Buffalo. Larkinville has gained national attention, from the Congress for New Urbanism to earning praise from journalist Katie Couric during her recent visit to Buffalo.

My Buffalo District office is located in the Larkin at Exchange Building, and we've witnessed an incredible transformation due in no small part to Leslie. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating her for receiving the Woman of Distinction Award, expressing our deepest gratitude for her vision and efforts, and wishing her all the best in her future endeavors.

CALLING UPON THE SENATE TO FULFILL CONSTITUTIONAL DUTY TO VOTE ON JUSTICE SCALIA'S SUCCESSOR

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, ten days ago, on February 13, 2016, the nation was saddened to learn of the death of Justice Antonin Scalia, the senior Associate Justice of the Supreme Court.

Justice Scalia, who loved the Court, served it ably for nearly 30 years and was involved in some of the most consequential cases in history.

Mr. Speaker, I urge those who revered Justice Scalia, cherish his memory, and wish to do honor to the work of his life, to join me in calling upon the Senate, and every senator, to discharge their constitutional duty to advise and consent (or not consent) to the nomination that will be put forward by the President by holding an up or down vote.

Mr. Speaker, those who claim there is an 80 year precedent against confirming a Supreme Court nominee during an election year and that there is not sufficient time to fill the vacancy are incorrect.

The most recent instance where there was a vacancy on the Supreme Court in an election year occurred not 80 but 28 years ago, in 1988, during the administration of President Reagan.

That vacancy was filled on February 3, 1988 by the appointment of Justice Anthony Kennedy who was confirmed 97-0 by a Democrat-controlled Senate.

The Kennedy nomination is the controlling precedent, as Justice Scalia would recognize.

In fact, Justice Scalia would say to anyone claiming otherwise, "Leges posteriores priores contrarias abrogant," which is Latin for the canon of judicial interpretation that "the last expression of the people prevails."

There are 332 days left in President Obama's term, which is more than sufficient time for the President to nominate, and for the Senate to consider and vote to confirm or reject his nominee.

Since 1900, there have been 60 Supreme Court vacancies.

The average time taken to fill these 60 vacancies is 73 days, which is less than 25% of the time remaining in the President's term.

The average time to fill each of the 13 vacancies since 1975 is a mere 67 days.

And of the current members of the Supreme Court, the average time is 74 days, the longest being the 99 days taken to confirm the controversial nomination of Justice Clarence Thomas in October 1991.

Mr. Speaker, as is often noted, elections have consequences.

They also impose responsibilities and duties.

And one of the most important duties imposed by the Constitution on the President is to nominate persons to fill vacancies on the Supreme Court and for the Senate to consider those nominations with dispatch.

The Supreme Court is the nation's highest court and its essential and indispensable role in our constitutional system is to provide definitive interpretations of American law and the Constitution.

Its decisions are the law of the land binding in every state and territory.

It is the only judicial tribunal capable of providing the legal clarity and certainty required for the legal system to function and give meaning to the rule of law.

President Obama has announced that he intends to fulfill the responsibility devolved upon him by the Constitution and will submit to the Senate a nominee to fill the large shoes left by the late Justice Antonin Scalia.

The Senate should fulfill its constitutional duty to advise and consent, or withhold its consent, by casting an up or down vote on that nomination.

That is the way to pay fitting tribute to Justice Scalia, to honor the Constitution, and to keep faith with the American people.

HONORING PEGULA SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT FOR RECEIVING THE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARD FROM THE AMHERST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Pegula Sports and Entertainment for receiving the Business of the Year Award from the Amherst Chamber of Commerce. Created in 2014, Pegula Sports and Entertainment is a management company streamlining the Pegula family's business endeavors across sports and entertainment, including the Buffalo

Bills, Buffalo Sabres, Buffalo Bandits, Rochester Americans, HARBORCENTER, and Black River Entertainment.

On February 22, 2011, a new era in Buffalo sports history began when Terry and Kim Pegula purchased the Buffalo Sabres and Buffalo Bandits. That summer, the Pegulas acquired the Rochester Americans, and resuming the team's long time relationship with the Sabres as their American Hockey League affiliate.

In 2012, the Pegulas purchased the 1.7 acre Webster Block across from First Niagara Center, which became the HARBORCENTER complex. HARBORCENTER features two NHL-size rinks, the Academy of Hockey, (716) Food and Sport, IMPACT Sports Performance, a destination Tim Hortons Cafe & Bake Shop, 750-space parking ramp, and full-service Marriott Hotel.

The Pegulas' dedication extends beyond reinvigorating the Sabres and their arena. On Friday, October 10, 2014, Terry and Kim became owners of the Buffalo Bills, after the passing of Ralph Wilson, Jr. The Pegulas are only the second owners of the beloved 55-year old National Football League organization.

To show their commitment to our region, on Sunday, October 12th, 2014, coinciding with the Pegula's first game as owners of the Bills, Pegula Sports and Entertainment officially launched the "One Buffalo" campaign. The "One Buffalo" campaign provides an association and link between the Bills, Sabres, the Pegulas, and the City of Buffalo. The campaign is a celebration of the future of sport in Western New York and the family who has invested so much into the city, and seeks to bring the community together as a representation of teamwork and a deeper connection between Buffalo sports teams and their fans.

I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating Terry and Kim Pegula as they receive the Business of the Year Award. I am deeply grateful for their incredible investment and belief in Western New York, and I wish them all the best in their future endeavors, and many championships for the Bills and Sabres under their leadership.

TRIBUTE TO MR. LEWIS "LEW" BELCHER

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, our lives have been touched by the leadership and service of Mr. Lewis "Lew" Belcher, Jr.; and

Whereas, Mr. Lewis "Lew" Belcher served our nation with honor and valor in the United States Air Force. He demonstrated unquestionable leadership and courage as an Airman devoted in protecting our nation; and

Whereas, Mr. Belcher served and led our district in Rockdale County as a steadfast pillar of our community by being ever so watchful of issues that would hinder constituents. He was a community advocate on the front line of

fighting for equality and justice. He was the voice for the voiceless and the pulse of the grassroots machine in Rockdale County; and

Whereas, Mr. Belcher advised many elected and appointed officials on issues concerning the public, he also promoted supporting local small businesses; and

Whereas, he never asked for fame or fortune, nor found a job too small or too big; he gave of himself, his time, his talent and his life to uplift those in need by demonstrating unwavering commitment to protecting and serving the citizens of Rockdale County; and

Whereas, he was a husband, a father, a grandfather, a great grandfather and a friend; he was also a man of great integrity who remained true to the uplifting and service of my district; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia recognizes Mr. Lewis "Lew" Belcher, Jr., as a citizen of great worth and so noted distinction; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., do hereby attest to the 114th Congress that Mr. Lewis "Lew" Belcher, Jr., is deemed worthy and deserving of this "Congressional Honor" by declaring Mr. Lewis "Lew" Belcher, Jr. U.S. Citizen of Distinction in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 18th day of January, 2016.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF PEDRO PALOMO ADA, JR.

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of the late Pedro Palomo Ada, Jr. Pedro was a son of Guam, icon in our business community, and philanthropist. He was born on July 7, 1930 and passed away on February 12, 2016 at the age of 85. Pedro was the Chairman of Ada's Trust & Investment, Inc., a real estate and investment holdings company.

Pedro followed in the footsteps of his parents Maria Palomo Ada and Pedro Martinez Ada who were also successful business people and generous philanthropists in the local community. Pedro began his business career at a young age while attending school at Saint Thomas Military Academy in Saint Paul, Minnesota. He would find shoes and other items at great bargains and send them home to Guam to be sold at his parents' retail business. He graduated from St. Thomas College in Saint Paul, Minnesota in 1953 with a degree in Business Administration.

After finishing college, Pedro served as one of the first Chamorro commissioned officers in the United States Air Force. He later returned to Guam to help with the family business. He was able to improve and expand Ada's Market into a household name and then into a real estate holding company, and soon became a real estate visionary who was responsible for many changes and improvements in Guam's capitol city of Hagåtña. Pedro created opportunities in the private sector and expanded the potential for residential and commercial real estate developments during times of emerging

economic markets in the island. Pedro was inducted into the Guam Chamber of Commerce's Guam Business Hall of Fame in 2003.

Pedro led a long life with both business and community involvement. He served as a member and board chairman of the University of Guam Board of Regents in the 1970s and 1980s. He was also instrumental in establishing the University of Guam's Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC). Pedro was an active member of the Air Force's Civilian Advisory Council, and supported groups such as the Guam Boy Scouts and KGTF Public Television. Additionally, he served on numerous boards including the Guam Blue Ribbon Education Committee, the Guam Memorial Hospital, the Guam Retirement Fund and the Guam Visitors Bureau.

Pedro dedicated his life to improving our island and community. He was an active member and supporter of the Saint Anthony-Saint Victor Parish of Tamuning, Guam and a dedicated family man. I am deeply saddened by the passing of Pedro and I join the people of Guam in celebrating his life and remembering his contributions to our island community. My thoughts and prayers are with his family, loved ones and friends. I extend my condolences to his wife of 57 years, Fe; his children Maria A. Bonnie, Pedro "Sonny" and Jennifer Ada, Dr. Frances A. and Jaime Purviance, Patricia P. Ada, Therese and David John, and Carla P. Ada; and his eleven grandchildren. He will be missed, and his memory will live on in the hearts of the people of Guam.

HONORING AMHERST YOUTH
HOCKEY FOR RECEIVING THE
COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD
FROM THE AMHERST CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Amherst Youth Hockey for receiving the Community Service Award from Amherst Chamber of Commerce.

The Amherst Youth Hockey Association was established in 1964, when the Audubon rink was first built. The cost to participate when established was \$5.00 to register and 25 cents every time one went on the ice.

Those who worked to first develop the program were William E. Russell, Barney March, Bob Westphal, Bud Aschbacher, Frank Sykes, Gary Mitchell, Don Satchell, Harvey Rogers, H. Jarvis (Jerry) Turner, Bob Sacha, Jim Wurzer, Danny Guynn, Skip Harrington, John Brownschidle, Thomas Burke, Charles Kramer, Richard Johnston, Drury Williford, Ray Cotter, H. Hamilton, W. Leahy, Leo Lynett, Phil Boudreau, Frank Mathewson, R. Weisenborn, Robert Carver and many more.

During its second year of existence, the organization had the opportunity to host the New York State Pee wee Championship during March of 1965. Familiar players in that tournament include Kevin McGuire, Chuck Sykes, Terry Brownschidle, Terry Sykes, Bill Bush, Mark Aschbacher, Pete Hunt, Sean

McCossan, Ed McGuire, Keith Metzger, Brian Cavanaugh, Gary Hill, Ray Weil, Bill Graf, Mike Hanretty, David Smith, Mike Caruana and Jay Hill.

Presently, the Amherst Youth Hockey now operates out of the Northtown Recreation Center. It is a youth hockey organization for boys and girls ages 4 through 18, offering house programs, travel programs, and a spring session.

The Amherst Youth Hockey Association is committed to giving back to the community and providing a tremendous experience for all members. Dedicated to enriching the community's youth through sport, the association provides children with the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of hockey, find enjoyment in the sport, and become young athletes.

I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating Amherst Youth Hockey on receiving the Community Service Award and recognizing their continuous dedication and contributions to Western New York.

IN HONOR OF REVEREND
MICHELLE THOMAS AND HER
WORK ON THE LOUDOUN FREE-
DOM CENTER

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, today, February 24, 2016, a very special ceremony took place at which the brave Foot Soldiers who participated in the civil rights marches from Selma to Montgomery half a century ago were honored with the Congressional Gold Medal. Among the witnesses to this ceremony were a group of my constituents from the Lansdowne community of Loudoun County who are taking affirmative steps to build a new church and multi-purpose community center on 4.4 acres of land that includes an unmarked cemetery in which more than 40 slaves who lived and worked on the former Belmont Plantation are buried.

To honor those slaves, Reverend Michelle Thomas, senior pastor at Holy and Whole Life Changing Ministries International, has joined with other Loudoun County residents to form The Loudoun Freedom Center, a non-profit that will use science and technology to explore the cultural history of Loudoun, including African-American slaves who helped build plantations in the area.

Among the projects planned for The Loudoun Freedom Center are: A visitors' center that will tell the story of the African-American communities of Loudoun County; Belmont and Coton (Lansdowne) African burial grounds that will preserve, protect and restore the sacred burial grounds on the former Belmont and Coton plantations; a Loudoun-specific genome project; a virtual DNA extraction laboratory; a research library and genealogy hub; and the Loudoun Freedom Chapel, a place to reflect and meditate.

Just as it was divine inspiration that caused so many faithful Americans of different races and backgrounds to join together in unity and in hope at the Edmund Pettus Bridge last

year, so too, it is divine inspiration for this diverse group of citizens in Loudoun County to join together in unity and in hope on the site of an unmarked slave cemetery on Belmont Ridge Road.

Reverend Thomas has said of the ambitious project that it is a crusade to reclaim the property under a banner of unity. "No matter what your race, your color, your creed . . . we all want the same things. We all want to be honored. We all want to have hope for the future."

I pray that they will be successful in their endeavors and that they will inspire the residents of Loudoun County and my Congressional District for years to come.

H.R. 3442 AND H.R. 2017

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be in Washington, D.C. on the afternoon on February 11th and on February 12th because I was attending a memorial service and I missed votes in the House. If I had been present, I would have opposed final passage of H.R. 3442, the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act, and H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act.

The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act may sound like a common-sense bill, but it is a misguided effort that creates duplicative burdens and reporting requirements on the executive branch. The bill would require the Secretary of the Treasury to appear before Congress when the country nears the statutory debt limit and provide a written report on the Treasury's debt-reduction proposals. The Administration, however, already provides Congress with an outline of its debt-reduction proposals in the President's annual budget. The President presented his final budget—which includes numerous debt-reduction proposals—to Congress just two days ago, but House leaders denied the opportunity for the director of the Office of Management and Budget to testify about these proposals. Instead, we are considering a bill that would create more requirements for the Administration by making them duplicate efforts they already undertake. For those reasons, I would have voted against H.R. 3442.

I would have also opposed H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act. This bill would have allowed certain restaurants and food retailers to limit the nutritional information they provide to consumers. The nutrition disclosure requirements this bill seeks to roll back became law as part of the Affordable Care Act. Preparing to comply with those requirements has been a substantial undertaking for many retailers, but Congress has already delayed implementation of this rule as part of the FY2016 omnibus and given retailers an additional year before the rule would go into effect. Making nutrition information available empowers consumers to make healthy and nutritious choices, and this bill would have further undermined that effort. For that reason, I would have voted against H.R. 2017.

HONORING 360 PSG, INC. FOR RECEIVING THE TECHNOLOGY AWARD FROM THE AMHERST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and honor 360 PSG, Inc. for receiving the Technology Award from the Amherst Chamber of Commerce.

Founded in 2005 by 360 PSG partners Joel Colombo, Matthew Whelan, and Ben Shepard after their previous employer closed its doors. With no capital and grueling 20 hour work days, by the end of the first year they had built three websites to start the company.

360 PSG hired its first employees in 2006. Over the next two years, the company continued to hire, launched over 150 new websites, and developed automated tools and platforms to help small business owners take full advantage of internet marketing. In the following two years another 300 websites. By 2011 the staff had grown to almost 20 full-time members.

The company focuses its business on two flagship products that have been programmed and developed in-house, Fission CMS and 360 CMS. With over \$2.5 million dollars of operating capital invested, these innovative products provide website management tools with modern design elements to support the small business community across the country.

Having come a long way from their humble beginnings, 360 PSG, Inc. serves over 1,000 customers from nearly every state and Canada. Their solid core values and a dedication to treating clients like partners allows them to develop strong, lasting relationships with high retention, remain profitable every year in business, and continue regional employment growth. 360 PSG's internal divisions now include all aspects of digital and internet marketing.

Employing 30 full time team members specialized in their respective fields of web design, software engineering, social media advertising, search optimization and marketing, and service/support departments, 360 PSG continues to evolve as a single-stop hub of services supporting our region by bringing in national revenue, creating full-time technology jobs.

I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating 360 PSG, Inc. on receiving the Technology Award from the Amherst Chamber of Commerce, and wish them the best as they continue to provide innovative services to small businesses and contribute to Western New York's revitalization.

CONGRATULATING 100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF ROSECRANCE HEALTH NETWORK

HON. ADAM KINZINGER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the Rosecrance

Health Network as they celebrate 100 years of serving children, adolescents, adults, and families in Northern Illinois and beyond.

In 1916, Dr. James Rosecrance kept the memory of his late wife, Franny, alive by creating the Rosecrance Memorial Home for Children at the couple's homestead in New Milford, Illinois. Incorporated by the state of Illinois as a home for children on August 11, 1916, the staff continued to care for needy children from New Milford and surrounding communities before expanding and relocating to Rockford, Illinois, in 1953.

Continually adapting to the changing needs of the community, in 1982, Rosecrance transformed into an innovative and groundbreaking chemical dependency treatment center for teens struggling with drug and alcohol addiction and abuse. In 1992, this mission expanded even further as Rosecrance began treating adults with substance abuse disorders. Today, their Harrison Campus in Rockford offers a number of substance abuse services including outpatient programs and maintains specialized units for young adults, veterans, firefighters, and paramedics.

In 2011, Rosecrance merged with the Janet Wattles Center, a leading mental health service provider, to truly integrate substance abuse and mental health services and better serve patients at their many locations throughout Illinois and Wisconsin. Today, Rosecrance operates more than 40 locations and serves more than 22,000 people annually.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Sixteenth Congressional District, I would like to sincerely thank the hardworking men and women who have dedicated themselves to providing quality substance abuse and mental health care services. Without question, our communities and families are healthier and stronger thanks to the service and care provided by Rosecrance throughout their 100 year history.

HONORING LIEUTENANT COLONEL MARVIN R. "BUD" KILTON

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Lieutenant Colonel Marvin R. "Bud" Kilton and his service to our nation in the United States Air Force. He passed away on February 9, 2016 at the age of 90.

Born in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, Lt. Col. Kilton joined the Air Force in 1943 and trained to become a B24 and B25 pilot in the final years of World War II. At the conclusion of the war, he became an active reservist and earned a Bachelor's of Science and a Master's Degree at the University of Wisconsin. Lt. Col. Kilton rejoined active service from 1950 to 1970 where he served at Air Force Bases across the Western Hemisphere in Biloxi, Mississippi; Goose Bay, Labrador, Canada; and Bogotá, Colombia. Throughout his twenty-six year military career, he accrued over 2000 total hours of flight time as a pilot and also headed the ROTC program at The Ohio State University for three years. He was Honorably Discharged with a total of six medals and

commendations, including the Air Force Commendation Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, the National Defense Service Medal with one Bronze Service Star, the Air Force Reserves Medal, the Air Force Longevity Service Award with four Oak Leaf Clusters, the Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon, and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

After his service, Lt. Col. Kilton remained active in his community as the Director of Education for the Credit Union National Association and worked as a tax preparer in Madison, Wisconsin and Orange County, California. He was married for 64 years to the late Carol M. Hansen and is survived by his two daughters, Megan Minarik and Stacey (Kilton) Winker, and his two grandchildren, Kelsey Lee Minarik and Ryan Andrew Minarik.

I thank Lt. Col. Kilton for his courage and dedication to the United States and my thoughts are with his family in this difficult time.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, February 25, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 1

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States European Command.

SD-G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine the multi-employer pension plan system, focusing on recent reforms and current challenges.

SD-215

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine the state of the farm economy.

SD-116

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for

fiscal year 2017 for the Transportation Security Administration.

SD-138

Committee on Foreign Relations

Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development.

SD-419

3 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Senate Sergeant at Arms and the Capitol Police.

SD-192

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Airland

To receive a closed briefing on the Air Force Long Range Strike-Bomber.

SVC-217

MARCH 2

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine S. 2446, to amend subtitle D of the Solid Waste Disposal Act to encourage recovery and beneficial use of coal combustion residuals and establish requirements for the proper management and disposal of coal combustion residuals that are protective of human health and the environment, S. 1479, to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to modify provisions relating to grants, and an original bill entitled, "Good Samaritan Cleanup of Orphan Mines Act of 2016".

SD-406

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission.

SR-253

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Patrick Pizzella, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, and Julie Helene Becker, Steven Nathan Berk, and Elizabeth Carroll Wingo, each to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine EB-5 targeted employment areas.

SD-226

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

SD-G50

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Navy and Marine Corps.

SD-192

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation.

SD-138

Joint Economic Committee

To hold hearings to examine the Economic Report of the President.

SH-216

MARCH 3

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Health and Human Services.

SD-138

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment

To hold hearings to examine regulatory reforms to improve equity market structure.

SD-538

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 2555, to provide opportunities for broadband investment, the nomination of Thomas F. Scott Darling, III, of Massachusetts, to be Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, and routine lists in the Coast Guard.

SR-253

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fis-

cal year 2017 for the Department of Energy.

SD-366

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the dogs of the Department of Homeland Security, focusing on how canine programs contribute to homeland security.

SD-342

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold hearings to examine the impacts of Federal fisheries management on small businesses.

SR-428A

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations.

CHOB-345

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Commerce.

SD-192

MARCH 8

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Forest Service.

SD-366

MARCH 9

2 p.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the enforcement of the antitrust laws.

SD-226

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for Indian Country.

SD-628

MARCH 16

10 a.m.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations.

SD-G50

SENATE—Thursday, February 25, 2016

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, You have withheld nothing we need. Today, meet the needs of our lawmakers. Give them so much more than they expect or deserve that they will sing praises for Your goodness. In these days of unprecedented challenges and opportunities, empower them with faith, courage, and good will to make the world a better place. Lord, use them as Your servants to bring healing to our Nation and world.

Today we also pray for the ill, the bereaved, the infirmed, the discouraged, and the lonely. Keep them as the apple of Your eye; hide them in the shadow of Your wings.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

PROTECTING FAMILIES AFFECTED BY SUBSTANCE ABUSE ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, by now, many know the numbers. Overdose deaths in Kentucky were responsible for more than 1,000 deaths in 2014 alone. This is a devastatingly high number, among the highest rates in the Nation, but it is even more heart-breaking when you consider the real-world toll substance abuse can take on friends and family members, not to mention their children.

The trickle-down effects of opioid and heroin abuse are palpable and widespread, lasting and cyclical, but there are steps we can take today to help families impacted by drug abuse and keep more families from ever going through it to begin with. That is why I am proud to join my colleague, the senior Senator from Iowa, in introducing

the Protecting Families Affected by Substance Abuse Act, which would reauthorize grants to help children in foster care or at risk of being placed there because of their parents' drug habits. This is what one Kentucky group said about their experience with these grants:

The Regional Partnership Grants have been integral to the implementation of Kentucky-START, which has helped more than 800 Kentucky families and more than 1,600 Kentucky children. It's programs like these, which focus on better outcomes for children and safely reuniting families, that are helping combat the negative effects of the opioid, heroin, and other drug epidemics facing the Commonwealth.

I am also proud of the work that is being done in the Commonwealth to address the opioid crisis, particularly in rural communities. For instance, the Appalachia High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas Program, HIDTA, was recently recognized by Director Botticelli and the Office of National Drug Control Policy as the top program of its type for 2015. I recognize all they have done in the fight against drug trafficking and illegal drug use. I have no doubt that without their efforts and those of the other leaders in the Commonwealth, the toll of the epidemic would be much greater than it already is.

So whether it is working to support the local HDTAs or working together with the senior Senator from Iowa and me to pass our legislation to reauthorize grants for local communities, there are many opportunities for Senators to help ensure we respond to the drug epidemic wreaking havoc on our communities at home. For example, there are a number of other important pieces of related legislation in the Senate.

This week Senators discussed one of these bills in the Finance Committee. It would allow Medicare Advantage and Part D plans to implement a prescription drug abuse prevention tool similar to what is already available and used in Kentucky in the Medicaid Program and in private plans. I was proud to join the junior Senator from Pennsylvania as a cosponsor of that bill as well.

Of course, there is the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA. The junior Senators from Ohio and New Hampshire have been leading the charge on that effort, and I thank the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, and the chairman of the HELP Committee, Senator ALEXANDER, for working together to have the bill reported out of Judiciary, and it came out of the Judiciary Committee on a voice vote.

In the coming days we will be working to move that important bipartisan bill forward. It has garnered a great deal of support from both sides of the aisle because of its provisions to expand prevention and educational efforts, strengthen prescription drug-monitoring programs, improve treatment programs, and give law enforcement officials more of the tools it needs to address this awful epidemic.

With bipartisan support, we can pass legislation such as CARA and the others I have discussed today in order to promote healthier families and a healthier country.

CONFIRMATION OF ROBERT CALIFF

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, in the meantime, we took a step forward yesterday by confirming the new FDA Commissioner, Dr. Robert Califf. In a recent meeting with Dr. Califf, I expressed my concerns regarding the epidemic at hand and the need for more action by the FDA.

I was encouraged by Dr. Califf's recognition that the opioid epidemic is a serious problem and the FDA must do a better job of addressing it. Dr. Califf received broad bipartisan support yesterday in the Senate, and we look forward to working with him. I will continue to hold him accountable to lead the FDA in a new direction to help prevent dependence and abuse of prescription opioids.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

OPIOID ADDICTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I join the Republican leader on the need to address the scourge of opioid addiction. It is a scourge. That is why it is more important than ever that we back our words with real solutions, real resources.

That is why the amendment by Senator SHAHEEN to the opioid bill will be important. I hope it gets every consideration, and I hope it passes.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I start with a statement the Republican leader made on the Senate floor in 2007: "I will never agree to retreat from our responsibility to confirm qualified judicial nominees."

I wish to repeat: "I will never agree to retreat from our responsibility to confirm qualified judicial nominees."

My Republican counterpart said that. They are his own words.

Fast forward 9 years to today, now. Not only is the senior Senator from Kentucky abandoning his responsibility to confirm a Supreme Court Justice, he is leading the entire Republican caucus to retreat from their constitutional obligation. This is unfortunate because the Republican leader was right 9 years ago. As Senators, we have a responsibility to uphold a number of things, but one certainly is the Constitution. That responsibility is clearly outlined in the oath we take before we are sworn into office—right there. Every one of them has done it. What are we asked to confirm, to swear to? We swear to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States." We swear to "bear true faith and allegiance to the same." We swear to "faithfully discharge the duties of office." I wish to repeat that. We swear to "faithfully discharge the duties of office."

One cannot see how Republicans can claim to uphold this oath as they block the President from appointing a new Supreme Court Justice. Senate Republicans are making pledges of a different sort these days. They have vowed to not hold hearings—even though denying a hearings is unprecedented in history. They have sworn not to meet with the President—I am sorry, with his nominee and maybe even him. He has been waiting for word from the chairman of the Judiciary Committee and the Republican leader to find out if they are willing to come and meet with him in the White House. That has been going on for several days now. They have sworn not to meet with the President's Supreme Court nominee, even though they don't know who that person might be. By refusing to hold confirmation hearings for President Obama's Supreme Court nominee or to hold a vote, they undermine the Presidency, the Constitution, and the Senate.

Senate Republicans are known—and have been for some time now—as a set of human brake pads, obstructing, filibustering virtually everything President Obama has had on his agenda, but this raises obstruction to a new level never seen before in this country—the Supreme Court: no hearings, no vote, and yesterday even more. They even refuse to meet with this man or woman who is going to be nominated—no meetings, no meetings with the nominee to the Supreme Court, a person put forth by the President of the United States because the Constitution states he shall nominate. He has no discretion, he shall nominate.

By refusing to even sit or talk with any nominee, they make a mockery of the office to which the American people elected them.

Think about this. Republicans will not do their due diligence by speaking with a nominee to assess his or her qualifications. Meeting with the nominee is basic. Holding a hearing is routine. These things are common sense, so why won't Republican Senators make an effort to uphold their constitutional responsibilities?

U.S. Senators have an obligation to evaluate the Presidential nominations, not only for the Supreme Court but for every nomination that comes forward—but especially the Supreme Court. That means sitting down with the nominee. That means holding hearings to learn about their record and qualifications for the position, and that means a vote.

The senior Senator from Texas said the same about 7 years ago. After Justice Sonia Sotomayor was nominated, the assistant Republican leader told C-SPAN that "my own view is that we ought to come with an open mind and do the research and do the reading . . . and then be able to ask the nominee about them."

What he said, the senior Senator from Texas, is that his view is that we ought to come with an open mind, do the research, do the reading, and then be able to ask the nominee about them. I agree. The Senate should be able to research the background of the President's Supreme Court nominee and ask any questions they may have about them. Why—why—for the first time in history, do we have this situation? Why do Republicans—the Republican Senator from Texas, whom I just quoted, and all Republicans—refuse to even meet with a nominee?

I say to my Republican friends, you cannot offer advice and consent on a nominee you have never met, never considered. It is impossible. Maybe Republicans are hoping the Supreme Court vacancy will just go away, but it will not. Maybe Senate Republicans think they will only endure a few weeks of negative stories—and there have been negative stories, of course. There are no positive stories that I am aware of saying: That is great. For the first time in history you are not even willing to meet with a nominee. I guess they believe the American people will forget about this vacancy, but they will not.

Democrats are going to fight every day to ensure that this important nominee gets a dignified confirmation process that past Senates have afforded all Supreme Court nominations. I, along with every other Member of the Democratic caucus, will be on the floor next week, the week after that, and the week after that, as long as it takes, to bring to the attention of America the failure of this Republican Senate to meet its constitutional mandate.

Pretending the nominee doesn't exist will not make the Supreme Court vacancy go away. It will not make the President's nomination vanish. Rather,

it leaves the American people with a Senate full of Republicans who, as the Republican leader said, are "retreating from their responsibilities." That is what the Republican leader said. Their obstruction of the President's Supreme Court nominee is abdication of the oath my Republican colleagues took when they assumed the title of U.S. Senator.

Once again I tell my Republican friends: Don't run away from your responsibilities, just do your job. Do your job.

Mr. President, will the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES RULE AND FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise for the purpose of showing how one bureaucracy, the Corps of Engineers—and to some extent the EPA working with them—has already made farming very difficult and how, if the waters of the United States rule goes into effect, it can be much worse than even what I am going to be referring to.

Now, I am going to quote word for word a farmer's problem from the Iowa Farm Bureau's Spokesman dated January 27, 2016, and then I am going to make some comments on it.

For that reason, since I am told the next speaker is not going to come until 10:15, I ask unanimous consent to continue until that time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, before I start quoting, this is a story about a California farmer by the name of John Duarte, of Tehama County, CA. The title is "One farmer's ordeal may signal agencies' actions under WOTUS."

All John Duarte did was hire a guy to plow some grazing land so that he could raise wheat on 450 acres that his family had purchased in California's Tehama County, north of Sacramento. The land had been planted to wheat in the past. The wheat market was favorable and the farmer made sure to avoid some wet spots in the field, called vernal pools, which are considered wetlands.

But that plowing, which disturbed only the top few inches of soil, unleashed a firestorm from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other regulators against the California Farm Bureau member. The regulators' actions

stopped Duarte from raising wheat, tried to force him to pay millions of dollars to restore the wetlands in perpetuity—although there was no evidence of damage—and sparked lawsuits and counter-lawsuits.

Duarte's experience could well turn out to be an example of how the agencies will treat farmers in Iowa and all over the country under the expansive Waters of the United States rule, according to Duarte, his attorneys and experts at the American Farm Bureau Federation.

"This really shows how these agency actions can play out on a specific family farm," Duarte said recently during a press conference at the American Farm Bureau Federation annual convention in Orlando. "We aren't concerned about it because John Duarte is having a bad time with the feds. We are concerned because this is a very serious threat to farming as we know it in America."

Although the EPA and other agencies continue to say to farmers that the WOTUS rule will not affect normal farming practices, such as plowing, Duarte's case shows that it will, said Tony Francois, an attorney with the Pacific Legal Foundation, which is representing Duarte.

"Anyone who is being told not to worry about the new WOTUS rule, they should be thinking about this case," Francois said. "The very thing they are telling you not to worry about is what they are suing Duarte over—just plowing."

Don Parish, [American Farm Bureau Federation] senior director of regulatory relations, said a big problem is the wide parameters that the agencies have placed in the WOTUS rule. He noted the rule is filled with vague language like adjacent waters and tributaries, which are difficult to clarify.

As broad as possible. "They want the Waters of the United States to be as broad as they can get it so it can be applied to every farm in the country," Parish said.

Iowa Farm Bureau Federation and other organizations have worked hard to stop the WOTUS rule, which was imposed last year but has been temporarily suspended by court rulings. The rule was designed to revise the definition of what is considered a "water of the United States" and is subject to Federal regulations under the Clean Water Act.

But instead of adding clarity, IFBF and others contend the rule has only added ambiguity, leaving farmers, like Duarte, facing the potential of delays, red tape and steep fines as they complete normal farm operations, such as fertilizing, applying crop protection chemicals or moving dirt to build conservation structures.

Another problem, Duarte said, is that the agencies are piling the WOTUS law with other laws, such as the Endangered Species Act, to dictate how farmers use their own land or to keep them from farming it at all.

"They aren't just trying to micromanage farmers. They're trying to stop farmers," Duarte said. "They're trying to turn our farmland into habitat preservation. They are simply trying to chase us off of our land."

Duarte, who operates a successful nursery that raises grapevines and rootstock for nut trees, was first contacted by the Corps of Engineers in late 2012. In early 2013, the Corps sent a cease-and-desist letter to Duarte, ordering suspension of farming operations based on alleged violations of the CWA.

The Corps did not notify the farmer of the allegations prior to issuing the letter or provide Duarte any opportunity to comment on the allegations.

The agency, Duarte said, wrongly accused him of deep ripping the soil and destroying

the wetlands in the field. However, he had only had the field chisel plowed and was careful to avoid the depressions or vernal pools.

It's also important to note, Duarte said, that plowing is specifically allowed under the CWA. Congress specially added that provision to keep farmers from having to go through an onerous permitting process for doing fieldwork, he said.

Deciding to Fight.

That is a headline.

Instead of capitulating to the Corps, Duarte decided to fight the case in court.

His lawsuit was met by a countersuit from the U.S. Justice Department, seeking millions of dollars in penalties. The case is expected to go to trial in March.

Meaning March right around the corner.

The case, Duarte said, has raised some absurd charges by the agencies. At one point, the government experts claimed that the bottom of the plowed furrows were still wetlands, but the ridges of the furrow had been converted to upland, he said.

In another, an agency official claimed that Duarte had no right to work the land because it had not been continuously planted to wheat.

However, he said, the previous owner had stopped planting wheat because the prices were low.

"They said it was only exempt if it was part of an ongoing operation," Duarte said. "There is no law that says farmers have to keep growing crop if there is a glut and prices are in the tank. But by the Corps thinking, if you don't plant wheat when it is unprofitable, you lose your right to ever grow it again."

Duarte also noted that when federal inspectors came out to his farm, they used a backhoe to dig deep pits in the wetlands. "If you do that, you can break through the impervious layer and damage the wetland, but it does not seem to be a problem if you are a government regulator."

To date, his family has spent some \$900,000 in legal fees.

Let me say something parenthetically here. If we had to spend \$900,000 in legal fees, the Grassleys might as well get out of farming. Now I want to go back to quoting, so I am going to start that paragraph over.

To date, his family has spent some \$900,000 in legal fees. That is separate from the work by the Pacific Legal Foundation, which represents the clients it takes for free and is supported by foundations.

It would have been easier, and cheaper, to comply with the wishes of federal agencies and given up use of the land. Many California farmers who found themselves in a similar situation have done just that, Duarte said.

Another two-word headline:

Banding together.

However, it's important to stand and fight the agencies' attempt to bend the CWA, Endangered Species Act and other laws to take control of private lands. And it's important for farmers to band together with Farm Bureau and other groups that oppose the WOTUS rule.

"We are not against the Clean Water Act or the Endangered Species Act as they were intended," Duarte said. "But this is not how those acts are supposed to be enforced. We are getting entangled in regulation, and the noose seems to be tighter every year."

I said that I would comment after I read that. For people who may be just listening, I just read an article that ran on the front page of the Iowa Farm Bureau Spokesman. The problems illustrated by this article are all occurring under current law with regard to farmers wanting to make a living by planting wheat in their fields. In the case of Mr. Duarte, government regulations from the EPA and the Corps of Engineers are making his life miserable with the threats of millions of dollars of fines.

As the article stated, regulators at one point tried to claim that "the bottom of the plowed furrows were still wetlands, but the ridges of the furrow had been converted to upland." That is ridiculous. The EPA is out of control.

You might remember the fugitive dust rule of a few years ago. I don't think now they are trying to push it, but the EPA was going to rule that you had—when you are a farming operation, you have to keep the dust within your property lines. So I tried to explain to the EPA Director: Do you know that only God determines when the wind blows? When you are a farmer and your soybeans are at 13 percent moisture, you have about 2 or 3 days to save the whole crop and get it harvested.

The farmer does not control the wind. The farmer does not control when the beans are dry, ready for harvest. When you combine soybeans, you have dust. There is no way you can keep that dust within your boundaries. But as Washington is an island surrounded by reality, you can see the fugitive dust rule does not meet a commonsense test, and you can see that what they are trying to do to Duarte does not reach a commonsense test.

Again, referring to the newspaper article I just read, if the EPA and the Corps of Engineers are going around to farmers' fields making determinations about wetlands based on tillage practices under current law, imagine what they might do if this new waters of the United States rule goes into effect—now being held up by the courts.

Just think how you would feel if your family farm had survived for decades, overcoming droughts, overcoming flooding, overcoming price declines—and you can name 10 other things that a farmer has no control over—and then you have to put up with this nonsense. However, one day a government regulator could show up at your farm and hit you with excessive fines, and the next thing you know, your family farm is being auctioned off. That may sound absurd, but that is the reality of threats posed by the EPA. Mr. Duarte's case is the proof.

We have no shortage of assurances from the EPA Administrator that the plain language in the WOTUS rule will not be interpreted in a way that interferes with farmers. It is hard to take

some assurances seriously when they are interpreting current law in such an aggressive way.

We have to stop the WOTUS rule so the bureaucrats don't become even more powerful. The WOTUS rule is too vague and allows way too much room for regulators to make their own interpretations about jurisdiction. So we should all continue to fight against the WOTUS rule and all other actions the EPA is taking that are ridiculous actions against farmers.

We have checks and balances in government. The Congress tried three times to stop the WOTUS rule. Senator BARRASSO tried to pass legislation taking away the authority or modifying the authority. That got about 57 votes but not 60 votes, so that could not move forward. The junior Senator from Iowa, my friend Senator ERNST, got a congressional veto through, a resolution of disapproval, with 52 votes. It went to the President. He vetoed it. So we did not override it that way. Then, of course, we tried an amendment on the appropriations bill, but we could not get that into the appropriations bill before Christmas. So we have tried three things. But thank God the courts have held up WOTUS through the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. So temporarily, at least, waters of the United States can't move ahead.

This brings back something that is very current right now: Why should we be concerned about who the next person on the Supreme Court is going to be? Because we have a President who said: I have a pen and a phone, and if Congress won't act, I will.

This sort of executive action by the EPA and the Corps of Engineers is kind of an example of the WOTUS rules, kind of an example of what we get out of this President. The President packed the DC Circuit Court of Appeals, which reviews these regulations, so they are going to have a friendly judge who says that whatever these bureaucrats do that may even be illegal or unconstitutional, they can get away with it.

Then, if that goes to the Supreme Court—we had an example just recently, about 1 week or so before Scalia died—a 5-to-4 ruling holding up some other ridiculous EPA rules.

Everybody wonders why everyone around here is saying they are concerned about who is going to be on the Supreme Court. It's because of these 5-to-4 decisions. We're concerned about the role of the Supreme Court in our constitutional system. The American people deserve to have their voices heard before the Court becomes drastically more liberal. I bet the Presiding Officer has people come to his town meetings, as I do, and say: Why don't you impeach those Justices, because they are making law, instead of interpreting law as the Constitution requires? Well, you can't impeach a Justice for that. But this does raise some-

thing very basic: What is the role of the Supreme Court in our constitutional system? It hasn't been debated in Presidential elections for I don't know how long. There is a chance for this to be debated in the Presidential election and maybe lay out very clearly where Hillary Clinton or BERNIE SANDERS is coming from on one hand, or where our Republican nominee, whoever that is going to be, is coming from and what type of people they are going to put on the Court.

I have about 30 seconds, and I will be done.

We are presented with an opportunity, here. The American people have an opportunity to debate about the proper role for a Supreme Court Justice. The American people can decide whether they want another Justice who just decides cases based on what they feel in their "heart," and who buys into this notion of a "living Constitution," or whether they want a man or woman who believes the text means what it says on the Supreme Court.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

STOPPING MEDICATION ABUSE AND PROTECTING SENIORS ACT

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise this morning to address a huge problem that is happening in every one of our States and in all of our communities and to talk about a bill that is meant to be helpful in this area. It is about the huge problem we have with opioid abuse, opioid addiction, including both prescription and heroin addiction and abuse. This is an epidemic that is truly unbelievable in scale. It is affecting people of all ages, all ethnic groups, all demographics, all income classes, all geography. It is everywhere, and it is a huge problem. I have heard about it in every county I have visited in my State. In all 67 counties of Pennsylvania, I have heard about how big this problem is. In fact, more Pennsylvanians will die this year from heroin overdoses and the misuse of opioid painkillers than from the flu or homicides.

I wanted to learn more about this, so last fall I convened a hearing of the Senate Finance Subcommittee on Health Care, which I chair. Senator CASEY joined me in that hearing at Allegheny General Hospital in Pittsburgh, where we had this, to learn more to understand about the nature and scale of this huge opioid addiction problem and what we might do about it. I was surprised when I got to the room. It was a huge auditorium, and it was standing room only. The room was completely packed with people because this epidemic is affecting virtually every family. It affects almost all of us

at some level and in some way. It is tearing families apart. It is taking the lives of people who are in the prime of their lives. It is a huge problem.

The hearing was very helpful in illuminating some aspects of the nature of the problem. We had medical professionals who are dealing with the treatment, and we had people who are suffering from addiction. A recovering addict who has put her life back together told a very compelling story about what she went through. We had people in law enforcement. So we had a lot of testimony with different perspectives.

One of the things I took away is that there are at least three categories of ways we can help try to deal with this huge scourge. One is the problem of the overprescription of narcotics, the overprescription of painkillers, opioids, which are chemically very similar to heroin. A lot of people begin their addiction with these prescriptions, and then when they can no longer obtain or afford the prescription opioids, they move on to nonprescription forms, such as heroin, and it usually goes downhill very dramatically from there. So reducing overprescription has to help. There are ways to deal with that. A second is to reduce the diversion of these opioids when they are being prescribed. My legislation really does focus on that. The third is, we need better treatment and we need better outreach. We need better ways of treating people. We need to treat the addiction, but also, many people find themselves addicted after they develop a mental health problem that is an underlying problem that contributes to the addiction. We have to do a better job identifying and helping people with mental health problems.

We have many aspects to this challenge that arises from this terrible epidemic, but let me focus in on one aspect of this, the overprescription and the diversion of prescription narcotics.

The Government Accountability Office estimated that in 1 year alone, there were 170,000 Medicare beneficiary enrollees engaged in doctor shopping. Doctor shopping is the process whereby a person goes to multiple doctors, gets multiple prescriptions for perhaps the same opioid—maybe oxycodone or some other kind of painkiller—then goes to multiple pharmacies to get them all filled and ends up walking out of the pharmacy with a huge quantity of these very powerful, very addictive opioids, which they then sell on the black market. It is a very valuable commodity on the black market. The GAO found that there was one beneficiary who visited 89 different doctors in a single year, all for the same kind of prescriptions. There is another beneficiary who received prescriptions for 1,289 hydrocodone pills. That is a 490-day supply. You are not supposed to get more than a 30-day supply.

The inspector general found that a midwestern pharmacy billed Medicare

for reimbursement of over 1,000 prescriptions for each of just 2 beneficiaries—1,000 prescriptions per beneficiary—and one physician ordered all the prescriptions for one of those beneficiaries.

Last April, the DEA indicted two doctors in Mobile, AL, who were writing prescriptions for massive amounts of pain pills that were then filled at the pharmacy next door to the pain clinic they also owned.

The examples go on and on. This is fraud. Let's be clear that that is what it is. This is fraud. This is people who are systematically abusing these programs so they can obtain commercial-scale quantities of a very valuable narcotic, which is also very dangerous and very addictive, because it can be lucrative. Why is it lucrative? In part, because the American taxpayer pays for their supply. That is how outrageous this is. People are getting multiple prescriptions, going to multiple pharmacies, and when the prescription is filled at all of these pharmacies on these multiple occasions, the bill is submitted to Medicare, and Medicare reimburses.

Think about this. We have this criminal enterprise where the supply of narcotics is being paid for by taxpayers, and then the people who fraudulently obtain these drugs go out and sell them in what I am sure is a very lucrative arrangement. This is beyond outrageous; It is the description of the obviously fraudulent.

There is another category of people who end up with multiple prescriptions and it is completely innocent. There is no criminal intent whatsoever, no criminal activity. It is especially elderly people who have multiple illnesses and they have different doctors who treat them. In many cases, there is not a good coordination of the care for those patients. There is nobody coordinating what all of the doctors are doing, so doctors separately and—if it weren't for what other doctors are doing—appropriately give a prescription for a powerful narcotic. They don't know there is another doctor doing the same thing. This patient unwittingly ends up with an excessive quantity of these opioids, which dramatically increases the risk that the patient will become addicted and will suffer any number of very harmful consequences.

So we have the fraudulent cases of excessive prescriptions and then we have the innocent cases, but both are problems. The legislation I have introduced addresses both problems. First, I want to thank the cosponsors, the co-author of the bill. Senator SHERROD BROWN from Ohio is the lead Democrat on this bill. It is a bipartisan bill. Senator PORTMAN and Senator KAINE have also been very helpful. They are original cosponsors of the bill. It is called Stopping Medication Abuse and Pro-

tecting Seniors Act. We now have 25 cosponsors.

We had a very constructive hearing last week in the Senate Finance Committee about this legislation, this approach. Senator HATCH said he hopes the bill will move very soon. I hope the bill will move very soon. It is very important.

Here is what it does. When Medicare discovers that a beneficiary is obtaining multiple prescriptions well beyond what any individual should appropriately have, then Medicare would have the authority to require that person to get their prescriptions in the future from one doctor and get it filled at one pharmacy. It is called lock-in because you are locked in to a single doctor and you are locked in to a single pharmacy. In one step, that would go a very long way to making it very difficult to commit this kind of fraud or to accidentally obtain more prescriptions than you ought to have.

This procedure is not a new concept. It already exists in Medicaid. It is used every day in Medicaid to protect innocent people from excessive prescriptions and to protect taxpayers from fraudulent abuse. It is done by private carriers all the time. Private health insurance carriers use this lock-in mechanism when they discover excessive prescriptions being written. It is designed in a way—as these other programs are, the private and Medicaid—so that no one who legitimately needs a prescription—because there are legitimate prescriptions for opioids and for narcotics. No one who has a legitimate need will have an access problem. People will still be able to obtain exactly what they need. The lock-in applies only to a narrow category of controlled substances, schedule II controlled substances, which is what we think is appropriate.

I think this is going to be very helpful. It is going to help opioid-addicted seniors be identified as such so they can get the treatment they need. It is going to stop the diversion of these powerful narcotics. It is going to save taxpayers money. CBO estimates that \$79 million over 10 years will be saved by bringing an end to these illegal prescriptions. And it is going to reduce the quantity of these terribly powerful drugs on the streets.

This legislation has very broad bipartisan support. Just last weekend the National Governors Association came out fully in favor of adding a lock-in provision for Medicare. We had nearly identical language passed in a bill in the House as part of the 21st-century cures legislation, which passed overwhelmingly. The support includes the President of the United States. His budget has repeatedly asked Congress to give Medicare this authority. CMS's Acting Administrator, Andy Slavitt, just recently, before our committee, said this legislation makes "every bit

of sense in the world." We have the support of the CDC Director; the White House drug czar; Pew Charitable Trusts; Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing; many law enforcement groups; senior groups, such as the Medicare Rights Center. This is a list of just some who support this legislation.

This is really just common sense. We already have this capability in Medicaid. We already have this capability in private health insurance. It is long past due that Medicare have the ability to protect seniors from accidental excessive prescriptions but also to prevent people from committing fraud, which we know is happening on a very large scale today.

I am not aware of any opposition to this. We have broad bipartisan support. I am hoping we can get this passed very soon, certainly in the next week or so. The House will certainly pass this, as it already has as part of the 21st-century cures legislation, and we can get this to the President and get this signed into law and start to help save lives and save taxpayers money at the same time.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

SMARTPHONE SECURITY

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, on December 2, 2015, 14 innocent souls in San Bernardino were gunned down in a violent act of terrorism, and it involved one of these, an iPhone. This item has become ubiquitous, and a lot of us carry them around in our pocket. Yet almost 3 months later, law enforcement has not been able to fully access the iPhone—the one used by the terrorists in gunning down these 14 people. The information on this particular iPhone could shed some light on how he planned the attack with his wife and would obviously give authorities an opportunity to see if others were involved in the attack. The contacts in that iPhone could indicate whether there were other terrorists in the United States or abroad who helped them in that attack. Yet 3 months after these murders, the FBI cannot access the contents of the iPhone because a security feature on the iPhone potentially erases its contents after 10 incorrect passwords are entered. The maker of the iPhone, Apple, says it would need to develop new software—software that it claims does not exist today—in order to disable that feature.

If this security feature were to be disabled by Apple, the FBI could use what it calls "brute force attack," which is the ability to run different combinations of numbers through the iPhone in milliseconds, to try to assess the different password combinations in order to gain access to the iPhone, but they still don't have access even though the court is involved.

Last week a Federal magistrate judge ordered Apple to provide reasonable technical assistance to the FBI in order to provide access to the perpetrator's iPhone. Apple opposes this order, given the concerns that technology developed to intentionally weaken its security features could be abused if it is in the wrong hands. In other words, there would not be the privacy concern. They claim it would put smartphone users' data and privacy at risk. It is a legitimate argument. They also view the Federal magistrate judge's order as an example of government overreach.

Well, in response the Department of Justice filed a motion in district court to compel Apple to comply with the magistrate judge's order, and because of the complicated nature of the issues of national security, individual privacy, which we value, and First Amendment questions involved, there will no doubt be prolonged litigation that may ultimately have to be resolved by the U.S. Supreme Court.

I certainly understand the risk to Americans' privacy, as expressed by Apple and other technology companies, but I don't want to run the risk of letting the trail go so cold on this terrorist attack—and potentially other similar cases—that we lose this valuable information all because this is winding itself through months and years in the courts. In other words, we need to know what was behind this attack. Everybody recognizes that this was a terrorist attack. We need to obtain this information in order to get to the bottom of it and root out and see if there are other terrorists in the country planning to do the same thing so we can protect our people and our national security. There has to be a way that the FBI can get the information it needs from the terrorist's iPhone in a manner that continues to protect American smartphone users.

Now, surely common sense can prevail here. This is why this Senator urges Apple and the FBI to work together in order to resolve the stalemate.

Let me go back over this again. We have a dead terrorist. He and his wife killed 14 Americans. We have that dead terrorist's iPhone, and we have a Federal judge's order that says we have the right to get that information in order to protect the Nation and its people. It is just like if we had this terrorist, dead or alive, and we needed to get an order to invade that person's privacy to get into their home and get evidence to protect the Nation from other terrorist attacks. There would certainly be no objection to that. The judge's order would be the protector of that privacy. This is a similar situation, except the FBI has an iPhone and they still can't get the information in it.

What if this terrorist were not an American citizen and this terrorist

were illegally in the United States? Would the same standard apply? I think Apple would say yes. We can draw up the different scenarios, but the bottom line is we are going to have to protect our people. That is why this Senator urges Apple and the FBI to work together in order to resolve the stalemate. I understand that consideration must be given as far as the protection of privacy in people's iPhones. We have always found a way to balance our cherished right to privacy and our cherished right of securing ourselves and our national security, and that is what is needed in this case. The safety and security of our fellow Americans depend on it. Otherwise, when the next terrorist strikes—51 percent of Americans who have been surveyed today say they feel the government needs access to this information to protect against future attacks. If the next attack happens and information is on an iPhone, that 51 percent will soar and it will be very clear that the American people support the protection of our national security.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, yesterday the minority leader came to the floor to disparage the work of the Senate Judiciary Committee and also disparage the work of the Senate as a whole. And, of course, as he does from time to time, he launched into a personal attack against me. Now, that is OK. I don't intend to return the favor. I love Senator REID. I don't want to talk about the nuclear option and the tremendous damage that did to the Senate, not to mention the years and years that Democratic Senators had to endure his leadership without even being able to offer an amendment. There is at least one Democratic Senator, who was defeated in the last election, who never got a chance to get a vote on an amendment during the entire 6 years he was in the Senate.

We all know that is how some people act when they don't get their own way, but childish tantrums are not appropriate for the Senate. I think if my friend Senator BIDEN had been in the Chamber yesterday, he would have said—as we have heard him say so many times—“that is a bunch of malarkey.”

I didn't come to the floor today to talk about the minority leader. However, I did want to follow up on my remarks from earlier this week on the Biden rules. Now, in fairness, Senator BIDEN didn't just make these rules up out of thin air. His speech, back in 1992, went into great historical detail on the history and practice of vacancies in Presidential election years. He dis-

cussed how the Senate handled these vacancies and how Presidents have handled and should handle them. Based on that history and a dose of good common sense, Senator BIDEN laid out the rules that govern Supreme Court vacancies arising during a Presidential election year, and of course, he delivered his remarks when we had a divided government, as we have today, in 1992.

Now, the Biden rules are very clear. My friend from Delaware did a wonderful job of laying out the history and providing many of the sound reasons for these Biden rules, and they boil down to a couple fundamental points. First, the President should exercise restraint and “not name a nominee until after the November election is completed.” As I said on Monday, President Lincoln is a pretty good role model for this practice. Stated differently, the President should let the people decide. But if the President chooses not to follow President Lincoln's model but instead, as Chairman BIDEN has said, “goes the way of Fillmore and Johnson and presses an election-year nomination,” then the Senate shouldn't consider the nomination and shouldn't hold hearings. It doesn't matter “how good a person is nominated by the President.” Stated plainly, it is the principle, not the person, that matters.

Now, as I said on Monday, Vice President BIDEN is an honorable man and he is loyal. Those of us who know him well know this is very true, so I wasn't surprised on Monday evening when he released a short statement defending his remarks and of course, as you might expect, defending the President's decision to press forward with a nominee. Under the Constitution, the President can do that. Like I predicted on Monday, Vice President BIDEN is a loyal No. 2, but the Vice President had the difficult task of explaining today why all the arguments he made so cogently in 1992 aren't really his view.

It was a tough sell, and Vice President BIDEN did his best Monday evening, but I must say that I think Chairman BIDEN would view Vice President BIDEN's comments the same way he viewed the minority leader's comments yesterday. He would call it like he sees it and as we have so often heard him say: It is just a bunch of malarkey. Here is part of what Vice President BIDEN said on Monday. It is a fairly long quote.

“Some critics say that one excerpt of a speech is evidence that I do not support filling a Supreme Court vacancy during an election year. This is not an accurate description of my views on the subject. In the same speech critics are pointing to today, I urge the Senate and the White House to overcome partisan differences and work together to ensure the Court function as the Founding Fathers intended.”

That doesn't sound consistent with all of those Biden rules I shared with

my colleagues on Monday. So we ask: Is it really possible to square Chairman BIDEN's 1992 election-year statement with Vice President BIDEN's 2016 election-year statement? Was Chairman BIDEN's 1992 statement really just all about greater cooperation between the Senate and the White House? When Chairman BIDEN said in 1992 that if a vacancy suddenly arises, "action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over," was he simply calling for more cooperation? When he called for withholding consent "no matter how good a person is nominated by the President," was he merely suggesting the President and the Senate work together a little bit more? When he said we shouldn't hold hearings under these circumstances—was that all about cooperation between the branches?

Since we are talking about filling Justice Scalia's seat, it seems appropriate to ask: How would he solve this puzzle? I suppose he would start with the text. So let us begin there.

In 1992, did Chairman BIDEN discuss cooperation between the branches? Yes, in fact, he did. So far, so good for Vice President BIDEN, but that can't be the end of the matter because that doesn't explain the two vastly different interpretations of the same statement. Let us look a little more closely at the text. Here is what Chairman BIDEN said about cooperation between the branches: "Let me start with the nomination process and how the process might be changed in the next administration, whether it is a Democrat or a Republican."

Remember, again, I emphasize that was during the 1992 election year. We didn't have to search very long to unearth textual evidence regarding the meaning of Chairman BIDEN's words in 1992. Yes, he shared some thoughts about how he believed the President and Senate might work together, but that cooperation was to occur "in the next administration"—in other words, after the Presidential election of 1992, after the Senate withheld consent on any nominee "no matter how good a person is nominated by the President."

So the text is clear. If you need more evidence that this is an accurate understanding of what the Biden rules mean, look no further than a lengthy Washington Post article 1 week prior. In that interview he made his views quite clear. He said: "If someone steps down, I would highly recommend the president not name someone, not send a name up." And what if the President does send someone up?—"If [the President] did send someone up, I would ask the Senate to seriously consider not having a hearing on that nominee."

Specifically, my friend Chairman BIDEN said: "Can you imagine dropping a nominee after the three or four or five decisions that are about to be made by the Supreme Court into that

fight, into that cauldron in the middle of a presidential [election] year?"

Chairman BIDEN went on: "I believe there would be no bounds of propriety that would be honored by either side. . . . The environment within which such a hearing would be held would be so supercharged and so prone to be able to be distorted."

At the end of the day, the text of Chairman BIDEN's 1992 statement is very clear. So, in 2016, when he is serving as a loyal No. 2 to this President, Vice President BIDEN is forced to argue that the Biden rules secretly mean the exact opposite of what they say. Ironically, that is a trick Justice Scalia taught us all to recognize and to reject on sight. We know we should look to the clear meaning of his text, as Justice Scalia taught us. This was not a one-off comment by Senator BIDEN. It was a 20,000-word floor speech forcefully laying out a difficult and principled decision. It relied on historical precedent. It relied upon respect for democracy. It relied on respect for the integrity of the nomination process. There is no doubt what Senator BIDEN meant.

Of course there is a broader point, and I hope in the next several months we concentrate on his broader point. That is this. Words have meaning. Text matters. Justice Scalia devoted his adult life to these first principles. Do the American people want to elect a President who will nominate a Justice in the mold of Scalia to replace him? Or do they want to elect a President Clinton or SANDERS who will nominate a Justice who will move the Court in a drastically more liberal decision? Do they want a Justice who will look to the constitutional text when drilling down on the most difficult constitutional questions or do they want yet another Justice who, on those really tough cases, bases decisions on "what is in the Judge's heart," as then-Senator Obama famously said.

It comes down to this. We have lost one of our great jurists. It is up to the American people to decide whether we will preserve his legacy.

More importantly, do you want a Justice who follows the text of the Constitution? Do you want a Justice who follows the text of the law?

Or, do you want a Justice who makes decisions based on his or her "heart"? This is a debate we should have. This is a debate I hope we will have. This is a debate I hope will be part of the three or four national presidential debates between Nominee Clinton or SANDERS on one side, and whomever the Republicans nominate on the other side. The American people should have this debate. And then we should let the American people decide.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I will thank my colleague from Iowa. I hoped

to get a chance to speak to him personally about another matter, but I will call him from the floor afterward. We will get in touch. Senator HATCH is here. I don't want to delay the proceedings of the Senate, but I would like an opportunity to respond on this issue that was raised by Senator GRASSLEY.

Senator GRASSLEY of Iowa is my friend. Politicians say that sometimes and mean it, and say it sometimes and don't mean it. I mean it. We have become friends as neighboring States and sharing a lot of plane rides together, serving on the same committee, serving in the same body for a number of years, and I respect him very much. We have different points of view on many things, but we found common agreement on many other things. So I do respect him when I say that at the outset as I respond to his remarks.

What is this about? This is about the passing of Justice Scalia and whether his seat on the Supreme Court will be filled, and if it will be filled, who will do it and when. The first place for us to turn when it comes to asking questions is the one document, the only document, that matters, the U.S. Constitution. It is this document that we literally all swore to uphold and defend, every one of us, Democrat and Republican. It is this document that is explicit, not making a suggestion but really spelling out the responsibilities when it comes to a vacancy on the Supreme Court, and it is article II section 2. Article II, section 2 says that the President "shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court." Shall.

It is our responsibility under this Constitution to do this. It is amazing to me in the history of this Republic, guided by this great document, we have reached a point in the year 2016 where those simple words, directions in the Constitution, are being challenged and ignored by the Republican majority because, you see, there has never—underline the word never—been a moment in history when the Senate has refused to extend a hearing to a Supreme Court nominee until this moment. There has never been a moment in history, never—underline that word—when the Senate has refused a vote on a Supreme Court nominee.

I can't say never, but it is been more than 150 years since we have allowed a vacancy on the Supreme Court to go on for more than a year, as the Republicans in the Senate are determined to do here. That 150 years goes back to the Civil War. So I would say to my colleague from Iowa, you are about to make history if you stand by this decision. If you decide the Senate Judiciary Committee will not even entertain a nomination to fill the Scalia vacancy on the Supreme Court, it will be the first time in the history of the U.S. Senate—the first. If the Senate Republican leadership makes the decision

that even if a nominee is sent they will never allow a vote, it will be the first time in the history of the United States of America. That is why this is such a definitive issue. That is why the position taken by the Senate Republican majority is so different, so unusual, and in some cases so extreme.

The argument is being made on the other side—listen to this argument. This argument is being made: Well, we are in a campaign year. This is a Presidential election year. Who knows who the next President will be. Let the American people choose that President and that President choose the nominee.

It overlooks one basic fact. Three years and three months ago, the American people chose a President. By a margin of 5 million votes, Barack Obama defeated Mitt Romney for President of the United States. They made their selection. Did they elect President Obama for a 3-year term? Let me check the Constitution, but I think it was a 4-year term. Oh, was it 3 years and 3 months? No. It turns out the American people spoke in our democracy by a margin of 5 million votes and said: Barack Obama, you will be President of the United States until January the 20th, 2017. Was there a rider or some exclusion that said you can't appoint a nominee, name a nominee to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court in the last year of your Presidency? I don't remember that. Perhaps that was the case in some States, but not in Illinois and, to be honest, in no other State.

The President was elected for 4 years. He was given the consent and authority of the American people to govern this Nation for 4 years and to fill the vacancies on the Supreme Court as he is directed to do by the U.S. Constitution.

Now the Senate Republicans have come up with a different spin: No; he may have been elected, but from their point of view, he wasn't given the full power of office. They say Barack Obama was given something less than any other previous President of the United States. They say he was not given the authority to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court in the last year of his term.

I would like to find the constitutional precedent for that. I invite my colleagues—we have two on the floor. One is the current chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and one is the former chairman of the Judiciary Committee. I invite them to show me that historical, constitutional precedent that says Barack Obama, the President of the United States, really only has the authority of the office for 3 years—3 years and 2 months. Beyond that, he is a lame duck President. Give me the authority for that.

What do they hang their hat on? They hang their hat on a speech made by Vice President BIDEN when he

served in this body 25 years ago. JOE BIDEN is truly my friend, as he is the friend of virtually every Senator from both sides of the aisle. I respect him so much. I wasn't surprised at all when I heard the Senator from Iowa say that he gave a 20,000-word speech. He gave a lot of 20,000-word speeches. I saw him deliver a few here, and they were a sight to behold. This one I think went on for 90 minutes as then Senator BIDEN shared his views on filling judicial vacancies and on recommendations. If we listen closely, we know the Senator from Iowa said that Vice President BIDEN "recommended," "should consider." Well, let me ask this question: Was there ever any time when Senator BIDEN was the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee that he denied a hearing to a Supreme Court nominee? No. Was there ever a time as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee when he recommended to the Senate that they deny a vote on a Presidential nomination to fill a Supreme Court vacancy? No. So whatever his theory was that he expressed on the floor of the Senate—and we all express a lot of theories—JOE BIDEN was respectful of this document. He knew what the U.S. Constitution said.

I find it hard to imagine that the Republican Senators now in the majority are going to walk away from this Constitution and turn their backs on it. I have a lengthy statement that I ask unanimous consent be printed in the RECORD following my remarks which goes into the question of why the Republican majority continues to obstruct the appointment of judges and people to serve in the executive branch of government under this President. It has been unprecedented. They decided not just on this nominee but long ago that they would not give this President the same treatment, the same respect that has been given other Presidents. Now it has been brought front and center with this vacancy, the Scalia vacancy on the Supreme Court.

I sure disagreed with Justice Scalia on a lot of things, but I do not argue with Judge Posner of the Seventh Circuit in my State when he said that Justice Scalia was a major force in terms of thinking on the Supreme Court. And what really undergirded the philosophy of Justice Scalia was what he called originalism. Some people mocked it, and some people just flat out disagreed with it. But he said time and again: Read the Constitution and read the precise wording of the Constitution. I saw different things in those words than he did, but that was his North Star when it came to Supreme Court decisions.

Well, if he read article II, section 2, which says the President "shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court"—there is little doubt—no doubt—in

those words. And if he relied on the precedent of the United States, the history of the United States that the U.S. Senate has never denied a hearing to a Presidential nominee until this moment in history, has never refused a vote on a nominee until this moment in history, then he would realize that what is being done here is unprecedented and uncalled for.

If my Republican colleagues now in the majority—54 votes strong against 46 on the Democratic side—really disagree with the President's choice, his nominee, whoever it may be, they have an option. There is a constitutional option. The constitutional option is to hold a hearing, do the background check which is done, and then vote, and if you disapprove of that nominee, vote no. That is the regular order and the regular course of events. That is the constitutional way to approach this.

But they have gone even further. Senator MCCONNELL said two days ago he would not only give the President's nominee no hearing and no vote, he refuses to even meet with that person, whoever it may be. Those are the lengths they will go to to avoid facing the constitutional responsibility that every Senator has.

Senators can quote Vice President JOE BIDEN's speeches of 25 years ago as long as they want. They can read his words over and over again, but the fact is he never stopped a hearing, he never stopped a vote, and he honored the Constitution. The wording of the Constitution didn't go on for 20,000 words. It is just a handful of words that we have sworn to uphold and defend before we can become U.S. Senators.

History will not look kindly on this political decision by the Republican majority. History will not give them a pass. History will ask time and again: How could you ignore the Constitution? How could you ignore your responsibility under the Constitution? Why won't you do your job, a job you were elected to do to fill this vacancy? Is a temporary political victory worth this—to turn your back on the Constitution and the history of this country? I don't think it is.

I hope that when the Republican Senators go home and meet with their constituents over this weekend and in the days ahead, they will have second thoughts. When the President sends a nominee, I hope they will abide by the Constitution, be respectful of this document and respectful of this President, and give his nominee the same due consideration that has been given to Supreme Court nominees throughout history.

Justice Anthony Kennedy became a Justice on the Supreme Court when a Democratic-controlled Senate gave him a vote—a hearing, and then a vote in a Presidential election year much like this one. A lameduck, outgoing

President appointed Justice Kennedy. A Democratic Senate did not refuse to meet with him, did not refuse to have a hearing, did not refuse a vote, but said: We will abide by the Constitution. For that outgoing President, he had the full authority of office. President Barack Obama deserves nothing less. And we as Senators have a responsibility under this Constitution, regardless of what speech was made 25 years ago, to pay close attention to these words and to do our constitutional duty.

When the Senate majority leader said that he would not give any consideration to any Supreme Court nominee named by the President—no vote, no hearing, not even a courtesy meeting—it set a new low for the Senate. Throughout our Nation's history, no pending Supreme Court nominee who sought a hearing has been denied one. Some nominees were confirmed so quickly after their nomination that a hearing was not scheduled, and one nominee withdrew before her scheduled hearing could take place, but the Senate has never before refused a hearing to a pending nominee. Similarly, every pending nominee for an open Supreme Court vacancy has been voted upon by Senators. Some nominees were confirmed on the floor, some were rejected on the floor, some nominees were renominated before they got their vote, and some only received a vote on whether to be reported or discharged out of committee, but all of them got a vote. Yet the Senate majority leader has announced that President Obama's next nominee will get no hearing, no vote, not even a meeting.

The President is obligated by Article II, section 2 of the Constitution to send a nominee to the Senate. That is the process the Founding Fathers established. There is nothing in the Constitution that provides for this process to be abandoned in an election year. Just as the President and Senate must do their jobs in times of war and economic depression, they must do their jobs in election years.

The reality is that Republicans simply want to keep the Supreme Court seat vacant in the hopes that their presidential nominee will get to fill it. It is a purely political calculation. But Presidential politics do not trump the Constitution.

The Republican leader should do what past Republican leaders like Senator Everett Dirksen of Illinois did when a Supreme Court vacancy arose in the election year of 1968—roll up his sleeves and get to work.

Senate Republicans have come up with a number of excuses for shirking their constitutional responsibilities. But the bottom line is that there is no excuse for the Senate to fail to do its job.

The President made clear yesterday that he is taking his constitutional re-

sponsibility seriously. He wrote a piece in the website SCOTUSblog explaining the careful, deliberative process he is undertaking to choose a nominee. The President said he will select a person who has outstanding qualifications, a commitment to impartial justice, a deep respect for the role of the judiciary, and a life experience that shows integrity and good judgment.

The President is doing his job, as the Constitution requires. Senate Republicans must stop the pattern of obstruction that they have shown with so many of President Obama's nominees and do their job, too. Once the President selects a Supreme Court nominee, Senators should meet with the nominee, give him or her a fair hearing, schedule a vote, and fill the vacancy on our Nation's highest Court.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

REPUBLICAN OBSTRUCTION OF PRESIDENT OBAMA'S NOMINEES, FEBRUARY 23, 2016

Senate Republicans have announced they will obstruct President Obama's forthcoming nominee to the Supreme Court without even considering the nominee's merits, simply because Republicans do not want President Obama to make the nomination.

This is far from the first time that Republicans have engaged in unreasonable obstruction of nominations made by President Obama. According to statistics from the Congressional Research Service as reported in a Jan. 5, 2016 Politico article, "the Senate in 2015 confirmed the lowest number of civilian nominations—including judges and diplomatic ambassadors—for the first session of a Congress in nearly 30 years." Only 173 civilian nominees were confirmed last year.

Other examples of Republican obstruction of nominations include the following:

Judicial nominations:

D.C. Circuit: In 2013, Republicans announced they would oppose any person President Obama nominated to fill three vacancies in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, simply because they did not want Obama to fill those vacancies. The President nominated three unquestionably qualified people—Patricia Millett, Nina Pillard, and Robert Wilkins, and twice Senate Republicans opposed cloture votes on Millett's nomination. This prompted Senator Reid to change Senate rules to lower the cloture vote threshold for lower court nominees to 50, and subsequently the three D.C. Circuit nominees were confirmed.

Obstruction in the current Republican Senate: Last year, Senate Republicans matched the record for confirming the fewest number of judicial nominees in more than half a century, with 11 for the entire year. Overall, in the current Congress Republicans have only allowed 16 judges to be confirmed, compared to 68 judges that were confirmed by the Democratic-controlled Senate in the last two years of George W. Bush's administration. There are 17 non-controversial judicial nominees pending on the Senate executive calendar, all of whom were reported out of committee by unanimous voice vote. Currently there are 81 judicial vacancies, including 31 judicial emergencies.

National security nominations:

Attorney General Loretta Lynch had to wait 165 days after her nomination to be con-

firmed by the Republican Senate in April 2015. This was far longer than other recent Attorney General nominees had to wait for a confirmation vote. By comparison, the Democratic Senate confirmed Michael Mukasey in 53 days in 2007.

Treasury Undersecretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes: Adam Szubin was nominated on April 20, 2015 for this position, which involves tracking and blocking financing to terror groups like ISIS. Banking Chairman Shelby described Szubin as "eminently qualified" for the position, but he has still not received a floor vote in over 10 months.

Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness: Brad Carson was nominated on July 8, 2015 for this position, which is responsible for ensuring our military is ready to face threats around the world. He is waiting for a hearing.

Secretary of the Army: Eric Fanning was nominated on Sept. 21, 2015 for this position, which involves overseeing U.S. Army personnel, strategy, and readiness around the world. He waited four months just to get a hearing, and now he is waiting to receive a Committee vote.

General Counsel, Defense Department: Jennifer O'Connor was nominated on Sept. 21, 2015 for this position, but she is waiting for a hearing.

Under Secretary for the Navy: Janine Davidson was nominated on Sept. 21 for the #2 position in the Navy, but she is still awaiting confirmation.

Foreign policy nominations

Ambassadors and foreign policy positions: Only 59 ambassador or other key foreign policy positions have been confirmed in this Congress with an average confirmation wait of six months. For comparison, during the 110th Congress (2007–08) when George W. Bush was President and the Democrats controlled the Senate, more than 120 nominees for key foreign policy positions were confirmed with an average confirmation wait of under three months.

Of the seven State Department nominees confirmed a few weeks ago, three were nominated in 2014 or earlier. These include Brian Egan (Legal Advisor, first nominated in 2014), John Estrada (Trinidad and Tobago, first nominated in 2013), and Azita Raji (Sweden, first nominated in 2014).

Ambassador to Mexico: Roberta Jacobson, a career nominee, was nominated as ambassador to Mexico on June 2, 2015 but she is still awaiting confirmation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, before I begin, let me note that I have been very concerned about the tenor of the debate. I am very upset that yesterday my dear friend, the minority leader, yesterday attacked my other dear friend, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, by calling him inept as a committee chairman. There is no reason for that kind of language on the floor, even if it were true, which it is not, and I think the minority leader knows it is not true.

Senator GRASSLEY is one of the most effective, hard-working, decent Senators in the U.S. Senate. He is not an attorney, and yet he has run the Judiciary Committee as well as any chairman that I recall in my 40 years here.

Everybody knows he treats people fairly. So I hope we can get rid of that kind of language and start treating people with decency and with regard. We differ widely with the Democrats on this issue and on other issues, but we are not slandering them. If a Republican behaved similarly, I would stand up to him. It just shouldn't happen.

On Tuesday, I rose to honor the memory of the late Justice Antonin Scalia, whom I knew quite well. With his passing, the Nation lost one of its greatest Supreme Court Justices ever to have served, and I lost a dear friend.

Today, I rise to make the case that the next President should chose the nominee to replace Justice Scalia. As we embark on this debate, our first task should be to situate properly the Senate's role in seating members of the judiciary as well as the reasons for the role. In doing so, let me invoke an approach that Justice Scalia himself employed to make the same point.

In addressing audiences, the late Justice often asked: What part of our Constitution was most important in protecting the liberties of the people? Invariably, audiences would provide answers such as protections for the freedom of speech, the freedom of religion, the right to keep and bear arms, the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures, and the like.

Justice Scalia, like the vast majority of Americans, agreed that these protections are obviously important. I certainly do, too. Nevertheless, he always made one crucial observation: Even the most repressive dictatorships, such as the Soviet Union and North Korea, typically have provisions akin to our Bill of Rights in their Constitutions. Simply enshrining these basic rights in constitutional text does not ensure their protection.

I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to complete my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. Our Nation's Founders knew, in the sage words of James Madison in Federalist 47, that "[t]he accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands . . . may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny." They bestowed upon us the blessing of the Constitution that creates a Federal Government with limited and enumerated powers, with those powers diffused and balanced between three coequal branches of government.

The Federal judiciary occupies a unique station in this constitutional architecture. In deciding cases and controversies, it is, in the seminal words of *Marbury v. Madison*, "emphatically the province and the duty of the judicial department to say what the law is." Unelected and armed with life tenure and salary protection,

judges thereby have the power to hold the political branches to account.

This power is the source of much of the Constitution's great brilliance in its ability to restrain transient political majorities from exceeding the authority granted to government by the sovereign people; however, it is also the source of one of the great potential pitfalls of our system of government, in which five lawyers can substitute their personal policy preferences to the legitimate judgments of the executive and legislative branches, thereby usurping the powers of the self-governing people.

This tension between the stark necessity of judicial independence to preserve limited government under the Constitution and the dangers of an unaccountable judiciary shirking its duty to say what the law is—and instead saying what it thinks the law should be—makes the judicial selection process vitally important. Hewing to a careful process envisioned by the Framers that vests the Executive and legislature with critical but distinct roles is the means by which we can maintain the integrity of the judicial branch.

The appointments clause delineates these distinct roles for the President and the Senate in the appointment property. Article II, section 2 provides that the President "shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States." By creating two separate roles in the confirmation process, the executive branch to nominate and the legislative branch to provide its advice and consent, the Framers were creating rival interests.

Alexander Hamilton cogently explained the various rationales for this particular allocation of appointment powers in Federalist 76. Following the example of the Massachusetts Constitution, the Framers vested the responsibility for nominations in one officer, the President, to ensure accountability and impartiality in selecting nominees and to guard against corruption, impropriety or imprudence that characterized the appointment process in many of the States. By concentrating the power of nomination in one person, the Framers sought to create accountability or in Hamilton's words a "livelier sense of duty and a more exact regard to reputation."

That said, the Framers expressly rejected the notion of vesting an unchecked appointment power in the President alone. By requiring the President to submit his nominee for the Senate's approval, the Founders sought to forestall any potential abuse of the nomination power. Hamilton argued that the requirement of advice and consent would serve as "an excellent check upon a spirit of favoritism

in the President and would tend greatly to prevent the appointment of unfit characters from State prejudice, from family connection, from personal attachment, or from a view to popularity."

While the practice of the early Republic confirmed that the Chief Executive enjoys plenary authority over nominations, history also shows that the Senate equally possesses the plenary authority to withhold its consent the nominee for any reason. Nothing in the text of the appointment clause appears to limit the Senate's considerations. Just as the President has an unfettered right to veto legislation, the Senate enjoys complete and final discretion in whether to approve or even consider a nomination.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have taken up the mantra that we must "do our job" with respect to the current vacancy, and so we must. But our job, despite what the Democrats are saying, is not to follow a particular path found nowhere in the Constitution. Rather, it is to determine the most appropriate way to fulfill our advice and consent role for this particular vacancy. The Senate would not be doing its job if we followed a process that is not appropriate for the situation before us today.

Indeed, withholding consent can be just as valid an exercise of our role as granting it, and deferring the confirmation process for a particular vacancy may be the most appropriate and responsible exercise of the advice and consent role entrusted to us. It all depends on the circumstances.

Consider these precedents. The Senate has never confirmed a nominee to a Supreme Court vacancy that opened up this late in a term-limited President's time in office. It is only the third vacancy in nearly a century to occur after the American people had already started voting in a Presidential election, and in both the previous two instances—in 1956 and in 1968—the Senate did not confirm the nominee until the following year after the election had occurred.

It has been more than three-quarters of a century since a Supreme Court Justice has been nominated and confirmed in a Presidential election year, and the only time the Senate has ever confirmed a nominee to fill a Supreme Court vacancy created after voting began in a Presidential election year was in 1916. That vacancy arose only because Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes resigned his seat on the Court to run against incumbent President Woodrow Wilson.

The cautiousness with which Senators in times past have approached election-year vacancies is only amplified by present circumstances. As my colleagues in the minority are fond of saying, elections have consequences, and the election of 2014 certainly had tremendous consequences.

In the last election, the American people went to the polls to register their opposition to the wide range of illegal and unconstitutional actions of the Obama administration, including: its unilateral cancellation of duly enacted law, such as with illegal immigration; its regulation contrary to the plain text of the law, such as with the Clean Power Plan; its willingness to ignore its statutory obligations without meaningful justification, such as with the President's decision to release the top five Taliban leaders in U.S. custody without notifying Congress beforehand as required by Federal law; its efforts to stretch what lawful authorities the executive branch does possess beyond all recognition, such as with its mass clemency effort for drug offenders; and its attempt to bypass the Senate's role in the confirmation process, one of nearly two dozen times the Obama administration has lost 9 to 0 before the Supreme Court.

The American people elected our Republican Senate majority in large part to check the overreach of President Obama, and given how crucial the courts have proven in holding this administration accountable to the Constitution and the law, the Senate has every reason to approach lifetime appointments cautiously and deliberately, especially appointments to the highest Court in the land.

Moreover, leaving Justice Scalia's seat vacant until after the election would hardly result in a constitutional crisis. An even number of Justices has never inhibited the Supreme Court from functioning. An absence of this length would be far from unprecedented, as the Court has adapted to vacancies that lasted for more than 2 years in its history and as recently as 1970 accommodated a vacancy of more than a year thanks to liberal obstruction of two candidates nominated by a Republican President. Famously, when Justice Robert Jackson took a year-long leave of absence to serve as chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg war crimes tribunal, Justice Felix Frankfurter wrote to him and advised him that having a temporary eight-member Court as a result of his prolonged absence did not "sacrifice a single interest of importance."

Moreover, the recusal process often-times requires the Court to consider various cases with a reduced number of Justices, including recent high-profile cases such as *Arizona v. United States* in 2012 and *Fisher v. University of Texas* in 2013. Consider that Justice Kagan, due to her service as Solicitor General, had to recuse herself in 38 cases. In these situations the Court has well-established rule for dealing with its cases, including 4-to-4 splits. At its discretion, the Court has the authority to hold cases over or reargue them when a new Justice is confirmed.

Indeed, the vast majority of Supreme Court decisions are unanimous, nearly

so, or are split along nonideological lines. Only a relatively small minority of cases—typically less than 20 percent—are decided 5-to-4, and even fewer divide along predictable ideological lines. In the unlikely event that a tie should occur, as has occurred in only 2 of 38 of Justice Kagan's recusals, the ruling of the lower court is simply upheld. Put simply, the absence of one of the nine Justices on the Court is far from calamitous, but a hastily made appointment could be.

If the particular circumstances we face today counsel in favor of waiting until after the election, why would we act otherwise simply because the other party tells us to do so?

The minority leader made this same point in 2005 when he flatly rejected the claim that the Senate must always give nominees an up-or-down vote. In fact, he said that the very idea would be, in his own words, "rewriting the Constitution and reinventing reality."

He said: "The duties of the United States Senate are set forth in the Constitution of the United States. Nowhere in that document does it say that the Senate has a duty to give Presidential nominees a vote. It says that appointments shall be made with the advice and consent of the Senate. That is very different than saying that every nominee receives a vote."

Yesterday, I was stunned to hear numerous Democrats contradict the minority leader on this point. For example, the minority whip said that the "clear language of the Constitution" requires an up-or-down confirmation vote. That claim is obviously wrong on its face, since the Constitution says no such thing. By the minority leader's 2005 standard, these Democrats today are "rewriting the Constitution and reinventing reality." Perhaps they received different sets of talking points.

This claim by the minority whip and others that the Constitution requires an up-or-down vote is baffling for another reason. Between 2003 and 2007 the minority whip voted 25 times to filibuster Republican judicial nominees. In other words, he voted 25 times to deprive judicial nominees of an up-or-down confirmation vote that he now says the Constitution's clear language requires.

Many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have also repeatedly observed that deferring the confirmation process until the next President takes office would be unprecedented. This point escapes me as well. The filibusters used to defeat Republican judicial nominees were also unprecedented, yet many Democrats voted for them anyway. While past practice matters, the ultimate question is not whether this has happened before but whether it is an appropriate step to take now.

The Senate's job is to decide how best to carry out its duty of advice and consent in the situation before us.

Thankfully, we are not without guidance in making that judgment. I think back to 1992, a Presidential election year not unlike this one, in which different parties controlled the White House and the Senate. My friend, then-Judiciary Committee Chairman and now-Vice President JOE BIDEN, came to this very floor on June 25, 1992, and delivered what he said was the longest speech in his then 19 years in this body. He evaluated the state of the confirmation process, suggested reforms for the future, and made a specific recommendation. He said that if a Supreme Court vacancy occurred in that Presidential election year, President George H.W. Bush "should consider following the practice of a majority of predecessors and not—and not—name a nominee until after the November election is completed."

If the President did choose a Supreme Court nominee, Chairman BIDEN said: "The Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination until after the political campaign season is over." While Vice President BIDEN might feel differently about that today, that is what he said then as chairman of the committee.

In other words, deferring the confirmation process until the next President was in office was the most appropriate way for the Senate to fulfill its advice and consent role. Then-Chairman BIDEN listed several factors that led him to this recommendation, and every one of these factors exists today.

First, he noted that an appointment process in 1992 would take place in divided government. Different parties also control the White House and Senate today.

Second, he said that Presidents had recently made controversial Supreme Court appointments, noting that those nominees received a significant number of negative votes in the Senate. Again, the same is true today. President Obama's appointments of Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan, for example, are both among the top five most opposed Supreme Court appointees in history.

Third, then-Chairman BIDEN noted that the Presidential election process had already begun. Once again, that is the case today. That is the case today, with voters in numerous States having already cast ballots.

Fourth, Chairman BIDEN said that the confirmation process itself had become increasingly divisive. This criterion strikes me as ironic, given its source. After all, Senate Democrats are responsible for provoking the so-called confirmation wars with the political and ideological inquisition used to defeat the Supreme Court nomination of Robert Bork and the despicable smear tactics used against the nomination of Clarence Thomas.

Senate Democrats have also been responsible for every major escalation in judicial confirmations since 1992.

Within 2 weeks of President George W. Bush's inauguration, the Senate Democratic leader vowed to use "whatever means necessary" to defeat undesirable judicial nominees.

A few months later, Senate Democrats organized a retreat with the goal, as the New York Times described it, of changing the ground rules for the confirmation process.

In January 2002, former Democratic Congressman, appeals court judge, and White House Counsel Abner Mikva urged Senate Democrats not to consider any Supreme Court nominees during President Bush's first term.

In 2003, Democrats began for the first time to use the filibuster to defeat judicial nominees who otherwise would have been confirmed.

In July 2007, Senator CHARLES SCHUMER—another friend of mine—said in a speech to the American Constitution Society that the Senate should not confirm a Supreme Court nominee during President Bush's final 18 months in office except in what he called "extraordinary circumstances."

When then-Chairman BIDEN said in 1992 that the state of the confirmation process should defer consideration of any Supreme Court nominees, no judicial nominee had been defeated by a filibuster in nearly 25 years. During President George W. Bush's tenure alone, Democrats led 20 filibusters that ultimately defeated five appeals court nominees.

More to the point, in 2006, then-Senators BIDEN, Clinton, REID, LEAHY, SCHUMER, DURBIN, and Obama voted to filibuster the Supreme Court nomination of Samuel Alito. President Obama did say last week that he now regrets voting to filibuster the Alito nomination, although it took him 3,670 days to reach that conclusion. He told me that last night at the White House in a private conversation we had, and I accept his statement. I like the President personally, but the record does not support the other side's audacious claims.

Finally, after the District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals—a court that many of us consider nearly as important as the Supreme Court, given its role in regulatory oversight—rightfully invalidated several key actions of the Obama administration, Democrats openly sought to fill that court with compliant judges in order to obtain more favorable decisions. The President's allies in this body, in their own words, "focus[ed] very intently on the D.C. Circuit" to "switch the majority" and were willing to "fill up the D.C. Circuit one way or another."

In the rush to eliminate any possible judicial obstacle to the administration's overreaching agenda, Senate Democrats in 2013 used a parliamentary maneuver—the so-called nuclear

option—to abolish the very nomination filibusters they had used so aggressively, but with one telling exception: They left alone the possibility of filibustering a Supreme Court nomination. Having done so, they must continue to believe the Senate's advice and consent role allows denying any confirmation vote to a Supreme Court nominee.

I am disappointed and, frankly, a little baffled at the response so far of my Democratic colleagues. Now-Vice President BIDEN and President Obama himself have both said that he was speaking in 1992 about a "hypothetical vacancy." Of course he was, and his purpose in doing so was to outline what the President and Senate should do if that hypothetical vacancy materialized. Well, that vacancy is no longer hypothetical; it is very real. Yet the Vice President now says the Senate should not take his advice after all.

Vice President BIDEN has also said that his words from 1992 are being taken out of context. We have all faced the inconvenient truth of our past words—especially in these areas—and the go-to objection is often about context.

I have two suggestions. First, my colleagues should read then-Chairman BIDEN's speech for themselves. It takes up 10 full pages in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, so there is as much context as anyone could possibly want to consider. A second option is to consider how the media had described that speech. One CBS news story, for example, has the headline: "Joe Biden Once Took GOP's Position on Supreme Court Vacancy." Perhaps they, too, are contextually challenged.

This is what the Washington Post said about the speech: "But Biden's remarks were especially pointed, voluminous and relevant to the current situation. Embedded in the roughly 20,000 words he delivered on the Senate floor that day were rebuttals to virtually every point Democrats have brought forth in the past week to argue for the consideration of Obama's nominee."

The constant refrain of Senate Democrats and their media allies over the past few days is that the Senate should just "do its job." Of course, what they really mean is that the Senate should do what they want the Senate to do. Then-Chairman BIDEN believed in 1992 that the Senate would be doing its job by deferring the confirmation process for a Supreme Court nominee. Senate Democrats presumably believed the Senate was doing its job by denying confirmation votes to judicial nominees under President George W. Bush. The minority leader presumably believed the Senate would be doing its job by not voting on nominations since, as he said in 2005, the Constitution does not require it to do so. And I can only assume that the senior Senator from New York believed the Sen-

ate would be doing its job if it followed his 2007 recommendation and refused to consider Supreme Court nominees in a President's final 18 months.

Perhaps the most audacious claim trafficked by the other side of the aisle over the past few days is, as the senior Senator from New York has said, "It doesn't matter what anybody said in the past," or, as President Obama put it, "Senators say stuff all the time."

In response, consider this point: Benjamin Franklin wrote in 1789 that "in this world, nothing can be said to be certain except death and taxes." I would like to add one more thing to that list: It is equally certain that if a Supreme Court Justice beloved by the left passed away in the final year of a Republican President's tenure, a Democratic-controlled Senate would not only refuse to consider any nominee of the lame-duck President but would also extensively cite then-Chairman BIDEN's 1992 speech and other such clear statements for support. No one should have any doubt about that.

Indeed, my friends on the other side seem to have fallen into the trap identified by Justice Scalia in his opinion in the Noel Canning case in which he warned that "individual Senators may have little interest in opposing Presidential encroachment on legislative prerogatives, especially when the encroacher is a President who is the leader of their own party."

Before I conclude, I cannot let pass the disturbing comments yesterday by my friend the minority leader about Judiciary Committee Chairman CHUCK GRASSLEY. I have served with Senator GRASSLEY for nearly 25 years on the Finance Committee and for 35 years on the Judiciary Committee. If there is anybody in this body who knows his own mind and makes his own decisions, it is CHUCK GRASSLEY.

I was flabbergasted by the minority leader's statement that Chairman GRASSLEY has allowed the majority leader to "run roughshod" over him. If the minority leader's case for committee action depends on grasping at such unwarranted and unjustified personal attacks, then he has simply exposed the weakness of his own position.

Under Chairman GRASSLEY's leadership, the Judiciary Committee has reported 21 bipartisan bills. Five of them have become law—the same number as during the entire 113th Congress under Democratic leadership. This record contrasts quite favorably to the senior Senator from Nevada's abysmal record in the last Congress as majority leader, in which the Senate set a record for bills that bypassed committee consideration and voted on only 15 amendments in all of 2014.

I know there are different opinions about whether or how to address filling the vacancy left by Justice Scalia's death, and I appreciate that. And I appreciate that Senators and others feel

strongly about these issues. Nevertheless, it is absolutely disingenuous for the minority leader, who today demands the same up-or-down confirmation vote he 25 times tried to prevent for Republican nominees, to suggest that Chairman GRASSLEY is doing anything other than what he believes is right. Senator GRASSLEY is one of the great Senators here. He is totally honest, and we all know it. He speaks his mind, and we all know that, too.

I have served longer on the Judiciary Committee than any other current Member of this body. During these past four decades, including during my more than 8 years as chairman of the committee, I have strived to develop a record of true fairness toward the nominations made by Presidents of each party. I have absolutely no doubt that my treatment of this vacancy fits squarely within this record of fairness.

The bottom line is simple: The Constitution obliges the Senate to take its role seriously as a check on the President in the consideration of lifetime appointments to the Federal courts, especially the Supreme Court. With voting already underway to replace our lame-duck President, delaying consideration of a nomination until after the election comports not only with historical practice but also with the prescriptions of key Democrats in the Senate and the White House over many years. By protecting the integrity of the Supreme Court from this environment, Senate Republicans are unquestionably doing the job the Constitution charges us to do. We can have differences, no question about it, but the Senate Republicans are acting responsibly.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, next week the Supreme Court is going to hear oral arguments in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*. This is a case that could not mean more to a woman's ability to exercise her constitutionally protected health care rights. As this case now moves forward, I want to take a few minutes today to explain how much is at stake and why it is so critical that Texas's extreme anti-abortion law be treated as exactly what it is: unconstitutional.

Madam President, in Texas and across the country, extreme rightwing conservatives continue to try and turn back the clock on American women. Just yesterday, the Fifth Circuit allowed a Louisiana law to go into effect. That law would leave women with only one health center where they can exercise their reproductive rights.

This debate is frustrating, it is disappointing, and, frankly, it is appalling that in the 21st century—43 years since the historic ruling in *Roe v. Wade*—we

even have to have a discussion about whether a woman has the right to make her own decisions about her own body. But one thing that has always kept me going is seeing that when their health and their rights and their opportunities are at stake, women stand up and make it clear why reproductive freedom is so important.

As we have fought back against Texas's extreme anti-abortion law, women have explained that because they were able to plan when they had children, they were able to escape abusive relationships. They have told us that because they had control over their own bodies, they were able to break cycles of poverty generations long and give back to their communities. They have shared their experiences of making the extraordinarily difficult decision to end a pregnancy out of medical necessity. These are powerful stories about the difference self-determination makes for women. These stories are possible because of constitutional rights affirmed in *Roe v. Wade* and protected in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*.

If Texas's extreme anti-abortion law stands, three-quarters of clinics in the State are expected to shut down—three-quarters of them. As a result, 900,000 women of childbearing age in Texas will have to drive as far as 300 miles round trip just to get the care they need. And women in States with laws like Texas will face similar barriers.

I believe strongly that a right means nothing without the ability to exercise that right. Laws like those in Texas and Louisiana, which are driven by extreme conservative efforts to undermine women's access to care, are, without question, getting in between women and their constitutional rights, especially the rights of women who cannot afford to take off work and drive hundreds of miles when they need health care.

Put simply: Texas's extreme anti-abortion law and laws like it across the country threaten women's lives. These laws are intended to take women back to the days before *Roe v. Wade* when women had less control over their bodies and their futures.

As a mother, as a grandmother, and as a U.S. Senator, I know that is absolutely the wrong direction for our country. Our daughters and granddaughters should have more opportunity and stronger rights, not less. That is why 163 Democratic and Independent Members of the House and Senate urged the Supreme Court in an amicus brief to stand up for women's constitutionally protected health care rights. And it is the reason that even some of our Republican colleagues are focused on doing everything they can to undermine the Supreme Court.

My Democratic colleagues and I are focused on how much the Court's deci-

sion in this case will mean for women now and for generations to come. So instead of trying to obstruct justice, we are urging the Supreme Court to ensure justice by upholding settled law. For women, being able to exercise their constitutionally protected reproductive rights means health, it means freedom, and it means opportunity. We cannot and we should not go backward.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I rise today to recognize February as National Children's Dental Health Month. Since 1981, this month has afforded us the opportunity to acknowledge the importance of children's dental health, recognize the significant strides we have made and the work that remains to be done, and renew our commitment to ensuring all children in our country have access to affordable and comprehensive dental services. To echo former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, "there is no health without oral health."

Despite being largely preventable, tooth decay is the single most chronic health condition among children and adolescents in the United States. It is 5 times more common than asthma and 20 times more common than diabetes. Nearly half, 44 percent, of the children in the United States will have at least one cavity by the time they start kindergarten. Children with cavities in their primary or "baby" teeth are three times more likely to develop cavities in their permanent adult teeth, and the early loss of baby teeth can make it harder for permanent teeth to grow in properly.

Left untreated, tooth decay can not only destroy a child's teeth, but also can have a debilitating impact on his or her health and quality of life. Tooth and gum pain can impede a child's healthy development, including the ability to learn, play, and eat nutritious foods. Recent studies have shown that children with poor oral health are nearly three times more likely to miss school due to dental pain, and children reporting recent toothaches are four times more likely to have a lower grade point average than their peers without dental pain.

Tooth decay and oral health problems also disproportionately affect children from low-income families and minority communities. According to the National Institutes of Health, approximately 80 percent of childhood dental disease is concentrated in 25 percent of the population. These children and families often face inordinately high barriers to receiving essential oral health care, and, simply put, the consequences can be devastating.

Madam President, many have heard me speak before about the tragic loss of Deamonte Driver, a 12-year-old Prince George's County resident. In 2007, Deamonte's death was particularly heartbreaking because it was entirely preventable. What started out as a toothache turned into a severe brain infection that could have been prevented by an \$80 extraction. After multiple surgeries and a lengthy hospital stay, sadly, Deamonte passed away—9 years ago today. So today we mark the ninth anniversary of his tragic death.

Since the tragic death of Deamonte in 2007, we have made significant progress in improving access to pediatric dental care in the country. For example, in 2009, Congress reauthorized the Children's Health Insurance Program—CHIP—with an important addition: a guaranteed pediatric dental benefit. Today, CHIP provides affordable comprehensive health coverage, including dental coverage, to more than 8 million children. Thanks to CHIP, we now have the highest number of children in history with medical and dental coverage. In addition, in 2010, Congress included pediatric dental services in the set of essential health benefits established under the Affordable Care Act.

I am very proud my State of Maryland has been recognized as a national leader in pediatric dental health coverage. In a 2011 Pew Center report, "The State of Children's Dental Health," Maryland earned an A and was the only State to meet seven of the eight policy benchmarks for addressing children's dental health needs.

In addition, in the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange, every qualified health plan now includes pediatric dental coverage, so families do not have to pay a separate premium for dental coverage for their children and do not have a separate deductible or out-of-pocket limit for pediatric dental services.

However, Madam President, more work remains to be done. For example, according to a recent report by the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General, three out of four children covered by Medicaid did not receive all required dental services over a recent 2-year period, with one in every four failing to see a dentist at all. This is simply unacceptable. We must act to ensure that all American children have access to comprehensive oral health care.

I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort. Tragically, our health care system was not there for Deamonte. Today, on the ninth anniversary of his death, let us honor his memory and pledge to do better for the children in our country by working together to build on the significant strides we have made over the past 9 years, and to ensure that all children have access to affordable and comprehensive pediatric dental services.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, notwithstanding our occasional dustups and kerfuffles and disagreements that we have in the Senate—and that is not a bad thing—the Senate is supposed to be a place where differences of opinion and different points of view are debated, voted on, and played out here on the floor of the Senate in an attempt to achieve consensus on a bipartisan basis and make legislative progress for the American people.

I have to say that since 2015, under new leadership, this Chamber has been marked by a spirit of hard work, bipartisanship, and accomplishment. I am sure we have all been frustrated by the things we cannot accomplish because, frankly, there is no consensus, but that shouldn't deter us from working together where we can to make progress for the American people. So I am frankly proud of what the Senate has done, again on a bipartisan basis.

I think one of the greatest frustrations under the previous leadership was that even if you were a Member of the majority party, you could not get amendments on legislation. You could not get votes on amendments. So you were basically shut out of the process, not just if you were in the minority but including when you were in the majority. That is a little hard to explain to your constituents back home. Indeed, I think that is one reason we saw some races for the Senate turn around the way they did in 2014.

The truth is that under new leadership we have proved we can work together on the issues that matter most to the people of our country. That is not to say there will not be some partisan differences. There is a reason people choose to be Republicans or Democrats. But my experience has been that most of the time we agree on the goal, just not on the means to achieve the goal.

While bipartisanship is important, leadership really does matter, and I think we have seen what a difference it can make in the 114th Congress—since the last election in 2014. I will mention just a couple of examples.

One is the first major overhaul to education reform since No Child Left Behind. We also passed a major long-term Transportation bill. I know it seems like a small thing in isolation, but it really does make a difference to fast-growing States such as mine—Texas—to be able to plan ahead when it comes to maintaining and operating our transportation infrastructure. Frankly, it saves taxpayer money when you can plan on the long haul rather than in a series of starts and stops.

A subject that is near and dear to my heart is the first major help we have been able to provide to victims of human trafficking in 25 years. Because of a resource deficit at the local level, a lot of big-hearted people who wanted to help simply didn't have the resources to do it—simple things such as rescuing people who are victims of human trafficking and providing them a safe place to stay. Now, as a result of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, we are going to be able to provide through a victim's compensation fund up to \$60 million a year to help provide grants for housing, for rescue, and for victims of human trafficking.

It is true there are some differences between the political parties, and that shouldn't be a matter for panic. We shouldn't say: Well, I guess we can't do anything since we can't do this one thing. It is certainly true with respect to the recent passing of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia.

It is clear that we have reached a major point of disagreement or I guess you could look at it this way: We actually are agreeing with the position that Vice President BIDEN took when he was chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. We are now agreeing with the position that was taken by then-Senate Democratic leader REID, and we are agreeing with the position that was taken in 2007 by Senator CHUCK SCHUMER, a Member of the senior Senate leadership of the Democratic Party.

I mentioned these yesterday. I will just go over them really quickly again. Surely, our Democratic friends don't think that Republicans, when we are in the majority, ought to be constrained by different rules than apply to them. That does not make any sense at all. How foolish we would be, in the majority, to say that this is the way that Democrats view the rules and that we are going to apply a different set of rules to ourselves.

This is what Senator REID said in 2005. He said:

The duties of the Senate are set forth in the U.S. Constitution. Nowhere in that document does it say the Senate has a duty to give Presidential appointees a vote.

That is a fact. Senator REID is correct. The President proposes a nominee, and the Senate either grants or withholds consent under the terms of the Constitution itself. But of course, that is what Senator REID was suggesting back when George W. Bush was President of the United States—that the Senate was under no obligation to even give those nominees a vote.

Then, more recently, there is Senator SCHUMER, who I know is really stirred up about our intention not to process a nominee this year and to have a referendum as a result of this Presidential election on who makes that appointment—perhaps for the next 30 years. That is how long Justice Scalia served on the Supreme Court of the United

States. But here is Senator CHUCK SCHUMER, the senior Senator from New York. This was 18 months before President George W. Bush left office—18 months, or a year and a half, before he left office.

Senator SCHUMER said: For the rest of this President's term, we "should reverse the presumption of confirmation." In other words, he was saying there was a presumption against confirming. He said he would recommend to his colleagues that we should "not confirm a Supreme Court nominee except in extraordinary circumstances."

Then, of course, more recently a little research was done into the record of Vice President BIDEN when he was Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee back in 1992. He said: The Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination until after the political campaign season is over. Action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over.

So it strikes me as rather hypocritical for our Democratic friends to say that these were the rules when George W. Bush was in office or when his father, George Herbert Walker Bush, was in office, in the case of 1992, but now that President Obama is in office, a different set of rules ought to apply.

It would be completely hypocritical of them to say that. But this is a matter of disagreement. There is no debate about that. But it does not mean that just because we are divided along party lines on this matter that there are other things we cannot do together. I think our friends across the aisle would agree that there is a lot of important work that we can and should do together.

The chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, along with the ranking member from Washington, has worked diligently on energy legislation that we are currently considering. It is legislation that would update and modernize our country's energy infrastructure for the 21st century. We still need to find a way forward to deal with this legislation. I know this is an opinion that many members on the Energy Committee and in this Chamber share on a bipartisan basis.

There is another piece of legislation that has strong bipartisan support that was voted out of the Senate Judiciary Committee, unanimously, called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, known as CARA. This legislation is in response to the growing opioid abuse epidemic that affects our Nation, an epidemic that has claimed the lives of tens of thousands of Americans each year, along with the concomitant scourge of cheap heroin coming across our borders from Mexico, because when people can't get the pre-

scription drugs—the opioids—then too many of them revert to cheaper heroin with disastrous consequences.

I know that on a bipartisan basis the junior Senators from New Hampshire and Ohio have particularly led on this on my side of the aisle. But they have worked with the junior Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and the senior Senator from Minnesota, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, to make this a top priority. So we are going to have a chance to show very soon that we are committed to actually getting important legislation, such as the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, passed by this Chamber.

This week also, the senior Senator from Vermont, Mr. LEAHY, who is the ranking member on the Senate Judiciary Committee, and I introduced legislation called the Justice for All Reauthorization Act. That bill would provide important resources to victims of domestic violence, and it would target resources on the rape kit backlog, which is, just frankly, an embarrassment to our criminal justice system.

It has been estimated that there are as many as 400,000 rape kits; that is, forensic evidence taken after a sexual assault that would, if tested, reveal the identity of the attacker through DNA testing.

There is just no excuse not to test those rape kits, which are part of that backlog. We know that many of the assailants in these cases are serial abusers, and many times we can stop someone before they attack again, if we will just test those kits. There is about \$120 million each year that Congress appropriates for the Debbie Smith Act. Debbie Smith is the person for whom this legislation is named—and quite appropriately so. She has been a champion of eliminating that rape kit backlog. That is a large part of what the Justice for All Reauthorization Act would help us do.

So I would ask our friends across the aisle, while they come out on the floor or give press conferences and express mock horror at the fact that Republicans in the majority now would apply the same standards that they advocated for when they were in the majority, to tone down the rhetoric and avoid the hypocrisy that seems so apparent when they argue for different standards today than they advocated in the past. That is nothing more, nothing less than hypocritical.

What is out of line is when you have personal attacks against the Members of the Senate, particularly the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. The minority leader, the Democratic leader, made a personal attack against the chairman of the Judiciary Committee right here on the Senate floor just yesterday. What he said was so far from the truth that it is not even worth repeating.

But what I would like to make clear is that Chairman GRASSLEY, the chair-

man of the Judiciary Committee, has made a big impression on this Chamber and on the legislation that we have passed. I mentioned the CARA Act that passed out of the Judiciary Committee unanimously. Senator GRASSLEY has a decades-long dedication to serving the people of Iowa in this body.

So I don't know how the Democratic leader can come out and personally attack a colleague who has done an outstanding job as chairman of the Judiciary Committee, while basically what we are embracing is what he himself argued for in 2005. How does that work?

Well, I would say the Democratic leader does not have a lot of firm ground to stand on when it comes to judicial nominations. I would like to remind my colleagues that the Democratic leader, just a few short years ago, took the position that there were no fixed rules when it comes to judicial nominations. Then, in 2014, he simply tore up the rule book by invoking the so-called nuclear option, breaking the rules to change the rules on judicial nominations, as he attempted—successfully, I will say—to pack the District of Columbia Court of Appeals by breaking the rules of the Senate in order to pack the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, which many have said is the second most important court in the Nation.

So I hope he will take into consideration his prior actions, which are far more disruptive and poisoned the well of this institution more than anything we are talking about doing now, especially when we are agreeing with him, at least on this point.

But most of all, I would hope that we can conduct our debates in a civil and a dignified fashion. People watch what we do and we say here. When people come out here and make hypocritical attacks, I don't think it reflects very well on the person making that attack, and I don't think it reflects well on the Senate as a body. It is certainly not a good example for our young people or other people who might be looking at how we conduct ourselves as they think: Well, that is the way we air our differences. Then certainly they can be forgiven for thinking: Well, maybe that is the way I ought to conduct myself. That is not the message we should be conveying.

Well, we can continue to do a lot of good work here on a bipartisan basis in the Senate this year. It is true that we do have a major difference of opinion when it comes to filling the vacancy left by the untimely death of Justice Scalia. But it is true that we are only applying the rules that were advocated for by the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, now Vice President BIDEN, in 1992, and by minority leader REID in 2005 and Senator SCHUMER in 2007.

Surely they cannot expect us to apply a different set of rules today than they themselves said they would

apply if the shoe were on the other foot. But we can still work together on other legislation, such as the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, such as the energy legislation we are considering now, because we do have a lot of work left to do, and there is a lot we can accomplish together.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). Without objection, it is so ordered.

SAFE PIPES ACT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I wish to take a moment to speak today on a bipartisan pipeline safety bill that will soon be considered by the full Senate.

Last December, the Senate Commerce Committee unanimously passed legislation to strengthen pipeline safety across our Nation. I have been working with my colleagues, Senator BOOKER, the Presiding Officer Senator DAINES, and Senator PETERS, on this bill for nearly 9 months, and we are proud of this bipartisan legislation.

Over the past several months, we have held several hearings, including one in the Presiding Officer's home State, in Billings, MO, last September. Not far from Billings, in January of 2015, the Poplar Pipeline spilled nearly 30,000 gallons of crude oil into the State's precious Yellowstone River. This incident reinforced the need for a robust update to our laws regarding both the pipeline system and the government agency charged with keeping it safe.

Pipeline infrastructure transports vital energy resources to homes, businesses, schools, and commercial centers across the United States. According to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, or PHMSA, more than 2.5 million miles of pipelines traverse this country. Our bill, the SAFE PIPES Act, would increase congressional oversight over pipeline safety programs at PHMSA. It would also provide greater flexibility and resources to State pipeline safety officials. Further, the bill would require PHMSA to reprioritize congressional directives and conduct an assessment of the pipeline integrity management program.

Pipeline safety affects citizens in each and every one of our States. In my home State of Nebraska, we experienced this just a couple months ago. In January, a ruptured natural gas pipeline exploded in the Old Market area of downtown Omaha. The disaster destroyed a historic building, and it did

injure several people. The SAFE PIPES Act would encourage the use of advanced technology for pipeline mapping and help avoid accidents like this moving forward.

In California, the massive Aliso Canyon underground natural gas storage facility leak posed a serious public health threat and displaced hundreds of families from their homes. The SAFE PIPES Act would direct PHMSA to create crucial minimum standards for underground natural gas storage facilities. It would also establish an Aliso Canyon working group to ensure that similar incidents are avoided in the future. I appreciate the strong support provided by the California Senators, BARBARA BOXER and DIANNE FEINSTEIN, who helped draft the working group provisions there. They also serve as co-sponsors of our SAFE PIPES Act.

The Senate must pass this robust, bipartisan legislation. We all have a responsibility to prioritize not only the efficient permitting and construction of energy infrastructure but also the safety and the security of our Nation's extensive pipeline network.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JOHN ORIZOTTI

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, John Orizotti, most famously known as "Pork Chop John," passed away on Monday in his Butte home at the age of 82. Montanans know John for his efforts to expand his restaurant's flourishing business. John bought Pork Chop John on 8 West Mercury Street in 1969, when sandwiches sold for 65 cents.

According to his oldest son Rick Orizotti, owning the shop was something he wanted to do his whole life, and he always kept his eye on it. Rick said: "He was truly very proud to be Pork Chop John. He was a man that really loved going to work, really worked hard."

John was born in Butte on September 25, 1933. He graduated from Butte High School in 1951 and married his high school sweetheart Mary Carol when he was 21 and she was 19.

He worked for his father-in-law Dan Piazzola at the Better Meat Market and then went on to open the Main Public Market in 1960 with Piazzola before buying Pork Chop John 9 years later. The restaurant has expanded to a second location on 2400 Harrison Avenue, which was formerly a Texaco gas station. After John retired 20 years

ago, two of his sons, Ed and Tom Orizotti, took over the restaurant and currently run Pork Chop John.

I remember as a kid in Montana, it was the stop you made when you were on a trip. It didn't matter whether you were on a sports trip, band trip or a speech debate trip, you stopped at Pork Chop John's in Butte to grab something to eat.

In fact, the very first stop my wife and I made after we announced our campaign for the U.S. Congress in Bozeman was at Pork Chop John's in Butte to grab a sandwich.

All seven of Orizotti's children have worked at the restaurant at some point in their lives and the pork chop batter recipe remains a family secret to this day. The restaurant itself has been in the family for 47 years.

John was greatly beloved by many in his community. His past employees and friends have nothing but wonderful things to say about him, including how he would put his whole heart into all of his endeavors. Others called him gentle, caring, honest, and never having a bad word to say about anybody. He has probably been best described as one of the legends of Butte and a "Butte icon."

John Orizotti made a lasting impact on his family, community, and business. May his legacy of hard work and kind heart be forever honored and remembered.

Cindy and I offer our deepest condolences to the family.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, the sudden passing and tragic death of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Scalia leaves us with a vacancy to fill on our country's highest Court, but it shouldn't lead us to a yearlong political standoff.

Article II, section 2, of the Constitution is clear: The President shall nominate a Supreme Court Justice with the advice and consent of the Senate. It doesn't say "may." It doesn't say "maybe." It isn't followed by a clause which says that Senators don't have to do their jobs in an election year. It doesn't say anything about that. And that is the tradition of our country, that Senators—we run for office willingly, enthusiastically. We work hard

to get here. We take an oath of office. Every couple of weeks, we get a paycheck. And some are saying we simply shouldn't do our job and move forward with this nomination.

Complete refusal to consider any nominee from this President is outrageous. It is indefensible, and it is unprecedented in spite of what some of my colleagues would like to say. Don't take my word for it. Senator GRASSLEY, the Republican chairman of the Judiciary Committee, said as recently as 2008 that "the reality is that the Senate has never stopped confirming judicial nominees during the last few months of a President's term." The country didn't elect Barack Obama—whether you voted for him or against him—for a 3-year term or three-fifths of a term; the country elected him for a 4-year term.

Since the Civil War, no Supreme Court vacancy has been left open for a year. For the past century, the Senate has taken action on every single pending Supreme Court nominee.

I talk to people in Ohio all the time, Republicans and Democrats alike. I talked to a Republican today who supports Senator RUBIO for President and probably votes for Republicans for President in every election. He said: I just can't believe what MITCH MCCONNELL did. I can't believe my party—the people I vote for in Senate races and House races—would possibly say that we are not going to have a hearing on this nominee.

We are not even going to meet with this nominee. I mean, a number of Senate Republicans said: We won't even shake hands. We aren't even willing to meet with a Supreme Court nominee whom the President of the United States, under the Constitution, shall appoint, whom the President of the United States submits to the U.S. Senate.

Let's look at what has happened in the past. In 1988, which was President Reagan's final year in office, a Democratic majority unanimously confirmed Justice Anthony Kennedy. That was in 1988. Again, President Reagan submitted his name in 1988. He was confirmed by a Democratic Senate. In fact, the Senate has been confirming Justices in Presidential elections since our Nation's founding. Two of President Washington's nominees were confirmed during his last years in office. Since 1916, every pending Supreme Court nominee has either received a hearing or been confirmed quickly before a hearing even took place. Think about that. A pending Supreme Court nominee has never been denied a hearing in the history of the United States. The only exception is the nominees who were confirmed without a hearing. Yet, within hours—I think only minutes, actually—within less than an hour, I believe, of the announcement of Justice Scalia's passing, the Repub-

lican leader of the Senate, the majority leader of the Senate pretty much said: We are not going to do our job. We are not even going to have a hearing on whomever the President of the United States nominates. We are not only not going to have a hearing, he then said later, I am not even going to meet with that person. Imagine that.

So that nomination—whomever President Obama nominates—that vacancy will be more than a year for sure if the Senate does nothing on this confirmation. Again, the last time there was a vacancy for as long as 1 year was during the Civil War. It was 150 years ago. That is because there was a Civil War and the Congress wasn't very functional in those days. Members were leaving the Court, leaving the Senate and House after secession in 1861 and all the other things that happened.

We have nearly a year left in President Obama's term, about a quarter of the term the American people elected him to serve. That is plenty of time for the Senate to carefully consider and review a nominee.

President Obama—and just to make it clear, he was not just elected, he was elected decisively. I believe he is only the second Democrat in American history—surely the second Democrat since the Civil War—he is only the second Democrat since the Civil War to at least twice win a majority of the popular vote. Only President Obama, who got more than 50 percent of the vote twice, and President Roosevelt, who got more than 50 percent of the vote, I believe, four times—they were the only Democrats in 150 years who got a majority of the vote twice. President Clinton was elected twice with a plurality. President Wilson was elected twice with a plurality. President Obama and President Roosevelt were decisive wins. This wasn't an accidental win. This wasn't a candidate put into office by a decision of the U.S. Supreme Court. This was a legitimate election and a decisive win.

Let's look at some of those nominees. The longest nomination on record was Justice Brandeis, who I believe was the first Jewish American to be appointed to the Supreme Court. His took 125 days. President Obama has more than 300 days left in his term.

If we fail to confirm a nominee, if Senate Republicans fail to do their job—they were elected. They were sworn in. They get paid. All of us do. We are just asking them to do their job. But if Senate Republicans don't do their job, two Supreme Court terms will pass before a new Justice is appointed.

Yesterday I spoke with Professor Peter Shane, a constitutional law professor at Ohio State's Moritz College of Law in Columbus. Professor Shane said that a vacancy of this unprecedented length on the Supreme Court "will compromise its ability to perform its

proper constitutional function" and it will create "prolonged uncertainty."

I have heard so many Republicans in the Senate say that we do all these things and create uncertainty—uncertainty in the economy, uncertainty in regulation, uncertainty in the consumer bureau, whatever. This is the worst kind of uncertainty. It is self-inflicted, and it affects entirely one-third of the government, one of the three branches of government. Without a full bench, justice could be further delayed for Americans who fought for years to have their cases heard. Split decisions—4 to 4 would leave legal questions unanswered and leave Americans in different parts of the country subject to different laws. How do we prevent that? Do your job, I say to my colleagues in the Senate.

In the past, Senator MCCONNELL himself has agreed with a normal, deliberative approach for Supreme Court nominees. He said in 2005: "Our job is to react to that nomination in a respectful and dignified way, and at the end of the process, to give that person an up-or-down vote as all nominees who have majority support have gotten throughout the history of the country."

That is what he said a decade ago.

Now he is saying the Senate will not even do our jobs. Again, we run for these offices, we get sworn in to these offices when we win elections, we get paid every two weeks; we should be doing our job. I am not saying every Republican has to vote for the President's nominee. What we are saying is meet with them. The President will do the nomination. We should begin hearings. We should meet with these nominees individually. For every Supreme Court nomination since I have been in the Senate, I have had an hour-long meeting with each nominee, and we then make our decisions based on that. We have not said we are not going to do our work, we are not going to do our jobs. How would that make sense?

The only difference now is that we have a different President. Time and again the Democrats in the Senate have given Republican Supreme Court nominees a fair hearing and the up-or-down vote they deserve. During the 7 years the Vice President chaired the Judiciary Committee, when he was a Senator here, he did his job. He oversaw the confirmation of three Justices who were nominated by Republican Presidents.

In the case of Clarence Thomas, he even allowed Justice Thomas to have an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor, even though the committee failed to report his nomination with a favorable recommendation. So what does that mean? That means that when Clarence Thomas was in front of the Judiciary Committee, a majority of members said no, they didn't want to confirm him, yet they still moved his nomination to the floor. They didn't filibuster.

They didn't require 60 votes. They just said: A majority vote wins. Thomas won. Even though Democratic leadership voted against him, Thomas won 52-48. Nobody blocked him, which they could have easily done. And the Senate did its job, the same thing we are asking the Senate to do today.

Both Justice Thomas and Justice Alito were confirmed by the Senate with fewer than 60 votes. That means, again, they could have blocked them with a filibuster. They didn't. They allowed both of them to come forward. Even though they had lots of opposition, they still allowed an up-or-down vote. Yet this time Senate Republicans are refusing to hold hearings and are, in many cases, even refusing to meet with the nominee.

Do your job. You were sworn in. You ran for these offices and then you were sworn in. Do your job. You get paid to do these jobs. Show up for work and do your job.

Can we imagine how Republicans would have reacted if Democrats had shown Ronald Reagan this same disrespect when we considered Justice Kennedy's nomination? I wasn't here then, but we certainly understand the history of the story.

The consistent attempt to delegitimize a democratically elected President is politics at its worst. In 2013, the Republicans didn't like the results of the 2012 election, so they shut down the government. Three years later they still don't like the results of the 2012 election, so they are saying: Well, forget the 2012 election, this is all about the 2016 election.

What it is really about is that the President of the United States was elected in 2012 with the majority of the vote and in an electoral college landslide. He was elected for a 4-year term—not a 3-year and 1-month term, not three-fifths of a term—a 4-year term. American history, in spite of what my colleagues like to say with their revisionist history—in spite of what they like to say about revisionist history, the fact is we have done this in the fourth year or the eighth year of many Presidents. Now they are trying to—as they shut down the government in response to the 2012 election of which they didn't like the outcome, now they are trying to shut down the Supreme Court process with a year left in this President's term. You don't shut the whole system down when you don't get your way. It is a dangerous precedent that undermines our democracy.

Our friends on the other side of the aisle justified this saying: We need to let the people make the choice. Well, they did. They made their choice in 2012 by selecting a President for a 4-year term. This is the fourth year of his term. There is no reason this President shouldn't have the obligation and the right to nominate a candidate and

send a name to the Senate, and there is no reason that Senators shouldn't do their jobs—have hearings, meet with the nominee, bring him to the floor for a vote with a 50-vote threshold—a majority vote—and see what happens. They may vote no. If they vote no, that is a legitimate exercise, but if they are not willing to go through the process and see what might happen—see what the public judges as the right decision in whether to confirm or not—they are not doing their jobs.

It may be asking too much when I have seen the partisanship and the head-in-the-sand attitudes and the fight-this-president-at-all-costs views of so many on the other side, but I expect this Senate to put politics aside and give a fair hearing and an up-or-down vote to any qualified nominee because that is our job.

Simply put, we need to do our job.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from Nebraska.

HONORING NEBRASKA'S SOLDIERS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN COMBAT

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I rise today to continue my tribute to this current generation of Nebraska heroes by remembering those who died defending our freedom in Iraq and Afghanistan. Each of our fallen Nebraskans has a special story to tell. Over the next year and beyond, I will continue to devote time here on the Senate floor to remember each of them in a special tribute to their life and to their service to our country.

Time after time, Nebraska's Gold Star families tell me the same thing. They hope and pray that the supreme sacrifices of their loved ones will always be remembered.

SERGEANT JEFFREY HANSEN

Today I want to celebrate the life of SGT Jeffrey Hansen of Cairo, NE.

Jeff grew up with the heart of a soldier. He enjoyed an all-American childhood, spending time outdoors, hunting, playing football, and staying in shape. Born in Minden, NE, and a 1993 graduate of Bertrand High School, Jeff attended college at the University of Nebraska at Kearney before graduating in 1997 with a bachelor's degree in athletic training.

Over the years, the urge to serve his country tugged at Jeff. He decided to enlist with the Nebraska Army National Guard in January of 2000. A natural leader, he quickly rose through the ranks, serving as an assistant squad leader, fire team leader, and squad leader before his last assignment as a fire support sergeant.

Jeff exhibited outstanding leadership as a member of Troop A in the 1-167th Cavalry of the Nebraska Army National Guard. Friends remember Jeff as an awesome teacher and an amazing

mentor. SGT Brad Jessen recalls how Jeff was very soft spoken, but he always had something intelligent to say.

In civilian life, Jeff became a Kearney police officer in 2002, and he later joined the Department of Veterans Affairs Police force in Grand Island. James Arends, who worked with him as a sergeant in the VA Police Service, said, "Jeff was the strong, silent type. He didn't talk a lot, but when he did, people listened."

Jeff was also a loving husband. He met his wife Jenny at a football game at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Fate brought them together, and they began a natural and a comfortable relationship that blossomed quickly. Jenny excelled at golf in college. Jeff would attend her tournaments, cheering her on as the team progressed to a winning season. Then, after the final round of the 2002 NCAA Division II Women's Golf Tournament, Jeff came up to Jenny on the 18th green where he knelt down and proposed.

That same year, Jeff was promoted to sergeant and recognized for outstanding gunnery marksmanship. Jeff and Jenny also began discussing their future plans. Their talks became more intense when Jeff's unit, the 1-167th Cavalry, was called to duty in Bosnia.

Jeff and Jenny wasted no time, and they were married on October 12, 2002. Two days later, Jeff left for Bosnia. After 11 months, Jeff returned home and the two settled down back in Cairo, NE.

A world away, the war in Iraq continued. By the fall of 2005, the American public was hopeful that major military operations in the region would be coming to an end. However, the bombing of the al-Askari mosque in February of 2006 ignited a Sunni-Shia civil war that plunged Iraq deeper into violence. At that time, the American military was operating as a peacekeeping force, but things quickly turned deadly, and the coalition found themselves engaged in dramatic wartime operations.

Jeff's unit arrived in Iraq just before the al-Askari mosque bombing. Operating out of Balad Air Base, his unit, "the Cav," was known for their ability to complete security operations in one of the most violent areas of the country. The days were long, and with each mission they faced imminent danger. All the while, Jeff kept his head in the game and inspired his battle buddies to do the same.

While Jeff was gone, Jenny remained active, and she continued to excel on the golf course. She won the Nebraska Women's State Amateur Golf Championship and qualified for the 2006 U.S. Women's Amateur Open. As she continued to advance, Jenny began thinking about playing the sport professionally, so she wrote to Jeff, asking for his guidance and thoughts on this important new stage—one they would share and navigate on their journey together.

Back in Iraq, Jeff headed out on patrol where conditions worsened with limited visibility. Out of nowhere, Jeff's humvee hit a sinkhole and it flipped, landing upside down in a canal. As this was unfolding, Jeff pushed the other soldiers out of the vehicle, all of whom survived the crash. Meanwhile, Jeff was still in the humvee and critically injured. SGT Brad Jessen remained at the scene, keeping Jeff alive until the medical team arrived. Jeff was quickly flown to Germany for emergency care.

Jenny was at work when the phone rang. "There's been an accident," she was told. "We need you to come to Germany."

It seemed like an eternity before Jenny was able to reach Jeff's side at the hospital in Germany. As soon as she arrived, it was clear Jeff was not going to make it home. He passed away a few days later, with Jenny at his side.

Jenny returned home to Nebraska, saying goodbye to Jeff one last time and bracing for a life without the man she loved.

Shortly after the funeral, a letter arrived. It was from Jeff, and there was a reply to her questions about golf and their future. He had written to tell his wife to pursue her dream. He told her to find the focus and dedication that she yearned for in her life. If there was something she wanted to pursue, he would support her every step of the way.

So Jenny pursued that dream. She competed for and she earned a spot on the Ladies Professional Golf Association tour, and she played in a number of professional tournaments.

But as any Nebraskan can understand, "the good life" pulled her back. Today, she is the mother of three beautiful children. She still reads the letters from Jeff every once in a while, and Jeff is with her every day in her heart.

For his service in Iraq, Jeff was awarded the Iraqi Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal. He was also posthumously awarded the Bronze Star, the Army Good Conduct Medal, and the Overseas Service Ribbon.

Jeff is survived by his widow Jenny, his father Robert, and his brother Jeremy. Our Nation and all Nebraskans are forever indebted to his service and sacrifice.

SGT Jeffrey Hansen is a hero, and I am honored to tell his story, lest we forget his life and the freedom he fought to defend.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I think we are all very touched and

moved by Senator FISCHER's remarks and the thoughts of the entire body go out to Sergeant Hansen's family and those he left behind.

I am on the floor today with no better news. We all woke up just days ago to the news of another mass shooting, this time in Kalamazoo. Saturday, another community was changed forever by gun violence. We live it every day in Connecticut, still mourning 20 dead first-graders and 6 teachers who protected them.

In this case, the alleged killer used a semiautomatic handgun to kill six people and injure at least two others across three incidents between about 6 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. That Saturday night the shooter first shot a woman several times, leaving her seriously wounded. Then, next to a car dealership, he gunned down a father and son. Later, he approached two cars that were parked outside a neighboring Cracker Barrel restaurant. He opened fire there and killed four.

I have been coming down to the floor now for almost 3 years telling the stories of victims of gun violence. I am going to talk about six today. Unfortunately, the statistics tell us there are 86 every single day killed by guns—2,600 a month and 31,000 a year. The vast majority of them are due to mass shootings. Most of the individuals on this list are killed by virtue of suicides or by individual acts of violence—domestic violence, for instance—the violence that happens in cities of America like Hartford, New Haven, New York, and Los Angeles.

What is astounding to many of us is that despite these numbers—and I have made this case before—which are unlike those of any other industrialized country, we do absolutely nothing about it. We do nothing about it. We don't pass stronger gun laws. We don't strengthen our mental health system. We don't give more law enforcement resources. All we do is just catalog the numbers of dead every single day and every single month. The statistics apparently are not moving this place.

Hopefully—my hope is the voices of these victims can give you a sense of who these people are. Just the trail of tragedy that is left behind—researchers will tell you there are often over a dozen people who experience serious levels of trauma in the wake of one person being killed by guns.

Maybe these stories will change people's minds. Stories such as that of Mary Jo Nye, who was 60 years old when she was killed. She was enjoying a night out on the town with her former college roommate, her sister-in-law, Mary Lou Nye, and her friends, Barbara Hawthorne and Judy Brown, when all of their lives were taken by this seemingly random shooting.

Mary Jo was a retired teacher from Calhoun Community High School, where she dedicated her time and tal-

ents to students who were at risk of dropping out. That is not an easy job, but she put her mind to it and put her heart to it. One colleague commented that "she was an English teacher, but she was a lot more than that to the students who don't come from great home lives."

A friend said she was "always reaching out to others and helping families." This friend also said:

It just doesn't make sense. Mary Jo saw helping others as her calling in both her professional and her personal life. It's a tragedy.

Mary Lou Nye met her sister-in-law, Mary Jo, when they were in college where they were actually roommates. Mary Lou fell in love with one of her roommate's older brothers, eventually getting married, making the roommates not only friends but also family. Mary Lou dedicated her time as a manager of the Michigan Secretary of State branch in South Haven prior to its closing. She shared her love of children for the last 6 to 7 years working at a daycare center. A local pastor said she always had a smile on her face and was loved by the kids she worked with. "It was never about her," he said, "always about making sure things were right for the children." Her son said his mom "loved reading books and doted on her grandson," his 5-year-old, Geoffrey. She, herself, was the youngest of five children. Her grandson Geoffrey will not be able to spend that time with his grandmother any longer.

Sixty-eight-year-old Barbara Hawthorne was in the backseat of Mary Jo Nye's car when she was killed.

Her family said:

Our 'Auntie Barb' was easy to laugh. A generous, giving person who loved her many friends and family. She was a true "hippie" who marched for civil rights in the Deep South, recycled everything that came through the house, and believed in marching to your own drummer. She loved the theater and live music and shared tickets to performances whenever possible.

Dorothy Brown, known as Judy among her friends and neighbors, was also with Mary Jo, Mary Lou, and Barbara. Neighbors remember Judy's generous and friendly spirit. She readily shared her homegrown herbs and always took time to share a friendly wave with her neighbors. One neighbor who did odd jobs for her occasionally, helping out around the house, always got a gift card from her at the end of the year. She was described by one neighbor as "a sweet, sweet old lady. You couldn't ask for a better neighbor."

Tyler Smith was 17 years old and he was with his father shopping for a car when the shooter drove by and opened fire, killing both the father and the son. Tyler had a very bright future ahead of him. He was enrolled in the marketing entrepreneurship program at the local tech center in addition to high school. He was, according to friends and family, studying marketing

so he could help open a family business with his father, sister, and his cousin.

The superintendent, who knew Tyler well—it means something about a kid if the superintendent knew this particular student well. That tells you he was marked for something big. He said he “was such a great kid. He always had a smile on his face, always happy and very well liked.”

His father, known as Rich, was killed alongside him while they were shopping for a car. A family friend remembers Rich, saying, “When Rich was in your presence he automatically put you in a good mood—he had this contagious laugh and he always smiled.”

A friend said:

Rich was always there to lighten it up and laugh it off. . . . He was such a wonderful man.

Those are 6 people of the average of 86 killed every day, just in that one episode in Kalamazoo. What is so sad is that when the shootings in Kalamazoo began that Saturday evening, a dozen other people had already been killed in multiple victim incidents since the weekend started. Set aside all of those one-of instances of gun violence. Set aside all of the suicides. Just last weekend, before Kalamazoo happened, a dozen other people had been shot across this country in multiple victim incidents. There is no other country in the world that has that level of epidemic mass gun violence.

I will speak at another time about why that is, but what is unexceptional about the United States is that the American public wants to do something about it. They don't accept the status quo, just as other countries probably wouldn't accept it either. Ninety-two percent of Americans are in favor of universal background checks, and we can't even get a debate on this on the floor of the Senate, nor in the House of Representatives. Democracy normally doesn't allow for 90 percent of Americans to support something that their legislative body will not even consider.

Eighty-five percent of NRA Members are in favor of universal background checks. All that means is, all you have to prove is that you are not a criminal. You have to prove you haven't been deemed mentally incompetent before you can buy a gun.

Support for the laws that we want to debate on the floor of the Senate is absolutely bipartisan. Here is a chart showing background checks for gun shows and private sales. Those are not universal background checks. They are just for those two particular forums. For that specific proposal, Democrats support it by 88 percent, Republicans by nearly 80 percent; laws to prevent the mentally ill from buying guns, 81 percent Democrats and 79 percent of Republicans—no difference.

There is a little bit more of a difference when you come to a Federal

database to track gun sales. You still have 55 percent of Republicans supporting that. That is probably the most controversial reform which, to me, for the life of me, I can't figure out why it is controversial. A ban on assault-style weapons, you have 70 percent of Democrats but a majority of Republicans as well, which tells you that the overall American population, despite their partisan registration, supports a ban on assault weapons, which of course wasn't that radical long ago, when it was passed in the law of this country. I will not go into this in detail, but, again, you look at specific provisions, and the overwhelming majority of the American public supports them—bans on semiautomatic weapons, bans on assault weapons, bans on high-capacity ammunition clips, bans on online sales of ammunition. Again, over and over again, you see an overwhelming majority of Americans supporting these laws.

It is simply time for us to respond to the voices of 31,000 victims every single year and do something about it. I will continue to come down to the floor and share these stories, share some of these charts, share some of the data, in the hope that it will inspire this body to break out of its ice of indifference—as somebody coined the phrase before me—and do something.

I understand we are not likely to get a vote on background checks between now and the end of the year, but there is a big bipartisan mental health bill we can debate on the floor before we wrap up for the year. This Senator would submit to you that is not the answer for the epidemic of gun violence, but it would help. If you create more inpatient beds and more outpatient capacity, a lot of the very disturbed individuals who take these demons that exist inside them and turn them into an act of massive violence—that mental health reform bill could help them. It would just be the beginning of the work we have to do, but it would be a very important beginning.

At some point the U.S. Senate, the greatest deliberative body in the world, an organization that claims to represent the will of the people, will have to start paying attention to the voices of these victims and the overwhelming majority of the American public who want us to honor them.

I yield back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

RELATING TO THE DEATH OF ANTONIN SCALIA

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 374, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 374) relating to the death of Antonin Scalia, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the resolution.

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted “yea” and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) would have voted “yea.”

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 93, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 26 Leg.]

YEAS—93

Alexander	Ernst	McConnell
Ayotte	Feinstein	Menendez
Baldwin	Fischer	Merkley
Barrasso	Flake	Mikulski
Bennet	Franken	Moran
Blumenthal	Gardner	Murkowski
Blunt	Gillibrand	Murphy
Boozman	Graham	Murray
Boxer	Grassley	Nelson
Brown	Hatch	Paul
Burr	Heinrich	Perdue
Cantwell	Heitkamp	Peters
Capito	Heller	Portman
Cardin	Hirono	Reed
Carper	Hoeven	Reid
Casey	Inhofe	Risch
Cassidy	Isakson	Roberts
Coats	Johnson	Rounds
Cochran	Kaine	Sasse
Collins	King	Schatz
Coons	Kirk	Schumer
Corker	Klobuchar	Scott
Cotton	Lankford	Sessions
Crapo	Leahy	Shaheen
Daines	Lee	Shelby
Donnelly	Manchin	Stabenow
Durbin	Markey	Sullivan
Enzi	McCain	Tester

Thune
Tillis
Toomey

Udall
Vitter
Warner

Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NOT VOTING—7

Booker
Cornyn
Cruz

McCaskill
Rubio
Sanders

Wicker

The resolution (S. Res. 374) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the preamble is agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of February 24, 2016, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Maryland.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to speak in morning business on an issue before the American people, and that is the Supreme Court vacancy.

I rise today to express my very deep, deep disappointment in my Republican colleagues for vowing to block President Obama's nomination—vowing to block President Obama's nominee for filling the vacancy on the Supreme Court.

Each and every Senator serving in this Chamber was elected by the American people, and we took an oath to uphold the Constitution. In this matter, the Constitution is very clear. Article II, section 2 says the President "shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court."

It doesn't say the President only has an hour and a half left. It doesn't give a time limit to the President. If you are a President and you have a 4-year term, you have the authority and duty to exercise your obligations under the Constitution for a full 4 years, and the Senate has a duty to provide advice and consent. There are no waivers for election years. I urge my colleagues: Do your job. Follow the Constitution and live up to the Constitution. The Constitution doesn't say: In an election year, delay, delay, delay. The word "delay" doesn't even appear in the Constitution, in the hope that one day you will get your way.

Republicans have said that the Senate must wait until the people have

spoken by electing a new President in November. The American people have spoken. They elected President Obama in 2008, and they reelected him in 2012. Barack Obama is our President from now until noon on January 20, 2017. If the Founders wanted a 3-year term for the President, they would have written that in the Constitution, but they mandated 4 complete years.

Now the other party wants to deny the President the legitimacy and authority of his office. Even George Washington had his nominee considered during a Presidential election year and had three of his candidates confirmed. What was good enough for the first Congress under George Washington should be good enough for this Congress now under President Obama.

President Obama and I will both be closing our offices in January of 2017, but that doesn't mean we are done working for the American people today. There is a lot of work to be done. President Obama has the constitutional duty to submit a nomination in order to fill the vacancy left with Justice Scalia's passing. This duty is not suspended in an election year. The Constitution is clear about the President's authority. The President must fulfill his duty, and we must do our job. The issue is not about Executive orders or checking Executive powers or interpreting law books; it is about following the Constitution.

I say to the Republicans on the other side of the aisle: Please do your job. Your constituents elected you to this position to follow the Constitution. If you don't like the nominee the President has selected, vote no, but at least follow the process. After the President selects his nominee, we then go through a courtesy process where the nominee calls upon each Senator. Then there is a hearing—and maybe there are several days of hearings—and then there is a vote.

I am calling on the Senate to follow the process that was mandated by the Constitution and mandated by our traditions. After the President nominates someone, let's meet with the nominee. Let's hold the hearings and follow the process, and then let's bring it to a vote. Over the last 40 years, the average time it has taken for the Senate to act has been only 67 days from nomination to confirmation, so to say we don't have enough time just doesn't work. We have 10 months, or 330 days, left in this President's administration to do this job.

Some of my colleagues say there is precedent for this obstructionism. Chairman GRASSLEY, the chair of the Judiciary Committee, cited four times in our history where a President did not nominate someone to fill a vacancy during an election year. Well, those numbers are right, but guess what. The vacancy occurred after the Senate had adjourned for the year. None of those

Presidents could have nominated a candidate because the Senate wasn't in session.

For the past 100 years, every Supreme Court nominee has been acted upon. Even if they got a disapproval vote in the committee, they still got a vote in the Senate.

In 1987, Robert Bork was voted down in the committee, but he still got a vote on the floor where he was voted down.

In 1991, Clarence Thomas, one of the most contentious and controversial Supreme Court nominations that I ever participated in, was voted on by the committee without a recommendation. He got a vote on the floor and was approved 52 to 48.

Each of these candidates had their day to be evaluated. Each Senator had the ability to apply their advice and consent or, in some cases, nonconsent. I didn't always vote yes on the nominee, but I certainly supported the process that we have here. We have never denied a sitting President his duty to provide a nominee. This is of utmost importance to our Nation. It really is.

The Supreme Court is unique. It is the highest Court of the land with real and lasting impacts on American lives. To obstruct a Supreme Court nominee for political reasons would be absolutely unprecedented. Until this vacancy is filled, the Supreme Court is left with eight members with the potential for tie votes. If there is a tie vote in a decision, the ruling of the lower court remains as if the Supreme Court never heard the case. In some cases, that leaves disagreement among courts, leaving our laws at odds with each other.

If this vacancy lasts until the next President, the Supreme Court could be left without eight members for two terms on the Court. Some of the cases with the most impact on our history have been decided in 5-to-4 votes. That brings up some cases that are of particular concern to me.

What if there were a tied decision in a case and we were left stuck in a gridlock? The Senate knows that I am very involved with equal pay for equal work. There was the famous Lilly Ledbetter case—Lilly Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. It was decided by a 5-to-4 vote. She faced injustice not only at her job, but also in the courts. At the urging of Justice Ginsburg, the Senate provided a legislative remedy to correct that injustice. If we had a tie, we might not have ever been able to resolve that issue both through the Court and through the Senate. This is what democracy is supposed to be.

There was another amazing case, which was Bush v. Gore. Everyone remembers the election in 2000 when we had the hanging chads in Florida and we really weren't sure who won the election—Al Gore or George Bush. This is America, so banks stayed open, there

were no tanks in the street, school children were able to go about learning what America was all about and get ready for the new century. We were moving ahead because the process moved through the courts.

The Bush v. Gore case was decided with a 5-to-4 vote. Can you imagine if we had a tied Court now? We would have a constitutional crisis, and we would have a crisis over who was the legitimate President of the United States. We can't have that happen again.

When the voters make their decisions in November on who they want to have as the next President, I hope it is clear and decisive and we don't end up before the Supreme Court, but surely we need to have a Court that is not going to end in a tie and that we have done our job to make sure that there are nine—N-I-N-E—on the Supreme Court.

First of all, follow the Constitution. It is in the best interest of our country. Do your job so we can say to the world: We are a Nation of laws. We encourage people all over the world that are emerging from authoritarian regimes or chaotic political situations to write a Constitution and live by it. Well, we wrote a Constitution, so let's live by it. We need to follow what we say we were elected to do and that we swore an oath to do.

President Obama must do his job. I urge the Republicans to do their job. Let's follow and live up to the Constitution. When the President makes his nomination, let's open our doors so we can meet with that nominee. Let's hold a hearing or multiple hearings, if necessary, and then let's hold a vote on the Senate floor. Let's be accountable by the deeds of our vote and not simply avoid our responsibility.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, Senator MURKOWSKI and Senator CANTWELL and many others continue to work diligently on a way to wrap up the Energy bill and to deal with the Flint issue. In the meantime, I will be shortly filing cloture on a motion to proceed to the opioid bill, and I am hopeful we can reach an agreement to finish this bill with just a handful of amendments next week.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 369, S. 524.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 369, S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 369, S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Mitch McConnell, Daniel Coats, Dan Sullivan, Orrin G. Hatch, Shelley Moore Capito, John Cornyn, Lindsey Graham, Roy Blunt, Ron Johnson, Chuck Grassley, Rob Portman, Susan M. Collins, Jeff Flake, Cory Gardner, Lamar Alexander, John Barrasso, John McCain.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I am on the Senate floor for my 34th edition of "Waste of the Week." As you know, I do these speeches each week to highlight waste, fraud, and abuse and simple ways that we can save the taxpayers' dollars from being misused.

Last year, in my 18th "Waste of the Week" speech, I detailed an investigation by the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office that discovered that fraudulent applications were being accepted by healthcare.gov, the government Web site for choosing ObamaCare plans. I discussed the waste, fraud, and abuse of ObamaCare

subsidies that were being awarded to fraudulent applicants.

As part of that investigation, the Government Accountability Office investigators purposefully submitted 12 fraudulent applications. They wanted to test the system. They wanted to see how well the system worked. So they drew up 12 deliberately fraudulent applications just to see what the response would be. They submitted them to healthcare.gov. Eleven of them came back as approved. Only one application was called out, where someone said, "Wait a minute, we don't have the appropriate information" or "we didn't do the fact-checking." But 11 apparently weren't even fact-checked.

The Government Accountability Office said, "I think this might be the canary in the coal mine." This ought to be a signal that this program is being abused; when 11 out of 12 applications come back with a stamp for approval and the subsidies are given, you would think the government would take notice of that and simply say, "We have to get ahold of this."

After the investigation, after this was made public it ought to have been embarrassing to the agencies that are handling this, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid disbursement. You would think they would jump on this. If I were heading up this agency, if I had anything to do with this at all, I would either fire someone or I would put reforms in place to make sure this never happened again. You would think this report would have spurred some kind of action.

But this week, the Government Accountability Office released a new report detailing how the Obama administration continues to take—and this is in their words—"take passive approach to dealing with the potential fraud" in the ObamaCare program. The GAO report outlines how healthcare.gov is still plagued by serious operational problems that lead to fraud and abuse. They found that in 2014, over 4 million ObamaCare applicants received a total of \$1.7 billion in taxpayer subsidies despite these unresolved documentation errors. What this means is that the healthcare.gov site is allowing people to sign up for and receive ObamaCare benefits without proper verification.

When you have had a previous investigation that said that 11 out of 12—more than 90 percent—of the applications were stamped "approved" and subsidies were paid without verification or with faulty verification, you would think by now they would have cleaned this up. Hundreds of thousands of people have been able to get their ObamaCare applications approved without having their eligibility verified. That has become clear. As GAO investigators bluntly stated in the report, healthcare.gov "is at risk of granting eligibility to, and making subsidy payments on behalf of, individuals who are ineligible to enroll."

The GAO said that one of the biggest problems with healthcare.gov is that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, CMS, which is responsible for the oversight and management of ObamaCare, did not resolve Social Security number inconsistencies for thousands of applications. When you submit your identity, you give your Social Security number. It goes to CMS. They are supposed to check it to see if it is a legitimate Social Security number, and if it isn't, they obviously cannot or should not issue the subsidy and approve the application. But, instead, CMS approved subsidized coverage without verifying those numbers from the applicants. It potentially allows access to subsidies by illegal immigrants or other ineligible individuals.

So word gets around: Hey, you don't even need to put your Social Security number on there or you can put a false Social Security number on there, and you are going to get the subsidy.

This is how your government is spending your tax dollars. It is an outrageous way, to pump up ObamaCare. And we keep hearing the White House touting the fact that millions are signing up for this. Of course they are. Millions are signing up for this because whether they are eligible or not, they are getting a subsidy. Who wouldn't want to get a check from the government every month? But it is done through fraud. It is done through waste, and it is done through something that hasn't been documented.

People have to realize that under ObamaCare, you have to be a citizen or a legal resident, fall within a certain income range. Healthcare.gov is supposed to verify all of this when you sign up. But the GAO found that the program does not check new applications against existing approved applications. The resulting failure is that millions of people have been approved for benefits while using the same Social Security number.

Here is another situation. Not only are people using false Social Security numbers on the application and they are still getting subsidies, but a lot of people are using the same Social Security number. This is not the era of having mountains of paperwork stored in warehouses around Washington, DC, because the agencies have been flooded with paper applications; this is an age of computerizing and digitizing all of this information. So all you have to do is push a button to find out whether that is a legitimate Social Security number. I mean, how hard is it?

To make matters worse, we have learned that in thousands of ObamaCare applications, it wasn't even clear if the beneficiary was serving a prison sentence. The law basically says you are not eligible for Obamacare subsidies if you are serving a prison sentence. The GAO found that the Centers

for Medicare & Medicaid Services ignored many opportunities for reducing ObamaCare fraud. Basically, it appears that CMS is willing to look the other way. Maybe they were ordered to, maybe they are just doing it, or maybe they are just purely incompetent. But they are looking the other way as the President continues to tout the benefits of this law.

If that isn't bad enough, GAO also found that CMS actually knew that millions of applications were potentially fraudulent and still approved the applications. I am not making this up. We have information provided by the Government Accountability Office that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services knew about these fraudulent practices, so they couldn't plead "Well, we didn't know this was happening" or "This was a computer glitch" or "We are just so overwhelmed with paperwork or applications that we can't handle it." They knew about it. They knew it was happening, and yet they still haven't cleared the situation up.

It really drives you up the wall—and it is no wonder the American people are so unbelievably frustrated with this government and have deemed that this government is simply wasting their tax dollars. It is the biggest bureaucratic mess they have ever seen and they are paying for it. Doesn't it just practically make you want to scream?

CMS told GAO "that they currently do not plan to take any actions on individuals with unresolved incarceration or Social Security number inconsistencies." Does anybody find that outrageous? We know there is a problem. We have documented there is a problem. But they currently are not willing to undertake any kind of reforms or action to deal with this problem.

To address this mess, I will introduce legislation that will mandate CMS to recoup all improperly paid subsidies. I am going to continue to press the agency to take action to enforce the existing requirements.

What does it take to get the Congress to take the steps to insist that these agencies—entrusted with taxpayer money carry out their programs and then not act in such a cavalier, dismissive way—deal with this situation? What does it take?

I guess what it takes is what is happening in our election process right now, and that is the example of the reason American people saying: We have had enough and we are blazing mad, and we ought to tear the place down and start all over. And this is all because this behemoth of a dysfunctional government continues to rob the taxpayer of its hard-earned money. Yet it is not providing job opportunities for people, despite all the best efforts of this administration.

It kind of reminds me of back when Obamacare was being debated in the

House of Representatives and the then-Speaker of the House, a Democrat, said: Well, we have to pass this bill so we can find out what is in it. Well, Madam Speaker of the House of Representatives, we are finding out not only what is in this bill, but we are also finding out we need an efficient, effective government enforcement of this to ensure that waste, fraud, and abuse is not occurring.

So once again, I am down here adding to the ever-growing amount of money that has been documented as waste, fraud, and abuse of. Today we stand at \$157 billion of documented waste, fraud, and abuse, and we are just scratching the surface. I probably could come down here every hour of every day the Senate is in session and point out another waste of taxpayer money.

When are we going to step up to the plate and stop this charade that is happening here? When are we going to deal with this problem? I am urging my colleagues to support my efforts and other efforts to at least address known documented problems of waste, fraud, and abuse.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAN

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, tomorrow the people of Iran will go to the polls to elect 285 members of the Iranian Parliament, or the Majlis, and 88 members of the so-called Assembly of Experts, which is the body that will eventually choose the successor to the current Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Last December, Secretary of State John Kerry cautioned that having an election does not of itself make a democracy, and I think his words are equally fitting this week. Iran's elections, in truth, are neither free nor fair. Iran is not a democracy. Power brokers in Iran have already rigged these elections and even the results of a potential runoff in April will not tell us much we don't already know about the Iranian regime or its foreign policy objectives in the Middle East.

Some observers do hope that moderate voices will make some progress in Iran, and I agree that is good to hope for, but I remain deeply skeptical. In many ways tomorrow's elections are nothing more than a rubberstamp because an unelected Guardian Council, which vets all candidates for office, has already prevented most moderates from even running.

Let me explain. Aspiring candidates for Iran's national Parliament and the

Assembly of Experts must be approved by the unelected Guardian Council before they appear on a ballot. Unless they make it through a multiweek vetting process and unless they are deemed sufficiently loyal and conservative, these aspiring candidates will not get a chance to be candidates at all. That is why the candidate list for tomorrow's election has already told us more about Iran's intentions than the election results will.

A willingness to allow reform-minded or moderate Iranians to stand for election would have suggested some real hope for genuine reform for real change in the Iranian regime. Sadly, the disqualification of both female and reformist candidates indicates that Iran is instead doubling down on its decision to avoid long-awaited and much needed democratic reforms and instead will continue to isolate itself from broader membership in the international community. Sixteen women applied to run to serve on the Assembly of Experts. They were all prohibited from running. Three thousand reform-minded candidates sought to run for the Iranian Parliament, but only 1 percent of those 3,000 were approved. Even Hassan Khomeini, the grandson of Ayatollah Khomeini, who founded the Islamic Republic of Iran, was rejected as a candidate for being too modern. These disqualifications reflect the regime's rejection of basic democratic norms and serve as reminder of the urgency with which we have to continue to scrutinize Iran's behavior.

Tomorrow's elections will not change Iran's aggressive behavior in the region or transform the political power structure within the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is still dominated by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Despite what some may hope, the Supreme Leader seems unwilling to allow even a modicum of dissent inside Iran. These elections are likely nothing more than a guise to give the international community the impression that Iranians have a real voice in choosing their elected officials.

While we should hope for future moderation, we should expect the status quo because at its core Iran remains a revolutionary regime that supports terrorism as a central tool of its national foreign policy. U.S. policymakers have to remain clear-eyed about that reality as we seek to effectively and aggressively enforce the nuclear deal and push back against Iranian aggression in the region.

I urge my colleagues, the administration, and the American people to pay close attention not just to tomorrow's Iranian elections but to Iran's actions in the weeks, months, and years to come.

I commend the administration for one action it took this week. It indicted four individuals who violated previously existing U.S. sanctions

against Iran. This decision sends another important signal that despite the nuclear deal, sanctions that remain on the books and companies that violate them remain a significant barrier and that companies should not rush to do business with Iran. Only by continuing to enforce existing sanctions, only by continuing to hold Iran to its commitments in the nuclear agreement, and only by pushing back against Iran's support for terrorist proxies, its human rights abuses, and its illegal ballistic missile tests will we demonstrate that we are serious about holding the regime accountable for its actions. Only by viewing Iran through the right lens—a lens of weariness and suspicion, not trust—can we continue to protect our national security and the safety of our regional allies, especially Israel.

A nuclear deal with a nation like Iran does not make that regime our ally or friend and having an election does not make a democracy, but it does make a statement.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. President, on Monday I had the privilege of serving as the first Senator from the State of Delaware—the first State—to ever read George Washington's Farewell Address on the Senate floor on February 22, the appointed day every year when we recognize Washington's contributions to our country and its history by repeating his Farewell Address on this floor.

In the more than two centuries since President Washington wrote and delivered those words, I am struck by how relevant they still remain in warning Americans of the dangers of partisanship, factionalism, and division. Today the constitutional order for which President Washington and so many of our Founding Fathers and so many Americans risked and dedicated their lives, and which has sustained our experiment in democracy for generations, is now threatened not by one person or by one political party but rather by the relentless division and dysfunction that has come to define our current political discourse.

Just over 2 years ago, this discord led to an unprecedented shutdown of our whole Federal Government for 17 days. At stake today is nothing less than the capability of the Supreme Court of the United States to continue to function meaningfully. If we fail to reverse this increasingly divisive—and, I think, dangerous—trend, we won't just be facing a series of undecided legal policy issues. We will also be looking at a direct threat to our constitutional quarter—a new normal in which Supreme Court vacancies remain just that for months upon months or even years.

Sadly, the rhetorical warfare on filling the vacancy on the Court began just an hour after the world first learned of Justice Scalia's passing, when the majority leader issued a statement in which he ruled out any

hearing or vote or any consideration whatsoever of a Supreme Court nominee. The back and forth between our parties has grown even more heated in the days since. Much has been made of what Senators of both parties have said and done in response to past Supreme Court vacancies, but the precedent that I think matters most is what this Chamber actually did the last time there was a Supreme Court vacancy during an election year. As many of my colleagues have pointed out, the last time that happened was in 1988, and that year Justice Kennedy was confirmed unanimously and by a Democratic-controlled Senate.

Recently, some of my colleagues have also pointed to a speech that Vice President BIDEN—then chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee—gave back in 1992, as evidence that there is some clear, strong precedent for the level of obstructionism that we are seeing today. But that reading of his remarks both misrepresents his remarks and obscures the real facts. It is easy to take much of what we say and do here on the floor of the Senate out of context. In fact, I am sure it has happened to each Member of this Chamber more than once, but a full reading of then-Chairman BIDEN's full remarks shows that at the end of his speech, Senator BIDEN promised to consider not just holding hearings, not just a vote but also supporting a consensus nominee. To quote directly:

I believe that so long as the public continues to split its confidence between the branches, compromise is the responsible course for both the White House and for the Senate. Therefore, I stand by my position. Mr. President, if the President—

Then-President Bush—

consults and cooperates with the Senate or moderates his selections absent consultation, then his nominees may enjoy my support as did Justices Kennedy and Souter.

So when it comes to setting Senate precedent, I think it is important to get the Vice President's words right, but I also think it is important to pay attention to his actions, which speak more loudly than his words. His record as chairman of the Senate Judiciary committee is unmistakable. In case after case, he convened and held appropriate and timely hearings for judges of all backgrounds and experience when nominated by President Bush in an election year. Even in a deeply contentious election year, he considered dozens of district and circuit court nominees all the way up until September, just 2 months before the Presidential election.

So today I echo then-Chairman BIDEN's 1992 request. I urge President Obama to nominate a moderate and eminently qualified jurist by whose record should clearly, under normal circumstances, be confirmed and who can become a consensus nominee in this Chamber. You don't have to look

very far to find a number of candidates who would easily fit this description.

I am not asking my Republican colleagues to commit to support such a nominee, but I am asking for us to be able to fulfill the constitutional obligations of advice and consent that we have sworn to uphold. Here is just another important piece of factual record. Since the formation of the Senate Judiciary Committee a century ago, every single Supreme Court nominee has received a vote, a hearing or both. The only exceptions were candidates whose nominations were withdrawn before they could be considered or that proceeded directly to the floor for a confirmation vote.

Even nominees whose confirmations were voted down by the Senate Judiciary Committee ultimately received a vote by the full Senate. That is the precedent that matters. The American people, I think, aren't deeply interested in what this Senator said 2 years ago or that Senator said two decades ago. This back-and-forth, he said/she said rhetoric is exactly what they have sadly come to expect from this Congress, but it is not why they sent us here.

It is not just our constituents who are watching. Around the world, believers in a democratic system of government, in a system of separation of powers in our constitutional framework, some of whom have risked life and limb to bring democracy to their countries, are watching. Those who believe democracy can't work and who advance that argument around the world are watching too.

At stake in this debate is not just a key vote on the Supreme Court but, more importantly, a key indicator of whether our American experiment can still function. Over the past two-plus centuries, our experiment in democracy has not just survived but even thrived. But in recent years, Members of Congress have been playing a risky game, employing increasingly obstructionist tactics that probe the very boundaries of our system of government. How the Senate conducts itself in the weeks and perhaps even months to come, I think, will set a strong precedent for how future Supreme Court vacancies will be filled and more importantly, about whether our constitutional order can still function. We have an opportunity to show the world that even in the midst of a strikingly divisive Presidential campaign, our democratic system can still work.

President Washington's Farewell Address of 220 years ago warned of the many threats to that full and fair experiment that is American democracy. One of the threats he highlighted most pointedly was that of partisanship and division. The issues facing our Senate today represent nothing less than a direct and serious challenge to the vibrancy of that very democratic experi-

ment for which so many suffered, struggled, and died.

It is my prayer that we will find a way forward through this together.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

ANNA WESTIN ACT

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today in recognition of National Eating Disorders Awareness Week and bring attention to millions of Americans struggling with eating disorders. It is not something we often talk about on this floor, but eating disorders are more common in our country than breast cancer and Alzheimer's and do not discriminate by class, race, gender or ethnicity. The all-too-sad truth is that eating disorders take the lives of 23 Americans every day and nearly 1 life every hour.

Our understanding of how eating disorders develop and progress is constantly evolving. We know there are between—and, again, because we don't have statistics except for when people die—15 and 30 million people across the country struggling with an eating disorder. We know that anorexia has the highest mortality rate of any mental health disorder. Listen to that. Of any mental health disorder that you can think of, anorexia has the highest mortality rate. We know that eating disorders affect women 2½ times more than men, making this the important women's mental health issue.

Unfortunately, far too few of these people are getting the help they need. Only 1 in 10 people with an eating disorder will receive treatment for that disease, and for those who don't receive any treatment, the rate of recovery sharply declines, while the likelihood they will be hospitalized rises. The numbers illustrate a grim reality. Too many Americans are suffering in silence, unable to access a treatment they need to conquer their eating disorder and to go on to live healthy lives.

To help the millions of people suffering from eating disorders get the treatment they need, I have introduced the Anna Westin Act with Senator AYOTTE, Senator CAPITO, and Senator BALDWIN. We are very proud that this is a bipartisan bill that is supported by both Democrats and Republicans. As to the fact that it is led by all women Senators, it may be that our time has come, given that women are 2½ times more likely than men to suffer from this disorder.

We remember in the early days when it was the women Senators who united to do something about breast cancer research or when it was women Senators who said: Why are we just studying men when it comes to various drugs and various diseases and cancer? Women have different interactions. Women have different problems. In fact, these eating disorders affect women 2½ times more than men, yet,

literally, hardly anything is going on with this in terms of help and funding. The number one mental health disorder that leads to death and has the highest mortality rate is anorexia.

The bill is named in honor of Anna Westin of Chaska, MN, who was diagnosed with anorexia when she was 16 years old. Her health started deteriorating quickly after she completed her sophomore year at the University of Oregon. She began suffering from liver malfunction and dangerously low body temperatures and blood pressure. Even though her condition was urgent, Anna was told she had to wait until the insurance company certified her treatment. This ultimately delayed and severely limited the treatment that she received. After struggling with the disease for 5 years, she committed suicide at the age of 21.

My colleagues, we have a moral obligation to help people like Anna and families like the Westins, and we cannot afford to wait any longer. Last week marked 16 years since Anna's death, yet people with eating disorders are still not guaranteed coverage for lifesaving residential treatment by insurance companies. The bipartisan Anna Westin Act fixes this problem by clarifying that the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act specifies that residential treatment for eating disorders must be covered. We are talking about when a doctor diagnoses an eating disorder and believes, after trying different treatments, that there is an immediate emergency situation, that there should be coverage for residential treatment, which has been found to be really helpful with eating disorders because it helps to change how someone is eating and what they are doing and how they are interacting and how they are going on with their day-to-day life.

My friend, the late Senator from Minnesota, Paul Wellstone, fought hard for that Wellstone and Domenici mental health parity law. As Paul always insisted, a mental health parity bill is about equality and fairness. It is time patients struggling with an eating disorder receive that equality and fairness. It is time that so many of these women who suffer from this disease, which is much more particular to women than to men, get to receive that treatment that you get for other kinds of mental health disorders. This bill would ensure that patients like Anna Westin aren't prevented from getting the treatment they need simply because their insurance doesn't cover it. Eating disorders become life-threatening when left untreated, making early detection absolutely critical. That is why this bill would also use existing funds to create grant programs to train school employees, primary health professionals, and mental health and public health professionals on how

to identify eating disorders, as well as how to intervene when behaviors associated with an eating disorder have been identified.

I think most young people today know someone who has an eating disorder. I remember in college a number of young women who had eating disorders, but they were hiding it. Nobody did anything about it. I have no idea how they are doing now.

Making this investment is a no-brainer. By drawing on existing funds for the training programs, this bipartisan bill is designed to have no cost associated with it. These commonsense and long overdue actions will help give those suffering from eating disorders the tools they need to overcome these diseases and prevent more tragedies like Anna's. We wish that Anna was still with us. We wish that she could have graduated from college, started a career, and had children of her own. Well, it may be too late for Anna. We know she would want us to do everything we can to create a world where eating disorders are acknowledged, are recognized, are treated, and are prevented.

I am so proud this bill has been out there for a few years. This is the first time this last year where it has been a bipartisan bill led by four women Senators, two Democrats and two Republicans. The time has come. With affected families in every corner of our country, I invite all of my colleagues to join us in support of this bipartisan bill. We must act now to give the millions of Americans struggling with eating disorders the help they need. Doing so will not just prevent suffering; it will help save lives.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for approximately 15 minutes—probably less.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, at noon today a group of us on this side of the aisle went to the Supreme Court and stood in front of it and spoke about what was happening with the Republican decision to not proceed with the advice and consent provisions of the U.S. Constitution.

I have been a member of the Judiciary Committee for 23 years. I sat through six Supreme Court nominations. In those 23 years, as a non-

lawyer, I really became infused with great respect for the American system of justice, for the trial courts, for the appeal courts, and for the supreme courts on the State level as well as on the national level. I don't think there is a system of justice that affords an individual, a company, or an organization a fairer way to proceed to litigate a case than the American justice system.

So as I stood there and heard some of my colleagues speaking, I began to think of the enormity of what is happening. We all know that the Constitution is clear that the President's role is to nominate and the Senate's role is to advise and consent on the nominee, nothing less, nothing more. I strongly believe that we should proceed to render the President's nominee to the highest Court of the land and proceed to consider that advice and consent process with a hearing in the Judiciary Committee. To do anything less, in my view, is to default on our responsibility as U.S. Senators.

That has been the process, no matter how controversial a nomination. That has been the process even when the President and the Senate are of different parties. And, yes, that has been the process during Presidential election years. That is what happened when Anthony Kennedy was confirmed in the last year of President Reagan's term when Democrats actually held the Senate majority. In fact, a total of 14 Justices have been confirmed in the final year of a President's term.

Now, why is this important? The Supreme Court is a coequal branch of our Federal Government. It is a vital part of the separation of powers. It is the final arbiter of the law of the land. And one of our important jobs as Senators is to ensure that the Court has the Justices it needs to decide cases.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of a functioning Supreme Court. *Brown v. Board of Education* desegregated our schools. *Loving v. Virginia* struck down laws that made interracial marriage illegal. *Roe v. Wade* ruled on the constitutionality of State limits on women's access to reproductive health care, which has been upheld as precedent for over 40 years. *Bush v. Gore* even decided who would move into the White House as President of the United States. More recently, the Supreme Court struck down limits on campaign money, nullified a key part of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, upheld *ObamaCare*, and legalized same-sex marriage.

Now, what does a 4-to-4 Court mean? The prospect of having more than a year—as a matter of fact, some are saying it is up to 2 years—of tie votes on the Court in major controversial issues would be terrible for our system of justice.

Justice Scalia wrote about the prospect of the split Court in 2004. In re-

sponding to a request to recuse himself, he declined. He said if he were to recuse himself, "the Court proceeds with eight Justices, raising the possibility that, by reason of a tie vote, it will find itself unable to resolve the significant legal issue presented by the case."

That is Justice Scalia.

He continued, quoting the Court's own recusal policy: "Even one unnecessary recusal impairs the functioning of the court."

So that is what we are doing. We are impairing the functioning of the Supreme Court of the United States.

What the Republicans are doing will affect cases for we think at least 2 years—cases left from this year and those to be heard next year. If Republicans are successful in blocking a hearing and a vote on the President's nominee, the Court will find itself unable to resolve important legal questions for a lengthy period of time.

Imagine that you are a plaintiff, someone who has been wrongly terminated from a business, or a business in a legal dispute, or imagine you are a person or a business held liable as a defendant for millions of dollars in a civil case or someone who has been charged with or convicted of a crime. You might spend years of your life in prison or even be subjected to the death penalty even though there may be a legal problem with your conviction or sentence. In all of these instances, as Justice Scalia pointed out, the Court "will find itself unable to resolve the significant legal issue presented by the case."

That will mean that individuals and businesses, as well as the American people, will be denied the full system of justice guaranteed by this Constitution. Our people should not stand for this.

There are major issues pending before the Supreme Court. There are important measures to help stop climate change, immigration issues, race in college admissions, the fundamental concept of "one person, one vote," and the ability of unions representing public employees to function. The point is this: Important issues are before the Court, or will be, and there should be a full Court to hear them.

There is absolutely no reason—none—that the Senate should refuse to do its job and conduct full and fair hearings and hold a vote on the nominee.

Just a bit of history: The Senate has not left a Supreme Court seat vacant for a year or longer since the middle of the Civil War. That is a fact. It has not happened since the middle of the Civil War. That would be about 1862.

Even as the nominations process has become more contentious, the Senate has still considered Supreme Court nominees in a timely manner. This has happened regardless of who sat in the White House or which party controlled the Congress.

Here are a few historic facts to consider: Since the Judiciary Committee began holding hearings in 1916 for Supreme Court nominees, a pending nominee to the Supreme Court vacancy has never been denied a timely hearing—never denied a timely hearing—even in the final year of a President's term.

Since 1975, the average time between a Supreme Court nomination and a vote by the full Senate has been 67 days. That is about 2 months. I would remind my Republican colleagues that this includes Justice Anthony Kennedy's confirmation, which took place in February of 1988—a California judge—in the final year of President Reagan's Presidency and before a Democratic Senate. So in the final year, a Democratic Senate took a Republican President's nominee, who was a Republican, and made him a Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

This has held true even for controversial nominees. Robert Bork and Clarence Thomas both failed to win a majority vote by the Judiciary Committee, but their nominations still advanced to a full Senate vote. That was even the case for Justice Thomas, a very conservative jurist, who replaced Justice Thurgood Marshall, a very liberal jurist. And, again, this took place in a Democratic-controlled Senate.

Many of my Republican colleagues have voiced their own support for a President's right to have his nominee considered. Someone I consider a friend who was chairman of the Judiciary Committee during periods of my tenure, Senator ORRIN HATCH, who voted in favor of Justice Ginsburg, said at the time—and I know this because I was sitting right there and heard it—he believed a President deserves some deference on Supreme Court appointments. He said he would not vote against a nominee simply because he would have chosen someone else.

Senator GRASSLEY, now chairman of the Judiciary Committee, made similar comments, saying Congress must not forget its advice and consent responsibilities.

Well, those responsibilities don't cease with the death of a jurist. As a matter of fact, that is the clear intent of the Constitution, that the advice and consent responsibility is mandated, no matter what. So to refuse to hold hearings before a nominee is even announced, to me, is shocking, and it makes me think: To what extent is the partisanship in this body going when it is willing to deny the Supreme Court a vital member? It will be like denying a baseball team a pitcher. They couldn't conduct a game without a pitcher. And a case that has any controversy cannot be fairly held without nine Justices.

That is not what we were sent to Washington for. It is not how to do the people's business. To deny the American people full and fair Senate consid-

eration for a Supreme Court nominee would be unprecedented in our history and further undermine faith in the Senate as an institution. I really deeply believe this, and I don't know why we would let this happen.

If Republicans follow through on this threat, the fairness of the process for the Supreme Court will forever be tarnished. The consequences could reverberate for generations, and it will be a serious gesture against the functioning of this great democracy. So all we ask is, do your job. It is why we were sent here after all.

Thank you very much.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Thank you, Mr. President, for the recognition, and I just want to say to Senator FEINSTEIN that this Senator has listened to many of her remarks and very much agrees with what she said, which is that we should be doing our job in terms of this Supreme Court nominee. It is our job to advise and consent. The Constitution says we shall advise and consent when we get nominations.

Ten years ago the Senate faced a critical task: to consider the nomination by President Bush of Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court. It was a fierce debate. Many opposed him, and some passionately so. I will not argue that it was an easy road, but it was a road that was traveled because that is our job and that is one of our most important duties.

At the time, the current majority leader was very clear on that duty the Senate has. He said:

We stand today on the brink of a new and reckless effort by a few to deny the rights of many to exercise our constitutional duty to advise and consent, to give this man the simple up-or-down vote he deserves. The Senate should repudiate this tactic.

Justice Alito did get an up-or-down vote and was confirmed 58 to 42, including four Democrats who voted in favor.

The majority leader was right. We do have a duty to advise and consent, and the Constitution indeed uses the word "shall" advise and consent.

A President's nominee does deserve an up-or-down vote. That was true then, and it true now. I do not agree with many of Justice Alito's views, but I do believe that it was critical for the Senate to do its job.

Now, here we are with a new nomination to the Supreme Court by a different President, but the majority leader seems to have changed his mind. We are told that no nomination of anyone by this President will be considered. The current Senate majority is refusing its constitutional mandate that it "shall" advise and consent, refusing to do its job for blatantly partisan and political purposes. This is misguided, and it is without precedent.

The full Senate has always voted to fill a vacancy on every pending Su-

preme Court nominee in election years and nonelection years, every single one for the last 100 years. We can go back even further than that. The Senate Judiciary Committee was created 200 years ago. According to the Congressional Research Service, the committee's usual practice has been to report every nominee to the full Senate, even those nominees opposed by a majority of the committee. This is a bipartisan tradition that makes sense and that we should follow.

When Senator LEAHY was Judiciary Committee chairman, he and Ranking Member HATCH did just that. Nominations—even those opposed by a majority of the committee—went to the full Senate.

In 2001, the Republican leader, Senator Lott, said that "no matter what the vote in committee on a Supreme Court nominee, it is the precedent of the Senate that the individual nominated is given a vote by the whole Senate."

Were those Senators any less principled? I don't think so. Were those Senators any less passionate in their views? No, but they did their job. They knew how important this was to our country. They honored Senate tradition, and they made sure the highest Court in the land was not running on empty. How did we get from there to here? If the majority leader has his way, there will be no hearings, no debate, and no vote.

The confirmation of a Supreme Court Justice is critical to a functioning democracy. It has become contentious only in recent years. It wasn't always so polarizing. Take, for example, Justice Scalia, whom we just lost. Justice Scalia was confirmed 98 to 0. This Senator does not argue that either side of the aisle is 100 percent pure, but we know that a fully functioning Supreme Court is vital to ensure justice in our system of government, and that depends on a fully functioning Senate.

This obstruction is part of a bigger problem. We have seen before and we are seeing now that the Senate is broken. The American people are frustrated, fed up with political games, obstruction in the Senate, special deals for insiders, and campaigns that are being sold to the highest bidder. They see this obstruction as just another example of how our democracy is being taken away. In this case, the hammer doing the damage is the filibuster. Instead of debate, we have gridlock. Instead of working together, we have obstruction. That is why I pushed for rules reform in the 112th Congress and in the 113th Congress. That is why I continue to push no matter which party is in the majority.

We changed the Senate rules to allow majority votes for executive and judicial nominees to lower courts, but that does no good if they remain blocked, and that is what is happening in this

Congress. The line gets longer and longer of perfectly qualified nominees who are denied a vote—denied even to be heard. Meanwhile, the backlog grows to 17 judges, 3 Ambassadors, and even the top official at the Treasury Department whose job is to go after the finances of terrorists. We are on track for the lowest number of confirmations in three decades.

We now have 31 judicial districts with emergency levels of backlogs. A year ago, we had 12. Thousands of people wait for their day in court because there is no judge to hear the case. That is justice delayed and justice denied.

Just when you think things can't get any worse—they do. A seat on the Supreme Court is empty, and the majority leader is actually arguing that it should stay empty for over a year.

I do not believe that the Constitution gives me the right to block a qualified nominee, no matter who is in the White House. This Senator says that today and has said it many times before. Amazingly, this obstruction may reach all the way to the Supreme Court—not just for a specific nominee, but for any nominee.

What we are seeing is bad going to worse, and what we are seeing is election-year politics. The majority leader said that the voters should have a say in who the next Supreme Court Justice is. They had their say. They overwhelmingly reelected President Obama to a 4-year term—not a 3-year term. There is no logical end point to the majority leader's position. They say no Supreme Court nominee should be considered in the President's last year. What if this were 2 months ago? Would their views be different if it was December 2015 or October?

Additionally, Presidents aren't the only ones with limited terms in office. A number of sitting Senators are retiring. Do their constitutional duties and rights as Senators expire now as well? Of course not, and neither should a President's.

Nominees should be judged on their merits. They are public servants in the executive branch, in our courts. They serve the people in this country. They should not be judged on feelings about a President you may not like. That is not governing; that is a temper tantrum.

Let's be very clear. A Presidential election year is no excuse. For example, Justice Kennedy was confirmed unanimously in the last year of President Reagan's administration by a Democratic-controlled Senate.

Our democracy works with three branches of government, not just two. This assault on the Supreme Court is without precedent, without cause, and should be without support.

The President will do his duty and will nominate a Supreme Court Justice. Any Senator has the right to say no, but the American people have the right to hear why.

I began my speech with comments by the majority leader. But this really isn't about what the majority leader said 10 years ago or what other majority leaders have said and what both sides say back and forth; it is about what the American people are saying now and what the Constitution has always said: Do your job. Uphold your oath. Move our country forward.

So I state to my colleagues: Let's get serious. Let's stop these dangerous games. The President's nominee, whoever that is, deserves consideration. The American people deserve a government that works.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, our Nation is in the midst of a Presidential election in which the American people are currently deciding who will be our next Commander in Chief. In my home State of North Carolina, many voters have already submitted their absentee ballots and early voting will begin soon.

This election year is especially important. In addition to electing our next President, the American people will have an opportunity to have their say in who should be our next Supreme Court Justice. This is a rare opportunity to let people determine the composition of the highest Court in the land, an institution that dramatically affects the lives of all of us.

While the stakes weren't as high in 2014 as they are today, the voice of the American people was still heard loud and clear nonetheless. In 2014, the American people sent a message about their displeasure for the President's disregard for our Nation's system of checks and balances. The American people sent a message about their opposition to the President's misuse of Executive orders to bypass the will of the Congress, and the American people sent a message by electing a new Senate majority.

Perhaps the memo the Nation sent to the President in 2014 is the reason the minority leadership is now attempting to deny the American people's full voice from being heard in this election. The minority doesn't want the people to decide the composition of the Supreme Court, so they have claimed there is a constitutional requirement for the Senate to give the President's Supreme Court nominee a vote.

That couldn't be further from the truth. Article II, section 2 of the Constitution makes this clear. While the President may nominate individuals to

the Supreme Court, the Senate holds the power to grant or withhold consent for those nominees. This is not difficult or unique in a constitutional sense. In fact, in 2005, the senior Senator from Nevada took to this very Senate floor and this is what he declared:

The duties of the Senate are set forth in the U.S. Constitution. Nowhere in that document does it say the Senate has a duty to give the Presidential nominees a vote. It says appointments shall be made with the advice and consent of the Senate. That is very different than saying every nominee receives a vote.

The Senate is doing its job by withholding consent, and that is exactly why the rules of the Senate provide further guidance on what happens when the Senate exercises its authority not to advance a judicial nominee.

Senate rule XXXI states: "Nominations neither confirmed nor rejected during the session at which they are made shall not be acted upon at any succeeding session without being again made to the Senate by the President."

The Constitution states and the Senate rules anticipate that the Senate can exercise its clear authority to withhold consent on any nominee offered by the President. It is not a novel concept that the Supreme Court vacancy should not be filled during an election year.

We can look back to 1992, probably before these pages were even born, when Senate Judiciary Committee then-Chairman JOE BIDEN eloquently explained the need for the Supreme Court vacancy during a Presidential election cycle and that it should be addressed after the American people had their say in the election.

Chairman BIDEN, now Vice President BIDEN, said:

The senate too, Mr. President, must consider how it would respond to a Supreme Court vacancy that would occur in the full throes of an election year. It is my view that if the president goes the way of Presidents Fillmore and Johnson and presses an election year nomination, the Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination—until after the political campaign season is over.

He went on to say:

And I sadly predict, Mr. President, that this is going to be one of the bitterest, dirtiest presidential campaigns we will have seen in modern times.

The Vice President concludes by saying:

I'm sure, Mr. President, after having uttered these words, some will criticize such a decision and say that it was nothing more than an attempt to save a seat on the court in hopes that a Democrat will be permitted to fill it.

But that would not be our intention, Mr. President, if that were the course we were to choose as a senate to not consider holding the hearings until after the election. Instead it would be our pragmatic conclusion that once the political season is underway, and it is, action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over. That is what is fair to the

nominee and essential to the process. Otherwise, it seems to me, Mr. President, we will be in deep trouble as an institution.

Vice President BIDEN's remarks may have been voiced in 1992, but they are entirely applicable in 2016. The campaign is already underway.

It is essential to the institution of the Senate and to the very health of our Republic not to launch our Nation into a partisan, divisive confirmation battle during the very same time the American people are casting their ballots to elect our next President.

Vice President BIDEN—and this is not something I have said very often—was absolutely right. There should be no hearings. There should be no confirmation. The most pragmatic conclusion to draw in 2016 is to hold the Supreme Court vacancy until the American people's voices have been heard.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING OFFICER JASON DAVID MOSZER

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I join with my colleague and senior Senator, Mr. HOEVEN, to honor and to bear witness to a great North Dakotan and a great officer of the Fargo Police Department, Jason Moszer, who lost his life in the line of duty.

I begin by yielding the floor to my senior Senator, Mr. HOEVEN.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I join my colleague from North Dakota to honor a brave young man, Jason David Moszer, who made the ultimate sacrifice for his community.

Jason Moszer was an officer since 2009 with the Fargo Police Department. He died in the line of duty 2 weeks ago today while responding to a domestic violence report in Fargo, ND. It is a tragedy that he was torn from his family and friends and torn from his life while protecting the lives of others. He dedicated himself to serving our State, and we are all grateful for his commitment to devoting his energy and talents to serve as a member of the Fargo Police Department.

While at his funeral earlier this week, I appreciated the opportunity to learn more about the person Jason was and the life he lived. From his youth, he led a life of continuous service—service with the National Guard as a combat medic for 8 years, service in Bosnia, service in Iraq, and, until his passing, service to the people of Fargo as a policeman. In 2012 he and fellow officer Matthew Sliders were awarded the Department's Silver Star Medal for pulling two children from an apartment fire.

Even in death he served by donating his organs to others in need. In dying, his organs and tissue helped save the lives of at least five other people. Clearly, Officer Moszer was a man committed to doing things for others and, consequently, he was respected and admired by everyone who came into contact with him.

Hearing stories about the pranks he pulled, the friends he brought together, his love of camping and cooking all round out the picture of a man who touched the lives of so many, a man who was loved by so many. We owe him and those who love him a tremendous debt for their sacrifice because his family and friends paid a high price.

We in North Dakota pride ourselves on being a safe State, but incidents like this remind us we are not immune to violent crime. They also remind us of the enormous debt we owe to Officer Moszer and to all the men and women in law enforcement who leave home every day and go to work to protect us and help make ours the wonderful State North Dakotans are so proud of.

Mikey and I extend our heartfelt condolences to Officer Moszer's wife Rachel and their children, Dillan and Jolee. It is difficult to lose a loved one, and, more so, to lose one so young and under such circumstances. During this difficult time, we pray that the Moszers are able to find comfort in the love of their family and friends, the support of their community, and the warm memories they have of Jason, which they will carry for the rest of their lives. Please know that you will continue to be in our thoughts and prayers.

One final note. Senator HEITKAMP and I were at the funeral. I think there were about 6,000 people at the funeral, which is a testament to Officer Moszer and his life. He truly epitomizes sacrifice and service to others. May God bless him and his family.

Mr. President, I turn the floor back to my colleague, Senator HEITKAMP.

Ms. HEITKAMP. I thank my senior Senator from North Dakota, Mr. HOEVEN.

As we sat quietly in the hockey arena that Jason loved so much, we felt the pain of so many, including the literally hundreds of thousands of North Dakotans who watched the broadcast of the funeral but also listened on the radio.

On the evening of Wednesday, February 10, Officer Jason Moszer did what so many police officers do on a daily basis—he went toward the danger to answer the call to serve and protect the citizens of Fargo, ND. Jason and the other officers who responded to that initial call knew they were encountering a dangerous situation. The domestic violence call that brought them there that evening had mentioned there might be a firearm involved. Yet those officers did not hesitate that night.

A short time later, shots rang out, and then those words—those words that will never be forgotten by his fellow officers—were heard: “Officer down.”

Yet, even in the darkest of hours, the men and women of the Fargo Police Department maintained their composure and continued the critical work of securing the surrounding neighborhood and trying to bring this dangerous situation to a resolution.

Later that night the city of Fargo, the State of North Dakota, our neighboring community of Moorhead, ND, and certainly his home community of Sabin, lost one of its finest when Officer Moszer succumbed to his injuries. The loss of an officer in the line of duty is something that devastates an entire community—and in a small State like North Dakota it has taken a toll on every law enforcement officer and every resident throughout our entire State.

I am here this evening to honor Officer Moszer, and I am here this evening to honor the brave men and women of the Fargo Police Department. These officers wake up every morning, and they put on a uniform that requires that they frequently place themselves in dangerous situations in order to protect and to serve the citizens of their State, their community or their tribe. Few among us know what it is like to make that choice.

We have a proud history in North Dakota of law enforcement officers serving their State and local community with distinction. I have had the privilege over the years to work with law enforcement officers in my State who span the spectrum—from highway patrol to State and local officers, to various Federal officers, and the tribal communities. Let me tell you, without any hesitation, these are some of the finest men and women I have ever met or worked with. The officers of the Fargo Police Department have proven beyond a doubt that they are some of the finest law enforcement officers in the Nation.

The men and women of the Fargo Police Department, led by Chief David Todd, performed admirably and heroically that night 2 weeks ago. The courage, strength, and leadership displayed by Chief Todd during this incredibly difficult period has been nothing short of remarkable, and those qualities have certainly spread throughout his department to each and every officer under his charge. Remember, these officers chose this path. They chose to selflessly put themselves in harm's way so they could make the city of Fargo a safer place for each and every person who lives there or who may by chance be passing through. They chose to put the needs of others before their own. They chose a more difficult path to tread than most of us would ever be willing to follow.

One of the stories we heard was from one of his best friends who said: Jason, quite honestly, would have been embarrassed by the outpouring. He suggested that maybe what Jason would have liked is just for people to have a few beers and remember him quietly. Well, Jason's loss was a loss not only for the people of our State, but it was a tremendously devastating loss for the Fargo Police Department and the community of Fargo. Those officers who put on that uniform each and every day are a unique and very special group, a tight-knit group. Very few people can understand what it takes to do the job they do.

Unfortunately, I have attended a number of funerals—two during my time as attorney general—of officers who were killed violently in the line of duty. One of the most moving tributes to a fallen officer is when the radio dispatcher goes through an End of Watch Roll Call. This moving and emotional moment shows that even in death, the men and women of the Fargo Police Department stand shoulder to shoulder with their colleagues, that they will support each other the way they support the city of Fargo each and every day, and that even when a colleague has fallen in the line of duty, they will always have his back.

Officer Moszer, Chief Todd, and the men and women of the Fargo Police Department, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your service and for your sacrifice to the people of Fargo and to the State of North Dakota.

I wish to end with the End of Watch:

Edward 143 Status Check. . . . Edward 143 Status Check. . . . Last Call Edward 143 Status Check.

Adam One Central—Edward 143 is 1042. End of Watch, February 11th 2016 at 1245 hours.

Those were the final words that their comrades spoke to Officer Moszer and his family.

Without brave men and women willing to step up and willing to stand on the wall for every one of us, we would be a much lesser society.

My thanks to my colleague Senator HOEVEN for joining me. It is in a great North Dakota spirit that we join together as colleagues in a bipartisan way to say thank you and to say goodbye to a wonderful officer, Officer Moszer.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

Mr. DURBIN. I come to the floor today in recognition of American Heart Month.

For more than 50 years, Congress has recognized February as American Heart Month. During this time, we have seen many advances in reducing congenital heart defects, heart disease, stroke, and other forms of cardiovascular disease through improvements in research, education, prevention, and treatment.

Over 1 million cardiovascular disease deaths are now averted each year thanks to advances in biomedical research, prevention programs, and the development of new drugs and therapies; yet every 15 minutes, a child is born with a heart defect, and nearly 86 million adults are living with some form of cardiovascular disease. Congenital heart defects are the most common type of birth defect, and heart disease alone remains our Nation's leading cause of death.

For millions of families across the country, including mine, the impact of heart defects and disease can be overwhelmingly painful.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, parents can now afford health insurance, and coverage can no longer be denied for a preexisting condition. Also, insurers cannot set arbitrary lifetime or annual limits on care. These protections can be lifesaving, literally, when dealing with congenital heart conditions.

And while I am so proud of what we did in health reform to improve access to care, we must do more to improve quality of care—and that means finding ways to better treat and even prevent these diseases.

Thankfully, there is hope for patients and families across the country. Breakthroughs in research are getting us closer to understanding the risk factors and causes of these diseases. We are developing new drugs and therapies to help those who are suffering, and we are improving standards of care for those living with and managing these diseases.

Increases in funding for the NIH and CDC in the fiscal year 2016 omnibus bill will support these critical efforts in prevention, research, and treatment. We provided a historic funding increase of \$2 billion for the NIH, and the CDC's budget was increased by nearly 5 percent. These increases will support leading research efforts at the NIH on the causes of cardiovascular diseases and possible treatments; community prevention programs at the CDC; as well as initiatives to gather data and track the incidence of congenital heart disease. These cannot be onetime increases. We must commit to sustained long-term investments in our Federal

health agencies—that means ensuring robust funding increases above inflation year after year. That is why I will again fight for funding equal to five percent real growth in the fiscal year 2017 appropriations bills for NIH, CDC, and seven other research agencies that contribute to medical and scientific advancements consistent with two bills I have introduced.

The American Cures Act would provide annual budget increases of five percent over inflation every year for 10 years at America's top four biomedical research agencies: the National Institutes of Health; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; the Department of Defense health programs; and the VA's Medical and Prosthetic Research Program, its biomedical research arm.

The American Innovations Act would invest an additional \$110 billion over 10 years in the critically important basic science research at America's top research agencies: the National Science Foundation; the Department of Energy Office of Science; the Department of Defense Science and Technology Programs; the National Institute of Standards and Technology Scientific and Technical Research; and the NASA Science Directorate.

We can't afford not to invest in the work these critical agencies are doing. And let me tell you why.

A few weeks ago, I was in Peoria, IL, touring the OSF Hospital there. Researchers from the University of Illinois Medical School are teaming up with the engineering department in joint efforts to bring new technologies to medical breakthroughs. They showed me a model of an infant's heart. It was an exact 3-D printed replica of an actual infant heart with serious congenital defects that would be operated on. The model was produced through MRIs and CAT scans. This allows surgeons to look at the heart, open it, and prepare for the procedures that they are about to conduct. It meant less time on the heart-lung machine, and it improves the odds of a positive recovery. These medical breakthroughs—made possible by Federal, State, and private contributions—are giving millions of Americans hope.

In early January, surgeons at Prairie Heart Institute in my hometown of Springfield, IL, operated on a local woman from Decatur. The doctors replaced two diseased heart valves with artificial valves that were threaded into position inside catheters, smaller than the width of a pencil. This procedure is known as a double transcatheter valve replacement. This successful surgery was only the fourth of its kind in the United States, and the first in the world to use the latest generation of artificial valves. The lead surgeons were from Prairie and Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. Had the valve not been replaced, the patient

would have faced a substantially higher risk for death from congestive heart failure.

As co-chair of the Senate NIH Caucus, and co-chair of the bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Heart and Stroke Coalition, I want to thank my colleagues for their commitment to lifesaving research for all Americans. I also want to thank the researchers, advocates, public health professionals, families, and patients for their leadership and tireless support for advancements in the science and treatment of heart diseases.

There is more work to be done, but I am optimistic for breakthroughs in the near future.

Thank you.

PLAN TO CLOSE THE GUANTANAMO BAY DETENTION FACILITY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, for years, I have consistently opposed efforts by Congress to restrict the Obama administration's ability to close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. The indefinite detention without trial of detainees at Guantanamo contradicts our most basic principles of justice, degrades our international standing, and harms our national security. The mere existence of this facility serves as a recruitment tool for terrorists, and the facility costs American taxpayers more than \$4 million per detainee each year—an astonishing amount of money that could be repurposed to keep our men and women in uniform safe.

I recently received a letter from former Marine Corps Commandant Charles Krulak, co-signed by an additional 60 retired generals and admirals that noted “closing Guantanamo is not just a national security imperative, it is about reestablishing the core values of who we are as a nation.” I could not agree more. I ask unanimous consent that General Krulak's letter be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

Last May, I wrote a letter to President Obama urging him to expedite the transfer of cleared detainees to foreign countries and accelerate the periodic review board process to determine if additional detainees could be transferred. Since that time, the President has made progress toward closing the Guantanamo detention facility. To date, only 91 detainees remain, and top national security officials have already cleared 35 of those detainees for transfer to foreign countries. I am encouraged that the plan unveiled by the administration yesterday morning calls for accelerating the review process to determine if additional detainees can be transferred, as I urged, and for completing that process by the fall.

Now that President Obama has delivered a plan, Congress must do its part and lift the unnecessary and counterproductive restrictions on transferring

detainees to the United States, so that we can finally shutter Guantanamo once and for all. We should all want to see additional detainees finally brought to justice in our Federal court system, which has a long and proven track record in terrorism prosecutions—unlike the military commission system that has been bogged down in legal challenges and procedural hurdles.

The detention facility at Guantanamo Bay has been a stain on our national reputation for more than 14 years. Closing Guantanamo is the morally and fiscally responsible thing to do, and it is long past time to stop the fear-mongering so we can work together to close it down.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

FEBRUARY 23, 2016.

DEAR SENATOR LEAHY: I represent a coalition of more than 60 retired generals and admirals of the United States Armed Forces who have for years advocated the responsible closure of the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. I write to urge you to give serious consideration to the recently submitted Department of Defense plan to close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Closing Guantanamo is in our national security interest, and with the submission of the DOD plan, there is a unique opportunity for Congress to lift the remaining restrictions on transferring detainees so that Guantanamo can be closed.

Guantanamo continues to impose significant costs to our national security. As an offshore detention facility that—rightly or wrongly—represents to the world an image of detainee abuse and violations of the rule of law, Guantanamo undermines counterterrorism cooperation with allies and unnecessarily bolsters the propaganda and recruiting narratives that terrorists seek to advance. It is a travesty that the trial of the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks remains bogged down at Guantanamo nearly 15 years after 9/11.

The issue of what to do with Guantanamo is not a political issue. There is near unanimous agreement from our nation's top military, intelligence, and law enforcement leaders that Guantanamo should be closed. Even President George W. Bush, who opened Guantanamo after the 9/11 attacks, tried to close it, noting that “the detention facility had become a propaganda tool for our enemies and a distraction for our allies.”

We understand that some fear bringing even a small number of detainees to the United States as part of the plan to close Guantanamo. However, we are confident that those detainees can be held safely and securely stateside. Hundreds of terrorists are already being held in U.S. prisons—including one former Guantanamo detainee who is serving a life sentence. Rather than trying to invoke fear, we should applaud these communities that have successfully and safely detained society's worst without incident. In any event, the risks of keeping Guantanamo open far outweigh any risks associated with closing it.

In the coming days and weeks, we plan on more closely studying the Department of Defense's plan to close Guantanamo, and we hope you will do the same. Closing Guantanamo is not just a national security imperative, it is about reestablishing the core val-

ues of who we are as a nation, and we believe strongly that there must be a bi-partisan approach to achieving that objective.

Semper Fidelis,

CHARLES C. KRULAK,
General, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret.).

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for today's vote on S. Res. 374, a resolution relating to the death of Antonin Scalia, Associate Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States. I would have voted yea. •

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD at this point the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,

Arlington, VA, February 23, 2016.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16-12, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to Iraq for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$350 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-12

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Iraq.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* \$0 million.
Other: \$350 million.
Total: \$350 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Non-Major Defense Equipment (MDE): The Iraq Air Force is requesting a five-year sustainment package for its KA-350 fleet that includes contract logistics, training, and contract engineering services. Also included in this possible sale are operational and intermediate depot level maintenance, spare parts, component repair, publication updates, maintenance training, and logistics.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (X7-D-QBQ).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: FMS Case: IQ-D-QAX-169M-13 September 2011, IQ-D-QBK-750K-19 November 2009.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: February 23, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Government of Iraq—KA-350 Sustainment, Logistics, and Spares Support

The Government of Iraq is requesting a five-year sustainment package for its KA-350 fleet that includes: operational and intermediate depot level maintenance, spare parts, component repair, publication updates, maintenance training, and logistics. There is no Major Defense Equipment associated with this case. The overall total estimated value is \$350 million.

The Iraq Air Force (IqAF) operates five (5) King Air 350 ISR (intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) and one (1) King Air 350 aircraft. The KA-350 aircraft are Iraq's only ISR-dedicated airborne platforms and are used to support Iraqi military operations against Al-Qaeda affiliates and Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) forces. The purchase of a sustainment package will allow the IqAF to continue to operate its fleet of six (6) KA-350 aircraft beyond September 2016 (end of the existing Contract Logistics Support (CLS) effort). Iraq will have no difficulty absorbing this support.

The proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security goals of the United States by helping to improve a critical capability of the Iraq Security Forces in defeating ISIL.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be Beechcraft Defense Company, Wichita, KS. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Iraq.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Iraq.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,

Arlington, VA, February 23, 2016.

Hon. BOB CORKER,

Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16-04, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Ac-

ceptance to the United Arab Emirates for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$225 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,

Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-04

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: United Arab Emirates.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* \$82.664 million.

Other: \$142.336 million.

Total: \$225.000 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: The UAE requested a possible sale of eight (8) AN/AAQ-24(V)N Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures (LAIRCM) Systems to protect the UAE's C-17 aircraft. Each C-17 aircraft configuration for the LAIRCM system consists of three (3) Guardian Laser Transmitter Assemblies (GLTA), six (6) Ultra-Violet Missile Warning System (UVMWS) Sensors AN/AAR-54, one (1) Control Indicator Unit Replacement (CIUR) and one (1) LAIRCM System Processor Replacement LSPR.

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Twenty-four (24) AN/AAQ-24(V)N Guardian Laser Transmitter Assemblies (GLTA) and thirteen (13) spares. Eight (8) AN/AAQ-24(V)N LAIRCM System Processor Replacement (LSPR) and eleven (11) spares. Forty-eight (48) AN/AAR-54 Ultra-Violet Missile Warning System (UVMWS) Sensors and twenty-six (26) spares.

Non-MDE items include: Control Indicator Unit Replacement (CIUR), Smart Card Assemblies (SCA), High Capacity Cards (HCC), User Data Modules (UDM), Repeaters, COMSEC Key Loaders, initial spares, consumables, support equipment, technical data, repair and return support, engineering design, Group A and Group B installation, flight test and certification, warranties, contractor provided familiarization and training, U.S. Government (USG) manpower and services, and Field Service Representatives (FSR). The total estimated program cost is \$225 million.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (AE-D-QAI).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: FMS Case: AE-D-QAC-17 December 09-\$501M, 26 May 10-\$250M, 31 July 12-\$35M, 28 July 15-\$335M. AE-D-QAH 28 July 15-\$335M.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: February 23, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

United Arab Emirates—AN/AAQ-24(V)N Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures (LAIRCM)

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) requested a possible sale of eight (8) AN/AAQ-24(V)N LAIRCM for the UAE's C-17 aircraft. Each C-17 aircraft configuration for the LAIRCM system consists of the following major defense equipment (MDE): three (3) Guardian Laser Transmitter Assemblies (GLTA), six (6) Ultra-Violet Missile Warning System

(UVMWS) Sensors AN/AAR-54, one (1) LAIRCM System Processor Replacement (LSPR). The sale includes spares bringing the MDE total to thirty-seven (37) GLTA AN/AAQ-24(V)Ns, nineteen (19) LSPR AN/AAQ-24(V)Ns, and seventy-four (74) UVMWS Sensors AN/AAR-54. The sale also includes the following non-MDE items: Control Indicator Unit Replacements (CIUR), Smart Card Assemblies (SCA), High Capacity Cards (HCC), User Data Modules (UDM), Repeaters, COMSEC Key Loaders, initial spares, consumables, support equipment, technical data, repair and return support, engineering design, Group A and Group B installation, flight test and certification, U.S. Government manpower and services, and Field Service Representatives (FSR). The total estimated value of MDE is \$82.664 million. The total estimated program cost is \$225 million.

This proposed sale enhances the foreign policy and national security of the United States by improving the security of a partner country, which has been, and continues to be, an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East.

The proposed purchase of LAIRCM to provide for the protection of UAE's C-17 fleet enhances the safety of UAE airlift aircraft engaging in humanitarian and resupply missions. LAIRCM facilitates a more robust capability into areas of increased missile threats. The UAE will have no problem absorbing and using the AN/AAQ-24(V)N LAIRCM system.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be The Boeing Company, Chicago, Illinois. The main subcontractor is Northrop Grumman Corporation of Rolling Meadows, Illinois. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

This sale includes provisions for one (1) FSR to live in the UAE for up to two (2) years. Implementation of this proposed sale requires multiple temporary trips to the UAE involving U.S. Government or contractor representatives over a period of up to six (6) years for program execution, delivery, technical support, and training.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-04

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology

1. The AN/AAQ-24(V)N Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures (LAIRCM) is a self-contained, directed energy countermeasures system designed to protect aircraft from infrared-guided surface-to-air missiles. The system features digital technology and micro-miniature solid-state electronics. The system operates in all conditions, detecting incoming missiles and jamming infrared-seeker equipped missiles with aimed bursts of laser energy. The LAIRCM system consists of multiple Ultra-Violet Missile Warning System (UVMWS) Sensor units, Guardian Laser Transmitter Assemblies (GLTA), LAIRCM System Processor Replacement (LSPR), Control Indicator Unit Replacement (CIUR), and a classified High Capacity Card (HCC), and User Data Modules (UDM). The HCC card is loaded into the CIUR prior to flight. When the classified HCC card is not in use, it is removed from the CIUR and put in secure storage. LAIRCM Line Replaceable Units (LRU) hardware is classified SECRET when the classified HCC is inserted into the

CIUR. LAIRCM system software, including Operational Flight Program, is classified SECRET. Technical data and documentation to be provided are UNCLASSIFIED.

a. The set of UVMWS Sensor units (AN/AAR-54) are mounted on the aircraft exterior to provide omni-directional protection. The UVMWS Sensors detect the rocket plume of missiles and sends appropriate data signals to the LSPR for processing. The LSPR analyzes the data from each UVMWS Sensors and automatically deploys the appropriate countermeasures via the GLTA. The CIUR displays the incoming threat.

b. The AN/AAR-54 UVMWS Sensor warns of threat missile approach by detecting radiation associated with the rocket motor. The AN/AAR-54 is a small, lightweight, passive, electro-optic, threat warning device used to detect surface-to-air missiles fired at helicopters and low-flying fixed-wing aircraft and automatically provide countermeasures, as well as audio and visual warning messages to the aircrew. The basic system consists of multiple UVMWS Sensor units, three GLTAs, a LSPR and a CIUR. The set of UVMWS units (each C-17 has six (6)) are mounted on the aircraft exterior to provide omnidirectional protection. Hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. Software is SECRET. Technical data and documentation to be provided are UNCLASSIFIED.

2. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification. Moreover, the benefits derived from this sale, as outlined in the Policy Justification, outweigh the potential damage that could result if the sensitive technology were revealed to unauthorized persons.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures or equivalent systems which might reduce system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the United Arab Emirates.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,

Arlington, VA, February 11, 2016.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 15-80, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Pakistan for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$699.04 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-80

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: The Government of Pakistan.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* \$564.68 million.
Other \$134.36 million.

Total: \$699.04 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services Under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): Eight (8) F-16 Block 52 aircraft (two (2) C and six (6) D models), with the F100-PW-229 increased performance engine.

Fourteen (14) Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing Systems (JHMCS).

Non-MDE items included in this request are eight (8) AN/APG-68(V)9 radars, and eight (8) ALQ-211(V)9 Advanced Integrated Defensive Electronic Warfare Suites (AIDEWS). Additionally, this possible sale includes spare and repair parts, support and test equipment, publications and technical documentation, personnel training and training equipment, U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistical and program support. The estimated cost of MDE is \$564.68 million. The total estimated cost is \$699.04 million.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (X7-D-5A7).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: FMS Case SAF—\$1.4B-24 Oct 06.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: February 11, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

The Government of Pakistan—F-16 Block 52 Aircraft

The Government of Pakistan has requested a possible sale of:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Eight (8) F-16 Block 52 aircraft (two (2) C and six (6) D models), with the F100-PW-229 increased performance engine

Fourteen (14) Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing Systems (JHMCS)

Non-MDE items included in this request are eight (8) AN/APG-68(V)9 radars, and eight (8) ALQ-211(V)9 Advanced Integrated Defensive Electronic Warfare Suites (AIDEWS). Additionally, this possible sale includes spare and repair parts, support and test equipment, publications and technical documentation, personnel training and training equipment, U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistical and program support. The estimated cost of MDE is \$564.68 million. The total estimated cost is \$699.04 million.

This proposed sale contributes to U.S. foreign policy objectives and national security goals by helping to improve the security of a strategic partner in South Asia.

The proposed sale improves Pakistan's capability to meet current and future security threats. These additional F-16 aircraft will facilitate operations in all-weather, non-daylight environments, provide a self-defense/area suppression capability, and enhance Pakistan's ability to conduct counter-insurgency and counterterrorism operations.

This sale will increase the number of aircraft available to the Pakistan Air Force to sustain operations, meet monthly training requirements, and support transition training for pilots new to the Block 52. Pakistan will have no difficulty absorbing these additional aircraft into its air force.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

Contractors have not been selected to support this proposed sale. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Pakistan.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-80

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. This sale involves the release of sensitive technology to Pakistan. The F-16C/D Block 50/52 weapon system is UNCLASSIFIED, except as noted below. The aircraft uses the F-16 airframe and features advanced avionics and systems. It contains the Pratt and Whitney F-100-PW 229 engine, AN/APG-68(V)9 radar, digital flight control system, external electronic warfare equipment, Advanced Identification Friend or Foe (AIFF), LINK-16 datalink, and software computer programs.

2. Sensitive and/or classified (up to SECRET) elements of the proposed F-16C/D include hardware, accessories, components, and associated software: AN/APG-68(V)9 Radar, Have Quick I/II Radios, AN/APX-113 AIFF with Mode IV capability, AN/ALE-47 Countermeasures (Chaff and Flare) set, LINK-16 Advanced Data Link Group A provisions only, Embedded Global Positioning System/Inertial Navigation System, Joint Helmet-Mounted Cueing System (JHMCS), ALQ-211(V)9 Advanced Integrated Defensive Electronic Warfare Suite (AIDEWS) without Digital Radio Frequency Memory, AN/ALQ-213 Countermeasures Set, Modular Mission Computer, Have Glass I/II Without infrared top coat, Digital Flight Control System, F-100 engine infrared signature, and Advanced Interference Blanker Unit. Additional sensitive areas include operating manuals and maintenance technical orders containing performance information, operating and test procedures, and other information related to support operations and repair. The hardware, software, and data identified are classified to protect vulnerabilities, design and performance parameters and other similar critical information.

3. The AN/APG-68(V)9 is the latest model of the APG-68 radar and was specifically designed for foreign military sales. This model contains the latest digital technology available for a mechanically scanned antenna, including higher processor power, higher transmission power, more sensitive receiver electronics, and an entirely new capability, Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR), which creates higher resolution ground maps from a much greater distance than previous versions of the APG-68. Complete hardware is classified CONFIDENTIAL, major components and subsystems are classified CONFIDENTIAL, software is classified SECRET, and technical data and documentation are classified up to SECRET.

4. The AN/ARC-238 radio with HAVE QUICK II is a voice communications radio system. The AN/ARC-238 employs cryptographic technology that is classified SECRET. Classified elements include operating characteristics, parameters, technical data, and keying material.

5. The AN/APX-113 AIFF with Mode IV system is classified up to SECRET when operational evaluator parameters are loaded into

the equipment. Classified elements of the AIFF system include software object code, operating characteristics, parameters, and technical data.

6. The Multifunctional Information Distribution System-Low Volume Terminal (MIDS-LVT) is an advanced Link-16 command, control, communications, and intelligence (C3I) system incorporating high-capacity, jam-resistant, digital communication links for exchange of near real-time tactical information, including both data and voice, among air, ground, and sea elements. MIDS-LVT is intended to support key theater functions such as surveillance, identification, air control, weapons engagement coordination, and direction for all services and allied forces. The system will provide jamming-resistant, wide-area communications on a Link-16 network among MIDS and Joint Tactical Information Distribution System (JTIDS) equipped platforms. The MIDS/LVT and MIDS on Ship Terminal hardware, publications, performance specifications, operational capability, parameters, vulnerabilities to countermeasures, and software documentation are classified CONFIDENTIAL. The classified information to be provided consists of that which is necessary for the operation, maintenance, and repair (through intermediate level) of the data link terminal, installed systems, and related software.

7. The Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System (JHMCS) is a modified HGU-55/P helmet that incorporates a visor-projected Heads-Up Display (HUD) to cue weapons and aircraft sensors to air and ground targets. A Helmet Vehicle Interface (HVI) interacts with the aircraft system bus to provide signal generation for the helmet display. This provides significant improvement for close combat targeting and engagement. The hardware is UNCLASSIFIED; technical data and documents are classified up to SECRET.

8. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware or software source code in this proposed sale, the information could be used to develop countermeasures which might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of systems with similar or advanced capabilities. The benefits to be derived from this sale in the furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives, as outlined in the Policy Justification, outweigh the potential damage that could result if the sensitive technology were revealed to unauthorized persons.

9. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

10. A determination has been made that the recipient country can provide the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

11. All defense articles and services are approved for release to the Government of Pakistan.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,

Arlington, VA, February 10, 2016.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(A) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as

amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 0C-16. This report relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 15-14 of 29 May 2015.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 0C-16

Report of Enhancement or Upgrade of Sensitivity of Technology or Capability (Sec. 36(b)(5)(A), AECA)

(i) Purchaser: The United Arab Emirates (UAE).

(ii) Sec. 36(b)(1), AECA Transmittal No.: 15-14; Date: 29 May 2015; Military Department: Air Force.

(iii) Description: On 29 May 2015, Congress was notified by Congressional Notification Transmittal Number 15-14, of the possible sale under Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act for 500 GBU-31B(V)1 (MK-84/BLU-117) bombs, 500 GBU-31B(V)3 (BLU-109 bombs) bombs, and 600 GBU-12 (MK-82/BLU-111) bombs, containers, fuzes, spare and repair parts, support equipment, publications and technical documentation, personnel training and training equipment, U.S. Government and contractor logistics and technical support services, and other related elements of logistics support. The estimated total cost was \$130 million. Major Defense Equipment (MDE) constituted \$100 million of this total.

This transmittal reports a clarification that the MDE munitions notified on Congressional Notification transmittal number 15-14 include the following: 500 GBU-31B(V)1 (KMU-556 Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) kits with 500 MK-84/BLU-117 general purpose bombs); 500 GBU-31B(V)3 (KMU-557 JDAM kits with 500 BLU-109 penetrating bombs); and 600 GBU-12 kits, with 600 MK-82/BLU-111 general purpose bombs. This transmittal also reports the inclusion as MDE of 1700 FMU-152A/B munitions fuzes. The value of the fuzes was included in the MDE cost but was not enumerated as MDE. The total estimated value of associated MDE remains at \$100M. The total overall value of the program remains at \$130 million.

(iv) Significance: The proposed sale provides munitions resupply. The UAE continues to be a steadfast partner within the region and continues to participate in Coalition Operations.

(v) Justification: This proposed sale contributes to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by meeting the security and defense needs of a partner nation that continues to be an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East.

(vi) Date Report Delivered to Congress: February 10, 2016.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,

Arlington VA, February 10, 2016.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(A) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 0G-16. This report relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the

Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 16-10 of 18 December 2015.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO.: 0G-16

Report of Enhancement or Upgrade of Sensitivity of Technology or Capability (Sec. 36(b)(5)(a), AECA)

(i) Purchaser: Government of Australia.

(ii) Sec. 36(b)(1), AECA Transmittal No.: 16-10; Date: 18 December 2015; Military Department: Army.

(iii) Description: On 18 December 2015, Congress was notified, by Congressional Notification Transmittal Number 16-10, of the possible sale under Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act for the following:

Major Defense, Equipment (MDE):

Three (3) CH-47F Chinook Helicopters.

Six (6) T55-GA-714A Aircraft Turbine Engines.

Three (3) Force XXI Battle Command, Brigade & Below (FBCB2)/Blue Force Tracker (BFT).

Three (3) Common Missile Warning Systems (CMWS).

Three (3) Honeywell H-764 Embedded Global Positioning/Inertial Navigation Systems.

Three (3) Infrared Signature Suppression Systems.

The previous request also included the following Non-Major Defense Equipment; AN/APX-123A Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) Transponders, Defense Advanced Global Positioning System (GPS) Receiver (DAGR), AN/ARC-201D SINGARS Airborne Radio Systems, AN/ARC-220 High Frequency Airborne Communication Systems, AN/ARC-231(V)(C) Airborne VHF/UHF/LOS SATCOM Communications Systems, KY-100 Secure Communication Systems, KIV-77 Common IFF Cryptographic Computers, AN/AVS-6 Aviator's Night Vision Systems, AN/ARN-147 Very High Frequency (VHF) Omni Ranging/Instrument Landing System Receiver, AN/PYQ-10(C) Simple Key Loaders, AN/ARN-153 Tactical Airborne Navigation (TACAN) System, Spare Parts, Tools, Ground Support Equipment, Technical Publications, Contractor and U.S. Government Technical Services.

The total estimated cost of MDE was \$105 million. The total overall estimated value was \$180 million.

This report revises the quantity of the Honeywell H-764 Embedded Global Positioning/Inertial Navigation Systems (GPS/INS) to two (2) per aircraft and two (2) as spares, for a total quantity of eight (8). This report also revises the quantity of Common Missile Warning Systems (CMWS) to four (4), which includes one spare. Additionally, this report removes the three (3) Force XXI Battle Command, Brigade & Below (FBCB2), but retains the Blue Force Tracker (BFT), which are non-MDE. The Infrared Signature Suppression Systems are also revised to be properly enumerated here as non-MDE. The revised MDE total cost is \$103 million. The total overall estimated value remains at \$180 million.

(iv) Significance: The GPS/INS provides highly accurate all-altitude, all-weather navigation and timing information to the CH-47F Chinook helicopters, allowing more precise flight pattern and rendezvous. The helicopters have a redundant requirement to have two GPS/INS systems for flight operations. There is also a requirement for two additional GPS/INS as maintenance spares. The CMWS provides enhanced situational awareness and the capability to defeat

ground to air missile threats. The CH-47F helicopters will increase Australia's ability to contribute to future coalition operations and help provide stability in the region.

(v) Justification: It is vital to U.S. national interests to assist Australia to develop and maintain a strong and ready self-defense capability. This update to a previously approved sale will further enhance Australia's interoperability with the U.S. Army.

(vi) Date Report Delivered to Congress: February 10, 2016.

DEFENSE SECURITY

COOPERATION AGENCY,

Arlington, VA, February 10, 2016.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding a revised Transmittal No. 15-62, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Japan for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$1.20 billion. The original Transmittal was delivered on November 19, 2015, and it erroneously cited the potential for offsets. There are no known offsets associated with this sale. This submission corrects this discrepancy and makes no other changes. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a corrected news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-62

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Japan.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment:* \$689 billion.

Other: \$511 billion.

Total: \$1.20 billion.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Three (3) RQ-4 Block 30 (I) Global Hawk Remotely Piloted Aircraft with Enhanced Integrated Sensor Suite (EISS).

Eight (8) Kearfott Inertial Navigation System/Global Positioning System (INS/GPS) units (2 per aircraft with 2 spares).

Eight (8) LN-251 INS/GPS units (2 per aircraft with 2 spares).

Also included with this request are operational-level sensor and aircraft test equipment, ground support equipment, operational flight test support, communications equipment, spare and repair parts, personnel training, publications and technical data, U.S. Government and contractor technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics support.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (X7-D-SAI).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: February 10, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Government of Japan—RQ-4 Block 30 (I) Global Hawk Remotely Piloted, Aircraft

The Government of Japan has requested a possible sale of:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Three (3) RQ-4 Block 30 (I) Global Hawk Remotely Piloted Aircraft with Enhanced Integrated Sensor Suite (EISS).

Eight (8) Kearfott Inertial Navigation System/Global Positioning System (INS/GPS) units (2 per aircraft with 2 spares).

Eight (8) LN-251 INS/GPS units (2 per aircraft with 2 spares).

Also included with this request are operational-level sensor and aircraft test equipment, ground support equipment, operational flight test support, communications equipment, spare and repair parts, personnel training, publications and technical data, U.S. Government and contractor technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics support. The estimated value of MDE is \$689 billion. The total estimated value is \$1.2 billion.

This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States. Japan is one of the major political and economic powers in East Asia and the Western Pacific and a key partner of the United States in ensuring regional peace and stability. This transaction is consistent with U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives and the 1960 Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security.

The proposed sale of the RQ-4 will significantly enhance Japan's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities and help ensure that Japan is able to continue to monitor and deter regional threats. The Japan Air Self Defense Force (JASDF) will have no difficulty absorbing these systems into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor will be Northrop Grumman Corporation in Rancho Bernardo, California. There are no known offset agreements in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require the assignment of contractor representatives to Japan to perform contractor logistics support and to support establishment of required security infrastructure.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-62

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The RQ-4 Block 30 Global Hawk hardware and software are UNCLASSIFIED. The highest level of classified information required for operation may be SECRET depending on the classification of the imagery or Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) utilized on a specific operation. The RQ-4 is optimized for long range and prolonged flight endurance. It is used for military intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. Aircraft system, sensor, and navigational status are provided continuously to the ground operators through a health and status downlink for mission monitoring. Navigation is via inertial navigation with integrated global positioning system (GPS) updates. The vehicle is capable of operating from a standard paved runway. Real time missions are flown under the control of a pilot in a Ground Control

Element (GCE). It is designed to carry a non-weapons internal payload of 3,000 lbs consisting primarily of sensors and avionics. The following payloads are integrated into the RQ-4: Enhanced Imagery Sensor Suite that includes multi-use infrared, electro-optical, ground moving target indicator, and synthetic aperture radar and a space to accommodate other sensors such as SIGINT. The RQ-4 will include the GCE, which consists of the following components:

a. The Mission Control Element (MCE) is the RQ-4 Global Hawk ground control station for mission planning, communication management, aircraft and mission control, and image processing and dissemination. It can be either fixed or mobile. In addition to the shelter housing the operator workstations, the MCE includes an optional 6.25 meter Ku-Band antenna assembly, a Tactical Modular Interoperable Surface Terminal, a 12-ton Environmental Control Unit (heating and air conditioning), and two 100 kilowatt electrical generators. The MCE, technical data, and documentation are UNCLASSIFIED. The MCE may operate at the classified level depending on the classification of the data feeds.

b. The Launch and Recovery Element (LRE) is a subset of the MCE and can be either fixed or mobile. It provides identical functionality for mission planning and air vehicle command and control (C2). The launch element contains a mission planning workstation and a C2 workstation. The primary difference between the LRE and MCE is the lack of any wide-band data links or image processing capability within the LRE and navigation equipment at the LRE to provide the precision required for ground operations, take-off, and landing. The LRE, technical data, and documentation are UNCLASSIFIED. The EISS includes infrared/electro-optical, synthetic aperture radar imagery, ground moving target indicator and space to accommodate optional SIGINT, Maritime, datalink, and automatic identification system capabilities. The ground control element includes a mission control function and a launch and recovery capability.

c. The RQ-4 employs a quad-redundant Inertial Navigation System/Global Positioning System (INS/GPS) configuration. The system utilizes two different INS/GPS systems for greater redundancy. The system consists of two LN-251 units and two Kearfott KN-4074E INS/GPS Units. The LN-251 is a fully integrated, non-dithered navigation system with an embedded Selective Availability/Anti-Spoofing Module (SAASM), P(Y) code or Standard Positioning Service (SPS) GPS. It utilizes a Fiber-Optic Gyro (FOG) and includes three independent navigation solutions; blended INS/GPS, INS-only, and GPS-only. The Kearfott KN-4074E features a Monolithic Ring Laser Gyro (MRLG) and accelerometer. The inertial sensors are tightly coupled with an embedded SAASM P(Y) code GPS. Both systems employ cryptographic technology that can be classified up to SECRET.

2. If a technology advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

3. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Japan.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,

Arlington VA, February 10, 2016.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 15-82, concerning the Department of the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$154.9 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-82

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective, Purchaser: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* \$72.5 million.

Other \$82.4 million.

Total \$154.9 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): Five (5) MK 15 Phalanx Close-in Weapons System (CIWS) Block 0 to Block 1B Baseline 2 upgrade kits.

Also included are the following non-MDE items: five (5) local control stations, spare and repair parts, upgrade and conversion of the kits, support and test equipment, personnel training and training equipment, publications, software and technical documentation, U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of program and logistics support. The estimated cost is \$154.9 million.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (SR-P-LCR).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: FMS Case: SR-P-SAT, 24 Mar 74, \$147.8 million

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: February 10, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia—MK 15 Phalanx Close-in Weapons System (CIWS) Block 1B Baseline 2 Kits

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has requested a sale for the upgrade and conversion of five (5) MK 15 Phalanx Close-In Weapons System (CIWS) Block 0 systems to the Block 1B Baseline 2 configuration. The Block 0 systems are currently installed on four (4) Royal Saudi Naval Forces (RSNF) Patrol Chaser Missile (PCG) Ships (U.S. origin) in their Eastern Fleet and one (1) system is located at its Naval Forces School. Also included are: five (5) local control stations, spare and repair parts, support and test equipment, personnel training and training equipment, publications, software, and technical documentation, U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logis-

tics support services, and other related elements of program and logistics support. The total estimated value of MDE is \$72.5 million. The overall total estimated value is \$154.9 million.

This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a strategic regional partner, which has been, and continues to be, an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East. This acquisition will enhance regional stability and maritime security and support strategic objectives of the United States.

The proposed sale will provide Saudi Arabia with self-defense capabilities for surface combatants supporting both national and multi-national naval operations. The sale will extend the life of existing PCG Class ships. Saudi Arabia will use the enhanced capability as a deterrent to regional threats and to strengthen its homeland defense. Saudi Arabia will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment, services, and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be Raytheon Missiles Systems of Tucson, Arizona. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Saudi Arabia; however, contractor engineering and technical services may be required on an interim basis for installations and integration.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-82

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology

1. The MK 15 CIWS Phalanx Block 1B is a fast reaction detect-through-engage combat system that provides terminal defense against low-flying, high speed, anti-ship missiles; slow speed general purpose aircraft, helicopters, and small surface craft; and rockets, artillery, and mortars. The system is an automatic, self-contained unit consisting of a search and track radar, digitalized fire control system, and electro-optical thermal imager, and a stabilization system, as well as a 20mm M61A1 gun subsystem. CIWS Block 0 provides terminal defense capability but is no longer in the U.S. Navy inventory decreasing its sustainability. By comparison, the CIWS Block 1B upgrade included in this sale would add surface mode and enhanced anti-air warfare capabilities.

a. There is no Critical Program Information associated with the MK 15 CIWS Phalanx hardware, technical documentation, or software. The highest classification of the hardware to be exported is UNCLASSIFIED. The highest classification of the technical documentation to be exported is CONFIDENTIAL. The highest classification of software to be exported is UNCLASSIFIED.

2. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures which might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

3. A determination has been made that the recipient country can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to Saudi Arabia.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,

Arlington VA, January 15, 2016.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 15-52, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Iraq for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$1.95 billion. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-52

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Iraq (GoI)

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* \$550 billion.

Other: \$1.400 billion.

Total: \$1.950 billion.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: provides additional weapons, munitions, equipment, and logistics support for F-16 aircraft.

Major Defense Equipment (MDE) includes: Twenty (20) each Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System (JHMCS).

Twenty-four (24) each AIM-9M Sidewinder missile.

One hundred and fifty (150) each AGM-65D/G/H/K Maverick missile.

Fourteen thousand one hundred and twenty (14,120) each 500-lb General Purpose (GP) bomb body/warhead for use either as unguided or guided bombs. Depending on asset availability during case execution, total quantity of 14,120 each 500-lb warheads will comprise a mix of MK-82 500-lb warheads and/or BLU-111 500-lb warheads from stock and/or new contract procurement.

Two thousand four hundred (2,400) each 2,000-lb GP bomb body/warheads for use either as unguided or guided bombs. Depending on asset availability during case execution, total quantity of 2,400 each 2,000-lb warheads will comprise a mix of MK-84 2,000-lb warheads and/or BLU-117 2,000-lb warheads from stock and/or new contract procurement.

Eight thousand (8,000) each Laser Guided Bomb (LGB) Paveway II tail kits. Will be combined with 500-lb warheads in the above entry for MK-82 and/or BLU-111 to build a GBU-12 guided bomb.

Two hundred and fifty (250) each LGB Paveway II tail kits. Will be combined with 2,000-lb warheads in the above entry for MK-82 and/or BLU-117 to build a GBU-10 guided bomb.

One hundred and fifty (150) each LGB Paveway III tail kits. Will be combined with

2,000-lb warheads in the above entry for MK-82 and/or BLU-117 to build a GBU-24 guided bomb.

Eight thousand, five hundred (8,500) each FMU-152 fuzes. Will be used in conjunction with the LGB tail kits and warheads in the above entries to build GBU All Up Rounds (AUR's). Includes provisioning for spare FMU-152 fuze units (MDE).

Four (4) each WGU 43CD2/B Guidance Control Units.

One (1) each M61 Vulcan Rotary 20mm cannon.

Six (6) each MK-82 inert bomb.

Four (4) each MK-84 inert bomb.

Also included are items of significant military equipment (SME), spare and repair parts, publications, technical documents, weapons components, support equipment, personnel training, training equipment, Aviation Training, Contract Engineering Services, U.S. Government and contractor logistics, engineering, and technical support services, as well as other related elements of logistics and program support. Additional services provided are Aviation Contract Logistics Services including maintenance, supply, component repair/return, tools and manpower. This notification also includes Base Operations Support Services including construction, outfitting, supply, security, weapons, ammunition, vehicles, utilities, power generation, food, water, morale/recreation services, aircraft support and total manpower.

(iv) Military Department: U.S. Air Force (YAA).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: FMS case SAG-\$4.2 billion—13 Dec 2010. FMS case SAH-\$2.3 billion—12 Dec 2011.

(vi) Sales Commission. Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Annex attached.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: January 15, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Iraq—F-16 Weapons, Munitions, Equipment, and Logistics Support

The Government of Iraq requested a possible sale of additional weapons, munitions, equipment, and logistics support for its F-16 aircraft.

Major Defense Equipment (MDE) includes: Twenty (20) each Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System (JHMCS).

Twenty-four (24) each AIM-9M Sidewinder missile.

One hundred and fifty (150) each AGM-65D/G/H/K Maverick missile.

Fourteen thousand one hundred and twenty (14,120) each 500-lb General Purpose (GP) bomb body/warhead for use either as unguided or guided bombs.

Depending on asset availability during case execution, total quantity of 14,120 each 500-lb warheads will comprise a mix of MK-82 500-lb warheads and/or BLU-111 500-lb warheads from stock and/or new contract procurement.

Two thousand four hundred (2,400) each 2,000-lb GP bomb body/warheads for use either as unguided or guided bombs. Depending on asset availability during case execution, total quantity of 2,400 each 2,000-lb warheads will comprise a mix of MK-84 2,000-lb warheads and/or BLU-117 2,000-lb warheads from stock and/or new contract procurement.

Eight thousand (8,000) each Laser Guided Bomb (LGB) Paveway II tail kits. Will be combined with 500-lb warheads in the above

entry for MK-82 and/or BLU-111 to build GBU-12 guided bombs.

Two hundred and fifty (250) each LGB Paveway II tail kits. Will be combined with 2,000-lb warheads in the above entry for MK-82 and/or BLU-117 to build GBU-10 guided bombs.

One hundred and fifty (150) each LGB Paveway III tail kits. Will be combined with 2,000-lb warheads in the above entry for MK-82 and/or BLU-117 to build GBU-24 guided bombs.

Eight thousand, five hundred (8,500) each FMU-152 fuzes. Will be used in conjunction with the LGB tail kits and warheads in the above entries to build GBU All Up Rounds (AUR's). Includes provisioning for spare FMU-152 fuze units (MDE).

Four (4) each WGU-43CD2/B Guidance Control Units.

One (1) each M61 Vulcan Rotary 20mm cannon.

Six (6) each MK-82 inert bomb.

Four (4) each MK-84 inert bomb.

Also included are items of significant military equipment (SME), spare and repair parts, publications, technical documents, weapons components, support equipment, personnel training, training equipment, Aviation Training, Contract Engineering Services, U.S. Government and contractor logistics, engineering, and technical support services, as well as other related elements of logistics and program support. Additional services provided are Aviation Contract Logistics Services including maintenance, supply, component repair/return, tools and manpower. This notification also includes Base Operations Support Services including construction, outfitting, supply, security, weapons, ammunition, vehicles, utilities, power generation, food, water, morale/recreation services, aircraft support and total manpower. The total estimated value of MDE is \$550 billion. The total overall estimated value is \$1,950 billion.

This proposed sale contributes to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a strategic partner. This proposed sale directly supports Iraq and serves the interests of the people of Iraq and the United States.

Iraq previously purchased thirty-six (36) F-16 aircraft. Iraq requires these additional weapons, munitions, and technical services to maintain the operational capabilities of its aircraft. This proposed sale enables Iraq to fully maintain and employ its aircraft and sustain pilot training to effectively protect Iraq from current and future threats.

The proposed sale of these additional weapons, munitions, equipment, and support does not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal vendors are:

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company, Fort Worth, Texas.

Lockheed Martin Simulation, Training and Support, Fort Worth, Texas.

Raytheon Company, Lexington, Massachusetts.

The Marvin Group, Inglewood, California.

United Technologies Aerospace Systems, Chelmsford, Massachusetts.

Lockheed Martin Mission Systems and Training, Fort Worth, Texas.

Royal Jordanian Air Academy, Amman, Jordan.

Pratt and Whitney, East Hartford, Connecticut.

Michael Baker International, Alexandria, VA.

There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale requires approximately four hundred (400) U.S. Government and contractor personnel to reside in Iraq through calendar year 2020 as part of this sale to establish maintenance support, on-the-job maintenance training, and maintenance advice.

There is no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-52

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. This sale sustains sensitive technology previously sold to Iraq. The F-16C/D Block 50/52 weapon system is UNCLASSIFIED, except as noted below. The aircraft uses the F-16 airframe and features advanced avionics and systems. It contains the Pratt and Whitney F-100-PW-229 or the General Electric F-110-GE-129 engine, AN/APG-68V(9) radar, digital flight control system, internal and external electronic warfare equipment, Advanced Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) (without Mode IV), operational flight program, and software computer programs.

2. The AIM-9M-8/9 Sidewinder is a supersonic, heat-seeking, air-to-air missile carried by fighter aircraft. The hardware, software, and maintenance are classified CONFIDENTIAL. Pilot training, technical data, and documentation necessary for performance and operating information are classified SECRET.

3. The Paveway II/III (GBU-10/12/24) weapon is classified CONFIDENTIAL. Information revealing target designation tactics and associated aircraft maneuvers, the probability of destroying specific/peculiar targets, vulnerabilities regarding countermeasures and the electromagnetic environment is classified SECRET.

4. The AGM-65D/G/H/K Maverick air-to-ground missile is SECRET. The SECRET aspects of the Maverick system are tactics, information revealing its vulnerability to countermeasures, and counter-countermeasures. Manuals and maintenance have portions that are classified CONFIDENTIAL. Performance and operating logic of the countermeasures circuits are SECRET.

5. The Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System (JHMCS) is a modified HGU-55/P helmet that incorporates a visor-projected Heads-Up Display to cue weapons and aircraft sensors to air and ground targets. The hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. The technical data and documents are classified up to SECRET.

6. The PGU-28 20mm High Explosive Incendiary ammunition is a low-drag round designed to reduce in-flight drag and deceleration. It is a semi-armor piercing high explosive incendiary round. The PGU-27 A/B 20mm ammunition is the target practice version of the PGU-28. Both the PGU-27 and the PGU-28 are UNCLASSIFIED.

7. The M61 20mm Vulcan Rotary Cannon is a six-barreled automatic cannon chambered in 20x102mm. This weapon is fixed mounted on fighter aircraft and is used for damaging and destroying aerial and ground targets. The cannon and the associated ammunition are UNCLASSIFIED.

8. The MK-82 and MK84 are 500-lb and 2000-lb general purpose bombs respectively. These blast and fragmentation bombs are designed to attack soft and intermediately protected targets. The weapons are UNCLASSIFIED.

9. The BLU-111 is a 500-lb bomb and the BLU-117 is a 2,000-lb bomb. Both bombs are similar to the MK-84 and are filled with the

Insensitive Munitions explosive to resist exploding in fuel related fires. They are used by the U.S. Navy. The weapons are UNCLASSIFIED.

10. MJU-7 Flares are a magnesium-based Infrared (IR) countermeasure used for decoying air-to-air and surface-to-air missiles. The MJU-7 hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. Countermeasure effectiveness information is classified up to SECRET.

11. RR-170 Chaff is a countermeasure used to decoy radars and radar-guided missiles. The hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. Countermeasure effectiveness information is classified up to SECRET.

12. Software, hardware, and other data/information, which is classified or sensitive, is reviewed prior to release to protect system vulnerabilities, design data, and performance parameters. Some end-item hardware, software, and other data identified above are classified at the CONFIDENTIAL and SECRET level. Potential compromise of these systems is controlled through management of the basic software programs of highly sensitive systems and software-controlled weapon systems on a case-by-case basis.

13. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures or equivalent systems which might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

14. This sale is necessary to further the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification. Moreover, the benefits derived from this sale, as outlined in the Policy Justification, outweigh the potential damage that could result if the sensitive technology were revealed to unauthorized persons.

15. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Iraq.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA, January 6, 2016.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 15-65, concerning the Department of the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Oman for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$51 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-65

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Oman.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* \$51 million.

Other: \$0 million.

Total: \$51 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Four hundred (400) Tube-launched Optically-tracked wire guided (TOW) 2B Aero,

Radio Frequency (RF) Missiles (BGM-71F-3-RF).

Seven (7) TOW 2B Aero, RF Missile (BGM-71F-3-RF) Fly-to-Buy Missiles.

(iv) Military Department: U.S. Army (UKP).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: FMS Case UKC-\$16.8B-05 Mar 15.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: January 6, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Government of Oman—TOW 2B Missiles

The Government of Oman has requested a possible sale of:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Four hundred (400) Tube-launched Optically-tracked wire guided (TOW) 2B Aero, Radio Frequency (RF) Missiles (BGM-71F-3-RF).

Seven (7) TOW 2B Aero, RF Missile (BGM-71F-3-RF) Fly-to-Buy Missiles.

The estimated value of MDE is \$51 million. The total estimated cost of this effort is \$51 million.

This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a friendly country which has been, and continues to be, an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East.

The proposed sale of the TOW 2B Missiles and technical support will advance Oman's efforts to develop an integrated ground defense capability. Oman will use this capability to strengthen its homeland defense and enhance interoperability with the U.S. and other allies. Oman will have no difficulty absorbing these missiles into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor will be Raytheon Missile Systems, Tucson, Arizona.

There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require the U.S. Government or contractor representatives to travel to Oman for multiple periods for equipment de-processing/fielding, system checkout and new equipment training. There will be no more than three (3) contractor personnel in Oman at any one time and all efforts will take less than fourteen (14) weeks in total.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-65

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The Radio Frequency (RF) Tube-launched Optically-tracked Wire guided (TOW) 2B Aero Missile (BGM-71F-3-RF) is a fly-over, shoot-down version with the actual missile flight path offset above the gunner's aim point. The TOW 2B flies over the target and uses a laser profilometer and magnetic sensor to detect and fire two downward-directed, explosively-formed penetrator warheads into the target. The TOW 2B has a range of 200 to 3750m. A Radio Frequency

(RF) Data link, replaced the traditional TOW wire guidance link in all new production variants of the TOW beginning in FY 07. No RF TOW AERO technical data will be released during program development without prior approval from the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Defense Exports and Cooperation. The hardware for the TOW 2B is UNCLASSIFIED. Software for performance data, lethality penetration and sensors are classified SECRET.

2. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

3. A determination has been made that the recipient country can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Oman.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA, January 6, 2016.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 15-64, concerning the Department of the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Iraq for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$800 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-64

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Iraq.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* \$750 million.

Other: \$50 million.

Total: \$800 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles and Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Five thousand (5,000) AGM-114K/N/R Hellfire missiles.

Ten (10) 114K M36E9 Captive Air Training Missiles.

Non-MDE included with this request are Hellfire missile conversion; blast fragmentation sleeves and installation kits; containers; transportation; spare and repair parts; support equipment; personnel training and training equipment; publications and technical documentation; U.S. Government-provided and contractor-provided technical, engineering, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: U.S. Army (UBW).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any:
 IQ-B-UBF, Basic/LOA Value: \$40.6M/LOA
 Implementation Date: 27 FEB 14.
 IQ-B-UBF, A1/LOA Value: \$57.8M/LOA Im-
 plementation Date: 16 JUN 14.
 IQ-B-UBQ, Basic/LOA Value: \$68.3M/LOA
 Implementation Date: 29 SEP 14.
 IQ-B-UCI, Basic/LOA Value: \$49.3M/LOA
 Implementation Date: 24 DEC 14.
 IQ-B-UCX, Basic/LOA Value: \$62.6M/LOA
 Implementation Date: 11 JUN 15.
 IQ-B-UHC, Basic/LOA Value: \$45.7M/LOA
 Implementation Date: 10 AUG 15.
 IQ-B-UHK, Basic/LOA Value: \$56.5M/LOA
 Implementation Date: 05 OCT 15.
 IQ-B-UBL, A1/LOA Value: \$53.4M/LOA Im-
 plementation Date: 26 JUN 14.
 (vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc. Paid. Of-
 fered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.
 (vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained
 in the Defense Article or Defense Services
 Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.
 (viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress:
 January 6, 2016.
 *As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms
 Export Control Act (AECA).

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

The Government of Iraq—Hellfire Missiles
 and Captive Air Training Missiles

The Government of Iraq has requested a possible sale of five thousand (5,000) AGM-114K/N/R Hellfire missiles; Ten (10) 114K M36E9 Captive Air Training Missiles; associated equipment; and defense services. The estimated major defense equipment (MDE) value is \$750 million. The total estimated value is \$800 million.

The proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security goals of the United States by helping to improve a critical capability of the Iraq Security Forces in defeating the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

Iraq will use the Hellfire missiles to improve the Iraq Security Forces' capability to support ongoing combat operations. Iraq will also use this capability in future contingency operations. Iraq, which already has Hellfire missiles, will face no difficulty absorbing these additional missiles into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor will be Lockheed Martin Corporation in Bethesda, Maryland. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives in Iraq.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-64

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

The Hellfire Missile is primarily an air-to-surface missile with a multi-mission, multi-target, precision-strike capability. The Hellfire can be launched from multiple air platforms and is the primary precision weapon for the United States.

The Captive Air Training Missile (CATM) is a training missile (Non-NATO) that consists of a functional guidance section coupled to an inert missile bus. The missile has an operational semi-active laser seeker that can search for and lock-on to laser-designated targets for pilot training, but it does

not have a warhead or propulsion section and cannot be launched.

The highest level of classified information that could be disclosed by a proposed sale or by testing of the end item is SECRET. Information required for maintenance or training is CONFIDENTIAL. Vulnerability data, countermeasures, vulnerability/susceptibility analyses, and threat definitions are classified SECRET or CONFIDENTIAL. Release of detailed information to include discussions, reports and studies of system capabilities, vulnerabilities and limitations that lead to conclusions on specific tactics or other counter countermeasures (CCM) is not authorized for disclosure.

If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

A determination has been made that the Government of Iraq can provide substantially the same degree of protection as the U.S. Government for the information proposed for release.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I want to express my deepest sympathies to the Scalia family.

Justice Scalia was first and foremost a family man, beloved by his wife, 9 children, and 36 grandchildren.

Since 1986 he had served on the highest court in our land. He inspired deep loyalty among his many friends and his current and former clerks, who remember him for his sharp wit and intellect.

He was clearly a man who rose above ideological differences with his colleagues to forge deep friendships on the Court. That is a credit to him.

While I may have disagreed with him on matters of law and policy, we are united as Americans in sharing our condolences.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, in honor of the rich cultural heritage of the African-American community in Maryland and in memory of all the freedom fighters across the Nation, past and present, I am celebrating Black History Month by reexamining what this country still needs to do to guarantee that African Americans are not left behind when it comes to the issues that matter.

We are living right now in a world that is fighting for change on many levels, from social unrest in our cities, to expansive international crises. While the news may seem grim, there is also inspiration every day around the world as people come together to bring about the peaceful change that they are fighting for. There are peaceful protests for great social change, the next generation is volunteering and giving hope to their communities, and

educational opportunities continue to grow for our youth around the world.

Reflecting on where we have been and where we are going, I recognize the immeasurable impact that Maryland African Americans have made to our culture and to the fight for equal rights for all. Benjamin Banneker, born in Catonsville, made scientific strides to help us understand the mysteries of nature. Harriet Tubman and Reverend Josiah Henson each led slaves to freedom through the Underground Railroad running through Maryland, defying the law and fighting for what was right. Isaac Myers became a labor leader, the first president of the Colored National Labor Union, and a cofounder of a co-operative shipyard and railway to provide African Americans with employment opportunities in Baltimore. Frederick Douglass was a dedicated and prolific civil rights activist and author. Explorer Matthew Henson co-discovered the North Pole and traversed the ends of the earth.

We certainly will never forget the esteemed Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American Justice on the Court, who protected and fought for our rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. He fought for desegregation through the law throughout his long career, in particular arguing the *Brown v. Board of Education* case in front of the Supreme Court, on behalf of African-American schoolchildren across the U.S.

We honor those who came before us by continuing to fight for justice and equality today. That means the right laws, and it means the right education. That means fighting for economic justice, social justice, and criminal justice. We know that the best weapons against economic injustice is a good education. That is why I am fighting for public schools that families can count on because the quality of education your kids receive shouldn't depend on the zip code you live in. That is why I fought and continue to fight for early child care, which helps 1.5 million children, including 19,000 in Maryland, get ready for school. That is why I pushed to fund early education to help States implement high quality preschool programs and Head Start programs. That means college that is affordable and accessible. It is why I am fighting to simplify the application for student aid and expand Pell grants to make sure that students can pay for books next semester or rent next month. We fought for the American Opportunity Tax Credit so that parents could get a tax break for sending their kids to college—because a college education is part of the American dream, not part of a financial nightmare.

We look to our community and national leaders, like the NAACP, headquartered in Baltimore, to continue to lead the fight for equal rights.

We look to our strong leaders in Maryland, like Freeman Hrabowski, the president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and Representative ELIJAH CUMMINGS, fighting tooth and nail every day for the citizens of Maryland's Seventh Congressional District.

With people like this to look up to, we are reminded of the abiding truth that each of us has the power to create a better world for ourselves and our children. So the battle is enjoined. As the great Martin Luther King, Jr., said, "Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle. And so we must straighten our backs and work for our freedom." This is not about the past, and it is not only about the present, but it is also about the future.

I thank so many people and organizations around the Nation and in Maryland for all they do every day for our future. Remember, each of us can make a difference, but together we can make change.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, as we celebrate Black History Month, we remember so many trailblazers. From William Flora's heroism during the American Revolution, to Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks and Dr. Martin Luther King, the contributions of Black Americans throughout our Nation's history are great. But they are not limited to the names and stories we all know—every family has their legend, their groundbreaker.

Growing up in North Charleston, SC, my granddaddy, Artis Ware, was my hero. He passed away last month at the age of 94, leaving our family saddened by his loss, but truly blessed by his life. I wanted to take this opportunity to share what my granddaddy meant to us, and how his legacy shows the true meaning of Proverbs 13:22—"A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children."

My granddaddy was born in 1921 in Salley, SC. He grew up picking cotton and left school after the third grade. He did not let the lack of a formal education hold him back though, and as he grew up, he moved to North Charleston and eventually secured a job with the South Carolina Ports Authority.

As a young kid, this was the granddaddy I knew, not one that let his circumstances hold him back or let his frustrations overtake his love for his family. After my parents' divorce, my mom, my brother, and I all moved into my grandparents' house—about 800 or 900 square feet and one bathroom. The three of us shared a bedroom—and were happy to do so.

What I remember most about my granddaddy from this time was, on so many mornings, he would sit down at the kitchen table, have a cup of coffee, and leaf through the newspaper. He wanted us to see him reading, rein-

forcing the importance of doing well in school. It wasn't until years later that I learned he couldn't read.

My cousin also loves to tell the story of how granddaddy would wake up to do the laundry at 4 a.m. and make sure everyone else got up and started working as well. That work ethic and dedication started to funnel down through the rest of our family and showed us all the importance of hard work.

Granddaddy's messages worked—my brother recently retired as a command sergeant major after 30 years in the Army, my cousin is a preacher in North Charleston, and I eventually got my own act together as well. My nephew, granddaddy's great-grandson, has earned his undergrad from Georgia Tech, his master's at Duke, and is now headed to medical school at Emory.

That is the power of a strong role model, someone who knows there is a better future out there for his family. In my granddaddy's lifetime, our family went from cotton to Congress, and I could never even pretend to thank him enough. He was the rock for our family—our trailblazer.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN ARMY ENGINEERS TO THE STATE OF ALASKA

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the immense contributions of the African-American community to my State of Alaska and to our great Nation.

I want to highlight in particular a contingent of troops, members of the African-American Army Engineers, who were stationed in Alaska during World War II, hundreds of men who served our Nation at a time when their basic human rights were being denied, some 6 years before the military was desegregated. In spite of that despicable injustice, they exhibited a great love for this country, even a willingness to die for this country.

These soldiers were stationed in Alaska among several regiments assigned to build the ALCAN—Alaska-Canada—Highway. For a State as big and diverse as Alaska, infrastructure is critically important to the well-being of our communities. And in the 1940s, infrastructure assets—roads, bridges, ports—were few and far between. In fact, there was no road linking the contiguous United States to Alaska through Canada. We were isolated.

We think of construction projects today, the many tools and machines our hard-working crews have at their disposal. But back then, many of those technologies and advancements didn't exist, making this enormous undertaking all the more daunting. Worse still, the machinery that was available was often given to the all-White units, leaving the African-American servicemembers ill-equipped. Nonetheless, the men of the African-American

Army Engineers labored on under extreme weather conditions, creating a roughly 1,700 mile cross-continental corridor in a mere 8 months.

The project, too, came at a time when our Nation was under imminent threat in the Pacific, just 2 months after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Our country needed to get supplies and soldiers to the furthest stretches of U.S. territory. Without the ALCAN, Alaska would not be the cornerstone of our national defense in the Pacific and the Arctic, nor the prosperous land of opportunity we see today.

For these enormous contributions and for their selfless service to our country, we thank the thousands of African-American servicemembers who for too long were dismissed and overlooked.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DONNA MILLER

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize an individual who has gone above and beyond to save lives in the State of Nevada, Donna Miller. Ms. Miller's drive to provide a dependable health care option to the people of Tonopah is commendable. Her actions warrant only the greatest gratitude and recognition, and I am proud to honor her for her invaluable work for people across the Silver State.

Ms. Miller was born in Romania and immigrated to the United States in 1991. In 1996, she graduated from nursing school and moved to Las Vegas 3 years later. She obtained her flight nurse wings in 2001, beginning her career caring for others. In 2002, she helped found Life Guard International Air Ambulance, and in 2007, she reorganized it into Life Guard International—Flying ICU, Flying ICU. This incredible organization serves as a flying intensive care unit, transporting critically ill and injured patients from one hospital to another that offers more resources in a different location.

Beginning in 2009, Flying ICU served as a necessary resource to the Tonopah community, transporting all ill and injured patients from the Nye Regional Medical Center to facilities in Las Vegas and Reno. Unfortunately, last fall, the Nye Regional Medical Center closed its doors, leaving this rural community with a devastating lack of access to health care. After the medical center's closing, Ms. Miller courageously decided to keep Flying ICU's Tonopah location, changing the organization to an emergency medical service, which treats and transports patients by plane while traveling to the closest hospital in Las Vegas or Reno. This service currently is the only resource in the region for the critically ill and injured to receive lifesaving care.

Ms. Miller also took the initiative to relocate a second plane to Tonopah and increase staff with additional critical care nurses, paramedics, and pilots to provide greater services to the local community. In order to minimize the amount of time that Tonopah's flight crews were away from the Tonopah station, Ms. Miller organized additional Flying ICU flight crews on standby at Nevada airports to allow patients to be further transported by the standby crew, allowing the flight crew to return to the station in a timely manner. Ms. Miller's work on this organization is one of a kind, and I am thankful for her work in saving the lives of Nevadans. Her decision to step up to the plate and provide the Tonopah community many medical resources it would otherwise be without remains invaluable for our State.

Today Flying ICU's services reach across the State, saving lives with four aircraft, a hangar at McCarran International Airport, and operation bases in Las Vegas and Tonopah. The organization employs over 50 medical and aviation professionals to help those in need. Flying ICU's reputation of safe and quality care is well deserved.

In 2014, Ms. Miller was elected as the president of the Nevada Nurses Association, district Three. She has received many awards for her actions, including being recognized as Ambassador for Peace by the International Women's Federation for World Peace in 2014, SBA's Nevada Woman-Owned Business of the Year Award in 2014, the 2014 Women of Distinction Awards—Entrepreneur of the Year, and as one of Las Vegas's 2015 Top 100 Women of Influence. These accolades are given only to those who have done extraordinary acts to earn them, and Ms. Miller without a doubt deserves each one. Nevada is fortunate to have someone like Ms. Miller representing our State. She is a shining example of selflessness for myself and others.

Ms. Miller has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to our State, saving lives and providing care to Nevadans in need. Her drive to help those around her is inspiring, and I thank her for all of her hard work. I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in thanking Ms. Miller for her many contributions to our State. I wish her well as she continues her efforts to help those in need and in servicing the city of Tonopah and those across central Nevada.●

TRIBUTE TO JENNIFER SPROUT

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Jennifer Sprout on her retirement after serving as CEO of the Elko Area Chamber of Commerce for 6 years. It gives me great pleasure to recognize her years of service to the city of Elko's business community.

Ms. Sprout grew up in California and moved to Elko when she was 19 years old. Prior to working for the chamber, she served as account manager and general manager for Holiday Broadcasting of Elko. In 2009, Ms. Sprout accepted the position of CEO at the Elko Area Chamber of Commerce. As CEO, she served as a powerful voice for Elko businesses, working to bring awareness to issues affecting this community.

She also spearheaded efforts to grow outside recognition of the resources the city has to offer and provided opportunities for business leaders to come together. The city of Elko is recognized as a tourist destination and economic hub for the northeastern part of Nevada, due in part to Ms. Sprout's hard work and unwavering dedication to growing the community. To say she has had a positive impact on the city of Elko would be an understatement. The strong foundation she has built throughout her tenure will be felt for years to come.

The Elko Area Chamber of Commerce was established on April 1, 1907, to support the local business community and promote the city of Elko. Today the chamber has over 700 businesses represented through various members. This incredible organization has helped businesses through times of economic downturn and recovery to stay on their feet and succeed. Through the incredible work of the Elko Area Chamber of Commerce, Elko's business community continues to thrive and maintain a high quality of life for residents. The city of Elko is fortunate to have had someone like Ms. Sprout leading the way at this important chamber.

Ms. Sprout has demonstrated professionalism, commitment to excellence, and dedication to the highest standards during her tenure at the Elko Area Chamber of Commerce. I am both humbled and honored by her service and am proud to call her a fellow Nevadan.

Today I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Ms. Sprout on her retirement from the chamber and in wishing her well at her new position with Design Concepts. I give my deepest appreciation for all that she has done for the city of Elko.●

REMEMBERING DR. ROBERT B. HAYLING

● Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the achievements of Dr. Robert B. Hayling, a civil rights leader in Florida who passed away on December 20, 2015, at the age of 86.

Dr. Hayling was born in Tallahassee and graduated from Florida Agricultural & Mechanical College. Upon graduation, Dr. Hayling served in the U.S. Air Force. Dr. Hayling went on to receive his degree in dentistry from Meharry Medical College and became the first African-American dentist in Florida to be elected to the local, re-

gional, State, and national components of the American Dental Association.

Throughout his years as a community leader and civil rights activist in St. Augustine, Dr. Hayling faced numerous threats, hate speech, and brutal violence at the hands of the Ku Klux Klan. Nevertheless, Dr. Hayling persevered in his resolve for racial equality and is widely recognized as a father of the St. Augustine civil rights movement. During a time of widespread racial divide, Dr. Hayling served as an adviser to the youth council of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and as head of the St. Augustine chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the national organization of which Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was president.

Dr. Hayling is the recipient of various honors and awards, including the Order of La Florida and the de Aviles award which honors citizens that have dedicated themselves to the community of St. Augustine. Scott Street in St. Augustine has been renamed Dr. Robert B. Hayling Place in his honor.

Dr. Hayling was inducted into the Florida Civil Rights Hall of Fame and received a certificate of recognition by St. Augustine's mayor. Even his old dental office became the first civil rights museum in Florida. Further, State Senator Tony Hill sponsored the Dr. Robert B. Hayling Award of Valor, which is presented to civil rights heroes, and a bronze plaque testifying to Dr. Hayling's contributions hangs in the lobby of the Florida State Capitol.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank Dr. Robert B. Hayling for his commitment, achievements, and dedication in advancing the cause of racial equality and civil rights on both a national and State level.

I offer my heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, and loved ones of Dr. Robert B. Hayling.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:47 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 238. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to authorize the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to issue oleoresin capicum spray to officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 812. An act to provide for Indian trust asset management reform, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1475. An act to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund that Wall of Remembrance.

H.R. 2880. An act to redesignate the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3004. An act to amend the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Act to extend the authorization for the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission.

H.R. 3371. An act to adjust the boundary of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park to include the Wallis House and Harriston Hill, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3620. An act to amend the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act to provide access to certain vehicles serving residents of municipalities adjacent to the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) announced that on today, February 25, 2016, he has signed the following enrolled bills, which were previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

H.R. 487. An act to allow the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma to lease or transfer certain lands.

H.R. 890. An act to revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida.

H.R. 3262. An act to provide for the conveyance of land of the Illiana Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Danville, Illinois.

H.R. 4056. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States to the property known as "The Community Living Center" at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida.

H.R. 4437. An act to extend the deadline for the submittal of the final report required by the Commission on Care.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 12:09 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 2109. An act to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 2880. An act to redesignate the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 3004. An act to amend the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Act to extend the authorization for the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 3371. An act to adjust the boundary of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park to include the Wallis House and Harriston Hill, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 3620. An act to amend the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act to provide access to certain vehicles serving residents of municipalities adjacent to the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, February 25, 2016, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 2109. An act to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BARRASSO:

S. 2580. A bill to establish the Indian Education Agency to streamline the administration of Indian education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2581. A bill to ensure that enforcement of Federal tax law by the Internal Revenue Service is not influenced by political bias, inaccurate sources of information, or bias at the individual examiner of department level, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. ERNST (for herself and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 2582. A bill to ensure economic stability, accountability, and efficiency of Federal Government operations by establishing a moratorium on midnight rules during a President's final days in office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 2583. A bill to authorize appropriations for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2584. A bill to promote and protect from discrimination living organ donors; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 2585. A bill to establish an airspace management advisory committee; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 2586. A bill to require States to report elevated blood lead levels to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 2587. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to promulgate regulations to improve reporting, testing, and monitoring related to lead and copper levels in drinking water; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 2588. A bill to provide grants to eligible entities to reduce lead in drinking water; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. JOHNSON:

S. 2589. A bill to require the Secretary of State to submit to Congress an unclassified notice before the transfer of any individual detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to the custody or control of the individual's country of origin, any other foreign country, or any other foreign entity, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 2590. A bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to improve access to, and the delivery of, children's health services through school-based health centers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. BALDWIN:

S. 2591. A bill to strengthen incentives and protections for whistleblowers in the financial industry and related regulatory agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 2592. A bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act by instituting a 180-day waiting period before medical debt will be reported on a consumer's credit report and removing paid-off and settled medical debts from credit reports that have been fully paid or settled, to amend the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act by providing for a timetable for verification of medical debt and to increase the efficiency of credit markets with more perfect information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. 2593. A bill to require the Secretary of Labor to maintain a publicly available list of all employers that relocate a call center overseas, to make such companies ineligible for Federal grants or guaranteed loans, and to require disclosure of the physical location of business agents engaging in customer service communications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL:

S. 2594. A bill to provide for the discoverability and admissibility of gun trace information in civil proceedings; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 2595. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2596. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit veterans who have a service-connected, permanent disability rated as total to travel on military aircraft in the same manner and to the same extent as retired members of the Armed Forces entitled to such travel; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2597. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for treatment of clinical psychologists as physicians for purposes of furnishing clinical psychologist services under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 2598. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the 60th anniversary of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. DURBIN (for Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. 2599. A bill to prohibit unfair and deceptive advertising of hotel room rates, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SASSE, and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 2600. A bill to amend the Military Selective Service Act to provide that any modification to the duty to register for purposes of the Military Selective Service Act may be made only through an Act of Congress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. KIRK:

S. 2601. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to disclose certain information to State controlled substance monitoring programs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. PAUL, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. SASSE):

S. 2602. A bill to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from reclassifying broadband Internet access service as a telecommunications service and from imposing certain regulations on providers of such service; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2603. A bill to deny corporate average fuel economy credits obtained through a violation of law, establish an Air Quality Restoration Trust Fund within the Department of the Treasury, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. PAUL:

S.J. Res. 31. A joint resolution relating to the disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the Government of Pakistan of F-16 Block 52 aircraft; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN):

S. Res. 375. A resolution raising awareness of modern slavery; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. REID, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. TESTER, Mr. DAINES, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. Res. 376. A resolution designating the first week of April 2016 as "National Asbestos Awareness Week"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. Con. Res. 32. A concurrent resolution recognizing the soldiers of the 14th Quartermaster Detachment of the United States Army Reserve, who were killed or wounded in their barracks by an Iraqi SCUD missile attack in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, during Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the attack; to the Committee on Armed Services.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 239

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 239, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, with respect to apportionments under the Airport Improvement Program, and for other purposes.

S. 386

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 386, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 391

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS) were added as cosponsors of S. 391, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 524

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) were added as cosponsors of S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

S. 553

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S.

553, a bill to marshal resources to undertake a concerted, transformative effort that seeks to bring an end to modern slavery, and for other purposes.

S. 607

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 607, a bill to provide for a five-year extension of the Medicare rural community hospital demonstration program.

S. 1500

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1500, a bill to clarify Congressional intent regarding the regulation of the use of pesticides in or near navigable waters, and for other purposes.

S. 1555

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1555, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 1607

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1607, a bill to affirm the authority of the President to require independent regulatory agencies to comply with regulatory analysis requirements applicable to executive agencies, and for other purposes.

S. 1697

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1697, a bill to provide an exception from certain group health plan requirements to allow small businesses to use pre-tax dollars to assist employees in the purchase of policies in the individual health insurance market, and for other purposes.

S. 1865

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1865, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to eating disorders, and for other purposes.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) were added as cosponsors of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1944

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1944, a bill to require each agency to repeal or amend 1 or more rules before issuing or amending a rule.

S. 2173

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2173, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to mental health services under the Medicare program.

S. 2218

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2218, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care.

S. 2373

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2373, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

S. 2484

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2484, a bill to amend titles XVIII and XI of the Social Security Act to promote cost savings and quality care under the Medicare program through the use of telehealth and remote patient monitoring services, and for other purposes.

S. 2539

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2539, a bill to amend the Social Security Act to provide for mandatory funding, to ensure that the families that have infants and toddlers, have a family income of not more than 200 percent of the applicable Federal poverty guideline, and need child care have access to high-quality infant and toddler child care by the end of fiscal year 2026, and for other purposes.

S. 2557

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2557, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to repeal the suspension of eligibility for grants, loans, and work assistance for drug-related offenses.

S. 2570

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr.

CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2570, a bill to amend the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 to provide for regulatory impact analyses for certain rules and consideration of the least burdensome regulatory alternative, and for other purposes.

S. 2574

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2574, a bill to amend title IV of the Social Security Act to require States to adopt a centralized electronic system to help expedite the placement of children in foster care or guardianship, or for adoption, across State lines, and to provide grants to aid States in developing such a system, and for other purposes.

S. 2579

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2579, a bill to provide additional support to ensure safe drinking water.

S. CON. RES. 4

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 4, a concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act.

S. RES. 368

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 368, a resolution supporting efforts by the Government of Colombia to pursue peace and the end of the country's enduring internal armed conflict and recognizing United States support for Colombia at the 15th anniversary of Plan Colombia.

S. RES. 372

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 372, a resolution celebrating Black History Month.

S. RES. 373

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 373, a resolution recognizing the historical significance of Executive Order 9066 and expressing the sense of the Senate that policies that discriminate against any individual based on the actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion of that individual would be a repetition of the mistakes of Executive Order 9066 and contrary to the values of the United States.

AMENDMENT NO. 3308

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3308 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to pro-

vide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BARRASSO:

S. 2580. A bill to establish the Indian Education Agency to streamline the administration of Indian education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about legislation that will streamline and modernize the Bureau of Indian Education.

The Bureau of Indian Education school system includes 183 elementary and secondary schools, and it serves roughly 48,000 students. Part of the school system falls under a cumbersome bureaucracy burdened with needless red tape. This has led to staffing and administrative issues at these schools, as well as problems with neglect at the facilities themselves. A lack of defined leadership at the Bureau of Indian Education has led to schools falling through the cracks. In the past 36 years, there have been 33 Bureau of Indian Education directors. Stability and clear structure are needed.

Last May, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, which I chair, held an oversight hearing on this topic. We heard testimony from Government Accountability Office officials that more accountability is needed at the Bureau of Indian Education to help students succeed.

That is why I am introducing the Reforming American Indian Standards of Education—or RAISE—Act. The RAISE Act separates the functions of the Bureau of Indian Education from the Bureau of Indian Affairs into an independent agency under the Department of the Interior. This agency would be led by a president-appointed and Senate-confirmed director and two assistant directors. Together, this leadership team will oversee the administration of Indian Education, curriculum for the schools and school-facilities management.

The RAISE Act will create better accountability for all. By having a leadership team that tribes can directly address for their school's needs, Indian students attending these schools will have a greater voice. The current Indian school system is managed in such a fragmented and complicated manner that it has failed students for many years. These students are our future, and they deserve our best efforts to address their educational needs.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2580

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Reforming American Indian Standards of Education Act of 2016” or the “RAISE Act of 2016”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) AGENCY.—The term “Agency” means the Indian Education Agency established by section 3(a).

(2) ASSISTANT DIRECTOR.—The term “Assistant Director” means, as applicable—

(A) the Assistant Director of Education Curriculum described in section 3(c)(1); or

(B) the Assistant Director of Facilities Management described in section 3(c)(2).

(3) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department” means the Department of the Interior.

(4) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means the Director of Indian Education described in section 3(b)(1).

(5) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian tribe” has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

(6) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is established within the Department an independent agency to be known as the “Indian Education Agency”.

(b) DIRECTOR.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of the Agency shall be the Director of Indian Education.

(2) APPOINTMENT.—The Director shall be appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(3) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT.—The Director shall be—

(A) appointed for a term of 6 years; and

(B) eligible for reappointment for an unlimited number of terms.

(4) REMOVAL.—The Director may be removed by the President before the expiration of the term of the Director only for cause.

(5) VACANCIES.—Any vacancy in the position of Director shall not affect the functions or authorities of the Agency, but shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(c) ASSISTANT DIRECTORS.—

(1) ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION CURRICULUM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—There shall be in the Agency an Assistant Director of Education Curriculum, who shall be appointed by the Director.

(B) DUTIES.—The Assistant Director shall be responsible for the functions of the Agency—

(i) relating to education curriculum; and

(ii) that the Director may delegate to the Assistant Director.

(2) ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES MANAGEMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—There shall be in the Agency an Assistant Director of Facilities Management, who shall be appointed by the Director.

(B) DUTIES.—The Assistant Director shall be responsible for the functions of the Agency—

(i) relating to facilities management; and

(ii) that the Director may delegate to the Assistant Director.

SEC. 4. TERMINATION OF BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION; TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS.

(a) TERMINATION OF BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION.—Effective beginning on the date of

enactment of this Act, the Bureau of Indian Education (including any predecessor office described in Federal law) is terminated.

(b) TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Any function or authority relating to Indian education that, as of the day before the date of enactment of this Act, was performed or carried out by the Secretary or any bureau, office, or other unit of the Department is transferred to the Director.

(2) REFERENCES.—Any reference in any other Federal law to the Secretary, the Department, or any bureau, office, or other unit of the Department with respect to the functions or authorities transferred under paragraph (1) is deemed to refer to the Director or the Agency, as appropriate.

SEC. 5. REPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Director, in consultation with affected Indian tribes, shall prepare a report describing the implementation of this Act, including—

(1) the activities of the Agency;

(2) an assessment of the effectiveness of this Act; and

(3) recommendations for legislation to improve the functioning of the Agency.

(b) SUBMISSION.—The Director shall submit each report described in subsection (a) to—

(1) the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate;

(2) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and

(3) the Committee on Education and Workforce of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 6. REGULATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall promulgate such regulations as the Director determines are appropriate to perform the functions of the Director.

(b) AUTONOMY.—No regulation promulgated pursuant to subsection (a) shall be subject to approval or review by the Secretary.

SEC. 7. PERSONNEL.

(a) COMPENSATION OF DIRECTOR AND ASSISTANT DIRECTORS.—

(1) DIRECTOR.—The Director shall be compensated at a rate equal to that of level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) ASSISTANT DIRECTORS.—Each Assistant Director shall be compensated at a rate equal to that of level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of title 5, United States Code.

(3) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—The Director and each Assistant Director shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of their duties.

(b) STAFF.—

(1) TRANSFER OF PERSONNEL.—Effective beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the personnel employed in connection with the functions or authorities transferred under section 4(b)(1) are transferred to the Director.

(2) ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL.—The Director may, without regard to the civil service laws, appoint and terminate such additional personnel as may be necessary to enable the Director to perform the functions of the Director.

(3) COMPENSATION.—The Director may fix the compensation of the personnel of the Agency other than the Director or the Assistant Directors without regard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5,

United States Code, relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the other personnel may not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of that title.

(c) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the Agency without reimbursement, and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

(d) PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT SERVICES.—The Director may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals that do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of that title.

(e) PREFERENCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In the selection of each individual to be employed by the Director pursuant to section 3(c) and subsections (b)(2), (c), and (d) of this section, the Director shall give preference to members of Indian tribes.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The preference described in paragraph (1) shall apply only to initial hiring, and shall not apply to promotion, lateral transfer, reassignment, reductions in force, or any other employment practice.

(f) CIVIL SERVICE LAWS.—All personnel of the Agency other than the Director shall be covered by the civil service laws.

SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Director such sums as are necessary to carry out this Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 375—RAISING AWARENESS OF MODERN SLAVERY

Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 375

Whereas it is estimated that tens of millions of children, women, and men around the world are subjected to conditions of modern slavery;

Whereas the International Labour Organization estimates that modern slavery generates more than \$150,000,000,000 in criminal profits each year;

Whereas despite being outlawed in every nation, modern slavery exists around the world, including in the United States;

Whereas around the world, 55 percent of forced labor victims are women or girls, and nearly 1 in 5 victims of slavery is a child; and Whereas each year, individuals around the world join together to call for an end to modern slavery by symbolically drawing a red “X” symbol on their hands to share the message of the END IT movement: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends each individual that supports the END IT movement on February 25, 2016;

(2) notes the dedication of individuals, organizations, and governments to end modern slavery; and

(3) calls for concerted, international action to bring an end to modern slavery around the world.

SENATE RESOLUTION 376—DESIGNATING THE FIRST WEEK OF APRIL 2016 AS “NATIONAL ASBESTOS AWARENESS WEEK”

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. REID, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. TESTER, Mr. DAINES, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. LEAHY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 376

Whereas dangerous asbestos fibers are invisible and cannot be smelled or tasted;

Whereas the inhalation of airborne asbestos fibers can cause significant damage;

Whereas asbestos fibers can cause cancer, such as mesothelioma and asbestosis, and other health problems;

Whereas symptoms of asbestos-related diseases can take between 10 and 50 years to present themselves;

Whereas the projected life expectancy for an individual diagnosed with mesothelioma is between 6 and 24 months;

Whereas generally, little is known about late-stage treatment of asbestos-related diseases and there is no cure for asbestos-related diseases;

Whereas early detection of asbestos-related diseases may give some patients increased treatment options and might improve the prognoses of those patients;

Whereas the United States has substantially reduced the consumption of asbestos in the United States, yet the United States continues to consume about 400 metric tons of the fibrous mineral each year for use in certain products throughout the United States;

Whereas asbestos-related diseases have killed thousands of people in the United States;

Whereas while exposure to asbestos continues, safety and prevention of asbestos exposure—

(1) has significantly reduced the incidence of asbestos-related diseases; and

(2) can further reduce the incidence of asbestos-related diseases;

Whereas thousands of workers in the United States face significant asbestos exposure, which has been a cause of occupational cancer;

Whereas thousands of people in the United States die from asbestos-related diseases every year;

Whereas a significant percentage of all asbestos-related disease victims were exposed to asbestos on naval ships and in shipyards;

Whereas before 1975, asbestos was used in the construction of a significant number of office buildings and public facilities, including schools;

Whereas people in the small community of Libby, Montana, suffer from asbestos-related diseases, including mesothelioma, at a significantly higher rate than people in the United States as a whole; and

Whereas the designation of a “National Asbestos Awareness Week” will raise public awareness about the prevalence of asbestos-related diseases and the dangers of asbestos exposure: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the first week of April 2016 as “National Asbestos Awareness Week”;

(2) urges the Surgeon General of the United States to warn and educate people about the public health issue of asbestos exposure, which may be hazardous to their health; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the Office of the Surgeon General.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 32—RECOGNIZING THE SOLDIERS OF THE 14TH QUARTERMASTER DETACHMENT OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE, WHO WERE KILLED OR WOUNDED IN THEIR BARRACKS BY AN IRAQI SCUD MISSILE ATTACK IN DHAHRAN, SAUDI ARABIA, DURING OPERATION DESERT SHIELD AND OPERATION DESERT STORM, ON THE OCCASION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ATTACK

Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. CON. RES. 32

Whereas 217,000 members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces served alongside 470,000 members of the regular components of the Armed Forces during Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas the Army Reserve in Pennsylvania played crucial roles in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas 69 soldiers of the 14th Quartermaster Detachment of the United States Army Reserve, stationed in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, were deployed to Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Storm, while supporting operations to liberate the people of Kuwait and defend the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1991;

Whereas the unit was deployed to assist with water purification efforts in the final days of the Persian Gulf War;

Whereas the barracks of the unit in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, were attacked by an Iraqi-launched SCUD missile;

Whereas 13 soldiers from the 14th Quartermaster Detachment were killed, and 43 wounded, in the attack;

Whereas the attack represented the deadliest attack on Americans during the Persian Gulf War, killing a total of 28 soldiers and wounding 99;

Whereas the unit suffered the greatest number of casualties of any allied unit during Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas Specialist Steven E. Atherton, 14th Quartermaster Detachment, of Nurmine, Pennsylvania, was killed on February 25, 1991, while loyally serving his country during Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas Specialist John A. Boliver, Jr., 14th Quartermaster Detachment, of Monongahela, Pennsylvania, was killed on February 25, 1991, while loyally serving his country during Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas Sergeant Joseph P. Bongiorno III, 14th Quartermaster Detachment, of Hickory, Pennsylvania, was killed on February 25, 1991, while loyally serving his country during Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas Sergeant John T. Boxler, 14th Quartermaster Detachment, of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, was killed on February 25, 1991, while loyally serving his country during Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas Specialist Beverly S. Clark, 14th Quartermaster Detachment, of Armagh, Pennsylvania, was killed on February 25, 1991, while loyally serving her country during Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas Sergeant Allen B. Craver, 14th Quartermaster Detachment, of Penn Hills, Pennsylvania, was killed on February 25, 1991, while loyally serving his country during Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas Specialist Frank S. Keough, 14th Quartermaster Detachment, of North Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, was killed on February 25, 1991, while loyally serving his country during Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas Specialist Anthony E. Madison, 14th Quartermaster Detachment, of Monessen, Pennsylvania, was killed on February 25, 1991, while loyally serving his country during Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas Specialist Christine L. Mayes, 14th Quartermaster Detachment, of Rochester Mills, Pennsylvania, was killed on February 25, 1991, while loyally serving her country during Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas Specialist Steven J. Siko, 14th Quartermaster Detachment, of Latrobe, Pennsylvania, was killed on February 25, 1991, while loyally serving his country during Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas Specialist Thomas G. Stone, 14th Quartermaster Detachment, of Falconer, New York, was killed on February 25, 1991, while loyally serving his country during Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas Sergeant Frank J. Walls, 14th Quartermaster Detachment, of Hawthorne, Pennsylvania, was killed on February 25, 1991, while loyally serving his country during Operation Desert Storm;

Whereas Specialist Richard V. Wolverton, 14th Quartermaster Detachment, of Latrobe, Pennsylvania, was killed on February 25, 1991, while loyally serving his country during Operation Desert Storm; and

Whereas this year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the meritorious service of these Pennsylvanians, and others in Pennsylvania-based units, which contributed to the liberation of the people of Kuwait and the defense of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes the tremendous sacrifice and dedicated, selfless service of Pennsylvanians during Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm;

(2) honors the 13 soldiers of the 14th Quartermaster Detachment of the United States Army Reserve who were killed in action on February 25, 1991, in the attack on Dhahran, Saudi Arabia;

(3) honors the 43 soldiers of the 14th Quartermaster Detachment of the United States Army Reserve who were wounded during the attack;

(4) pledges its gratitude and support to the families of these soldiers; and

(5) encourages the people of the United States to commemorate and honor the role and contribution of Pennsylvanians and Pennsylvania-based units of the Army National Guard, the Army Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve, the Navy Reserve, the Air National Guard, and the Air Force Reserve who supported Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3324. Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for

other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3325. Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3324. Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . USE OF AUTHORIZED PESTICIDES; DISCHARGES OF PESTICIDES; REPORT.

(a) USE OF AUTHORIZED PESTICIDES.—Section 3(f) of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136a(f)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) USE OF AUTHORIZED PESTICIDES.—Except as provided in section 402(s) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342), the Administrator or a State shall not require a permit under that Act for a discharge from a point source into navigable waters of—

“(A) a pesticide authorized for sale, distribution, or use under this Act; or

“(B) the residue of the pesticide, resulting from the application of the pesticide.”.

(b) DISCHARGES OF PESTICIDES.—Section 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(s) DISCHARGES OF PESTICIDES.—

“(1) NO PERMIT REQUIREMENT.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), a permit shall not be required by the Administrator or a State under this Act for a discharge from a point source into navigable waters of—

“(A) a pesticide authorized for sale, distribution, or use under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136 et seq.); or

“(B) the residue of the pesticide, resulting from the application of the pesticide.

“(2) EXCEPTIONS.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to the following discharges of a pesticide or pesticide residue:

“(A) A discharge resulting from the application of a pesticide in violation of a provision of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136 et seq.) relevant to protecting water quality if—

“(i) the discharge would not have occurred without the violation; or

“(ii) the amount of pesticide or pesticide residue in the discharge is greater than would have occurred without the violation.

“(B) Stormwater discharges subject to regulation under subsection (p).

“(C) The following discharges subject to regulation under this section:

“(i) Manufacturing or industrial effluent.

“(ii) Treatment works effluent.

“(iii) Discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel, including a discharge resulting from ballasting operations or vessel biofouling prevention.”.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, in consultation with the Secretary

of Agriculture, shall submit a report to the Committee on Environment and Public Works and the Committee on Agriculture of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives that includes—

(1) the status of intra-agency coordination between the Office of Water and the Office of Pesticide Programs of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding streamlining information collection, standards of review, and data use relating to water quality impacts from the registration and use of pesticides;

(2) an analysis of the effectiveness of current regulatory actions relating to pesticide registration and use aimed at protecting water quality; and

(3) any recommendations on how the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136 et seq.) can be modified to better protect water quality and human health.

SA 3325. Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 44 ____ . LINCOLN NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.

(a) BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.—Section 443(b)(1) of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-229; 122 Stat. 819) is amended—

(1) by inserting “Livingston,” after “LaSalle,”; and

(2) by striking “ and Woodford counties” and inserting “, and Woodford counties and the city of Jonesboro in Union County and the city of Freeport in Stephenson County”.

(b) MAP.—The Secretary of the Interior shall update the map described in section 443(b)(2) of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-229; 122 Stat. 819) to reflect the adjustment to the boundary of the Lincoln National Heritage Area under the amendments made by subsection (a).

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled “Nomination of Dr. John King to serve as Secretary of Education.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Connecting Patients to New and Potential Life Saving Treatments.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room 428A of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled, “An Examination of Changes to the U.S. Patent System and Impacts on America’s Small Businesses.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2016 at 2 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION AND THE NATIONAL INTEREST

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “The Impact of High-Skilled Immigration on U.S. Workers?”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Olivia Cox, an intern in my office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the duration of today’s session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2016

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m., Monday, February 29; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be

approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; further, that at 5 p.m., the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 524, with the time until 5:30 p.m. equally divided between the two managers or their designees; finally, that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 524 at 5:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY,
FEBRUARY 29, 2016, AT 3 P.M.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:49 p.m., adjourned until Monday, February 29, 2016, at 3 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

DONALD W. BEATTY, OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA, VICE CAMERON M. CURRIE, RETIRED.
DONALD C. COGGINS, JR., OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA, VICE JOSEPH F. ANDERSON, JR., RETIRED.

LUCY HAERAN KOH, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT, VICE HARRY PREGERSON, RETIRED.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. BRADLEY S. JAMES
COL. KURT W. STEIN

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Thursday, February 25, 2016

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARDY).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 25, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CRESENT HARDY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

CARBON CAPTURE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, this morning I introduced the Carbon Capture Act, which makes simple changes to the existing section 45Q tax credit that further incentivizes carbon capture and sequestration projects.

CCS technology will help reduce carbon emissions while simultaneously creating jobs, bolstering domestic oil production, and providing regulatory relief for our coal industry. Yes. You heard that right.

The benefits of CCS are bringing folks who do not traditionally work together to the same table for the betterment of our Nation's energy security.

Often people believe they are forced to choose between supporting economic development or environmental stewardship. However, this bill is evidence that that is a false choice. Above all, CCS serves as a testament to the entrepreneurial spirit and gumption found throughout this great country.

In Texas District 11, I have seen this innovative spirit daily. These projects will play an important role in west

Texas' and our Nation's future energy portfolio.

I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this important legislation.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION AND APPROPRIATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, in the weeks ahead, we will be dealing with the budget resolution and we will be dealing with defense authorization and appropriations.

Already we have seen the administration unveil a budget that is not only unrealistic, but actually could be dangerous.

It keeps spending for all the nuclear modernization on track over \$3 billion, and it includes funding for a long-range, standoff replacement cruise missile, \$2.2 billion in the future year defense program, ultimately costing \$20- to \$30 billion, if not more, this to replace a cruise missile that the father of this device, former Secretary of Defense William Perry, feels is no longer relevant and has argued against.

There are billions of dollars for the controversial modernization of each leg of the nuclear triad—the land-based missiles, submarine-based missiles, and the bombers—which have not been used in 65 years, have been unable to help us with the military challenges that we face now in the Middle East and are going to consume huge sums of money in this hopelessly redundant program.

It is dangerous because of the cuts in the nuclear nonproliferation program of over \$100 million. I mean, these are real threats to our security.

We are battling ISIS now. They have already obtained some low-grade nuclear material in a facility near Mosul. We have had a few nuclear weapons gone missing and other nuclear materials unaccounted for or stolen.

We need to have these proven programs to reduce the inventory, track it down, and take it out of circulation. We should be expanding them, not cutting them back. It continues an overall trillion-dollar spending that we are going to have on the nuclear programs over the course of the next 30 years.

Now, these are resources that are going to be at the expense of our conventional weapons. As I mentioned, the nuclear triad is far more than we need to deter anybody in the world right now and do not help us with the strategic challenges that we face today.

It is not going to prevent Russian adventurism in Ukraine or Crimea, but it will result in our having to cannibalize the Guard and Ready Reserve, the Army that will be paying the price for this.

These are conventional forces that have paid the price for the last two decades of activities and are going to be needed for both deterrence and, God forbid, actual activity in the future. We cannot do all of this within the current budget horizon.

The budget gimmicks ignore that. We have a little trust fund with the overseas contingency account that ignores budget realities that we are not going to be able to continue in perpetuity.

We ignore the long-term costs of budget programs for weapons, preferring to put that off to a future administration and future Congresses.

In so doing, we are playing fast and loose with the integrity of the Pentagon with the resources and the materials that are necessary to support our troops now and in the future.

It is not too late for this Congress to demand a spending plan, cost accountability, kill the new cruise missile program, and put us on a path of fiscal stability and sanity while we have appropriate priorities for the military strength and defense of our country.

IN MEMORY OF GEORGE COLLINS JEFFREYS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and work of Goldsboro's own George Collins Jeffreys, who passed away on January 20.

Born over 90 years ago, in 1925, George lived a long and full life. The eldest of four children, he attended St. Mary's School and Oak Ridge Military Academy in Oak Ridge, North Carolina. During the Second World War, George served in the Pacific.

After the war, George returned home to work in the family business, which was originally established back in the 1890s by two prominent North Carolina families to market local produce, chickens, seed, and eggs. The business was successful.

In the 1920s, George's father and uncle took over the business, renaming it Jeffreys and Sons. The two brothers began offering beverage distribution. After the end of prohibition, they became a licensed distributor for Anheuser-Busch products.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

It wasn't long before the company had grown so big that it was divided into separate seed, beverage, and cabinet companies. It continued growing and expanding in Goldsboro, Greenville, and other communities.

Today, R.A. Jeffreys Distributing Company is the oldest Anheuser-Busch distributor in North Carolina as well as one of the oldest family-owned distributors in the United States.

R.A. Jeffreys Distributing Company services almost every grocery store, convenience store, and restaurant in the area, supplying 36 counties in North Carolina.

Now, George Jeffreys was not only respected as a business leader. He was a thoughtful and generous member of his community, volunteering and contributing to local schools, Scout troops, churches, and community programs.

In addition to his company being recognized multiple times as an outstanding wholesaler by Anheuser-Busch, receiving the Dimensions of Excellence Award, George also received the Distinguished Service Award from the Tuscarora Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

His dedication to business and to his community were certainly highlights of his long and full life. But the true foundation of George Jeffreys' life was his family.

His wife Lucy and his three children—his daughters, Leigh and Ellen, and his son Robert—and seven grandchildren will all remember him with love.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to call George Jeffreys a friend.

I pray for God's blessings and God's peace to his family.

END HUNGER NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, last week during our district work period, I spent the night at the Interfaith Hospitality Network, a family homeless shelter in Worcester, Massachusetts. This was my second time spending a night there in recent years.

It was a wonderful opportunity to hear firsthand the stories of families who are facing tough times and to see the incredible support provided by groups like IHN.

In today's media environment, where every development in the Presidential campaign gets a breaking news banner, it is easy to lose sight of the real issues impacting real families, and homelessness is one of those real issues.

In 2015, more than 500,000 Americans were homeless on any given night. Of that number, more than 200,000 were people and families and nearly 50,000 were veterans.

Even in Massachusetts, which is one of the richest States in the Nation, homelessness continues to be a challenge in many of our communities.

In recent years, State budget cuts have led to a record number of homeless children in Massachusetts, and the overall uptick in homelessness has led to overcrowding in shelters, with thousands of families being turned away.

In the richest country on the planet, it is simply astonishing that anyone is homeless, but the fact is this continues to be a persistent problem. Fortunately, there are amazing organizations like the Interfaith Hospitality Network that are making a difference.

IHN works in partnership with the faith community to provide shelter and assistance to families with children who are homeless. Their primary goals are to assist families by increasing their income and to help them secure permanent housing while providing critical support services necessary for them to succeed.

It is a community bed shelter that provides private bedrooms and shared quality living areas for six families at a time who are homeless, but don't qualify for State-funded shelters.

One of the points that the people I met made very eloquently was that sometimes life is very complicated and sometimes things don't work out as you expect them to.

Many of the families that I met during my stay included at least one working parent, but they had fallen into the gap where they earned too little to make ends meet, but too much to qualify for other housing assistance programs.

Some of the residents included college-educated parents with families that fell on hard times. Maybe a parent is sick or a child is sick or a parent got laid off from a job. Those families are not there because they made poor choices. There were a series of events that led to this.

One thing parents at the shelter have in common is that they love their kids more than anything and they are working tirelessly to get back on their feet.

The families at IHN are not charged rent and work with a caseworker to budget and save money for their own apartments. The caseworker also helps families access necessary health care or counseling, learn job skills, enroll in job training or educational classes, and assists them with other life issues.

Mr. Speaker, IHN is a very special place. It is a home. It is comfortable. It is safe. Families prepare and eat dinner together. Children do their homework together, color in coloring books, and play games. IHN provides a sense of normalcy during these times of turmoil and uncertainty for these families.

With each visit to the IHN shelter in Worcester, I am inspired to see that within our community there are so many wonderful people who care about

their neighbors who are going through difficult times and who want to get back on their feet.

The volunteers and staff are incredible people. Places like IHN represent the best of our community. There is a real need for places like this.

Too often in this Chamber I have heard colleagues demonize and disparage America's poorest families, but those who are homeless don't fit into a stereotype.

Every family faces different challenges. It is hard work to be poor in America. The families I met are working hard for a better life for their kids.

We should be helping them get back on their feet, not kicking them while they are down. Certainly we should not be indifferent to their struggles.

To help more of these families get ahead, we must do more at the national level to strengthen the social safety net and to better address homelessness, food insecurity, poverty, and many other issues which deserve to be front and center.

Looking at the big picture, we need to be talking about how we can make sure that work pays enough so that all working families can afford rent and a place to live and be able to put food on the table for their kids.

□ 1015

We might start by increasing, at long last, the Federal minimum wage so that it is a livable wage. If you work in this country, you ought not to be poor, and you certainly ought not to be homeless.

Mr. Speaker, in the richest country on the planet, I know we can do more to solve homelessness. Spending the night at the Interfaith Hospitality Network was a learning experience. I encourage all of my colleagues to do the same in their districts.

Those of us who serve in Congress are blessed that we don't have to worry about whether or not we will have a roof over our heads on any given night, but there are many families, too many families all throughout this country who do. We need to do a better job of listening to their stories, of trying to lend a helping hand so that they can get out of their difficult situation and move on to a better life.

I urge my colleagues to listen to what I said today and to do what I did and spend a night in a shelter in their own district.

STACIE WALLS STORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the war on coal touches every family in my home State of West Virginia. Whether you are a miner or not, you feel the consequences of this administration's regulations that are shutting down our coal mines.

Closing a coal mine doesn't just affect a miner and his family. It affects everyone in the community, from the small town mom-and-pop stores who depend on customers, to our schools that depend on tax revenue. A decline in coal hurts us all.

Stacie Walls contacted me. She is a wife of a coal miner and a mother in Boone County. She sees the consequences firsthand.

Here is what she wrote me: "My husband has been laid off four times since last April.

"Because of the war on coal, my county is closing my son's school due to not having the coal tax to help keep it opened.

"My son's education is now going to suffer because of the war on coal. I've watched many families leave the State because they must find work.

"There are more 'for sale' signs up than there are kids riding their bikes."

This, Mr. Speaker, is Stacie. This is Stacie's family. These are the true faces of the war on coal.

West Virginia's families deserve peace of mind. It is time for the EPA to get off the backs of West Virginians and let them do the work that powers our Nation and puts food on our tables.

I am working every day in Congress for our coal families, for all families. I believe in the future of West Virginia coal.

President Obama must stop his war on coal, and we must pass policies that create jobs to ensure a future for West Virginians in West Virginia.

TWO GREAT AMERICAN HEROES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the Bipartisan Policy Center for the establishment of the Congressional Patriot Award and naming SAM JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS as its first recipients.

I can think of no two people who are more deserving than SAM JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS, both of whom serve in this Chamber with distinction, both of whom I have the honor of serving with on the Committee on Ways and Means who do an extraordinary job on behalf of the citizenry of this great Nation. For all of our membership here, we can all be proud to say that we served with both SAM JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS.

I want to thank and commend TOM COLE, my co-chairman in this effort, on behalf of our two esteemed colleagues. By now every Member should have received, and the public will become increasingly aware of, an invitation to this event on March 15. The event will be held at the Library of Congress. What a fitting place for us to honor our colleagues. The Library will have on display photos and documents from the

Vietnam war and photos and documents from the civil rights movement.

It was 50 years ago that SAM JOHNSON was shot down over Vietnam. It was 51 years ago that JOHN LEWIS made that historic trek from Selma to Montgomery and crossing over the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Most people don't realize today that SAM JOHNSON was imprisoned by the Vietcong for 7 years, 42 months of which he spent in solitary confinement, nearly beaten to death but never said a word. What an incredible American.

JOHN LEWIS, nearly beaten to death by the Alabama police as he had the temerity to lock arms and cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge, faced with undaunted courage an unwelcoming crowd who could never deter the will of a movement that he is so identified with.

To have the Bipartisan Policy Center recognize a conservative, a progressive, a Republican, a Democrat, people who served this Nation extraordinarily with their patriotism long before they ever got here, to have a medal named in their honor and to present that once in a biennium to deserving Members of this body, past and present, is a great notion.

It demonstrates to the American people that at the end of the day it is not about conservative or liberal or it is not about Democrat or Republican, it is about the great nation that we serve. There are no more exemplary figures than SAM JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS.

JOHN MCCAIN will be presenting on behalf of SAM JOHNSON. No one understands what SAM JOHNSON endured better than Senator JOHN MCCAIN. Andrew Young will be speaking on behalf of JOHN LEWIS. He was alongside of JOHN LEWIS during that historic march. No one knows better what they endured.

We are so fortunate to both have the Library of Congress but also to have David Rubenstein, who will be there, who will conduct an interview that evening with SAM JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS. It will be a wonderful evening, made more special by what the Library of Congress will present in terms of what transpired 50 and 51 years ago respectively, but made greater by the presence of everybody here recognizing the great contribution of our colleagues, SAM JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS.

I look forward to having everybody on March 15 at the Library of Congress to recognize these two great American heroes.

HISTORIC ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, for recently freed African Americans, education denied to them under slavery was a critical component of understanding freedom.

In the wake of the Civil War, with the widespread awareness that education was essential to the advancement of a free people in this society, African Americans flocked to schools established by the Freedmen's Bureau.

The recognition of this relationship between schools, community, and the broader ideal of the American Dream led African American parents and teachers to be among the first Southerners to advocate for universal public education.

However, the dual education system that arose, determined by race and based on the fiction of separate but equal, brought about a hand-me-down approach to Black education in the South. This flawed duality resulted in the perpetuation and exacerbation of institutional inequity.

In the face of such obstacles, leaders like Booker T. Washington, founder of the Tuskegee Institute, embraced and expanded on the early belief in education as the great hope of a truly democratic society.

Washington's vision inspired many, including philanthropist and president of Sears Roebuck, Julius Rosenwald.

The philanthropic and educational partnership between these two men led to the construction of 5,000 Rosenwald schools across 15 Southern States. In Arkansas, 389 school buildings were constructed in 45 of our 75 counties, with communities pooling their often meager resources to fulfill Rosenwald's pledge to match their contribution.

For many, these buildings were not simply schools but monuments to Black achievement and symbols for an ardent hope in a better future. Rosenwald schools contributed to the education of thousands of African American students across the American South, including notable figures like Arkansas poet Maya Angelou and our own esteemed colleague and friend, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS).

In 1954, with the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, to which Julius Rosenwald contributed one-third of the litigation costs, his carefully crafted schools became obsolete. In Arkansas, the tensions behind this great achievement played out in the tumultuous 1957 Little Rock Central High crisis. The courageous determination of the Little Rock Nine hearkens back to that fundamental belief in education equals freedom.

This is the continuing legacy of Washington, of Rosenwald, and the countless parents and teachers who were determined to give future generations the means of mobility, economic advancement, opportunity.

In 2002, the National Trust for Historic Preservation listed Rosenwald schools as one of America's most 11 endangered places. Today in Arkansas, only 18 of those original school buildings remain. One of those remaining

buildings is in the Second Congressional District. The only Rosenwald school to be built in Perry County, the Bigelow Rosenwald School, was constructed in 1926.

After 38 years of service toward education, the Bigelow Rosenwald School was transformed into a community center. With a revival of interest in and knowledge about the schools, efforts are being formed around the country to restore these embodiments of our history.

Aviva Kempner's documentary "Rosenwald" pays tribute to the man, his work, and the rippling impact on the evolution of African American education in our country.

As we celebrate Black History Month, I rise to recognize how far we have come, how far we still must traverse, and pay a special salute to Julius Rosenwald and his contributions to the advancement of education.

THE EXTENDED DROUGHT IN CALIFORNIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention again to the devastating drought that has impacted California for over 4 years.

Much is said about California and the success that we have had post-World War II, but a lot of it is owed to the fact that we have developed a water system, both a Federal and State water project, that allows us to move water throughout California for beneficial use to every region of California, and that has been a great success.

But today that water system is broken. It is broken because it was designed to meet the needs of 20 million people and the agriculture that we had in the 1960s and 1970s. Today we have over 40 million people in California, we have more intensive agriculture, producing half the Nation's fruits and vegetables—the leading agricultural State in the Nation—and demands for water for the environment that was not part of the project in the beginning.

I have made and will continue to make it a priority to speak on the House floor regularly regarding the devastating drought impacts and will attempt to offer solutions both for the State and Federal agencies to maximize our ability to move water through the system where it is most needed to ensure that we also make the changes at the Federal level and at the State level to fix this magnificent but broken water system today that no longer can meet all of the demands and needs that are subscribed for it.

□ 1030

Protecting and securing a reliable water supply in the San Joaquin Valley is arguably the most important issue

facing the region of 4 million people that I, along with four of my other colleagues, represent. We worry every day about job security and the future success of the San Joaquin Valley's economy, which are directly dependent upon our access to a reliable and secure supply of water that is of high quality. The people of the valley and the entire State of California have been directly impacted by this devastating drought in one way or another.

There are many examples of how the San Joaquin Valley, a place I represent, has been impacted:

Over 6,000 acres of productive agricultural land has been fallowed, unplanted.

The land in the San Joaquin Valley is subsidizing because, out of devastating need, families are drilling deeper wells to meet their everyday needs to keep what land they can in production and permanent crops irrigated, and farmers are pumping groundwater at unsustainable rates to avoid the catastrophic impacts of pulling out hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of permanent crops.

Unemployment in the San Joaquin Valley is twice as high as the rest of the country; and in 2015 alone, California lost \$2.2 billion as a result of the drought.

These devastating impacts have brought many of us to pray for rain and snow in the mountains, but that is not enough. We need to fix this broken water system.

While we will continue to hope for the El Nino year to bring additional rainfall amounts that are significantly greater than average, we know that that is not enough.

With above-average rainfall and snow in the mountains, San Joaquin Valley communities and farmers can now rest easy; right? Sadly, no. Since October 1, 2015, over 3.4 million acre-feet of water has gone out into the ocean. That is water that could be used in the valley and in southern California. This is nearly 1.1 trillion gallons of water. To put that number in context, an average American family uses around 400 gallons of water a day.

My point is that only a small amount of water is being pumped out of the delta to move south for the San Joaquin Valley to assist the farm communities, as well as for southern California. We have yet to recover from the devastating impacts of the drought over the last 4 years, even though we have got more water this year as a result of the El Nino conditions.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation announced recently that, even with well-above average rainfall, reservoirs in California are still below the 15-year average for this time of year, and there is no Federal water stored in a major reservoir, the San Luis Reservoir, for the San Joaquin Valley that would be available for water this summer.

Yet, this week, we were devastated to hear that the Bureau of Reclamation is releasing 200,000 acre-feet out of Folsom Lake because of flood control purposes. We are not moving that water—not even 100,000 acre-feet—through the system. That is just not right. This is directly due to the unwillingness of State and Federal agencies to pump water at the maximum levels based the biological opinions that many of us believe are flawed because the science is at least 10 years old.

While weather patterns have had a great impact on the delivery of water over the last 4 years, it has only been one of the impacts. We must make a difference. We must fix this broken water system. I will continue to update the Members of the House on the challenges we face and on legislation that is important to do just that.

HONORING ALLAN BOWLES ON HIS RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of his retirement on February 29, 2016, I rise to thank Allan Bowles for over 32 years of outstanding service to the United States House of Representatives.

Allan began his career in the labor division on September 1, 1983. Shortly after that, he worked as a storeroom clerk. Not long after that, he made his way into the cabinet shop and began his rapid ascent through the ranks from apprentice to journeyman cabinetmaker.

He can be proud of the many projects that were successfully completed during his tenure. Some of these projects include custom cabinets made for Speaker Wright and Members in leadership, such as Mr. HOYER, Mr. ARMY, and Ms. PELOSI.

Allan's list of accomplishments is indeed long. In over 32 years, he has produced some of the most exemplary and useful projects, many of which are still being utilized today.

Allan's cabinetmaking expertise and craftsmanship are evident in his body of work. He has worked tirelessly alongside other House employees to make the House more secure following the events of September 11 and the anthrax incident of 2001.

His reputation in the shop for lighthearted humor and quick wit made for long-lasting friendships and camaraderie in the shop. He brought a unique brand of comedy and teamwork to the cabinet shop, which serves the House from behind the scenes.

He made a long-term commitment to excellence and improved services to the House community. In addition, Allan's dedication to his craft and customer service skills made him an extremely valuable member of the service team.

Allan has dedicated his life to making the CAO and the United States House of Representatives a better place.

After his retirement from the House, he plans to enjoy country living, fishing, and hunting. He also plans to keep busy working in his own shop in southern Maryland.

On behalf of the entire House community, I extend our congratulations to Allan Bowles for his dedication and outstanding contributions to the United States House of Representatives. We wish him many wonderful years in fulfilling his retirement dreams.

HONORING ANTHONY THOMPSON ON HIS RETIREMENT

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of his retirement on March 3, 2016, I rise to thank Anthony Thompson for over 34 years of outstanding service to the United States House of Representatives.

Anthony began his career with the House, in November 1981, as an apprentice cabinetmaker in the House cabinet shop. Over the next 34 years, he was promoted to various positions, to include lead cabinetmaker, or “third man”; assistant foreman; and eventually became manager of the House cabinet shop. His accomplishments are far too lengthy to list in this tribute; however, there are two examples of his contributions that are worthy of recognition.

Anthony designed and constructed the first offsite House floor furniture set which may be used, heaven forbid, in the event that the House Chamber is unavailable for use. He has been instrumental in the design and construction of all the succeeding sets of furniture as well.

He was also involved in the design and construction of the House floor stenographer’s table that sits to my right. The table was designed with new technology in mind, while still matching the original design, look, and feel of the existing dais.

On a more personal note and equally worthy of recognition, Anthony has dedicated his life to making the CAO and the United States House of Representatives a better place. He has passed along his many years of cabinet-making experience to staff and coworkers so that they can continue the extremely high standards of quality craftsmanship that have come to be expected of the House cabinet shop. Upon his retirement, he plans to use his extraordinary talents continuing to make beautiful, one-of-a-kind pieces of furniture for the private sector.

On behalf of the entire House community, I extend our congratulations to Anthony for his many years of dedication and outstanding contributions to the United States House of Representatives. I am honored to call him a friend, and I wish him all the best in the years to follow.

TRIBUTE TO ANDREW JACKSON LANGUAGE ACADEMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to highlight and pay tribute to one of Chicago’s most effective public schools, the Andrew Jackson Language Academy.

Andrew Jackson was opened in 1894 to serve children from the crowded tenement community surrounding the Polk Street station, a port of entry for immigrants. That very same year, one of the first public school kindergartens was established in Chicago. Since 1981, this school has offered foreign language instruction to its students.

In 1988, Andrew Jackson Language Academy moved into a new, up-to-date facility. The building is equipped with science and computer labs, a library, media center, and a large outside area for play and gardening activities.

Today 550 students from diverse racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds attend the school. Students at Jackson receive extensive instruction in Chinese, French, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish. The curriculum not only emphasizes the skill of understanding and using these languages, but also introduces students to the geography, history, and tradition of other cultures. As a result, students are more adequately prepared for the international marketplace and for success in the 21st century.

The Andrew Jackson Language Academy is a well-organized, safe, and orderly school with an excellent student code of conduct, and the dress code has been developed to promote a suitable learning environment. It has a wealth of school spirit, which is promoted through the Merit Club, family reading night, Project Backpack for the Homeless, musical performances, student ambassadors, Big Sisters and Big Brothers, a Chinese painting workshop, and the Weigi workshop. French and Italian shops are ongoing. Japanese students are learning to work in class, and Spanish students from kindergarten through eighth grade are working hard on building their Spanish skills.

The Dads Club at Jackson is very active and sponsors a number of family events such as the annual basketball fundraiser, family skate night, the daddy-daughter dance, and a number of other ways for dads to be involved.

The Andrew Jackson Language Academy has a very strong and actively engaged local school council. Its chairperson is Ms. Angela Bryant; principal, Ms. Marilou Rebolledo; secretary, Ms. Margaret Kempster; members, Mr. Kevin Lopez, Ms. Mary Clare Maxwell, Ms. Tara Roden, Mr. Jeff Sadoff, Mr. Luis Oviedo, and Mr. Stephen Smith.

The parents council at Jackson Language Academy is actively engaged and

involved, led by Heather Alvarez, president; vice president, Rubi Alvarez; recording secretary, Emerlie Harde; Virgil Nita; and treasurer, Pamela Alfaro.

I commend and congratulate all of those who work to make and keep the Andrew Jackson Language Academy the great Chicago public school that it is.

Someone—perhaps a philosopher—once said: It takes great souls to make great schools. We thank all of those who have been involved in making the Andrew Jackson Language Academy the great school that it is. It takes great souls to make great schools.

A FALLEN OFFICER REMEMBERED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of fallen St. Joseph, Minnesota, police officer Brian Klinefelter. It has been 20 years now since Brian was killed in the line of duty, and this loss is still felt in our community today.

On a cold night in January, Officer Klinefelter was nearing the end of his shift when he heard of an armed robbery over the radio dispatch and decided to help his fellow officers pursue the robbers. Not long after, Officer Klinefelter was tragically shot and killed in his brave attempt to protect his colleagues and the community he loved.

The men and women in blue are some of the finest this Nation has to offer, and Officer Brian Klinefelter is proof of that. Every morning they put on their uniforms, not knowing if they will safely return to their loved ones at the end of the day. The sacrifices they make are done because of their selfless love of country, community, and neighbors.

The night Brian was killed, he left behind his wife, Wendy; his newborn daughter, Katelyn; along with numerous family members and friends. Wendy and Katelyn, we haven’t forgotten you, and we have not forgotten Brian—the incredible life he lived and the brave sacrifice that he made.

□ 1045

FREE HOUSTON METRO HOT LANE ACCESS FOR DISABLED VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this morning I spent some time, and last evening, communicating with leaders of my transit system, Houston METRO, that has received numerous awards; and I applaud them for working very hard, sometimes against odds, to provide mobility for the great citizens of the Houston, Harris County, metroplex area.

I had a particular beef, or a particular issue, that we have been working on since last November, and that is to give disabled veterans in this very vast territory of Texas the ability to ride on what we call the HOT lanes for free.

My premise is simple. When we ask our men and women in the United States to put the uniform on, we ask, with no qualifications, meaning no restraints, that they are expected to defend the United States to the utmost. In the course of that, some fall in battle, lose their lives, or are veterans who ultimately come to their demise by their age and illnesses. Therefore, I think it is enormously important that, when they make a request that helps them in their mobility, whether it is to doctors' offices and family or going back to school, there should be no barriers, no restraints.

So today my METRO board is meeting, and I made contact again, as I did this past week, with the committee, late into the night, to say that there should be no delay, no barrier in allowing those lanes to be used for free by disabled vets.

I want this in the RECORD because I will pursue and persist, even to the extent that an emergency board meeting will need to be called. There just simply is no reason to delay. November, December, January, February, and near March, there is no reason to delay.

I am waiting for the decision, and I will look forward to the Disabled Veterans of America and others reaching out to my office so that together, collectively, we can make sure that not only does this happen in Houston, Texas, but that it be a policy across America.

We should find a way to be able to assist those who have willingly, without any hesitancy, and unselfishly, put on the uniform.

RESPECT FOR THE THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to turn the attention of my colleagues to another issue of justice, and that is the fair existence of and respect for the three branches of government.

This involves vets and nurses and schools and school teachers and families across America. It is a process that the Congress goes through every year. We call it the budgeting process; and it is an act of Congress and the administration, we hope, working together.

That is the time that the Congress works on the plan for the American people; and it is, of course, the time when the President works on the plan for the American people. It includes reports like this, an economic report of the President. It includes the budget, which is the roadmap for the American people.

Let me be very clear. We are all elected; but there is one person—in this

instance, one man—that has been elected by all of the people, and he has submitted a budget.

I would not ever imagine in my tenure in Congress that we would have this Congress overlook a 41-year tradition for the American people, on their behalf, whether you are for it or against it: the right of the representative of the President, in this instance, Shaun Donovan, the President's Budget Director, to make his presentation before the United States Congress.

If I were not standing on this floor, Mr. Speaker, I might simply break down and cry, because I love this institution. I love the constitutional processes documented in the Constitution of the three separate branches of government. We have often disagreed, but we have and should never disrespect.

G. William Hoagland, who was the Republican staff director at the Senate Budget Committee for much of the 1980s and 1990s, now senior vice president of the Bipartisan Policy Center, could not recall a year, since the Martin budget process took effect in the 1970s, when a President's Budget Director was not invited to testify, Republican or Democrat.

While the last budget of an outgoing President is usually aspirational and sets a tone for what he or she hopes will be followed up by, it is not and has not been a time to not see the President's budget. The President's budget is good for education and job creation and national security, and it does not cut, as the Republican budget does, Mr. Speaker, 46 percent in education.

Where is our collegiality?

Shame on us. Let the President's man speak on the budget.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 50 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As we meditate on the blessings of life, we especially pray for the blessing of peace in our lives and in our world.

As You have created each person, we pray that You would guide our hearts

and minds that every person of every place and background might focus on Your great gift of life and so learn to live in unity.

May Your special blessings be upon the Members of this assembly in the important, sometimes difficult, work they do. Give them wisdom and charity that they might work together for the common good.

May all that is done this day in the people's House be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. FITZPATRICK led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

TEAM VERMILLION'S EFFORTS TO BEAT LEUKEMIA AND LYMPHOMA ARE A FITTING TRIBUTE TO STEVE VERMILLION

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the legacy of a dear friend and long-time public servant, Steve Vermillion, who passed away in 2012 from acute myeloid leukemia.

Steve began his career here in the House in 1986, working for colleagues like JIM SENSENBRENNER and Lincoln Diaz-Balart. He was a strong defender of democracy and human rights, especially when it came to U.S. policy toward Cuba, and he helped cofound the Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute.

Team Vermillion, led by his son Joe, has committed to raising funds to support the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society through February 27. Team Vermillion's efforts are a fitting tribute to a good man who sought to help lift others throughout his life.

Steve, you are greatly missed, but you will never be forgotten.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF EARL THOMAS BROWN

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and work of Attorney Earl Thomas Brown of Greenville, North Carolina, who this past Saturday tragically died in a one-car collision at the age of 64.

Attorney Brown was a native of Edgecombe County, though he lived and worked in the city of Greenville. He was an extraordinary lawyer. During my years as a Superior Court judge, Earl appeared before my court on many occasions. He treated each case as unique, exceptional in his scholarship, compassionate for his clients.

At the time of his passing, Attorney Brown was a candidate for District Court judge, a position he wanted to achieve so very much. Not only was Earl an exceptional lawyer, but a man of faith and a strong patriarch for his family.

He is survived by his wife, Dr. Hazel J. Brown; a son, Attorney Derek Brown; a daughter-in-law, Joni Marie; and grandchildren, Austin, Alanna, and Myles. He is also survived by his beloved mother, Mrs. Anna Brown, and many other relatives and friends too numerous to mention.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in celebrating the life and work of a great American, Attorney Earl Thomas Brown.

PRESIDENT OBAMA IS IGNORING THE LAW

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, 10 days ago Congress expected the President to submit his plan to counter the rise of Islamic terrorism in the Middle East. American families deserve to know that the President has a strategy to defeat ISIL and keep us safe.

The 2016 National Defense Authorization Act signed by the President was clear that the President must submit a plan to Congress by February 15 on how to defeat ISIL and reduce risks to American families.

Sadly, the President has not presented a strategy. This is another example of the President's continued disregard for law and the Constitution. We should support our troops by giving them a clear mission and a clear strategy to protect American families.

While I am disappointed that the President has failed to submit a strat-

egy, we cannot be surprised, after he dismissed ISIL as the JV team. He claimed ISIL was contained just 1 day before the Paris slaughter, and he incorrectly assured Americans to be confident just as the mass murder was beginning in San Bernardino by ISIL terrorists.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

RECOGNIZING AWARD-WINNING ARTIST HARRY DAVIS

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Black History Month to recognize a fellow North Carolina artist and living legend, Harry Davis.

Originally from Wilmington, North Carolina, Harry Davis' natural talent was evident from his early drawings. After serving our Nation in the U.S. Army, an accidental shooting left him permanently confined to a wheelchair, which led him to turn to oil painting as a means of expression and therapy.

Self-taught artist Harry Davis' attention to detail and the use of bold and brilliant hues and compositional precision have captivated audiences around the country.

An award-winning artist who has gained national recognition, Davis' work is in private collections of more than a dozen actors, actresses, and public figures.

He has received many honors throughout the country since the 1970s, including best of show in the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and featured artist for the Greensboro African American Arts Festival.

Harry Davis has also worked tirelessly to share his love for the arts and African culture with students throughout North Carolina. We applaud him on this day. We thank him for his service to this country and his service to the arts.

CLOSURE OF GUANTANAMO BAY PRISON

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday President Obama presented his plan to close the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay and proposed transferring up to 60 prisoners to the United States mainland.

Bringing dangerous terrorists to the American homeland has been consistently rejected by bipartisan majorities in Congress. The President's plan is lacking key details required under the law, including the exact cost and location of an alternate detention facility.

On the same day that the President announced his plan, Spanish and Mo-

roccan police arrested four suspected members of a jihadi cell that sought to recruit fighters for Islamic State, including one individual described as a former Guantanamo detainee who once fought with militants in Afghanistan.

President Obama's stubborn insistence on fulfilling an ill-advised campaign promise to close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay distracts from ongoing threats to American national security and highlights the failures of his foreign policy agenda.

AFRICAN AMERICAN POVERTY

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, as chair of the Democratic Whip Task Force on Poverty, Income Inequality, and Opportunity, I rise to commemorate Black History Month and highlight the disproportionate impacts of poverty on the African American community.

Sadly, our Nation has a long history of individual and institutional racism, from slavery and Jim Crow to redlining and overpolicing. This has locked many, many families out of opportunities, even with the enormous progress that we have made with our great civil rights leaders and foot soldiers whom we honored yesterday.

These deplorable disparities and inequalities continue at every level of our society. For example, the African American poverty rate is 26 percent, nearly triple the poverty rate of White Americans. One in three African American children lives in poverty.

The unemployment rate in the African American community is more than 8 percent, twice the unemployment rate of White Americans. The median wealth of White households is 13 times the median wealth of African American households, the widest gap since 1989.

Poverty doesn't just hurt African American families. We know that communities of color are two times more likely to live in poverty and too many rural White and Native Americans have felt persistent poverty for generations.

These statistics paint a clear and stark picture that Congress cannot ignore. We need to get serious about ending poverty and giving everyone, including African Americans and people of color, an opportunity to live the American Dream.

HONORING THE LIFE OF WILLIAM AMOS "BILL" USHER

(Mr. DENHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the life of a personal friend, Major William Amos Usher. Bill passed away at the age of 86 on Sunday in Paducah, Kentucky.

From 1952 to 1962, Bill served as a fighter pilot in France and Germany for the United States Air Force and Air Force Reserves. Bill proudly served in the 417th tactical fighter squadron and was awarded the Commendation Medal for his outstanding work with the United States military.

In 1962, he retired and returned home to Paducah to help with the family trucking company, Usher Transport. Bill became the manager of the company and eventually the owner for many years. Bill established the local Christmas Cop organization, was honored as a Kentucky Colonel and a Duke of Paducah for all of his contributions.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring the life and legacy of Major William Amos "Bill" Usher for his many outstanding contributions to the community as well as his service to our country. God bless him always.

NATIONAL RARE EYE DISEASE AWARENESS DAY

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce my resolution expressing support for the designation of February 28, 2016, as National Rare Eye Disease Awareness Day. In solidarity with those living with rare eye conditions and blindness, I am introducing it in braille.

Joining me today is the Smedley family from my district in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, whose sons, Michael and Mitchell, suffer from a rare eye condition which has caused them to lose their sight at a very young age.

But this has not stopped them from pursuing their dreams. Michael serves in his high school student government and is a member of the track team. Mitchell is on the wrestling team and performs in school plays.

National Rare Eye Disease Awareness Day will highlight exceptional individuals like Michael and Mitchell as they overcome challenges and show us true inspiration.

In doing so, this day will increase awareness for all rare eye diseases and conditions that lead to blindness as well as the need for increased funding for research and for accessibility of treatments.

As a member of the congressional Rare Disease Caucus and as a voice for the Smedleys and the millions more living with blindness, I am proud to introduce this resolution today. I urge my colleagues' support.

CLOSING GUANTANAMO IS A MISPLACED PRIORITY

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, the 2016 National Defense Authorization Act prevents the President from closing the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay unless he submits a plan that receives congressional approval. He has not. This week President Obama submitted the plan to close the prison anyway.

There are currently 91 detainees at Guantanamo Bay. There were 242 when the President took office. His plan calls for transferring 35 of the remaining detainees to other countries.

These detainees have been cleared for transfer by the relevant national security agencies. Approximately 60 detainees will be transferred to facilities in the United States on our own soil. These are not even specified in the plan.

The Department of Defense has identified many potential sites, but again this has not received congressional approval. Construction for a new facility on American soil would cost nearly half a billion dollars.

With all these things going on, with the former GTMO detainees being rearrested for recruiting new ISIS members and an expiration of the timeline for developing an ISIS plan to defeat ISIS, this is a misplaced priority by the President.

We need to stick to the business of what is going to keep our country safe, not fulfill some campaign promise.

□ 1215

FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA WEEK

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the House Agriculture Committee, I rise today in recognition of Future Farmers of America, or FAA, Week.

Earlier this week, the Nation marked the birthday of our first President, George Washington. Since 1948, the week of Washington's birthday has also been FAA Week due to the President's legacy as an agriculturalist and a farmer.

Agriculture is a key to not only the history and heritage of our Nation, but also to Pennsylvania and to our Commonwealth's Fifth Congressional District. It is important that we help the future leaders of this industry continue to grow, ensuring that the future of agriculture is just as bright as its present and past.

"I believe in the future of agriculture" are the first words from the FFA creed. Earlier this year, I met with FAA members from across Pennsylvania, at the Pennsylvania Farm Show, where I held a forum focused on agriculture issues. I was impressed with their knowledge of issues cur-

rently impacting farming across the Nation and was inspired by their vision for the future. Echoing the words of the FAA creed, I am sure that, with the dedication of FAA members across the Nation, the future of agriculture is in good hands.

GUANTANAMO BAY PRISONER TRANSFERS

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, on November 25, 2015, our Commander in Chief made the 2016 National Defense Authorization bill the law of the land.

Section 1030 of that law states, in part, that no amounts authorized may be used to transfer or release, within the United States, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed or any other detainee.

On Monday, despite those clear words, our Commander in Chief announced that he would try to transfer Guantanamo Bay detainees to American soil. His reason? A political campaign promise he made nearly one decade ago is more important than keeping Khalid Sheikh Mohammed behind bars.

Mr. Speaker, the American people want Khalid Sheikh Mohammed's last breath to be in prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. This House—their House—will grant their wish.

RESTORING ARTICLE I

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about legislation that my colleagues and I recently introduced that works to restore our article I powers of the Constitution.

We all learned about separation of powers in our grade school civics class. As you know, this separation protects that one branch of government doesn't overrule or overstep another. It also ensures that the power of the American people is never diminished.

Article I specifically grants legislative powers to Congress, as Congress was established to be the most direct voice of the people. We are the people's House. It seems the President simply chooses to ignore this.

I have consistently heard from folks in the 12th District who are sick and tired of this administration overstepping its boundaries and overstaying its welcome in their lives. Americans—myself included—are frustrated with an executive branch that goes around Congress to create new rules and regulations daily.

My biggest disappointment as a new Member of Congress is our lack of authority to carry out the will of the

American people in this House. As an original cosponsor of H.R. 613, I strongly support this legislation and urge my colleagues to join me in restoring and respecting the most sacred document in our Nation's history—our Constitution.

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Black History Month and the remarkable contributions of Black Hoosiers to our State and country:

Take, for instance, Madam C.J. Walker, a visionary leader who rose from being orphaned at age 7 to becoming an accomplished entrepreneur of hair care products and a prolific philanthropist in the Indianapolis community. She was also America's first self-made female millionaire;

Or Emma Christy, Indianapolis' first female police officer, who patrolled the city's streets with the department's all-female unit, the largest in the world in 1921;

Or the 1955 Crispus Attucks State Championship basketball team. It was the first all-Black team to win a State title.

These are just some of the many African American Hoosiers who have helped shape Indiana's history, enriched our community, and transformed our Nation.

As this month draws to a close, let us continue to honor and recognize all of the trailblazing Black Hoosiers who have contributed so much. We recognize that their great work has paved the path we walk today and leaves lasting legacies in their wake.

CARBON CAPTURE ACT

(Mr. TIPTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, the United States is blessed with nearly 30 percent of the world's coal reserves—more than twice that of the nearest coal reserve country, Russia, and three times as much as China.

Colorado is America's 10th leading coal producer. In Colorado's Third Congressional District, mines in communities like Craig and Delta provide critical jobs and tax revenues as they responsibly produce reliable, affordable electricity on which countless Americans rely.

One thing is certain: the people who work in Colorado's mines and coal-fired power plants take great pride in their communities and the natural environment. They want to develop the

land's abundant resources as responsibly as possible with as small a footprint as possible.

I do not support the President's Clean Power Plan and have voted to stop this onerous Federal overreach multiple times. However, as industry continuously searches for safer and more efficient ways to produce energy, we will need to incentivize the improvement of technology. Passing the Carbon Capture Act will help facilitate that.

Our economic, national, and energy security are all served through ensuring that the ability to use our natural resources responsibly to provide abundant, affordable energy continues.

EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS

(Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of National Eating Disorders Awareness Week.

This annual campaign sheds light on a disease that affects nearly 30 million Americans and has the highest mortality rate of any mental illness. While recovery is certainly possible, early detection and intervention is key. Unfortunately, many people are unfamiliar with the signs typically associated with an eating disorder.

This is why I introduced a bipartisan bill with several of my female colleagues, H.R. 4153, the Educating to Prevent Eating Disorders Act. It would create a pilot program in middle schools to begin educating school counselors, teachers, and nurses about the symptoms of eating disorders.

The facts are clear: education and early detection save lives. This legislation, H.R. 4153, would allow for us to provide both. We have a responsibility to improve the public's understanding of eating disorders so that we can prevent this mental illness.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2406, SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 619 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 619

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2406) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes. The first reading of the

bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule, House Resolution 619, providing for consideration of H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act, also commonly known as the sportsmen's bill.

The rule provides for consideration of H.R. 2406 under a structured rule, with 17 amendments made in order that are roughly evenly split between Democratic and Republican members of this legislative body.

Mr. Speaker, the SHARE Act is an important bipartisan package of proposals that will promote greater opportunities for hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation, as well as safeguard the rights of hunters, anglers, and recreational shooters.

While similar bills have passed the House in the past two Congresses, the Senate has failed to adopt them, making this legislation long overdue. This is especially true when considering the current administration's ongoing assault on the Second Amendment, as well as their restrictions on access to Federal land. This includes restricting hunting and shooting on Federal lands, where many people go to participate in these time-honored American activities.

The Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation recently stated that roughly 37 million American sportsmen and -women spend over \$90 billion annually on outdoor sport activities, highlighting the important economic impact this legislation will have on small businesses across the country that comprise our recreational industries.

Mr. Speaker, these outdoor activities are deeply ingrained in America's heritage and culture, with the values they instill passed down from generation to generation. In fact, according to a 2013 Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation report, hunting, fishing, and shooting are growing in popularity throughout the country, with almost 40 million people over the age of 16 hunting or fishing in the United States. However, over the past 7 years, we have seen the Federal Government continually find ways to block law-abiding Americans from exercising this most fundamental right. People all across my State of central Washington are avid hunters, anglers, and outdoorsmen. Many Americans, especially in the West, look to our vast Federal lands to hunt, fish, and shoot.

Unfortunately, over the past few years, we have seen Federal agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management prevent or impede access to Federal lands which should otherwise be available for these purposes. Lack of access to acceptable areas to participate in these activities is often one of the main reasons why sportsmen and -women stop participating in these traditional American pastimes. Ensuring the public has reliable access to our Nation's Federal lands must remain a priority of this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, we should be fostering and growing participation in outdoor sporting activities—rather than trying to create regulatory barriers that drive Americans away from them—which instill important lifelong values and principles.

□ 1230

These include responsibility, firearm safety and conservation, as well as pa-

tience, discipline, respect for wildlife, and most of all, appreciation of our country's rich natural heritage and beautiful national parks, forests, and vast wilderness areas.

H.R. 2406 is critical to protecting our way of life and ensuring all Americans have the ability to enjoy outdoor recreation and develop a profound appreciation for our country's marvelous natural landscapes.

This legislation is comprised of a number of provisions that will help provide future generations of Americans with access to our country's Federal lands for outdoor recreation, sport shooting, hunting, and fishing.

The measure will also reaffirm the Second Amendment rights of Americans to lawfully carry firearms on Federal lands.

Additionally, it will help prevent Federal overreach, eliminate regulatory impediments, and protect against the promulgation of new, onerous regulations that impede access or restrict lawful activities on Federal lands.

Sportsmen are natural stewards of public lands and greatly contribute to habitat and wildlife conservation, so I find it difficult to understand the rationale behind many of these Federal decisions.

Mr. Speaker, the SHARE Act also includes legislation that I introduced, the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act, or FLTFA, which authorizes the BLM to sell surplus lands to States, localities, or private entities that can be put then to economically beneficial use.

Since its initial enactment, FLTFA reduced Federal land ownership by more than 9,000 acres over the course of a decade, while also enhancing access for hunting, fishing, and shooting on these Federal lands.

This critical program brings a commonsense approach to land transactions and helps streamline land ownership patterns, all without spending taxpayer funds or adding to the surplus of federally owned property.

Additionally, the bill includes the Recreational Land Self-Defense Act, legislation that protects the ability of gun owners to exercise their Second Amendment rights when they are legally camping, hunting, and/or fishing on property owned by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Like many in Central Washington, I grew up responsibly exercising the right to bear arms, and I am a long-standing advocate for the protection of those rights, which is why I am proud to cosponsor this bill.

In my district, access to Federal lands is of paramount importance, and the SHARE Act will ensure that sportsmen, outdoorsmen, and all Americans wishing to enjoy our treasured Federal parks and forests have the ability to do so.

For this reason, I have also introduced an amendment to the SHARE Act that would require the U.S. Forest Service to publish a notice in the Federal Register, along with a justification for the closure of any public road in our forests.

In Central Washington and across our country, the Forest Service has closed public roads with no prior notification, preventing access to public areas in our region's national forests. Often, these blocked roadways have been in use for decades, and many local residents rely on them for both everyday activities as well as for recreational purposes.

The first indication of a closure should not come when an individual is faced with an impassable roadway, but, rather, through an adequate public notice from the Forest Service, which my amendment would provide.

Our country has a deep and long-standing tradition of using Federal land for outdoor and recreational activities, and protecting the ability of Americans to use our abundant Federal lands for these purposes must remain one of our top priorities in Congress, which is why I am committed to working with my colleagues in the House and in the Senate to advance this much-needed legislation.

Mr. Speaker, for generations Americans have passed down these values to their children and to their grandchildren, which have deeply ingrained hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting in America's heritage and our cultural fabric.

As I said, growing up in Central Washington, I experienced the importance of these values firsthand, and they continue to play an important role in my life to this very day.

The rule we consider here today provides for consideration of legislation that will protect these values, increase opportunities for hunters, anglers, and shooters, and ensure that future generations of Americans have equal opportunity to access and enjoy our Nation's vast public lands.

This is a good, straightforward rule, allowing for the consideration of a critically important measure. I support the rule's adoption, and I urge my colleagues to support the rule as well as the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentleman, my colleague on the Rules Committee, for yielding the customary 30 minutes to me.

Mr. Speaker, for months, the Chamber's majority has been bringing recycled bills to the floor to stall and waste time, knowing full well these bills will not be signed into law.

The majority has introduced no budget. Our infrastructure is crumbling. Americans are in need of new

bridges, new roads, new water systems, schools, housing, and much more.

It has been said that it costs an estimated \$24 million to run the House of Representatives for a week, money basically wasted when we do bills like these.

As a matter of fact, I think if we were to add up all that money, we might even be able to do high-speed rail in the United States.

Wouldn't that be a new venture?

The majority has sidestepped addressing the high cost of a college education and the student loan debt crisis. They have put their heads in the sand concerning the threat of the Zika virus.

We have done nothing about the century-old water pipes crisscrossing the country, even in light of the tragedy in Flint. No wonder Americans are so disgusted and angry. Instead of focusing on what people are crying out for, we now bring up this whole package of bills that has no chance of advancing.

Today we have the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act. It advances an anti-conservation agenda at odds with the decades of longstanding tradition benefiting our uniquely American landscapes, wildlife, and sporting community.

The SHARE Act cobbles together seven separate legislative proposals, along with six other titles. Now, that is some seamstress work. It is a grab bag that includes provisions that would undermine the Wilderness Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and other essential conservation laws.

What's more, the SHARE Act would drive the extinction of domestic and international wildlife by adding language that would block the administration's efforts under the Endangered Species Act to stop ivory trafficking—it basically says that you can, if you go on a safari, bring back elephant tusks because they are not in any danger, despite what we all hear to the contrary—and to prevent the slaughter of American elephants, which is necessary to get those tusks.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wouldn't be able to stop the illegal ivory trade, and the importation of polar bears would be made possible again.

But I think one of the worst things is it brings back the traps that captured so many of people's pets, small animals who died a very cruel and long death. Why in the world would we do that? What is sporting about catching an animal, sometimes a person, or a pet, in something from which they cannot extricate themselves, and to suffer and to die?

Let's be clear. This bill undermines bedrock conservation laws. It won't benefit the average hunter or angler. People going on safaris might get something more out of it, like elephant tusks, but it will destroy years of work

done by animal protection advocates and conservationists. The delicate balance at work in our ecosystem's food chain is not to be trifled with, and we disrupt it at our own peril.

Aside from rolling back decades of work conserving our majestic natural resources, the bill is a distraction from what we should be doing.

May I remind my colleagues on the other side of the aisle of a piece of wisdom from Teddy Roosevelt, America's favorite outdoorsman and actually the person who is responsible for the wonderful national parks that we have.

He said, and I quote: "We are prone to speak of the resources of this country as inexhaustible; this is not so."

If he had this worry that we have today here, 100 years ago, I can only imagine what he would think of this state of affairs.

I urge a "no" vote on this rule and a "no" vote on the underlying legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just respond that certainly there are many issues facing Congress today, many important things that we have to consider in many issue areas, but that should not preclude us from addressing a very important issue, and that is access to our national, our Federal lands by sportsmen, by hunters, by fishers.

Protecting the ability of Americans to enjoy our natural abundance of Federal lands, I think, is something that our President Roosevelt, who the distinguished gentlewoman from New York quoted, would be very much in favor of. Certainly he was a proponent of enjoying those same Federal lands.

Any efforts that we can put forth to make sure that we can continue those strong traditions of Americans being exposed to the great outdoors in this country is something that we should do all we can to preserve.

I might note, too, that this is a bipartisan-led effort in the House of Representatives. Passed in the last two Congresses, many of the provisions of this bill have enjoyed overwhelming bipartisan support, and this year we do have a clear path forward, as the committees in the other body across the rotunda are already marking up very similar legislation in their work on this important issue.

So I feel very positive about the direction we are taking, about the bipartisan nature of the effort that we have here before us today, and I think it is an important thing that we need to address, as well as many of the other things that the gentlewoman from New York discussed. But certainly this is something that we can and should move forward.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up a resolution that will require the majority to stop the partisan games and hold hearings on the President's budget proposal.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD along with extraneous material immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, just out of courtesy to the gentlewoman from New York, I do have one Member who would like to speak on this bill, if that is okay with you.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Of course.

□ 1245

Mr. NEWHOUSE. So, with that, I would be very happy to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK).

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2406, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015, or the SHARE Act.

The SHARE Act has 13 important provisions that will work to expand opportunities for sportsmen and -women to enjoy their favorite outdoor activities around the country.

Title II of this bill, which I authored, is the Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage and Opportunities Act. I grew up in northern Michigan and, like many of my constituents, spent my summers fishing and the fall hunting grouse in the UP woods.

These traditions—spending quality time outdoors with our kids and grandkids—are the kinds of things we must make sure are preserved for generations to come.

This portion of the SHARE Act seeks to create an open until closed policy for sportsmen's use of Federal lands.

As you know, nearly one-quarter of the United States landmass, or over 500 million acres, are Federal lands that are owned by all Americans. It is important that the right to fully utilize these lands is ensured for future generations.

Over the years, legislative ambiguity has allowed antihunting groups to pursue an antihunting agenda that has eliminated opportunities for many of these activities on our Federal lands. Groups like these are taking advantage of loopholes in the law to deprive our constituents of the right to fully use Federal lands.

Recreational anglers, hunters, and sporting organizations, many of whom have endorsed this bill, are passionate supporters of the conservation movement. These dedicated sportsmen and

-women deserve to know that the land they cherish will not be closed off to hunting, fishing, and shooting for future generations.

This is a bipartisan issue. Both Presidents Clinton and Bush issued executive orders recognizing the value of these heritage activities. It is time we finally close the loopholes, firm up the language, and make sure that future generations will always be able to enjoy the outdoors, hunting, fishing, shooting, or just taking a walk in the woods.

I encourage all my colleagues today to join me in supporting this piece of commonsense legislation.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) for an opportunity to respond, since she already yielded back her time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. That is very kind of the gentleman, but I continue to yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I do have one more speaker who would like to say a few words on this issue.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN), the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support today's rule.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join with Sportsmen's Caucus Co-chair TIM WALZ and Caucus Vice Chairs JEFF DUNCAN and GENE GREEN in introducing H.R. 2406, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act, better known as the SHARE Act.

This bipartisan package of legislation protects and advances hunting, angling, and recreational shooting traditions and also promotes fish and wildlife conservation efforts.

The SHARE Act passed the House of Representatives in both the 113th and 112th Congress with bipartisan support, and in October 2015 the Natural Resources Committee voted 21-15 in favor of the bill.

In addition, H.R. 2406 is supported by the Nation's leading hunting and fishing conservation organizations, which represent millions of sportsmen and -women across the Nation.

This commonsense proposal will expand opportunities for hunting and fishing and promote conservation across the United States, particularly on Federal lands. In many parts of the country, American sportsmen and -women rely on access to Federal lands to hunt, fish, and recreationally shoot.

This bill would expand access to these lands by requiring the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service to keep lands open for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting unless there is a specific reason to close them.

The bill also requires the National Park Service or Office of National Marine Sanctuaries to consult with State fish and wildlife agencies prior to clos-

ing areas to fishing, and allows State fish and wildlife agencies the added flexibility needed to construct public shooting ranges.

The SHARE Act also protects Second Amendment rights. It ensures the rights of law-abiding citizens to possess firearms on lands and waters managed by the United States Corps of Engineers, which is consistent with rights afforded on other Federal public lands. The bill also prevents the Environmental Protection Agency from unnecessarily regulating ammunition and fishing tackle.

As an avid sportsman, I am humbled to advocate for this commonsense legislation. I am proud, also, to introduce it in order to advance the priorities of American sportsmen and -women.

I encourage my colleagues to ensure that America's hunting and fishing heritage remains a top priority for the Federal Government for years to come and to pass this critical legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the rule and to support H.R. 2406.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, let me first say I very much appreciate the distinguished gentlewoman's indulgence on allowing folks to speak on this issue. As you can tell, it is very important to a lot of people. So I thank her very much for her polite indulgence.

Mr. Speaker, the debate that we have had here today underscores the importance of the legislation that is considered under this rule.

I believe we must take a firm stand against executive overreach on the infringement of Americans' constitutional rights to keep and bear arms by protecting the Second Amendment as well as protecting the public's access to Federal lands for the purposes of hunting, fishing, and sports shooting.

People all across the country are avid hunters, anglers, and outdoorsmen, often utilizing public lands for those purposes, and the SHARE Act will ensure that the Federal Government does not restrict their ability to participate in these activities.

Federal lands represent an important and precious national resource for many mixed-use purposes. We must not tolerate efforts by Federal agencies such as the Forest Service or the BLM to restrict, impede, or prevent access to Federal lands that should otherwise be available for use by our country's outdoor enthusiasts as well as sportsmen and -women.

By adopting this rule, providing for consideration of the underlying bill, the House will be taking an important step toward resolving many of the long overdue issues facing our country's outdoor recreational community.

The SHARE Act will allow the values instilled by hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting to be passed down to

future generations of Americans, just as our parents passed them to many of us.

This is particularly important to me because, as a farmer, I consider myself a conservationist, a steward of our resources, and believe we have a responsibility to use our natural resources wisely and with care, preserving them for those who come after.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good, straightforward rule allowing for consideration of a long overdue piece of legislation that ensures future generations have access to our country's Federal lands for outdoor recreation and sporting activities.

I have certainly appreciated the discussion here today, which underscores the importance of this issue to so many people. I believe this rule and the underlying bill are strong measures that are important to preserving our Nation's cultural heritage.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 619 and the underlying bill.

The material previously referred to by Ms. SLAUGHTER is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 619 OFFERED BY
MS. SLAUGHTER

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Immediately upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 624) Directing the Committee on the Budget to hold a public hearing on the President's fiscal year 2017 budget request with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget as a witness. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of the resolution specified in section 2 of this resolution.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT
IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated

the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

FRAUDULENT JOINDER PREVENTION ACT OF 2016

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within

which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 3624.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WITTMAN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia? There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 618 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3624.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1254

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3624) to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder, with Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

□ 1300

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Hardworking Americans are some of the leading victims of frivolous lawsuits and the extraordinary costs that our legal system imposes. Every day, local businessowners routinely have lawsuits filed against them, based on claims they have no substantive connection to, as a means of forum shopping on the part of the lawyers filing the case. These lawsuits impose a tremendous burden on small businesses and their employees. The Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act, introduced by Judiciary Committee Member KEN BUCK from Colorado, will help reduce the litigation abuse that regularly drags small businesses into court for no other reason than as part of a lawyer's forum shopping strategy.

In order to avoid the jurisdiction of the Federal courts, plaintiffs' attorneys regularly join instate defendants to the lawsuits they file in State court, even if the instate defendants' connections to the controversy are minimal or nonexistent.

Typically, the innocent but fraudulently joined instate defendant is a small business or the owner or employee of a small business. Even though these innocent instate defendants ultimately don't face any liability as a result of being named as a defendant, they nevertheless have to spend money to hire a lawyer and take valu-

able time away from running their businesses or spending time with their families to deal with matters related to a lawsuit to which they have no real connection.

To take just a couple of examples, in *Bendy v. C.B. Fleet Company*, the plaintiff brought product liability claims against a national company for its allegedly defective medicinal drink. The plaintiff also joined a resident local defendant health clinic alleging it negligently instructed the plaintiff to ingest the drink. The national company removed the case to Federal Court and argued that the small local defendant was fraudulently joined because the plaintiff's claims against the clinic were time-barred by the statute of limitations, showing "no possibility" of recovery.

Despite finding the possibility of relief against the local defendant "remote," the court remanded the case after emphasizing how hard it is to demonstrate fraudulent joinder under the current rules. The court practically apologized publicly to the joined party, stating: "The fact that Maryland courts are likely to dismiss Bendy's claims against the local defendant is not sufficient for jurisdiction, given the Fourth Circuit's strict standard for fraudulent joinder."

Shortly after remand, all claims against the local defendant were dismissed, of course, after its presence in the lawsuit served the trial lawyer's tactical purpose of keeping the case in their preferred State court. When courts themselves complain about the unfairness of current court rules, Congress should take notice.

In *Baumeister v. Home Depot*, Home Depot removed a slip-and-fall case to Federal Court. The day after removal and before conducting any discovery, the plaintiff amended the complaint to name a local business, which it alleged failed to maintain the store's parking lot. The court found the timing of the amended complaint was "suspect," noting the possibility "that the sole reason for amending the complaint to add the local defendant as a defendant . . . could have been to defeat diversity jurisdiction."

Nevertheless, the court held Home Depot had not met its "heavy burden" of showing fraudulent joinder under current law because the court found it was "possible," even if it were just a tenth of a percent possible, that "the newly added defendant could potentially be held liable," and remanded the case back to State court. Once back in State court, the plaintiff stipulated to dismiss the innocent local defendant from the lawsuit, but only after it had been successfully used as a forum shopping pawn.

Trial lawyers join these unconnected instate defendants to their lawsuits because today a case can be kept in State court by simply joining as a defendant

a local party that shares the same local residence as the person bringing the lawsuit. When the primary defendant moves to remove the case to Federal Court, the addition of that local defendant will generally defeat removal under a variety of approaches judges currently take to determine whether the joined defendant prevents removal to Federal Court.

One approach judges take is to require a showing that there is “no possibility of recovery” against the local defendant before a case can be removed to Federal Court, or some practically equivalent standard. Others require the judge to resolve any doubts regarding removal in favor of the person bringing the lawsuit. Still, others require the judge to find that the local defendant was added in bad faith before they allow the case to be removed to Federal Court.

The current law is so unfairly heavy-handed against innocent local parties joined to lawsuits that Federal Appeals Court Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals has publicly supported congressional action to change the standards for joinder, saying: “That’s exactly the kind of approach to Federal jurisdiction reform that I like because it’s targeted. And there is a problem with fraudulent jurisdiction law as it exists today, I think, and that is that you have to establish that the joinder of a nondiverse defendant is totally ridiculous and that there’s no possibility of ever recovering . . . That’s very hard to do. So I think making the fraudulent joinder law a little bit more realistic . . . appeals to me because it seems to me the kind of intermediate step that addresses some real problems.”

The bill before us today addresses those real problems in two main ways:

First, the bill allows judges greater discretion to free an innocent local party from a case where the judge finds there is no plausible case against that party. That plausibility standard is the same standard the Supreme Court has said should be used to dismiss pleadings for failing to state a valid legal claim, and the same standard should apply to release innocent parties from lawsuits.

Second, the bill allows judges to look at evidence that the trial lawyers aren’t acting in good faith in adding local defendants. This is a standard some lower courts already use to determine whether a trial lawyer really intends to pursue claims against the local defendant or is just using them as part of their forum shopping strategy.

This bill is strongly supported by the National Federation of Independent Business, representing America’s small businesses, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, among other legal reform groups.

Please join me in supporting this vital legislation to reduce litigation

abuse and forum shopping and to protect innocent parties from costly, extended, and unnecessary litigation.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Members of the House, H.R. 3624, the so-called Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act, is not really about fraud. Rather, this measure is just the latest attempt to tilt the civil justice system in favor of corporate defendants by making it more difficult for plaintiffs to pursue State law claims in State courts.

Here is why I say that. To begin with, H.R. 3624 addresses a nonexistent problem. Under current law, a defendant may remove a case alleging solely State law claims to a Federal court only if there is complete diversity of citizenship between all plaintiffs and all defendants, with an exception. If the plaintiff adds an in-state defendant to the case to defeat diversity jurisdiction, this constitutes fraudulent joinder and, in such circumstance, the case may be removed to Federal court.

In determining whether a joinder was fraudulent, the court must consider only whether there was any basis for a claim against the nondiverse defendant. For the case to remain in Federal Court, the defendant must show that there was no possibility of recovery or no reasonable basis for adding the nondiverse defendant.

This very high standard has ignited our Federal Courts for more than a century, and it has functioned well. H.R. 3624 would replace this time-honored standard with a thoroughly ambiguous one. The measure would require a remand motion to be denied unless the court finds, among other things, that it is “plausible to conclude that the applicable State law would impose liability” on an in-state defendant; that the plaintiff had a “good faith intention to prosecute the action against each” in-state defendant or to seek a joint judgment; and that there was no “actual fraud in the pleading of jurisdictional facts.”

Additionally, H.R. 3624 would effectively overturn the local defendant exception, which prohibits removal to Federal Court even if complete diversity of citizenship exists when the defendant is a citizen of the State where the suit was filed.

The bill’s radical changes to long-standing jurisdictional practice reveal the true purpose of this measure. It is simply intended to stifle the ability of plaintiffs to have their choice of forum and, possibly, even their day in court.

In addition, H.R. 3624 would sharply increase the cost of litigation for plaintiffs and further burden the Federal court system. For example, terms like “plausible” and “good faith intention” are not defined in the bill. This ambiguity will lead to greater uncertainty

for both courts and litigants and will spawn substantial litigation over their meaning and application, further delaying many decisions in many cases.

Additionally, these standards require a court to engage in a minitrial during an early procedural stage of a case, without an opportunity for the full development of evidence. Thus, the bill would sharply increase the burdens and costs of litigation for plaintiffs and make it more likely that they would be prevented from choosing the forum for their claims.

□ 1315

Finally, the amendments made by this bill raise fundamental federalism concerns. Subject to certain exceptions as set forth in our Constitution, matters of State law should be decided by State courts. The removal of a State court case to Federal court always implicates federalism concerns, which is why the Federal courts generally disfavor Federal jurisdiction and read removal statutes narrowly.

H.R. 3624, however, ignores these federalism concerns. By applying sweeping and vaguely worded new standards to the determination of when a State case must be remanded to a State court, the bill denies State courts the ability to decide and ultimately to shape State law. H.R. 3624 not only violates State sovereignty, but it also violates our fundamental constitutional structure.

Accordingly, I sincerely urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this problematic legislation.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume to respond to some of the points raised by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), the ranking member.

First of all, it is not this bill that removes cases from State courts to Federal courts. It is the United States Constitution and the Federal laws that have been passed by this Congress for over 200 years that recognize the importance of the principle of diversity jurisdiction and of having parties from different States in cases in controversy able to remove those cases to the Federal system, which represents all citizens, not just the citizens of one State, as State courts are sometimes perceived as doing.

Secondly, it is not this legislation that creates the kind of circumstance that the gentleman from Michigan claims it does of denying access to the courts. Rather, it is the purpose of this legislation to treat people fairly who have been treated unfairly in the process. If you have no liability in a case, you should not be sued in the first place.

If you are sued by a lawyer who is trying to manipulate the rules in order to keep a case in a court that he has

forum-shopped—in other words, he has picked the court that he prefers it to be in—that individual or business, as quickly as possible, should be able to seek redress from the Federal court so as to have a determination made about whether or not it is indeed a party that is “plausibly liable,” which is a Supreme Court standard to be held in the case.

If it is not a party, then the rules of Federal procedure would allow for the removal of that case to Federal court. So we should not be blaming innocent parties for spoiling the plans of trial lawyers to try to forum-shop into a favorable jurisdiction.

Let me make a few other quick points about federalism.

Some of the rhetoric on the other side suggests that it is somehow strange for Federal courts to be deciding State law claims, but as a matter of history, that is totally inaccurate. State law claims are heard by Federal courts whenever the Federal courts have the diversity jurisdiction that is outlined in the Constitution.

That has been a major part of the Federal trial court's work for far longer than Federal claims have existed, and out-of-State defendants have been able to remove civil cases from State courts since the beginning of the Federal judicial system created by the very first Congress of which James Madison and many other Founders were members.

All the bill before us today does is protect the right of removal from being subverted by blatant gamesmanship on the part of trial lawyers. H.R. 3624 also protects in-State individuals and small businesses from being dragged into litigation just so the plaintiff can keep the case in State court when the plaintiff's primary target is an out-of-State corporation.

Is it really unfair to say to the trial lawyer, “when your real target is an out-of-State corporation but you want to keep the case in State court, you have to come up with a claim against the local in-State individual or small business that is at least plausible”?

That is the simple, fair, and modest demand that this bill makes on trial lawyers.

Is it fair to the local individual or small business that it is required to bear the costs and other burdens of litigation when the claim against it isn't even plausible?

No, it is not, but that is what is allowed under current law, and that is what H.R. 3624 will correct.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Somehow the gentleman from Virginia has misunderstood what I said or has mischaracterized what I said.

This bill makes it too difficult to remand cases back to State courts to the point at which federalism concerns are

raised and plaintiffs are frequently harmed.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN), a distinguished member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. COHEN. I thank the ranking member.

Mr. Chairman, this bill which has come before our committee is one that the President has said he will veto because the President says that it is a “solution that is looking for a problem” or something to that effect.

This bill will make it more difficult for plaintiffs—people who have been harmed—to get relief because their cases in State courts can more easily be removed to Federal courts.

Now, the gentleman from Virginia is exactly right in that it has always been permitted. You can remove a case to Federal court if you can show that the plaintiff in the State court is not a proper plaintiff, if you can show that there is diversity of citizenship and not complete diversity.

The problem is that this has always been the rule, and it is the way the rule is now; but the courts have not come to us and said this is a problem and have asked us to correct it. We are correcting this because the corporate defendants want to make it easier for them to remove these cases to courts at which they will get better results. It will make it more difficult for plaintiffs to get judgments in State courts, which have historically been a bit healthier. This makes it almost impossible.

It increases litigation. It makes you, on the front end, have to show your case. It increases the cost to the courts and the burden on the courts. It will make the government larger because there will be more activity in Federal court if this becomes law. It will take from the States the right to determine their own State laws, which is generally the position of my friends on the other side—being for states' rights. In certain parts of our country, including in my part of the country, they have been known to sometimes talk poorly about the Federal courts. This gives the Federal courts more power.

It is an aberrant position that this side has taken, kind of like they took when we had reciprocity on gun permits. Rather than having States' laws be paramount, they thought the Federal law should superimpose it. We have got a situation by which the idea of States' laws being sovereign and States having more authority and giving more power to the States falls second to being for things that corporations and the NRA desire. In those cases, states' rights come second, and that is an unusual aberration.

This bill will probably not pass the Senate, but if it does, it will be vetoed, and it won't be overridden.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. COHEN. Yesterday we had a program at which we honored the foot soldiers of the civil rights movement. One of the Republican Senators confessed: “I should have done more.” I hear that from a lot of folks from the South. They go to Selma and they march and they say they should have done more.

Meanwhile, one can do something today because there is a Voting Rights Act that needs to be extended or amended and approved to give people the ultimate thing that America is most well-known for, which is the right to vote in a democracy.

Voting rights are in peril in our country, income inequality continues, and millions of Americans of both parties are voting for candidates who appeal to those folks. Race relations between police and minority communities are fraught, young people have tremendous burdens of student loan debt, and our infrastructure is in danger.

Let's deal with those issues and let's make Congress great again.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK), the chief sponsor of this legislation and a member of the House Judiciary Committee.

Mr. BUCK. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, in many cases a trial lawyer's main target is a national business, but if the only defendant in the case is an out-of-State business, the case can be heard in Federal court rather than in a local State court, which trial lawyers often prefer.

By also suing a local defendant in addition to the national defendant, who are the true targets of the lawsuits, trial lawyers can keep their cases in the preferred State courts.

Trial lawyers who sue innocent local people and small businesses simply to keep the lawsuits in their preferred State courts usually drop their cases against these innocent local parties but only after their cases are safely back in State courts and only after the innocent local parties have had to spend time and money in dealing with the lawsuits. That is not right. Trial lawyers shouldn't be able to subject innocent local people and small businesses to costly and time-consuming lawsuits just to rig the places in which their lawsuits will be heard.

This unfairness led respected Federal appeals court Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals to publicly support congressional action to change the standards for joinder to allow judges greater flexibility in making the right decisions on questions of removal to Federal court and to give Federal judges greater discretion to determine earlier in the case whether a local party joined to the lawsuit is there for a good reason or for fraudulent reasons.

H.R. 3624 is precisely the kind of remedy urged by Judge Wilkinson, who has said:

That is exactly the kind of approach . . . that I like because it is targeted; and there is a problem with fraudulent jurisdiction laws as it exists today, I think, and that is that you have to establish that the joinder of a non-diverse local defendant is totally ridiculous and that there is no possibility of ever recovering. . . . That is very hard to do. So I think making the fraudulent joinder law a little bit more realistic . . . appeals to me because it seems to me the kind of intermediate step that addresses some real problems.

H.R. 3624 would protect innocent local defendants in two main ways.

First, the bill allows Federal judges greater discretion to release local defendants from a case where it is not plausible to conclude, as a legal matter, that applicable State law would impose liability on the local defendant. The term "plausible" is taken from the Supreme Court's jurisprudence that interprets rule 8 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, and the Court's decisions provide substantial guidance as to the meaning of the term.

Initially, in *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, the Court distinguished between plausible claims and claims that are speculative:

Factual allegations must be enough to raise a right to relief above the speculative level.

Later, in *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, the Court stated:

The plausibility standard . . . asks for more than a sheer possibility that a defendant has acted unlawfully. This standard demands more than an unadorned, 'the defendant unlawfully harmed me' accusation or threadbare recitals of the elements of a cause of action, supported by mere conclusory statements.

Professor Martin H. Redish, one of the Nation's foremost scholars of Federal court jurisdiction, has written:

The *Twombly/Iqbal* plausibility standard represents the fairest and most efficient resolution of the conflicting interests in the context of pleading.

It will similarly provide a fair and efficient approach in the context of fraudulent joinder.

Second, the bill codifies a proposition that the Supreme Court has long recognized: that in deciding whether joinder is fraudulent, courts may consider whether the plaintiff has a good faith intention of seeking a judgment against the local defendant.

Consistent with Supreme Court precedent, courts continue to find fraudulent joinder when objective evidence clearly demonstrates there is no good faith intention to prosecute the action against all defendants.

As the Federal court in *Faulk v. Husqvarna Consumer Outdoor Products N.A., Inc.*, said:

Where the plaintiff's collective litigation actions, viewed objectively, clearly demonstrate a lack of good faith intention to pursue a claim to judgment against a non-

diverse local defendant, the court should dismiss the nondiverse defendant and retain jurisdiction over the case.

□ 1330

The language of this provision is taken almost verbatim from an oft-cited decision in the Third Circuit, *In re Briscoe*: "The court said that joinder is fraudulent if 'there is . . . no real intention in good faith to prosecute the action against the defendant or seek a joint judgment.'"

I urge all my colleagues to support this simple, commonsense bill that will protect innocent local parties from being dragged into expensive and time-consuming lawsuits for the sole reason of furthering a trial lawyer's forum shopping strategy.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), a veteran member of the House Judiciary Committee.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the so-called Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act.

The main purpose of the bill is to make it easier to remove State cases to Federal courts where large corporate defendants have numerous advantages over consumers, patients, and injured workers.

This bill is yet another attempt by the Republicans to tilt the legal playing field in favor of large corporations. It will clog the Federal courts, drain judicial resources, upset well-established law, and delay justice for plaintiffs seeking to hold corporations accountable for harming consumers or injuring workers.

This bill is part of a general effort by the Republicans to close off access to the courts to ordinary Americans. With every step the Republicans take, whether it be to put forward bills to make class action suits more difficult, to remove more local cases to Federal courts, to reclassify more lawsuits as frivolous and subject to mandatory sanctions, or to oppose legislative attempts to limit mandatory arbitration clauses, they are transforming our system of justice.

Our courts are being turned into a forum where only very rich people can get justice, where corporations can easily escape liability, and where consumers and the injured can get no relief, and it is all tilted one way.

There is nothing in this bill or in any other bill put forward by the other side that will help ordinary consumers hold big corporations responsible for actions that harm the little guy.

Under this so-called Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act, anytime there is a case with at least one in-state, non-diverse, and out-of-state, diverse, defendant, the defendants will use this forum shopping bill law to delay justice.

These attempted removals will result in contentious disputes over whether the court has jurisdiction. It will drain

court time, as the courts will have to engage in almost a minitrial, reviewing pleadings, affidavits, and other evidence submitted by the parties since this bill turns a simple procedural determination into a merits determination.

At a minimum, the bill will allow corporate defendants to successfully force the plaintiff to expend their limited resources on what should be a simple procedural matter.

Under this bill, this preliminary decision would become a baseless, time-consuming merits inquiry of the case before a second time-consuming merits inquiry on the substance. While large corporations can easily accommodate such cost, injured workers, consumers, and patients cannot.

I am amazed by some of my colleagues who, with this bill, will bring even more cases to our Federal courts. I don't need to remind you that our Federal courts are facing an enormous number of judicial vacancies with no end in sight due to delays in confirmations in the other body.

Yet, this bill would increase the workload of the Federal courts with cases based on the flimsiest of Federal jurisdiction. It makes no sense. This bill will take up valuable Federal court time with State claims based on State law, preventing the Federal courts from hearing and managing cases that are properly before them.

Finally, despite its name, this bill is not about fraud. Indeed, the proponents cite no example that alleges actual fraud.

I would say this is a bill in search of a problem. I would say that, if I didn't understand, the true purpose of the bill is not to stop fraud, but to further tilt the scales of justice in favor of big corporations over the needs of ordinary Americans.

For these reasons, I oppose it. I urge all of my colleagues to oppose this bill as well.

We should defeat this bill and start making Congress great again.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3½ minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, just a few minutes ago the Judiciary Committee ranking and chairman were in a hearing that exuded bipartisan expressions for fixing the challenges that we have, with the location of data and international requests for data being held by America's technology companies. It was an interesting and open discussion, which I want to evidence on the RECORD.

The Judiciary Committee is continuing and has had over the years bipartisan approaches to a number of difficult questions, which we have solved, including our approach to criminal justice reform. I thank the chairman and ranking member for that.

I also want to acknowledge that we have some challenges, as was evidenced by comments from the gentleman from Tennessee, on the restoration of the Voting Rights Act. We find ourselves again in a challenge that I hope can be fixed.

First, I want to make it very clear that I practiced law for a number of years and served as an associate municipal court judge and as well was a quasi-prosecutor on the Select Committee on Assassinations which, I allow, this body did research when that select committee was in place the issues of the investigations of Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination and John F. Kennedy.

So I know the importance of lawyers, of which I have the greatest respect and of which I am one. I understand that trial lawyers are representing both defendants and plaintiffs and corporations come into the court with trial lawyers. So I am a little taken aback by any suggestion that the words "trial lawyers" have a negative connotation.

Anyone who wants to win a case in a courtroom must have a lawyer, and you would want to make sure that they are a trial lawyer. As well, you want to make sure that you have the rights of due process.

So I would make the argument that trial lawyers go into court, whether they are representing corporations or plaintiffs. Corporations in many instances may be defendants.

In that case, I will tell you you are making it far more difficult by pushing cases into the Federal court under H.R. 3624. It is more expensive and they take longer, making it difficult for workers, consumers, and patients generally to have their cases closer to home in State courts.

However, there may be an instance where a corporation is a plaintiff and you will have the same blocking of that corporation by this bill.

If this bill was enacted, it would tip the scales of justice in favor of corporate defendants or others that make it more difficult for injured plaintiffs. It would effectively eliminate the local defendant exception by diversity jurisdiction. I heard someone say—and it bears repeating—it is a solution looking for a problem.

The current standard used by the courts to determine whether the joinder of a nondiverse defendant is improper, however, has been in place for a century. We have no evidence that this has put anyone in a position of not getting due process. That is our goal in the court system.

The fraudulent joinder doctrine is well established and, in fact, will only be found if the defendant establishes that the joinder of the diversity-destroying party in the State court was made without a reasonable basis. We have a system, but this particular bill

reverses this longstanding policy by imposing new requirements.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, if I might, further taking away a defendant's responsibility to prove that Federal jurisdiction over State cases is improper alters the fundamental precept of a party seeking removal.

I ask my colleagues to recognize that we have bipartisanship on this committee.

I oppose this legislation and ask my colleagues to oppose it.

I thank the gentleman for yielding and rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3624, the "Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act of 2016."

H.R. 3624 is the latest effort to deny plaintiffs access to the forum of their choice and, possibly, to their day in court.

H.R. 3624 seeks to overturn longstanding precedent in favor of a vague and unnecessary test that forces state cases into federal court when they don't belong there, and gives large corporate defendants an unfair advantage to pick and choose their forum without the normal burden of proving proper jurisdiction.

If enacted this bill would tip the scales of justice in favor of corporate defendants and make it more difficult for injured plaintiffs to bring their state claims in state court.

H.R. 3624 would effectively eliminate the local defendant exception to diversity jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. 1441(b)(2), which currently prohibits removal to federal court even when there is complete diversity when a defendant is a citizen of the state in which the action is brought.

The current standard used by courts to determine whether the joinder of a nondiverse defendant is improper, however, has been in place for a century, and no evidence has been put forth demonstrating that this standard is not working.

Rather, the "Fraudulent Joinder Doctrine," is a well-established legal doctrine providing that: fraudulent joinder will only be found if the defendant establishes that the joinder of the diversity-destroying party in the state court action was made without a reasonable basis of proving any liability against that party.

H.R. 3624 reverses this longstanding policy by imposing new requirements on federal courts considering remand motions where a case is before the court solely on diversity grounds.

Specifically, it changes the test for showing improper joinder from a one-part test ("no possibility of a claim against a nondiverse defendant") to a complicated four-part test, requiring the court to find fraudulent joinder if: There is not a "plausible" claim for relief against each nondiverse defendant; There is "objective evidence" that "clearly demonstrates" no good faith intention to prosecute the action against each defendant or intention to seek a joint judgment; There is federal or state law that clearly bars claims against the nondiverse defendants; or There is actual fraud in the pleading of jurisdictional facts.

What should be a simple procedural question for the courts, now becomes a protracted mini-trial, giving an unfair advantage to the defendants (not available under current law) by allowing defendants to engage the court on the merits of their position.

By requiring litigation on the merits at a nascent jurisdictional stage of litigation based on vague, undefined, and subjective standards like "plausibility" and "good faith intention," and by potentially placing the burden of proof on the plaintiff, this bill will increase the complexity and costs surrounding litigation of state law claims in federal court and potentially dissuade plaintiffs from pursuing otherwise meritorious claims.

Further, taking away a defendant's responsibility to prove that federal jurisdiction over a state case is indeed proper alters the fundamental precept that a party seeking removal should bear the heavy burden of establishing federal court jurisdiction.

The bill is a win-win for corporate defendants.

At its most harmful, it will cause non-diverse defendants to be improperly dismissed from the lawsuit.

At its least harmful, it will cause an expensive, time-consuming detour through federal courts for plaintiffs.

Wrongdoers would not be held accountable for the harm they cause, while the taxpayers ultimately foot the bill.

For example: large corporate defendants (i.e. typically the diverse defendants) would be favored by the bill because, if the nondiverse defendant is dismissed, they can blame the now-absent in-state defendant for the plaintiff's injuries.

Smaller, nondiverse defendants would also be favored because the diverse defendant does all the work for them.

The diverse defendant removes the case to federal court and then argues that the non-diverse defendant is improperly joined.

If the federal court retains jurisdiction, the nondiverse defendant must be dismissed from the case.

If one or more defendants are dismissed from the case, it is easy for the remaining defendant to finger point and blame the absent defendant for the plaintiff's injuries.

Even if a federal court remands the case to state court under the bill, the defendants have successfully forced the plaintiff to expend their limited resources on a baseless, time-consuming motion on a preliminary matter.

While large corporate defendants can easily accommodate such costs, plaintiffs (i.e. injured consumers, patients and workers) cannot.

Regardless of whether the case is remanded to state court or stays in federal court, this new, mandated inquiry will be a drain on the limited resources of federal courts.

By mandating a full merits-inquiry on a procedural motion, H.R. 3624 is expensive, time-consuming, and wasteful use of judicial resources.

Lastly, by seeking to favor federal courts over state courts as forums for deciding state law claims, this bill offends principles of federalism.

The ability of state courts to function independently of federal courts' procedural analysis is a necessary function of the success of the American judiciary branch.

For these reasons I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing H.R. 3624, the Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON), another distinguished member of the House Judiciary Committee.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I return to the floor today for the second time in as many months to speak against another crony-capitalist, Republican-led bill to benefit big business.

H.R. 3624, the Fraudulent Joinder Protection Act, as it is so called, is a solution in search of a problem.

Current Federal law already provides Federal courts with ample tools to address possible forum shopping. This crony-capitalist legislation would add needless complications for civil litigants seeking redress for violent claims in the State courts.

Two, it further stretches the already limited resources Federal courts are experiencing due to Republican-passed, budget-cutting sequestration measures.

Currently America is burdened with a Republican Party-caused judicial vacancy crisis in this Nation's Federal courts, where there are over 81 Federal court judicial vacancies around the country, including the one left vacant by the passing of Justice Scalia.

Republicans—who control the Senate and who, in the press conferences and meetings they have held this week, have fully exposed their plot to add to this judicial crisis—are refusing to fill that vacancy on the country's highest Court, and they have an ulterior purpose for doing so.

That purpose, ladies and gentlemen, is because they know that justice delayed is justice denied. They want to gum up the works of the Federal courts by defunding the Federal courts while at the same time bogging them down with State court matters that should be left to the States, and then what it results in is crony capitalists being able to avoid being held accountable in the State or Federal courts.

So this Congress should not further burden the Federal courts, which are already strapped for time and resources, when State courts are more suited and capable of hearing State—not Federal, but State—law claims as State courts have been empowered to do since this country was formed.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. WALKER). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. The 10th Amendment in this country means something. It means something to Republicans, and it means something to Democrats. Sometimes we disagree on what it means and what impacts it should have.

But there is no doubt that the Federal court system has its body of law and the citizens should be able to bring their claim into their State courts, as

they have been doing since this country's foundation.

They use the 10th Amendment when it is convenient to them, and then they violate it when it is not convenient. That is not the way that conscientious Republicans should operate. I challenge them to stop this encroachment on states' rights.

This legislation presumes that Federal courts are not currently preventing forum shopping in civil suits, but there is absolutely no credible evidence that Federal courts are failing to do their duty.

I ask my colleagues to oppose this crony-capitalist legislation.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 1 minute.

I thought you might be interested in knowing that 21 different organizations strongly oppose H.R. 3624, the Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act, including: the American Association for Justice, the Center for Effective Government, the Center for Justice and Democracy, the Consumer Federation of America, the D.C. Consumer Rights Coalition, Main Street Alliance, the National Association of Consumer Advocates, the National Disability Rights Network's lawyers, the National Employment Lawyers Association.

I include in the RECORD the letter containing the list of groups that strongly oppose H.R. 3624.

FEBRUARY 23, 2016.

Re: Groups Strongly Oppose H.R. 3624, "The Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act".

HON. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

HON. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN AND LEADER PELOSI: The House will soon be voting on H.R. 3624, the "Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act." This bill would upend long established law in the area of federal court jurisdiction, place unreasonable burdens on the federal judiciary, and make it more difficult for Americans to enforce their rights in state courts. The undersigned organizations strongly oppose the bill as harmful and unnecessary.

Under our system of government, federal court jurisdiction is supposed to be very limited. State courts should not be deprived of jurisdiction over a claim they should properly hear, so the burden is always on the party trying to get into federal court to show why it should be there. When a case is properly in state court, only complete "diversity" can support removing it to federal court, meaning that no plaintiff in a case may come from the same state as any defendant.

H.R. 3624 would undermine this fundamental precept and force state cases into federal court when they don't belong there. The bill would do this by transforming the centuries-old concept called "fraudulent joinder," which is a way to defeat complete diversity; i.e., when non-diverse defendants are in case. Despite its name, joining such defendants is rarely "fraudulent" and has been accepted practice for over a century. As

Lonny Hoffman, Law Foundation Professor of Law at the University of Houston Law Center, explained in testimony to this committee, under current, "well-settled law, fraudulent joinder will only be found if the defendant establishes that the joinder of the diversity-destroying party in the state court action was made without a reasonable basis of proving any liability against that party." Current law "strikes an appropriate balance among competing policies in how it evaluates the joinder of non-diverse defendants."

However, H.R. 3624 would dramatically change this longstanding, efficient and well-functioning law. The bill alters the fundamental precept that a party seeking removal has a very heavy burden to establish federal court jurisdiction. At a preliminary stage, the court is required to engage in exhaustive fact finding on the merits even before summary judgment. The bill instructs the court to use subjective and vague criteria, like "objective evidence clearly demonstrates that there is no good faith intention" or "based on the complaint . . . it is not plausible to conclude," creating uncertainty as courts struggle with how to interpret and apply this new standard. The bill provides no evidentiary standards to help courts make such a complex decision. And requiring the court to engage in extensive factual adjudication at this early stage raises significant 7th Amendment "right to jury trial" constitutional concerns. As Professor Hoffman put it in testimony to this committee, although the bill is short in length, its provisions are "anything but modest; if enacted, they would dramatically alter existing jurisdictional law."

The process contemplated by this bill would be not only unfair to and incredibly expensive for the plaintiff, but also an enormous waste of judicial resources. There is no reason for these state based claims to be heard in federal court other than corporations' desire to engage in forum shopping. Yet, there is no evidence whatsoever that national corporations, who choose to avail themselves of the marketplaces in states across the country, complying with multiple state laws in the process, should then have a problem appearing in state court.

H.R. 3624 will have a destructive impact on our state and federal judiciary. Professor Hoffman said in his testimony, "Finally, by divesting state courts of jurisdiction and deciding merits questions that state courts now routinely resolve, proponents appear deaf to the serious federalism concerns that the bill raises." We urge you to oppose this legislation.

Thank you.

Very sincerely,

Alliance for Justice, American Association of Justice, Americans for Financial Reform, Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization, Center for Effective Government, Center for Justice & Democracy, Consumer Federation of America, Consumer Action, Consumer Watchdog, Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety, D.C. Consumer Rights Coalition, Essential Information, Homeowners Against Deficient Dwellings.

Main Street Alliance, National Association of Consumer Advocates, National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low income clients), National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care, National Consumers League, National Disability Rights Network, National Employment Lawyers Association, Protect All Children's Environment, SC Appleseed Legal Justice Center, Texas Watch, The Impact Fund, Woodstock Institute, Workplace Fairness.

PUBLIC CITIZEN,

Washington, DC, February 18, 2016.

Re: Opposition to H.R. 3624, The Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act of 2015.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: I am writing on behalf of Public Citizen, a non-profit membership organization with more than 400,000 members and supporters nationwide, to express opposition to H.R. 3624, the Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act of 2015. This bill is an unnecessary intrusion into the province of the federal courts.

H.R. 3624 addresses a federal district court's consideration of a plaintiff's motion to remand a case to state court, after a defendant has removed the case from the state court in which it was filed to federal district court on the theory that the plaintiff had fraudulently joined a non-diverse defendant for the purpose of defeating federal-court jurisdiction. The purpose of the bill, as made clear in the September 29, 2015, hearing, is to assist defendants in keeping cases in federal court after removal. The bill purports to effectuate this purpose by specifying that the federal court consider evidence, such as affidavits, and by specifying four findings that would require a federal district court to deny a plaintiff's motion to remand.

Congress should not get into the business of micro-managing the motion practice of the federal courts without strong evidence that current court procedures are not serving their purpose: facilitating justice. In this case, however, the hearing provided no support for the assumption that the district courts are not denying motions to remand in appropriate cases. Witness testimony that different courts state different standards for reviewing such motions does not support a call for congressional action, unless the existence of different standards is leading to unjust results. The testimony, however, did not demonstrate that the courts' current approach results in injustice, and it did not explain how results would differ under the standard proposed in the bill and why any difference would be an improvement. Simply put, the bill is a supposed fix for an imagined problem. The House should hesitate before taking the step into micromanagement of the federal courts' consideration of one specific type of motion, where that motion has existed for more than a century and evidence of a problem is so flimsy.

Thank you for consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

ROBERT WEISSMAN,
President, Public Citizen.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT
AND BUDGET,

Washington, DC, February 24, 2016.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY
H.R. 3624—FRAUDULENT JOINDER PREVENTION
ACT OF 2016 (REP. BUCK, R-CO)

The Administration strongly opposes H.R. 3624 because it is a solution in search of a problem and makes it more difficult for individuals to vindicate their rights in State courts.

Federal law currently permits defendants to remove to Federal court a civil case initially filed in State court where the plaintiffs and defendants are citizens of different States and the case's value exceeds a certain monetary threshold. H.R. 3624 purports to address a problem called fraudulent joinder, where plaintiffs fraudulently raise claims against a same-state defendant in order to

defeat the Federal court's ability to hear the case.

Existing Federal law already provides Federal courts with ample tools to address this problem, and the proponents of H.R. 3624 have offered no credible evidence that the Federal courts are failing to carry out their responsibility to prevent fraudulent joinder. The bill would therefore add needless complexity to civil litigation and potentially prevent plaintiffs from raising valid claims in State court.

If the President were presented with H.R. 3624, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1345

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, it is not often that the House has the opportunity to protect innocent local people and businesses from costly and meritless lawsuits and holding them to a good faith standard in litigation all by passing a bill that is just a few pages long, but that is the opportunity the House has today.

I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK), a member of the Committee on the Judiciary, for introducing this vital measure, and I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Chair, I ask for the House's attention today to support H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act.

As a lifelong gun owner and sportsman, I strongly support the SHARE Act. I believe it defends our Second Amendment rights. It also upholds our nation's heritage and history of hunting and shooting. The SHARE Act promotes the interests of hunters and recreational shooters in Alabama's Third District, and I offer my strong support.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 3624

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. PREVENTION OF FRAUDULENT JOINDER.

Section 1447 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) FRAUDULENT JOINDER.—

“(1) This subsection shall apply to any case in which—

“(A) a civil action is removed solely on the basis of the jurisdiction conferred by section 1332(a);

“(B) a motion to remand is made on the ground that—

“(i) one or more defendants are citizens of the same State as one or more plaintiffs; or

“(ii) one or more defendants properly joined and served are citizens of the State in which the action was brought; and

“(C) the motion is opposed on the ground that the joinder of the defendant or defendants described in subparagraph (B) is fraudulent.

“(2) The joinder of the defendant or defendants described in paragraph (1)(B) is fraudulent if the court finds that—

“(A) there is actual fraud in the pleading of jurisdictional facts;

“(B) based on the complaint and the materials submitted under paragraph (3), it is not plausible to conclude that applicable State law would impose liability on each defendant described in paragraph (1)(B);

“(C) State or Federal law clearly bars all claims in the complaint against all defendants described in paragraph (1)(B); or

“(D) objective evidence clearly demonstrates that there is no good faith intention to prosecute the action against all defendants described in paragraph (1)(B) or to seek a joint judgment.

“(3) In determining whether to grant or deny a motion under paragraph (1)(B), the court may permit the pleadings to be amended, and shall consider the pleadings, affidavits, and other evidence submitted by the parties.

“(4) If the court finds fraudulent joinder under paragraph (2), it shall dismiss without prejudice the claims against the defendant or defendants found to have been fraudulently joined and shall deny the motion described in paragraph (1)(B).”

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in House Report 114-428. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. BUCK

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 114-428.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 1, strike “the defendant or defendants” and insert “a defendant”.

Page 4, line 5, after “facts” insert “with respect to that defendant”.

Page 4 beginning in line 9 and ending in line 10, strike “each defendant described in paragraph (1)(B)” and insert “that defendant”.

Page 4, beginning in line 12 and ending in line 13, strike “all defendants described in paragraph (1)(B)” and insert “that defendant”.

Page 4, beginning in line 16 and ending in line 17, strike "all defendants described in paragraph (1)(B)" and insert "that defendant".

Page 4, line 17, after "joint judgment" insert "including that defendant".

Page 4, line 23, strike "fraudulent joinder" and insert "that all defendants described in paragraph (1)(B) have been fraudulently joined".

Page 4, beginning in line 25 and ending in line 1 of page 5 strike "the defendant or defendants found to have been fraudulently joined" and insert "those defendants".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 618, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, this manager's amendment simply makes a few technical changes to the bill; namely, striking references to multiple defendants and replacing them with references to single defendants to make clear that even if one instate defendant has a legitimate connection to the case, the case can remain in State court.

I urge my colleagues to support this technical and clarifying amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONYERS. Members of the House, I oppose the manager's amendment, something I rarely ever do. While I don't take issue with the changes to the bill that the manager's amendment makes, this amendment fails to address any of the concerns that I raised about the underlying bill because the bill is flawed in its very conception.

There is no real problem that this bill addresses. Existing fraudulent joinder law adequately addresses the improper joinder of instate defendants, and the bill's proponents have offered no evidence to the contrary.

This unnecessary bill instead creates great uncertainty and delay in the consideration of State law claims with its ambiguous new requirements. It will also spawn much litigation, leading to increased costs that will be borne disproportionately by plaintiffs.

This bill, in addition, violates State sovereignty by significantly diminishing the ability of State courts to decide and shape State law matters.

Those are my objections to the manager's amendment. I hope it will be voted down.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. CARTWRIGHT

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 114-428.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 5, line 2, strike the close quotation mark and the period which follows.

Page 5, after line 2, insert the following:

"(5) This subsection shall not apply to a case in which the plaintiff seeks compensation resulting from the bad faith of an insurer."

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 618, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I also oppose the underlying bill, which I call the wrongdoers protection act for multistate and multinational corporations, and for that purpose I add this amendment.

It is no coincidence that these corporate wrongdoers want to force consumers to fight them in the Federal court. That is the effect of this bill, to enlarge Federal court diversity jurisdiction.

It is no coincidence that the corporate wrongdoers want to fight there. It is not because they think the Federal judges are better looking or that the Federal judges are more polite or that the decor is nicer in Federal court. No. They want to go there because they are more likely to beat consumers in Federal court cases.

After a generation of bad decisions by the Supreme Court of the United States, Federal court has become candy land for corporate wrongdoers, generations of bad decisions that invite and exhort district judges to forget about the 7th Amendment in the Bill of Rights. You remember what that says. It was written by James Madison. It was announced as approved by Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, whose statue stands right outside this Chamber. It says this: "In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved."

There is nothing ambiguous about that. But since the 1980s, there has been this steady drumbeat of Supreme Court of the United States decisions encouraging and emboldening Federal court judges to decide and dismiss cases without the trouble of a jury trial.

Their toolkit is enormous: motions to dismiss, motions for judgment on the pleadings, motions for summary judgment, motions for directed verdict,

motions for judgment as a matter of law.

Cases do get thrown out every day without the trouble of jury trials, and the Seventh Amendment right to jury trial is not preserved. That is why wrongdoer corporations prefer to be in Federal court. So that is the backdrop, Mr. Chairman.

On top of that, I want to give you some very strong reasons why this underlying bill is bad. Number one, it is discriminatory. Unless you are a multistate or multinational corporation, this bill doesn't help you. If you are an individual sued in State court, you get no help. If you are a small-business owner only doing work in your State, you are out of luck. This doesn't provide you any help. Only multistate, multinational corporations get help, and that is why I call this the wrongdoers protection act for multistate and multinational corporations.

Number two, it is burdensome. Representative JOHNSON from Georgia already made this point. The Federal courts are already overworked and understaffed. The civil caseload already is growing at 12 percent a year—much of that, by the way, contract cases filed by corporations. There are currently 81 vacancies in the Federal judiciary. There is no reason to add to this burden.

Number three, this bill is ironic. We have a crowd in this House that constantly preaches about states' rights and the need to cut back on the Federal Government. But a bill like this comes along, and they drop that states' rights banner like it is a hot potato and pick up the coat of arms of the multistate, multinational corporations.

Number four, and maybe most importantly, the underlying bill is wrong-headed because these cases, called diversity cases, are filed in State court under State law; and ever since the 1930s in the Erie Railroad case, if you take these cases and handle them in Federal court, the Federal judges have to follow State law, not Federal law. Mr. Chairman, there is nobody better at interpreting State law than State court judges. It stands to reason.

I offer this amendment that is on the desk to exempt consumer cases against insurance companies for bad faith in insurance practices. If the majority is going to persist and present this gift, this enormous gift to the multistate and multinational corporate wrongdoers, at least include this amendment and give a couple of crumbs to the average American consumer trying to defend himself or herself in court.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUCK. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment should be roundly opposed for the simple reason that not only does it not protect any victims, but it also victimizes innocent local parties in the types of cases covered by the amendment.

The purpose of this bill is to allow judges greater discretion to free innocent local parties—that is, innocent people and innocent small businesses—from lawsuits when those innocent local parties are dragged into a case for no other reason than to further a trial lawyer's forum-shopping strategy.

These innocent local parties have, at most, an attenuated connection to the claims by the trial lawyer against some national company a thousand miles away, and these innocent local parties shouldn't have to suffer the time, expense, and emotional drain of a lawsuit when the plaintiff cannot even come up with a plausible claim against it. The base bill protects those innocent local parties from being dragged into a lawsuit brought against some other party for no other reason than to keep the case in a State court the trial lawyer prefers.

Now, enter this amendment, which denies the bill's protections to innocent local parties joined to a lawsuit simply because the legal allegations in the case fall into one arbitrary category rather than another. That is terribly unfair.

If this were any other kind of bill designed to protect innocent people, no one would argue that it shouldn't apply when the lawsuit relates to a bad faith suit against an insurance company. Innocent people are innocent people, and they should be protected from being dragged into lawsuits, regardless of the nature of the case.

Now, let me say a little something about this amendment based on my career as a prosecutor.

As a prosecutor, I deeply respected all the rules we have developed in this country to protect the innocent. These are rules of general application, such as rules protecting people's rights to have their side of the story told and rules protecting people from biased or inaccurate testimony. I would have been appalled if anyone ever suggested that these general protections designed to protect innocent people from criminal liability should be suspended because the case was one of assault or battery or murder or somehow related to insurance.

Our country is rightfully proud of its principles providing due process and equal protection, but those concepts are meaningless if they are only selectively applied to some cases but not others. For the same reason, we should all be outraged at the suggestion that rules of fairness designed to protect the innocent should be suspended in civil law because the case involves one par-

ticular subject or another. But that is exactly what this misguided amendment does.

Further, courts could read this amendment as not even allowing them to consider the fraudulent joinder argument for cases within its coverage, no matter how clear it was that there was no valid claim against the local defendant under State law.

This bill defines and limits fraudulent joinder. It does not license courts to make up their own fraudulent joinder doctrines for cases not within its coverage. Under that reading, claims could be made against local insurance agents with no factual basis supporting the lawsuit.

The amendment would also allow a plaintiff's lawyer to drag an individual insurance adjuster into a lawsuit even when the applicable State law makes absolutely clear that only insurers, not individual people, are subject to bad faith claims.

How does a sponsor explain to a person like Jack Stout why a lawyer pulled him into a bad faith lawsuit targeting State Farm? Mr. Stout was a local insurance agent who merely sold a policy to the plaintiff, met and spoke with the plaintiff once, and had nothing to do with processing the plaintiff's homeowner insurance claim.

A Federal district court in Oklahoma found he was fraudulently joined and dismissed the claim against him. But under this amendment, this innocent person could be struck back into the lawsuit.

How does the sponsor explain to a person like Douglas Bradley why a plaintiff's lawyer named him as a defendant in a bad faith lawsuit against an insurer? In that case, the complaint included Mr. Bradley, an insurance agent, as a defendant in the caption referred to as defendant, singular, not defendants throughout, and did not even mention Mr. Bradley in the body of the complaint.

A Federal district court in Indiana dismissed the claim against him as fraudulently joined, but under this amendment, this innocent person could be sucked back into the lawsuit, and that is not fair.

For all these reasons, this amendment should be soundly rejected.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1400

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, to respond to my colleague from Colorado who has just cited two cases where, under existing law and procedure, fraudulent joinder of bad faith insurance claims was claimed and actually succeeded, the proof is right there.

The statute does not need to be amended. It is working already. That is why we don't need to include bad faith insurance cases in the Wrongdoers Protection Act for multistate and multinational corporations.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania will be postponed.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LATTA) having assumed the chair, Mr. WALKER, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3624) to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1515

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS) at 3 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.

FRAUDULENT JOINDER PREVENTION ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 618 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3624.

Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN) kindly take the chair.

□ 1515

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3624) to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder, with Mr. HULTGREN (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, a request for a recorded vote on amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 114-428 offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT) had been postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR.
CARTWRIGHT

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, the unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 178, noes 237, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 87]

AYES—178

Adams	Engel	McCollum
Aguilar	Eshoo	McDermott
Ashford	Esty	McGovern
Bass	Farr	McNerney
Beatty	Fattah	Meeks
Becerra	Foster	Meng
Bera	Frankel (FL)	Moore
Beyer	Fudge	Moulton
Bishop (GA)	Gabbard	Murphy (FL)
Blumenauer	Galleo	Nadler
Bonamici	Garamendi	Neal
Boyle, Brendan	Graham	Nolan
F.	Grayson	Norcross
Brady (PA)	Green, Al	O'Rourke
Brown (FL)	Griffith	Pallone
Brownley (CA)	Grijalva	Pascarella
Bustos	Gutiérrez	Payne
Capps	Hahn	Pelosi
Capuano	Heck (WA)	Perlmutter
Cardenas	Higgins	Peters
Carney	Himes	Peterson
Carson (IN)	Hinojosa	Pingree
Cartwright	Honda	Pocan
Castor (FL)	Huffman	Polis
Castro (TX)	Israel	Posey
Chu, Judy	Jackson Lee	Price (NC)
Ciulline	Jeffries	Quigley
Clark (MA)	Johnson (GA)	Rangel
Clarke (NY)	Johnson, E. B.	Rice (NY)
Clay	Jones	Richmond
Cleaver	Keating	Ros-Lehtinen
Clyburn	Kennedy	Roybal-Allard
Cohen	Kildee	Ruiz
Connolly	Kilmer	Ruppersberger
Conyers	Kind	Ryan (OH)
Costa	Kirkpatrick	Sánchez, Linda
Courtney	Kuster	T.
Crowley	Langevin	Sarbanes
Cuellar	Larsen (WA)	Schakowsky
Cummings	Larson (CT)	Schiff
Curbelo (FL)	Lawrence	Schrader
Davis (CA)	Lee	Scott (VA)
Davis, Danny	Levin	Scott, David
DeFazio	Lieu, Ted	Serrano
DeGette	Lipinski	Sewell (AL)
DeLauro	Loeb sack	Sherman
DelBene	Lofgren	Sinema
DeSaulnier	Lowenthal	Sires
Deutch	Lowe y	Slaughter
Dingell	Lujan Grisham	Spaul
Doggett	(NM)	Swailwell (CA)
Doyle, Michael	Lynch	Takai
F.	Maloney,	Takano
Duckworth	Carolyn	Thompson (CA)
Edwards	Maloney, Sean	Thompson (MS)
Ellison	Matsui	Titus

Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey

Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz

NOES—237

Abraham	Grothman
Aderholt	Guinta
Allen	Guthrie
Amash	Hanna
Amodei	Hardy
Babin	Harper
Barletta	Harris
Barr	Hartzler
Barton	Heck (NV)
Benishiek	Hensarling
Bilirakis	Hice, Jody B.
Bishop (MI)	Hill
Bishop (UT)	Holding
Black	Hudson
Blackburn	Huelskamp
Blum	Huizenga (MI)
Bost	Hultgren
Boustany	Hunter
Brady (TX)	Hurd (TX)
Brat	Hurt (VA)
Bridenstine	Issa
Brooks (AL)	Jenkins (KS)
Brooks (IN)	Jenkins (WV)
Buchanan	Johnson (OH)
Buck	Johnson, Sam
Bucshon	Jolly
Burgess	Jordan
Byrne	Joyce
Calvert	Kaptur
Carter (GA)	Katko
Carter (TX)	Kelly (MS)
Chabot	Kelly (PA)
Chaffetz	King (IA)
Clawson (FL)	King (NY)
Coffman	Kinzinger (IL)
Cole	Kline
Collins (GA)	Knight
Collins (NY)	Labrador
Comstock	LaHood
Conaway	LaMalfa
Costello (PA)	Lamborn
Cramer	Lance
Crawford	Latta
Crenshaw	LoBiondo
Culberson	Long
Davis, Rodney	Loudermilk
Denham	Love
Dent	Lucas
DeSantis	Luetkemeyer
Desjarlais	Lummis
Diaz-Balart	MacArthur
Dold	Marchant
Donovan	Marino
Duffy	Massie
Duncan (SC)	McCarthy
Duncan (TN)	McCaul
Ellmers (NC)	McClintock
Emmer (MN)	McHenry
Farenthold	McKinley
Fincher	McMorris
Fitzpatrick	Rodgers
Fleischmann	McSally
Fleming	Meadows
Flores	Meehan
Forbes	Messer
Fortenberry	Mica
Fox	Miller (FL)
Franks (AZ)	Miller (MI)
Frelinghuysen	Moolenaar
Garrett	Mooney (WV)
Gibbs	Mullin
Gibson	Mulvaney
Gohmert	Murphy (PA)
Goodlatte	Neugebauer
Gosar	Newhouse
Gowdy	Noem
Granger	Nugent
Graves (GA)	Nunes
Graves (LA)	Olson
Graves (MO)	Palazzo

NOT VOTING—18

Butterfield	Hastings	Luján, Ben Ray
Cook	Herrera Beutler	(NM)
Cooper	Hoyer	Napolitano
Delaney	Kelly (IL)	
Green, Gene	Lewis	

Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

Roby
Rush

Sanchez, Loretta
Simpson

Smith (WA)
Wilson (FL)

□ 1535

Mr. FLEISCHMANN and Mrs. WAGNER changed their vote from "aye" to "no."

Messrs. SWALWELL of California, POSEY, and DOGGETT changed their vote from "no" to "aye."

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chair, on Thursday, February 25, 2016, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 87. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on the Cartwright Amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois) having assumed the chair, Mr. HULTGREN, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3624) to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder, and, pursuant to House Resolution 618, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I am opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mrs. Watson Coleman moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3624 to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendments:

Page 5, line 2, strike the close quotation mark and the period which follows.

Page 5, after line 2, insert the following:

“(5) This section shall not apply to a case in which the plaintiff seeks relief in connection with the sexual abuse and exploitation of a minor.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes in support of her motion.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

My amendment would simply ensure that those who have filed a suit in connection with sexual abuse or exploitation of a minor are exempt from the changes that this law makes.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is an assault on the ability of everyday hardworking Americans to seek justice, and despite its misleading title, this bill has absolutely nothing to do with fraud and will do nothing to prevent it.

This is just one more step by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to offer corporations every opportunity imaginable to take advantage of workers, consumers, and patients.

By making it easier to move cases to Federal court, we make it easier for big corporations to play the long game, waiting out plaintiffs with limited financial resources, with limited capacity to travel far from home for hearings, and with limited ability to sit through the significantly longer Federal process.

The current law has been around for centuries, based on the obvious logic that a State case belongs in a State court.

The new burden that this bill would place on the average American is simply outrageous. The least that we can do is protect children who have already been victimized by sexual assault.

My amendment is simple. It would ensure that we allow those who have filed lawsuits in connection with the sexual abuse or exploitation of a minor to continue to operate under the completely operational and already efficient system currently in place.

Most importantly, it will protect victims who have already experienced incredible emotional and physical trauma from being dragged through a long and costly court process far from home just to benefit some multinational corporation out to maximize its profits.

This isn't a hypothetical situation. In one case heard in Washington State, plaintiffs were minors who were sexually exploited by in-state defendants and by an out-of-State defendant who advertised the sexual services of the minors on the defendant's Web site.

When those plaintiffs brought claims against the defendants for sexual exploitation, assault, battery, unjust enrichment, and civil conspiracy, the out-of-State defendant attempted to move the case to Federal court. Federal courts rejected that defendant's arguments, and the case remained at the State level. But if this bill is allowed to pass, that would no longer be the case.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is reprehensible. Unfortunately, it is only the latest in a long line of efforts to put corporations beyond reproach and outside of any accountability. Let's at least ensure that young people, who have already been victimized, don't experience any further mistreatment for the sake of shareholders' profits.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I seek time in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK) for bringing this outstanding legislation before the House. This is very common sense. It solves a very practical problem, and most importantly, it protects the innocent. I want to quote him with regard to this motion to recommit. He says:

As a prosecutor, I deeply respected all the rules we developed in this great country to protect the innocent. These are rules of general application, such as rules protecting people's rights to have their side of the story told and rules protecting people from biased or inaccurate testimony.

I would have been appalled if anyone ever suggested that these general protections, designed to protect innocent people from criminal liability, should be suspended because the case was one of assault or battery, murder, or somehow related to insurance.

Our country is, rightfully, proud of its principles providing due process and equal protection, but those concepts are meaningless if they are only selectively applied to some types of cases, but not others. For the same reason, we should all be outraged at the suggestion that rules of fairness, designed to protect the innocent, should be suspended in the civil law because the case involves one particular subject or another.

But that is exactly what this motion to recommit does.

□ 1545

The problem with all of the arguments made by opponents of this bill is that those arguments rely on trapping completely innocent local people in lawsuits they don't deserve to be in. That is wrong, and that is unfair. Innocent local people and small businesses deserve protections from being dragged into lawsuits that are really directed against other larger parties, regardless of the nature of those lawsuits against other parties.

In the end, this bill doesn't require much of trial lawyers. It tells trial lawyers not to sue local innocent people and businesses just so they can further their own forum shopping strategies. It tells trial lawyers they need to have a plausible case before they can wrap up innocent local people and businesses in costly and time-consuming lawsuits.

It tells trial lawyers their lawsuits must be based on good faith. But, apparently, those very modest demands

of civility and fairness are too much to ask, according to opponents of this bill who would prefer to dilute it with irrelevancies and distractions.

It is not often that the House has the opportunity to protect innocent local people and businesses from costly and meritless lawsuits, rein in forum shopping abuses by trial lawyers, and hold them to a good faith standard in litigation, all by passing a bill that is just a few pages long. But that is the opportunity the House has today.

I urge all of my colleagues to take that opportunity now. Reject this motion to recommit and, in so doing, expand the opportunities of all local citizens and small businesses that would otherwise be smothered by costly and meritless lawsuits. Pass this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of the bill, if ordered; ordering the previous question on House Resolution 619; and adoption of House Resolution 619, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 180, yeas 239, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 88]

AYES—180

Adams	Cohen	Gallego
Aguilar	Connolly	Garamendi
Ashford	Conyers	Graham
Bass	Costa	Grayson
Beatty	Courtney	Green, Al
Becerra	Crowley	Grijalva
Bera	Cuellar	Gutiérrez
Beyer	Cummings	Hahn
Bishop (GA)	Davis (CA)	Heck (WA)
Blum	Davis, Danny	Higgins
Blumenauer	DeFazio	Himes
Bonamici	DeGette	Hinojosa
Boyle, Brendan	Delaney	Honda
F.	DeLauro	Huffman
Brady (PA)	DeBene	Israel
Brown (FL)	DeSaulnier	Jackson Lee
Brownley (CA)	Deutch	Jeffries
Bustos	Dingell	Johnson (GA)
Capps	Doggett	Johnson, E. B.
Capuano	Doyle, Michael	Jones
Cárdenas	F.	Kaptur
Carney	Duckworth	Keating
Carson (IN)	Edwards	Kennedy
Cartwright	Ellison	Kildee
Castor (FL)	Engel	Kilmer
Castro (TX)	Eshoo	Kind
Chu, Judy	Esty	Kirkpatrick
Ciциlline	Farr	Kuster
Clark (MA)	Fattah	Langevin
Clarke (NY)	Foster	Larsen (WA)
Clay	Frankel (FL)	Larson (CT)
Cleaver	Fudge	Lawrence
Clyburn	Gabbard	Lee

Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe y
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Neal
Nolan
Norcross

NOES—239

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishkek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming

O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano

Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swailwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart

Butterfield
Cook
Cooper
Green, Gene
Hastings

Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)

NOT VOTING—14

Herrera Beutler
Hoyer
Kelly (IL)
Napolitano
Roby
Sanchez, Loretta
Simpson
Smith (WA)
Visclosky

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN) (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1553

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, February 25, 2016, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 88. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on the Motion to Recommit H.R. 3624—Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act of 2015.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 229, noes 189, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 89]

AYES—229

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishkek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert

Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fox
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)

Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley

Adams
Aguilar
Amash
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny

McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moonenar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer

NOES—189

DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duckworth
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Griffith
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)

Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe y
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Massie
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Neal

Nolan	Rush	Thompson (CA)	Barletta	Hanna	Pearce	DeGette	Kuster	Quigley
Norcross	Russell	Thompson (MS)	Barr	Hardy	Perry	Delaney	Langevin	Rangel
O'Rourke	Ryan (OH)	Titus	Barton	Harper	Pittenger	DeLauro	Larsen (WA)	Rice (NY)
Pallone	Sánchez, Linda	Tonko	Benishkek	Harris	Pitts	DelBene	Larson (CT)	Richmond
Pascarella	T.	Torres	Bilirakis	Hartzler	Poe (TX)	DeSaulnier	Lawrence	Roybal-Allard
Payne	Sanford	Tsongas	Bishop (MI)	Heck (NV)	Poliquin	Deutch	Lee	Ruiz
Pelosi	Sarbanes	Van Hollen	Bishop (UT)	Hensarling	Pompeo	Dingell	Levin	Ruppersberger
Perlmutter	Schakowsky	Vargas	Black	Hice, Jody B.	Posey	Doggett	Lewis	Rush
Peters	Schiff	Veasey	Blackburn	Hill	Price, Tom	Doyle, Michael	Lieu, Ted	Ryan (OH)
Peterson	Schrader	Vela	Blum	Holding	Ratcliffe	F.	Lipinski	Sánchez, Linda
Pingree	Scott (VA)	Velázquez	Bost	Hudson	Reed	Duckworth	Loeb sack	T.
Pocan	Scott, David	Visclosky	Boustany	Huelskamp	Reichert	Edwards	Lofgren	Sarbanes
Polis	Serrano	Walz	Brady (TX)	Huizenga (MI)	Renacci	Ellison	Lowenthal	Schakowsky
Price (NC)	Swell (AL)	Wasserman	Brat	Hultgren	Ribble	Engel	Lowey	Schiff
Quigley	Sherman	Schultz	Bridenstine	Hunter	Rice (SC)	Eshoo	Lujan Grisham	Schrader
Rangel	Sinema	Sires	Brooks (AL)	Hurd (TX)	Rigell	Esty	(NM)	Scott (VA)
Rice (NY)	Sires	Waters, Maxine	Brooks (IN)	Hurt (VA)	Roe (TN)	Farr	Luján, Ben Ray	Scott, David
Richmond	Slaughter	Watson Coleman	Buchanan	Issa	Rogers (AL)	Fattah	(NM)	Serrano
Ros-Lehtinen	Speier	Welch	Buck	Jenkins (KS)	Rohrabacher	Frankel (FL)	Lynch	Sewell (AL)
Roybal-Allard	Swalwell (CA)	Wilson (FL)	Bucshon	Jenkins (WV)	Rokita	Fudge	Maloney,	Sherman
Ruiz	Takal	Yarmuth	Burgess	Johnson (OH)	Rooney (FL)	Gabbard	Carolyn	Sinema
Ruppersberger	Takano		Byrne	Johnson, Sam	Ros-Lehtinen	Gallago	Maloney, Sean	Sires
			Calvert	Jolly	Roskam	Garamendi	Matsui	Slaughter
			Carter (GA)	Jones	Ross	Graham	McCollum	Speier
			Carter (TX)	Jordan	Rothfus	Grayson	McDermott	Swalwell (CA)
			Chabot	Joyce	Rouzer	Green, Al	McGovern	Takai
			Chaffetz	Katko	Royce	Grijalva	McNerney	Takano
			Clawson (FL)	Kelly (MS)	Russell	Gutiérrez	Meeks	Thompson (CA)
			Coffman	Kelly (PA)	Salmon	Hahn	Meng	Thompson (MS)
			Collins (GA)	King (IA)	Sanford	Heck (WA)	Moore	Titus
			Collins (NY)	King (NY)	Scalise	Higgins	Moulton	Tonko
			Comstock	Kinzing (IL)	Schweikert	Himes	Murphy (FL)	Torres
			Conaway	Kline	Scott, Austin	Hinojosa	Nadler	Tsongas
			Costa	Knight	Sensenbrenner	Honda	Neal	Van Hollen
			Costello (PA)	Labrador	Sessions	Huffman	Nolan	Vargas
			Cramer	LaHood	Shimkus	Israel	Norcross	Veasey
			Crawford	LaMalfa	Shuster	Jackson Lee	O'Rourke	Vela
			Crenshaw	Lamborn	Smith (MO)	Jeffries	Pallone	Velázquez
			Culberson	Lance	Smith (NE)	Jeffries	Pascarella	Visclosky
			Curbelo (FL)	Latta	Smith (NJ)	Johnson (GA)	Payne	Walz
			Davis, Rodney	LoBiondo	Smith (TX)	Johnson, E. B.	Pelosi	Wasserman
			Denham	Long	Stefanik	Kaptur	Perlmutter	Schultz
			Dent	Loudermilk	Stewart	Keating	Peters	Waters, Maxine
			DeSantis	Love	Stivers	Kennedy	Peterson	Watson Coleman
			DesJarlais	Lucas	Stutzman	Kildee	Pingree	Welch
			Diaz-Balart	Luetkemeyer	Thompson (PA)	Kilmer	Pocan	Wilson (FL)
			Dold	Lummis	Thornberry	Kind	Polis	Yarmuth
			Donovan	MacArthur	Tiberi	Kirkpatrick	Price (NC)	
			Duffy	Marchant	Tipton			
			Duncan (SC)	Marino	Trott	Butterfield	Hastings	Roby
			Duncan (TN)	Massie	Turner	Cole	Herrera Beutler	Rogers (KY)
			Ellmers (NC)	McCarthy	Upton	Cook	Hoyer	Sánchez, Loretta
			Emmer (MN)	McCaul	Valadao	Cooper	Kelly (IL)	Simpson
			Farenthold	McClintock	Wagner	Green, Gene	Napolitano	Smith (WA)
			Fincher	McHenry	Walberg			
			Fitzpatrick	McKinley	Walden			
			Fleischmann	McMorris	Walker			
			Fleming	Rodgers	Walorski			
			Flores	McSally	Walters, Mimi			
			Forbes	Meadows	Weber (TX)			
			Fortenberry	Meehan	Webster (FL)			
			Fox	Messer	Wenstrup			
			Franks (AZ)	Mica	Westerman			
			Frelinghuysen	Miller (FL)	Westmoreland			
			Garrett	Miller (MI)	Whitfield			
			Gibbs	Moolenaar	Williams			
			Gibson	Mooney (WV)	Wilson (SC)			
			Gohmert	Mullin	Wittman			
			Goodlatte	Mulvaney	Womack			
			Gosar	Murphy (PA)	Woodall			
			Gowdy	Neugebauer	Yoder			
			Granger	Newhouse	Yoho			
			Graves (GA)	Noem	Young (AK)			
			Graves (LA)	Nugent	Young (IA)			
			Graves (MO)	Nunes	Young (IN)			
			Griffith	Olson	Zeldin			
			Grothman	Palazzo	Zinke			
			Guinta	Palmer				
			Guthrie	Paulsen				

NOT VOTING—15

Butterfield	Green, Gene	Napolitano
Carter (GA)	Hastings	Roby
Cook	Herrera Beutler	Sánchez, Loretta
Cooper	Hoyer	Simpson
Costello (PA)	Kelly (IL)	Smith (WA)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1559

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 89, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Stated against:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, February 25, 2016, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 89. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on Final Passage of H.R. 3624—Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act of 2015.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2406, SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 619) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2406) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk reads the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 240, nays 178, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 90]

YEAS—240

Abraham	Allen	Amodei
Aderholt	Amash	Babin

Adams	Brown (FL)	Clarke (NY)
Aguiar	Brownley (CA)	Clay
Ashford	Bustos	Cleaver
Bass	Capps	Clyburn
Beatty	Capuano	Cohen
Becerra	Cardenas	Connolly
Bera	Carney	Conyers
Beyer	Carson (IN)	Courtney
Bishop (GA)	Cartwright	Crowley
Blumenauer	Castor (FL)	Cuellar
Bonamici	Castro (TX)	Cummings
Boyle, Brendan	Chu, Judy	Davis (CA)
F.	Cicilline	Davis, Danny
Brady (PA)	Clark (MA)	DeFazio

NAYS—178

NOT VOTING—15

Butterfield	Hastings	Roby
Cole	Herrera Beutler	Rogers (KY)
Cook	Hoyer	Sánchez, Loretta
Cooper	Kelly (IL)	Simpson
Green, Gene	Napolitano	Smith (WA)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1607

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, February 25, 2016, I was absent during rollcall No. 90. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2406.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 241, nays 175, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 91]

YEAS—241

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fox
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)

Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCauley
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson

Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—175

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Beckerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)

Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Capps

Capuano
Cardenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline

Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
DeSaulnier
Deutsch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Huffman
Israel

Jackson Lee
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larsen (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebach
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maloney
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter

Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—17

Butterfield
Cook
Cooper
Green, Gene
Hastings
Herrera Beutler

Hoyer
Jeffries
Kelly (IL)
Napolitano
Palazzo
Palmer

Roby
Rogers (KY)
Sanchez, Loretta
Simpson
Smith (WA)

□ 1614

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, on Thursday, February 25, 2016, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 91. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on H. Res. 619—Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2406—Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) Act.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I was unable to vote on Thursday, February 25, 2016, due to important events being held today in our district in Houston and Harris County, Texas. If I had been able to vote, I would have voted as follows: On the Cartwright Amendment to H.R. 3624, the Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act, I would have voted "yea." On the Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 3624, I would have voted "yea." On Final Passage of H.R. 3624, I would have voted "no." On the Motion on Or-

dering the Previous Question on the Rule for H.R. 2406, Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act, I would have voted "no." On H. Res. 619, the resolution providing for consideration of H.R. 2406, I would have voted "no."

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2015

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia? There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 619 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2406.

The Chair appoints the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1616

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2406) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, with Mrs. BLACK in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN).

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, before the House today is the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2016, better known as the SHARE Act. It is a package of commonsense bills that will increase opportunities for hunters, recreational shooters, and anglers; eliminate unneeded regulatory impediments; safeguard against new regulations that impede outdoor sporting activities; and protect Second Amendment rights. Similar packages were passed with strong bipartisan support in both the 112th and 113th Congresses.

Outdoor sporting activities, including hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting, are deeply engrained in the fabric of America's culture and heritage. Values instilled by partaking in these activities are passed down from generation to generation and play a significant part in the lives of millions of Americans.

Much of America's outdoor sporting activity occurs on our Nation's Federal lands. Unfortunately, Federal agencies like the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management often prevent or impede access to Federal lands for outdoor sporting activities. Because lack of access is one of the key reasons sportsmen and -women stop participating in outdoor sporting activities, ensuring the public has reliable access to our Nation's Federal lands must remain a top priority.

The SHARE Act does just that. One of the key provisions in the bill, the Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage Opportunities Act, will increase and sustain access for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting on Federal lands for generations to come. Specifically, it protects sportsmen and -women from arbitrary efforts by the Federal Government to block Federal lands from hunting and fishing activities by implementing an "open until closed" management policy.

Another provision in the package will give State and Federal agencies the tools to jointly create and maintain recreational shooting ranges on Federal lands. In addition, the bill allows the Department of the Interior to designate hunting access corridors throughout our national parks so that sportsmen and -women can access adjacent Federal lands to hunt and fish.

The package also protects Second Amendment rights and the use of traditional ammunition and fishing tackle. It defends law-abiding individuals' constitutional right to keep and bear arms on lands managed by the Army Corps of Engineers and ensures that hunters are not burdened by outdated laws preventing bows and crossbows from being transported across national parks.

Finally, the package prevents the implementation of onerous constraints by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on lawfully possessed domestic ivory products and eliminates red tape associated with the importation of 41 lawfully harvested polar bear hunting trophies.

This important legislation will sustain America's rich hunting and fishing traditions, improve access to our Federal lands for responsible outdoor sporting activities, and help ensure that the current and future generations of sportsmen and -women are able to enjoy the sporting activities our country has to offer and what we hold dear.

I strongly encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on this important election.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, 22 February 2016.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: During the week of February 22, 2016, the House will be debating H.R. 2406, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015. The bill

was referred primarily to the Committee on Natural Resources, with an additional referral to the Committee on the Judiciary, among other committees.

At the request of Vice Chairman Cynthia Lummis, I ask that you allow the inclusion of the text of H.R. 3279, the Open Book on Equal Access to Justice Act, as passed by the House of Representatives, as part of a manager's amendment to the bill. Mrs. Lummis is a cosponsor of the measure and has discussed this course of action with the bill's author. The Senate counterpart to H.R. 2406 already includes such a provision, and I believe it would be a substantial improvement to the bill and bolster its purpose of increased sportsmen's opportunities to hunt, fish and recreationally shoot. If the amendment is adopted, this action would in no way affect your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the amendment, and it will not serve as precedent for future amendments. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on the Judiciary represented on the conference committee on this matter. Finally, I would be pleased to include this letter and any response in the Congressional Record to document our agreement.

Thank you for your consideration of my request, and I look forward to further opportunities to work with you this Congress.

Sincerely,

ROB BISHOP,
Chairman,
Committee on Natural Resources.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, February 23, 2016.

Hon. ROB BISHOP,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BISHOP: I am writing with respect to H.R. 2406, the "Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015," which the House is scheduled to debate this week. As a result of your having consulted with us on the inclusion of the text of H.R. 3279, the "Open Book on Equal Access to Justice Act," as part of your Committee's manager's amendment to H.R. 2406, I agree to allow the text of H.R. 3279 to be included in the amendment.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by allowing the inclusion of the text of H.R. 3279 in the manager's amendment, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in H.R. 3279 or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as H.R. 2406 moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving H.R. 2406, and asks that you support any such request.

I would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H.R. 2406.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, February 23, 2016.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On December 10, 2015, the Committee on Natural Resources favor-

ably reported as amended H.R. 2406, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015.

The reported bill contains provisions affecting import bans, a matter within the jurisdiction of the Ways and Means Committee. I ask that you not seek a sequential referral of the bill so that it may be scheduled by the Majority Leader this week. This concession in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill, and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on Ways and Means represented on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to include this letter and any response in the Congressional Record to document this agreement.

Thank you for your consideration of my request, and I look forward to further opportunities to work with you this Congress.

Sincerely,

ROB BISHOP,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, February 23, 2016.

Hon. ROB BISHOP,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BISHOP: I am writing with respect to H.R. 2406, the "Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015," which the Committee on Natural Resources ordered reported favorably. As you note, several provisions of the bill affect the establishment and operation of import bans, a matter that is within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means. I agree to forego action on this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 2406 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and asks that you support any such request.

I would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H.R. 2406.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, December 2, 2015.

Hon. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On October 8, 2015, the Committee on Natural Resources ordered favorably reported as amended H.R. 2406, the Sportsman's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Natural Resources, with an additional referral to the Committee on Agriculture, among other committees. My staff has shared a copy of the reported text with your staff.

I ask that you allow the Committee on Agriculture to be discharged from further consideration of the bill so that it may be scheduled by the Majority Leader. This discharge in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill, and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on Agriculture represented on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to include this letter and any response in the bill report filed by the Committee on Natural Resources to memorialize our understanding, as well as in the Congressional Record.

Thank you for your consideration of my request and for the extraordinary cooperation shown by you and your staff over matters of shared jurisdiction. I look forward to further opportunities to work with you this Congress.

Sincerely,

ROB BISHOP,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, DC, December 8, 2015.

Hon. ROB BISHOP,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for the opportunity to review H.R. 2406, the Sportsman's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015. As you are aware, the bill was primarily referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, while the Agriculture Committee received an additional referral.

I recognize and appreciate your desire to bring this legislation before the House in an expeditious manner and, accordingly, I agree to discharge H.R. 2406 from further consideration by the Committee on Agriculture. I do so with the understanding that by discharging the bill, the Committee on Agriculture does not waive any future jurisdictional claim on this or similar matters. Further, the Committee on Agriculture reserves the right to seek the appointment of conferees, if it should become necessary.

I ask that you insert a copy of our exchange of letters into the Congressional Record during consideration of this measure on the House floor.

Thank you for your courtesy in this matter and I look forward to continued cooperation between our respective committees.

Sincerely,

K. MICHAEL CONAWAY,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, December 7, 2015.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On October 8, 2015, the Committee on Natural Resources ordered favorably reported as amended H.R. 2406, the Sportsman's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Natural Resources, with an additional referral to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, among other committees.

I ask that you allow the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to be discharged from further consideration of the bill so that it may be scheduled by the Majority Leader. This discharge in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject mat-

ter of the bill, and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure represented on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to include this letter and any response in the bill report filed by the Committee on Natural Resources to memorialize our understanding, as well as in the Congressional Record.

Thank you for your consideration of my request and for the extraordinary cooperation shown by you and your staff over matters of shared jurisdiction. I look forward to further opportunities to work with you this Congress.

Sincerely,

ROB BISHOP,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COM-
MITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, December 8, 2015.

Hon. ROB BISHOP,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BISHOP: I write concerning H.R. 2406, the Sportsman's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015 (SHARE Act). This legislation includes matters that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

In order to expedite floor consideration of H.R. 2406, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure will forgo action on this bill. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding that forgoing consideration of the bill does not prejudice the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation that fall within the Committee's Rule X jurisdiction. Should a conference on the bill be necessary, I fully expect the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to be represented on the conference committee.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter and for agreeing to include a copy of this letter in the bill report filed by the Committee on Natural Resources, as well as in the Congressional Record during floor consideration.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, December 9, 2015.

Hon. FRED UPTON,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On October 8, 2015, the Committee on Natural Resources ordered favorably reported as amended H.R. 2406, the Sportsman's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Natural Resources, with an additional referral to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, among other committees.

I ask that you allow the Committee on Energy and Commerce to be discharged from further consideration of the bill so that it may be scheduled by the Majority Leader. This discharge in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill, and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. In addition, should a conference on

the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on Energy and Commerce represented on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to include this letter and any response in the bill report filed by the Committee on Natural Resources to memorialize our understanding, as well as in the Congressional Record.

Thank you for your consideration of my request and for the extraordinary cooperation shown by you and your staff over matters of shared jurisdiction. I look forward to further opportunities to work with you this Congress.

Sincerely,

ROB BISHOP,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, December 9, 2015.

Hon. ROB BISHOP,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 2406, the Sportsman's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015.

As you noted, the bill was additionally referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and I agree to the discharge of the Committee from further consideration of the bill so that it may be scheduled by the Majority Leader. This discharge in no way affects the Committee's jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill, and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I appreciate your support for my request to have the Committee represented on the conference committee.

Finally, I appreciate the inclusion of your letter and this response in the bill report filed by the Committee on Natural Resources to memorialize our understanding, as well as in the Congressional Record.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

FRED UPTON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, December 9, 2015.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Wash-
ington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On October 8, 2015, the Committee on Natural Resources ordered favorably reported as amended H.R. 2406, the Sportsman's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Natural Resources, with an additional referral to the Committee on the Judiciary, among other committees.

I ask that you allow the Committee on the Judiciary to be discharged from further consideration of the bill so that it may be scheduled by the Majority Leader. This discharge in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill, and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on the Judiciary represented on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to include this letter and any response in the bill report filed by the Committee on Natural Resources to memorialize our understanding, as well as in the Congressional Record.

Thank you for your consideration of my request, and I look forward to further opportunities to work with you this Congress.

Sincerely,

ROB BISHOP,
Chairman,
Committee on Natural Resources.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, December 9, 2015.

Hon. ROB BISHOP,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BISHOP: I am writing with respect to H.R. 2406, the "Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015," which the Committee on Natural Resources recently ordered reported favorably. As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions in H.R. 2406 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, I agree to discharge our Committee from further consideration of this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 2406 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and asks that you support any such request.

I would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 2406.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, I rise to oppose H.R. 2406, with great respect for my friend, the gentleman from Virginia. I respect very much what Representative WITTMAN and others are trying to do.

The best I can do to describe H.R. 2406 is a missed opportunity. Many of the titles in the bill are inoffensive, but others would significantly hinder conservation efforts that benefit hunters, anglers, and other lovers of the outdoors.

I myself am an avid hiker, Madam Chair. I just completed 25 miles on the Appalachian Trail in the snow last week in Representative GOODLATTE's district. I am up to 1,288 miles on the Appalachian Trail. I would love to see conservation efforts that protect the long-term legacy of the Appalachian Trail like the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Simply put, this bill doesn't include the sporting community's top legislative priorities. The Natural Resources Committee Democrats have been clear from the beginning that we are open to discussions that could lead to com-

promise legislation—legislation that would indeed include many of the pieces of this bill, but also additional titles that would earn it broad bipartisan support.

In a letter several days ago, Ranking Member GRIJALVA wrote to the chair expressing optimism that a non-controversial outcome could still be achieved and requesting negotiations to produce a bill that would pass the House without opposition. Unfortunately, this request was denied.

So I would love to have this bill on the suspension calendar, but not on the suspension calendar I would like to detail nine specific objections.

Objection 1, this bill omits the top two priorities of the outdoors community, the permit reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and the permit reauthorization of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act.

LWCF has provided funding to help protect some of Virginia's most special places: the Rappahannock River Valley, Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Historic District, and the Appalachian Trail.

Studies have shown that for every dollar of LWCF invested, there is a \$4 return to communities. The broader outdoor recreation conservation economy is responsible for more than \$600 billion in consumer spending every year.

This is one of the Nation's premier programs. Over the years, LWCF has been responsible for more than 40,000 State and local outdoor recreation projects: playgrounds, parks, refuges, and baseball fields. There is strong bipartisan support. I believe 88 percent of Americans want Congress to preserve it. So now is the perfect opportunity to do that.

We have had hearings in the Committee on Natural Resources on Representative Chairman BISHOP's bill. We need hearings on Representative GRIJALVA's H.R. 1814, which has more than 200 bipartisan cosponsors. This bill was the perfect opportunity to include that bill.

It was also the perfect opportunity to do the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, NAWCA. It is a voluntary, nonregulatory conservation program. Farmers, ranchers, and other private landowners support the program, and every project is voluntary. It fosters conservation efforts by the non-Federal sector.

Over the years, nearly 5,000 corporate, small business, nonprofit, State, and local entities have tripled NAWCA dollars by providing matching funds. The 50 State wildlife agencies are all active partners in it, and demand for NAWCA continues to exceed available funds. So this was debated and thoroughly vetted in the 112th and the 113th Congresses. It was unani-

mously reauthorized by Congress in 2006, and this was a great vehicle to do that.

Objection 2, title X, I believe, which is the ivory title, this would gut the administration's proposed ivory rule. Last year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service seized a 1-ton stockpile of illegal elephant ivory, most of which was seized from a Philadelphia antique dealer named Victor Gordon.

For at least 9 years, Gordon imported and sold ivory from freshly killed African elephants in violation of U.S. law and the laws of the countries where the elephants were poached and the ivory was stolen. While a ton of ivory was confiscated, there is no way to know how much Gordon had sold during the previous decade or where it is now.

How did he get away with it for so long?

The ivory was doctored so it looked old enough to pass through a loophole in enforcement of the African Elephant Conservation Act, a law that was passed by us in 1989 to end the commercial import and export of ivory.

The Obama administration's proposed ivory rule would close that loophole and prevent U.S. citizens from being involved—knowingly or unknowingly—in elephant poaching and the trafficking crisis. Ending the commercial ivory trade does not mean taking away the people's musical instruments, ivory-handled pistols, or family heirlooms. Museum collections, scientific specimens, and sport-hunted trophies will also be allowed to move freely. Neither the Fish and Wildlife Service's direct order nor the forthcoming Endangered Species Act rule restrict possession or transport within the United States, and transport into and out of the country will still be allowed with the appropriate documentation.

Further, items up to 200 grams—7 ounces—of ivory can still be bought and sold, and that is more ivory than is in any piano or ivory-gripped pistol.

What the rule will do is stop profiteering off elephant parts in this country. As long as ivory has monetary value, people will kill elephants to get it. Eliminating value will eliminate demand, and it is a necessary component of the broader U.S. strategy to reduce wildlife poaching and trafficking.

I am disappointed that Ranking Member GRIJALVA's amendment to strike ivory was not made in order in the Rules Committee, but I understand no one wanting to vote on this floor to be in favor of killing more elephants. Regardless, the inclusion of that provision in this bill before us today shows that somehow we are unaware or unconcerned with the fact that poachers are slaughtering nearly 100 African elephants a day.

Objection 3, Madam Chair, is section 302 of SHARE Act that would allow polar bear trophies. It creates a loophole in the Marine Mammal Protection

Act to allow a handful of wealthy trophy hunters to import polar bear trophies into the U.S. in defiance of current law.

If passed, this will be the fourth major carve-out by Congress since 1994 for Americans who have hunted polar bears in Canada. Although the number of polar bears affected by this loophole will be relatively small, the cumulative effect of the carve-outs has been detrimental to an imperiled species.

And these trophy hunters were not caught up in government bureaucracy or red tape. All the individuals hunted the bears after the George W. Bush administration proposed the species for listing as threatened under the Endangered Species Act despite repeated warnings from government agencies, hunting groups, and the conservation community that the trophies could face a bar on importation and that these hunters were hunting at their own risk.

Granting this request would create a dangerous precedent by encouraging hunters to race for trophies the moment any species is considered for listing when such species most need protection, knowing they can rely on Congress later to let them import their trophies.

Objection 4, the provision gives States the veto power on Federal fishing management and national marine parks, sanctuaries, and monuments.

I flew to Homestead, Florida, this past spring, Madam Chair, for their public hearing on the Biscayne Bay, a national marine that was set aside by the park service. It was a small, small percentage of the total Federal lands and waters. About half the fishermen there were for it and half the fishermen were against it, but it missed the fact that these were not State waters and that we in Congress have a responsibility to the entire Nation, not just for any one county or one region.

Our oceans cover more than 70 percent of the Earth, and 99 percent of that water is open to fishing, but in some cases science shows that we must protect certain areas. We all want more people to have more fishing opportunities, but the fish have to be there.

I was impressed by something the director of NOAA told me a couple years ago, that the fishing marine reserves in the Pacific set aside by George W. Bush, you can now see them from space because the fish have recovered so quickly within those reserves, that the fishing vessels outline the perimeter of the reserve, which you can see from 100 miles away.

Objection 5, title 15 bars the Forest Service from restricting dog deer hunting on certain national forest lands in Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. The aim is to allow for a continued hunting of deer with dogs, which is an extremely controversial

practice that pits landowners against hunters.

Landowners complained. This didn't come from overzealous environmentalists or Federal regulators. It came from landowner complaints to the Forest Service to ban deer dogging in the Louisiana Kisatchie National Forest.

□ 1630

Congress should let expert land managers manage land and other resources valued by all Americans. This decision to ban hunting deer with dogs was necessary to create balance among multiple users of the forest, and Congress should respect that.

Objection 6 is title IV that creates the Recreational Lands Self-Defense Act. This bill would actually prohibit the Army from developing or enforcing any regulation that prohibits an individual from possessing a firearm at recreation areas administered by the Corps of Engineers. It is just hard to believe that we are going to restrict the Army from regulating gun use on Army property. If the Army is in charge of lands management, it should be able to determine whether firearms are appropriate on a site.

Army lands about family homes and other sensitive sites. We should not lightly permit access in places where an accidental shot could wind up in someone's backyard or in a sensitive location. Accidental shots are real. A longtime family friend—a West Point graduate and a retired Army colonel—was sitting at his desk when a bullet, an accidental bullet, came through the window, hit him in the back of the neck, and he is a quadriplegic today.

Objection 7 is title IX that changes a successful program, the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act. On the Natural Resources Committee, we have heard much from the majority, appropriately, about how we need to deal with the incredible infrastructure deferred maintenance backlog that we have on lands that we own. Basically, that we shouldn't buy more until we take care of what we already have. This would allow the existing act to take 100 percent of the land from land transactions and spend it on deferred maintenance.

This violates the whole original idea of the act: that we would sell Federal land to get more Federal land back. Furthermore, it makes these expenditures subject to appropriation. So if we bring in X million dollars in land sold, we don't have to buy or even use that X million dollars on new deferred maintenance. It could just go to—wherever.

I am disappointed that the bipartisan land-for-land FLTFA version that sportsmen in 165 groups have championed for a decade isn't included in the SHARE Act today.

Objection 8 is title VI. Currently over 75 percent of all Federal land is open to

hunting and fishing, but title VI deems all Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service land open for hunting unless it is closed by the head of the agency through a long closure process. Right now, they can be closed by local land managers.

Once again, I find this a little ironic because so much of the theme from the majority, which I respect, is to move decisionmaking back close to the communities that are actually affected. In this case, they are moving it away from the communities and to Washington, D.C., to close these lands. It also undermines the Wilderness Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act.

Finally, Madam Chair, objection 9 is trapping. The SHARE Act would dramatically expand the use of body-gripping traps on Federal public lands, including in sensitive wilderness areas. The provision takes the step, unprecedented in Federal law, of adding trapping to the definition of hunting, then creating a presumption that all these Federal public lands are open. Millions of acres of land would be open to trapping.

Even under current law, roughly 6 million targeted animals are killed in traps every year, according to Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Held in a painful leghold trap, a beaver, a bobcat, a fox, will try desperately to break free in the hours or days until they succumb to dehydration, predators, or death at the hands of trappers. Traps are dangerous and they are indiscriminate in snaring not only targeted areas, but threaten endangered species, pets, or even unsuspecting children and adults.

Leghold traps have already been prohibited or severely restricted in nine U.S. States in over 80 countries. Congress should be acting to protect the public, endangered species, and pets from dangerous and indiscriminate body-gripping traps, not expanding their use into additional areas. Really, how can trapping be described as sportsmanlike?

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his work on behalf of American sportsmen.

Madam Chair, three overarching goals should guide our Federal land policy. First, to restore public access to the public lands; second, to restore sound and proven scientific management to the public lands; and finally, to restore the Federal Government as a good neighbor to the local communities impacted by the public lands.

This measure does all three. It removes the arbitrary and capricious restrictions that are increasingly imposed on hunting and fishing by various Federal agencies; it enlists sportsmen in the long-neglected management of overpopulated species; and it gives more funds to States for recreational activities on public lands while encouraging greater participation by the public in developing these policies.

Outdoor sporting activities, including hunting and fishing and recreational shooting, are deeply engrained in the fabric of America's culture and heritage that are now under attack by the radical left.

In 2011, over 37 million Americans hunted or fished across the country. These traditional outdoor activities contributed over \$90 billion to the U.S. economy in 2011, much of it in the gateway communities to our public lands. Unfortunately, Federal agencies like the Forest Service and the BLM often prevent or impede public access for outdoor sporting activities. This is a large and growing class of complaints that my office fields in a district that includes five national forests in the Sierra Nevada of California.

One of the key provisions of this bill will increase and sustain access for hunting and fishing and recreational shooting on public lands by implementing an "open until closed" management policy. It also requires Federal agencies to report to Congress on any closures of Federal lands to these pursuits. Another provision would provide State and Federal coordination to create and maintain recreational shooting ranges on the Federal lands.

This bill protects the property rights of those who have acquired ivory products and other trophies over generations, long before any of this hunting was banned, and often passed on down through the generations within a family. It does absolutely nothing to imperil the protected species under current laws.

The purpose of the public lands can be found in the original Yosemite Grant Act of 1864: public use, resort, and recreation for all time. The SHARE Act recognizes our Nation's hunting and fishing heritage; it strengthens the fundamental right of public use; it secures the vital role that recreational hunting and fishing play in resource management; and it guarantees the freedom to sustain that heritage for the many generations of Americans to come.

Mr. BEYER. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Chair, I thank my colleague for yielding.

Madam Chair, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2406. This bill is being described as a simple package to support hunting and fishing on Federal lands.

For fishing and hunting to be sustained, it must be done with a mind to-

ward conservation. Unfortunately, this bill fails to achieve this need, and it threatens the very environment that supports the animals. Of course, by doing so, it endangers the sustainability and long-term viability of hunting and fishing, also.

Furthermore, this bill ignores scientifically based best practices, leaving these lands at risk. While there are numerous bad provisions in the bill, including allowing ill-advised ivory and polar bear importation and actually preventing scientifically based regulations, this bill is particularly troubling because it limits Federal management, lead ammunition, and fishing tackle.

We hear every day about the dangers of lead. The devastating impacts of lead poisoning are not just restricted to people. I have seen these dangers firsthand, as they are extremely apparent in my district on the central coast of California.

As anyone from California knows, the California condor, the largest North American land bird and an iconic species along the central coast, was on the brink of extinction, in large part due to lead poisoning. A looming threat to this species remains, so we must stay vigilant. In fact, this danger is so imminent that published research shows that the species is unlikely to survive unless we continue to substantially reduce the threat of lead in the environment.

The source of this lead is not a mystery. It is in large part the result of lead from hunting and fishing equipment. Lead poisoning is a terrible and cruel way for any animal to die. While the risk to condors is immediate, this risk is not limited in any way to this one species.

Continuing to pollute our lands and waters with lead ammunition and fishing tackle makes absolutely no sense. But the bill before us would keep the Federal Government from doing anything to address this issue. It is so dangerous and shortsighted.

That is why I offered an amendment at the Rules Committee which would have removed this dangerous language from the bill; but unfortunately, we will not be able to fix this problem on the floor because my amendment has been blocked from a vote. Despite its name, the SHARE Act would do little good and a great deal of harm. This is a bad bill.

I urge my colleagues strenuously to oppose it.

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE).

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Chair, I want to thank my friend from Virginia for yielding and for his leadership in bringing the SHARE Act forward.

I rise in strong support of this legislation that protects the rights of sportsmen and protects the rights of gun owners.

Madam Chair, I am proud to come from Louisiana, which is called the Sportsman's Paradise. We have great traditions of hunting and fishing throughout our State.

If you look at the barrage of regulations that have come out from this administration over the years, it has attacked so many different fundamental aspects of our society, so many things that make our country great. Of course, the right to hunt and fish is something that is not only a fundamental right for people, but it is actually something that brings families together. It is one of the great traditions that we love to share with our children. Our parents brought us hunting and fishing.

Yet if you look at some of the regulations coming out of these Federal agencies today, it is actually undermining those rights. What this bill is targeted at is restoring those rights, to make sure, for example, when you have got agencies like the Corps of Engineers that are trying to arbitrarily shut off lands for the ability of people to go hunt, they shouldn't be able to do that. In fact, under this legislation, they won't be able to continue doing that. No unelected bureaucrat should be able to limit the rights of law-abiding citizens.

Something else we have seen, Madam Chair, is the Environmental Protection Agency, unfortunately an agency we hear a lot about around this town, that is out there threatening jobs, taking away the ability for people to do things that are important to their everyday lives.

The EPA has been threatening to ban lead ammo and tackle. In this bill, we block the EPA from being able to ban lead ammo. Again, this is something that is fundamental to our rights as sportsmen, as hunters and fishermen, to be able to enjoy the fruits of our land.

There are over 50 sports organizations that are supporting this legislation. I just want to read from the National Rifle Association's Institute for Legislative Action: "The SHARE Act would give law-abiding gun owners more access to carry firearms on land managed by the Army Corps of Engineers, protect lead-based ammunition, and promote the construction and maintenance of public target ranges."

Madam Chair, it is important legislation. I encourage all of our colleagues to support it and pass it over to the Senate.

Mr. BEYER. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ).

Mr. WALZ. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding time.

I rise in support of the SHARE Act and the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act.

I thank my co-chair on the Sportsmen's Caucus, Mr. WITTMAN, for his

work on this bill. Like so many you have heard here today, we, as a Nation, are blessed with an abundance of opportunities in the outdoors. Like so many, I take advantage of them: hiking, biking, hunting, and fishing.

For those who do participate in hunting and fishing, it truly is a passion, it is a way of life, and it is a heritage that we share with our parents. I don't think there is one of us who participated in it who doesn't remember a crisp autumn morning, waking up with our father, cooking breakfast, and going out to the field with the dew on the grass and the Sun coming up. To this day, I don't remember if we necessarily got a pheasant, but I remember my dad, and I remember talking about it.

It was on those trips that I think we understood that hunting and fishing, as a way of life, is not in a vacuum.

Hunting and fishing in Minnesota, 1.7 million Minnesotans participate in hunting and fishing. That contributes \$3 billion to our economy and creates 48,000 direct jobs. If you take that across the Nation, it is \$90 billion a year to our economy. That is not in a vacuum either, because we have a really unique system of conservation in this country: user pays and public benefits. Every shell and cartridge that is purchased and every fishing rod and boat that is purchased has an excise tax in it that goes back into the very conservation.

□ 1645

The people who are out hunting and fishing understand as well as anyone, if you don't have the proper habitat, you don't have the pheasants.

An organization like I belong to, Pheasants Forever, has literally put in all of the money and has leveraged this in order to turn tens of thousands of acres of the prairie back to virgin prairie, which are now abundant with game for people to take advantage of. Those are the types of things that make sense.

I understand the concerns that the gentleman expressed, and I understand that this is not a perfect bill. But I can tell you that it has been worked on for a long time and that it is a starting point.

There is a realization and an understanding that we have to compromise on issues. We are going to have to work with the Senate, and we are going to get this in front of the President.

Yet, I think most of us agree that our goal with this is to allow Americans to continue to have their constitutional rights and their abilities to do those activities they want, whether that be hiking, whether that be mountain biking, whether that be hunting, or whether that be fishing and, at the same time, to make sure that there is an economic engine in it that contributes to the ability to keep those lands up.

I ask my friends to approach it with an open mind and to understand that this is truly deeply engrained in this culture. There are commonalities here. We have the same goals, to make sure these are available for our children.

If we can come together and work on this, we have to take this first step. We are becoming a more populated country, and there are fewer opportunities for people to get out there. Many people are not landowners themselves; so, the public lands are the only places at which these activities can take place.

There is enough out there. If we manage it right, we can share the land, as the act says, and we can do those activities that mean a lot to us and continue them for future generations.

I encourage my colleagues to support this piece of legislation.

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP), the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Chair, I thank Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. WALZ for working with our committee to bring this bipartisan bill together to protect hunting and shooting heritages.

One of the things that I, as well as many of my colleagues, hear repeatedly from our constituents is the complaint that land management agencies have blocked access to Federal lands. That especially goes for hunters and anglers and target shooters.

Our national monuments alone have already closed 928,000 acres to hunting and recreational shooting. Most of those areas are, unfortunately, easily accessible. You don't have to walk miles to try and get to them.

There are some who condemn this by saying that the vast majority of public lands is still open for hunting and shooting. The problem is the proximity.

The ones that are being closed are those that are easily accessible to especially those people who live in urban areas who don't have to go miles and miles to do it.

In addition to that, the problem is that the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service make no assessment on the impact of closing lands to shooters or to anglers.

They don't identify where the displaced recreationalists are being able to go, how far they have to travel, or what kind of access would be available to them. At a minimum, this bill forces them to take that into consideration.

I wish it were tougher language that would force them to make some kind of accommodations. But at least for the first time they are actually going to consider those issues, because hunting and fishing and shooting are part of the multiple-use mandate for our public lands. There is no question about it.

I also want to make a couple of points very clear in that the language in title IV that deals with this bill,

that deals with the Army Corps lands, allows law-abiding American citizens to carry firearms on Army Corps recreational lands.

The Army Corps is not the Army. There is a difference between the two. We are not talking about military lands, but recreational lands.

What this does is make these recreational lands that are owned by the Army Corps of Engineers compliant and parallel to the laws we have for the Forest Service as well as for the BLM and the Park Service, as it deals with carrying weapons as long as they are in compliance with State and Federal law.

Many Members think this is, basically, a hunting issue. It is not. The primary reason for this language has to do with the fundamental right of self-defense, and it does make it consistent.

I want to make two final points here.

The Natural Resources Committee strongly encourages the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service to develop agency-wide policies, in consultation with the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council and the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council, that reflect the intent of this act. These policies should ensure that there is more access to America's Federal lands for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting.

These councils represent the interests and needs of sportsmen and -women who depend on having access to Federal lands for outdoor sporting activities.

I will also be reaching out to the Bureau of Land Management and to the Forest Service for regular updates on the progress being made in developing these policies within 30 days of each respective council meeting.

I appreciate the gentleman's compliance and understanding.

Vote for what is good about this bill, not for what is not there.

Mr. BEYER. Madam Chair, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), my colleague and good friend.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy in permitting me to speak on this bill.

Madam Chair, I, too, am a passionate advocate of public spaces, of outdoor recreation, and I understand the importance of protecting some of our Nation's most pristine places.

My constituents enjoy hunting and fishing and are involved in exploring the great outdoors. That is why it is unfortunate that what we have before us today is a piece of legislation that is unduly partisan and special-interest-oriented and is not speaking in terms of things that could have brought us together in something that could have been a lovefest.

Why aren't we making a permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water

Conservation Fund and making sure that it is funded?

Yesterday we had hundreds and hundreds of women from the Federated Garden Club of America, just one more group adding its voice to something that is supported by people who hunt, people who fish, people who hike, people who enjoy the opportunity of what the Land and Water Conservation Fund represents.

Instead, we are veering off. We are in the process now of having legislation in this bill that does pose serious problems in terms of environmental protections. I will give one specific example in terms of what is happening in the area of ivory.

Voters in Washington recently voted overwhelmingly to ban on a State level traffic in ivory. You are going to see this fall in my State of Oregon that an initiative is going to be approved that is going to close loopholes in terms of allowing trade in my State for ivory.

This has nothing to do with grandma's antique piano or somebody who has an ivory-handled pistol that has been in the family for years. We have a thriving international trade in ivory that is resulting in the destruction of a species. We are losing 100 elephants a day.

At the rate we are going, by the end of the decade—within 10 years—there will be no more wild African elephants. The trade in ivory fuels some of the most heinous acts by some of the most vicious people in the world.

Terrorists use these funds for their horrific activities, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, poisoning wells so that the animals are dying by the dozens, hacking off the tusks at that site.

We have to stop the trade in ivory. The United States is the second largest destination. We have China that is finally stepping up and working with us. We should not make it harder for the United States to crack down on the ivory trade.

There is no reason for a civilized society to continue trading in things like ivory tusks and products. It enables this black market to continue. People will find their way into it, and we will continue to slaughter elephants every single day.

What we should be doing is not restricting what the Federal Government is doing. We should be tightening it further like we will do in the State of Oregon.

I find it a little frustrating that people are talking about protecting traditional ammunition and fishing lure. I mean, there are some people who might say, in Flint, Michigan, using lead in the pipes is a traditional way of plumbing, but we figured out that that traditional mechanism is actually poisoning people.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BEYER. Madam Chair, I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. There are, in fact, alternatives if what you want to do is kill animals with guns. We don't need to do lead-based ammunition, which ends up in the environment. It ends up not just in what you are killing. It doesn't go away. It persists and adds to lead pollution.

There is no reason that we can't make changes in these policies that we know are destructive, that we know there are viable alternatives to that actually protect the environment.

As people work through this legislation and hear from animal welfare groups, sports people, and environmentalists and as they look at the problems that are associated with it, it is not a consensus, bipartisan bill.

It is an approach that actually leads us in the wrong direction. It is not rational. It is not popular. It is not based in sound policy. I strongly urge its rejection.

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like respond just briefly to the gentleman's remarks concerning ivory.

If you look at the current state of regulatory efforts by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, for those nations that have sustainable elephant populations, it would actually make it much, much more difficult to manage them and it would actually encourage more poaching.

We want to make sure that we allow the legal trade of legally harvested elephants. In doing that, that makes sure that African nations can put in place sustainable programs for the harvesting of elephants, where there are overpopulations, to make sure that they have the wherewithal to put people on the ground to stop poaching.

This is a sustainable effort, I believe, that is critical, and these regulations will actually stop that.

Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK).

Mr. BENISHEK. Madam Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 2406, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015, or the SHARE Act.

This legislation is vital in ensuring that Federal agencies like the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management can no longer continue to prevent or deny full access to Federal lands for activities like hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting.

Access to public, Federal lands for these heritage activities is not only an important part of our shared American value, it is also a significant contributor to national, State, and local economies.

In 2011, in the State of Michigan alone, over 1.9 million hunters and anglers spent over \$4.8 billion in hunting and fishing. To put this in perspective, spending by sportsmen and -women in

Michigan generates over \$576 million in State and local taxes each year. That is enough to support the average salaries of over 10,000 police officers.

Madam Chair, when I was a kid, my family owned a small hotel and bar. I worked by making beds, by filling ice buckets, and by hauling beer in order to save for college. Our business depended on hunters in the fall and winter and on fishermen in the summer. Without those sportsmen, we would have had no small business.

There are small businesses like this all over northern Michigan and across America today. There are also grandparents, parents, and children all across the country who are excited for their next hunting and fishing adventures.

That is why we must make sure that we do everything possible to ensure access to public lands for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting for all Americans, including for future generations to come.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to support the SHARE Act.

Mr. BEYER. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) for his leadership and for the service that he has given to this Congress. We are so delighted to have him join us. I thank the manager as well, his colleague from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN).

Madam Chair, in coming from Texas and knowing many of those who seek recreational hunting, fishing, and participation on lands, private and Federal, one wonders whether or not we could have found a way to deal with the concerns of our friends of whom I support: environmental groups and the Humane Society and just a litany of individuals from the Atlantis, the Alaska Wilderness League, the Alliance of the Wild Rockies, the Humane Society International, the Endangered Species Coalition, the Environmental Investigation Agency, the National Audubon Society, the Kentucky Heartwood, and just a whole array of individuals, the names of whom I will offer into the RECORD at another time.

□ 1700

This bill comes and specifically interferes with what I believe is the important protection, if you will, of items that impact our wilderness.

This bill undermines the NEPA Wilderness Act and the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act to solve a problem that does not exist. It blocks the administration's rule to restrict trade in African elephant ivory and protects African elephants from being slaughtered for their tusks. It adds indiscriminate and inhumane trapping practices to the legal definition of hunting and does not include a long-term reauthorization of the Land

and Water Conservation Fund, a high priority for hunters and anglers.

My simple question is: Couldn't we have found some common ground and not be supporting legislation that, for one, my amendment on polar bears will, in fact, impact; that the wealthy trophy hunters who shot bears had full knowledge of the pending rule? This is an issue that occurred when 41 polar bears were killed as the Fish and Wildlife Service finalized a rule listing them as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

The polar bears are vulnerable. They are not yet under the Endangered Species Act, but they are vulnerable. So we have individuals who want to take advantage and seek to utilize the loophole. That is my opposition to this legislation, that it does not find a balance.

What it does do is it puts our animals in jeopardy, animals that make for the ecosystem in a positive way.

So I would ask my colleagues really to go back to the drawing board and come forward with a bill that actually protects animals, allows sport but does not undermine the whole ecosystem, undermine the structure of protecting animals, and certainly, in the memory of Cecil—although a lion—continue to kill our vulnerable species of polar bears just to have trophies.

I urge opposition to this bill.

Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2406, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015 (SHARE Act).

While several of the proposals are non-controversial, the bill includes provisions that would seriously undermine the Wilderness Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the Endangered Species Act, and fails to include important, bipartisan program reauthorizations sought by outdoor enthusiasts.

There are many reasons for opposing this bill but I list just a few:

More than 75 percent of all federal lands are already open to recreational hunting, fishing and shooting, making the bulk of this legislation unnecessary.

Undermines NEPA, the Wilderness Act, and the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act to solve a problem that does not exist.

Blocks efforts to crack down on poachers and protect elephants from being slaughtered for their tusks.

Adds indiscriminate and inhumane trapping practices to the legal definition of hunting.

Does not include a long-term reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a high priority program for hunters and anglers.

Does not include important, bipartisan program reauthorizations that would provide critical funding for wetlands conservation and expanding hunting and fishing access; programs supported by hunters and anglers.

Exempts ammunition and sports fishing equipment from the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) despite the fact that EPA has no plans to regulate this equipment under the Act.

Mr. Chair, H.R. 2406 simply patches together a slew of legislative proposals, alleg-

edly to enhance access to federal lands for hunting, fishing and recreational shooting.

The bill is opposed by virtually every leading environmental organization and the President has announced that it will be vetoed if presented to him for signature.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against this unwise and unnecessary legislation.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS).

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 2406, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act; specifically, title IV of the bill, which includes the Recreational Lands Self-Defense Act. This legislation is vital to preserving and expanding the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens.

In 2010, legislation was enacted that allows campers, hikers, and sportsmen who are legally allowed to possess a firearm to protect themselves and their families on land operated by the National Park Service or the Fish and Wildlife Service. Unfortunately, this law left millions of acres overseen by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers closed to those who want to legally arm and protect themselves.

Every year, millions of Americans camp, hunt, and hike on Federal lands. They are often in remote locations with no easy access to emergency services or law enforcement. These Americans deserve to have peace of mind and the ability to protect themselves while recreating.

The Army Corps of Engineers' interpretation of the law preempts State firearms laws; thus, preventing Americans from exercising their Second Amendment rights. Even if someone is permitted by the State to carry a firearm, they cannot do so while on the Corps' 11.7 million acres or camping at one of the Corps' 90,000 campsites.

Title IV will prevent the Corps from prohibiting law-abiding American citizens from carrying a firearm as long as they are not prohibited from owning a firearm and the possession of the firearm is in compliance with the State they are located in.

This title in the SHARE Act will provide uniformity and clarity for hunters, campers, and hikers who want to merely protect themselves, and it will preserve the right to bear arms on recreational Federal lands.

I want to thank Congressman WITTMAN for introducing this legislation and including the Recreational Lands Self-Defense Act in the underlying bill.

I urge my colleagues to support the SHARE Act.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chair, I inquire how much time the minority side has remaining.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. WALKER). The gentleman from Virginia has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act. Passage of this bill will increase opportunities and reduce regulatory burdens for all sportsmen and sportswomen.

I want to highlight two specific provisions in the SHARE Act that I sponsored. This legislation will authorize the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council, which will serve as an official advisory board to the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture on policies that benefit recreational hunting and wildlife resources. Authorization of the council is vital to ensuring that hunters maintain an advisory role in future administrations. This legislation will provide levels of certainty and stability necessary to ensure the council's ability to engage in assisting the Federal Government in devising and implementing long-term solutions that are necessary to address policy issues important to sportsmen and sportswomen.

The legislation also directs the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to create a new permit that authorizes a crew of five or fewer people to film for commercial or similar purposes on Federal lands and waterways at an annual cost of \$200. Aside from this set fee, no additional fees may be added during their time filming and photographing.

We want to rectify disparity in application and approval regulations between smaller crews and their larger, well-funded counterparts while filming on public lands. The financial burden is often too great and unfairly limits their ability to access our national parks and waterways.

As the former co-chairman of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus and a cosponsor of the SHARE Act, I believe this legislation will serve to the betterment of current and future generations of hunters and outdoorsmen and -women.

I thank the gentleman from Virginia for his work on this legislation, and I urge the passage of the SHARE Act.

Mr. BEYER. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chair, in closing, I would like to thank the co-chairs of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. WALZ, for putting this together.

I clearly resist the idea that our opposition comes from the radical left. The 37 million hunters and fishermen out there are not Democrats. They are not Republicans. They are both. They are not conservative or liberal. They represent all Americans.

Representative MCCLINTOCK and Chairman BISHOP talked about the 928,000 acres, BLM and Forest Service,

which are closed now. I very much respect that that seems like a big number and that perhaps there should be movement on that.

I think the question is: Should those decisions be made by State and local land managers or moved to Washington, D.C., to the head of the Forest Service, to the head of BLM? I think it is weird that, in this body, we are talking about moving things to Washington for the decision to be made.

In fact, in the hearing we had on Chairman BISHOP's Land and Water Conservation Fund reauthorization, much of it was about moving the decisionmaking back to States and local governments. Perhaps there is a way to think about opening up these 928,000 acres with more input from State and local governments in the time to come.

On ivory and trafficking, Representative WITTMAN and I had a good conversation about how we really don't want it to address heirlooms that have been in the family for generations. That is not what the Obama rule is trying to do. We are looking at preventing trafficking.

Every 15 minutes every day, an elephant is killed. I would love to explore the economic argument that somehow this ivory rule will make African elephants more endangered. What we are trying to do is cut off demand.

Finally, Majority Whip SCALISE talked about being hostile to hunting and fishing. I do think it is probably silly to think of the Army Corps of Engineers as a radical leftist organization. We want them to open the lands appropriately, but this is probably not the legislation to do it.

I think many of these provisions will likely be dead on arrival in the Senate. If it passes, as it is likely to do with the majority, I am looking forward to working with Representative WITTMAN, Representative WALZ, and others to get a good, bipartisan bill at the end of the day that we can all support for the hunters and fishermen of the United States.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Virginia for his perspectives on this and for the good conversation we have had in trying to find common ground to make sure that we are, indeed, supporting the great outdoors and the sportsmen and -women that enjoy the great outdoors. I thank him for his efforts there and look forward to continuing to work with him.

I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman WITTMAN for his leadership on this issue. As a vice chair of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, I commend the caucus co-chairs, Chairman WITTMAN and TIM WALZ, as well as my fellow vice chair,

GENE GREEN, for the great work they have done to contribute to the SHARE Act's Sportsmen's package on the floor today.

The Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus is the largest bipartisan caucus in Congress. By offering commonsense policy solutions that expand the joys of hunting, angling, as well as shooting sports and, really, access to public lands and all the great outdoors, our goal is to be the voice of millions of American sportsmen and -women who treasure this unique feature of American heritage.

The SHARE Act is supported by the Nation's leading hunting and fishing conservation organizations, making it a bipartisan win for the sportsmen and -women of America. It includes the Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage and Opportunities Act; the Hunting, Fishing, and Recreational Shooting Protection Act; the Target Practice and Marksmanship Training Support Act; and the Hunter and Farmer Protection Act. These, along with many other hunting and fishing conservation provisions, will strengthen America's bond to the blessings given to our great country.

Most important to our role as leaders of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus is to promote policies that bring more potential hunters, anglers, and recreational shooters into the sportsmen's community. Sportsmen and -women are leading contributors to the conservation of the great American outdoors.

As a sidebar, I would just ask folks to really research the contribution that hunters make in the whole African elephant goal, because the lack of the hunter in that equation means there is more poaching; and I think, ultimately, that will be detrimental to the African elephant and detrimental to the goals of those who want to protect that.

In conclusion, I request your support for this bill to ensure that we can protect this sacred institution of American heritage.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentleman from South Carolina for his leadership as vice chairman of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus.

We have heard a lot of, I think, good efforts today in wanting to ensure that our sportsmen and our sportswomen have access to Federal properties, to make sure they can enjoy outdoor sports. I think that is absolutely critical. That is what this bill is about. It is about clarifying to make sure that it is the legislative body that does the directing, not the bureaucrats. I want to make sure there is a balance there because we hear each and every day from our constituents about what they feel needs to happen with their land.

We must remember this land belongs to the taxpayers, and we must find re-

sponsible ways to make sure that there is access to that land for everyone. I want to make sure that we do that. I believe that this bill achieves that.

I understand, too, that we want to make sure that their voices are heard. Many times from the side of these agencies, they will consider comments, but many times the comments aren't included. This ensures that Congress has a role in defining what those opportunities are. I want to make sure those voices are heard. I can't help but believe that everyone here is in favor of making sure that their voices are heard and that opportunities exist across all these Federal lands for our outdoorsmen, our sportsmen and -women of this Nation.

I want to make sure, too, that we are clear that all of us are against stopping the illegal trafficking of ivory. All of us here want to make sure that stops. I think there are reasonable and thoughtful ways that do that that don't inhibit the sportsmen who want to go there to be part of the legal process to harvest an elephant in the areas where there is an overpopulation. The dollars there are used to support local populations in that area, villages.

None of that animal is wasted. Every bit of it is used. The fees that are collected for hunters are put into stopping the poaching effort there. I think those are sustainable models to make sure that elephant populations continue in those areas and that we, indeed, have the ability and resources in Africa to stop those efforts by poachers.

□ 1715

I think sustainable hunting is a way to do that. In any way impeding the flow of ivory back into the United States from legal hunting operations doesn't allow us to do that. Making sure, too, that it is simple and straightforward for owners of ivory to continue to own that, especially those pieces that are family heirlooms, and not have to go through a long, drawn-out bureaucratic process to prove that something is yours that has been passed down through family history where you may not have documentation to do that.

These efforts that U.S. Fish and Wildlife agencies are putting forward would make it in many instances very, very difficult for individuals and families to demonstrate that. Let's make this process easy and let's get at the issue, and that is the illegally harvested ivory that is coming out of Africa to the United States.

We talked, too, about access elements. We heard the number used that 99 percent of our ocean waters are open to fishing, to recreational fishing. But remember that the entire ocean is different in its habitats. So fish live in certain areas. I would argue that the 1 percent that is being closed off many times is the most productive area for

fishermen. It is where the habitat rests. It is where the fish are.

So if you were to say, don't worry about it, you can hunt the entire Sahara Desert, that wouldn't mean much to sportsmen. The same that you are saying if you are allowed to fish these other areas that don't hold the habitat that allow fish to live in those areas also doesn't keep in mind making sure that recreational fishermen have access to the place where fish live. So I want to make sure that that is clear when we talk about these numbers, 99 percent versus the 1 percent.

Remember, this bill is not about what is not included. It is about really making those opportunities available for those men and women who hunt, fish, and use the outdoors. I am in full support of LWCF. I am in full support of NAWCA. I do believe that we ought to reauthorize those pieces of legislation, and I do believe that there are mechanisms to do that. I believe that the vast majority of folks on our Committee on Natural Resources, as well as in Congress, want to see those things happening.

The difficulty always is in taking one bill and adding a bunch of different elements to it. I think those bills are important enough that they deserve their own level of debate and own level of attention about what we do in reauthorizing those bills.

I think folks outside the 90 square miles of Washington look at us and say, you know, why are you putting all these other elements into a bill rather than debating them individually?

I think we can put too much into a piece of legislation where it becomes confusing and it doesn't get after the true purpose behind the original bill. We tried to put together pieces that were similar in scope but didn't include other areas that really deserve their own level of debate.

So that is the reason that LWCF and NAWCA was left out of this, not by any intention to say we shouldn't address those, but by understanding that we have a responsibility to try to keep these packages of bills as simple and straightforward as we can.

Also, when we talk about lead, remember that the lead we talk about is in things like fishing sinkers. Remember, fishing sinkers are used in water. The gentlewoman from California talked about the issue with California condors. Well, California condors are not an aquatic bird, so I don't think we have to worry about them swimming in water and getting hold of these fishing sinkers.

The same way with bullets. I understand there are a few instances where they might have found a bullet associated with ingestion with a California condor, but the vast majority of shooting sports are put forth in legal ranges where the lead ends up in the ground. It ends up in the ground at a shooting

range. Remember, that is the exact area where the lead came from. So returning it to the ground where we know eventually through the years it does indeed decay, it does indeed break down, those things are legal and I think environmentally responsible ways that lead is used in both hunting and fishing. Let's not stop those efforts. I want to make sure that those things happen.

If there are specific issues related to the California condor, I think we ought to address that, but these carte blanche one-size-fits-all efforts to say let's ban lead across the spectrum in the shooting sports, for hunting, and for fishing doesn't get at those root issues and it creates unnecessary burdens on folks who are using those in a legal way and in a way that doesn't affect our fish and wildlife populations. So I want to make sure that those things continue.

I do believe that there are many more areas of agreement than disagreement on this bill. I think that we have talked to folks on many aspects of this. It is different in its scope with the Senate bill, and I look forward to its successful passage out of this House and for our ability to bring it to a conference committee in the Senate and to work through those particular differences between the House and the Senate bill.

Mr. Chairman, I would urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chair, I support H.R. 2406, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act or SHARE Act.

Recreational hunting and fishing are some of the oldest traditions in America. I went on my first hunting trip in the early 70's and have loved gaming ever since. The sport was a great way to bond with my father-in-law and a great tradition to pass on to my own son.

I am not alone in enjoying this great tradition. Sportsmen and women contribute billions of dollars to the U.S. economy, support thousands of jobs and enrich our culture. Texas is home to 2,713,000 hunters and anglers, making it the second biggest state for sportsmen and women in the nation.

H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act, is supported by more than 50 of the nation's leading conservation groups and includes provisions that will expand access for hunters and anglers and protect the environment through conservation efforts.

The SHARE Act will protect access to BLM and U.S. Forest Service land for hunting and fishing, reauthorize the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act and allows fish and wildlife agencies added flexibility to construct public shooting ranges.

Ensuring future generations of Americans have access to these great traditions must be our priority going forward.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act. This legislation

would protect 2nd Amendment rights and prevent unnecessary federal regulations from limiting access to outdoor sporting activities.

Activities like hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting contribute billions of dollars to our economy. But, it's impossible to put a dollar value on what they mean to millions of American families.

For many Texans—myself included—hunting and fishing are more than simple hobbies. They are family traditions that get passed down through generations. These traditions bring us together and teach invaluable lessons about gun safety and environmental responsibility.

Passing the SHARE Act will protect 2nd Amendment rights and help ensure that our sporting traditions can continue for generations to come.

I call on all my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HILL) having assumed the chair, Mr. WALKER, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2406) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

HONORING THE FALLEN SOLDIERS OF THE 14TH QUARTERMASTER DETACHMENT DURING OPERATION DESERT STORM

(Mr. ROTHFUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of the soldiers of the 14th Quartermaster Detachment of the United States Army Reserve who were killed or wounded in their barracks by an Iraqi Scud missile attack in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, during Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm in 1991 on this date.

The soldiers of the Pennsylvania Army Reserve served with bravery and honor in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm, and they will forever make western Pennsylvania proud.

Sixty-nine soldiers of the 14th Quartermaster Detachment stationed in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, were deployed to Saudi Arabia during this campaign. These brave men and women were supporting operations to liberate the people of Kuwait. Even though 13 of these soldiers gave their lives 25 years ago today—another 43 were wounded—the impact of their sacrifice and their loss has not faded and will not be forgotten.

We owe these soldiers and their families a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid, and we sympathize with the pain endured by those they left behind. May God bless them.

HONORING WADE HENDERSON

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, we are nearing the end of Black History Month. We had a special program yesterday recognizing foot soldiers of the civil rights movement. It reminded me of a man who is a foot soldier up here in Washington, Wade Henderson.

Wade Henderson is the president and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and the Leadership Conference Education Fund. He announced he is going to be retiring after 20 years as the head of that organization at the end of this year.

Wade Henderson has worked with Republicans and Democrats both to bring about change in our country. He was largely responsible for work on the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act when it passed and had been working on trying to get it renewed in this Congress. He worked in a major way on the Fair Sentencing Act that took away the disparity in crack and cocaine sentences that was wrongful.

Before he came to his position at the Leadership Conference, he was active in the NAACP here in Washington, where he was the bureau director, and he worked on other issues with the ACLU and other groups on civil and human rights.

When Wade Henderson came to the Capitol, he was a voice of conscience. He and Hilary Shelton, together with the NAACP, are two of the most conscientious men I know. They have served this country well. I will miss him in his retirement. I appreciate the remaining time he has. He is a foot soldier. I thank him for his service.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LIGO TEAM

(Mr. NEWHOUSE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the efforts behind an incredible breakthrough in humanity's understanding of the universe: the first detection ever of the existence of gravitational waves.

Gravitational waves are invisible ripples in the fabric of space-time. Albert Einstein theorized their existence 100 years ago as part of his theory of general relativity.

After more than a decade of work by researchers at two identical observatories—one in Livingston, Louisiana,

and another in Hanford, Washington, located in my congressional district—Einstein's theory of the existence of gravitational waves has direct evidence as scientific fact.

On February 11, the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory, or LIGO, Scientific Collaboration officially confirmed that the world's most sensitive instruments at these observatories had detected gravitational waves for the first time. The gravitational wave detected by LIGO's team was the result of the collision of two black holes 1.3 billion years ago.

Congratulations to my constituents and the entire LIGO team on their historic discovery, which will continue to add to the scientific understanding of the universe for generations.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S BACKDOOR KEY TO THE IPHONE

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Benjamin Franklin said: "Those who would give up essential liberty, to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety."

A Federal judge now has ordered that Apple take an unprecedented step developing a backdoor key for an iPhone. The software that the government is demanding does not exist. It would have to be created from scratch.

The government wants the golden key to crack this phone. Such a key could be used to crack all other phones in the future. Giving a master key for the government to access any phone of any citizen at any time without their knowledge violates the right of privacy. Americans' constitutional right of privacy is under attack by the spying eyes of a powerful government.

My legislation, H.R. 2233, End Warrantless Surveillance of Americans Act, specifically prohibits the government from either mandating or requesting that a backdoor key be installed in the private phones of citizens.

Mr. Speaker, privacy must not be sacrificed on the altar of temporary safety and false security.

And that is just the way it is.

IN MEMORY OF OFFICER JASON MOSZER

(Mr. CRAMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a hero, Fargo police officer Jason Moszer.

While in the Army National Guard, he was deployed as a combat medic to Bosnia and Iraq. Officer Moszer joined the Fargo Police Department in 2009. In 2012, he and a fellow officer were

awarded the department's Silver Star Medal for rescuing two children from an apartment fire.

On the night of February 10, Officer Moszer responded to a domestic disturbance, putting himself in danger to help others, something he had done many times. On this night, however, gunshots were fired and a bullet struck Officer Moszer, causing a fatal wound.

He died the next afternoon, but not before one last heroic act. It is reported at least five people, ages 26 to 61, are being helped thanks to his donated organs.

I thank our U.S. Capitol Police officers for their service to us every day. I especially thank Officer Andy Maybo, who traveled to Fargo to represent the Capitol Police and the National Memorial Committee, which he chairs. Andy lent his expertise to the Fargo PD and planners as they prepared for a fellow officer's funeral, an event that had not occurred in Fargo in over 130 years.

God bless all the men and women who wear the badge, and God bless the memory of Officer Jason Moszer.

IN MEMORY OF REPRESENTATIVE BOB BRYANT

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember a true civil servant and my friend, Representative Bob Bryant, who died this morning.

Over his lifetime, Representative Bryant's professional career included a variety of services in different areas. He began his career serving 2 years in South Vietnam and 10 years as an Army recruiter before retiring in 1982. He then worked 5 years as general manager for a local radio station, spent time as office manager to a local law firm, and worked 13 years for the city of Savannah, until he retired in 2001. After 40 years of service to his community, he was not done. He was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives in 2004 and was currently serving his 12th year.

I will always remember Representative Bryant, as he and I worked together to pass our first pieces of legislation in the Georgia House over a decade ago. I can truly say that he was beloved by his constituents and colleagues alike. I am deeply saddened by the loss of my friend and colleague.

I wish to extend my condolences to his family. He will be missed.

□ 1730

CARE FOR THE MENTALLY ILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WALKER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the

gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURPHY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, let me start off with some sobering news. I call it the body count.

Last year, 2015, in the United States, there were 41,000 suicide deaths in this country. There were 45,000 deaths from drug overdoses. Many of those folks suffered from depression. There were an estimated 1,200 homicides by people who are seriously mentally ill. About half of all deadly police encounters occurred with someone who is mentally ill.

There is an unknown number of mentally ill who died 25 years sooner because they tend to die of chronic illnesses. There is about one homeless person per day in Los Angeles who dies. We know about 200,000 homeless people in this country are mentally ill.

It is a sad case in any numbers. But if you add those numbers up, even the most conservative version is that there were some 85,000 deaths last year related to mental illness—and it is probably much higher—and more have died from mental illness-related problems than the total United States combat deaths of the entire Korean War and Vietnam Wars combined.

That is sobering, but it is worse. It is worse because we could prevent a large number of these mental illness problems. We could save many of those with mental illness from their early demise. We could save their families from suffering. But, unfortunately, the Federal Government is the problem.

Let me lay out this evening in this Special Order some of the particular problems that we have.

In particular, for those who are low income, Medicaid itself is one of the biggest discriminators against people with mental illness getting treatment.

First, consider this. Fifteen percent of Medicaid recipients have serious mental illness. That is far more than the general population. Serious mental illness is things like schizophrenia, bipolar illness, schizoaffective disorder, and severe depression.

Thirty-one percent of those on SSI have serious mental illness. Twenty-six percent of those with Social Security disability have serious mental illness.

In the general population, by the way, there is only about 1 percent with schizophrenia. About 2.6 of the general population have been diagnosed as bipolar.

So look at how much higher those numbers are among the poor. That

makes sense. Because mentally ill people are three times more likely to have low income as a result of their mental illness. Low-income individuals are three times more likely to have mental illness, many as a result of being poor.

Poverty and homelessness are both associated with serious mental illness. Both are associated with inadequate primary care and preventative care. But here are some ways that Medicaid makes it harder for people with mental illness to get care.

First of all, there is a rule called the same-day doctor rule. If you take someone to the doctor and the internist or family physician is very concerned that person has a mental illness, they are told they have to come back another day before they can see the psychiatrist.

That is a serious problem. Because when you have the warm handoff in the doctor's office, you have 95 percent that will return versus less than half if they have to come back another day. And treatment is the key to getting better.

There is a 16-bed rule from the Institute of Mental Diseases which says that, if the hospital has more than 16 beds and you are between ages 22 and 64, we are not paying for it.

The problem with that is that serious mental illness tends to emerge in 50 percent of the cases by age 14 and in 75 percent of the cases by age 24.

So at the very time when problems are emerging, the very time when someone may have their first serious crisis that may require some inpatient care, they are told there will be no room.

Only 45 percent of Medicaid recipients with schizophrenia actually get evidence-based care. Only 35 percent of those with a bipolar diagnosis who are on Medicaid get evidence-based care.

Listen to this statistic. Ninety-two percent of low-income children and foster children are prescribed drugs off label—those are drugs that are not approved by FDA—according to an HHS Inspector General's report, and many of those prescriptions, according to the report, are done without clinical justification.

The homeless with schizophrenia have a rate of hospitalization for complications of hypertension almost twice as high as others. Fifty percent of individuals with schizophrenia are noncompliant with treatment regimens during their illness and don't adhere to medications. They need assistance in doing so.

Also, half of those with serious mental illness have at least two chronic physical health conditions, such as chronic pulmonary disease, infectious disease, cardiovascular disease, gastrointestinal problems, and these people are generally in poorer health.

So what happens is that those with serious mental illness and a number of

other clinical aspects have compromised physical symptoms and we don't have a place to treat them.

We used to have 550,000 psychiatric hospital beds in the 1950s. Now we have less than 40,000. During that same time, the population of the United States climbed from 150 million to over 300 million today.

So where do people who have an acute mental health crisis go? Sadly, whether it is acute or chronic, about 200,000 of our homeless are mentally ill. Twenty-eight percent of them get some of their food out of a garbage can.

We also have a large portion of those with mental illness filling our prisons. When we closed down those psychiatric hospitals, some got better. But, basically, we traded the hospital bed for the prison cot, a blanket over a subway grate, an emergency room or a gurney or a slab in some morgue.

The incarceration rate among the seriously mentally ill is 16 percent of the population. Some 60 percent of the incarcerated may have some level of mental illness.

And then what happens in the area of violence? Well, in general, people with mental illness are no more violent than the rest of the population. But when untreated serious mental illness occurs, they are 16 times more likely to be perpetrators of violence.

As I said before, there are over 1,000 homicides a year, and we have no idea how many are victims of crime. Estimates are it is 6 to 10 times greater.

What happens if a person with mental illness is not treated? The longer a person waits for treatment for a psychotic episode, the longer it takes a person's illness to come into remission. That means it costs more.

For bipolar illness, the sooner a person starts lithium, the greater their improvement. It means it would cost less if we treated them. Delusions, hallucinations, and other severe symptoms increase the longer treatment is withheld.

As far as the costs go, the cost of schizophrenia alone far exceeds that of coronary artery disease. The mortality rates of schizophrenia are far more than breast cancer.

The costs of serious mental illness in this country are about \$55 billion in direct costs and \$70 billion in indirect costs, but there is also the added cost of emergency room care, added cost of primary care, and the cost of treating their other medical problems.

The deinstitutionalization move in this country is associated with much higher suicide rates, such that, while our country has made great strides in reducing mortality rates over the last couple of decades in heart disease, auto accidents, HIV/AIDS, stroke, and cancer, we have seen huge increases in suicide rates and drug overdose deaths.

As a Nation, we should be ashamed of that. As a Congress, we should be

ashamed if we do nothing about this. That requires a great deal of change on our part. That means we are going to have to do something to help people with mental illness get treatment.

Half are simply not compliant and don't adhere to their medication. They get worse. Their medical problems get worse. The Medicaid bills get higher. Half of those with serious mental illness, as I said, have two or more chronic physical health conditions, and it gets worse for them.

There are several things we must do to treat this. Tonight we are going to hear from a number of Members of Congress. First, my friend JIM McDERMOTT of the State of Washington will speak. We will talk about a number of the issues before us and what we must do in Congress.

I yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT).

Mr. McDERMOTT. I want to first begin by acknowledging Congressman MURPHY. He has taken on an extremely difficult issue. It takes courage to bring that kind of issue to the floor of the House.

More than half a million Americans with serious mental illness continue to fall through the cracks of a broken and outdated system.

As Congress begins the consideration of how to address this national crisis, it is important that we take some stock of history.

Prior to the 1960s, commitment was based on a medical model where two physicians made a determination that a patient needed treatment. I did that when I came out of the military in 1970 in Seattle.

When the first attempt at comprehensive mental health reform began in the 1960s in California, it signaled a shift from the medical model to the legal model.

Ronald Reagan had been elected Governor and was interested in reducing the population in the mental hospitals in California. The result was the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act in the California State Assembly.

This act set a new standard, making it increasingly difficult to obtain commitment to a hospital. That standard was that a patient must be suicidal, homicidal, or gravely disabled. Gravely disabled means that they can't take care of their basic needs.

I moved to California in 1968 shortly after that bill was passed to serve as the chief psychiatrist at the Long Beach Naval Station, where I saw servicemen and -women and their families. For the 2 years I was in California, I had almost no success in getting civil commitment for people that I felt were suicidal.

I was overruled by State employees charged with the duty of evaluating the need for civil commitment. The real pressure was so great on them and the court system that it was nearly im-

possible to get anyone into treatment in a secure facility. The hospitals in the State were quickly emptied, and literally thousands of mentally disabled people went out on the streets.

At the same time, in Congress, the mental health center movement was taking hold. The Community Mental Health Act was signed into law in 1963. The bill promised adequate funding would go to mental health centers to effectively treat most of these patients on an outpatient basis.

But things didn't go as planned. The political reality resulted in insufficient money going to the mental health system. This had a devastating effect and led to more patients wandering the streets in need of treatment.

When I finished my time in the military and went back to Washington State, I went to the legislature and saw a similar movement was occurring in my State. Remembering what had happened in California, I argued against changing that commitment standard, but the majority ruled and a similar law was passed.

As a result, we closed one of the three mental hospitals in the State of Washington—Northern State Hospital—with the assurance that the money we saved from closing that hospital would go to the mental health centers. We saved \$11 million. \$3 million went to the mental health centers, and \$7 million or \$8 million went elsewhere.

As a result, the streets of the State of Washington began to see all kinds of homeless people laying on the street and so forth. As a result, some of the most vulnerable patients were left without a support structure.

Many became homeless or were imprisoned. In the end, we simply replaced hospital beds with prison beds, as Congressman MURPHY has already pointed out. Right now there are 10 times more mentally ill patients in jails and prison than in State hospitals.

Turn the clock forward to 1979. I was a jail psychiatrist in King County, which, in effect, was the second largest mental hospital in the State. I had over 200 patients who belonged in treatment, not in jail.

This had a tremendous cost on our society. All across this country—and Washington is no different than anywhere else you go in this country—it has a human cost as well as a financial cost.

The average cost per year for a prisoner without mental illness in a jail is \$22,000 a year. For a mentally ill patient who is a prisoner, the cost is more than double that, at \$50,000 a year. It costs 20 times more to imprison a mentally ill patient than to provide that same patient with treatment.

These statistics are deplorable, and the process continues to remain in

place across this country. There are some places that have done things on their own and made efforts to improve how they care for behavioral health patients.

In Dixon, Illinois, recently two young people died. It is a town of 20,000 people. The sheriff said: I am going to do what they are doing in Gloucester, Massachusetts, in the ANGEL program.

He made the statement to the community: Anybody who is addicted to heroin or opioids, come in. We won't arrest you. We won't prosecute. We will treat you. Twenty seven people showed up in that jail.

He said, amazingly, another thing happened. The jail was empty because crime went down dramatically. Most of those people were out committing crimes to buy drugs.

□ 1745

Now, this program encouraged those suffering from addiction to go to the police, where they would be directed to drug rehabilitation and not prosecuted. Since then, many individuals have had effective treatment.

We need to treat addiction as a disease state and not as a criminal offense or some moral failure. And the same is true with mental illness. A comprehensive mental health reform bill would go a long way to that effort.

Now, out on the floor here, again and again, we pause for a moment of silence. Some awful thing has happened someplace in this country, in my city, in 25 cities across this country, and we stand here for 1 minute and commemorate the tragedy with a moment of silence. After that pause, we do nothing.

Virtually all mentally ill patients are more likely to be victims of violent crimes rather than perpetrators, and we must recognize there are tragic situations that can be prevented with treatment and early intervention.

I understand—I have been involved in this my whole professional life—that the most contentious issue is whether or not the society has a right to detain a citizen and treat them in the most medically effective way.

Many fear a return to the indeterminate confinement of people like in the 1960s. I saw that in Chicago when I was in medical school. None of us want to see that happen—not me, most of all. But certainly no one on this floor wants that to happen in this society.

The balance between personal liberty and the needs of a society is a challenging one to strike; but difficult as it may be, we have to rise to that challenge. That is why I commend Congressman MURPHY for bringing it out here and beginning the debate that ought to go on in this society.

If a mentally ill person is a danger to themselves or others, there needs to be an ability to commit that person long enough for the treatment to take effect. We need to listen to those who

know the patient best. In many cases, it is not their doctor.

We often hear stories from families who have tried desperately to get treatment for their loved ones, or from police officers who have tried desperately to get treatment for people. We, as doctors, can't possibly make the best assessment without hearing from family, friends, and those who live with patients and play an integral role in their lives.

Giving patients and families the help they need will dramatically improve and even save lives. That is why we need to work together, on a bipartisan basis, on a bill that Mr. MURPHY has brought out.

Is it a perfect bill? No, but it is a bill from which we can work and reach an agreement to try and help the needs of our society. We have had enough moments of silence on this floor. It is time to act.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank Dr. McDERMOTT. He has been, really, a champion of mental health issues in his career and on this bill as well.

I want to point out, the bill he is referring to is our Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, H.R. 2646. It is bipartisan. It has 183 cosponsors today—50 Democrats, the rest Republicans—because we all recognize that when you are dealing with someone with mental illness, in the 40 years that I have practiced as a psychologist, I have never once asked any of my patients what party they are.

We know that mental illness affects people regardless of gender or race or age, certainly not by party.

We also know, however, that getting care is tougher. Studies have said that if you are Black, your chances of getting treatment for your mental illness are even tougher. In fact, in Los Angeles County, 9.6 percent of the population is Black, and yet they constitute 31 percent of the L.A. County jail prisoners, and they have a lower likelihood of getting psychiatric medication.

Although most crimes committed by people with mental illness tend to be nonviolent, after they have repetitive incarcerations, they tend to serve four times longer sentences when they are mentally ill than someone who is not. So that is what we mean when we say we have filled our prisons and we have increased our costs with this.

I yield to my friend, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL), to also talk about the things we need to do and our problems with mental illness.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman MURPHY for this time and for bringing this issue to the floor of the House. I thank my friend, Mr. McDERMOTT, from Washington, for his views.

Congressman MURPHY's bill opens a bipartisan conversation on how best to address the challenges that have been

facing mental health services and our citizens in this country for decades.

President John Kennedy implemented a groundbreaking, community-based treatment model for individuals with mental health illnesses. However, in the decades following his service, the Federal Government has missed opportunity after opportunity to effectively address the needs of Americans with mental illness. Over the years, we have seen our prisons, our hospitals, and our homeless shelters bear the brunt of providing services for our Nation's mentally ill.

One-third of the homeless are mentally ill, some 200,000. Sixteen percent of incarcerated Americans, some 300,000, have mental illness. And mental disorders are some of the most costly health conditions we face in our country.

As noted, many of our incidents of mass violence have mental illness as a factor. Now most States still rely on the standard of imminent danger for commitment of mentally ill individuals. This is, in part, a result of past Supreme Court decisions, most importantly, in 1975, *O'Connor v. Donaldson*, which has been used consciously many times to oppose involuntary commitment and argue that committing individuals who are not imminently dangerous to themselves or others is unconstitutional.

Congressman MURPHY's bill, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, holds our Federal agencies accountable and requires that our States follow evidence-based practices that have proven to reduce hospitalization, homelessness, and violence.

This bill also provides alternatives to institutionalization for Americans with severe mental illness; and for those that need to be institutionalized, it requires States to include need-for-treatment commitment standards in their civil commitment laws in order to remain eligible for certain Federal block grant programs. This will help clarify commitment standards for our States and will ensure that we no longer wait until it is too late to potentially commit dangerous individuals and those who need help.

It is important that we seize this opportunity for future generations of Americans, and I commend my colleague for his leadership on this important issue.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman so much for his kindness and his support for this legislation.

As has been said, whenever one of these tragic killings occur or when some tragedy occurs, we have our moment of silence, and then we do nothing.

We have a chance to do something. America demands it. I know that the overwhelming majority of Americans expect us to do something more than

talk about it, particularly when so many family members are struggling.

As we closed many of these institutions, what we ended up with is families themselves being the ones that are being told, here's your son, your daughter, your brother, your sister, your mother or father; go take care of them. By the way, we are not going to give you much information on them. We are not going to provide you much support, unless that person, indeed, is a danger to themselves or others.

I have heard from many family members that they have called the police when they have had troubles at home, struggling.

By the way, with mental illness, when someone's out of control, we call the police. With other illnesses, you call paramedics because we recognize that that is a disease that needs help, like when someone is having a heart attack or something else. But with mental illness, out of our fear, out of our stigma, or other things, we call the police, and the police are oftentimes not fully trained to do this. Then we tell the parents, well, good luck, and take care of them. We are not going to give you much information.

That whole grand experiment of closing down the hospitals, which those asylums needed to be closed down, but the stopping institutional care and stopping all treatment, that whole process has actually shown more failures than successes, especially when we have not provided community-based treatment.

We provide treatment for so many other diseases, but when it comes to mental illness, we fall far short. And we somehow have this idea, this misguided and self-centered and projected belief of our own, that people are at all times fully capable of deciding their own fate and direction, regardless of their deficits and diseases, and that the right to self-decay and self-destruction overrides the right to be healthy.

But remember what I said earlier about people with severe mental illness and having so many other chronic illnesses and somehow going into the slow-motion death spiral, we walk right by and pretend that that is okay. It is not, and it shouldn't be. Somehow, in so doing, we comfortably abdicate our responsibility to action and live under this perverse redefinition that the most compassionate compassion is to do nothing at all.

It further bolsters those most evil of prejudices we have that the person with disabilities deserves no more than what they are. We will leave it up to them. Under that approach, there are no dreams; there are no aspirations; there is no goal to be better that can even exist. Indeed, to help a person heal is some head-on collision with this bigoted belief we have that the severely mentally ill have no right to be better than they are, and we have no obligation to help them.

This is the corrupt evil of this hands-off approach and, in some cases, the antitreatment model and the things that we have lulled ourselves into, this somnolence where we become comfortable with crossing the street or stepping over a homeless person, when we fear those, when we hear the title, the term, "mental illness." It is this perversion of thought embedded in the glorification that to live a life of deterioration and paranoia and filth and squalor and emotional torment trumps a healed brain and the true chance to choose a better life.

What a sad state of affairs our Nation has to become easy with that, and what a sad statement it is about this Congress for taking so long to take action on this. I don't know how we look ourselves in the mirror and continue to delay this.

A number of my colleagues also feel very strongly about this issue of mental health. I yield now to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) to take a few minutes to talk about his perspectives of what we need to do with mental health.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I want to first say thank you for Dr. Murphy's persistence and determination for bringing this legislation to this point. It has been an act of love on his part, and I greatly appreciate it.

Dr. Murphy, also, great thanks for your continued work with our men and women in uniform in the mental health field as you continue to do today. It is much appreciated.

As a family doctor in rural Louisiana, I have witnessed firsthand the hardships mental illness can put on families, individuals, and friends. I am sure every American has a story of how someone that they know and love has been affected by mental illness. It is not a partisan issue, as has been said here just recently.

Thankfully, the study and treatment of mental health has improved dramatically in the last 50 years, leading to better outcomes and better lives. But, as our knowledge of mental health improves, we must routinely ensure that our government is keeping up.

It has been over 15 years since Congress last passed comprehensive mental health reform. During that time, the size and authority of our Federal mental health bureaucracy has grown to the point where the amount of coordination required to function effectively is too immense.

How much has it grown?

A recent report from the independent Government Accountability Office found that there are now a total of 112 Federal programs intended to address mental illness—112. As you can imagine, the report also found that there is serious fragmentation and lack of coordination among these programs.

As history continues to prove time and time again, when the size of bu-

reaucracy increases, the effectiveness decreases; but when mental health bureaucracy fails, it fails individuals, it fails families, and it fails communities.

Unfortunately, the President's solution this year is to throw more money at the problem and increase the bureaucracy. His 2017 budget proposes to add \$500 million in mandatory spending to the same Federal programs that have been proven to be inefficient, uncoordinated, and inadequate. This is a shortsighted response to a long-term challenge. We must do more than throw money at a problem and hope for a solution.

Congressman MURPHY's Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act has taken inventory of these Federal programs. It refocuses the programs that work and removes the ones that don't, greatly increasing program coordination across the Federal Government. This is only one of the many reasons why I have cosponsored this comprehensive bill, and I welcome rigorous debate on this floor on the rest of the bill's merits.

□ 1800

Finally, I thank again Dr. Murphy for his dedication and leadership on this mental health issue. The time, effort, and attention to detail that he has put into this comprehensive reform bill is what the American public should expect from elected officials. I strongly encourage and support his efforts.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Thank you, Doctor. I appreciate your comments and your support for this bill and, of course, your practice in the field and understanding our needs.

A couple of points you made there I want to elaborate on. You said that there are 112 Federal programs identified scattered across 8 departments that deal with mental health. There are 26 programs for the homeless.

But many of these programs have not met since 2009, and according to the General Accounting Office report, it is uncoordinated. A patchwork quilt would be a compliment because a patchwork quilt is at least stitched together and our mental health approach is not.

Part of this bill is to create an office for the Assistant Secretary of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorders. That doctor would then be charged with meeting regularly with these programs and agencies to get them to work together.

Where there is unnecessary redundancy, get them to merge. Where there is exemplary programs, let's expand it. But, above all, get treatment back to the States and back to the communities where they can do the most good with evidence-based programs that work.

I will elaborate more on these in a minute, but first I want to call upon my friend, CHRIS GIBSON, from New York for a few minutes.

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend and colleague, Dr. Murphy, for organizing this Special Order, but also for his strong leadership in an area that is so important to all Americans. I also want to thank him for his service to our Nation.

Indeed, I rise to give a voice for so many of my constituents who are calling on this House to strengthen Federal mental health policies.

I think this is important not only in terms of these policy changes that we are talking about this evening, but, quite candidly, also about the mindset. I think we need to think about this issue area differently.

Misconceptions out there, I hear this often from my constituents, how we need to change the way that we think. Too often we think of mental health as a permanent state, that individuals are either well or not well, when, in fact, what we have learned is that, over the course of our life, mental health is really a spectra. Sometimes we are flourishing, and sometimes we are challenged.

For me, this is certainly a personal issue. My closest adviser is my beautiful wife, Mary Jo, who is a licensed clinical social worker. I get the benefit of her counsel on a regular basis.

I also look to Dr. Murphy as somebody who has spent over 40 years in this field. I also want to thank GRACE NAPOLITANO, who is also a leader of the Mental Health Caucus. I have worked together with her as we push forward these very important initiatives.

I want to say that I do think we have made some progress. In a moment here, I will talk about some of the details of that. I think that we are making some progress particularly with neuroses, anxiety, and to some degree, depression.

But, candidly, we are not making progress at all with regard to policy when it comes to very severe mental health issues. In part, Dr. McDERMOTT addressed this earlier.

We know that, in the 1960s and the 1970s, there were a series of exposes, very severe issues that were going on in our psychiatric hospitals. Consequent to that we went through a process of deinstitutionalization.

But we have learned that, when we did this and put nothing in behind it—and I certainly can understand a lot of abuses that were going on and understood the need to take action to roll back and to really make sure that we don't have those abuses.

But what we have learned is that it was a mistake not to put policy in behind that. We see this all the time. It has been mentioned already this evening, the issues with homelessness, the issues with mass violence.

Inasmuch as we know most with very severe mental illness are not violent, we also know that, when we have these very tragic events, that, at times,

these are correlated with severe mental illness without Federal support, without any support. So that is part of the calling for this evening.

The American people want to know: Is our Congress listening? We are listening. That is part of the reason why Doc has organized this tonight to express this to the American people, that we know this is a very important priority.

I want to provide some overview of some of the actions we have taken. First of all, last year I was at the White House when the President of the United States signed into law the Clay Hunt suicide awareness and prevention bill.

Corporal Clay Hunt was a great American hero. He served our country very honorably and courageously in Iraq and Afghanistan and lost his life to mental health disease. His family has taken up the standard and are working really hard to move us forward on that.

This bill that the President signed into law last year—a very bipartisan bill—is going to help strengthen mental health support for our servicemen and -women and our veterans.

Likewise, the James Zadroga 9/11 healthcare bill for our first responders also includes a provision in there that strengthens mental health. So we are supporting our veterans, and we are supporting our first responders. These are important bills that have been enacted into law.

We have also passed in this House an important bill called the Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act, and we are calling on the Senate to pick this up so that we can also send that to the President.

While we have made progress in some of these areas, we have much more to do in so many other areas. I want to talk about the Mental Health in Schools Act.

I think this is a very important and certainly a challenging period in the lives of Americans in the teenage years and so many emotions all going through. We need to provide support.

What we have found in some pilot programs in New York is, when we have social workers in schools, this absolutely stems incidences of drug abuse and crime because we are dealing with this in the area where we really need that support: mental health.

We have a bill that will address this that will scale that, and I hope that we can get more support here in the House.

In addition to our teenagers, I also have a bill that helps with our senior citizens. It is a very simple bill. It basically just adjusts Medicare so that, for seniors looking for counseling, they will get that support.

Finally, of course, the bill that we are all rallying around tonight, H.R. 2646, the Helping Families in Mental

Health Crisis Act—I think we have heard about some of the important dimensions of this bill.

I just want to highlight the fact that I think that this bill is going to help us with the very severely mentally ill, particularly those suffering from psychosis.

We have heard tonight how we have a shortage of inpatient care. We have got to address this because, if we don't address it, we end up seeing it in the penal system. That is absolutely the wrong approach to this, and it is costing the taxpayers as well.

So, in addition to that, we see more coordination among agencies and suicide awareness and prevention programs strengthened.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will close with this. This is a very important issue, and the American people are counting on us to take action. I think we have got a series of bills that we can rally around—bipartisan bills—that will truly make a positive difference.

So let me end where I began and just thank Dr. MURPHY for his great leadership and call upon my colleagues to support his bill and these other bills as we move forward.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank my friend from New York in his ongoing support for these issues dealing with mental illness.

Now I would like to call upon my friend from the State of Oregon, EARL BLUMENAUER, who has been a great champion on these issues as well. Many times we have conversed about this. I appreciate my friend's guidance and support on this issue.

I know your heart is in this and you are dedicated to it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to Mr. BLUMENAUER.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate your courtesy in permitting me to join you this evening, and I appreciate the conversation that we have had.

Dr. McDERMOTT's experience in the 1960s and 1970s really touched me. I started in my political career when I was much smarter than I am now and was part of the deinstitutionalization movement in my State of Oregon, where it was quite clear that we could provide better quality services that were less intrusive and more cost-effective through a program of deinstitutionalization. It made perfect sense on paper.

What happened—and, luckily, karma intervened. I was a local official when it hit full force. The commitments that had been made to help with medication, to help with housing, to help with counseling, and to be able to provide the support services weren't ironclad guarantees.

It was easy for subsequent legislators to erode them, and people were out on their own. This was a process that took place across the country, and we have seen the impact, as Dr. McDERMOTT mentioned.

I really appreciate you sinking your teeth in here to bring this forward. There are some elements that are clearly controversial. I have found over the course of 2 years that we have been talking about this a willingness to engage in conversation and to be open to refinement because we are all seeking the same objectives.

One of the things that has just become clearer and clearer to me is that there needs to be stronger provisions to deal with assisted outpatient treatment programs. We used to call it involuntary commitment.

It strikes me that we would not have a cancer patient just sort of cast loose on their own to sort of fend for themselves.

But we have some of the most vulnerable members of society, in many cases, who are not capable of fully comprehending the situation they are in.

In fact, in some cases, part of the illness they suffer from is that they don't think that they are sick, that we make it much more difficult than it should be, in some cases, impossible, for people who care about them most to be able to participate in treatment.

I appreciate your willingness to work with us to strike the balance.

I see this as part of a much larger movement. In my community, we are finally opening a facility this fall to get people with mental problems out of emergency rooms, where they actually can't be treated. They can just be warehoused at, actually, great expense and risk to the employees in the emergency room.

I am convinced that, if we are able to work together to tease out the expenses—Dr. McDERMOTT talked about how incarcerating people and treating them behind bars, where so many people with mental illness end up, is 20 times more expensive than treatment.

Being able to hit that sweet spot, to be able to balance treatment, to be able to have intervention with appropriate safeguards, to empower the families, and to be able to help people on a path to treatment like we would do with any other illness is very, very important.

I would hope that we would be able to continue this conversation. I hope that there will be other Special Orders where we have a chance to involve people who want to explore and maybe refine some of these elements, to be able to answer questions about the necessary protections and have the give-and-take that sometimes is hard to do when we are in sort of a formalized setting.

I have appreciated your willingness to tackle tough issues, to be open to suggestions, to be willing to engage others, but, most importantly, that this Congress not go home without having legislation to meet our responsibilities to refine and focus our mental health programs to get more out of

the resources that we have, to provide new tools for families, and I think build on a foundation.

I think the bill that you have introduced is a great start. I am encouraged that you have sparked a very robust conversation and that there are other bills that are moving forward. But I hope we can build on this to be able to get across the finish line.

I look forward to continuing our conversation, whether it is here tonight, in another evening, or with our colleagues, to make sure that we are doing what we should do to correct a situation that is a national tragedy, that is unnecessary, that is wasteful and inhumane.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman for his comments.

I will add to that in the sense that about 10 people per hour die related to mental illness, and it is probably much more than we know of.

I thank you for your good counsel, too. I may have been doing this 40 years, but I have a lot to learn in the field of mental health.

I have learned a great deal from colleagues and from people like Paul Gionfriddo of Mental Health America or the leaders of the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, and from Fuller Torrey. There is a whole host of names in this country who continue to write about and talk about this and show us research on this.

Osteopaths, physical therapists—you name the field—and social workers are out there talking about the problems that we have with this. You are right. It is the most compassionate thing to make some changes on this.

I know one of my colleagues who is also in the Energy and Commerce Committee with me, SUSAN BROOKS, would like to comment on this as well and talk about our needs now, what we need to do in mental health.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Dr. MURPHY, for introducing this important legislation and arranging for this Special Order today.

As I am sure it has already been stated, one in five Americans struggle with mental illness. One in five. This is a critical situation in the country, as we have just heard, a national tragedy.

That is why we must address it with a comprehensive, community-based, mental health care proposal like the one we are talking about here today, and we must do it in a bipartisan way.

So I am very pleased that we have colleagues from the other side of the aisle here as well this evening talking about it.

We have all seen the tragic headlines about people who lose their battle with mental illness and their families who are often powerless to help them or prevent them from harming themselves or others.

According to researchers, about half of the people with schizophrenia and 40 percent of people with bipolar disorder don't believe they are mentally ill. These individuals have the right to refuse therapy and medication, and under current law, their families are only able to intervene when their condition becomes suicidal or extremely dangerous.

So in practical reality, my young adult children in their 20s, if they struggle with serious mental illness, I could be completely shut out from their diagnosis and treatment, unable to help them before their condition became completely debilitating.

□ 1815

As a mother, as a parent, this is heartbreaking. It is further evidence that something has to change. We have all talked to too many families, whether it is at ceremonies remembering their lives when they have taken their lives or when they have overdosed. That is too late. This bill is important for all parents in America, the loved ones, the family members who desperately want to help but are unable to do so.

But it is also important to every American regardless of whether or not they have a personal connection to mental illness. It is critically important when we look at our criminal justice system.

Sixty years ago—and I think we talked about this a little bit earlier—there was one psychiatric bed for every 300 Americans. Fast-forward 50 years later, that number has shrunk to one psychiatric bed for every 3,000 Americans. Today, it is even less. The people, as you have mentioned, who work in our emergency rooms and in our criminal justice system are paying the price. Those people who work there are paying the price.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness estimates that between 25 and 40 percent of people with mental illness will be jailed or incarcerated at some time in their lives. I am a former criminal defense attorney and a prosecutor. I can tell you not with respect to treatment, but dealing with them, either if they had been arrested or if we needed to prosecute them, I have seen the statistics—and these are real people.

Our courts, jails, and prisons are full of people with mental illness. Most of them are not getting the treatment they need. In our State prisons and local jails, more than half of the women and three-quarters of the men have at least one mental health diagnosis. In Federal prisons, about half of all inmates, regardless of gender, struggle with some form of mental illness.

We must reform the way we care for and treat people with mental illness. We can't rely on the prisons and jails

to serve as the de facto mental health institutions that they have become, and we must make families the partner to ensure that patients with serious and debilitating illness can maintain a comprehensive regimen of care.

I applaud the work of my colleague, Dr. MURPHY, the only psychologist serving in Congress, for his leadership and for crafting the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, H.R. 2646. I am not going to go through all of the proposals because you have so many people. I am so pleased that you have people. I am sure that you have talked about all that is in the bill.

But I must say, I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this proposal. It does focus on the programs that will help families and patients. It will improve that connectivity between primary care doctors, mental health professionals, and the patients and families. It will help with the existing shortage of in-patient psychiatric beds. It will bring accountability to programs like SAMHSA, to make sure that their resources are being used in the most effective and consistent way for patients.

I just want to applaud Dr. MURPHY and all of those who care deeply about mental illness, because I don't want to go to more of these ceremonies of family members who are remembering their family members who have died from suicide or who have died from an overdose. Thank you for your work.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Mrs. BROOKS.

I might say that we have all heard those stories from families. I am sure there are families watching tonight, Mr. Speaker, who will consider contacting a Member of Congress and share that story as well. Nothing is more painful than to hear the story of a parent like you described, a nightmare of a parent to be told that their child has a problem and there is nothing the government will let them do about it. How difficult that must be.

While waiting for my other colleague, DOUG LAMALFA, of California, to come forward, I want to mention a couple of things on the bill that have been referenced.

As I said before, the bill has an assistant secretary for substance abuse and mental health disorders that would organize the programs. It would drive evidence-based care for programs such as response after an initial schizophrenic episode, assisted outpatient treatment, and assertive community treatment, or programs like the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, which is an exceptional program. It is a government-funded program that does exceptionally good, high-quality work.

We know that we have to build a mental health workforce to take care of our extreme doctor shortage. There

simply aren't enough psychiatrists, psychologists, or clinical social workers. When we have 9,000 child and adolescent psychiatrists, we need 30,000. We have too few clinical psychologists and others who want to work with those with serious mental illness.

As I said earlier, we have to fix the shortage of mental health beds, places that treat people who are in crisis, instead of putting them in jail, sending them back on the street, or strapping them to a gurney in an emergency room, giving them a five-point tie-down and some chemical sedative. We have to eliminate that same-day doctor barrier which says you can't see two doctors in the same day. We have to empower parents to be part of the treatment plan, because right now they are still harnessed and kept away from them.

I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) for some of his comments.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Dr. MURPHY. I really appreciate him holding this Special Order, his dedication, and his persistence in moving this issue along. It is very important because mental health is an issue that is getting more and more rampant in our communities.

We really have some challenges in northern California with it and the lack of available treatment. I just had a doctor visit my office yesterday from Siskiyou County who, had she had this ability, had that county had these resources available in the way that your bill prescribes, tragedy would have been prevented with an attempted suicide and a suicide that actually happened in that same family. It is really inexcusable after a point that we are not able to channel the resources and have the effectiveness of the program that you are seeking.

Previously, in Nevada County, California, we witnessed a devastating shooting at a nearby health clinic that took the lives of three individuals back in 2001. The shooter, who suffered from mental illness, had repeatedly refused treatment, despite his family's best efforts to get him help. This is where the system, again, is broken.

Outdated laws leave individuals suffering with severe mental illness to fend for themselves, only to have intervention step in when it is too late. Does it really take an attempted suicide, does it really take a drug overdose, to get attention, instead, when people that have this and know about these triggers would be able to get them the help they need with the right implementation? We need to break down those barriers and provide that pathway.

The Assisted Outreach Treatment program, for example, helps patients and families experiencing severe mental health issues to get the treatment they need before a crisis occurs. Pa-

tients are able to live at home and meet their therapist on a regular basis while having access to lifesaving medications. Success rates are testimony to the effectiveness of the program in terms of compassion and effectiveness. Again, in one of my counties, Nevada County, where this program is in effect, hospitalization was reduced 46 percent, incarceration reduced 65 percent, homelessness reduced 61 percent, and emergency contacts and emergency needs reduced 44 percent.

Of the patients who entered the program overall, 90 percent said it made them more likely to keep their appointments and take their medication, and 81 percent said it helped them get well and stay well. This is what it is all about: to give them hope and to put them in the mainstream of society where they can function well and be successful. Forty-nine percent fewer abused alcohol, 48 percent fewer abused drugs.

Yet, instead of investing in programs such as this, we continue to spend billions on duplicative behavioral wellness programs that allow far too many Americans to fall through the cracks.

We have got to do more to care for our neighbors in this country. I rise today in support, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of the gentleman's legislation. We cannot stand by anymore and allow the status quo because, as we know too well, the cost of inaction is too high for those who suffer from it and for the families and the communities. This is going to be very effective in helping to channel that and having a success we can all be proud of.

Thank you for the time and for your persistence.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his support.

While waiting for my friend JOHN KATKO of New York to come forward, I want to reflect on how long it has taken us to do this.

What we used to do up through the 1800s is just throw people in jail. Then along came an activist by the name of Dorothea Dix, who saw the abysmal conditions in our prisons for the mentally ill, saw them chained to walls in squalor and filth, beaten and abused. She spoke up to have institutions built that would be better respites for them. Indeed, that took place for awhile, but then they became overcrowded, and that was part of what we shut down.

As my other colleague talked about, Mr. BLUMENAUER mentioned that then we thought, well, we have other outpatient care for them. That promise never came through.

This legislation would, as I mentioned before, allow us to have more providers in psychology, psychiatry, social work. It would also merge the mental health and substance abuse dollars to allow States to use both. We

have got to be treating mental health and substance abuse dollars, not to cut either one, but to make sure that a person with substance abuse disorder and mental illness can be treated.

It would bring accountability of spending Federal funds for grants. Our bill would establish a national mental health policy lab within SAMHSA, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and set scientific objective outcome measures.

It would also have an interagency serious mental illness coordinating committee, which could coordinate the Federal spending in mental health and make suggestions to the Assistant Secretary's office and to Congress and bring together government offices with experts in the field to develop reforms in the mental health system.

We want to have alternatives to institutionalization and jail diversion. Assisted outpatient treatment is one version; assertive community treatment is another one. We are making sure that we provide the wraparound services for the mentally ill person instead of dumping them into jails and leaving them there only to get worse. And we want to advance early intervention and prevention programs, where this bill establishes most of its funding there to make sure we have those programs.

I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO), someone whom I have also gotten to know pretty well over this bill, with his own passion for this issue as well.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Dr. MURPHY.

I rise today to talk about one of the most serious challenges facing our country, and that is the mental health issue. It is a problem that affects the rich and the poor, old and young, employed and unemployed. It can strike anyone.

For far too long, the issue of mental health has stayed in the shadows in our country. If we want to directly face the challenges that the American people face in their everyday lives, we cannot allow the silence to continue. That is why I so enthusiastically support your bill, Doctor.

A short time ago, I met with some of my constituents in upstate New York that were part of a drug treatment, education training, and rehabilitation program. One of the individuals told me of his personal battle with mental health.

About 10 years ago, his sister died of cancer, and his marriage broke down soon thereafter. He couldn't sleep because of the trauma and stress, which led to anxiety and depression, and he didn't know what to do. As he was doing yard work one day, someone he knew walked past and said he could provide something to help him sleep. It was heroin. He tried it. Pretty soon he was hooked, and his life was ravaged

for years and years. In fact, it took 7 years of him being pushed to the brink by drugs for him to seek help—7 years, 7 lost years.

Six years later, he has found paid work, probably for the first time since his addiction. He told me that if we lived in a culture where the trauma of grief and the need to get help for mental health problems were more clearly recognized, things could have been much different for him. Just think how much better it would have been for him and think how much better it would have been for others in the country.

The reality is that, for many people today, mental health is a huge issue. With the awareness of the mental health issue increasing, I fervently hope that the acceptance and understanding of the individual suffering from it will as well.

We cannot prevent all mental health issues. There are no cures for all conditions. But we can help the culture change in our country. This bill goes a long way towards doing that, and I commend you for that, Doctor.

We can insist that everyone counts and that everyone matters and that no one dealing with any form of illness should ever feel ashamed. That is how you bring real change to America.

Before I close, I want to note that the second leading cause of death among individuals 24 years or younger in this country, as the doctor well knows, is suicide. The 10th leading cause of death in this country for all adults is suicide. It is an epidemic. It is not treated as such in this country, and it is high time that we do so.

For every suicide in this country, there are 12 suicide attempts. Think of the costs to our society. Think of the costs and the burdens on families, the burdens on the health industry who have to deal with this. We must do a better job, and we have to do a better job.

That is why I am proud in my district that soon after I was elected last year, we formed a mental health task force. We are enthusiastic about a lot of things and a lot of changes it is going to bring about, but there is nothing we are more enthused about than this bill.

Doctor, I commend you for this. I hope that we get this passed in the House, and I hope we get this bill moving once and for all.

Again, I commend you, Congressman MURPHY, for your steadfastness on this issue.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON).

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I am here to support Dr. MURPHY's tremen-

dous work in the area of mental illness. It shows that one person really can make a difference. Dr. MURPHY is leading the charge for our country to change the way that we deal with our mental health programs.

I have got direct experience with this. I have a high school friend who suffered from schizophrenia and eventually lost her family as it is related to that. I have had two high school friends who suffered from severe depression and ended up suicidal and subsequently did take their own lives.

This is critical legislation. With people like Dr. MURPHY working hard to get this done, we really can make a difference on behalf of people with severe mental illness in our country.

I commend you, Dr. MURPHY, for the strong work. Continue to push. I am hopeful we can get this through the House of Representatives this year.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, let me close with these statements.

With 60 million Americans out there with some form of mental illness this year and 10 million or so with severe mental illness, they all have families. I hope those families wake up and speak up. I hope they contact their Member of Congress.

I know that mental illness can be treated, but it cannot be treated if we ignore it and it gets worse. I don't want more tragedies here. I hate to wish any of these tragedies on my colleagues in Congress, but I know it will happen. We will be here again for moments of silence. We will have more Members that face this suffering in their own families and in their communities, and we should not allow that.

I hope that soon we can call forth H.R. 2646, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, because to delay it is to cause more harm, to deny it is to cause more death. Let's finally do something to help turn this problem around with mental health in America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1830

WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, next Tuesday the Supreme Court will take up *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*, which is a case that challenges Texas' outright offensive effort to strip women of their right to choose.

Last night the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals allowed a similar law to move forward in Louisiana, all but guaranteeing the closure of three of four abortion clinics in that State unless the Supreme Court intervenes there as well.

The men who have passed these laws—to be very clear, the Texas State Legislature is 80 percent male, and Louisiana has just made it up from dead last this year at 85 percent—claimed that it would increase the medical accountability and safety of facilities that provide abortion.

That is the new message, the new veil, that covers these laws with the air of legitimacy: We want to make your abortion safer. So every doctor needs to have admitting privileges at a local hospital and every clinic needs to function like an emergency center.

It sounds logical until you hear what the folks behind these laws have to say after the laws have passed.

In Texas, then-Governor Rick Perry said: "The ideal world is one without abortion. Until then, we will continue to pass laws to ensure that they are as rare as possible."

One of the authors of the bill said that she was especially proud that "Texas always takes the lead in trying to turn back what started with *Roe v. Wade*."

The first problem here is the same one we have dealt with over and over and over and over again, because *Roe v. Wade* isn't something you turn back. It wasn't an executive order. It wasn't even a law passed by Congress.

It was a legal challenge 40 years ago that required the Supreme Court to consider whether or not women had the right to make decisions about their bodies. They decided and set a precedent that every woman in this Nation had the constitutional right to an abortion.

What is more, the Court made it clear that States cannot use laws to create an undue burden for women who are seeking to exercise that right. The Court affirmed that decision once more in 1992.

Women in Texas now have firsthand experience of what happens when States ignore the Supreme Court. From what I can see, there is no way that the Texas law can be considered anything other than an undue burden, which brings us to the second problem: There is absolutely no logical, medical reason to suddenly require these clinics to meet the standards of a hospital.

These laws are opposed by a host of leading medical groups, including the

American Medical Association and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, professionals who know better than anyone what kinds of skills and resources should be necessary for an abortion, which is one of the safest medical procedures out there.

I find it incredibly hard to believe that whole organizations of physicians would oppose any of these laws if they really did make clinics safer, Mr. Speaker, but I digress.

In Texas, the full implementation of the bill that is being challenged next week would force more than 75 percent of abortion clinics in that State to close.

In fact, with the limited implementation they have had to date, the number of clinics has been cut in half. If it is allowed to go into effect, only 10 clinics will remain to serve the 5.4 million Texas women of reproductive age.

What is even worse is that, while these laws are being masqueraded as efforts to make abortions safer, they are forcing more women down the dangerous path of attempting to end their pregnancies on their own.

A study by the Texas Policy Evaluation Project found that women who report barriers to abortion are more likely to self-induce an abortion, putting their lives at risk in the process. This sounds like 1955, not 2016.

Mr. Speaker, these laws are an absolute farce, and it is time to stop the sham. Women deserve to make the choices that work for them. If that means having an abortion, they should be able to do it safely, without traveling hundreds of miles or without waiting weeks to be seen.

My colleagues and I are here on the floor tonight because we stand with the women in Texas, with the women in Louisiana, and with the women across this country, women who want to make their own decisions about when, where, and how to make decisions that will change their lives, women whose voices are seldom represented in the legislative bodies, which are filled with men who are ready to take away their rights.

It is now my pleasure to yield to the illustrious Member from the State of Texas, someone who has been a constant fighter for everyone's rights, including women's rights, Congresswoman JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the distinguished gentlewoman from New Jersey, and I thank her for her leadership. As well, I thank my colleagues who are here on the floor of the House who have joined us.

Mr. Speaker, let me associate myself with the comments by the gentlewoman from New Jersey as they relate to Louisiana.

Let me be clear. As I stand here as a constituent of the State of Texas, as a Representative of the State of Texas, and as a woman who lives in Texas,

that Texas State Law HB2 has led to the closure of more than 20 abortion facilities in the State, taking the total number of providers down from 40 to 19, its true purpose being to take away women's rights to make their own healthcare decisions.

It could not be more blatant, again, to take away every woman's right to choose. No one stands on this floor tonight to promote and coddle abortion, but we do stand on the floor to protect a woman's right to choose her health and to protect her sacred right of making such decisions with her God, her family, and her physician.

How do HB2 and other bills have the right to interfere with that?

Let me also cite for you that a U.N. working group concluded that women in the United States inexplicably lag behind international human rights.

Pointing to data and research on public and political representation, economic and social rights, and health and safety protections, experts in the U.N. working group boldly acknowledged that there is a myth that women in the United States already enjoy all of the expected standards of rights and protections afforded under America.

Isn't that shameful? Under America, we are still denied our rights.

The reality is women in the United States are experiencing continued discrimination and daunting disparities that prevent the true ability for them to fully participate as equal members of society.

We stand here this evening to acknowledge one striking issue that will be argued at the Supreme Court next week, and that is this case—HB2—that has shut down clinics and has denied to women that any other access be open to them with this particular legislation. So we are advocating, as it goes to the Supreme Court, that this is an issue of human rights equals women's rights.

In America, we face a real problem of hypocrisy. Isn't it interesting that we say that we believe in the rights of families and in the sacredness of one's religion and in one's choice between one's family, doctor, and God, yet, Danielle Deaver was denied an abortion even as the uterus crushed the fetus.

This family wanted children. This family wanted to be able to have this child. Unfortunately, due to medical reasons, this young lady needed to have this baby taken. She was 22 weeks pregnant.

The real crime is that this was not allowed to take place in a legal manner because just 1 month earlier Nebraska had enacted the Nation's first fetal pain legislation that banned abortions after 20 weeks. It is not one that she wanted. It is not one that she desired.

It was because of health care and need and the fact that a tragedy had happened to her and her family; yet, she was denied. Women's rights equal human rights.

With respect to the Texas case, the Supreme Court is scheduled next Tuesday to hear the case of Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt, which will challenge the Texas law that has stripped thousands of women of access to their constitutional right.

Whole Woman's Health is the most consequential reproductive case in the last two decades that challenges the longstanding precedent of upholding a woman's constitutional right to access to safe and legal abortion services.

It is not a supporting of abortion, but a supporting of the right to choose. It is protective of women's health, of the life of the mother, and of the fact that you engage with your family, with your God, and with your physician.

Ever since the landmark Roe v. Wade decision, which was affirmed again in 1992 in Planned Parenthood v. Casey, the U.S. Supreme Court has made clear that women have a constitutional right to safe, legal abortion care and that States do not have a right to unduly interfere.

The Casey decision explained these matters involving the most intimate and personal choices a person may make in a lifetime, choices that are central to personal dignity and autonomy and that are central to the liberty protected by the 14th Amendment.

The so-called experts who testified in favor of HB2 have been discredited by multiple Federal courts and have been exposed for submitting testimony written by an anti-abortion activist with no medical training.

Texas' HB2 has led to the closure of more than 20 abortion facilities in the State, taking the total number of providers down from 40 to 19.

Mr. Speaker, as I close, let me give an additional personal anecdote that has taken place in the State of Texas. That is, of course, the masquerading of going into the Planned Parenthood offices that have provided these clinics and that have provided health care to college students and to those in rural communities where there are no doctors, OB/GYNs, or facilities to handle the medical needs of these women.

Remember what I said. Women's rights are human rights, and human rights are women's rights, so said by then-First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. It is true today.

As I have shown in documents, the United Nations working group has challenged whether or not we are providing women the same rights in America as men. That is a daunting question and an unfortunate answer because the U.N. working group has said no.

In the backdrop of this great discussion and of the Texas HB2, we had the circumstances of people falsifying who they were, stealing the ID of this person's high school classmates and imitating that he was looking for fetuses for research.

Interestingly enough, all of them were calling for the indictment of the

Planned Parenthood personnel. Yet, an unbiased grand jury in Texas did not indict those innocent persons who were having a discussion about what was legal, but they indicted those who falsified their documents and tried to mislead people.

Again, this case will be argued in the backdrop of so many who are trying to undermine women's rights. I will continue to work with my colleagues to find ways to address the illogical, unfair, and unjust disparity by reviewing and responding to unwarranted restrictions that result in the disparate access to these constitutionally protected rights.

One day I hope that we will learn and have as our constitutional premise that the Constitution works and that women's rights are human rights.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady for yielding, and I commend the Progressive Caucus for standing firm in defense of our hard-fought women's rights, which in truth, are constitutionally protected American rights.

We face a real problem in America with hypocrisy.

As a country founded on principles of liberty, justice, and equality, and a global leader in formulating international human rights standards, the United States fails to meet these basic standards for women who are denied equal access to legal rights and protections.

The United Nations Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and Practice (U.N. Working Group) recently issued a sobering statement and assessment detailing a picture of women's missing rights in America.

Upon visiting several states throughout the country, including my home state of Texas, the U.N. Working Group concluded that women in the United States inexplicably lag behind international human rights standards.

Pointing to data and research on public and political representation, economic and social rights, and health and safety protections, experts in the U.N. Working Group boldly acknowledged that there is a myth that women in the United States already enjoy all of the expected standards of rights and protections afforded under America.

The reality is women in the United States are experiencing continued discrimination and daunting disparities that prevent the true ability for them to fully participate as equal members of society.

One of the most alarming deficiencies for women in America is the inability to access basic health care and the imposition of devastating barriers to reproductive health and rights.

Too many women are suffering dire and deadly consequences.

Between 1990 and 2013, the maternal mortality rate for women in the U.S. has increased by 136%.

Black women are nearly 4 times more likely to die in childbirth, and states with high poverty rates have a 77% higher maternal mortality rate.

Our global experts and allies acknowledge that even though women's reproductive rights

in America are constitutionally protected, access to reproductive health services are severely abridged by states imposition of sweeping barriers and restrictions.

For instance, in many states, women must undergo unjustified and invasive medical procedures; endure groundless waiting periods; be subjected to harassment, violence, or other threatening conditions that remain constant throughout all reproductive health care clinics; and forced to forgo treatment or engage in lengthy and costly travel due to closure of clinics faced with burdensome licensing conditions.

These restrictions disproportionately discriminate against poor women.

The United States can and should do better!

It is unacceptable that women in America are facing a health care crisis so dire that the global community is denouncing it as a human rights violation.

Sadly, the direction States are taking will only further dismantle women's access to affordable and trustworthy reproductive healthcare.

While clinics are shutting down at drastic rates throughout the country, devastating restrictions and barriers imposed throughout Texas strike at the core of this abomination.

A Texas statute known as HB2 (House Bill 2), was enacted several years ago under false claims to promote women's health, when in fact it only set in motion dangerous restrictions on women's access to reproductive health care.

In addition to constant attacks on funding for reproductive health care clinics, abortion providers in Texas were forced to undergo impossible million dollar renovations and upgrades.

Denying hundreds of thousands of women health care services in Texas, nearly half of all reproductive health care clinics were forced to shut down, and now only 10 remain in the second largest state in the country.

Taking an important step toward restoring the constitutional rights of millions of women, the Supreme Court recently granted certiorari of *Whole Woman's Health v. Cole* to decide the fate of these remaining clinics and the lives of women in Texas, and throughout the nation.

I am proud to say that I, and a number of my colleagues, signed on to a number of amicus briefs submitted to the Supreme Court, detailing the hardship and injustice *Whole Woman's Health v. Cole* presents.

While we await the decision of the Supreme Court, in *Whole Woman's Health v. Cole*, we can only hope that the court will help turn the tide of attacks and diminution on women's rights.

No woman in America should be denied the dignity of being able to make choices about her body and healthcare.

Access to safe, legal, and unhindered healthcare must be realized by all women.

These simple facts can no longer be denied, and hypocrisy can no longer be tolerated.

A woman's right to choose to have an abortion is a constitutionally protected fundamental right.

More than 40 years ago in the landmark decision in *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113, (1973), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 7–2 that the right to privacy under the Due Process Clause

of the 14th Amendment extends to a woman's decision to have an abortion.

More recently, in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, 505 U.S. 833 (1992), the Supreme Court upheld *Roe v. Wade* and further explained that states could not enact medically unnecessary regulations meant to create substantial obstacles for women seeking abortion services.

Yet, fairness and access to exercise constitutionally protected fundamental rights is trampled on and denied to millions of women.

We cannot ignore the hypocrisy of imbalanced protection and access to fundamentally protected rights for women in America when it is easier to purchase and lawfully possess a firearm—even for a person on the terrorist watch list—than it is for a woman to exercise her constitutional right to terminate a pregnancy.

Mr. Speaker, this is neither fair nor right and it should not be rewarded.

As our nation continues to push back against horrific acts of violence at the hands of dangerous and irresponsible gun owners and gun dealers, and our nation's number one provider of women's healthcare continues to experience violent and devastating attacks on its services and facilities, it is time we find common ground as we look to resolve these polarizing issues that have all too often collided.

A woman's right to choose to have an abortion and an individual's right to possess a firearm are both constitutionally protected fundamental rights.

I will be working with my colleagues to find ways to address this illogical, unfair, and unjust disparity by reviewing and responding to unwarranted restrictions that result in disparate access to these constitutionally protected rights.

Namely, if a woman is required to wait several days, undergo a physical examination, receive counseling and education about alternative options before making the decision to terminate a pregnancy, an individual purchasing a deadly weapon should be required to jump through the same restrictive hoops and apparent safety measures.

I hope one day we can come to an agreement in America that it should not be harder for a woman to exercise her fundamental right to choose than it is for a person on the terrorist watch list to lawfully purchase and possess firearms.

At a minimum, I urge my colleagues to take a hard look at our constitutional protections and founding principles to resolve the growing crisis and unacceptable conditions of inferiority in America.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I thank the Congresswoman.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY).

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, let me thank Congresswoman WATSON COLEMAN and my pro-choice colleagues for inviting me to participate in this very timely and important conversation.

As we await to hear the Supreme Court's oral arguments next week in the case of *Whole Woman's Health*, we must reflect on not only the serious implications of this particular case, but on the attacks on choice that have

happened across the country this past year.

The case against Whole Woman's Health threatens to take the number of clinics in Texas down from 19 to just 10 for the 5.4 million women of reproductive age in Texas.

It will also set a legal precedent for years to come—perhaps decades—and it will shape the continued debate on a woman's right to choose.

□ 1845

Clearly, this unacceptable assault on women's health places an undue burden on the women of Texas when accessing abortion and family planning services.

I was proud to sign onto the Amicus brief with 162 congressional colleagues in support of Whole Woman's Health. This case, in particular, is a high profile and extreme example of the attacks that are becoming all too common across the United States.

While abortion still remains legal in the years since *Roe v. Wade*, opponents of choice have attempted with varying degrees of success to chip away at a woman's right to choose, this despite the fact that abortions are at their lowest rates since *Roe*.

Last year, we saw ideological attacks against Planned Parenthood from anti-choice activists attempting to mire the organization in scandal and force its closing. Those attacks stemmed from the illegally obtained and questionably edited so-called sting videos filmed by these same anti-choice activists.

Unsurprisingly, Planned Parenthood has been cleared of any wrongdoing in every State that has conducted an investigation. And to top it off, a grand jury in Missouri has indicted those responsible for filming the videos. It goes to show this campaign against Planned Parenthood has been nothing less than a fraud.

While I fundamentally support a woman's right to choose, it is important to point out that the clinics forced to close in Texas and across the U.S. serve women in ways far beyond providing safe abortions. In many cases, especially for low income and minority communities, these clinics serve as a primary healthcare provider. The services they provide include birth control, STD testing, cervical screenings, mammograms, counseling, and health education.

It is crucial that we understand reproductive rights and choice is not a women's issue. It is a civil rights issue, and it is an American issue.

In the City of Chicago, which I represent, women have widespread access to reproductive health services. But women in neighboring States like Indiana are often forced to cross State lines to find a clinic where she can have a safe abortion. This reality is unacceptable. Civil rights should not be dependent upon your ZIP Code.

The decision in *Whole Woman's Health* will ultimately hold national

implications. As a man, I am proud to stand up for choice. As a male Member of Congress, I take my responsibility to protect choice for women very seriously.

Statistics show women's economic output is dramatically impacted for the better when they determine the timing and spacing of their pregnancies. When she is able to plan pregnancy, a woman is more likely to advance in education and the workforce. Conversely, unplanned pregnancies too often force women to leave school and to delay or abandon career ambitions outright in order to care for children before they are ready and with limited support and resources.

In order for our society to ever truly be equal, women must have control of their bodies and determine with their partner if and when they want to have children. Here in Congress, most of us were afforded the right to plan our families. Should we deny this right to the constituents we serve?

The future of millions of young women depend on the decision to be handed down in cases like *Whole Woman's Health*, and it is my sincere hope that the Court remains consistent in recognizing a woman's right to privacy and protects her right to make her own choices about her health.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE), who is a member of the select panel that will undoubtedly be examining some of these issues.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New Jersey for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, 43 years ago, the Supreme Court ruled that women have a constitutional right to decide whether and when to have a child. Americans overwhelmingly think that was the right decision, and I agree.

But according to Bloomberg, at no time since 1973 has a woman's access to reproductive health care been more dependent on her income or ZIP Code. Politicians across the country are passing dangerous laws to block women from exercising their constitutionally protected right to choose, and their efforts are working.

That is why the case before the Supreme Court is so important. As the Justices weigh the *Whole Woman's Health* case, I hope they recognize that these shameful attacks undermine *Roe v. Wade*, put women's health at risk, and must be struck down. A woman's right to make her own healthcare decisions means nothing without the ability to exercise that right.

If the Court upholds these harmful laws, it could pave the way for similar restrictions at the Federal level, and Republicans are already trying. We cannot let that happen.

Women deserve better. They deserve the freedom to make their own healthcare choices.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE).

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New Jersey for leading this Special Order hour on this very important issue.

As my colleagues have mentioned, the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt* next Tuesday, challenging HB2, a Texas law that has already led to the closing of more than 20 abortion providers in the State.

Now, this is just the most recent example of the attack which is underway all across this country on women's health, not just in the State of Texas, but in many other places around our country. As was just mentioned, politicians are passing laws and enacting regulations to deny women full reproductive health care.

In fact, just last Sunday, Ohio Governor John Kasich signed a law defunding Planned Parenthood. During his time in office, half of Ohio's abortion clinics have closed.

One in three women will have to make a decision in their lifetime if an abortion is the right decision for them. I am very proud to be a member of the Pro-Choice Caucus in the Congress. I know this is an extremely personal decision for women, a decision that should be made between a woman and her physician, and a decision the government has no right to intrude upon, a constitutionally protected right as established in our law. It is absolutely critical that women in every part of this country have access to full reproductive health care, including safe abortion services.

If the Court upholds *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*, there will be only ten clinics available to the women in the State of Texas. Some would have to travel 7½ hours roundtrip to get the health care that they need.

This is settled law in our country. The Court addressed this issue in *Roe v. Wade* and again in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. It reminds us of the importance of the decision that our Supreme Court will make in connection with this case that they will hear on Tuesday.

Doctors are being required, under Texas provisions, to affiliate with nearby hospitals, and it also limits abortions to ambulatory surgical centers. These measures are designed to reduce or even eliminate, in some circumstances, access to abortion services. Although there are arguments made that these are medically necessary or they are, in fact, intended to improve women's health, Nancy Northup, who is the president of the Center for Reproductive Rights, said it best when she said, the "laws . . . pretend to be about women's health but actually are designed to close clinics." And that is exactly what they intend to do.

These regulations and requirements are very disputed medical value. There are things like limits on nonsurgical drug-induced abortions, mandated building standards for clinics, or 2- or 3-day waiting periods. All of these things are intended to infringe upon a woman's right to choose and to make it more difficult for women to access full reproductive health care.

We all have responsibility in the Congress to stand up against this. I am proud to join my colleagues tonight to say that we will continue to fight to ensure that women have access to all of the reproductive health care they need and that we will resist any effort to infringe upon this important constitutional protection.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS).

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New Jersey for her leadership.

It frightens me that in 2016, we are still fighting the same politically motivated battles to roll back women's rights. It has been 43 years since the landmark Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade* made abortion a constitutional right.

Year after year, GOP lawmakers and anti-choice extremists have tried to tear it down. States like Texas have passed egregious laws to disenfranchise women and infringe on their ability to access safe and legal abortions.

Their State law has cut the number of abortion providers in Texas in half, increasing delays and severely limiting access and, frankly, punishing women for exercising their civil liberties.

This obvious war on women has got to stop. No law should control a woman's right to make decisions about her own body—no government, no legislature, no Congress. A woman's personal decision should be between her and her doctor and nobody else. Every woman deserves equal access to all forms of safe and affordable reproductive health.

As the Supreme Court prepares to hear this case, I will continue to stand with women in North Carolina and women across the country in the fight to protect a woman's right to choose.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, we thank you for this opportunity to raise what is a very important issue in 2016. Women are being attacked on several fronts, whether it is on cases that are being brought before courts or whether it is in this House. We have got to recognize that this decision, the decision for a woman to make with regard to her reproductive rights, have already been established. And we as Congress and we as a society of lawmakers and policymakers need to do all that we can to facilitate those rights to ensure that we do not discriminate against people. To discriminate against women in this regard is illegal, and it is unacceptable.

It is time for us to recognize our responsibility to be stewards of the laws which have been put before us and to uphold the Constitution that we have pledged to support and to uphold and to recognize that the abridgement of a woman's right is the abridgement of a civil right, and that is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

GUANTANAMO BAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KATKO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, the safety of Americans, the security of America, should never be jeopardized for any reason, but certainly not simply for the purpose of fulfilling a campaign pledge.

The President recently released a plan about closing Guantanamo Bay, and it demonstrates to me—and I think to the American people—that his plan is misguided, as well as his priorities.

The proposal to close Guantanamo proves that his priority lies in leaving behind a legacy rather than protecting the American people and American national security. As a matter of fact, it presents nothing more than another attempt to fulfill a campaign promise and distracts, based on the timing, from the administration's failure to defeat ISIS.

Perhaps it explains why the administration missed a separate congressionally mandated deadline last week for a plan to counter radical Islamic extremism. So he missed that deadline but was on time for an incomplete plan to close Guantanamo and the detention facility for terrorists that remains on that post.

Now, Congress is a coequal branch of government. It is coequal to the President, equal in power, equal in representation of America's interests, and it has come to a different conclusion than the President. We have absolutely strong and justified reasons for our concern.

Mr. Speaker, last September, the Director of National Intelligence reported that 30 percent of transfer detainees are confirmed or suspected to be reengaging in terrorist activities. Thirty percent. They are not necessarily in some prison overseas; 30

percent of them are out running around conducting terrorist activities.

The director's report clearly shows that the detainee transfer process is deeply flawed. It poses a real, significant, unnecessary, and unacceptable risk to the security of our Nation.

Just this week, Spanish and Moroccan police arrested four members of a jihadi cell that sought to recruit for ISIS fighters, including one former Guantanamo detainee who once fought against Americans in Afghanistan. I mean, that is this week. I guess he is part of the 30 percent or maybe it is 30-point something now, and I suspect it will just keep going up the more we release.

The President claims that Guantanamo, GTMO, weakens our national security by furthering the recruiting propaganda of Islamist terrorist groups, essentially saying we can't keep these people in prison because it makes the terrorists mad and it makes them want to do more terrorist things.

□ 1900

I guess we shouldn't put gang members in prison either, because their gang buddies would then be mad and want to conduct more gang activities in their communities. Now, based on that logic, we should let all these people out.

Al Qaeda has waged war against the United States long before Guantanamo, long before the detention facility was constructed in Cuba; right? It didn't exist when the World Trade Center was first bombed in 1993, when the U.S. Embassies in East Africa and Tanzania and Kenya were bombed in 1998. It didn't exist when the USS *Cole* was attacked in 2000, and it certainly didn't exist on 9/11 when Islamists attacked our country.

Islamist terror organizations have been and will be at war with Western culture regardless of whether GTMO remains open or is closed. Of that, you can be sure.

The President claims cost savings. His plan, he says, to move or transfer detainees abroad and to the U.S. would lower costs between \$140 million and \$180 million annually, which is absolutely nothing to sneeze at. I will let everybody know: I had a hearing today in Homeland Security where they wasted \$180 million on human resources programs—that is \$180 million gone—and 300-some-odd-million dollars for employees at the Department of Homeland Security that are home on leave because of doing something improper, while they adjudicate the issue.

While it is expensive, let's compare the cost, the immediate impact of not having these terrorists in prison.

The 9/11 attacks cost our country over \$230 billion initially. So we are looking at \$140 million to \$180 million annually to \$230 billion initially, and that doesn't include the damage made

to the airline industry or the additional costs that our whole country has had to endure due to increased security, whether it is at the airport, whether it is at the grocery store, or whether it is in your home. And it certainly doesn't include the cost to our freedoms.

The President's proposal fails to provide the critical details required by law, the law that he signed. His proposal failed to provide critical details, including the exact cost and the location of an alternate facility. Where does he want to put it and how much does it cost? These are required by law, and he hasn't enumerated them. Yet he has had 7 years. This is a campaign pledge. He has had 7 years to come up with this information. Somehow this is Congress' fault? I don't think so. He is just simply unwilling or unable to state where he is going to keep these dangerous terrorists that are currently at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.

Common sense tells us that the administration is simply avoiding fueling a political outcry when he specifies where these individuals are going to be held, because where he has even implied where they are going to be held, there has been a significant outcry, and it has been bipartisan.

Citizens of the United States don't want these terrorists in their neighborhood. They don't want them in their town. They don't want to be around them. That is exactly what the problem is with his proposal. The plan is just more politics and not any substance. It fails to satisfy the requirements mandated by Congress in the law that he, himself, signed.

You might ask who is still at GTMO. I mean, it has been years now going on. Who is still there? I want to remind everybody, Mr. Speaker, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind of 9/11, the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and the hijacking of United Airlines flight 93, that is who is there.

Or Mustafa Ahmed Hawsawi, who supported al Qaeda's terrorist network as a facilitator, financial manager, and media committee member. This support included the movement and funding of 9/11 hijackers to the U.S. to participate in terrorist attacks orchestrated by Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. He is affiliated with a number of high-level al Qaeda operatives. That is who is in that prison. Do you want him in your neighborhood? Do you want them in your neighborhood?

It is against the law to transfer these terrorist detainees to American soil. It is against the law. The President signed this law. A bipartisan majority in Congress has, year after year after year, reaffirmed restrictions on transferring these detainees to American soil.

As a matter of fact, the provisions of this were first included in the annual

National Defense Authorization Act, the NDAA, in a Democrat-led Congress in 2009. So it is not partisan. In fact, the most recent NDAA passed with the same provisions with 370 votes in the House and 91 votes in the Senate before once again the President signed the law himself. He is simply attempting to make this a partisan issue by seeking to contradict the will of the American people through their duly elected representatives.

Ultimately, the plan is simply not safe. The American people don't want GTMO terrorists in their communities, in their backyard, and for good reason. These terrorists should be tried. They should be tried under the military tribunal provisions already laid out in the \$10 million-plus courtroom facility that the taxpayers already paid for. Many of us have visited it. It is sitting right there on the post. We are waiting for these detainees to go to that courtroom that we paid for and be tried. That is fine with us. That is fine with Members of Congress, and that is fine with the American people. We don't need to bring them to America to do that. Congress is going to uphold its promise that any plan that seeks to transfer these dangerous war criminals does not happen.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER), my good friend.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY), my colleague, for organizing this Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely important that the American people need to learn about the President's proposal and what impact it is going to have on our country.

Folks, closing GTMO and transferring these dangerous terrorists to United States soil is a terrible and an illogical idea. Instead of putting America first, the President once again continues to weaken our national security by pursuing decisions apparently geared toward solidifying some form of his legacy. I am just not sure who he is trying to impress here.

Did you know that as many as one in three—the gentleman from Pennsylvania said 30 percent and rising; with the latest figures I have, 33 percent—one in three former GTMO detainees have returned or are suspected of returning to terrorist organizations? One in three, Mr. Speaker. In baseball, that is a .333 batting average. That is good enough to get you into the Hall of Fame in many instances.

Speaking of Hall of Famers, Mr. Speaker, the most infamous former GTMO detainee, one of their hall of famers, if you will, is Ibrahim al Qosi, once the cook for none other than Osama bin Laden himself.

Al Qosi pled guilty to charges of conspiracy and providing material support to al Qaeda. Al Qosi was transferred from GTMO to Sudan, his home coun-

try, after 2 years. Well, since his release, he has become an influential leader within—you guessed it—al Qaeda in Yemen.

What was the President thinking would happen? Well, the President's plan includes "transferring the bulk of remaining detainees to other countries and moving the rest because they are deemed too dangerous to transfer abroad to an as yet undetermined detention facility in the United States."

Mr. Speaker, a recent poll from Rasmussen confirms that the majority—56 percent, in fact—of the American people widely disapprove of the President's irresponsible plan to close GTMO. For those who side with the President's plan and attempt to rationalize the fact that these dangerous and deadly terrorists will be in supermax facilities, let us not forget about the prison break that happened in one of those facilities in New York just last year.

The two men who escaped weren't masterminds. They weren't terrorists of the first order like these guys are. Can you imagine what masterminds who plot terror, who love death and violence almost as much if not more than we love life and liberty, can you imagine what these masterminds of terrorism could do? Who knows how much help they could get from the outside, what their hall of famers could help them do.

Mr. Speaker, I am not willing to find out what they can do with the aid of their hall of famers on the outside, and I don't think the American public is willing to find out, either. Fortunately, as the gentleman from Pennsylvania said, Congress has already taken preventive measures by including language in the recent National Defense Authorization Act, the NDAA, that would bar Guantanamo detainees from being transferred to the United States, and the President signed this legislation into law.

For the President to close GTMO, current law must be changed. Oh, I forget. He doesn't seem to be hampered by the idea of current law. New legislation would have to be written, Mr. Speaker. It would have to be approved by Congress and sent to the President's desk again. Let me just tell you: I, for one, will not support any measure that will allow these dangerous terrorists to be transferred to the United States. America and Americans are far too precious to take this kind of risk.

I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY), my friend, for hosting this Special Order hour tonight.

I want to read something that was written by Michelle Jesse, where Secretary of State John Kerry testified in front of a Senate committee hearing, I think it was yesterday. It was pointed out to the Secretary that this very guy who was the cook of Osama bin Laden,

al Qosi, had indeed gone back to terrorism and to trying to kill Americans yet again.

I guess Mr. Kerry in seven simple words probably dismantled the President's argument about why it was a good idea, maybe unwittingly, maybe unknowingly. But when it was pointed out to him that that terrorist was back on the battlefield seeking to destroy Americans and kill Americans again, Mr. Kerry's simple response was: "Well . . . he's not supposed to be doing that."

Mr. Speaker, you can't make this stuff up.

I want to thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. PERRY. I thank my good friend from Texas and agree with him that 30 percent is way too high. One is too many, but 30 percent is way—way too high.

I yield to my good friend from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his leadership on this issue. We both are on the Committee on Homeland Security, so we are acutely aware of some of the terrorist dangers that are out there because we hear it in a lot of committee meetings, classified briefings, and other things.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that Congress act proactively against a President who holds a personal legacy above the law. Law does not bend to legacy. Law is obeyed, respected, and even honored for the order it brings to our Nation.

Disturbingly, this principle of our Founders seems to be at odds with a growing segment of politicians. That is why I introduced House Resolution 617. House Resolution 617 gives authority to the Speaker of the House to initiate litigation against any executive branch official should they file an illegal order by transferring detainees to U.S. soil. This commonsense approach provides a constitutional check on the President.

Now, whether in Charleston, Colorado, or Kansas, he should not bring American families, neighbors, and communities into close proximity with some of the most dangerous terrorists in the world.

Unfortunately, the President has forgotten about the people. He has forgotten that they don't travel in armored motorcades. They have no security details guarding their every step, looking around every corner.

I know my constituents are fearful of this proposal by the President because the folks in Charleston, South Carolina, have been fearful. The Navy brig the President is proposing to bring these terrorists to is a very, very short distance from an elementary school.

I would also call on the candidates for President of the United States when they are campaigning around South Carolina, ask them a question: Do they support housing terrorists in

our neighborhoods—that is a legitimate question—near our children who are at schools or near our churches where we worship?

Mr. Speaker, the language that prevents transferring detainees to U.S. soil was actually put in by a Democratic Congress and passed in bipartisan fashion ever since. It was further reaffirmed in last year's NDAA. It is against the law for the President to transfer detainees—I am going to stop using the word "detainees"—terrorists. It is against the law for a President of the United States to transfer terrorists from Guantanamo Bay to the United States, to our soil.

□ 1915

That is in the law. It has been in the law since the Democrats controlled this body. We just reaffirmed it this year. This isn't a Republican or Democratic issue. It is bipartisan. It is against the law.

Now, I visited GTMO. When I was a freshman in Congress 5 years ago, I went down there to see it for myself. Some of the biggest names on the terrorist roster are located there due to the brave efforts of our men and women in combat to capture these guys on the battlefield.

We have released a lot of them. Thirty percent, as you heard the gentleman from Texas say, of the terrorists that we have released have returned to terrorism or we suspect they have return to terrorism. That is based on intel.

Thirty percent is a large number of the number that we have released. Whether it is South Carolina, Colorado, Kansas, or any other State, no State should be a terrorist dumping ground for this administration.

So let's follow the law. Let's follow the law passed in a bipartisan manner through the United States Congress. Let's force the President to follow the law.

Because, if he doesn't, let's pass H.R. 1617 and give the Speaker of the House the legal grounds and the authority to file a lawsuit to put an injunction in place to keep him from violating the law, violating a law, by the way, that he signed.

Mr. PERRY. I think sometimes it seems like the President would like Americans to be more concerned with the rights of terrorists than their own rights.

I wonder about and think about all those MPs, all those members of the services that go down and do a tour at Guantanamo and have horrific things happen to them and still act professionally in the face of these terrorists every single day. That is who we should be thinking about, those people and the American people and their rights.

I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), the majority whip.

Mr. SCALISE. I appreciate my friend from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) for leading this Special Order to highlight, Mr. Speaker, what is at stake in this latest proposal by President Obama.

As you can see from the passion that my friend from South Carolina just exhibited, this is an issue that rivets throughout the country. People understand what is at stake. People across America know that there are bad people around the world that want to do us harm.

ISIS is on the move. They are not a JV team. They are not being detained. In fact, they are recruiting Westerners. In fact, they are recruiting Americans into the battle.

So you look at Guantanamo Bay. And this is something that, for whatever reason, has become a rallying cry for the political left. They wanted to close it down.

They wanted to bring those terrorists into the United States, to give them taxpayer-funded rights that the President can't even identify, but that everybody acknowledges they don't deserve. We don't need that kind of threat here.

When you look at the President's proposal this week, I think he has made it clear that he has put the political priorities of the far left elements over the safety and security of the United States of America. This would put Americans at risk by bringing these terrorists into the United States.

Just go look at what kind of people are being held at Guantanamo Bay. These are the worst of the worst. These are people who have plotted and actually carried out attacks against American servicemen and -women. They have killed Americans in the battlefield, killed our troops. These are the people who have carried out those attacks.

So they are being held at GTMO, as it is called, because that is the best place to ensure that we don't have to see them again on the battlefield.

Over 100 of those who have already been released have gone back into the battlefield, in many cases, to kill American soldiers. Why would the President want to give them extra rights? Why would the President want to bring them into the United States of America?

So, Mr. Speaker, we rise today and highlight this to point out, number one, what the President's intent really is and what the President is trying to do. This is something the President has asked Congress to take up.

Mr. Speaker, we are making it very clear it is not going to happen. This House will not allow these terrorists being detained at Guantanamo Bay to enter into the United States to undermine America's national security.

They are over there for a reason, which is because of terrorist attacks they have not only plotted, but carried

out, against Americans. So, Mr. Speaker, they belong in Guantanamo Bay. Under this House, they are going to stay in Guantanamo Bay and not be brought into the United States.

Again, I thank my colleague from Pennsylvania for this Special Order that he is leading.

Mr. PERRY. I thank the majority whip for his passion and his remarks. While he talks about the battlefield, we are going to hear from somebody that has been to the battlefield.

The other thing about these terrorists that are spending their time in Guantanamo Bay is that they turned America into a battlefield in New York City.

I yield to my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN).

Mr. ZELDIN. I would like to congratulate the gentleman from Pennsylvania on his recent promotion to general and for all of his service not just here in Congress, but also in uniform.

This week President Obama sent an incomplete plan to Congress to close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. This plan would send terrorists back home overseas and even bring high-risk terrorists to detention centers here in the United States.

There are still so many unanswered questions with regard to the President's proposal, for example, what happens when we capture the next 2 or 10 or 30 terrorists? Where are we going to question them? Where are we going to detain them? What is the exact placement inside the United States for those detainees currently in GTMO? Also, what legal protections and rights will detainees have if we bring them into the U.S. and into our civilian court system?

Make no mistake. These detainees at GTMO are the worst of the worst of the worst. All the variables left out of the President's plan shows that this really isn't a plan. It is a political campaign pledge from 8 years ago.

The facility at Guantanamo Bay has not only served as a place to keep some of the most dangerous terrorists in the world, but also as a tactical and strategic facility where intelligence is gathered to prevent potential attacks against our country and ensure U.S. national security.

While the President was speaking this week, it was reported that a former prisoner at Guantanamo Bay was one of four terror suspects affiliated with ISIS who was arrested for his alleged role in plotting terror attacks in Spain. Just one week earlier another former prisoner at Guantanamo was pictured in a number of videos that called for jihad against the Saudi Kingdom and the Western world.

These two cases are not just coincidence. Just a few months ago the Office of the Director of National Intelligence reported that one-third of freed Guantanamo prisoners are either suspected

or confirmed of returning to terrorist activities. One-third.

The President is willing to compromise the security and safety of American lives for the sake of his own legacy. Bringing dangerous terrorists to U.S. soil is a dangerous political move that could not come at a worse time, as groups like ISIS continue to spread across the Middle East, Europe, and the rest of the world. Again, Guantanamo is a key strategic and national security asset.

For the sake of our national security, I will do everything in my power to ensure that the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay remains open. I would rather have terrorists in GTMO or dead than in U.S. detention facilities or back on the battlefield.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. PERRY. Folks, there you have it. The case has been made. At this point, it is essentially irrefutable. You can't see what the upside is to bringing these people to the United States and closing the facility.

Al Qaeda, ISIS, radical Islamists, are not going to stop. They are never going to stop. It certainly has nothing to do with where people are detained. It has nothing to do with that.

They hate the West. They hate America. That is not going to change anytime soon. Allowing these people, these terrorists, to live within our community is not going to solve any part of that equation.

Mr. Speaker, the President has had 7 years to come up with a plan, 7 years for specifics, and, yet, he came this week and provided none of those specifics.

Earlier this year I asked the President about the details and about the transfer already conducted of these terrorists to other countries: What are the details? What has American given? How much has it cost us?

I didn't realize at the time that we have already transferred detainees to 55 countries around the world. We have no idea, as American citizens, from the most transparent administration in history—so-called by the administration—what the details of those arrangements are, but we do know this. These terrorists have been transferred to the likes of Yemen, Pakistan, Libya, Iran, and Iraq.

What kind of judgment is that, Mr. Speaker? We are sending terrorists from a detention facility to terrorist nations, nations where terrorism thrives, and expecting them not to re-engage, expecting them not to join the fight.

They are going to join the fight and they are coming after us. The President needs to quit being selfish and needs to be responsible with the security of his country.

I yield back the balance of my time.

ORIGINAL BLACK HISTORY MONTH RESOLUTION OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, tonight we will take up H. Res. 597, the Original Black History Month Resolution of 2016.

This resolution is one that has been endorsed by and cosponsored by 24 Members of the House. I want to thank each of them for their support of this resolution. It was introduced on February 2, 2016. I also want to thank the leadership for allowing us to have this time tonight to talk about Black history.

More specifically, tonight we are going to talk about Black history as it relates to hallowed grounds, the sites of African American memories. But before going there, I think it appropriate to note that the House of Representatives has passed Black history resolutions since 2007.

In 2007, the 110th Congress, we had a resolution that passed. It passed by voice vote. In 2008, the resolution passed 367-0. In 2009, it passed 420-0. In 2010, 402-0. Since 2010, of course, we have not taken votes on any resolutions, generally speaking.

I am honored to speak at this time of hallowed grounds, sites of African American memories. I am honored to do so because there are many persons who have made great sacrifices so that many of us would have the opportunities that we have. Many persons have suffered great pain so that some individuals can have great gains.

Tonight we will discuss some of the pain because pain is associated with hallowed grounds.

There are some things that we should never forget. We should never and cannot forget—nor should we—Pearl Harbor. This is a place where we have hallowed grounds. I have been to Pearl Harbor, and I know of the memorial that is there.

We should not forget 9/11 and the World Trade Center. Hallowed grounds exist on the site where the World Trade Center was taken down.

Because atrocities can sometimes create these hallowed grounds, we will sometimes find that things that we

have to say are not always appealing, but the truth is that we cannot sanitize history.

Efforts to sanitize history will only create what we call his story, someone else's version, but it is not the true history.

Tonight we will not sanitize, but we will, in fact, be truthful about some of those hallowed grounds. Some of them have atrocious events associated with them.

Let us start with hallowed grounds, places, sites, if you will, of Black history and some of the memories—not all good—associated with the African American lives that have been lost in this country, unfortunately.

□ 1930

Let us start with Mother Bethel AME Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, established in 1794. This is a place that is, without question, of hallowed ground, because this place is the home of one of the Underground Railroads to freedom.

It was the Union Station, if you will, of the Underground Railroad to freedom, where slaves would be stationed and they could receive sanctuary as they were moving from this country to Canada and moving to freedom.

This church was founded by the Honorable Richard Allen, who was a former slave himself, and became the founder of the AME Church. In fact, he was the first bishop of the church.

This site, if you will, had many people who were, but for the people who were there to give them aid and comfort, who were lost and were people who were trying to find their way on freedom's road, the Underground Railroad, if you will, to freedom, the Underground Railroad.

Well, I am going to quote now Harriet Tubman, because Harriet Tubman reminded us of something that is important as it relates to African American history and some of the incidents that we will talk about.

Harriet Tubman reminded us that she freed 1,000 slaves, but she went on to say: "I could have freed another thousand if they had only known that they were slaves." If they had only known that they were slaves, they, too, could have been freed.

The point that she was making is—and was—that people who are held in servitude can become so conditioned to their servitude that they don't really understand the condition that they are actually existing under and, as a result, they accept it.

Harriet Tubman did not. Those who were part of the Underground Railroad to freedom did not accept servitude, and they wanted to have freedom; and this place, this church, Mother Bethel, was a place of freedom and a sanctuary for those who were seeking new opportunities and a better life in a better place.

Another site, another place for us to remember the hallowed grounds that led to freedom, Seneca Village in New York City. The time of its existence was from 1825 to 1857. It was the site of a free middle class community. It was a small village, founded by Black people in 1825. And it is interesting to note that 10 percent of the African American voters who lived in New York lived in Seneca Village—10 percent.

There were other persons living there as well. The Irish were there. The Germans were there. These were immigrants as well.

The unfortunate circumstance about this hallowed ground, however, is that it was razed. Seneca Village was razed so that Central Park could rise. And the unfortunate circumstance further is that the stain of invidious eminent domain is Central Park's shame. It is so unfortunate that people were forced to leave their homes so that Central Park could have a home.

Another site that we will mention tonight is Freedmen's Town, the historic district in Houston, Texas. Freedmen's Town was one of the first and the largest of the post-Civil War Black urban communities in the United States. It was settled by emancipated slaves in 1866. Although African Americans lived in Houston before and during the Civil War, Freedmen's Town represents the first community of free Black Houstonians in the city. It was, however, more than just a community. It was, indeed, a town. It had the infrastructure. It had the streets that were made of brick. It had lawyers and doctors. It had persons who were teachers, professionals, artisans, tradesmen.

I had the privilege of going into Freedmen's Town not so long ago to the home of one of the prominent lawyers who lived there at that time.

Preserving Freedmen's Town has become quite a challenge, but there are people in the community and Fourth Ward who are committed to its preservation. I will mention one such person. This would be Ms. Gladys House, who has worked tirelessly to maintain the character and infrastructure in Freedmen's Town.

Another site would be Greenwood, the Greenwood community, also known as Black Wall Street. This was in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It was the site of a race riot in 1921. This riot lasted from May 31 to June 1, when the unthinkable—the unthinkable—occurred. The unthinkable occurred because of an allegation of a Black male assaulting a White female. A sexual assault was alleged. I don't know that it was ever proven. I haven't been able to find any place in the readings and the research that I have done to substantiate the fact that it was proven. But it was alleged, an attempted sexual assault, if you will.

This attack on this community of African Americans led to 10,000 people

being left homeless—10,000—35 or more city blocks were destroyed by fire, and estimates range from 39 to 300 people having been killed by various sources. We have found this to be the information that we can share. The residents rebuilt the community within 5 years. However, the community later declined because of desegregation in the mid-20th century.

This incident, however, is something that we can never forget, just as we can't forget Pearl Harbor, just as we can't forget 9/11. The incident was something that took place and had the blessings of the constabulary. The police actually helped set fire to the property of the people who lived there. Later, a police chief apologized, and this was done in September of 2013. An apology was given for the attack that took place many years before, between May 31 and June 1 of 1921.

Hallowed ground.

We should remember the Bryant's Grocery and Meat Market in Money, Mississippi, because on August 28, 1955, Emmett Till was murdered in Money, Mississippi. He was murdered because of an allegation of his having accosted a White female.

In these times, we don't like to discuss it. I know that it makes some uncomfortable. But during these times, it was dangerous for Black men to speak in an unkind way to a White female. In fact, it was unkind for them to look at White females in a certain way. As a result, many Black men lost their lives because of allegations that were never proven with reference to flirting or attempted rape, in many cases.

Well, as the case was with Emmett Till, he was a 14-year-old child from Chicago. He did not know the ways of the South. His mother had given him warnings before he left, but her admonitions were not enough. At some point, he went into this store, and the owner's wife alleges that he made a pass at her, if you will. Some said he whistled; others said he winked. There are many accounts, but it was never proven that he did anything.

After learning of this alleged incident, the owner of the store, with a friend, literally went into the home of Emmett Till, went into his home and took him from his home. They took him away and they beat him. They took him to a river, the Tallahatchie River, and after actually bludgeoning his eyes out, they threw him in the river, and his body was later discovered. His mother was so shocked, and the country was so shocked by what happened, that it instigated a movement in the country. Much of the movement led to the civil rights movement.

But the one thing that happened that his mother did that made a difference for many of us who are alive today was she allowed him to have an open casket so that the world could see the horrors of invidious segregation.

In 1955, what happened, his death, led to the passage of the Emmett Till Un-solved Civil Rights Crime Act of 2007. His death in 1955 led to the passage of this act in 2007. It was introduced by Congressman JOHN LEWIS, and it authorizes \$13.5 million annually, over a 10-year period, for Federal investigations of civil rights violations resulting in death prior to 1970.

However, it is interesting to note, and I hope that all within the sound of my voice will hear this, the bill has never been funded. The bill has never been funded.

The next site that we shall visit will be the National City Lines, and we will talk about bus No. 2857 in Montgomery, Alabama. The time of the Montgomery Bus Boycott was 1955 through 1956. It lasted 381 days. This bus boycott took place because of invidious discrimination alleged and occurring—excuse me, because it actually happened—against Ms. Rosa Parks.

Ms. Parks was a passenger on the bus and was required to give up her seat, which she refused to do not because she was tired of working, but because she was tired of invidious discrimination, if you will. She was tired of having to surrender her seat to persons simply because of her hue, the hue of her skin, so she refused to get up from her seat, and her actions started a boycott that lasted 381 days.

But there was also a lawsuit that was filed, *Browder v. Gayle*, and that lawsuit went all the way to the Supreme Court. The boycott and the lawsuit complemented each other.

Many times you need the protest movement to let those who are in power know that you are not satisfied with your circumstances, and they protested for the 381 days. The Supreme Court ruled, and they ruled that this type of segregation was unconstitutional. As a result, Dr. King became very prominent in the country. Ms. Rosa Parks, of course, did, as well as Reverend Abernathy.

Another site, the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, and January 10, 1957, was the date the Southern Christian Leadership Conference was born at this church. This church was a church home of many of the civil rights leaders that participated in many of the boycotts that took place. It was after the successful Montgomery Bus Boycott that Dr. King invited other leaders to associate themselves with him and the civil rights movement at this church. The church became a national historic site in 1980.

Another site that we should remember in memorializing and making note of historic places that are a part of hallowed grounds for African Americans would be Little Rock Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

September 1957, this was the date that a desegregation effort took place, and there was much resistance to this

desegregation. This occurred 3 years after the ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*. There were nine young children who tried to attend this all-White Little Rock Central High School, and these nine young children were accosted; they were threatened.

The violence that you could see on the faces of the persons who did not want innocent children in their school is something that you will remember. If ever you have an opportunity to review some of the old news reels, you can see the anger that I speak of. President Eisenhower ended up having to use Federal troops to desegregate this school. The event was heavily televised, and the news stories are available for those who would like to see.

Another site would be the Woolworth's Store, the five-and-dime, in Greensboro, North Carolina. This was the place where four young Black males decided that they were going to have a sit-in.

Sit-in simply means that they were going to either be served, or they would sit there until they were served or removed.

These students showed the kind of resistance that inspired others around the country to take up the same cause, to decide that they too would engage in sit-ins. While this was not the first sit-in, it is one of the most famous, if not the most famous sit-in, and the Woolworth's Store was finally desegregated in 1965.

Hallowed grounds.

Another site to remember is the Birmingham jail in Birmingham, Alabama. April 16, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King wrote his "Letter from Birmingham Jail," one of the most celebrated pieces of literary history. This letter has been studied by historians and is considered one of his most important works.

He, in this letter, defines the non-violent civil rights movement. It was this letter that was published in the *Liberation Magazine* in June of 1963 that led many people to understand the horrors of the civil rights movement, the horrors that civil rights workers suffered during the civil rights movement, and some of the suffering that people were enduring who were living under segregation.

□ 1945

Another site to remember would be the Lincoln Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. August 28 of 1963 is when Dr. King gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

This march was one of the most successful in the country's history. 200,000 to 300,000 people attended. This march helped to popularize the movement and support necessary for the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Another site to remember as we view hallowed grounds, sites of African American memories, would be the 16th

Street Baptist Church. On September 15 of 1963, a dastardly terrorist act occurred right here in the United States of America in Birmingham, Alabama.

Terrorists bombed the 16th Street Baptist Church, killing 4 young girls, and 22 others were wounded. The church was repaired and reopened on June 7 of 1964. In 1980, it was added to the National Registry as a historical place.

Another site of hallowed grounds is the Edmond Pettus Bridge. Much is always talked about when we talk about hallowed grounds with respect to the Edmund Pettus Bridge because, on March 7, 1965, about 600 peaceful protesters were attacked and assaulted by the constabulary.

They were beaten back to the place where they started their march. The Honorable JOHN LEWIS was a member of this group of persons, peaceful protesters, who wanted to march from Selma to Montgomery. This violence against the marchers was televised.

One of the things that we have noticed as we reviewed these sites and these incidents, these atrocities, is that television helped to change the American psyche because people had an opportunity by way of television to see what others were actually experiencing, very much akin to what we are seeing now with cell phones and some of the things that are happening to persons at the hands of the constabulary.

Much of what people would say others did not believe. But when you have the actual pictures to see the representation by way of pictures, it can make a difference in the psyche of people.

As a result of this march, many having suffered, we found that the civil rights law of 1965 was passed. This was done because people suffered and because the Edmund Pettus Bridge became a place for us to memorialize as hallowed grounds.

Moving forward, the civil rights acts, many of them—the history of those who were able to accomplish things by way of the courts is all predicated upon a lot of suffering that took place in this country. Too many people suffered so that I could have the opportunity to be here tonight to talk about these hallowed grounds.

I feel that it is my duty to do this. I know that talking about these things can create a good deal of discomfort for people. We ought to feel a certain amount of discomfort because what happened was, without question, something that this country should never want to see happen again and should never have happened ever to anyone.

But we must remember our history just as we are going to remember Pearl Harbor, just as we are going to remember 9/11, and just as we are going to remember World Wars I and II.

We have to remember the history in this country, the atrocities that occurred against African Americans as

they were trying their very best to live peaceful lives. Hallowed grounds, the sites of African American memories.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the time tonight to bring up these hallowed grounds and to talk about Black History Month, especially as it relates to some of the things that happened in this country.

But I also want to say this, Mr. Speaker. Notwithstanding all of the things that I have said and all of the memories that I have recounted, it is important for us to note that the country has truly come a long way.

I still contend that, notwithstanding all of the atrocities, this is a great place for Americans of all hues to find their way in the world.

This is a special country. I love my country, but I don't forget the things that happened in my country to cause us to memorialize certain places as hallowed ground.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

EXPRESSING GRATITUDE TO THE FIRST RESPONDERS AND LOCAL OFFICIALS FOR THEIR SELFLESS RECOVERY EFFORTS IN NORTH-EAST TEXAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RATCLIFFE) for 30 minutes.

Mr. RATCLIFFE. Mr. Speaker, on December 26 last year, tornadoes ravaged northeast Texas, tragically resulting in the loss of several lives and destroying hundreds of homes and small businesses in my Congressional District.

But in the wake of this tragedy, I was inspired to see how many wonderful people stepped up in our communities to help those in need.

I am especially grateful to our first responders and local officials whose selfless commitment and dedication to the ongoing recovery efforts over the past few months have brought so much healing to our communities.

In Rowlett, I would like to send a special thanks to Mayor Todd Gottle for his incredible leadership. To City Manager Brian Funderburk, the entire Rowlett Police and Fire Departments, the doctors and staff at Lake Pointe Medical Center, and local residents Sammy Walker and Bruce Hargrave, who pulled a mortally wounded man from the rubble of his home, thank you.

In Rockwell County, our thanks to County Judge David Sweet, Sheriff Harold Eavenson, Chief Deputy David Goelden, and Emergency Manager Joe DeLane.

In Collin County, I would like to thank County Judge Keith Self, Constable Gary Edwards, Assistant Emergency Management Coordinator Jason Lane, and the Collin County Sheriff's Department.

From Farmersville, thank you to the entire police and fire departments there, to Chief Mike Sullivan, to City Manager Ben White, and Mayor Joseph Helmberger.

In Blue Ridge, I would like to thank Mayor Rhonda Williams, the volunteer fire department there, and the Westminster Fire Department.

And in Hunt County, thanks to Judge John Horn and Homeland Security Manager Richard Hill.

Beyond this, I would like to thank the many churches and charities who offered their support, like First Baptist Farmersville and Pastor Bart Barber, First Baptist Rowlett and its director, Jon Bailey.

I know that, without the selfless efforts of all these great people and all these organizations, the recovery efforts and restoration of our communities would simply not be the same. Your efforts are so greatly appreciated.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. COOPER (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and February 26 on account of attending a funeral.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 2109. An act to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. RATCLIFFE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 52 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, February 26, 2016, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4460. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting a request for emergency supplemental appropriations to respond to the Zika virus both domestically and internationally (H. Doc. No. 114-103); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

4461. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy for the Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing Lieutenant General John W. Nicholson, Jr., United States Army, to wear the insignia of the

grade of general, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 777a(b)(4); Public Law 111-383, Sec. 505(a)(1); (124 Stat. 4208); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4462. A letter from the Director, Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Community Development Financial Institutions Program (RIN: 1505-AA92) received February 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4463. A letter from the Director, Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Bank Enterprise Award Program (RIN: 1505-AA91) received February 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4464. A letter from the Director, Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Capital Magnet Fund (RIN: 1559-AA00) received February 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4465. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Fiscal Year 2014 Report on the Preventive Medicine and Public Health Training Grant and Integrative Medicine Programs, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 295c(d); July 1, 1944, ch. 373, title VII, Sec. 768(d) (as amended by Public Law 111-148, Sec. 10501(m)); (124 Stat. 1002); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4466. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); and 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c); Public Law 99-83, Sec. 505(c); (99 Stat. 221); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4467. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report by the Department on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period of August 1 through September 30, 2015, pursuant to Sec. 620C(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and in accordance with Sec. 1(a)(6) of Executive Order 13313; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4468. A letter from the Director, Financial Reporting and Internal Controls, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's Fiscal Year 2015 Agency Financial Report, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3515(a); Public Law 101-576, Sec. 303(a); (104 Stat. 2849); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4469. A letter from the Secretary and Treasurer, Financing Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's Statement on the System of Internal Controls and the 2015 Audited Financial Statements, pursuant to the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4470. A letter from the Secretary and Treasurer, Resolution Funding Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's Statement on the System of Internal Controls and the

2015 Audited Financial Statements, pursuant to the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4471. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting a report to Congress concerning grants made under the Paul Coverdell National Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 3797o(b); Public Law 90-351, Sec. 2806(b) (as amended by Public Law 107-273, Sec. 5001(b)(5)); (116 Stat. 1814); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4472. A letter from the Administrator, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a notification that the cost of response and recovery efforts for FEMA-3374-EM in the State of Missouri has exceeded the \$5 million limit for a single emergency declaration, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 5193(b)(3); Public Law 93-288, Sec. 503(b)(3) (as amended by Public Law 100-707, Sec. 107(a)); (102 Stat. 4707); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4473. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Port Everglades final feasibility report and environmental impact statement dated May 2015 (H. Doc. No. 114-104); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

4474. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Upper Des Plaines River and Tributaries integrated feasibility report and environmental assessment dated January 11, 2016 (H. Doc. No. 114-105); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

4475. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Orestimba Creek final interim feasibility report and environmental assessment/initial study dated March 2013 (H. Doc. No. 114-106); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

4476. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Hereford Inlet to Cape May Inlet final feasibility report and integrated environmental assessment dated April 28, 2014 (H. Doc. No. 114-107); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

4477. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's report on the Short-Time Compensation Program, pursuant to Public Law 112-96, Sec. 2166(a); (126 Stat. 178); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. WALBERG (for himself, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. RIBBLE, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Mr. BLUM):

H.R. 4612. A bill to ensure economic stability, accountability, and efficiency of Federal Government operations by establishing a moratorium on midnight rules during a President's final days in office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the

Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KATKO (for himself and Ms. JUDY CHU of California):

H.R. 4613. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, with respect to civil forfeitures relating to certain seized animals; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. OLSON (for himself, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 4614. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to align physician supervision requirements under the Medicare program for radiology services performed by advanced level radiographers with State requirements; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself and Mr. ROHRBACHER):

H.R. 4615. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income amounts received from a water department for water conservation efficiency measures and water runoff management improvements; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. NADLER (for himself and Mr. BURGESS):

H.R. 4616. A bill to promote and protect from discrimination living organ donors; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, House Administration, Education and the Workforce, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DELBENE (for herself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. KILMER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington):

H.R. 4617. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require that the Buy American purchase requirement for the school lunch program include fish harvested within United States waters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. COLLINS of Georgia:

H.R. 4618. A bill to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 121 Spring Street SE in Gainesville, Georgia, as the "Sidney Oslin Smith, Jr. Federal Building and United States Courthouse"; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H.R. 4619. A bill to strengthen incentives and protections for whistleblowers in the financial industry and related regulatory agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HILL:

H.R. 4620. A bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to exempt certain com-

mercial real estate loans from risk retention requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mrs. CAPPS (for herself and Mr. SARBANES):

H.R. 4621. A bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to improve access to, and the delivery of, children's health services through school-based health centers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CONAWAY (for himself, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. HARPER, Mr. TIPTON, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. BARR, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. BARTON, Mr. BUCHSON, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. BOUSTANY, and Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan):

H.R. 4622. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve and make permanent the credit for carbon dioxide sequestration; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. LEE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. CLAY, and Ms. CLARKE of New York):

H.R. 4623. A bill to allow homeowners of moderate-value homes who are subject to mortgage foreclosure proceedings to remain in their homes as renters; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. HAHN:

H.R. 4624. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide for the inspection of pipeline facilities that are transferred by sale and pipeline facilities that are abandoned, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HANNA (for himself and Mr. PASCRELL):

H.R. 4625. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop a voluntary patient registry to collect data on cancer incidence among firefighters; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas (for herself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. LIPINSKI):

H.R. 4626. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 4627. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide parity among States in the timing of the application of higher Federal Medicaid matching rates for the ACA-expansion population; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. LOWEY (for herself and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 4628. A bill to require reporting of terrorist activities and the unlawful distribution of information relating to explosives, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4629. A bill to extend Federal recognition to the Muscogee Nation of Florida; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. RUSH (for himself and Mr. PAL-LONE):

H.R. 4630. A bill to deny corporate average fuel economy credits obtained through a violation of law, establish an Air Quality Restoration Trust Fund within the Department of the Treasury, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4631. A bill to amend the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 to eliminate the authority of the Secretary of Agriculture to make value-added agricultural product market development grants to support the development, production, or marketing of alcoholic beverages and to rescind a portion of the Commodity Credit Corporation funds made available for such grants; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. WENSTRUP (for himself and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 4632. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to cover screening computed tomography colonography as a colorectal cancer screening test under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROHRBACHER:

H.J. Res. 82. A joint resolution relating to the disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the Government of Pakistan of F-16 Block 52 aircraft; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. MARINO, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. DENT, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. PERRY, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. PITTS, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. REED):

H. Con. Res. 118. Concurrent resolution recognizing the soldiers of the 14th Quartermaster Detachment of the United States Army Reserve, who were killed or wounded in their barracks by an Iraqi SCUD missile attack in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, during Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the attack; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. HOYER (for himself, Mr. BEYER, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

H. Con. Res. 119. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. FITZPATRICK (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. LAMALFA):

H. Res. 625. A resolution expressing support for the designation of February 28, 2016, as "National Rare Eye Disease Awareness Day"; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the

committee concerned.

By Mr. TAKANO (for himself, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. HONDA, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. LEE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. KILMER, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. MOORE, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. VARGAS, and Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California):

H. Res. 626. A resolution recognizing the significance of the 74th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and supporting the goals of the Japanese American, German American, and Italian American communities in recognizing a National Day of Remembrance to increase public awareness of the events surrounding the restriction, exclusion, and incarceration of individuals and families during World War II; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

174. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, relative to Senate Resolution No. 262, urging the Congress of the United States to exercise regulatory control and oversight in order to maintain fair competition, adequate connections with short line railroads, and efficient, low-cost service for rail shippers; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. WALBERG:

H.R. 4612.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States; the power to regulate commerce among the several states and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers.

The purpose of the bill is to prohibit an outgoing Administration from publishing regulations during a moratorium period defined by Section 1, Title 3 of the U.S. Code through January 20 of the following year. Congress has the authority to limit regulations by the Executive branch under its Commerce Clause power and it is necessary and proper to introduce legislation to effectively carryout this power.

By Mr. KATKO:

H.R. 4613.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution (relating to the general welfare of the United States).

Article I, Section 8, Clause 9 of the Constitution of the United States; the power to constitute Tribunals inferior to the Supreme Court.

By Mr. OLSON:

H.R. 4614.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, section 3, clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 4615.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Sixteenth Amendment: Congress shall have power to law and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 4616.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 3 and 18 of Article 1 Section 8 of the US Constitution

By Ms. DELBENE:

H.R. 4617.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. COLLINS of Georgia:

H.R. 4618.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution, which states that Congress shall have the power "to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States or in any department or officer thereof.

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H.R. 4619.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section VII, Clause III: [The Congress shall have Power] To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. HILL:

H.R. 4620.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mrs. CAPPS:

H.R. 4621.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution.

By Mr. CONAWAY:

H.R. 4622.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 4623.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Const. art. I, §§1 and 8.

By Ms. HAHN:

H.R. 4624.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article 1: Section 8: Clause 18: of the United States Constitution, seen

below, this bill falls within the Constitutional Authority of the United States Congress.

Article 1: Section 8: Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. HANNA:

H.R. 4625.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 4626.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8:

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States.

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 4627.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 4628.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4629.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1. Section 8. Clause 3.

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 4630.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 14 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4631.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. WENSTRUP:

H.R. 4632.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. ROHRBACHER:

H.J. Res. 82.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 258: Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 379: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 501: Mr. KIND and Mr. LAMALFA.

H.R. 532: Mr. LEVIN.

H.R. 534: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 546: Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 563: Mr. CÁRDENAS and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 592: Mr. LAHOOD and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 654: Mr. CARTER of Texas.

H.R. 664: Mr. POE of Texas and Mr. JOLLY.

H.R. 731: Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H.R. 814: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.

H.R. 864: Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 868: Mr. CHAFFETZ.

H.R. 870: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 885: Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 900: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H.R. 953: Mr. DEUTCH.

H.R. 969: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.

H.R. 997: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 1076: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 1093: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. LUETKE-MEYER, and Mrs. LAWRENCE.

H.R. 1101: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1170: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 1197: Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS and Mr. CROWLEY.

H.R. 1233: Mr. RENACCI, Mr. LAHOOD, and Mr. BARR.

H.R. 1391: Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 1421: Mr. JEFFRIES.

H.R. 1431: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H.R. 1432: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H.R. 1439: Mr. MEEKS.

H.R. 1449: Mr. CÁRDENAS and Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 1492: Mr. DESAULNIER and Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 1505: Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H.R. 1516: Mr. ZELDIN.

H.R. 1545: Mr. GIBSON and Mr. GRIFFITH.

H.R. 1552: Mr. MOULTON.

H.R. 1588: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 1655: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 1658: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.

H.R. 1706: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 1736: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois and Mr. CLEAVER.

H.R. 1748: Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 1761: Mrs. NAPOLITANO and Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 1854: Mr. SHUSTER and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H.R. 1950: Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 2013: Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 2102: Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mrs. BEATTY, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 2144: Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 2254: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 2287: Mr. HUDSON.

H.R. 2290: Mr. HUELSKAMP.

H.R. 2304: Mr. CHAFFETZ.

H.R. 2400: Mr. KATKO.

H.R. 2404: Mr. WHITFIELD.

H.R. 2411: Mr. LEVIN and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 2460: Mr. CHAFFETZ.

H.R. 2493: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 2513: Mr. FLEMING.

H.R. 2539: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.

H.R. 2545: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 2546: Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 2646: Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 2721: Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 2752: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois and Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 2817: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 2901: Mr. ROYCE.

H.R. 2903: Ms. ADAMS.

H.R. 2927: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. SERRANO, Mrs. TORRES, and Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 2962: Ms. DUCKWORTH.

H.R. 2980: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. DEFazio.

H.R. 3029: Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 3048: Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. POE of Texas, and Mr. BABIN.

H.R. 3071: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 3084: Mr. VALADAO and Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 3094: Mr. GOHMERT.

H.R. 3137: Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 3220: Mr. MARCHANT and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.

H.R. 3222: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.

H.R. 3226: Ms. SINEMA and Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 3235: Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. GRAYSON, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. HASTINGS, and Mr. GRJALVA.

H.R. 3299: Mr. JOYCE, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, and Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 3308: Mr. KEATING, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. LYNCH, and Mr. TED LIEU of California.

H.R. 3326: Mr. HUDSON, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. RENACCI, and Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.

H.R. 3353: Mr. ROYCE.

H.R. 3377: Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 3406: Ms. FUDGE.

H.R. 3445: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 3484: Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 3514: Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 3515: Mr. POMPEO and Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 3533: Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 3546: Mr. DEUTCH.

H.R. 3576: Mr. VELA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. CUELLAR.

H.R. 3599: Mr. COOK.

H.R. 3619: Ms. MENG.

H.R. 3706: Ms. NORTON and Mr. LONG.

H.R. 3713: Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 3719: Mr. BUCHANAN.

H.R. 3742: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3758: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 3765: Mr. HENSARLING.

H.R. 3779: Mr. BRAT.

H.R. 3808: Mr. VALADAO and Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 3913: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 3926: Mrs. CAPPS.

H.R. 4007: Mr. BABIN.

H.R. 4016: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 4019: Ms. MOORE and Mr. HECK of Washington.

H.R. 4062: Mrs. WAGNER.

H.R. 4102: Mr. GRIFFITH.

H.R. 4126: Mr. BURGESS, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. BRAT, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 4139: Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 4167: Ms. BORDALLO and Mr. BRADY of Texas.

H.R. 4197: Mr. HENSARLING.

H.R. 4219: Mr. HUDSON and Mr. DENT.

H.R. 4229: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania and Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 4235: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 4238: Mr. FARR, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, and Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 4247: Mr. FARENTHOLD and Mr. HURD of Texas.

H.R. 4262: Mr. NEWHOUSE.

H.R. 4266: Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 4293: Mr. ZINKE and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 4305: Mr. TED LIEU of California and Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 4320: Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 4321: Mr. WENSTRUP.

H.R. 4336: Ms. PINGREE, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. MICA, Ms.

WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Miss RICE of New York, and Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 4352: Mr. BILIRAKIS and Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 4376: Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, and Ms. LEE.

H.R. 4381: Mr. SMITH of Texas and Mr. BABIN.

H.R. 4386: Mr. BEYER and Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 4396: Mr. PAYNE, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. ENGEL.

H.R. 4400: Ms. DUCKWORTH.

H.R. 4403: Mr. SHERMAN and Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 4424: Mrs. Beatty, Mr. KLINE, and Mr. SIMPSON.

H.R. 4430: Mr. NOLAN, Mr. ELLISON, and Miss RICE of New York.

H.R. 4442: Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 4469: Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 4481: Mr. YARMUTH and Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 4490: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 4499: Mr. WALBERG, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, and Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 4514: Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 4519: Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 4521: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 4527: Miss RICE of New York.

H.R. 4528: Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 4537: Mr. HENSARLING and Mr. LUCAS.

H.R. 4557: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Ms. GRANGER, and Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 4570: Mr. HANNA, Ms. NORTON, and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.

H.R. 4583: Mr. BUTTERFIELD and Mr. GRIF-FITH.

H.R. 4589: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.

H.R. 4595: Mr. UPTON.

H.R. 4602: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 4603: Mr. SERRANO, Ms. MOORE, and Ms. BASS.

H.J. Res. 1: Mr. CONAWAY.

H.J. Res. 2: Mr. ABRAHAM and Mr. CONAWAY.

H.J. Res. 12: Mr. LOUDERMILK.

H.J. Res. 14: Mrs. WAGNER.

H.J. Res. 19: Mr. HARRIS.

H. Con. Res. 17: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. BABIN, and Mr. YARMUTH.

H. Con. Res. 75: Mr. PALAZZO and Mr. COOK.

H. Con. Res. 100: Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. DENT, and Mr. RATCLIFFE.

H. Con. Res. 114: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska and Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H. Res. 32: Mr. SARBANES.

H. Res. 49: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H. Res. 220: Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. LEVIN, and Mr. CICILLINE.

H. Res. 290: Mr. CICILLINE.

H. Res. 343: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, and Mr. BYRNE.

H. Res. 469: Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. COOK.

H. Res. 551: Mr. MARINO, Ms. MOORE, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. MCSALLY, and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H. Res. 567: Mr. LANCE.

H. Res. 590: Mr. FARENTHOLD, Ms. ESTY, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. KING of New York.

H. Res. 600: Mr. RENACCI.

H. Res. 616: Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BASS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. COSTA, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FARR, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. PETERS, Mr. POCAN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Ms. MATSUI.

H. Res. 617: Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. SANFORD, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. BUCK, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. SALMON, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. BABIN, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. BARR, Mr. OLSON, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. HUELSKAMP, and Mr. TIPTON.

H. Res. 623: Mr. WESTERMAN and Mr. DESAULNIER.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN RECOGNITION OF PRIVATE
FIRST CLASS JOE RIVERA
MONTES

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, it is my highest honor to recognize Private First Class Joe R. Montes for his courageous service to our great country during World War II. On December 29, 1941, as a very young man, Private Montes answered our nation's call to defend our freedoms after the devastating attack on Pearl Harbor. He valiantly served in the United States Marine Corps enduring multiple battles in the South Pacific. During this time, Private Montes was awarded the Purple Heart for injuries sustained during the heroic American recapture of the Island of Guam in July 1944. In January 1946, after the formal end of World War II, Private First Class Montes separated from the Marine Corps after four triumphant years of service. His time in service was defined by extraordinary leadership and selfless acts of devotion to his company. On behalf of the men and women of California's 3rd Congressional District, please accept my sincerest gratitude for his dedicated service to our country.

NATIONAL INVASIVE SPECIES
AWARENESS WEEK, 2016

HON. DAN BENISHEK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of National Invasive Species Awareness Week, 2016, from February 21 to February 27.

Invasive species cause widespread damage across the United States. Billions of dollars of damage are caused by animals such as nutria in the South, sea lampreys in the Great Lakes, Asian carp in the Mississippi Basin, and quagga mussels in the west. We must work together to raise awareness of the economic and environmental damage that invasive species are wreaking on our lands and waters.

In Congress, I along with Congressman MIKE THOMPSON of California, are co-chairs of the Congressional Invasive Species Caucus. This large, bipartisan group of Members of Congress from across the country seeks to bring attention to the danger invasive species pose. We often work together on policies that will reduce the impact of these species.

This week, the Congressional Invasive Species Caucus hosted an informational session in honor of National Invasive Species Awareness Week that saw over one dozen groups, ranging from federal agencies to non-govern-

ment organizations, presenting on the dangers of invasive species and ongoing efforts to control their populations.

On behalf of all residents of Northern Michigan and the United States, I wish to honor the many citizens and organizations who work each day to stop the threat of invasive species to our country. I, along with my colleagues in the House, will continue to work to stop invasive species and bring awareness of this important issue to the American public.

HONORING 100 YEARS SINCE THE
BIRTH OF ARCHIE MOORE

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100-year mark since Archie Moore's birth, one of America's greatest boxers, whose career took him from the ring, to the big screen in Hollywood and to San Diego, where his impact is still felt today as a crusader against the gang and drug culture.

Throughout Archie's life, he competed in 219 boxing matches, winning 185—131 coming by knockout; however, Archie's most important life work came outside the ring, when, in 1957, he founded the Any Body Can (ABC) Youth Foundation. In its 59th year, the ABC Youth Foundation continues to serve low-income students throughout Southeast San Diego, and aims to empower San Diego's inner-city youth with courage and dignity as they confront life's challenges.

Throughout the years, ABC has moved throughout the San Diego area, but its mission remains the same. They offer after school learning programs, where students can do homework and receive tutoring in a comfortable environment; they ensure that students are able to "Bridge the Gap" during school breaks, by providing hands-on educational learning experiences and a meal free of charge; and in honor of Archie, they offer year-round boxing classes, where students can learn self-defense and build self-esteem. As you can see, Mr. Speaker, Archie's legacy is alive and well in San Diego—it is seen in the thousands of students who have traveled through ABC's door in the past 59 years.

When Archie passed away, he handed the torch on to his son, Billy Moore, who has served as President of the ABC Foundation since 1998. Billy's leadership as President of ABC would make his father proud, as he has presented the ABC Concept in eleven community schools throughout the San Diego region and ensured that students have the opportunity to rise up out of challenging circumstances.

On the occasion of this 100-year anniversary, we remember both the champion he was

in the ring and the impact he made out of the ring, by inspiring students to realize that Any Body Can make a difference.

HONORING THE LIFE OF
RALPH NAPLES

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Ralph Naples, the owner of the Golden Dawn Restaurant in Youngstown, Ohio which has served as a very special place to both locals and travelers.

Mr. Naples was born on June 16th, 1919, in Youngstown, the son of Andrew and Mary Carmen Agnone Naples. He attended The Rayen School and later Youngstown College where he graduated with a degree in Chemical and Metallurgical Engineering in 1941.

After university, Ralph enlisted in the U.S. Army. In World War II, he served in the U.S. Army Air Corps as a bombardier and navigator on both the B-17 and the B-29 aircraft, obtaining the rank of lieutenant.

The Golden Dawn Restaurant, established in 1934, was co-owned by Ralph and his brother Carmen after the death of their parents. The "Dawn" became and still is a gathering place for families, fans and students of Youngstown State University and Ursuline High School, but really all are welcome. Ralph was truly a known legend in Youngstown.

Ralph leaves behind his sons, Andrew, Philip, Benedetto, Ralph, and Johnny; daughters Mary, Cathy, Christine, Casseday, and Annie; 14 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He is survived by a sister, Antoinette Hudson.

The Naples family will continue to operate the Golden Dawn. Mr. Naples was loved by all those in the community. He was a great man, a gentle man and a great family man. He will be missed by our entire community.

HONORING LAURA ESSERMAN, MD,
MBA

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Laura Esserman, MD, MBA, of San Francisco, California, in recognition of her receiving the Stanford Graduate School of Business distinguished Ernest C. Arbuckle Award during its annual award ceremony in Stanford, California, on March 3, 2016. The Arbuckle Award recognizes excellence in the field of management leadership and a commitment to addressing the changing needs of society.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Dr. Esserman is a professor of surgery and radiology, and the director of the Carol Franc Buck Breast Care Center at the Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). She is the founder and innovator-in-chief of the I-SPY TRIALS and I-SPY 2 Programs: two remarkable collaborations between private biotech companies and federal institutes that combine personalized medicine and private trial design to create fast and cost efficient breast cancer treatments. Under Dr. Esserman's deft leadership, the I-SPY 2 program's efficient and groundbreaking success has made it an international model for translational cancer research.

In May 2015, Dr. Esserman was awarded a five-year \$14.1 million grant from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). The award is being used to fund the 100,000 women clinical trial known as the WISDOM study to investigate whether a personalized approach to breast cancer screening is as effective as annual mammograms. Dr. Esserman has also served as a member of President Obama's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology Working Group on Advancing Innovation in Drug Development and Evaluation, and has published over 200 works in notable scientific magazines. She received her BA in the History of Science from Harvard University, her MD from Stanford University, and her MBA from Stanford University's School of Business.

Dr. Esserman is no ordinary physician. When she performs a surgery, it is a full-service operation. Dr. Esserman's preparation for surgery begins days before—with singing practice. She takes requests from patients, and holds their hands during anesthesia while singing them to sleep. Dr. Esserman is known for spending hours with her patients during office visits, and even sends personal text messages and returns late night phone calls to answer follow up questions whenever she can.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize the hard work and dedication of Dr. Laura Esserman to the City of San Francisco, to her husband, Michael Endicott, to her children, Mansa and Max, and to her patients. She is truly an inspiration to many, including myself, and a most deserving recipient of the Earnest C. Arbuckle Award.

HONORING WAVERLY WOODSON DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, as a young soldier in the Korean War, I was honored to follow in the footsteps of many Blacks in the military who exhibited extraordinary heroism and patriotism abroad despite facing discrimination and challenges at home. I would not be where I am today if it were not for my service in the Army. During our annual celebration of Black History Month, I would like to honor an unsung hero from West Philadelphia named Waverly "Woody" Woodson, Jr., who served as a young medic of World War II.

This summer will mark the 72nd anniversary of the historic D-Day invasion of World War II. Nearly three-quarters of a century later, the event is still revered by all Americans as an example of our military's strength and bravery. However, the life-risking efforts of thousands of Black veterans from the war have gone unnoticed.

The 320th Barrage Balloon Battalion, a unit of all-Black soldiers, landed in France ahead of the main invasion force. The battalion's job was to deploy and man an aerial barrage of massive helium-filled balloons to protect the American forces from enemy bomber airplanes. The balloons forced enemy pilots to fly their planes at higher altitudes to avoid becoming entangled and made it harder to effectively aim their bombs.

Among the 320th was Waverly Woodson, who enlisted in the Army on Dec. 15, 1942, during his second year of his pre-medical studies. He did not wait to be called by the draft; rather he decided to sacrifice his career, comfort and life for his country and the world. Woodson's enlistment placed him in the Anti-Artillery Officer Candidate School but he was told upon completion of his training that there was no spot open for him. Instead, he was sent for medic training with the 320th Barrage Balloon Battalion. He was one of five medics aboard a Landing Craft Tank that left England on June 5, 1944, for a ninety-mile journey towards Omaha Beach.

Woodson's voyage on June 6, 1944, was commenced by a violent charge towards the shore. Along with his unit, he valiantly stormed Omaha Beach in the midst of mines, mortar shells and heavy ammunition, with eyes fixed upon the mission of freedom that lay ahead. As a medic, Woodson risked his life to save the crippled and bleeding out American warriors clinging to their last thread of consciousness. He patched and resuscitated dozens if not hundreds of soldiers while he himself was wounded by the shrapnel ripping away at his legs. Woodson's determined efforts directly influenced the result of this battle.

Though he was segregated into a racially organized regiment, he saved the lives of numerous soldiers regardless of their skin color. Woodson would later say, on that day "they didn't care what my skin color was" and obviously he did not care either. He was bonded to his men by the camaraderie that only war can provoke and a steadfast allegiance to defending the greatest country in the world. His dedication broke down racial divides that day, and this is history that truly deserves recognition.

Waverly Woodson Jr. was previously nominated for the Medal of Honor, but he never received it. Instead, he was given the Bronze Star, the fourth-highest military honor. There exists no record of what happened to his nomination for the Medal of Honor. Not one of the thousands of Black soldiers who served in World War II received a Medal of Honor in the immediate wake of the war. Something is detrimentally wrong with that.

However, we can always remedy the mistakes of our past. In 1995, I was honored to bring Woodson and a group of African-American World War II veterans to the floor of the House Chamber and recognize these unsung heroes for their forgotten service. As a veteran

myself, I was moved to see that their sacrifice was no longer overlooked but there is more work that we must do.

Black History Month must continue to play a pivotal role in helping all of us remember, preserve, and honor the accomplishments and contributions of the Black leaders of America. The annual celebration serves as a poignant reminder of how much Black history has been lost, forgotten, or in some cases, deliberately erased from the record. The nation's commemoration of Black history is not for the Black community alone, but for our collective and cohesive recognition of American history as a whole.

RECOGNIZING MICHAEL SABLJAK

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Mr. Michael Sabljak, who is interning in my office as part of the Uni-Capitol Washington Program. The Uni-Capitol Washington Program (UCWIP) has paired some of the brightest Australian students with various congressional offices for almost two decades, and I am happy to be a host again this year.

Michael comes from the University of Melbourne where he is studying for his Juris Doctor degree. Over the past couple of months, I have found him to be outstanding in his duties and continually going above and beyond the call of duty. He has attended committee hearings, assisted with constituent correspondence, and assisted me, as well as my staff, with research. He was asked to travel down to Alabama during the latter part of February, and Michael and I travelled over 700 miles across the Fourth Congressional District. His Australian accent has garnered the friendly attention of many of my constituents on tours and over the phone. Michael's commitment, hard work, and presence have been an asset to the office and he will be sorely missed by all.

The program has been in force for 17 years thanks to the vision of Eric Federer, its director and founder. The students who are selected come from a variety of academic disciplines, but all have a common interest: promoting the U.S.-Australia relationship. These student placements are enhanced by the formation of genuine friendships and the exchange of views and ideas between the Australian interns and their respective offices. We are grateful for these friendships, and it is our hope that they strengthen the diplomatic ties of our great countries.

I would like to also thank Eric Federer for the opportunity to host Michael over the past several weeks through the program. To date, over 180 interns have come through his program, representing 10 different universities over the program's lifetime. It enhances opportunities for the individuals who come, and enlightens those who they come to. After the internship, many receive jobs on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. or go to work with Federal or various State Parliaments in Australia. Other interns have gone on to work in the

Australian Embassy or The World Bank. Simply put, this program selects incredibly talented individuals who are a pleasure to host and work with. It was an honor to have Michael in our office over the past couple of months, and I wish him the very best in the future. Michael, thank you again for your hard work and dedication.

HONORING THE LIFE OF RUTH
IRENE ANTHONY

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Ruth Irene Anthony, who passed away peacefully at the age of ninety on Sunday, February 14th, 2016, at her residence surrounded by her loving family in Fort Myers, Florida.

Ruth was born in Warren, Ohio on Dec. 9th, 1925, to Daniel and Olive Webb McCormick.

Ruth married Lee Andrew Anthony on January 3rd, 1945. They resided most of their lives in Niles, in northeast Ohio where they raised their four children. Ruth and Lee became residents of Fort Myers in 1989.

Ruth is survived by her beloved husband of 71 years; their son George and three daughters, Sandra, Kathy, and Ruth along with 15 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; and 14 great-great-grandchildren.

Ruth will be greatly missed by her loving family, friends, and neighbors, not only in Ohio but in her home of Florida as well.

HONORING CLAUDETTE COLVIN

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, this month we take time to commemorate the innumerable contributions that African Americans have—and continue to make—to our Nation. Today, I would like to rise and honor a resident of my district who is a pioneer and trailblazer for the Civil Rights Movement—Ms. Claudette Colvin—for her many years of advocacy and impact that she's had throughout the United States.

Ms. Colvin was born on September 5, 1939 in Birmingham, Alabama to C.P. Austin and Mary Jane Austin (Gadson). She is the oldest of eight sisters. During her early childhood her adopted parents, Q.P. and Mary Ann Colvin lived in the rural community of Pine Level, Alabama. Ms. Colvin attended the Springhill Baptist Elementary School but later she moved to Montgomery and lived in an area called King Hill. She attended Booker T. Washington School from 1949 to 1956. While she didn't finish her senior year, she later received her G.E.D. and attended the Alabama State Teachers College in Montgomery for one year.

Ms. Colvin is one of the unsung heroes of the Civil Rights Movement. At the age of fifteen, she played a critical role in deseg-

regating the buses in Montgomery, Alabama. Many people don't know that nine months before Rosa Parks was arrested for her act of courage in favor of equal treatment, Ms. Colvin was arrested on March 2, 1955 for a similar act of peaceful resistance. She subsequently became one of the four plaintiffs in *Browder v. Gayle*. The plaintiffs sought equal rights in Montgomery's bus system, and to have the racially segregated seating policies declared unconstitutional. Represented by famed attorney Fred D. Gray, the case went all the way to the Supreme Court, which declared in favor of Ms. Colvin and her co-plaintiffs. It was a jubilant day in the history of the city of Montgomery, and an important victory in the Civil Rights Movement.

Many people don't know that Ms. Colvin subsequently relocated to my district in the Bronx, and has been a New Yorker for more than 50 years. She worked for more than 30 years at a Catholic Nursing Home as a nursing assistant. She is the mother of two boys, and she has six adorable grandchildren. She has reaped the fruits of her labor through them.

Ms. Colvin's bravery that day in 1955, and in the subsequent months and years as the case moved through the federal court system, has not gone unnoticed. Ms. Colvin's name started surfacing during Black History Month as early as 1979. The Birmingham News did a feature story in 1980. New York Governor Mario M. Cuomo awarded her with the MLK, Jr. Medal of Freedom in 1990. The Selma Times Journal featured her in 1991, The National Voting Rights Museum and Institute added a picture display of Ms. Colvin in 1994. She was featured in the cover story of USA Today Newspaper on November 25, 1995, the Montgomery Advertiser in 1996 and the Washington Post on April 12, 1990. She has been mentioned in several books such as "Freedom's Children" by Ellen Levine, "Parting the Waters" by Taylor Bunch, "Bus Ride to Justice" by Fred D. Gray, "The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It", and the memoirs of JoAnn Gibson Robinson, to name a few.

I am proud to add to that recognition today. Ms. Colvin has been a pillar of the Bronx for so long, and her story is one that all Bronxites, and Americans, should know.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Ms. Claudette Colvin, a civil rights pioneer, for her legacy and devotion to fighting against injustice.

TRIBUTE TO DONALD AND
MARILYN HILYARD

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Donald and Marilyn Hilyard of Cumberland, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 65th wedding anniversary. They were married in 1950.

Donald and Marilyn's lifelong commitment to each other and their children, Donald, Jr.,

Sheryl, Kathy, Duane, and Sara, their grandchildren and their great-grandchildren, truly embodies Iowa values. It is because of Iowans like them that I'm proud to represent our great state.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 65th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

DIANE ENGLET—WOMAN OF THE
YEAR

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Diane Englet of Sugar Land, TX for being recognized as one of Houston's 50 Most Influential Women of 2015 by Houston Woman Magazine.

Through her years of employment at CenterPoint Energy, Diane Englet has worked her way up to the title of senior director of Corporate Community Relations by graciously serving the community. In this position, she supervises the development of the company and institutes involvement in society by promoting the importance of education and by providing a healthy and stable environment for families experiencing crisis. Englet is a true representation of compassion through her dedication to creating a better community for Houston area residents.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Diane Englet for being named one of Houston's 50 Most Influential Women of 2015. We thank her for all of her hard work.

HONORING THE LIFE OF RUSSELL
J. BRODE

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Russell J. Brode, 80, who passed away on February 19, 2016. He was born on April 11, 1935 in Ravenna, Ohio, a son of Ralph and Beulah Brode.

Russell had a career with Ohio Bell and AT&T for forty years. He was also a member of the Ravenna Volunteer Fire Department. Russell was a great patriot and proudly served the Naval Reserve Seabee Construction Force from 1951–1959. Russell loved his family. He had a warm heart and was always willing to help others.

The Reverend Deacon Russell Brode was ordained as a Permanent Deacon for the Diocese of Youngstown in 1995. From that point on, he served as a Deacon for the Immaculate Conception Parish in Ravenna, Ohio. Deacon Brode also shared his faith through his active service in the prison ministry at the Trumbull Correctional Institute. In addition to faith and

family, Russ was dedicated to supporting the youth of the Ravenna area. He was a founder of the Portage, Stark and Summit County youth wrestling program, as well as an OHSA wrestling official, and coached many different youth basketball and baseball teams over the years.

Russell will be deeply missed by his family. He leaves behind his wife of sixty years, Sandra (Winkler) Brode. Together, Russell and Sandra raised seven children, Kathleen (John) McHugh, David, Dennis, Robert (Liz), Russell, Kim Paull, and Linda (Robert) Corcoran. Russell also leaves behind his sister, Dolores (David) Middleton; twenty-three grandchildren; twenty-three great-grandchildren; many nieces and nephews, and countless friends.

It can be difficult to cope with a loss of such a great person as Russell, but we can all take comfort in the fact that he led a long and fulfilling life.

TRIBUTE TO THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF IOWA

HON. DAVID LOESACK

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. LOESACK. Mr. Speaker, Mr. YOUNG and I rise today to recognize and congratulate the community colleges of Iowa for 50 years of outstanding service to the state. The community colleges of Iowa have expanded to become our largest provider of postsecondary education.

On June 7, 1965, Iowa Governor Harold Hughes signed the first bill into law allowing for the opening and operation of community colleges in the state of Iowa. The following institutions were officially designated the next year: Northeast Iowa, North Iowa Area, Iowa Lakes, Northwest Iowa, Iowa Central, Iowa Valley, Hawkeye, Eastern Iowa, Kirkwood, Des Moines Area, Western Iowa Tech, Iowa Western, Southwestern, Indian Hills, and Southeast Iowa.

These fine institutions now provide accessible and affordable education, not only to Iowans, but to students across the country and the world. Their offerings include a wide-ranging, diverse curriculum that serves Iowa's specific workforce needs, including Iowa businesses competing in a global market. Iowa businesses in need of highly trained, specialized workers turn to our community colleges to fill the new, high-paying, high-skilled positions of tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, it is our honor to represent Iowa's community colleges in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that we recognize them today. We ask that our colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join us in congratulating Iowa's community colleges on celebrating their 50th year and for providing a high quality, affordable education for all Iowans. We wish them nothing but continued success in the years to come.

RECOGNIZING THE 69TH COM- MEMORATION OF TAIWAN'S "2-28 MASSACRE"

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to observe the 69th commemoration of Taiwan's "2-28 Massacre."

On February 28, 1947, the brutal arrest of a female civilian in Taipei led to large-scale protests by the native Taiwanese against the Chinese Nationalist government.

During the following days, government troops arrived from mainland China. These soldiers began capturing and executing leading Taiwanese lawyers, doctors, students, and other citizens. It is estimated that between 10,000 and 30,000 people lost their lives during the turmoil. Throughout the following four decades, Taiwan remained under martial law that lasted until 1987.

The "2-28" Massacre had far-reaching implications. The Taiwanese democracy movement that grew out of the incident helped pave the way for Taiwan's momentous transformation from living under a dictatorship to a thriving democracy.

I urge other Members to join me in commemorating this important historical event.

HONORING MRS. SADIE MAE LUSTER ROYALL

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I am humbled to honor Mrs. Sadie Mae Luster Royall—a remarkable lady who resided in Henderson County, Texas.

As we celebrate "Black History Month," it is important that we take time to recognize African-Americans who made remarkable contributions to their family and community. "Mama Sadie," as she was affectionately referred to by those who knew her, was truly one of those people.

Mrs. Royall always had high aspirations and dreams. It was her desire to help and care for people in their time of need that led her to put herself through, what was then, Henderson County Junior College. After becoming a Licensed Vocational Nurse, Mrs. Royall became the first African-American nurse to work for the Henderson County Memorial Hospital in Athens, Texas. For an extraordinary 42 years, "Mama Sadie" cared for and comforted countless patients and their families, and was known for her incredible work ethic. Though it was her desire to make an impression on her daughters that drove her, there is no doubt this remarkable woman made an indelible impact on her community as well.

Mrs. Royall—who sadly passed away on December 3, 2015 at the age of 90—was a life-long resident of Athens, Texas. She married her beloved husband, Robert Lee Royall,

on September 4, 1941. They were blessed with four daughters—Mary Royall, Betty Allen, Bobbie Royall, and Alice Lynch—and six grandchildren—Terry Royall, Russell Allen, D'Undra Wasson, Marcus Royall, Chris Lynch, and Kevin Lynch.

It is truly an honor to represent remarkable individuals like Mrs. Sadie Royall. There is no doubt that her legacy lives on through her family and in the community she loved and served.

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECH- NOLOGY'S GRAVITATIONAL WAVE DISCOVERY

HON. LOUISE MCINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago, our understanding of the universe leapt forward when gravitational waves were first detected. I rise today to recognize that achievement and honor six researchers from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) who were part of one of the most significant scientific discoveries in a century.

While hundreds of scientists worked together to make this discovery, I am especially proud of the researchers from RIT—James Healy, Jacob Lang, Carlos Lousto, Richard O'Shaughnessy, John Whelan, and Zhang Yuanhao. All of these researchers are members of RIT's Center for Computational Relativity and Gravitation, which is led by Manuela Campanelli. Her team was one of the first groups to initially solve Albert Einstein's strong field equations describing black hole mergers. Because of this legacy, it is fitting that the recent discovery helps further confirm Einstein's general theory of relativity.

As the only microbiologist in Congress, I know that every scientist hopes to have their predictions verified by direct observation. I also know that this is relatively rare, so I stand in awe of this RIT team that accurately modeled the merger of two black holes and predicted the gravitational waves that were detected. This monumental achievement marks yet another chapter in Rochester's rich history as a center of scientific innovation and discovery.

Rochester has helped pioneer important research and develop innovative products such as the Kodak Brownie camera, the Norden bombsight, and myriad high-powered lasers. Established in 1829, RIT has not only played a critical role in Rochester's past, it continues to ensure that Rochester remains a global center of excellence. RIT makes invaluable scientific contributions to the research community, but it is also a cornerstone of the Rochester community and helps provide local businesses with the talent they need to flourish.

Perhaps one of the most exciting aspects of this discovery is that it allows us to pose new questions and push the bounds of our collective knowledge. There's no doubt in my mind that RIT will play an essential role in these forthcoming discoveries, and I am proud that millions of people will continue learning about

the world around us thanks to the contributions of researchers like Dr. Campanelli and the other members of her team.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding all of the individuals who helped contribute to this monumental discovery and especially the six researchers from RIT. These Rochesterians have helped fundamentally change our understanding of the world, and I am proud to support their work in Congress.

RECOGNIZING THE 70TH
ANNIVERSARY OF VFW POST 5277

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this year, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 5277, William Alfred Suggs Memorial Post in Clermont, Florida, celebrates 70 years of service to veterans and their families.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is a strong advocate for veterans ensuring they receive their earned entitlements and the care they deserve. The history of the VFW dates back to 1899 when veterans of the Spanish-American War and the Philippine Insurrection founded organizations to assist wounded and sick veterans with securing benefits as there was no medical care or veterans' pension. Some of these veterans collaborated and started organizations which would be known as the VFW. The first chapters, founded in Ohio, Colorado, and Pennsylvania, quickly expanded reaching over 5,000 members by 1915; by 1936, membership had grown to nearly 200,000.

The VFW was an instrumental voice in the establishment of the Department of Veterans Affairs, GI Bill for the 20th century, national cemetery system, and compensation for Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange and veterans diagnosed with Gulf War Syndrome. The VFW championed the 21st century GI Bill, passed in 2008, providing educational benefits to active-duty service members, and members of the Guard and Reserves.

It is my distinct pleasure to commend the VFW Post 5277 on their 70th anniversary, and I join the VFW in expressing appreciation for our veterans and those currently serving in the United States military.

COL. WILLIAM BARRETT TRAVIS
LETTER

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following letter:

COL. WILLIAM BARRETT TRAVIS LETTER
FEBRUARY 24, 1836

There are those in history that paid for our freedoms with their lives. In 1836 Texas was fighting for its independence from the dictator of Mexico, Santa Anna. A small band of

180 patriots from numerous nations and states, of several races, stood defiant at the Alamo (in now San Antonio,) from Santa Anna's enormous invading army. The leader of the Texian patriots was a 27 year old lawyer from South Carolina by the name of William Barrett Travis. Surrounded by the enemy, Travis penned his famous letter seeking aid for the defense of liberty. It was 180 years ago:

BEJAR, FEBY. 24TH. 1836

COMMANDANCY OF THE ALAMO,

TO THE PEOPLE OF TEXAS & ALL AMERICANS IN THE WORLD—FELLOW CITIZENS & COMPATRIOTS—I am besieged, by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna—I have sustained a continual Bombardment & cannonade for 24 hours & have not lost a man—The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken—I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, & our flag still waves proudly from the walls—I shall never surrender or retreat.

Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism & everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid, with all dispatch. The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days.

If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible & die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor & that of his country—Victory or Death.

WILLIAM BARRETT TRAVIS,

Lt. Col. Comdt, The Alamo.

Mr. Speaker, Col. Travis and his Texians all died defending our freedom at the Alamo. Sixty days later General Sam Houston and his Texians defeated Santa Anna in the marshy plains of San Jacinto, winning independence from Mexico, once and for all. Travis's letter is a remarkable and inspirational statement for freedom and the spirit of liberty. Col. Travis is one reason my oldest grandson is named "Barrett Houston."

And that is just the way it is.

IN RECOGNITION OF DAVID
BIEGLER

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work of an outstanding Texan, David Biegler, as he completes his distinguished work as the long-term Chairman of the Board for Children's Health System of Texas (CHST). While serving as Chairman for Children's Health System of Texas, Mr. Biegler served as Chairman of the Board of Directors of Southcross Energy since 2011 and has more than 47 years of experience within the energy industry.

Children's Health Systems of Texas' original location is in Dallas and has now grown to include the more than 30 other specialty and pediatric care centers located throughout North Texas. Children's Health Systems of Texas remains the seventh largest pediatric health care provider in the country—with more than 850,000 patient encounters annually and performing more than 28,600 surgeries at its two full-service campuses in Dallas and Plano.

Children's Health is the only academic healthcare system in the Dallas-Fort Worth area dedicated solely to the comprehensive care of children from birth to age 18. Children's Health has also been recognized as (1) one of the most connected hospitals in the nation for its excellence in patient safety, patient engagement and clinical connectedness; (2) one of only six STS three-star designations for congenital heart surgery; (3) a Level IV Neonatal Intensive Care Unit—the highest qualification for such programs; and (4) a Level 1 Trauma Center for pediatric care.

I have seen the power of Children's Health System of Texas as both a Member of Congress and as the father of a patient. Our region is blessed to have the resources and expertise of CHST medical professionals and staff available to meet the needs of our children. So much of the CHST success story is due to the involved engagement of civil leaders like David Biegler. Together, those leaders have ensured the children of our region would never have to leave home to have the best possible medical care.

I have personally had the opportunity to work with Mr. Biegler over the years in Dallas on a number of issues important to our community, region and state. Besides serving as the Chairman of the Board at CHST, David has served as a director of Southwest Airlines Co. and Trinity Industries, Inc. David has also been recognized as an outstanding board member of CHST time and time again. In 2015 alone, he was recognized by the Texas Healthcare Trustees as an outstanding board member and by the Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council with the Kerney Laday, Sr. Trustee of the Year Award for his dedication and commitment to CHST for over 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my esteemed colleagues to join me in wishing him all the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Zion Baptist Church, to recognize and commemorate 127 years of religious devotion through community building and advocacy in North Minneapolis.

Zion Baptist Church, founded in 1889, has sought to provide a strong, steadfast foundation for their congregants through biblical teaching, equipping families through faith, and fostering an uncompromising belief in God. The church has fought for important changes in policy, community support systems, and physical safety—all led by their deep devotion to their faith.

For four decades, until 2012, the Reverend Curtis Herron led his congregation on the belief that "the church started in the building, but ended in the world." Through his advocacy for affordable housing, racial equity, and job creation, Reverend Curtis Herron championed substantial improvements for Zion Baptist Church, and the Minneapolis community as a whole. The people of Zion Baptist Church

have guided families along the path of faith while engaging them in local issues; and they show no signs of slowing down.

Zion Baptist Church is one of the largest and most influential African American churches in Minneapolis, and for the last 127 years their advocacy has helped make our community the best it can be. Their legacy of lifting up the most vulnerable in our community should serve as a reminder that faith calls us to stand up against injustice, no matter the form.

HONORING JOHN MEALEY ON THE
OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT
AS FOUNDING EXECUTIVE DI-
RECTOR OF COACHELLA VALLEY
HOUSING COALITION

HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, today I am honored to congratulate John Mealey on his retirement after 34 years of leadership in helping build communities and changing lives for thousands of farmworkers, service workers, and chronically ill residents through the Coachella Valley Housing Coalition (CVHC).

In 1982, Mr. Mealey led the way with community leaders to address the housing needs of hundreds of low income families in the Coachella Valley by forming CVHC. That same year, CVHC received its first grant of \$10,000 from Aetna Foundation and in 1986 they built the first low-income farmworkers complex in Coachella, CA.

Fast-forwarding three decades—and thanks to Mr. Mealey's diligent work and vision—he has helped fundraise over \$700 million toward building more than 4,500 homes and apartments for low and very low-income residents in the Coachella Valley. Furthermore, under Mr. Mealey's guidance, CVHC has created home ownership opportunities from Palm Springs to Blythe in the 36th Congressional district. This translates into a dream come true for families and a better and brighter future for generations to come.

In 2002, the Board of Directors and employees of the CVHC established the JFM College Scholarship Fund Program in honor of Mr. John F. Mealey. The Scholarship fund awards scholarships annually to students who reside in affordable housing communities developed by CVHC. The JFM has generated half a million in scholarship funds and benefitted more than 600 students.

Mr. Mealey's extraordinary career began in Philadelphia at a nonprofit housing organization. Before joining CVHC in 1982, he worked at the Riverside Department of Housing and Community Development. Mr. Mealey also served as a board member on the California Coalition for Rural Housing, the National Rural Housing Coalition and the National Equity Fund.

Amongst the numerous reputable recognitions that Mr. Mealey has obtained throughout his remarkable career, he recently was honored with the Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) award. This distinction is

presented to those individuals who demonstrate the lifetime achievement of leadership in rural development, building and sustaining an organization that benefits rural communities and has a regional impact.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Mr. Mealey who for nearly four decades dedicated his time to better the lives of underserved communities. For his work and on behalf of the thousands of families of the 36th district of California, I would like to offer my sincerest thanks and congratulate Mr. Mealey for his exceptional commitment. I wish him and his wife Patricia the best on his well-deserved retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably delayed and not present for roll call votes 83 and 84.

Had I been present. I would have voted yes on both Number 83 and Number 84.

HONORING WILLIE FRITZ FOR HIS
DECADE OF LEADERSHIP AS
FIRST SELECTMAN OF CLINTON,
CT

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to thank a public servant from Clinton, Connecticut who has served his community with distinction for more than ten years. Mr. William "Willie" Fritz, First Selectman since 2005, spent his decade of tenure leading the town into improved financial and physical shape, and constantly making himself accessible to town residents. Willie's public service started in Clinton local government in 2000, when he served on the Public Works and Planning and Zoning Commissions and immediately displayed a knack for putting the town's needs into action.

After his election as first selectman in 2005, Willie championed the needs of the people of Clinton. His legacy is visible in the beautiful buildings and public spaces around town. These efforts resulted in numerous state grants for the Main Street streetscape, the renovation of the Town Dock uplands, and a modern multi-use turf field at the Indian River Recreation Complex. Each of these spaces and the value they provide to the Clinton community is a testament to Willie's achievements as a local leader.

One of Willie's noteworthy achievements was in managing the renovation of the Andrews Memorial Town Hall. After two decades of inattention, the hall's magnificent architecture required urgent repairs and adjustments. Willie secured vital funds from the state Commission on Historic Preservation, and ultimately restored the hall to its former glory.

The beloved building, which houses offices, meeting rooms, a kitchen and auditorium, is now fit for use by the community, and is a destination for architecture historians and students.

Willie has also had a hand in the construction of the new Morgan High School, and in bringing new senior housing to Clinton. As Willie has said "Nobody is more hands-on than a first selectman in a smaller town." Willie has been an exemplary town leader; responsive to his neighbors, forward-thinking in his vision for the town, and full of energy. His extraordinary career for some of us is not too surprising. After all, his mother Mary Fritz is a legendary State Representative in the Connecticut General Assembly, representing the towns of Cheshire and Wallingford. I not only served with Mary during my time as a State Representative, but sat next to her on the House Floor. She has the same commitment to the public interest as her son, and the State of Connecticut has benefitted greatly from the Fritz legacy.

I truly believe that Willie's work for the people of our state is not done and hope he will find new ways to contribute to the public good. I ask my colleagues to please join me in thanking Willie for his many years of service as First Selectman in Clinton, and in wishing him well in the years to come.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$19,064,879,099,682.52. We've added \$8,438,002,050,769.44 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

SUCCESS STEMS FROM HARD
WORK

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Kalpana Vaidya of Sugar Land, Texas for being a Distinguished Finalist in the Texas' Top Youth Volunteers of 2016, given by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards.

Kalpana is a senior at Stephen F. Austin High School and a scout in the Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council troop. Her community service project, "The World of Science" is a hands-on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math education (STEM) activity for kindergartners up to eighth-graders. Now becoming an annual affair, her project was sponsored by

the Austin High School Honor Society and helped them raise \$2,000. Kalpana's activity has also attracted organizations such as the Houston Natural Science Museum and the Baytown Nature Center. Her efforts in creating this activity led her to become a distinguished finalist in The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. These awards recognize talented young men and women across America that have graciously served their communities.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Kalpana Vaidya for being a Distinguished Finalist. We are so proud of her and can't wait to see what she does next.

HONORING REVEREND FREDERICK CRAWFORD

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise during this month, dedicated to the celebration of African Americans who have made great contributions to the world, to pay tribute to Reverend Frederick Crawford for his many years of compassionate service and tireless work to improve the lives of our community residents.

Reverend Frederick Crawford is the Senior Pastor of Union Grove Missionary Baptist Church and the founder of Faithbook, which is a public group on Facebook designed to inspire and encourage via the internet. Established in 2014, Faithbook has more than 3,000 members and counting. This group was designed by Rev. Crawford to encourage, strengthen, and pray for believers in Christ. Members are welcomed to post prayers, words of encouragement, scriptures, testimonies, prayer requests, sermons, pictures, videos, and advertisements of church events.

Reverend Crawford is a native of the Bronx. He is the oldest of four children born to Reverend Dr. Fletcher and Mother Arnetta Crawford. He graduated from Eastern Mennonite College and Seminary where he earned a Bachelor's of Science in Business Administration and Minor in Religious Studies. He continued his studies at Alliance Theological Seminary, Unification Theological Seminary and later obtained a Bachelor's of Theology from American International Theological Seminary. He was ordained to be the Assistant Pastor of Union Grove Missionary Baptist Church by Dr. Fletcher Crawford in August 1988.

Reverend Crawford is the third generation of his family to serve as pastors of Union Grove Missionary Baptist Church. His father, Dr. Fletcher Crawford served for fifty years and his grandfather, Rev. Jeremiah Crawford, organized this community institution in 1946. Prior to his leadership at Union Grove Missionary Baptist Church, Reverend Crawford was the pastor at the First Calvary Baptist Church in Harlem, NY for twenty years before being called back to Union Grove Missionary Baptist Church in 2006. Upon Dr. Fletcher Crawford's retirement, Rev. Frederick Crawford was installed as Pastor at Union Grove Missionary Baptist Church on August

20, 2006. Pastor Crawford is happily married to Lady Antoinette Crawford, and they have four children; Lamont, Shapri, Hezekiah, and Chloe.

Under his leadership, Union Grove Missionary Baptist Church has created numerous programs to assist families in the Bronx. Many of those programs focus on addressing a serious issue in the Bronx—hunger and food insecurity. Through Reverend Crawford's leadership, Union Grove feeds more than 1,000 families every year during Thanksgiving Week, providing them with enough food for a family of four for a week. The church also runs an important food pantry that offers needy Bronxites produce, meats, breads, dairy, juice, water, dry and can goods at no charge. Additionally, Reverend Crawford leads a daily Summer Food Program at Union Grove Missionary Baptist Church, which provides more than 300 meals for breakfast and lunch for those in need. The church is also very involved in numerous other issues as well and has an annual Back To School Health and Community Awareness Fair that helps students prepare for school and includes free food, entertainment, clothes, books and book bags. Pastor Crawford has also created Union Grove Missionary Baptist Church's annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration to engage the community in honoring Dr. King. I have had the honor of speaking at this important community event several times.

As Reverend Crawford has made Union Grove Missionary Baptist Church an integral member of the Bronx community, he has also been called to serve in leadership roles in numerous other organizations. He has served as the President of the Baptist Minister's Evening Conference of the Bronx, NY, and is also a member of the Baptist Ministers Conference of Greater New York and Vicinity, the United Missionary Baptist Association and The National Baptist Convention USA. Rev. Crawford has received numerous awards and accolades including the Religious Community Leader Award in 2007 from the NAACP.

Reverend Crawford is a pillar of our community, and it is only fitting that he is honored for his work on behalf of others. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Rev. Frederick Crawford for his consistently remarkable dedication to service and longstanding commitment to improving our community.

TRIBUTE TO BRENNA WESTERGAARD

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Brenna Westergaard for earning an American FFA Degree. Brenna was recently awarded at the National FFA Convention and Expo in Louisville, Kentucky on October 31, 2015. She was a member of the Adair-Casey FFA Organization and is the daughter of Lori Westergaard and Kevin Westergaard.

The American FFA Degree is awarded to members who have demonstrated the highest

level of commitment to FFA and made significant accomplishments in their supervised agricultural experience. Brenna had to meet certain requirements, such as studying agriculture for three years in high school, earning money in an agriculture field and investing that money into her business, participation in community service and having a record of outstanding leadership ability and community involvement.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent leaders like Brenna in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to reach her goals. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating her on receiving this esteemed designation, and wishing her nothing but the best of luck in the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF EFFIE YEAW

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Effie Yeaw Nature Center as it celebrates its 40th anniversary. As its board of directors, staff, volunteers, and local nature enthusiasts gather to celebrate this wonderful occasion, I ask all of my colleagues to join men in recognizing and honoring the Effie Yeaw Nature Center for its contributions to the Sacramento Region.

The American River is an incredibly important part of our region and Effie Yeaw is the only environmental education center on the 23-mile American River Parkway. The 80-acre nature preserve with river access, oak woodlands, meadows, and ponds truly engages children and adults of all ages through their interactive exhibits and programs. These programs are essential to teaching our youth about the importance of protecting our local environment and the animals that inhabit it.

In 1955 Effie Yeaw, a teacher and environmental educator, began leading natural history walks in an area now known as the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and Nature Area, located along the American River in Carmichael. Effie Yeaw's efforts to raise awareness for preserving the lands along the river have been critical to the health of our local ecosystem. Her concept of a "Parkway" along the river has served as a guiding principal that has shaped the landscape of our region for the better.

Though Effie Yeaw died in 1970, her legacy lives on in the American River Parkway she helped to establish. Her legacy also lives on in the Nature Center which continues to be guided by Effie's genuine love for nature and children. In 1960, the Director of Parks received a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant to purchase land along the American River, including the Effie Yeaw Nature Area. Construction of the Nature Center was completed in June 1976 and was dedicated in memory of Effie.

Mr. Speaker, as the board of directors, staff, volunteers, and local nature enthusiasts gather for their 40th anniversary celebration, I am

pleased to honor and recognize Effie Yeaw Nature Center for its important role in enhancing Sacramento's community. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing them continued success and thanking them for their service to the Sacramento region.

IN RECOGNITION OF CHIEF
LAWRENCE L. MIHLON

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Chief Lawrence L. Mihlon on his retirement from the West Long Branch Police Department this year. Chief Mihlon dedicated 34 years to the Borough of West Long Branch and his contributions are to be celebrated.

Throughout his decorated career, Chief Mihlon held many positions, serving as Lieutenant for 2 years and Captain for 7 years before being appointed Chief of Police in 2013. Chief Mihlon has an extensive police background, having served in many capacities within the department, including Patrol, Detectives, Traffic, Training, Records, Command and Administration. Prior to joining the West Long Branch Police Department in 1982, Chief Mihlon worked as a Special Officer for the Little Silver Police Department and a National Park Service Ranger at Sandy Hook and Shenandoah National Park.

Chief Mihlon has been committed to serving the West Long Branch community and was focused on public relations, serving as the Department spokesman and creating the Department's website and Facebook pages. Community involvement has been instilled in Chief Mihlon's family. His mother worked as a Little Silver Police Dispatcher, his sister is a special education principal, his brother serves on Little Silver Borough Council and his nephew is a Little Silver Patrolman and Fire Chief. Over the years, Chief Mihlon has been recognized for his dedicated service and accomplishments, having received the West Long Branch Police Department's Life Saving Medal, the Education Bar and the Exceptional Duty Bar.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely hope that my colleagues will join me in congratulating Chief Lawrence Mihlon on his retirement and thanking him for his service to New Jersey. Chief Mihlon's commitment to the West Long Branch community is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

KIDS WORKING TO KEEP TEXAS
BULLY FREE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sidharth Duttala, a Fort Bend County student, for winning the National Association for Pupil Transportation's (NAPT) National School Bus Safety Week Poster Contest.

Sidharth, a third-grader at Sugar Mill Elementary School, won first place in the Division I category, with his "Super Important Bully Free Zone" poster. Initially competing at the local level, Sidharth's poster was voted on by school district bus drivers to be entered at the state level competition on the contest theme "Bully Free Zone." NAPT annually observes the importance of school bus safety. This year's poster contest included students in more than 40 states and countless school districts.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Sidharth Duttala. We are proud of him and encourage him to keep spreading kindness.

HONORING THE LIFE OF
JOHN PRICE

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a very special individual, John D. Price of Lexington, Kentucky. Mr. Price lived an exemplary life of service to others and passed away on February 23, 2016.

Mr. Price was a dedicated leader in education in Fayette County. He was appointed to the school board in 2003 and was elected four times. He served as board chairman since 2010. Mr. Price's involvement began over 30 years ago as a mentor with the Experience Based Career Education program. He went on to serve as a homeroom parent, a school volunteer, and a member of site based councils at Julia R. Ewan Elementary and Bryan Station High School. He was a PTA leader, serving as President of the 16th District PTA. He served on the Equity Council for Fayette County Public Schools. Mr. Price was a strong advocate for all students and was deeply concerned with every student having the opportunity for a great education. His commitment to students was unwavering.

Professionally, Mr. Price was a CPA and President of Price, Stagner, and Company. He was an active member of St. Peter Catholic Church. Mr. Price was a founding board member of Housing Equality for All Lexington (HEAL) and remained active with HEAL for thirty eight years.

John Price is survived by his daughter Allison Courtney Crosby and her husband Anthony Crosby, his mother Janella Wathen Price, and his sisters Jalenna Price and Margaret Griffin.

Mr. Price was a humble leader. Former superintendent Tom Shelton says of John Price, "He had exemplary character, strong personal integrity, and was a strong man of faith, and it was exhibited in everything he did and every decision he was involved in." He made a significant impact on the lives of all people he touched. He was an outstanding public servant, and I am honored to memorialize him before the United States House of Representatives.

RECOGNIZING THE ART OF LIVING
FOUNDATION

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Art of Living Foundation, and founder Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, as the Foundation commemorates its 35th anniversary with the upcoming World Culture Festival in New Delhi on March 11-13, 2016.

The three day major cultural event will be held at a venue that covers over 1,000 acres and will feature the world's largest stage spread over an area of seven acres.

The festival emphasizes co-existence and celebrates diversity by bringing together an estimated 3.5 million people to a common platform.

We must all remember that while lifestyles vary from one culture to the next, we are all human beings who should learn from one another.

I believe celebrating cultural diversity around the globe, as the Art of Living Foundation is doing with this wonderful event, will open lines of communication and understanding between nations, and I certainly wish them well.

HONORING ETTA F. RITTER

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Black History Month this year, I am honored to reflect on the contributions African-Americans have made within my district in Bronx County. That is why I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize Ms. Etta F. Ritter for her many years of tireless work to improve the lives of our community residents.

Etta F. Ritter is a native of Bronx County, spending her early years as a resident of Butler Houses, where she attended PS 132, CES 55 and IS 148. She later attended secondary school at Murry Bergtraum High School for Business Careers in Manhattan and majored in Secretarial Studies, graduating in 1982. Ms. Ritter then attended Manhattan Community College for one year, received an offer to work that started her on her career path. She has continued her education throughout the years in different venues.

Ms. Ritter was hired at the New York City Office of Management and Budget as a back-up secretary in 1984. She was later promoted as a statistical typist within the Community Development Unit and was subsequently promoted and transferred to the Computer Services Unit as a help desk coordinator. Ms. Ritter worked at the NYC Office of Management and Budget up until October 1996, when she was hired as a Community Coordinator at Bronx Community Board Three, which covers parts of the Melrose, Claremont, Morrisania, and Crotona Park neighborhoods in my district.

She recognized that working at Bronx Community Board Three plays an important role in

improving the quality of life for residents within Community District Three. As community coordinator at Bronx Community Board Three, Ms. Ritter ensures that agendas and minutes are distributed on a monthly basis to area residents, elected officials, community based organizations and media contacts. She plays a vital role in ensuring that complaints/concerns relating to the delivery of municipal city services are addressed in a timely fashion.

In June of 2013, Ms. Ritter was promoted to Administrative Manager based on her extensive relevant work experience. Under direction of the district manager and with wide latitude for independent initiative and judgment, she manages the daily operations of the office and performs difficult analytical work in the preparation and administration of the operating budget for Bronx Community Board Three. As the Fiscal Officer/Preparer for all budget documents, Ms. Ritter analyzes, prepares and modifies the Other than Personal Services Budget (OTPS) each year.

Ms. Ritter is pleased to work at a community board that has been "first" in the approval process involving the creation of numerous affordable housing and economic development projects, including a Sect. 197-A Neighborhood Development Plan, the Presbyterian Senior Services Grandparents Apartment building with support services for grandparents raising their grandchildren, the development of Boricua Village, which includes a major college campus in Boricua College that serves approximately 2,000 students and provides approximately 700 units of new housing and retail development, the Cross Bronx Plaza at East 174th Street, veterans housing and subsidized, affordable, green LEEDS rated homes.

Ms. Ritter's long-term devotion to the Bronx is truly noteworthy, and we can also see the progress our borough has made thanks as a result. I am so pleased to be able to recognize her efforts here in Congress. She will be celebrating 32 years of City service come April 2, 2016 and celebrates her life with her son Bashiek Dorsey, 31, who served in the Army protecting our country and now resides in Irving, Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Ms. Etta F. Ritter for her consistently remarkable dedication to public service and longstanding commitment to improving our community.

**HONORING THE EXTRAORDINARY
LIFE OF COACH JAMES "JIM"
BELDEN**

HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a beloved member of the Indiana community, Jim Belden. Jim was a councilman in Hamilton County and an Indiana Football Hall of Fame coach. Sadly, Jim died at the age of 77 on February 14, 2016 after a battle with cancer. He will be dearly missed by the Hoosier community, but we will remem-

ber him forever through the spectacular legacy he left behind.

Although he was born in Michigan, Jim spent most of his life in Indiana. He attended and played football at Shortridge High School in Indianapolis, where he was honored as an All-City and All-State Fullback. He graduated from Shortridge in 1957 and served in the United States Navy from 1958–1962. After serving our country in the Navy, he went on to play football for Butler University and was honored as an All-Conference Fullback. He graduated from Butler in 1963 and earned his master's degree in 1971 from Ball State University.

Beginning with his first call to public service in the United States Navy, he served as a stellar example of selfless public service. He left his mark as a teacher, a family man, and a member of the Hamilton County Council, but what Jim is most known for is coaching football. Jim's career as a high school teacher and football coach spanned over 30 years at three Hamilton County Schools—Westfield High School from 1964 to 1967, Noblesville High School from 1967 to 1980, and Carmel High School from 1980 to 1996. Jim is the 12th winningest coach in Indiana state history, with an impressive lifetime record of 283 wins, 80 losses, and 2 ties. His extraordinary record included 25 Conference titles, 16 Sectional, 10 Regional, five Semi-State, one State-Runner up, and most notably, he led Carmel High School to 4 State Championship titles in 1980, 1981, 1986, and 1991.

He retired from coaching football in 1996 and on April 24 of that year was inducted into the Indiana Football Hall of Fame. That honor followed many years of accolades. Beyond his long list of titles and State championships, he received "Coach of the Year" awards on many occasions, most notably from the Indiana Football Coaches Association, the Butler Alumni Association, and the Indiana Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association. He was also awarded a Key to the City of Carmel, Noblesville recognized him with "Jim Belden Day," and he received the prestigious Governor's Sagamore of the Wabash award, to name a few. He also ran a highly successful football camp for aspiring high school players for many years. As the daughter of a 30-year high school coach, I know the unquestionable and lasting impact Jim had on the many young men he coached, the students he taught, assistant coaches and faculty he worked with, and the schools and communities he served.

In 1993, Jim began serving on the Hamilton County Council and won every election since. He was influential as a councilman and contributed significantly to the community. He helped ensure the expansion of Ivy Tech Community College in Noblesville with a vote to provide funding for the project and was a big proponent of planned upgrades to State Road 37.

Jim loved coaching football and serving as an elected official in Hamilton County, but his pride and joy was his family. Jim is survived by his wife, Bev, son, Bo, daughter, Bamby, and 5 grandchildren. He is also survived by his brother, Randy, sister, Candy, and several nieces, nephews, and friends. Jim is a tremendous example of an effective and dedicated

public servant. After decades of serving as a mentor and leader in the community, his impact and presence will not soon be forgotten. Please join me in thanking Jim's family and friends for sharing this truly remarkable man with the Hoosier community.

**KIANNA HAWKINS—A GIRL WITH A
VISION**

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Kianna Hawkins of Manvel, Texas for being named a distinguished finalist in the Texas' top youth volunteers of 2016, given by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards.

Kianna is a senior at Lamar High School and a scout in the Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council troop. Her community service project, "EyeCare4TeenVision" raises awareness about the importance of eye care and aims to provide critical services to children in need. Her efforts in partnering with the nonprofit Nehemiah Center and the Prevent Blindness organization led her to become a distinguished finalist in The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. These awards recognize talented young men and women across America that have graciously served their communities.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Kianna Hawkins for being a Distinguished Finalist. We are so proud of her and can't wait to see what she does next.

HONORING JOHN SUDDUTH

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor Mr. John Sudduth of Double Springs, Alabama as the 2016 honoree of the Winston County Republican Party. I am honored to stand before this body of Congress and this Nation to recognize Mr. Sudduth for his unselfish dedication to the people of Winston County.

Mr. Sudduth grew up in Winston County before receiving his teaching degree. He first taught in Piedmont, Alabama before returning to his native Winston County where he taught agriculture science for more than 30 years at Winston County High School. Mr. Sudduth has taught thousands of students over the years the importance of agriculture to the local community, the state of Alabama and to America.

Mr. Sudduth has been very active in his community. He is a member of Double Springs First Baptist Church. He is also very active in ALFA and the Cattleman's Association. As part of his service in the Cattleman's Association, Mr. Sudduth and other members helped distribute supplies to farmers who were hard hit by the tornado outbreak of April 2011.

Last but not least, Mr. Sudduth has been a member of the Winston County Republican

Party for many years. He has also served as its vice-chairman for several terms.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege to honor Mr. Sudduth for his long service to so many in Winston County. I join his family, friends and colleagues in congratulating him on being recognized by the Winston County GOP.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN
CHARLES B. RANGEL

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of Black History Month and to recognize the important contributions made by African-Americans to our communities and to our nation. African-Americans have made countless contributions to and sacrifices for this great nation, and nowhere is this more visible than in New York City. That is why I want to stand before you today to honor my friend and colleague Congressman CHARLES B. RANGEL for his many years of public service and tireless work to improve the lives of residents of our community and our nation.

CHARLES RANGEL, or CHARLIE as many of us know him, is a legend in New York City and in Congress. His story is well chronicled, growing up on Lenox Avenue in Harlem and then volunteering to serve in the Army during the Korean War. CHARLIE became a war hero during his service when he was wounded by the enemy during the conflict, and then leading his surviving comrades back from behind enemy lines to safety. For his leadership and bravery, CHARLIE was awarded a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star.

CHARLIE returned from the war determined to make a difference. With the aid of the G.I. Bill, he graduated from New York University and St. John's University Law School, and became increasingly involved in his community. He also began a career of public service, serving for a time as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and involving himself in local politics and the civil rights movement. It was during this time that he met his mentor and friend, Percy Sutton, along with a number of other young leaders fighting to make a difference in Harlem. Four of those leaders, Percy Sutton, David Dinkins, Basil Paterson, and CHARLIE RANGEL, became the legendary Gang of Four, and each of them went on to incredible success in city, state, and national politics. CHARLIE's political journey formally began soon thereafter, with his election in 1966 to the New York State Assembly.

CHARLIE served in Albany for four years, and then in 1970, he took on the legendary Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. for the right to represent Harlem in Congress. He beat the incumbent in a tough battle, and began his service here in the House of Representatives.

In 1971, during his first term, CHARLIE became a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus. He has broken barriers throughout his 23 terms in office, and has maintained a consistent set of political prin-

ciples. He has sought to help the least among us, and has worked to ensure the American Dream for all Americans, regardless of income. And his record of accomplishment shows just how effective he has been.

Congressman RANGEL's accomplishments in Congress are truly too many to list, but let me name just a few. He has boosted the incomes of millions of working families through the Earned Income Tax Credit. He worked with my predecessor, Bob Garcia, to establish and pass the Empowerment Zone program, which has helped revitalize communities across the nation. He enabled the financing mechanisms to allow public school systems across the nation to construct new buildings and rehabilitate old ones. He helped isolate apartheid South Africa by passing the Rangel Amendment, which forced many investors in the 1980s to abandon the country. He has created trade and investment opportunities for countries across the Caribbean and Africa.

Lastly, he mentored a then junior Congressman from the Bronx, who arrived in Congress in 1990. It was with his friendship, advice, and support that I won my seat on the Appropriations Committee. He has always been a source of knowledge and know-how, and I am proud to count him as a colleague and a dear friend. He has extended his generosity and friendship to my son, State Senator José M. Serrano, and we know we can always count on his friendship, personally and politically.

CHARLIE still lives in the community where he was born with his wonderful wife Alma. They have two adult children and three grandchildren.

CHARLIE still has 11 months left in Congress, so this might seem a little bit early to some. But as we celebrate Black History Month and reflect on the contributions African-Americans have made to our nation, I thought it was important to acknowledge just how important and influential CHARLIE RANGEL, New York's own master legislator, has been to our nation.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Congressman CHARLES B. RANGEL for his consistently remarkable dedication to public service and longstanding commitment to improving our nation.

HONORING NAIOP-NEW MEXICO

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the New Mexico chapter of NAIOP which received the prestigious Chapter of the Year award, for the medium chapter category, at NAIOP's annual retreat on February 10, 2016 in Washington, D.C.

NAIOP, the Commercial Real Estate Development Association, was founded in 1967 and is the leading organization for developers, owners, and related professionals in office, industrial, retail and mixed-use real estate. With 52 chapters throughout the United States and Canada, NAIOP comprises more than 15,000

members. It advances responsible commercial real estate development while simultaneously advocating for effective public policy.

The New Mexico chapter of NAIOP, founded in 1981, was originally comprised of less than 10 members. The chapter has grown with vigor and today proudly counts more than 260 members in its ranks. NAIOP-New Mexico has been successful in advocating for their members at the local, state, and federal level. In addition to Chapter of the Year, I am proud to report that they were honored for the excellence of their Legislative and Government Affairs at the annual retreat.

The work that NAIOP-New Mexico performs is important not only because it promotes job growth and excellence in the commercial real estate industry, but also because of its educational programs. For example, the Developing Leaders Program provides members under 35 with the tools necessary to excel and become future leaders in commercial real estate. In the past three years, they focused on reaching out to millennials who are interested in careers in commercial real estate and have grown the program by 126%. NAIOP-New Mexico has also partnered with the University of New Mexico and Central New Mexico Community College to educate students who are interested in commercial real estate, providing them with important skills for future careers. In fact, their members have donated more than \$20,000 to these student projects and initiatives. For these accomplishments, NAIOP-New Mexico also received the award for the best medium-sized chapter in the Developing Leaders Program.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate NAIOP-New Mexico for winning three prestigious and competitive awards. In particular, I would like to call attention to NAIOP-New Mexico's CEO, Tom Bisaquino, and President, Lynne Anderson, for their outstanding leadership and to commend all the staff and members who made these awards possible. I look forward to hearing about the future successes of NAIOP-New Mexico as they continue to attract new members, train and educate future leaders, and improve commercial real estate in our state.

Congratulations, NAIOP-New Mexico; keep up the great work.

RECOGNIZING ZELMA BROOKS
WASHINGTON'S 50 YEAR MEM-
BERSHIP IN THE DELTA SIGMA
SORORITY

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize an important milestone for a dedicated member of the African American and Dallas Communities. On January 31st, 2016, Sister Zelma Brooks Washington was honored for her fifty years of membership in the Delta Sigma Sorority, an organization comprised of college-educated black women that provides community support throughout the world. The sorority has over 200,000 members, and was originally

founded here in Washington DC at Howard University.

Mrs. Washington is a graduate of Jarvis Christian College and the University of North Texas. She had a career dedicated to the greater public—she was a teacher and counselor here in the Dallas area for decades. In addition to her career as an educator, she has been active in her relationship with the Greater Golden Gate Church, working with the Deaconess, New Member Orientation, Mission, Women's Chorus, Church Program Committee and the Faith Walkers. In the greater Dallas community, she is involved with the Dallas Retired Teachers Association, AARP Volunteer Tax Preparer, Dallas Lincoln-James Madison Alumni Association, and the Jarvis Christian College National and Local Alumni Association.

Mrs. Washington was honored at the Hyatt Regency in Dallas alongside the company of her husband and daughter. She and her sisters looked graceful and youthful as they received recognition to their commitment to this long-standing institution. Mrs. Washington joined the alumni chapter of the Delta Sigma Sorority in 1966, a time when education and opportunities were still denied to African Americans in Dallas.

Mr. Speaker, for her dedication to an organization that promotes equality internationally, for her deep and rich commitment to the community, and for her selfless career as an educator, past National President of the Delta Sigma Sorority, Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE, and I would like to join together in formally recognizing this wonderful woman and her impressive milestone here in Congress.

HONORING MRS. LILLIAN
GERSTNER

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate Mrs. Lillian Gerstner, who is being recognized by the Village of Skokie for her 25 years of hard work and dedication to make the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center the wonderful place it is today.

An only child born to two Holocaust survivors, Rosalie and Moses Polus, Mrs. Gerstner came to Evanston in 1969 to pursue a degree in theater and a secondary school teaching certification at Northwestern University. Mrs. Gerstner married her husband, Mr. Alan Gerstner in 1976, and has two children, Michael and Lisa, born in 1980 and 1983, respectively.

Mrs. Gerstner began volunteering at the Holocaust Memorial Foundation of Illinois on Main Street in Skokie in 1985. With her young daughter Lisa in tow, she began her services by stuffing envelopes, typing, and filing. When Lisa began school, Mrs. Gerstner's duties increased to include production of the monthly newsletter. Mrs. Gerstner was a regular volunteer for years, feeling very much at home among the small staff and the survivors who visited. When staff began requesting that Mrs.

Gerstner join their team after the executive director, Ms. Pearl Karp, retired, Mrs. Gerstner declined initially, unable to take on a full time job. In the meantime, Mrs. Gerstner and the rest of the Foundation's staff worked tirelessly to convince Illinois legislatures to mandate a school curriculum inclusive of the Holocaust. All of their efforts paid off when, on January 1, 1999, Illinois became the first state in the nation to pass a Holocaust Education Mandate.

On January 31, 1991, to the delight of the Foundation's officers, Mrs. Gerstner accepted her third offer to work as Executive Director. She was put in charge of a three-person staff and began working to make the Foundation's vision a reality. Her first year was focused on working with the Foundation's Education Director to provide professional development for teachers who were to begin implementing the newly enacted Illinois Holocaust Education Mandate.

Over the years, the Holocaust Memorial Foundation of Illinois accumulated many memorable achievements; they include, but are not limited to: Production of four documentaries, one of which—"Choosing One's Way—Resistance in Auschwitz-Birkenau"—received the Chicago International Film Festival Hugo Award in 1994; onsite training to over 2,000 educators to aid them in their teachings on the Holocaust; speaking to tens of thousands annually through the Speaker's Bureau; conducting annual creative expression competitions for children; taping survivor interviews, starting in 1991; conducting unique Yom HaShoah observances within the community; supervising Holocaust Expression Theater, a program to aid high school students in the development and performance of Holocaust dramatic material; and welcoming non-Jewish volunteers from the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace starting in 1997.

Mrs. Gerstner was an asset in the transition from the small Holocaust Memorial Foundation of Illinois on Main Street to the huge Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center that can be seen today, in Skokie, Illinois. From her work as site director for the Main Street facility until it closed in 2008, to Director of Special Projects and then Director of Public Programs in 2015, Mrs. Gerstner has truly been indispensable in both garnering cultural acknowledgment for the Holocaust, as well as educating and engaging youth and adults in its events and activities.

Mrs. Gerstner is a remarkable woman who has dedicated 25 years of her life to the success of the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center. I want to congratulate her for being recognized by the Village of Skokie during their Board Meeting on March 7, 2016; she is an outstanding member of society who has brought much-needed attention to the Holocaust both within her town, and nationally. I am proud to honor her today for her achievements, and look forward to all she will continue to do in the future.

ENDOCRINE SOCIETY CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF PUBLIC HEALTH BREAKTHROUGHS

HON. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY III

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Endocrine Society, in honor of its Centennial anniversary.

A century ago, a small group of physicians joined together to unlock the secrets of the body's hormones—the chemical signals that govern breathing, metabolism, growth, reproduction and other critical biological functions. They were endocrinologists, and from this impassioned gathering, the Endocrine Society was born.

Over the next 100 years, endocrinologists would discover lifesaving treatments and provide quality care for hundreds of millions of people with diabetes, osteoporosis, thyroid conditions, infertility, sleep disorders, hormone-related cancers and many other conditions. Today, the Society has more than 18,000 members in 122 countries and is the world's oldest and largest organization devoted to hormone research and the clinical practice of endocrinology.

During its centennial year, the Endocrine Society will celebrate endocrinology's contributions to science and public health—while keeping an eye on today's promising research which will lead to tomorrow's discoveries. It will recognize Nobel Prize winners in the field (including four Society Past-Presidents) and historic breakthroughs such as the 1921 discovery of insulin, which transformed diabetes from a death sentence to a manageable chronic condition. In April, I am very pleased to recognize, the Endocrine Society will conduct its Annual Meeting and Expo, in Boston, Massachusetts. ENDO is the world's premier event for getting the latest updates in endocrine science and medicine, drawing thousands of endocrinologists from around the globe. ENDO 2016 will feature special programming celebrating the field's history and notable achievements.

Because hormones affect nearly every cell of the human body, the work of endocrinologists is essential to manage conditions that affect millions, including:

About 415 million adults worldwide who have diabetes, according to the International Diabetes Federation;

More than 36 percent of American adults who are obese, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

An estimated 48.5 million couples worldwide who were infertile as of 2010, according to the World Health Organization; and

More than 10 million American adults who have osteoporosis, according to the Society's Endocrine Facts and Figures report.

Endocrine Society members have been at the forefront of historic accomplishments in medicine and research. I offer my warmest congratulations to the Endocrine Society on its celebration of 100 years of breakthroughs and I look forward to what the next century brings.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARLIN A. STUTZMAN

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, on February 12, 2016, due to a funeral in my state, I was absent for four roll call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner:

Roll Call Vote No. 79—McMorris-Rodgers of Washington Amendment No. 1—Yes.

Roll Call Vote No. 80—Schrader of Oregon Amendment No. 3—No.

Roll Call Vote No. 81—H.R. 2017, Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015—Yes.

Roll Call Vote No. 82—(Motion to Suspend the Rules and Concur in the Senate Amendment) H.R. 757, North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enforcement Act of 2016—Yes.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PIPELINE INSPECTION ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2016

HON. JANICE HAHN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, today, I am reintroducing the Pipeline Inspection Enforcement Act to prevent oil pipeline leaks like the one that greatly damaged the community of Wilmington, California in my district.

Los Angeles is home to one of the most vast pipeline networks in the United States. Both oil and gas pipelines connect the Port of Los Angeles and the Port of Long Beach with the refineries in the area. Therefore, pipeline safety is a very important topic for me and the communities which make up the neighborhoods surrounding the Port of Los Angeles—including Wilmington, a primarily working class community. I have represented Wilmington for over 10 years—first on the Los Angeles City Council, and now as a Member of Congress.

Since Wilmington sits on top of one of the largest oil fields in the nation and a complex system of pipelines, this community lives with a heightened threat of a pipeline leaking or exploding. This became an unfortunate reality for many residents of Wilmington two years ago when a pipeline ruptured, causing thousands of gallons of crude oil to spill onto a residential street wreaking havoc on the lives of families who live in the community.

When Phillips purchased the pipeline, they were told that it was empty. In 15 years, the pipeline was not inspected to ensure that it was true.

As a result, the people in Wilmington paid the price.

I remember racing over there the morning it happened and discovering that yards were destroyed and homes were damaged. The smell of oil made people sick. The residents had to deal with the noise of jackhammers tearing up streets to locate the leak. Some people could not leave their houses and get to work.

The legislation I am reintroducing today would have prevented the damage these fami-

lies experienced by forcing companies like Phillips 66 to simply have firsthand knowledge of what their pipelines contain. My legislation will ensure that a company purchasing a pipeline does its due diligence and inspects the status of the pipelines they purchase within 180 days of the sale. This inspection needs to have third party verification by either PHMSA or a state authority.

It is neglectful not to inspect the pipelines. The oil spill endangered the health and safety of many of my constituents as well as property damage and costs to the local economy.

These basic improvements to federal policy would protect countless communities like Wilmington. I look forward to working with my colleagues in Congress to make this legislation law.

IN HONOR OF THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF SALLIE PAULINE NAUGHER PUTNAM

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize the birthday of Sallie Pauline Naugher Putnam of Piedmont, Alabama. She will turn 100 on March 28th.

Pauline was born to Jennie Elizabeth Warren Naugher and William Morris Naugher. She had two brothers, both World War II Veterans, and one sister who married a World War II Veteran. She married Volyer C. Putnam (deceased), also a World War II Veteran, on March 2, 1940. She is the proud aunt of her nephew Michael Naugher and niece Susan Ponder.

Pauline attended school in Oxford, Alabama until 7th grade and then finished 8th–12th grades at Piedmont High School. She was Salutatorian in 1934. She attended a year and a half at Jacksonville State University.

After her time at JSU, she worked at Stand-ard Coosa Thatcher, a cotton mill in Piedmont. There she worked as a spinner, in the lab and in the payroll department before retiring.

She attends First Baptist Church of Piedmont where she has been a member since 1955.

In the fall, she cheers on the Piedmont Bulldogs and Alabama Crimson Tide. She still drives and goes to the beauty shop each week.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the life and achievements of Sallie Pauline Naugher Putnam and wishing her a happy 100th birthday.

HONORING THE 168 INVENTORS INDUCTED AS THE 2015 FELLOWS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF INVENTORS

HON. DAVID W. JOLLY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 168 inventors who will soon be rec-

ognized at the United States Patent and Trademark Office and inducted as the 2015 Fellows of the National Academy of Inventors (NAI) in an induction ceremony that will feature a keynote address by U.S. Commissioner for Patents Andrew Hirshfeld. In order to be named as a Fellow, these men and women were nominated by their peers and have undergone the scrutiny of the NAI Selection Committee, having had their innovations deemed as making significant impact on quality of life, economic development, and welfare of society. Collectively, this elite group holds nearly 5,400 patents.

The individuals making up this year's class of Fellows include individuals from 109 research universities and non-profit research institutes spanning the United States and the world. The now 582-member group of Fellows is composed of more than 80 presidents and senior leadership of research universities and non-profit research institutes, 310 members of the other National Academies, 27 inductees of the National Inventors Hall of Fame, 36 recipients of the U.S. National Medal of Technology and Innovation and the U.S. National Medal of Science, 27 Nobel Laureates, 14 Lemelson-MIT prize recipients, and 170 AAAS Fellows, among other awards and distinctions.

The NAI was founded in 2010 by Paul R. Sanberg at the University of South Florida. Its mission is to recognize and encourage inventors with patents issued from the United States Patent and Trademark Office, enhance the visibility of academic technology and innovation, encourage the disclosure of intellectual property, educate and mentor innovative students, and translate the inventions of its members to benefit society.

We are greatly indebted to innovators such as these for contributions to society through their inventions. I commend these individuals, and the organizations that support them, for the work they do to revolutionize the world we live in. As the following inventors are inducted, may it encourage future generations to strive to meet this high honor and continue the spirit of discovery and innovation.

The 2015 NAI Fellows include; C. Mauli Agrawal, The University of Texas at San Antonio; Dean P. Alderucci, The University of Chicago; Jayakrishna Ambati, University of Kentucky; Iver E. Anderson, Iowa State University; Kristi S. Anseth, University of Colorado Boulder; Allen W. Appleby, Oklahoma State University; Charles J. Arntzen, Arizona State University; Harry A. Atwater, Jr., California Institute of Technology; Lorne A. Babiuk, University of Alberta; John M. Ballato, Clemson University; John S. Baras, University of Maryland; Issa Batarseh, University of Central Florida; Ray H. Baughman, The University of Texas at Dallas; Angela M. Belcher, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Stephen J. Benkovic, The Pennsylvania State University; Shekhar Bhansali, Florida International University; Sangeeta N. Bhatia, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; J. Douglas Birdwell, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville; Kenneth J. Blank, Rowan University; Dale L. Boger, The Scripps Research Institute.

Charles A. Bouman, Purdue University; John E. Bowers, University of California, Santa Barbara; Gary L. Bowlin, University of Memphis; C. Jeffrey Brinker, The University of

New Mexico; Emery N. Brown, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Milton L. Brown, Georgetown University; Richard B. Brown, The University of Utah; Steven R.J. Brueck, The University of New Mexico; Joe C. Campbell, University of Virginia; Selim A. Chacour, University of South Florida; Mau-Chung Frank Chang, National Chiao Tung University; Shu Chien, University of California, San Diego; Mary-Dell Chilton, Washington University in St. Louis; Diana S. Chow, University of Houston; Chung K. Chu, University of Georgia; Yoginder P. Chugh, Southern Illinois University; William J. Clancey, Institute for Human and Machine Cognition; Katrina Cornish, The Ohio State University; Delos M. Cosgrove III, Cleveland Clinic; Alan W. Cramb, Illinois Institute of Technology.

Benjamin F. Cravatt III, The Scripps Research Institute; Roy Curtiss III, University of Florida; P. Daniel Dapkus, University of Southern California; John G. Daugman, University of Cambridge; Mark E. Davis, California Institute of Technology; Robert C. Dean, Jr., Dartmouth College; Atam P. Dhawan, New Jersey Institute of Technology; Duane B. Dimos, The University of Texas at Arlington; David M. Eddy, University of South Florida; Nader Engheta, University of Pennsylvania; Antonio Facchetti, Northwestern University; Rudolf Faust, University of Massachusetts Lowell; Robert E. Fischell, University of Maryland; Christodoulos A. Floudas, Texas A&M University; Gabor Forgacs, University of Missouri; Scott E. Fraser, University of Southern California; Jean M.J. Fréchet, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology; Richard H. Frenkiel, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; Sanjiv S. Gambhir, Stanford University; Shubhra Gangopadhyay, University of Missouri; Sir Andre K. Geim, The University of Manchester; George Georgiou, The University of Texas at Austin.

John C. Gore, Vanderbilt University; Venu Govindaraju, University at Buffalo, The State University of New York; Ali Hajimiri, California Institute of Technology; Naomi J. Halas, Rice University; Andrew D. Hamilton, New York University; Wayne W. Hanna, University of Georgia; Florence P. Haseltine, National Institutes of Health; Charlotte A.E. Hauser, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology; Craig J. Hawker, University of California, Santa Barbara; M. Frederick Hawthorne, University of Missouri; Barton F. Haynes, Duke University; Richard F. Heck, University of Delaware; Andrew B. Holmes, The University of Melbourne; Rush D. Holt, American Association for the Advancement of Science; H. Robert Horvitz, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Chenming C. Hu, University of California, Berkeley; Leon D. Iasemidis, Louisiana Tech University; Mir Imran, University of Pittsburgh; Donald E. Ingber, Harvard University; Chennupati Jagadish, The Australian National University.

Anil K. Jain, Michigan State University; Kristina M. Johnson, University of Colorado Boulder; Joseph S. Kalinowski, East Carolina University; Aaron V. Kaplan, Dartmouth College; Usha N. Kasid, Georgetown University; Kenneth W. Kinzler, Johns Hopkins University; Brian K. Kobilka, Stanford University; Steven J. Kubisen, The George Washington University; Donald W. Landry, Columbia University;

Se-Jin Lee, Johns Hopkins University; Sunggyu Lee, Ohio University; Robert J. Lefkowitz, Duke University; G. Douglas Letson, H. Lee Moffitt Cancer & Research Institute; Jennifer A. Lewis, Harvard University; Guifang Li, University of Central Florida; James C. Liao, University of California, Los Angeles; John S. Lollar III, Emory University; Anthony M. Lowman, Rowan University; Rodney S. Markin, University of Nebraska Medical Center; Tobin J. Marks, Northwestern University; Dean F. Martin, University of South Florida.

Helen S. Mayberg, Emory University; Edith G. McGeer, The University of British Columbia; Patrick L. McGeer, The University of British Columbia; Meyya Meyyappan, NASA Ames Research Center; Thomas E. Milner, The University of Texas at Austin; Umesh K. Mishra, University of California, Santa Barbara; Somenath Mitra, New Jersey Institute of Technology; Andreas F. Molisch, University of Southern California; Ramani Narayan, Michigan State University; Alan C. Nelson, Arizona State University; Kyriacos C. Nicolaou, Rice University; David R. Nygren, The University of Texas at Arlington; Richard M. Osgood, Jr., Columbia University; Alyssa Panitch, Purdue University; H. Anne Pereira, The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center; William M. Pierce, Jr., University of Louisville; John M. Poate, Colorado School of Mines; H. Vincent Poor, Princeton University; Ann Progulsk-Fox, University of Florida; Suzie H. Pun, University of Washington; Kaushik Rajashekara, The University of Texas at Dallas; Jahangir S. Rastegar, Stony Brook University.

A. Hari Reddi, University of California, Davis; E. Albert Reece, University of Maryland; Kenneth L. Reifsnider, The University of Texas at Arlington; Jasper D. Rine, University of California, Berkeley; Ajeet Rohatgi, Georgia Institute of Technology; Stephen D. Russell, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command; Michael J. Sailor, University of California, San Diego; Bahgat G. Sammakia, Binghamton University; Andrew V. Schally, University of Miami; Paul R. Schimmel, The Scripps Research Institute; Peter G. Schultz, The Scripps Research Institute; Marian O. Scully, Texas A&M University; Jonathan L. Sessler, The University of Texas at Austin; Mohsen Shahinpoor, University of Maine; Ben Shneiderman, University of Maryland; Marvin J. Slepian, The University of Arizona; Kwok-Fai So, The University of Hong Kong; Richard A. Soref, University of Massachusetts Boston; Pramod K. Srivastava, University of Connecticut; Andrew J. Steckl, University of Cincinnati.

Valentino J. Stella, The University of Kansas; Galen D. Stucky, University of California, Santa Barbara; Bala Subramaniam, The University of Kansas; R. Michael Tanner, Association of Public and Land-grant Universities; Guillermo J. Tearney, Harvard University; Stephen Tomlinson, Medical University of South Carolina; James M. Tour, Rice University; Kalliat T. Valsaraj, Louisiana State University; Bert Vogelstein, Johns Hopkins University; Sherry L. Harbin, Purdue University; Norman J. Wagner III, University of Delaware; Yong Wang, Washington State University; James A. Wells, University of California, San Francisco; Caroline C. Whitacre, The Ohio State University;

Jay F. Whitacre, Carnegie Mellon University; Helena S. Wisniewski, University of Alaska Anchorage; Edward D. Wolf, Cornell University; Paul K. Wright, University of California, Berkeley; James C. Wyant, The University of Arizona; Pan-Chyr Yang, National Taiwan University; Yu-Dong Yao, Stevens Institute of Technology; Martin L. Yarmush, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; and Jianping Zheng, Florida State University.

TRIBUTE TO THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF IOWA

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, Mr. LOEBSACK and I rise today to recognize and congratulate the community colleges of Iowa for 50 years of outstanding service to the state. The community colleges of Iowa have expanded to become our largest provider of postsecondary education.

On June 7, 1965, Iowa Governor Harold Hughes signed the first bill into law allowing for the opening and operation of community colleges in the state of Iowa. The following institutions were officially designated the next year: Northeast Iowa, North Iowa Area, Iowa Lakes, Northwest Iowa, Iowa Central, Iowa Valley, Hawkeye, Eastern Iowa, Kirkwood, Des Moines Area, Western Iowa Tech, Iowa Western, Southwestern, Indian Hills, and Southeast Iowa.

These fine institutions now provide accessible and affordable education, not only to Iowans, but to students across the country and the world. Their offerings include a wide-ranging, diverse curriculum that serves Iowa's specific workforce needs, including Iowa businesses competing in a global market. Iowa businesses in need of highly trained, specialized workers turn to our community colleges to fill the new, high-paying, high-skilled positions of tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, it is our honor to represent Iowa's community colleges in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that we recognize them today. We ask that our colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join us in congratulating Iowa's community colleges on celebrating their 50th year and for providing a high quality, affordable education for all Iowans. We wish them nothing but continued success in the years to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF KRYSTA HARDEN

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and pleasure to extend my congratulations and best wishes to an outstanding leader, personal friend, and constituent, Ms. Krysta Harden, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture for the U.S. Department of Agriculture

(USDA). Ms. Harden has excelled at this position since she took office in August of 2013. She will be leaving her post at the end of February 2016.

A Georgia native, Ms. Harden was born and raised in Camilla, Georgia and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism from the University of Georgia in 1981. Her career began on Capitol Hill, where she worked for former Congressman Charles Hatcher as Legislative Director, Press Secretary, and Chief of Staff for more than ten years. Ms. Harden went on to serve as Staff Director for the Subcommittee on Peanuts and Tobacco of the House Committee on Agriculture.

In 1993, Ms. Harden left the public sector to work for Gordley Associates, a government relations firm focused on agricultural policy. Ms. Harden left the company in 2004 as Senior Vice President. From 2004 to 2009, she served as the Chief Executive Officer of the National Association of Conservation Districts.

In 2009, Ms. Harden began her influential career at the U.S. Department of Agriculture as the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations. In this role, Ms. Harden was instrumental in securing passage of and implementing the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, which increased the nutritional quality of school lunch programs and provides access for children of all economic backgrounds.

In 2011, she was promoted to Chief of Staff of the Department of Agriculture. And in 2013, President Obama nominated Ms. Harden for the position of Deputy Secretary of Agriculture. Her nomination was unanimously approved by the Senate. Ms. Harden's steadfast leadership led to what Secretary Vilsack has called the "best-implemented Farm Bill in history," referencing the 2014 Farm Bill in which Ms. Harden led the USDA's efforts to work with Congress to see the bill through to completion and implementation.

Ms. Harden has been praised by many for her bipartisan and commonsense approach to policies and programs that expand opportunities for rural communities. Krysta Harden, a "Georgia farm girl" herself, has dedicated her career to serving our nation's farmers and promoting a thriving bio-based economy.

As a friend of long standing and someone that I have had the honor to work with closely in developing legislative frameworks for farmer settlements, I can say with a full heart that I will miss working with Krysta in Washington. She has served admirably as Deputy Secretary of the USDA and has shown herself to represent the highest standards of public service. Ms. Harden has established a legacy of providing support for underrepresented groups—particularly women, young people, immigrants, disadvantaged producers, and veterans. I am very grateful for her tireless advocacy to diversify the nation's agriculture sector and her steadfast support for rural America. A woman of great integrity, her efforts, her dedication, and her expertise in her field are unparalleled and will be greatly missed.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our sincerest appreciation and best wishes to Ms. Krysta Harden upon the occasion of her departure from an outstanding career at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, on February 23, 2016, on Roll Call No. 83 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 4408, to require the development of a national strategy to combat terrorist travel, and for other purposes, as amended, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on this bill to require the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, within 180 days of enactment, to transmit a national strategy to Congress to combat terrorist travel.

On February 23, 2016, on Roll Call No. 84 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 4402, Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016, as amended, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on this bill to require the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, within 120 days of enactment, to provide a report to Congress on instances or attempted instances since 2011 of foreign fighter travel from the United States to Iraq or Syria.

PEARLAND CHEERLEADERS PLACE AT STATE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Pearland High School cheerleading team for placing third overall in the University Interscholastic League (UIL) State Competition.

Spirit, the UIL State Cheerleading Competition, is an extension of the typical high school cheerleading role, enhancing school spirit. This highly competitive UIL competition consists of three different categories: fight song, time out band dance, and time out cheer. Pearland High School competed in the UIL State Competition in the Class 6A division where the Pearland Oilers placed third overall, how impressive. We are so proud of our Pearland Cheerleaders and we can't wait to see what the future competitions bring.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the Pearland High School Cheerleaders for placing third in the UIL State Competition. Keep up the hard work.

THE RETIREMENT OF RICHARD "RICK" HEALY

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my profound thanks for the service

and best wishes on the retirement of Rick Healy. Rick has worked in the House of Representatives for over 35 years, which is multiple lifetimes here on the Hill.

Rick's career in the House encompassed more than three decades of dedicated service to the people of Minnesota's 4th Congressional District, to the House Natural Resources Committee, and to the Appropriations Committee.

I was fortunate enough to have Rick work with me as the Democratic Clerk for the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee during his last year, before departing this month to work with our former Chairman Jim Moran in the private sector.

Rick is a proud son of St. Paul. He graduated from St. Thomas, and his wife, Cecilia, is a St. Kate's grad. The first Congressional experience Rick gained was as an intern with his Member of Congress, Representative Bruce Vento. He then joined the Congressman's staff in DC working on environmental issues in 1980. When Bruce became the Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands, Rick left his personal office and joined the Subcommittee staff.

Congressman Vento is remembered both in Minnesota and nationally for his tremendous dedication and passion for the conservation of America's wilderness and natural treasures. Rick Healy played a pivotal role in advancing those efforts. He supported Chairman Vento and his successors in crafting much of the major public lands legislation passed through the Resources Committee over the next 25 years.

Rick's knowledge and experience was instrumental in issues of importance to Minnesota, like the management of the St. Croix National Scenic River and the establishment of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.

Rick was a tremendous help to me when I was first elected after Congressman Vento passed away in 2000, and provided valuable counsel on environmental issues as I followed in our friend and mentor Bruce's legacy by serving on the Resources Committee.

As a staffer who has been here longer than almost all of the Members serving in this body, Rick Healy assisted his Chairs and Ranking Members through the ups and downs of Majority and Minority.

And, five years ago, when he joined the Appropriations Committee, he brought that institutional knowledge to the work of funding and improving our nation's public lands, our environmental stewardship, our trust and treaty responsibilities with tribal nations, and our investment in the arts and humanities. Rick has been an invaluable resource on the Appropriations Committee.

I, along with many other Members and staff, will miss his depth of knowledge, his expertise and insight, his hard work, and his sense of humor.

Rick, we wish you the best of luck.

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF BOY SCOUT TROOP 151

HON. JERRY McNERNEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. McNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 100th anniversary of Boy Scout Troop 151 in Antioch, California. Formed in 1916, it is one of the oldest troops in California.

Since 1910, the Boy Scouts of America have helped mold future leaders of our country by teaching lifelong values and skills through educational activities. The Boy Scouts believe that helping the youth of America today sets us on a path to become a more responsible, respectful and productive society tomorrow. From its inception, Troop 151 has built a program consisting of traditional outdoor scouting activities that include camping, backpacking, and hiking to promote physical fitness and good character.

Community involvement continues to be a guiding principle for the Boy Scouts of America. Troop 151 was instrumental in the resurrection of the Antioch's Veterans Day celebration and they annually provide traditional flag services to the Veterans' Day celebration among other important community events. The boys of Troop 151 are proof that scouting can help build a greater sense of personal responsibility and high self-esteem. As a result, scouts are better prepared to make good decisions and give back to our community.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commending the Boy Scouts of Troop 151 for one hundred years of service to the City of Antioch and its residents.

A JOINT RESOLUTION DISAPPROVING THE SALE OF WEAPON SYSTEMS TO PAKISTAN

HON. DANA ROHRBACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, today I submit to the House of Representatives a Joint Resolution disapproving the sale of weapon systems to Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan has been using weapons from the United States to repress its own citizens and especially the people of Baluchistan. The deciding factor of whether to support this Joint Resolution is, for me, the arrogant and hostile actions taken by the Government of Pakistan against the man who helped bring Osama bin Laden to justice.

Osama bin Laden was a mass murderer of 3,000 Americans on September 11, 2001. Anyone who helped bring him to justice is an American hero. The Government of Pakistan arrested Dr. Shakil Afridi and continues to hold him in a cage. That arrest was a declaration of hostility toward the United States. Our government should not provide military equipment to Pakistan, let alone F-16s, as long as they are holding Dr. Afridi. His continued incarceration is an action which underscores that the

Government of Pakistan considers itself our enemy, not our friend.

HONORING SANDY BEST

HON. JOHN KLINE

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a historic promotion in the Minnesota National Guard. Today, the Minnesota Guard will conduct a promotion ceremony for Colonel Sandy Best, who will become the first female general in Minnesota National Guard history when she is promoted to Brigadier General.

General Best will be the Air Chief of Staff responsible for command supervision, oversight, and leadership of the 133rd Airlift Wing at the Minneapolis-St. Paul Joint Air Reserve Station, and the 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth.

Mr. Speaker, General Best began her career more than 30 years ago when she, a Minneapolis Edison High School graduate, enlisted in the Minnesota Air National Guard in 1984 as a Personnel Specialist. In 1991, she was commissioned through the Academy of Military Science at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base in Tennessee, contributing to the Minnesota Guard in a variety of positions ever since.

General Best's passion for our soldiers, their families, and our country as well as her advocacy for the National Guard has been exceptional. I have always appreciated our meetings in Minnesota and in Washington and I look forward to working with the new Brigadier General.

Mr. Speaker, this promotion is well deserved and I wish General Best my best, and congratulate her and the Minnesota National Guard on this historic achievement.

RECOGNIZING THE 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY MASSACRE

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, this week marks the 24th anniversary of the massacre of hundreds of people in the town of Khojaly in what was the largest killing of ethnic Azerbaijani civilians in the course of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. Khojaly, which is located in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, was once home to 7,000 people. However, on February 26, 1992, Armenian armed forces descended on the town in a final attempt to take over the city. In doing so, they massacred over 600 unarmed people—including 106 women and 83 children—and left less than 2,000 survivors. Hundreds more became disabled due to their horrific injuries. More than one hundred children lost a parent and 25 children lost both parents. At least 8 families were completely obliterated.

Even though a ceasefire went into effect over two decades ago, more than 20 percent

of Azerbaijan's territory, including Nagorno-Karabakh and seven surrounding districts, remain occupied and more than 1 million Azerbaijanis remain refugees unable to return to their home villages. Ongoing violence along the line of contact surrounding occupied Azerbaijani territory reinforces the urgency of robust American participation in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) Minsk Group as it works toward a peaceful resolution of the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict.

Azerbaijan is the only country that borders both Russia and Iran, and yet Azerbaijan has been a strong partner of the United States and its allies in security and energy matters. This cooperation has included: enforcing sanctions against Iran; providing troops to serve shoulder-to-shoulder with U.S. forces in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan; allowing transit for 40 percent of all non-lethal equipment used by NATO forces through Azerbaijan to Afghanistan; construction of the Southern Gas Corridor from the Caspian Sea to Italy, thereby providing Europe with an alternative to Russian energy sources; and supplying 40 percent of Israel's oil.

I invite my colleagues to join me and our Azerbaijani friends in recognizing and remembering the horrible events that occurred during the Khojaly Massacre twenty-four years ago. As Azerbaijanis in all parts of the world continue to grieve the loss of loved ones, let us commemorate their losses with support of non-violent efforts to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and of reforms that promote peace and stability throughout the Southern Caucasus region.

IN HONOR OF THE UNI-CAPITOL WASHINGTON INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, for the past 17 years, the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Program (UCWIP) has granted the opportunity for a select group of Australian students from ten partner universities the opportunity to intern in a Congressional office from January to March each year. Since 1999, over 180 Australian students have had the benefit of partaking in these internships, and credit is due to Eric Federer, a former senior Senate and House Congressional staffer who founded and continues to coordinate the program. The students must undertake a rigorous application process to be successful and come from a range of backgrounds. The program is a mutual exchange—the students use their time in Washington, D.C. to develop their knowledge of American politics and have the opportunity to work on a range of issues that are of personal interest, while simultaneously sharing experiences from their home country with their office.

This year, our office is lucky to be hosting Emily Denbigh from the University of Adelaide. Emily is currently in her 4th year of a Bachelor's degree in Law and Arts, pursuing a

major in Development Studies and a minor in French. She is passionate about social justice issues, and has previously undertaken an internship in Tanzania with a women's legal rights organization. She is interested in pursuing a career in international human rights law or environmental law. During her time in Washington, D.C., Emily has enjoyed learning about the dynamic American political system and California's beautiful 20th district. She has developed her knowledge of legal environmental issues, including what the American judicial system and legislators can do to combat climate change and promote conservation. She has also enjoyed talking to our constituents, who take a particular interest in her accent.

We have enjoyed hearing her accent and all of her wonderful ideas. Emily is a hardworking and highly intelligent woman. She is a strong writer and researcher and her passion for the environment and social justice shows in all the conversations I have had with her and through her writing. She has been a great asset to our team and we will be sorry to see her leave.

My staff and I have greatly enjoyed participating in the UCWIP program since its inception. I thank Mr. Federer for his hard work and dedication in bringing these Australian students to our nation's capital and for sending us Emily this session.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today regarding missed votes on February 9, 2016 through February 12, 2016, February 23, 2016, and February 24, 2016 due to the death of my father.

Had I been present for roll call vote number 64, passage of H.R. 3036—The National 9/11

Memorial at the World Trade Center Act, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 65, ordering the previous question for H. Res. 609, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 66, H. Res. 609, the combined rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3293—The Scientific Research in the National Interest Act and H.R. 3442—The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 67, passage of H.R. 4470—The Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 68, the E.B. Johnson Amendment to H.R. 3293—The Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, I would have voted "nay."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 69, the motion to recommit H.R. 3293—The Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, I would have voted "nay."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 70, passage of H.R. 3293—The Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 71, the Kelly Amendment to H.R. 3442—The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act, I would have voted "nay."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 72, the Duffy Amendment to H.R. 3442—The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 73, the Grijalva Amendment to H.R. 3442—The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act, I would have voted "nay."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 74, the Takano Amendment to H.R. 3442—The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act, I would have voted "nay."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 75, the motion to recommit H.R. 3442—The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act, I would have voted "nay."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 76, passage of H.R. 3442—The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 77, ordering the previous question for H. Res. 611, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 78, H. Res. 609, the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2017—The Commonsense Nutrition Disclosure Act, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 79, the McMorris Rodgers Amendment to H.R. 2017—The Commonsense Nutrition Disclosure Act, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 80, the Schrader Amendment to H.R. 2017—The Commonsense Nutrition Disclosure Act, I would have voted "nay."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 81, passage of H.R. 2017—The Commonsense Nutrition Disclosure Act, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 82, to concur in the Senate Amendment to H.R. 757—The North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 83, passage of H.R. 4408—The National Strategy to Combat Terrorist Travel Act, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 84, passage of H.R. 4402—The Foreign Fighter Review Act, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 85, ordering the previous question for H. Res. 618, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 86, H. Res. 618, the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3624—The Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act, I would have voted "yea."

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Friday, February 26, 2016*

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: God of mercy, through whom we see what we can become, thank you for giving us another day.

We thank You that so many Americans have been challenged and have risen to the exercise of their responsibilities as citizens to participate in the great debates of these days.

Grant wisdom, knowledge, and understanding to us all, as well as an extra measure of charity.

Send Your spirit upon the Members of this people's House who walk through this valley under public scrutiny. Give them peace and Solomonic prudence in their deliberations.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PETERS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

RECOGNIZING THE VILLAGE OF PINECREST ON ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 20th anniversary of one of South Florida's

grooviest communities, my hometown of the village of Pinecrest.

Since its incorporation in 1996, the village of Pinecrest has been known as a family-friendly community with many parks and recreational areas and neighborhood activities that are open to all South Floridians.

The village is committed to sustainable stewardship and environmental sensitivity, keeping it one of the most beautiful places in which to live and work.

In celebration of its founding, the residents, schools, public officials, and businesses will join together on Saturday, March 12, for a parade starting at Palmetto Elementary School and ending with a community picnic at Evelyn Greer Park.

I encourage my Congressional colleagues to join me in congratulating the village of Pinecrest and to join our community in celebration of this magnificent milestone.

I am honored to represent the families in the village, and Dexter and I have been proud to call this wonderful community our home for almost 30 years.

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Mr. ASHFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Black History Month and the countless contributions of African Americans as well as recognizing a man who embodies the best of this celebration.

Michael Maroney is president of the Omaha Economic Development Corporation. Our North Omaha community is a vibrant neighborhood, but one still facing economic challenges.

Michael finds and furthers projects that result in more jobs, business ownership, diverse housing options, and training opportunities. Through Michael's leadership, the city of Omaha is making significant strides to lessen the stress and strain of poverty.

Every American, no matter the color of their skin, should be able to achieve their full potential. One roadblock to this goal is the Supreme Court's flawed opinion in the *Shelby v. Holder* case, which significantly weakens the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Until Congress passes bipartisan legislation to right this wrong, every American's sacred franchise, the right to vote, is under attack.

So this Black History Month, let us make time to recommit to working together to ensure a better, brighter, and more equitable future for all Americans.

ERIC WILLIAMS CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS PROTECTION ACT

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, our Nation's correctional officers risk their safety every day in order to keep prisoners, visitors, and other officers safe.

In most Federal prisons, there are only one or two officers on duty in a cell block, meaning officers are guarding nearly 130 prisoners with virtually nothing to protect themselves.

We have seen the reality of this situation with the death of Correctional Officer Eric Williams, who was murdered by an inmate at a Pennsylvania prison. In addition, last year more than 2,500 weapons were confiscated from inmates in Federal prisons.

The Bureau of Prisons is currently operating a 1-year pilot program that allows correctional officers in some Federal prisons to carry pepper spray for protection.

Mr. Speaker, this week the House passed the Eric Williams Correctional Officers Protection Act, legislation that I have supported, to expand this pilot program to medium-security prisons and require a training course before they can use this pepper spray.

We need to provide our correctional officers the tools they need to protect themselves and others.

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

(Mr. PETERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, San Carlos Park, Florida, June 8, 2014: Maria Navas, 29 years old; Allison Navas-Sanchez, 10; Sophia Medina-Navas, 5; Mia Medina-Navas, 2.

Chicago, Illinois, September 29, 2015: Charles Lewis, 28 years old; Tyrone Spikes, 28; Antian Hardmon, 25; Ayanna Northern, 22.

Houston, Texas, November 20, 2013: Yosselyn Alfaro, 21 years old; Veronica Hernandez, 17; Daniel Munoz, 17.

Long Branch, New Jersey, September 1, 2015: Amanda Morris, 29 years old; Brandon Beharry, 7; Brian Beharry, 4.

Baker, Louisiana, December 11, 2015: Perry Allen, 55 years old; Joseph Allen, 57; Mark Allen, 51.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Ottawa, Kansas, April 28, 2013: Steven White, 31 years old; Andrew Stout, 30; Kaylie Bailey, 21; Lana Bailey, 1.

RECOGNIZING THE STAR FOUNDATION

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 20th anniversary of the Southern Technology Advocacy Resources Foundation, the STAR Foundation, and its unbelievable capability to transform lives in coastal Georgia.

Wally and Katie Orrel and Ellen Murphy founded the STAR Foundation in 1997 with the goal of providing computer training to residents of public housing in Brunswick, Georgia.

Over its 20 years, the STAR Foundation has expanded to teaching life, financial, and work-readiness skills that lead their students to be successful members of their community and the workforce.

The STAR Foundation's 8-week course is open to students outside of public housing as well as residents of McIntosh and Camden Counties.

The impact of this foundation is incredible. Over 1,000 students have graduated from the STAR Foundation, and 70 percent of their graduates improve their employment status within 15 months of graduation. Some outstanding students can even receive a personal computer for their home.

I am grateful for the work that the STAR Foundation is doing in the First Congressional District of Georgia, and I wish the program and its graduates success for many years to come.

NATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, small-business owners make up over 90 percent of private sector employers in my home State of Hawaii, and they are the backbone of our economy both in Hawaii and across the country.

In our close-knit community built on generations of small-business owners willing to lend a hand to a neighbor in need, this is one of the things that makes our State so special and that helps to bring the aloha spirit alive both for visitors and kama'aina alike.

Last week I had the chance to spend some time planting kale and beets at the Palaka Moon Farm with Waimanalo small-business owners Malia Smith and Kevin Vaccarello.

I then went and helped them open their Ai Love Nalo cafe, where they seek to improve the health and well-being of their community around them

by feeding them delicious, locally grown food.

It is the hard work of people like Malia and Kevin and the love that they put into their business and work that are at the heart of our economy in communities across the country and in Hawaii.

As we recognize National Entrepreneurship Week this week, I want to say thank you to all of our small-business owners and entrepreneurs for their dedication and for what they do to strengthen and serve our communities every single day.

THE PRESIDENT'S MISSING PLAN

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, when I was in law school, if a person did not turn in a term paper, they flunked. But the former constitutional law professor has missed a deadline required by law.

Under the bipartisan 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, the President is required to send Congress a real, comprehensive strategy to defeat ISIS. He signed this law. The due date was February 15. The paper is overdue.

Confronting terrorism and emphasizing the safety and security of the United States is critical. Why hasn't the President complied with the law he signed? Where is the plan? Where is the strategy? People are being killed by ISIS.

The Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Lieutenant General Stewart, stated that ISIS "will probably attempt to conduct additional attacks in Europe, and attempt to direct attacks on the U.S. homeland in 2016."

Mr. Speaker, this is not law school. This is the real world where terrorists kill the innocent. The President should spend more time developing a plan to defeat ISIS than planning to close the jailhouse for terrorists in Guantanamo Bay.

I wonder what grade the President, the constitutional law professor, would give himself, the Commander in Chief, for ignoring this legal requirement to turn in his paper.

And that is just the way it is.

SENATE SUPREME COURT CONFIRMATION

(Mr. TAKANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because the United States Senate is failing to serve the American people.

This week Senate Republicans announced their plan to simply ignore President Obama's nominee to the Supreme Court with no hearings, no

votes, no chance for the public to witness an open and honest debate over the future of the Court.

This is what the world's greatest deliberative body looks like under Republican control. Refusing to fill the vacancy until the next election disregards the will of the American people who elected President Obama twice, despite Republicans making it their primary mission to deny him a second term.

It also reflects a dramatic change of heart from Senator GRASSLEY, who once said a nominee should be considered, regardless of election politics. This is hypocrisy, plain and simple.

I accept that Senate Republicans have the constitutional authority to reject the President's nominee, but I do not accept their refusal to even consider that nominee. The American people shouldn't accept it either.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE POTTER COUNTY EXTENSION

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Penn State Potter County Cooperative Extension, which connects those in the agriculture industry with the tools and the knowledge to build and grow their farms. This landmark anniversary will be celebrated at the Extension's annual Black and White Gala this Saturday, February 27.

Agriculture continues to be a major industry in Potter County and has also played a big role in the county's heritage, especially when it comes to potatoes.

Potter County is the home of Potato City, which was built in 1949 through the efforts of the Pennsylvania potato growers, packers, and related industries.

It was there that Dr. E.L. Nixon, uncle of President Richard Nixon, worked on the development of new types of potatoes for crossbreeding. To this day, the Potato City Country Inn is a tourist destination for people across the Commonwealth.

Potatoes from Potter County also continue to be sold across the United States and in many foreign countries.

I congratulate the Extension on 100 years of serving local farmers, and I wish them continued success in the future.

□ 0915

NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK

(Ms. GRAHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in recognition of National Eating Disorders Awareness Week.

Millions of Americans across the country are suffering from eating disorders. It affects their health, their happiness, and can take their lives. I understand what they are going through because I personally struggled with an eating disorder as a teenager and a young woman.

I am speaking up today in the hopes of raising awareness and providing hope. I want other young men and women who are struggling as I did to know that they, too, can overcome this. I want to tell them that I know it is difficult, but don't wait to seek out help.

Mr. Speaker, by raising awareness, promoting treatment, and with early intervention, we can save lives.

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2015

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 2406.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 619 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2406.

Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN) kindly take the chair.

□ 0916

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2406) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, with Mr. HULTGREN (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Thursday, February 25, 2016, all time for general debate had expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute, recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources, printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 2406

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015" or the "SHARE Act".

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title.

Sec. 2. Table of contents.

Sec. 3. Report on economic impact.

TITLE I—HUNTING, FISHING AND RECREATIONAL SHOOTING PROTECTION ACT

Sec. 101. Short title.

Sec. 102. Modification of definition.

Sec. 103. Limitation on authority to regulate ammunition and fishing tackle.

TITLE II—TARGET PRACTICE AND MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING SUPPORT ACT

Sec. 201. Short title.

Sec. 202. Findings; purpose.

Sec. 203. Definition of public target range.

Sec. 204. Amendments to Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act.

Sec. 205. Limits on liability.

Sec. 206. Sense of Congress regarding cooperation.

TITLE III—POLAR BEAR CONSERVATION AND FAIRNESS ACT

Sec. 301. Short title.

Sec. 302. Permits for importation of polar bear trophies taken in sport hunts in Canada.

TITLE IV—RECREATIONAL LANDS SELF-DEFENSE ACT

Sec. 401. Short title.

Sec. 402. Protecting Americans from violent crime.

TITLE V—WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Sec. 501. Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee.

TITLE VI—RECREATIONAL FISHING AND HUNTING HERITAGE OPPORTUNITIES ACT

Sec. 601. Short title.

Sec. 602. Findings.

Sec. 603. Fishing, hunting, and recreational shooting.

Sec. 604. Volunteer Hunters; Reports; Closures and Restrictions.

TITLE VII—FARMER AND HUNTER PROTECTION ACT

Sec. 701. Short title.

Sec. 702. Baiting of migratory game birds.

TITLE VIII—TRANSPORTING BOWS ACROSS NATIONAL PARK SERVICE LANDS

Sec. 801. Short title.

Sec. 802. Bowhunting opportunity and wildlife stewardship.

TITLE IX—FEDERAL LAND TRANSACTION FACILITATION ACT REAUTHORIZATION (FLTFA)

Sec. 901. Short title.

Sec. 902. Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act.

TITLE X—AFRICAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION AND LEGAL IVORY POSSESSION ACT

Sec. 1001. Short title.

Sec. 1002. References.

Sec. 1003. Limited exemption for certain African elephant ivory.

Sec. 1004. Placement of United States Fish and Wildlife Service law enforcement officer in each African elephant range country.

Sec. 1005. Certification for the purposes of the Fishermen's Protective Act of 1967.

Sec. 1006. Treatment of elephant ivory.

Sec. 1007. Sport-hunted elephant trophies.

Sec. 1008. African Elephant Conservation Act financial assistance priority and reauthorization.

TITLE XI—RESPECT FOR TREATIES AND RIGHTS

Sec. 1101. Respect for Treaties and Rights.

TITLE XII—INTEREST ON OBLIGATIONS HELD IN THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

Sec. 1201. Interest on obligations held in the wildlife restoration fund.

TITLE XIII—PERMITS FOR FILM CREWS OF FIVE PEOPLE OR LESS

Sec. 1301. Annual permit and fee for film crews of 5 persons or fewer.

TITLE XIV—STATE APPROVAL OF FISHING RESTRICTION

Sec. 1401. State or Territorial Approval of Restriction of Recreational or Commercial Fishing Access to Certain State or Territorial Waters.

TITLE XV—HUNTING AND RECREATIONAL FISHING WITHIN CERTAIN NATIONAL FORESTS

Sec. 1501. Definitions.

Sec. 1502. Hunting and recreational fishing within the national forest system.

TITLE XVI—GRAND CANYON BISON MANAGEMENT ACT

Sec. 1601. Short title.

Sec. 1602. Definitions.

Sec. 1603. Bison management plan for Grand Canyon National Park.

SEC. 3. REPORT ON ECONOMIC IMPACT.

Not later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Interior shall submit a report to Congress that assesses expected economic impacts of the Act. Such report shall include—

(1) a review of any expected increases in recreational hunting, fishing, shooting, and conservation activities;

(2) an estimate of any jobs created in each industry expected to support such activities described in paragraph (1), including in the supply, manufacturing, distribution, and retail sectors;

(3) an estimate of wages related to jobs described in paragraph (2); and

(4) an estimate of anticipated new local, State, and Federal revenue related to jobs described in paragraph (2).

TITLE I—HUNTING, FISHING AND RECREATIONAL SHOOTING PROTECTION ACT

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Hunting, Fishing, and Recreational Shooting Protection Act".

SEC. 102. MODIFICATION OF DEFINITION.

Section 3(2)(B) of the Toxic Substances Control Act (15 U.S.C. 2602(2)(B)) is amended—

(1) in clause (v), by striking "and" and inserting "or any component of any such article including, without limitation, shot, bullets and other projectiles, propellants, and primers,";

(2) in clause (vi) by striking the period at the end and inserting "and"; and

(3) by inserting after clause (vi) the following:

"(vii) any sport fishing equipment (as such term is defined in subsection (a) of section 4162 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) the sale of

which is subject to the tax imposed by section 4161(a) of such Code (determined without regard to any exemptions from such tax as provided by section 4162 or 4221 or any other provision of such Code), and sport fishing equipment components.”

SEC. 103. LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY TO REGULATE AMMUNITION AND FISHING TACKLE.

(a) **LIMITATION.**—Except as provided in section 20.21 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act, or any substantially similar successor regulation thereto, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, and, except as provided by subsection (b), any bureau, service, or office of the Department of the Interior or the Department of Agriculture, may not regulate the use of ammunition cartridges, ammunition components, or fishing tackle based on the lead content thereof if such use is in compliance with the law of the State in which the use occurs.

(b) **EXCEPTION.**—The limitation in subsection (a) shall not apply to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Park Service.

TITLE II—TARGET PRACTICE AND MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING SUPPORT ACT

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Target Practice and Marksmanship Training Support Act”.

SEC. 202. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds that—

(1) the use of firearms and archery equipment for target practice and marksmanship training activities on Federal land is allowed, except to the extent specific portions of that land have been closed to those activities;

(2) in recent years preceding the date of enactment of this Act, portions of Federal land have been closed to target practice and marksmanship training for many reasons;

(3) the availability of public target ranges on non-Federal land has been declining for a variety of reasons, including continued population growth and development near former ranges;

(4) providing opportunities for target practice and marksmanship training at public target ranges on Federal and non-Federal land can help—

(A) to promote enjoyment of shooting, recreational, and hunting activities; and

(B) to ensure safe and convenient locations for those activities;

(5) Federal law in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, including the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 *et seq.*), provides Federal support for construction and expansion of public target ranges by making available to States amounts that may be used for construction, operation, and maintenance of public target ranges; and

(6) it is in the public interest to provide increased Federal support to facilitate the construction or expansion of public target ranges.

(b) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of this title is to facilitate the construction and expansion of public target ranges, including ranges on Federal land managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

SEC. 203. DEFINITION OF PUBLIC TARGET RANGE.

In this title, the term “public target range” means a specific location that—

(1) is identified by a governmental agency for recreational shooting;

(2) is open to the public;

(3) may be supervised; and

(4) may accommodate archery or rifle, pistol, or shotgun shooting.

SEC. 204. AMENDMENTS TO PITTMAN-ROBERTSON WILDLIFE RESTORATION ACT.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—Section 2 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669a) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) through (8) as paragraphs (3) through (9), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) the term ‘public target range’ means a specific location that—

“(A) is identified by a governmental agency for recreational shooting;

“(B) is open to the public;

“(C) may be supervised; and

“(D) may accommodate archery or rifle, pistol, or shotgun shooting.”;

(b) **EXPENDITURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE AREAS AND RESOURCES.**—Section 8(b) of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669g(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking “(b) Each State” and inserting the following:

“(b) **EXPENDITURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE AREAS AND RESOURCES.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in paragraph (2), each State”;

(2) in paragraph (1) (as so designated), by striking “construction, operation,” and inserting “operation”;

(3) in the second sentence, by striking “The non-Federal share” and inserting the following:

“(3) **NON-FEDERAL SHARE.**—The non-Federal share”;

(4) in the third sentence, by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(4) **REGULATIONS.**—The Secretary”; and

(5) by inserting after paragraph (1) (as designated by paragraph (1) of this subsection) the following:

“(2) **EXCEPTION.**—Notwithstanding the limitation described in paragraph (1), a State may pay up to 90 percent of the cost of acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range.”

(c) **FIREARM AND BOW HUNTER EDUCATION AND SAFETY PROGRAM GRANTS.**—Section 10 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669h–1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following:

“(3) **ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS.**—Of the amount apportioned to a State for any fiscal year under section 4(b), the State may elect to allocate not more than 10 percent, to be combined with the amount apportioned to the State under paragraph (1) for that fiscal year, for acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range.”;

(2) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

“(b) **COST SHARING.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out using a grant under this section shall not exceed 75 percent of the total cost of the activity.

“(2) **PUBLIC TARGET RANGE CONSTRUCTION OR EXPANSION.**—The Federal share of the cost of acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range in a State on Federal or non-Federal land pursuant to this section or section 8(b) shall not exceed 90 percent of the cost of the activity.”; and

(3) in subsection (c)(1)—

(A) by striking “Amounts made” and inserting the following:

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), amounts made”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) **EXCEPTION.**—Amounts provided for acquiring land for, constructing, or expanding a public target range shall remain available for expenditure and obligation during the 5-fiscal-year period beginning on October 1 of the first fiscal year for which the amounts are made available.”.

SEC. 205. LIMITS ON LIABILITY.

(a) **DISCRETIONARY FUNCTION.**—For purposes of chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code

(commonly referred to as the “Federal Tort Claims Act”), any action by an agent or employee of the United States to manage or allow the use of Federal land for purposes of target practice or marksmanship training by a member of the public shall be considered to be the exercise or performance of a discretionary function.

(b) **CIVIL ACTION OR CLAIMS.**—Except to the extent provided in chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code, the United States shall not be subject to any civil action or claim for money damages for any injury to or loss of property, personal injury, or death caused by an activity occurring at a public target range that is—

(1) funded in whole or in part by the Federal Government pursuant to the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 *et seq.*); or

(2) located on Federal land.

SEC. 206. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING CO-OPERATION.

It is the sense of Congress that, consistent with applicable laws and regulations, the Chief of the Forest Service and the Director of the Bureau of Land Management should cooperate with State and local authorities and other entities to carry out waste removal and other activities on any Federal land used as a public target range to encourage continued use of that land for target practice or marksmanship training.

TITLE III—POLAR BEAR CONSERVATION AND FAIRNESS ACT

SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Polar Bear Conservation and Fairness Act of 2015”.

SEC. 302. PERMITS FOR IMPORTATION OF POLAR BEAR TROPHIES TAKEN IN SPORT HUNTS IN CANADA.

Section 104(c)(5)(D) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1374(c)(5)(D)) is amended to read as follows:

“(D)(i) The Secretary of the Interior shall, expeditiously after the expiration of the applicable 30-day period under subsection (d)(2), issue a permit for the importation of any polar bear part (other than an internal organ) from a polar bear taken in a sport hunt in Canada to any person—

“(I) who submits, with the permit application, proof that the polar bear was legally harvested by the person before February 18, 1997; or

“(II) who has submitted, in support of a permit application submitted before May 15, 2008, proof that the polar bear was legally harvested by the person before May 15, 2008, from a polar bear population from which a sport-hunted trophy could be imported before that date in accordance with section 18.30(i) of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations.

“(ii) The Secretary shall issue permits under clause (i)(I) without regard to subparagraphs (A) and (C)(ii) of this paragraph, subsection (d)(3), and sections 101 and 102. Sections 101(a)(3)(B) and 102(b)(3) shall not apply to the importation of any polar bear part authorized by a permit issued under clause (i)(I). This clause shall not apply to polar bear parts that were imported before June 12, 1997.

“(iii) The Secretary shall issue permits under clause (i)(II) without regard to subparagraph (C)(ii) of this paragraph or subsection (d)(3). Sections 101(a)(3)(B) and 102(b)(3) shall not apply to the importation of any polar bear part authorized by a permit issued under clause (i)(II). This clause shall not apply to polar bear parts that were imported before the date of enactment of the Polar Bear Conservation and Fairness Act of 2015.”.

TITLE IV—RECREATIONAL LANDS SELF-DEFENSE ACT

SEC. 401. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Recreational Lands Self-Defense Act of 2015”.

SEC. 402. PROTECTING AMERICANS FROM VIOLENT CRIME.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds the following:

(1) The Second Amendment to the Constitution provides that “the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed”.

(2) Section 327.13 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, provides that, except in special circumstances, “possession of loaded firearms, ammunition, loaded projectile firing devices, bows and arrows, crossbows, or other weapons is prohibited” at water resources development projects administered by the Secretary of the Army.

(3) The regulations described in paragraph (2) prevent individuals complying with Federal and State laws from exercising the second amendment rights of the individuals while at such water resources development projects.

(4) The Federal laws should make it clear that the second amendment rights of an individual at a water resources development project should not be infringed.

(b) **PROTECTING THE RIGHT OF INDIVIDUALS TO BEAR ARMS AT WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.**—The Secretary of the Army shall not promulgate or enforce any regulation that prohibits an individual from possessing a firearm, including an assembled or functional firearm, at a water resources development project covered under section 327.0 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act), if—

(1) the individual is not otherwise prohibited by law from possessing the firearm; and

(2) the possession of the firearm is in compliance with the law of the State in which the water resources development project is located.

TITLE V—WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**SEC. 501. WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**

The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 10. WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

“(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is hereby established the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee (in this section referred to as the ‘Advisory Committee’) to advise the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture on wildlife and habitat conservation, hunting, and recreational shooting.

“(b) **CONTINUANCE AND ABOLISHMENT OF EXISTING WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL.**—The Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council established pursuant to section 441 of the Revised Statutes (43 U.S.C. 1457), section 2 of the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742a), and other Acts applicable to specific bureaus of the Department of the Interior—

“(1) shall continue until the date of the first meeting of the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council established by the amendment made by subsection (a); and

“(2) is hereby abolished effective on that date.

“(c) **DUTIES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**—The Advisory Committee shall advise the Secretaries with regard to—

“(1) implementation of Executive Order No. 13443: Facilitation of Hunting Heritage and Wildlife Conservation, which directs Federal agencies ‘to facilitate the expansion and enhancement of hunting opportunities and the management of game species and their habitat’;

“(2) policies or programs to conserve and restore wetlands, agricultural lands, grasslands, forest, and rangeland habitats;

“(3) policies or programs to promote opportunities and access to hunting and shooting sports on Federal lands;

“(4) policies or programs to recruit and retain new hunters and shooters;

“(5) policies or programs that increase public awareness of the importance of wildlife conservation and the social and economic benefits of recreational hunting and shooting; and

“(6) policies or programs that encourage coordination among the public, the hunting and shooting sports community, wildlife conservation groups, and States, tribes, and the Federal Government.

“(d) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

“(1) **APPOINTMENT.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Advisory Committee shall consist of no more than 16 discretionary members and 7 ex officio members.

“(B) **EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.**—The ex officio members are—

“(i) the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service or a designated representative of the Director;

“(ii) the Director of the Bureau of Land Management or a designated representative of the Director;

“(iii) the Director of the National Park Service or a designated representative of the Director;

“(iv) the Chief of the Forest Service or a designated representative of the Chief;

“(v) the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service or a designated representative of the Chief;

“(vi) the Administrator of the Farm Service Agency or a designated representative of the Administrator; and

“(vii) the Executive Director of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

“(C) **DISCRETIONARY MEMBERS.**—The discretionary members shall be appointed jointly by the Secretaries from at least one of each of the following:

“(i) State fish and wildlife agencies.

“(ii) Game bird hunting organizations.

“(iii) Wildlife conservation organizations.

“(iv) Big game hunting organizations.

“(v) Waterfowl hunting organizations.

“(vi) The tourism, outfitter, or guiding industry.

“(vii) The firearms or ammunition manufacturing industry.

“(viii) The hunting or shooting equipment retail industry.

“(ix) Tribal resource management organizations.

“(x) The agriculture industry.

“(xi) The ranching industry.

“(xii) Women’s hunting and fishing advocacy, outreach, or education organization.

“(xiii) Minority hunting and fishing advocacy, outreach, or education organization.

“(xiv) Veterans service organization.

“(D) **ELIGIBILITY.**—Prior to the appointment of the discretionary members, the Secretaries shall determine that all individuals nominated for appointment to the Advisory Committee, and the organization each individual represents, actively support and promote sustainable-use hunting, wildlife conservation, and recreational shooting.

“(2) **TERMS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), members of the Advisory Committee shall be appointed for a term of 4 years. Members shall not be appointed for more than 3 consecutive or nonconsecutive terms.

“(B) **TERMS OF INITIAL APPOINTEES.**—As designated by the Secretary at the time of appointment, of the members first appointed—

“(i) 6 members shall be appointed for a term of 4 years;

“(ii) 5 members shall be appointed for a term of 3 years; and

“(iii) 5 members shall be appointed for a term of 2 years.

“(3) **PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC ADVISORY STATUS.**—No individual may be appointed as a discretionary member of the Advisory Committee while serving as an officer or employee of the Federal Government.

“(4) **VACANCY AND REMOVAL.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Any vacancy on the Advisory Committee shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

“(B) **REMOVAL.**—Advisory Committee members shall serve at the discretion of the Secretaries and may be removed at any time for good cause.

“(5) **CONTINUATION OF SERVICE.**—Each appointed member may continue to serve after the expiration of the term of office to which such member was appointed until a successor has been appointed.

“(6) **CHAIRPERSON.**—The Chairperson of the Advisory Committee shall be appointed for a 3-year term by the Secretaries, jointly, from among the members of the Advisory Committee. An individual may not be appointed as Chairperson for more than 2 consecutive or nonconsecutive terms.

“(7) **PAY AND EXPENSES.**—Members of the Advisory Committee shall serve without pay for such service, but each member of the Advisory Committee may be reimbursed for travel and lodging incurred through attending meetings of the Advisory Committee approved subgroup meetings in the same amounts and under the same conditions as Federal employees (in accordance with section 5703 of title 5, United States Code).

“(8) **MEETINGS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Advisory Committee shall meet at the call of the Secretaries, the chairperson, or a majority of the members, but not less frequently than twice annually.

“(B) **OPEN MEETINGS.**—Each meeting of the Advisory Committee shall be open to the public.

“(C) **PRIOR NOTICE OF MEETINGS.**—Timely notice of each meeting of the Advisory Committee shall be published in the Federal Register and be submitted to trade publications and publications of general circulation.

“(D) **SUBGROUPS.**—The Advisory Committee may establish such workgroups or subgroups as it deems necessary for the purpose of compiling information or conducting research. However, such workgroups may not conduct business without the direction of the Advisory Committee and must report in full to the Advisory Committee.

“(9) **QUORUM.**—Nine members of the Advisory Committee shall constitute a quorum.

“(e) **EXPENSES.**—The expenses of the Advisory Committee that the Secretaries determine to be reasonable and appropriate shall be paid by the Secretaries.

“(f) **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, TECHNICAL SERVICES, AND ADVICE.**—A designated Federal Officer shall be jointly appointed by the Secretaries to provide to the Advisory Committee the administrative support, technical services, and advice that the Secretaries determine to be reasonable and appropriate.

“(g) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—

“(1) **REQUIRED.**—Not later than September 30 of each year, the Advisory Committee shall submit a report to the Secretaries, the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate. If circumstances arise in which the Advisory Committee cannot meet the September 30 deadline in any year, the Secretaries shall advise the Chairpersons of each such Committee of the reasons for such delay and the date on which the submission of the report is anticipated.

“(2) **CONTENTS.**—The report required by paragraph (1) shall describe—

“(A) the activities of the Advisory Committee during the preceding year;

“(B) the reports and recommendations made by the Advisory Committee to the Secretaries during the preceding year; and

“(C) an accounting of actions taken by the Secretaries as a result of the recommendations.

“(h) **FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.**—The Advisory Committee shall be exempt from the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).”.

TITLE VI—RECREATIONAL FISHING AND HUNTING HERITAGE OPPORTUNITIES ACT

SEC. 601. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage and Opportunities Act”.

SEC. 602. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) recreational fishing and hunting are important and traditional activities in which millions of Americans participate;

(2) recreational anglers and hunters have been and continue to be among the foremost supporters of sound fish and wildlife management and conservation in the United States;

(3) recreational fishing and hunting are environmentally acceptable and beneficial activities that occur and can be provided on Federal lands and waters without adverse effects on other uses or users;

(4) recreational anglers, hunters, and sporting organizations provide direct assistance to fish and wildlife managers and enforcement officers of the Federal Government as well as State and local governments by investing volunteer time and effort to fish and wildlife conservation;

(5) recreational anglers, hunters, and the associated industries have generated billions of dollars of critical funding for fish and wildlife conservation, research, and management by providing revenues from purchases of fishing and hunting licenses, permits, and stamps, as well as excise taxes on fishing, hunting, and recreational shooting equipment that have generated billions of dollars of critical funding for fish and wildlife conservation, research, and management;

(6) recreational shooting is also an important and traditional activity in which millions of Americans participate;

(7) safe recreational shooting is a valid use of Federal lands, including the establishment of safe and convenient recreational shooting ranges on such lands, and participation in recreational shooting helps recruit and retain hunters and contributes to wildlife conservation;

(8) opportunities to recreationally fish, hunt, and shoot are declining, which depresses participation in these traditional activities, and depressed participation adversely impacts fish and wildlife conservation and funding for important conservation efforts; and

(9) the public interest would be served, and our citizens’ fish and wildlife resources benefited, by action to ensure that opportunities are facilitated to engage in fishing and hunting on Federal land as recognized by Executive Order No. 12962, relating to recreational fisheries, and Executive Order No. 13443, relating to facilitation of hunting heritage and wildlife conservation.

SEC. 603. FISHING, HUNTING, AND RECREATIONAL SHOOTING.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **FEDERAL LAND.**—The term “Federal land” means any land or water that is owned by the United States and under the administrative jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management or the Forest Service.

(2) **FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS.**—The term “Federal land management officials” means—

(A) the Secretary of the Interior and Director of the Bureau of Land Management regarding Bureau of Land Management lands and interests in lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management; and

(B) the Secretary of Agriculture and Chief of the Forest Service regarding National Forest System lands.

(3) **HUNTING.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the term “hunting” means use of a firearm, bow, or other authorized means in the lawful—

(i) pursuit, shooting, capture, collection, trapping, or killing of wildlife;

(ii) attempt to pursue, shoot, capture, collect, trap, or kill wildlife; or

(iii) the training of hunting dogs, including field trials.

(B) **EXCLUSION.**—The term “hunting” does not include the use of skilled volunteers to cull excess animals (as defined by other Federal law).

(4) **RECREATIONAL FISHING.**—The term “recreational fishing” means the lawful—

(A) pursuit, capture, collection, or killing of fish; or

(B) attempt to capture, collect, or kill fish.

(5) **RECREATIONAL SHOOTING.**—The term “recreational shooting” means any form of sport, training, competition, or pastime, whether formal or informal, that involves the discharge of a rifle, handgun, or shotgun, or the use of a bow and arrow.

(b) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to valid existing rights and subsection (e), and cooperation with the respective State fish and wildlife agency, Federal land management officials shall exercise authority under existing law, including provisions regarding land use planning, to facilitate use of and access to Federal lands, including National Monuments, Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, and lands administratively classified as wilderness eligible or suitable and primitive or semi-primitive areas, for fishing, hunting, and recreational shooting, except as limited by—

(1) statutory authority that authorizes action or withholding action for reasons of national security, public safety, or resource conservation;

(2) any other Federal statute that specifically precludes fishing, hunting, or recreational shooting on specific Federal lands, waters, or units thereof; and

(3) discretionary limitations on fishing, hunting, and recreational shooting determined to be necessary and reasonable as supported by the best scientific evidence and advanced through a transparent public process.

(c) **MANAGEMENT.**—Consistent with subsection (a), Federal land management officials shall exercise their land management discretion—

(1) in a manner that supports and facilitates fishing, hunting, and recreational shooting opportunities;

(2) to the extent authorized under applicable State law; and

(3) in accordance with applicable Federal law.

(d) **PLANNING.**—

(1) **EVALUATION OF EFFECTS ON OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE IN FISHING, HUNTING, OR RECREATIONAL SHOOTING.**—Planning documents that apply to Federal lands, including land resources management plans, resource management plans, travel management plans, and general management plans shall include a specific evaluation of the effects of such plans on opportunities to engage in fishing, hunting, or recreational shooting.

(2) **STRATEGIC GROWTH POLICY FOR THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM.**—Section 4(a)(3) of the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd(a)(3)) is amended—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (C) and (D) as subparagraphs (D) and (E), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (B), the following:

“(C) the Secretary shall integrate wildlife-dependent recreational uses in accordance with their status as priority general public uses into proposed or existing regulations, policies, criteria, plans, or other activities to alter or amend the manner in which individual refuges or the National Wildlife Refuge System (System) are managed, including, but not limited to, any activities which target or prioritize criteria for long and short term System acquisitions;”.

(3) **NO MAJOR FEDERAL ACTION.**—No action taken under this title, or under section 4 of the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd), either individually or cumulatively with other actions involving Federal lands or lands managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, shall be considered to be a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, and no additional identification, analysis, or consideration of environmental effects, including cumulative effects, is necessary or required.

(4) **OTHER ACTIVITY NOT CONSIDERED.**—Federal land management officials are not required to consider the existence or availability of fishing, hunting, or recreational shooting opportunities on adjacent or nearby public or private lands in the planning for or determination of which Federal lands are open for these activities or in the setting of levels of use for these activities on Federal lands, unless the combination or coordination of such opportunities would enhance the fishing, hunting, or recreational shooting opportunities available to the public.

(e) **FEDERAL LANDS.**—

(1) **LANDS OPEN.**—Lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service, including Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, lands designated as wilderness or administratively classified as wilderness eligible or suitable and primitive or semi-primitive areas and National Monuments, but excluding lands on the Outer Continental Shelf, shall be open to fishing, hunting, and recreational shooting unless the managing Federal agency acts to close lands to such activity. Lands may be subject to closures or restrictions if determined by the head of the agency to be necessary and reasonable and supported by facts and evidence, for purposes including resource conservation, public safety, energy or mineral production, energy generation or transmission infrastructure, water supply facilities, protection of other permittees, protection of private property rights or interest, national security, or compliance with other law.

(2) **RECREATIONAL SHOOTING RANGES.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The head of each Federal agency shall use his or her authorities in a manner consistent with this Act and other applicable law, to—

(i) lease or permit use of lands under the jurisdiction of the agency for recreational shooting ranges; and

(ii) designate specific lands under the jurisdiction of the agency for recreational shooting activities.

(B) **LIMITATION ON LIABILITY.**—Any designation under subparagraph (A)(ii) shall not subject the United States to any civil action or claim for monetary damages for injury or loss of property or personal injury or death caused by any activity occurring at or on such designated lands.

(f) **NECESSITY IN WILDERNESS AREAS AND “WITHIN AND SUPPLEMENTAL TO” WILDERNESS PURPOSES.**—

(1) **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMINISTRATION.**—The provision of opportunities for fishing, hunting, and recreational shooting, and the

conservation of fish and wildlife to provide sustainable use recreational opportunities on designated Federal wilderness areas shall constitute measures necessary to meet the minimum requirements for the administration of the wilderness area, provided that this determination shall not authorize or facilitate commodity development, use, or extraction, motorized recreational access or use that is not otherwise allowed under the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), or permanent road construction or maintenance within designated wilderness areas.

(2) **APPLICATION OF WILDERNESS ACT.**—Provisions of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), stipulating that wilderness purposes are “within and supplemental to” the purposes of the underlying Federal land unit are reaffirmed. When seeking to carry out fish and wildlife conservation programs and projects or provide fish and wildlife dependent recreation opportunities on designated wilderness areas, each Federal land management official shall implement these supplemental purposes so as to facilitate, enhance, or both, but not to impede the underlying Federal land purposes when seeking to carry out fish and wildlife conservation programs and projects or provide fish and wildlife dependent recreation opportunities in designated wilderness areas, provided that such implementation shall not authorize or facilitate commodity development, use or extraction, or permanent road construction or maintenance within designated wilderness areas.

(g) **NO PRIORITY.**—Nothing in this section requires a Federal land management official to give preference to fishing, hunting, or recreational shooting over other uses of Federal land or over land or water management priorities established by Federal law.

(h) **CONSULTATION WITH COUNCILS.**—In fulfilling the duties under this section, Federal land management officials shall consult with respective advisory councils as established in Executive Order Nos. 12962 and 13443.

(i) **AUTHORITY OF THE STATES.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed as interfering with, diminishing, or conflicting with the authority, jurisdiction, or responsibility of any State to exercise primary management, control, or regulation of fish and wildlife under State law (including regulations) on land or water within the State, including on Federal land.

(j) **FEDERAL LICENSES.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize a Federal land management official to require a license, fee, or permit to fish, hunt, or trap on land or water in a State, including on Federal land in the States, except that this subsection shall not affect the Migratory Bird Stamp requirement set forth in the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act (16 U.S.C. 718 et seq.).

SEC. 604. VOLUNTEER HUNTERS; REPORTS; CLOSURES AND RESTRICTIONS.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—For the purposes of this section:

(1) **PUBLIC LAND.**—The term “public land” means—

- (A) units of the National Park System;
- (B) National Forest System lands; and
- (C) land and interests in land owned by the United States and under the administrative jurisdiction of—

- (i) the Fish and Wildlife Service; or
 - (ii) the Bureau of Land Management.
- (2) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means—

(A) the Secretary of the Interior and includes the Director of the National Park Service, with regard to units of the National Park System;

(B) the Secretary of the Interior and includes the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, with regard to Fish and Wildlife Service lands and waters;

(C) the Secretary of the Interior and includes the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, with regard to Bureau of Land Management lands and waters; and

(D) the Secretary of Agriculture and includes the Chief of the Forest Service, with regard to National Forest System lands.

(3) **VOLUNTEER FROM THE HUNTING COMMUNITY.**—The term “volunteer from the hunting community” means a volunteer who holds a valid hunting license issued by a State.

(b) **VOLUNTEER HUNTERS.**—When planning wildlife management involving reducing the size of a wildlife population on public land, the Secretary shall consider the use of and may use volunteers from the hunting community as agents to assist in carrying out wildlife management on public land. The Secretary shall not reject the use of volunteers from the hunting community as agents without the concurrence of the appropriate State wildlife management authorities.

(c) **REPORT.**—Beginning on the second October 1 after the date of the enactment of this Act and biennially on October 1 thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that describes—

(1) any public land administered by the Secretary that was closed to fishing, hunting, and recreational shooting at any time during the preceding year; and

(2) the reason for the closure.

(d) **CLOSURES OR SIGNIFICANT RESTRICTIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Other than closures established or prescribed by land planning actions referred to in section 604(e) or emergency closures described in paragraph (2), a permanent or temporary withdrawal, change of classification, or change of management status of public land that effectively closes or significantly restricts any acreage of public land to access or use for fishing, hunting, recreational shooting, or activities related to fishing, hunting, or recreational shooting, or a combination of those activities, shall take effect only if, before the date of withdrawal or change, the Secretary—

(A) publishes appropriate notice of the withdrawal or change, respectively;

(B) demonstrates that coordination has occurred with a State fish and wildlife agency; and

(C) submits to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate written notice of the withdrawal or change, respectively.

(2) **EMERGENCY CLOSURES.**—Nothing in this Act prohibits the Secretary from establishing or implementing emergency closures or restrictions of the smallest practicable area to provide for public safety, resource conservation, national security, or other purposes authorized by law. Such an emergency closure shall terminate after a reasonable period of time unless converted to a permanent closure consistent with this Act.

TITLE VII—FARMER AND HUNTER PROTECTION ACT

SEC. 701. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Hunter and Farmer Protection Act”.

SEC. 702. BAITING OF MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS.

Section 3 of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 704) is amended by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

“(b) **PROHIBITION OF BAITING.**—

“(1) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this subsection:

“(A) **BAITED AREA.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—The term ‘baited area’ means—

“(I) any area on which salt, grain, or other feed has been placed, exposed, deposited, distributed, or scattered, if the salt, grain, or feed could lure or attract migratory game birds; and

“(II) in the case of waterfowl, cranes (family Gruidae), and coots (family Rallidae), a standing, unharvested crop that has been manipulated through activities such as mowing, discing, or rolling, unless the activities are normal agricultural practices.

“(ii) **EXCLUSIONS.**—An area shall not be considered to be a ‘baited area’ if the area—

“(I) has been treated with a normal agricultural practice;

“(II) has standing crops that have not been manipulated; or

“(III) has standing crops that have been or are flooded.

“(B) **BAITING.**—The term ‘baiting’ means the direct or indirect placing, exposing, depositing, distributing, or scattering of salt, grain, or other feed that could lure or attract migratory game birds to, on, or over any areas on which a hunter is attempting to take migratory game birds.

“(C) **MIGRATORY GAME BIRD.**—The term ‘migratory game bird’ means migratory bird species—

“(i) that are within the taxonomic families of Anatidae, Columbidae, Gruidae, Rallidae, and Scolopacidae; and

“(ii) for which open seasons are prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior.

“(D) **NORMAL AGRICULTURAL PRACTICE.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—The term ‘normal agricultural practice’ means any practice in 1 annual growing season that—

“(I) is carried out in order to produce a marketable crop, including planting, harvest, postharvest, or soil conservation practices; and

“(II) is recommended for the successful harvest of a given crop by the applicable State office of the Cooperative Extension System of the Department of Agriculture, in consultation with, and if requested, the concurrence of, the head of the applicable State department of fish and wildlife.

“(ii) **INCLUSIONS.**—

“(I) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to subclause (II), the term ‘normal agricultural practice’ includes the destruction of a crop in accordance with practices required by the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation for agricultural producers to obtain crop insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) on land on which a crop during the current or immediately preceding crop year was not harvestable due to a natural disaster (including any hurricane, storm, tornado, flood, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, drought, fire, snowstorm, or other catastrophe that is declared a major disaster by the President in accordance with section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170)).

“(II) **LIMITATIONS.**—The term ‘normal agricultural practice’ only includes a crop described in subclause (I) that has been destroyed or manipulated through activities that include (but are not limited to) mowing, discing, or rolling if the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation certifies that flooding was not an acceptable method of destruction to obtain crop insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.).

“(E) **WATERFOWL.**—The term ‘waterfowl’ means native species of the family Anatidae.

“(2) **PROHIBITION.**—It shall be unlawful for any person—

“(A) to take any migratory game bird by baiting or on or over any baited area, if the person knows or reasonably should know that the area is a baited area; or

“(B) to place or direct the placement of bait on or adjacent to an area for the purpose of causing, inducing, or allowing any person to take or attempt to take any migratory game bird by baiting or on or over the baited area.

“(3) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of the Interior may promulgate regulations to implement this subsection.

“(4) REPORTS.—Annually, the Secretary of Agriculture shall submit to the Secretary of the Interior a report that describes any changes to normal agricultural practices across the range of crops grown by agricultural producers in each region of the United States in which the recommendations are provided to agricultural producers.”.

**TITLE VIII—TRANSPORTING BOWS
ACROSS NATIONAL PARK SERVICE LANDS**
SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Hunter Access Corridors Act”.

SEC. 802. BOWHUNTING OPPORTUNITY AND WILDLIFE STEWARDSHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 1015 of title 54, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 101513. Hunter access corridors

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) NOT READY FOR IMMEDIATE USE.—The term ‘not ready for immediate use’ means—

“(A) a bow or crossbow, the arrows of which are secured or stowed in a quiver or other arrow transport case; and

“(B) with respect to a crossbow, uncocked.

“(2) VALID HUNTING LICENSE.—The term ‘valid hunting license’ means a State-issued hunting license that authorizes an individual to hunt on private or public land adjacent to the System unit in which the individual is located while in possession of a bow or crossbow that is not ready for immediate use.

“(b) TRANSPORTATION AUTHORIZED.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall not require a permit for, or promulgate or enforce any regulation that prohibits an individual from transporting bows and crossbows that are not ready for immediate use across any System unit if—

“(A) in the case of an individual traversing the System unit on foot—

“(i) the individual is not otherwise prohibited by law from possessing the bows and crossbows;

“(ii) the bows or crossbows are not ready for immediate use throughout the period during which the bows or crossbows are transported across the System unit;

“(iii) the possession of the bows and crossbows is in compliance with the law of the State in which the System unit is located; and

“(iv)(I) the individual possesses a valid hunting license;

“(II) the individual is traversing the System unit en route to a hunting access corridor established under subsection (c)(1); or

“(III) the individual is traversing the System unit in compliance with any other applicable regulations or policies; or

“(B) the bows or crossbows are not ready for immediate use and remain inside a vehicle.

“(2) ENFORCEMENT.—Nothing in this subsection limits the authority of the Director to enforce laws (including regulations) prohibiting hunting or the taking of wildlife in any System unit.

“(c) ESTABLISHMENT OF HUNTER ACCESS CORRIDORS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—On a determination by the Director under paragraph (2), the Director may establish and publish (in accordance with section 1.5 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation)), on a publicly available map, hunter access corridors across System units that are used to access public land that is—

“(A) contiguous to a System unit; and

“(B) open to hunting.

“(2) DETERMINATION BY DIRECTOR.—The determination referred to in paragraph (1) is a de-

termination that the hunter access corridor would provide wildlife management or visitor experience benefits within the boundary of the System unit in which the hunter access corridor is located.

“(3) HUNTING SEASON.—The hunter access corridors shall be open for use during hunting seasons.

“(4) EXCEPTION.—The Director may establish limited periods during which access through the hunter access corridors is closed for reasons of public safety, administration, or compliance with applicable law.

“(5) IDENTIFICATION OF CORRIDORS.—The Director shall—

“(A) make information regarding hunter access corridors available on the individual website of the applicable System unit; and

“(B) provide information regarding any processes established by the Director for transporting legally taken game through individual hunter access corridors.

“(6) REGISTRATION; TRANSPORTATION OF GAME.—The Director may—

“(A) provide registration boxes to be located at the trailhead of each hunter access corridor for self-registration;

“(B) provide a process for online self-registration; and

“(C) allow nonmotorized conveyances to transport legally taken game through a hunter access corridor established under this subsection, including game carts and sleds.

“(7) CONSULTATION WITH STATES.—The Director shall consult with each applicable State wildlife agency to identify appropriate hunter access corridors.

“(d) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section—

“(1) diminishes, enlarges, or modifies any Federal or State authority with respect to recreational hunting, recreational shooting, or any other recreational activities within the boundaries of a System unit; or

“(2) authorizes—

“(A) the establishment of new trails in System units; or

“(B) authorizes individuals to access areas in System units, on foot or otherwise, that are not open to such access.

“(e) NO MAJOR FEDERAL ACTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Any action taken under this section shall not be considered a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

“(2) NO ADDITIONAL ACTION REQUIRED.—No additional identification, analyses, or consideration of environmental effects (including cumulative environmental effects) is necessary or required with respect to an action taken under this section.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 101512 the following:

“101513. Hunter access corridors.”.

**TITLE IX—FEDERAL LAND TRANSACTION
FACILITATION ACT REAUTHORIZATION
(FLTFA)**

SEC. 901. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act Reauthorization of 2015”.

SEC. 902. FEDERAL LAND TRANSACTION FACILITATION ACT.

The Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act is amended—

(1) in section 203(1) (43 U.S.C. 2302(1)), by striking “cultural, or” and inserting “cultural, recreational access and use, or other”;

(2) in section 203(2) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “on the date of enactment of this Act was” and inserting “is”;

(3) in section 205 (43 U.S.C. 2304)—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking “section 206” and all that follows through the period and inserting the following: “section 206—

“(1) to complete appraisals and satisfy other legal requirements for the sale or exchange of public land identified for disposal under approved land use plans under section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712);

“(2) not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act Reauthorization of 2015, to establish and make available to the public, on the website of the Department of the Interior, a database containing a comprehensive list of all the land referred to in paragraph (1); and

“(3) to maintain the database referred to in paragraph (2).”; and

(B) in subsection (d), by striking “11” and inserting “22”;

(4) by amending section 206(c)(1) (43 U.S.C. 2305(c)(1)) to read as follows:

“(1) USE OF FUNDS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Funds in the Federal Land Disposal Account shall be expended in accordance with this subsection.

“(B) PURPOSES.—Except as authorized under paragraph (2), funds in the Federal Land Disposal Account shall be used for one or more of the following purposes:

“(i) To purchase lands or interests therein that are otherwise authorized by law to be acquired and are one or more of the following:

“(I) Inholdings.

“(II) Adjacent to federally designated areas and contain exceptional resources.

“(III) Provide opportunities for hunting, recreational fishing, recreational shooting, and other recreational activities.

“(IV) Likely to aid in the performance of deferred maintenance or the reduction of operation and maintenance costs or other deferred costs.

“(ii) To perform deferred maintenance or other maintenance activities that enhance opportunities for recreational access.”;

(5) in section 206(c)(2) (43 U.S.C. 2305(c)(2))—

(A) by striking subparagraph (A);

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (B), (C), and (D) as subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C), respectively;

(C) in subparagraph (C) (as so redesignated by this paragraph)—

(i) by striking “PURCHASES” and inserting “LAND PURCHASES AND PERFORMANCE OF DEFERRED MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES”;

(ii) by striking “subparagraph (C)” and inserting “subparagraph (B)”;

(iii) by inserting “for the activities outlined in paragraph (2)” after “generated”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) Any funds made available under subparagraph (C) that are not obligated or expended by the end of the fourth full fiscal year after the date of the sale or exchange of land that generated the funds may be expended in any State.”;

(6) in section 206(c)(3) (43 U.S.C. 2305(c)(3))—

(A) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

“(B) the extent to which the acquisition of the land or interest therein will increase the public availability of resources for, and facilitate public access to, hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities;”; and

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and (C) as subparagraphs (C) and (D);

(7) in section 206(f) (43 U.S.C. 2305(f)), by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

“(2) any remaining balance in the account shall be deposited in the Treasury and used for deficit reduction, except that in the case of a fiscal year for which there is no Federal budget

deficit, such amounts shall be used to reduce the Federal debt (in such manner as the Secretary of the Treasury considers appropriate)."; and

(8) in section 207(b) (43 U.S.C. 2306(b))—
(A) in paragraph (1)—
(i) by striking "96-568" and inserting "96-586"; and

(ii) by striking "; or" and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (2)—
(i) by inserting "Public Law 105-263;" before "112 Stat."; and

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(3) the White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-432; 120 Stat. 3028);

"(4) the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-424; 118 Stat. 2403);

"(5) subtitle F of title I of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 1132 note; Public Law 111-11);

"(6) subtitle O of title I of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 460www note, 1132 note; Public Law 111-11);

"(7) section 2601 of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-11; 123 Stat. 1108); or

"(8) section 2606 of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-11; 123 Stat. 1121)."

TITLE X—AFRICAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION AND LEGAL IVORY POSSESSION ACT

SEC. 1001. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "African Elephant Conservation and Legal Ivory Possession Act of 2015".

SEC. 1002. REFERENCES.

Except as otherwise specifically provided, whenever in this title an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a provision of the African Elephant Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4201 et seq.).

SEC. 1003. LIMITED EXEMPTION FOR CERTAIN AFRICAN ELEPHANT IVORY.

Section 2203 (16 U.S.C. 4223) is amended—

(1) by inserting "(a) IN GENERAL.—" before the first sentence;

(2) by inserting "and subsection (b) of this section" after "2202(e)"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(b) EXEMPTION.—Nothing in this Act or subsection (a) or (d) of section 9 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1538) shall be construed to prohibit importation or exportation, or to require permission of the Secretary for importation or exportation, of—

"(1) any raw ivory or worked ivory—

"(A) imported solely for purposes of becoming part of a museum's permanent collection, return to a lending museum, or display in a museum; or

"(B) exported solely for purposes of—

"(i) display in a foreign museum; or

"(ii) return to a foreign person who lent such ivory to a museum in the United States;

"(2) any raw ivory or worked ivory that was lawfully importable into the United States on February 24, 2014, regardless of when acquired; or

"(3) any worked ivory that was previously lawfully possessed in the United States.".

SEC. 1004. PLACEMENT OF UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER IN EACH AFRICAN ELEPHANT RANGE COUNTRY.

Part I (16 U.S.C. 4211 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 2105. PLACEMENT OF UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER IN EACH AFRICAN ELEPHANT RANGE COUNTRY.

"The Secretary, in coordination with the Secretary of State, may station one United States Fish and Wildlife Service law enforcement officer in the primary United States diplomatic or consular post in each African country that has a significant population of African elephants, who shall assist local wildlife rangers in the protection of African elephants and facilitate the apprehension of individuals who illegally kill, or assist the illegal killing of, African elephants.".

SEC. 1005. CERTIFICATION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE FISHERMEN'S PROTECTIVE ACT OF 1967.

Section 2202 (16 U.S.C. 4222) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(g) CERTIFICATION.—When the Secretary of the Interior finds that a country, directly or indirectly, is a significant transit or destination point for illegal ivory trade, the Secretary shall certify such fact to the President with respect to the country for the purposes of section 8(a) of the Fishermen's Protective Act of 1967 (22 U.S.C. 1978(a))."

SEC. 1006. TREATMENT OF ELEPHANT IVORY.

Section 2203 (16 U.S.C. 4223) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

"(c) TREATMENT OF ELEPHANT IVORY.—Nothing in this Act or the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1538) shall be construed—

"(1) to prohibit, or to authorize prohibiting, the possession, sale, delivery, receipt, shipment, or transportation of African elephant ivory, or any product containing African elephant ivory, that has been lawfully imported or crafted in the United States; or

"(2) to authorize using any means of determining for purposes of this Act or the Endangered Species Act of 1973 whether African elephant ivory has been lawfully imported, including any presumption or burden of proof applied in such determination, other than such means used by the Secretary as of February 24, 2014.".

SEC. 1007. SPORT-HUNTED ELEPHANT TROPHIES.

Section 2203 (16 U.S.C. 4223) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

"(d) SPORT-HUNTED ELEPHANT TROPHIES.—Nothing in this Act or subsection (a) or (d) of section 9 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1538) shall be construed to prohibit any citizen or legal resident of the United States, or an agent of such an individual, from importing a sport-hunted African elephant trophy under section 2202(e) of this Act, if the country in which the elephant was taken had an elephant population on Appendix II of CITES at the time the trophy elephant was taken.

"(e) RELATIONSHIP TO THE CONVENTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as modifying or repealing the Secretary's duties to implement CITES and the appendices thereto, or as modifying or repealing section 8A or 9(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1537a and 1538(c))."

SEC. 1008. AFRICAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ACT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PRIORITY AND REAUTHORIZATION.

(a) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PRIORITY.—Section 2101 (16 U.S.C. 4211) is amended by redesignating subsections (e) and (f) as subsections (f) and (g), respectively, and by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

"(e) PRIORITY.—In providing financial assistance under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to projects designed to facilitate the acquisition of equipment and training of wildlife officials in ivory producing countries to be used in anti-poaching efforts.".

(b) REAUTHORIZATION.—Section 2306(a) (16 U.S.C. 4245(a)) is amended by striking "2007

through 2012" and inserting "2016 through 2020".

TITLE XI—RESPECT FOR TREATIES AND RIGHTS

SEC. 1101. RESPECT FOR TREATIES AND RIGHTS.

Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed to affect or modify any treaty or other right of any federally recognized Indian tribe.

TITLE XII—INTEREST ON OBLIGATIONS HELD IN THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

SEC. 1201. INTEREST ON OBLIGATIONS HELD IN THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND.

Section 3(b)(2)(C) of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669b(b)(2)(C)) is amended by striking "2016" and inserting "2026".

TITLE XIII—PERMITS FOR FILM CREWS OF FIVE PEOPLE OR LESS

SEC. 1301. ANNUAL PERMIT AND FEE FOR FILM CREWS OF 5 PERSONS OR FEWER.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to provide commercial film crews of 5 persons or fewer access to film in areas designated for public use during public hours on Federal land and waterways.

(b) NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM LAND.—Section 100905 of title 54, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking "The Secretary" and inserting "Except as provided in paragraph (3), the Secretary"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

"(3) SPECIAL RULES FOR FILM CREWS OF 5 PERSONS OR FEWER.—

"(A) DEFINITION OF FILM CREW.—In this paragraph, the term 'film crew' means any persons present on Federal land or waterways under the jurisdiction of the Secretary who are associated with the production of a film.

"(B) REQUIRED PERMIT AND FEE.—For any film crew of 5 persons or fewer, the Secretary shall require a permit and assess an annual fee of \$200 for commercial filming activities or similar projects on Federal land and waterways administered by the Secretary.

"(C) COMMERCIAL FILMING ACTIVITIES.—A permit issued under subparagraph (B) shall be valid for commercial filming activities or similar projects that occur in areas designated for public use during public hours on all Federal land and waterways administered by the Secretary for a 1-year period beginning on the date of issuance of the permit.

"(D) NO ADDITIONAL FEES.—For persons holding a permit issued under this paragraph, during the effective period of the permit, the Secretary shall not assess any fees in addition to the fee assessed under subparagraph (B).

"(E) USE OF CAMERAS.—The Secretary shall not prohibit, as a mechanized apparatus or under any other purposes, use of cameras or related equipment used for the purpose of commercial filming activities or similar projects in accordance with this paragraph on Federal land and waterways administered by the Secretary.

"(F) NOTIFICATION REQUIRED.—A film crew of 5 persons or fewer subject to a permit issued under this paragraph shall notify the applicable land management agency with jurisdiction over the Federal land at least 48 hours before entering the Federal land.

"(G) DENIAL OF ACCESS.—The head of the applicable land management agency may deny access to a film crew under this paragraph if—

"(i) there is a likelihood of resource damage that cannot be mitigated;

"(ii) there would be an unreasonable disruption of the use and enjoyment of the site by the public;

"(iii) the activity poses health or safety risks to the public; or

“(iv) the filming includes the use of models or props that are not part of the natural or cultural resources or administrative facilities of the Federal land.”; and

(2) in the first sentence of subsection (b), by striking “collect any costs” and inserting “recover any costs”.

(c) OTHER FEDERAL LAND.—Section 1 of Public Law 106–206 (16 U.S.C. 4601–6d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “The Secretary” and inserting “Except as provided in paragraph (3), the Secretary”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) SPECIAL RULES FOR FILM CREWS OF 5 PERSONS OR FEWER.—

“(A) DEFINITION OF FILM CREW.—In this paragraph, the term ‘film crew’ means any persons present on Federal land or waterways under the jurisdiction of the Secretary who are associated with the production of a film.

“(B) REQUIRED PERMIT AND FEE.—For any film crew of 5 persons or fewer, the Secretary shall require a permit and assess an annual fee of \$200 for commercial filming activities or similar projects on Federal land and waterways administered by the Secretary.

“(C) COMMERCIAL FILMING ACTIVITIES.—A permit issued under subparagraph (B) shall be valid for commercial filming activities or similar projects that occur in areas designated for public use during public hours on all Federal land and waterways administered by the Secretary for a 1-year period beginning on the date of issuance of the permit.

“(D) NO ADDITIONAL FEES.—For persons holding a permit issued under this paragraph, during the effective period of the permit, the Secretary shall not assess any fees in addition to the fee assessed under subparagraph (B).

“(E) USE OF CAMERAS.—The Secretary shall not prohibit, as a mechanized apparatus or under any other purposes, use of cameras or related equipment used for the purpose of commercial filming activities or similar projects in accordance with this paragraph on Federal land and waterways administered by the Secretary.

“(F) NOTIFICATION REQUIRED.—A film crew of 5 persons or fewer subject to a permit issued under this paragraph shall notify the applicable land management agency with jurisdiction over the Federal land at least 48 hours before entering the Federal land.

“(G) DENIAL OF ACCESS.—The head of the applicable land management agency may deny access to a film crew under this paragraph if—

“(i) there is a likelihood of resource damage that cannot be mitigated;

“(ii) there would be an unreasonable disruption of the use and enjoyment of the site by the public;

“(iii) the activity poses health or safety risks to the public; or

“(iv) the filming includes the use of models or props that are not part of the natural or cultural resources or administrative facilities of the Federal land.”; and

(2) in the first sentence of subsection (b)—

(A) by striking “collect any costs” and inserting “recover any costs”; and

(B) by striking “similar project” and inserting “similar projects”.

TITLE XIV—STATE APPROVAL OF FISHING RESTRICTION

SEC. 1401. STATE OR TERRITORIAL APPROVAL OF RESTRICTION OF RECREATIONAL OR COMMERCIAL FISHING ACCESS TO CERTAIN STATE OR TERRITORIAL WATERS.

(a) APPROVAL REQUIRED.—The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce shall not restrict recreational or commercial fishing access to any State or territorial marine waters or Great Lakes waters within the juris-

diction of the National Park Service or the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, respectively, unless those restrictions are developed in coordination with, and approved by, the fish and wildlife management agency of the State or territory that has fisheries management authority over those waters.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “marine waters” includes coastal waters and estuaries.

TITLE XV—HUNTING AND RECREATIONAL FISHING WITHIN CERTAIN NATIONAL FORESTS

SEC. 1501. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) HUNTING.—The term “hunting” means use of a firearm, bow, or other authorized means in the lawful pursuit, shooting, capture, collection, trapping, or killing of wildlife; attempt to pursue, shoot, capture, collect, trap, or kill wildlife; or the training and use of hunting dogs, including field trials.

(2) RECREATIONAL FISHING.—The term “recreational fishing” means the lawful pursuit, capture, collection, or killing of fish; or attempt to capture, collect, or kill fish.

(3) FOREST PLAN.—The term “forest plan” means a land and resource management plan prepared by the Forest Service for a unit of the National Forest System pursuant to section 6 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604).

(4) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—The term “National Forest System” has the meaning given that term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1609(a)).

SEC. 1502. HUNTING AND RECREATIONAL FISHING WITHIN THE NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.

(a) PROHIBITION OF RESTRICTIONS.—The Secretary of Agriculture or Chief of the Forest Service may not establish policies, directives, or regulations that restrict the type, season, or method of hunting or recreational fishing on lands within the National Forest System that are otherwise open to those activities and are consistent with the applicable forest plan.

(b) PRIOR RESTRICTIONS VOID.—Any restrictions imposed by the Secretary of Agriculture or Chief of the Forest Service regarding the type, season, or method of hunting or recreational fishing on lands within the National Forest System that are otherwise open to those activities in force on the date of the enactment of this Act shall be void and have no force or effect.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—This section shall apply only to the Kisatchie National Forest in the State of Louisiana, the De Soto National Forest in the State of Mississippi, and the Ozark National Forest, the St. Francis National Forest and the Ouachita National Forest in the States of Arkansas and Oklahoma.

(d) STATE AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section, section 1 of the Act of June 4, 1897 (16 U.S.C. 551), or section 32 of the Act of July 22, 1937 (7 U.S.C. 1011) shall affect the authority of States to manage hunting or recreational fishing on lands within the National Forest System.

TITLE XVI—GRAND CANYON BISON MANAGEMENT ACT

SEC. 1601. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Grand Canyon Bison Management Act”.

SEC. 1602. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The term “management plan” means the management plan published under section 1603(a).

(2) PARK.—The term “Park” means the Grand Canyon National Park.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(4) SKILLED PUBLIC VOLUNTEER.—The term “skilled public volunteer” means an individual who possesses—

(A) a valid hunting license issued by the State of Arizona; and

(B) such other qualifications as the Secretary may require, after consultation with the Arizona Game and Fish Commission.

SEC. 1603. BISON MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK.

(a) PUBLICATION OF PLAN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall publish a management plan to reduce, through humane lethal culling by skilled public volunteers and by other nonlethal means, the population of bison in the Park that the Secretary determines are detrimental to the use of the Park.

(b) REMOVAL OF ANIMAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a skilled public volunteer may remove a full bison harvested from the Park.

(c) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall coordinate with the Arizona Game and Fish Commission regarding the development and implementation of the management plan.

(d) NEPA COMPLIANCE.—In developing the management plan, the Secretary shall comply with all applicable Federal environmental laws (including regulations), including the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(e) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this title applies to the taking of wildlife in the Park for any purpose other than the implementation of the management plan.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in House Report 114–429. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. WITTMAN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 114–429.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 53, line 18, insert “, subject to appropriation,” after “expended”.

Page 63, strike lines 1 through 8.

Strike “of 2015” each place it appears.

At the end of the bill, add the following:

TITLE XVII—OPEN BOOK ON EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE

SEC. 1701. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Open Book on Equal Access to Justice Act”.

SEC. 1702. MODIFICATION OF EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE PROVISIONS.

(a) AGENCY PROCEEDINGS.—Section 504 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)(1), by striking “, United States Code”;

(2) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (i); and

(3) by striking subsection (e) and inserting the following:

“(e)(1) The Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States, after consultation with the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration, shall report to the Congress, not later than March 31 of each year through the 6th calendar year beginning after the initial report under this subsection is submitted, on the amount of fees and other expenses awarded during the preceding fiscal year pursuant to this section. The report shall describe the number, nature, and amount of the awards, the claims involved in the controversy, and any other relevant information that may aid the Congress in evaluating the scope and impact of such awards. The report shall be made available to the public online.

“(2)(A) The report required by paragraph (1) shall account for all payments of fees and other expenses awarded under this section that are made pursuant to a settlement agreement, regardless of whether the settlement agreement is sealed or otherwise subject to nondisclosure provisions.

“(B) The disclosure of fees and other expenses required under subparagraph (A) does not affect any other information that is subject to nondisclosure provisions in the settlement agreement.

“(f) The Chairman of the Administrative Conference shall create and maintain, during the period beginning on the date the initial report under subsection (e) is submitted and ending one year after the date on which the final report under that subsection is submitted, online a searchable database containing the following information with respect to each award of fees and other expenses under this section:

“(1) The case name and number of the adversary adjudication, if available.

“(2) The name of the agency involved in the adversary adjudication.

“(3) A description of the claims in the adversary adjudication.

“(4) The name of each party to whom the award was made, as such party is identified in the order or other agency document making the award.

“(5) The amount of the award.

“(6) The basis for the finding that the position of the agency concerned was not substantially justified.

“(g) The online searchable database described in subsection (f) may not reveal any information the disclosure of which is prohibited by law or court order.

“(h) The head of each agency shall provide to the Chairman of the Administrative Conference in a timely manner all information requested by the Chairman to comply with the requirements of subsections (e), (f), and (g).”

(b) COURT CASES.—Section 2412(d) of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5)(A) The Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States shall submit to the Congress, not later than March 31 of each year through the 6th calendar year beginning after the initial report under this paragraph is submitted, a report on the amount of fees and other expenses awarded during the preceding fiscal year pursuant to this subsection. The report shall describe the number, nature, and amount of the awards, the claims involved in each controversy, and any other relevant information that may aid the Congress in evaluating the scope and impact of such awards. The report shall be made available to the public online.

“(B)(i) The report required by subparagraph (A) shall account for all payments of fees and other expenses awarded under this

subsection that are made pursuant to a settlement agreement, regardless of whether the settlement agreement is sealed or otherwise subject to nondisclosure provisions.

“(ii) The disclosure of fees and other expenses required under clause (i) does not affect any other information that is subject to nondisclosure provisions in the settlement agreement.

“(C) The Chairman of the Administrative Conference shall include and clearly identify in the annual report under subparagraph (A), for each case in which an award of fees and other expenses is included in the report—

“(i) any amounts paid from section 1304 of title 31 for a judgment in the case;

“(ii) the amount of the award of fees and other expenses; and

“(iii) the statute under which the plaintiff filed suit.

“(6) The Chairman of the Administrative Conference shall create and maintain, during the period beginning on the date the initial report under paragraph (5) is submitted and ending one year after the date on which the final report under that paragraph is submitted, online a searchable database containing the following information with respect to each award of fees and other expenses under this subsection:

“(A) The case name and number.

“(B) The name of the agency involved in the case.

“(C) The name of each party to whom the award was made, as such party is identified in the order or other court document making the award.

“(D) A description of the claims in the case.

“(E) The amount of the award.

“(F) The basis for the finding that the position of the agency concerned was not substantially justified.

“(7) The online searchable database described in paragraph (6) may not reveal any information the disclosure of which is prohibited by law or court order.

“(8) The head of each agency (including the Attorney General of the United States) shall provide to the Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States in a timely manner all information requested by the Chairman to comply with the requirements of paragraphs (5), (6), and (7).”

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—Section 2412 of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (d)(3), by striking “United States Code,”; and

(2) in subsection (e)—

(A) by striking “of section 2412 of title 28, United States Code,” and inserting “of this section”; and

(B) by striking “of such title” and inserting “of this title”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) shall first apply with respect to awards of fees and other expenses that are made on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) INITIAL REPORTS.—The first reports required by section 504(e) of title 5, United States Code, and section 2412(d)(5) of title 28, United States Code, shall be submitted not later than March 31 of the calendar year following the first calendar year in which a fiscal year begins after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(3) ONLINE DATABASES.—The online databases required by section 504(f) of title 5, United States Code, and section 2412(d)(6) of title 28, United States Code, shall be established as soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, but in no case

later than the date on which the first reports under section 504(e) of title 5, United States Code, and section 2412(d)(5) of title 28, United States Code, are required to be submitted under paragraph (2) of this subsection.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, this manager's amendment makes technical changes to the underlying bill, makes expenditures under the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act subject to appropriation, and eliminates the Pittman-Robertson interest on obligations language, title XII, which was signed into law last year.

The manager's amendment also adds an important new title to the bill, the Open Book on Equal Access to Justice Act, which makes that law more transparent. The Equal Access to Justice Act, or EAJA, was originally passed in 1980 as a social safety net program for seniors, veterans, and small businesses.

It was designed to pay back these little guys for the cost of suing the Federal Government in a once-in-a-lifetime event. However, special interest groups have used EAJA as a way to be reimbursed for lawsuits when they can't be reimbursed under the Nation's environmental laws. These illegitimate reimbursements not only cost taxpayers money, but they tie up our land management agencies, chasing procedural lawsuits instead of doing their actual job.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the manager's amendment, although I do not oppose the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I simply take a minute. Since we have no amendments on leaded bullets or lead in fishing, this may be the only time it is germane to clear up an issue from our debate yesterday evening.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN), my good friend, mentioned about at shooting ranges, especially, bullets often end up back in the ground.

I just wanted to clarify, and let me quote from the Science and Environmental Health Network, that in the environment many chemicals are degraded by sunlight, destroyed through reactions with other environmental substances or metabolized by naturally occurring bacteria. Some chemicals, however, have features that enable them to resist environmental degradation. They are classified as persistent and can accumulate in soils and aquatic environments. Metals such as lead,

mercury, and arsenic are always persistent since they are basic elements and cannot be further broken down and destroyed in the environment. Lead contamination of air, soil, or drinking water can ultimately result in significant exposures in fetuses, infants, and children, resulting in impaired brain development.

Mr. Chair, I just wanted to get that on the record that the lead is not going to degrade once it hits the soil during hunting or fishing.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I urge adoption of the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. BEYER

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 9, strike "and" after the semicolon at line 14, strike the period at line 16 and insert "; and", and after line 16 insert the following:

(5) prohibits use of the location by any individual who is prohibited from purchasing a firearm by section 922(g) of title 18, United States Code.

Page 10, strike "and" after the semicolon at line 6, strike the closing quotation marks and period at line 8 and insert "and", and after line 8 insert the following:

"(E) prohibits use of the location by any individual who is prohibited from purchasing a firearm by section 922(g) of title 18, United States Code."

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chair, H.R. 2406 would increase Federal assistance made available in the Pittman-Robertson Act for construction, operations, and maintenance of recreational shooting ranges on public lands.

I, myself, am an avid outdoorsman and a big proponent of recreational activities, and I understand the value of recreational shooting. However, I believe that with these privileges come certain responsibilities. One of those responsibilities is to ensure that we are not creating a situation where dangerous people are allowed to hone their shooting skills on the taxpayers' dime.

My amendment today simply says, if you operate a public shooting range and if you receive Federal assistance by way of this act, then you must have a policy, a notice of some sort in place stating that no person who is prohib-

ited by Federal law from possessing a firearm is allowed to use the shooting range.

Nothing in this amendment creates new gun laws. Nothing in this amendment would infringe on the rights of responsible gun owners. Nothing in this amendment is onerous in any way. We are simply saying that the Federal Government should not be in the business of subsidizing dangerous people improving their marksmanship or creating spaces around guns where convicted felons feel like they can operate outside the law and endanger law-abiding sportsmen and -women. The Federal Government has an obligation to keep people safe.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, this amends the definition of public target ranges in title II and the definition of public target range as used for Pittman-Robertson funding.

This amendment is unnecessary, as it prohibits behavior which is already against the law. This amendment is also impractical. Administrators at public ranges would have no way of knowing who is prohibited and who is not. Public target ranges are not equipped to run background checks, and requiring them to do so would largely undermine the other purposes of the bill, like expanding access to ranges.

This amendment does not distinguish between public target ranges that allow only archery versus those that allow firearm use. The amendment would prohibit, without justification, certain persons from taking advantage of otherwise lawful and harmless recreational archery.

Access to the national background check screening data base is strictly limited by law and cannot be used to screen people just because they want to use a target range. The National Rifle Association, the National Shooting Sports Foundation, and Safari Club International oppose this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I strongly encourage my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chair, with respect for my friend from Virginia, there is nothing in the amendment that suggests or requires background checks for people wanting to use public shooting ranges—in fact, just the opposite. All we are asking is that there be a policy or a notice saying, if you are otherwise prohibited from using weapons under Federal law, that you can't prac-

tice, hone your shooting skills on these ranges.

Mr. WITTMAN and I both come from Virginia, where we have six target ranges managed by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Those six public target ranges have 17 rules. These rules include: use paper targets only; organized competitive shooting is prohibited; use of unauthorized target materials, such as cans, bottles, clay birds is prohibited. None of these is onerous. All we are asking is for an 18th rule that says, if you are otherwise prohibited from using a gun under Federal law, then you can't use it at the target range.

We are not trying to extend background checks to everyone. That is not what this says. All we are trying to do is make sure that people who can't otherwise have possession of a gun don't go to a target range, rent one, and practice.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I remind the gentleman from Virginia—we all have an interest in shooting sports—that there is no evidence to suggest that there is an issue right now with felons using this opportunity to perpetrate crimes at public shooting ranges, so I think it is a solution in search of a problem. We want to make sure that there is a balance there and that, indeed, people have access to these ranges.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, Federal law prohibits certain criminals from possessing firearms. This amendment assumes that a criminal who is forbidden from possessing a firearm, who then breaks that law and possesses one anyway, will then obey a law that says he can't bring the illegally possessed gun to a shooting range.

I have news for the author of this amendment. The last place a criminal wants to be is on a shooting range where he is surrounded by law-abiding and armed citizens. Criminals prefer gun-free zones where decent people can't fight back.

So what is the real purpose of this amendment? I think it is twofold. The first is to imply that gun ranges are brimming with criminals who are honing their skills to go on rampages. That is an insult to the many millions of Americans who own guns and who use shooting ranges.

Second, and more disturbing, it is to put the owners and managers of shooting ranges in an impossible legal position. How are they supposed to comply with this law? The gentleman says, well, they don't need to do background checks of every consumer, but what else are they then supposed to do in order to abide by this law? Require a 2-week waiting period to make reservations? How long before leftist legal

firms begin suing these gun ranges for failing to do due diligence in thoroughly probing the backgrounds of their customers?

We have many laws on the books to prohibit the illegal use of firearms and to prohibit criminals from possessing them. That is the problem with criminals: they just don't obey our laws. But instead of putting them behind bars, where they can't hurt anyone, the left seeks to make it increasingly difficult for law-abiding citizens to defend themselves.

It shouldn't surprise us that the sum total of these laws is more gun violence and not less. I urge the House to defeat this amendment.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chair, how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chair, all I need is just a few seconds to point out to my friend from California that many of the things that he objects to are irrelevant and not germane to this amendment.

We are not asking for background checks. We are certainly not setting up a structure where lawyers can sue. We are simply asking for a policy or notice to be in place, as many other policies and notices are in place at gun shooting ranges around the country, that recognize that Federal law prohibits certain people, some dangerous people from possessing or using firearms in the United States, and especially the public shooting range that is being funded by the Federal Government under Pittman-Robertson.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I want to remind folks, too, that the law already prohibits certain individuals from possessing a firearm, from using it at a public range. The acquisition or possession of a firearm by a person subject to 18 U.S. Code 922, section (g), under any circumstances for any purpose is already a Federal felony. I think the law already covers that as far as who can and cannot own a firearm.

Having the additional effort of saying you can't access a public range is secondary to the primary violation of the law. I think that that is already covered if you are looking at making sure that guns aren't put in the hands of those folks who are convicted of these crimes.

Again, I rise in strong opposition to the amendment. I encourage my colleagues to do the same, to oppose the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia will be postponed.

□ 0930

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 114-429.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Beginning at page 14, line 3, strike title III.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, let me, first of all, thank the Rules Committee for making my amendment in order. Let me also thank Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. BEYER for their leadership on this issue.

Let me state for the record that I am from Texas, where there are many fishermen, many hunters, and many sportsmen and -women, but we are also a people that understand unto whom much is given, much is expected. My amendment speaks to that very issue.

My amendment No. 3 strikes title III of the underlying bill that creates a loophole in the Marine Mammal Protection Act that would allow a handful of hunters to import polar bear trophies into the United States.

Let me provide for my colleagues a simple bit of information. Most people do not know, but polar bears are officially classified as marine mammals and, as such, are included under the 1972 Marine Mammal Protection Act. They are also listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, affording the iconic animals further protection against hunting, trapping, and capturing.

Over the last few years, these laws did not stop a handful of wealthy individuals from flying up to Canada to bag a trophy polar bear for their collection back home, even though they were warned that U.S. law would prohibit the importation of skins, heads, and other products from bears that they were hunting.

In 1994, well-funded hunting interests convinced Congress to amend the act, allowing a limited number of bears from trophy hunts, but only if the animal came from a designated population that could withstand the loss. Then in 2007, the Fish and Wildlife Service issued a proposed rule to list the polar bear as threatened. This continues.

In the Humane Society letter that supports my amendment, it is indicated that, in fact, we may lose two-thirds of the polar bear population by 2070.

My amendment is smart, it is right, it is humane. It responds to the conscience and the rightness of this country.

I am saddened to see these lovely animals—if I can call them that—become trophies to make someone else feel good. I ask my colleagues to recognize the importance of taking care of what God has given us.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, this amendment strikes a provision of the SHARE Act that will allow the importation of 41 polar bears legally harvested from sustainable populations in Canada before the polar bear was listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

I yield to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, it always interests me when some people try to undo something that has already occurred legally.

Legally, these bears were taken under license of the Canadian Government. Legally, they should have been allowed to be imported. And then, Secretary Kempthorne listed the polar bear as a threatened species. They are not endangered. In fact, we have a study now that the polar bear population has increased, not decreased.

The point is, these are 41 hides that were shot legally by individual hunters under the auspices of the Canadian law with proper guiding facilities, proper taxidermy facilities, and these bears are dead.

By the way, as these dead bears come to the United States, they create money to take and help conserve the rest of the live bears. If I was out buying something or it was given to me and it was declared illegal later on, I can't keep it? This is silliness.

This is a good part of this bill. It rectifies something that was done legally for hunters that did their hunting legally. Now we are saying that for human purposes, for the protection of the polar bear, we are not going to allow those 41 hides to come back into the United States that were shot legally?

We are not going to collect the money we used to save polar bears from these legally shot bears. This is not about the future. And by the way, Fish and Wildlife sort of likes this program.

I am always amazed that somebody is going to save a species that is not endangered—in fact, is not threatened—

because they are going to save dead bears from coming into the United States that were shot legally.

I oppose this amendment. It is a mischievous amendment.

This amendment was backed by the Humane Society. Of course they are going to support her amendment, but the fact is they were shot legally. They should be allowed to be brought back in the country, as they were shot under the Government of Canada's auspices.

So let's reject this amendment. Let's stick to the facts, not emotions.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Texas has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Virginia also has 2½ minutes remaining.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have a letter from the Humane Society that I will include in the RECORD, along with an article regarding polar bear hunting.

THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES,
February 24, 2016

Hon. SHEILA JACKSON LEE,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REP. JACKSON LEE: The Humane Society of the United States, Humane Society Legislative Fund, and Humane Society International strongly support your amendment to H.R. 2406, the so-called "Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) Act of 2015." This harmful legislation contains a variety of provisions that threaten wildlife, including one that would allow U.S. trophy hunters to import the heads and hides of threatened polar bears from Canada. Your amendment to strike this language sends a strong message that our country should be protecting vulnerable species, not carving out exceptions for the small fraction of the hunting public that travels the globe to kill its most majestic creatures.

Title III of H.R. 2406 would weaken the Marine Mammal Protection Act by permitting the importation of trophies from 41 polar bears killed as the Fish and Wildlife Service finalized a rule listing them as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The wealthy trophy hunters that shot these bears had full knowledge of the pending rule, and knew that U.S. law would likely prohibit them from bringing back their kill. We should not give these hunters a free pass to exploit a regulatory loophole.

This is just the latest in a recent series of import allowances by Congress. It would send a message that politically-connected trophy hunters can kill endangered and threatened species around the globe, put the trophies in storage, and wait around for their congressional allies to get them permission to bring the heads and hides into the country for display over mantles in living rooms. The provision does not help rank-and-file hunters and sportsmen, who would never dream of traveling to the Arctic to shoot a polar bear, or to Africa to shoot a lion.

Scientists estimate that we may lose two-thirds of the polar bear population by 2050. Congress should do all it can / to protect such vanishing species from extinction instead of incentivizing trophy hunters to kill as many as possible in advance of pending ESA listings. This is a critical measure to ensure the long-term viability of imperiled animals around the globe.

When Cecil, the beloved African lion, was killed by an American dentist it shined a light on the shameful subculture of trophy hunters, who spend their fortunes traveling the globe to kill the rarest and most majestic species on earth. We applaud your amendment, which provides real protections for endangered and threatened species.

Sincerely,

WAYNE PACELLE,
President and CEO,
The Humane Society
of the United States.
MICHAEL MARKARIAN,
President, Humane Society
Legislative
Fund.

[From TakePart.com, May 5, 2013]

POLAR BEAR TROPHY HUNTERS: KILL NOW,
GET PERMISSION LATER

(By David Kirby)

Most people don't know it, but polar bears are officially classified as marine mammals, and as such are included under the 1972 Marine Mammal Protection Act. They are also listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, affording the iconic animals further protection against hunting, trapping and capturing.

But over the past few years, those laws did not stop a handful of wealthy individuals from flying up to Canada to bag a "trophy" polar bear for their collection back home, even though they were warned that U.S. law would prohibit the importation of skins, heads and other products from the bears they were hunting.

Those trophy hunters have in the past managed to secure an exemption from Congress, allowing some of the trophy bears to enter the United States.

Now the trophy hunters and their friends in D.C. are at it again. Last week, Rep. Don Young (R-AK) introduced a new bill in the house, "To amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to allow the importation of polar bear trophies taken in sport hunts in Canada."

On the Senate side, Mike Crapo (R-ID) offered a similar though slightly more restrictive bill, the "Polar Bear Conservation and Fairness Act of 2013."

The Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 outlawed the sport hunting of all polar bears in the United States and banned the import of any marine mammal product into the country.

But in 1994, well-funded hunting interests convinced Congress to amend the act, allowing in a limited number of bears from trophy hunts, but only if the animal came from a designated population that could withstand the loss.

Then, in January 2007, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) issued a proposed rule to list the polar bear as "threatened" on the endangered species list, which meant no bears from any populations could be imported.

FWS had until January 2008 to issue its final ruling. But the deadline came and went and there was still no listing of the bears. A federal court intervened, ordering the agency to publish the rule by May 15, 2008, adding that the new rule would take effect immediately.

By law, then, no polar bear killed from any population could be imported after May 15, 2008, into the U.S., regardless of when the permit had been issued.

Trophy hunters were given repeated warnings from hunting organizations and government agencies that trophy bears killed in

2008 would not be allowed into the United States: They were hunting at their own risk.

Even pro-trophy-hunting groups such as Conservation Force issued repeated and dire warnings to its members, including one in a December 2007 newsletter that stated, "American hunters are asking us whether they should even look at polar bear hunts in light of the current effort by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to list this species as threatened; [t]he bottom line is, no American hunter should be putting hard, non-returnable money down on a polar bear hunt at this point."

And, the newsletter continued, "We feel compelled to tell you that American trophy hunters are likely to be barred from importing bears they take this season. Moreover, there is a chance that bears taken previous to this season may be barred as well. American clients with polar bear trophies still in Canada or Nunavut need to get those bears home."

The warning was not heeded by everyone. At least 40 Canadian polar bears were killed by U.S. trophy hunters from March until May of 2008—when they were cautioned that the Endangered Species Act would be in effect, disallowing any imports of trophy polar bears.

Now, those polar bear carcasses are collecting dust in refrigerated storage in Canada at great cost to the hunters, who desperately want to bring their trophies back stateside.

"We are disheartened to see this type of legislation introduced in Congress. We have seen it time and time again," says Lena Spadacene, policy manager for wildlife protection at the Humane Society of the United States, which has spearheaded the fight against importing polar bear products.

A similar bill was introduced in the last session of Congress, Spadacene said, but was defeated by a coalition of conservation groups. "We worked diligently on that issue and pulled together one of the most comprehensive reports on trophy hunting and exemptions," she says.

"The law should be consistently applied, and we should not have a special carve-out for a few trophy hunters who shot polar bears in Canada, knowing full well that they may not be able to import the trophies under U.S. law," the report stated.

"While some argue this is just a small number of trophies, it encourages hunters to continue killing protected species in other countries, store the trophies in warehouses, and simply wait for their allies in Congress to get them a waiver on the imports," the report said. "It sets a dangerous precedent, and encourages more killing of threatened species and protected marine mammals, which flies in the face of the Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act."

"We don't want to reward bad behavior," Spadacene says. When the trophy hunters learned that polar bears would be listed as threatened, "they rushed to Canada to bag themselves a trophy, but some of them did not make it in time. Now they are paying money every month for refrigeration until they can lobby their friends in Congress."

It's a worrying pattern, Spadacene says, and it could easily affect other species in the future.

Once it becomes known that a species is about to be put on the endangered list, it motivates some hunters to go out and kill while they still can. And if they miss the deadline, then they hope they can just win an exemption from Washington.

"Passing this legislation now is only going to entice and incentivize the bad behavior even more," Spadacene says.

She adds, "Whenever our elected officials grant special exemptions for trophy hunting, it undermines conservation policy. Shooting an iconic species for display or bragging rights and then crying to Congress for a bailout is simply bad form and should not be tolerated."

Spadacene explains the trophy hunters "were warned of the law and they shot polar bears anyway. If we allow this exemption to happen, we can predict it will happen again with other species, or potentially with polar bears again."

Then there is the question of priorities in Congress. With so many problems vexing the country, is the fate of 40 dead bears really so important that Capitol Hill should vote on this bill?

"The last session was what many considered to be the most ineffective and incompetent legislature in the history of democracy, exactly because they were working on legislation like this," Spadacene says. "It's this kind of special-interest legislation that makes Americans frustrated with Congress. It's so self-serving for a small group of wealthy trophy hunters, and does nothing for the American people or conservation."

Judd Deere, a spokesman for Senator Crapo, has the opposite take on the matter.

"There is nothing more frustrating for the American people than regulations that make no sense," Deere says. "It's frustrating for these hunters, and it's unfortunately requiring Congress to act. This legislation was a commitment that my boss made in the last Congress. We got really close last time. I hope we can get it done this time."

It is sure to be a bitter battle.

The polar bear legislation "is being cast as a private relief measure to help a few hunters bring in a handful of personal trophies," the HSUS report said. "But in reality it would provide incentive for still more killing of polar bears in Canada, by providing more hope to would-be bear slayers they can convince Congress to amend the law just one more time."

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, scientists estimate, as I indicated, that we may lose two-thirds of the polar bear population by 2050. Therefore, we, as custodians of these very precious animals, should do all that we can to protect a vanishing species from extinction instead of incentivizing trophy hunters to kill as many as possible in advance of pending ESA listings. This is a critical measure to assure the long-term viability of imperiled animals.

Let me also cite for the record that the appeals court upholds Endangered Species Act protections for polar bears.

Let me suggest to my colleagues that we saw an unfortunate circumstance just a few months ago when Cecil the lion was killed out of mistake or I don't know what, but this giant of an animal, this reflection of the idea of the importance of the animal kingdom, was killed.

I introduced H.R. 3448, Cecil the Lion Endangered and Threatened Species Act. It is similar to the amendment I have today. I ask my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Chair, let me express my appreciation to Chairman BISHOP and Ranking Member GRI-

JALVA for their leadership and commitment to working to maintain and preserve America's natural resources and wildlife habitat.

I also wish to thank Chairman SESSIONS, Ranking Member SLAUGHTER, and members of the Rules Committee for making in order Jackson Lee Amendment No. 3.

Mr. Chair, thank you for the opportunity to explain my amendment.

Jackson Lee Amendment No. 3 is an important revision to the SHARE Act because it serves to preserve the original intent of Congress under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, as well as the Endangered Species Act.

Specifically, the Jackson Lee Amendment strikes Title III of the underlying bill that creates a loophole in the Marine Mammal Protection Act which would allow a handful of hunters to import polar bear trophies into the United States in contravention of current law.

While H.R. 2406 purports to enhance recreational outdoor opportunities and does in fact have some favorable provisions, Title III, as well as many other harmful provisions make clear, that this legislation would in reality jeopardize already fragile ecosystems and negatively impact animal welfare and wildlife.

As a longstanding member of the Congressional Animal Rights Caucus and champion of wildlife preservation and protection of animals, I am deeply concerned about the harmful provisions of H.R. 2406 and the impact this legislation will have on endangered and threatened populations.

Title III of the SHARE Act is particularly concerning, because it creates a loophole in the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) allowing for a special class of hunters to import polar bear trophies into the United States in contravention of the law.

The MMPA was set up because it was recognized that many marine mammal stocks, including polar bears, were in danger of becoming endangered or extinct.

The sole, most important, objective of the MMPA is to help maintain the health and stability of the ecosystem.

The polar bears for which these hunters seek permits for were hunted in Canada after the species was proposed for listing as threatened under the Endangered Species Act and was done so with full knowledge and warning that U.S. law would prohibit their eventual importation.

Enacting Title III of the SHARE Act would threaten this imperiled species by encouraging hunters to race for trophies the moment a species is considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act, store them abroad and then seek waivers from Congress to import their trophies later.

Granting such a waiver sets a dangerous precedent and sends signals to trophy hunters that they can flout the law—effectively rewarding hunters who raced to kill polar bears for trophies before their listing under the Endangered Species Act.

Alternately, removal of this language will help ensure that hunters are not encouraged to seek bad faith waivers from Congress to import threatened and endangered species at a later time.

These bears were knowingly hunted in Canada after the species was proposed for listing as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

The survival and protection of the polar bear habitat is an urgent issue for wildlife experts and those who treasure our natural habitat.

H.R. 2406, as it stands, is opposed by virtually every leading environmental organization in the nation.

The Humane Society of the United States, the Humane Society Legislative Fund, and the Humane Society International, as well as several others including the Animal Welfare Institute, Center for Biological Diversity, and Born Free USA have all submitted letters in strong support my Jackson Lee Amendment as a necessary provision to provide real protections for endangered and threatened species.

Earlier this year, I also introduced H.R. 3448, the Cecil the Lion Endangered and Threatened Species Act in response to the tragic killing of Cecil the Lion and the immeasurable need for greater protections to shield all threatened and endangered species from trophy-hunting.

You have no doubt heard about the recent tragic illegal killing of Cecil the Lion, a 13-year-old lion, dominant male of his pride, and one of Zimbabwe's most beloved symbols of wildlife and important driver of tourism.

The hunter, along with hired professionals, lured Cecil out of Hwange National Park and shot him, allegedly without a permit, and collected the head and skin.

Beyond Cecil, over two thirds of the world's cat species are recognized as species in need of protection under federal or international law.

My legislation to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973, would prohibit the taking and transportation of any endangered or threatened species as a trophy into the United States.

Currently, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) does not protect the vast majority of wild animals killed and imported by American hunters.

While the ESA allows for the importation of endangered and threatened species for scientific research, propagation or survival of the species, hunters are abusing this limited exception to murder and transport protected wildlife for sport.

As a result of the ESA loophole, tens of thousands of wild animals are killed every year by American trophy hunters and transported into the United States.

In particular, Africa's lion population has declined 90 percent in the past 75 years.

The conservation of rare and threatened species is critically important to the sustainability of our ecosystem and wildlife as we know it.

Polar bears, like African lions, currently face unprecedented threats by humans on two fronts: sport hunting and loss of habitat.

The polar bear and African lion are vulnerable species sitting at the top of the food chain. The health of these animals is an indicator and foundation for the health of the ecosystem as a whole, and by protecting the sustainability of these specific umbrella species, we can have tremendous impacts on entire ecosystems.

The International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has "Red Listed" polar bears as a "Vulnerable" species—thus, meeting criteria as a threatened species facing a high risk of extinction in the wild.

While Canada is the only country that allows for sport hunting of polar bears, it is unfortunate that what was once a necessity of life for indigenous Inuit communities in Canada, killing polar bears has now become a bloody sport for profit and prestige.

It is estimated there are 20,000–25,000 polar bears left in the wild a number that has only been sustainable through federal protection.

Mr. Chairman, the SHARE Act of 2015, if enacted would continue to threaten the sustainability of one of our most vulnerable species as well as the critical preservation of our wildlife.

Scaling back protections on vulnerable and threatened species in the face of legislation aimed to do otherwise will have substantial adverse impacts on wildlife and conservation efforts, as well as policy implications rewarding those who failed to comply with federal law.

We simply cannot afford to let threatened and endangered species die needlessly for sport or profit.

The Jackson Lee Amendment would protect polar bears while at the same time preserving Congress's intent under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act.

I urge all members to support Jackson Lee Amendment No. 3.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I would like to reiterate something that Mr. YOUNG said. There is a thousand-dollar importation fee that is assessed on all 41 of those trophies. Those dollars go to polar bear conservation and research. So we are looking to use these efforts to continue the promulgation of this species. We want to make sure polar bear populations continue to grow.

Hunters provide, I believe, the largest measure of conservation of any group out there that is looking to preserve polar bears. It is in everyone's interest to make sure these things happen.

We have a number of groups out there that are in support of this bill: the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, the National Rifle Association, the National Shooting Sports Foundation, Safari Club International, and the Boone and Crockett Club. All those organizations are deeply committed to making sure that we continue and grow these species.

We want to make sure we understand that, but hunters are the best conservationists on the planet because they are involved in making sure the species continue. They use their resources to put into species continuation. They want to make sure these species are properly managed and that we have good science in managing those species. I believe that this is what we want. We want to make sure that we are encouraging that.

This amendment does not allow us to do that. It strikes those provisions. I would strongly urge my colleagues to vote against this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Texas has 1½ minutes remaining.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, there are a litany of organizations that are supporting this amendment: the League of Conservation Voters, the Alaskan Wilderness League, Animal Welfare League, Born Free USA.

With respect to lions, let me recite that over the last 75 years, we have lost 90 percent of African lions because we did not have the restraints. I would make the argument that we should not do that in this case.

When we let go and let free, we will find out that they will go beyond the 41. They will be calling after polar bears for trophies. We need to ban this in our legislation to ensure the protection of all of those.

Let me ask my colleagues to take into consideration the importance of our responsibilities of preservation.

Trophies? Money?

I can assure you that there are a bounty of humane organizations that will provide any amount of dollars to do the research that is necessary to protect this vulnerable population. They are listed on the Endangered Species Act. They are vulnerable.

These trophies should not be an indication to the American people that they can bring in polar bears—who may themselves become extinct—because we believe that trophies are more important than studying the species and growing the species to the extent that scientists and others can restrain them and make sure that we do have a population within the realm and reason of supporting the ecosystem that we need.

I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I would reiterate polar bears are not endangered. They are not on the endangered species list.

I want to remind folks, too, these 41 trophies were harvested in Canada. Canada has a world-class management program for polar bears. They have used the best science.

Remember, these polar bears were taken in 2008, based upon the science Canada was using to manage the program. The polar bears in Canada, both at the time and now, are increasing in population. Canada does a great job in managing this.

This is just a situation where polar bears legally harvested under the best management programs available should be allowed to come back into the United States. I would encourage my colleagues to vote against this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gen-

tlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. COSTA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BUSTOS), I offer amendment No. 4.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 20, line 19, strike “; and” and insert a semicolon.

Page 20, line 21, strike the period and insert “; and”.

Page 20, after line 21, insert the following: “(viii) Administrator of the Small Business Administration or designated representative.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

MODIFICATION TO AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. COSTA

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that amendment No. 4 be printed in House Report 114-429 and be modified in the form that I have placed at the desk.

The Clerk will report the modification.

The Clerk read as follows:

Modification to amendment offered by Mr. COSTA:

Page 19, line 24, strike “7” and insert “8”.
Page 20, line 19, strike “; and” and insert a semicolon.

Page 20, line 21, strike the period and insert “; and”.

Page 20, after line 21, insert the following: “(viii) Administrator of the Small Business Administration or designated representative.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The amendment is modified.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Chairman, Representative BUSTOS and I would like to thank Congressmen BEYER and WITTMAN and the Rules Committee for allowing us to present this amendment on the floor.

This amendment would help ensure that the interests of small businesses that rely on wildlife conservation and recreational hunting continue to thrive.

As established by this bill, the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee's duties would include advising the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture on policies and programs that help increase the participation in hunting and wildlife conservation activities and promote awareness of the importance of both wildlife conservation and the economic benefits of recreational hunting.

There is no question that recreational hunting has economic benefits. In 2011, hunters put \$38.3 billion into our economy. The small businesses across the country that cater to the needs of these hunters and wildlife watchers—be they stores, hotels, trail guides—are bedrocks of our local economies that are near our public lands. We know that.

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As is, however, none of the governmental bodies set to serve on this advisory committee that is being proposed as a part of this legislation represent the perspective or the needs of these small businesses.

Small businesses are the economic engine that is driving our economy. We know that. It has been that way for years. They should not be left behind or be left out of this.

This amendment would simply add the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to be listed as an ex-officio member of this advisory committee.

Having a representative from the Small Business Administration or their designee will strengthen the voice of small businesses that rely on tourism associated with hunting or shooting or sports or recreational or wildlife activities that this legislation intends to promote.

So my colleague, Representative BUSTOS, and I ask that you join us in supporting this small-business amendment ensuring that they have a seat at the table by supporting this effort.

Mr. Chairman, I ask for an "aye" vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment, as modified, offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA).

The amendment, as modified, was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF MISSOURI

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 49, line 20, after the period, insert "Such closures shall be clearly marked with signs and dates of closures, and shall not in-

clude gates, chains, walls, or other barriers on the hunter access corridor."

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the numerous hunters in my district who have called me, very frustrated, every hunting season that the National Forest Service, with no cause, no rationale, and no reason, closes down their access to hunt in the Mark Twain National Forest. With gates, locks and chains, they limit the residents of central and southeast Missouri.

I have been contacted by numerous folks in my district about not having proper postings of corridors within the National Park System whenever they decide to change its random gates. What this amendment would do is it would require the National Forest Service to publish signs of any hunting corridors that they decide to close.

I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN).

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I would like to state that we support this amendment.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MS. MENG

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in House Report 114-429.

Ms. MENG. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 59, line 10, strike "OFFICER" and insert "OFFICERS".

Page 59, beginning at line 16, strike "OFFICER" and insert "OFFICERS".

Page 59, line 20, strike "one".

Page 59, line 21, strike "officer" and insert "officers".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MENG) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. MENG. Mr. Chairman, this amendment would allow U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service law enforcement officers to be placed in diplomatic posts abroad in an effort to combat the illegal killing of African elephants.

Honestly, this is an activity in which the Fish and Wildlife Service already engages. What the underlying bill does in section 1004, however, which I think

is commendable, is explicitly authorizes this activity in law for the first time.

Unfortunately, I feel the authorization is overly narrow because it allows only one FWS officer to be placed in a single country at a time. I think this was likely a drafting oversight and simply wish to allow more than one FWS officer to be assigned to a foreign country at a time.

Let me be clear. This amendment does not mandate that multiple officers be sent abroad. It does not authorize any additional funds for these activities. It does not require an increase in any way on the number of FWS officers placed abroad. It simply allows more than one FWS officer to be placed in a single country at any given time.

In reality, this amendment could, should we wish it, result in a net decrease in the number of FWS law enforcement agents placed abroad, resulting in lowered costs to the U.S. Government for these activities.

Imagine a scenario in which elephant poaching and ivory trafficking was running rampant in 20 different nations and we wished to assist in the combating of these activities by leveraging the expertise and experience of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officers.

As written, we would only be allowed to place one officer in each country, for a total of 20 total officers deployed internationally.

What if the Secretary of the Interior determined, however, that formulating a task force of five specialists, who would be deployed jointly, as needed, would be the best possible course of action to combat the poaching of African elephants?

As written, the SHARE Act would force this task force to be split up and housed in five different African nations. The amendment before us, however, would permit the entire task force to be housed under one roof.

At the end of the day, housing the entire task force in a single location could be much more effective strategically and could result in significant savings to the U.S. Government if it is housed in the nation with the lowest cost of living.

Mr. Chair, no matter how one may feel about the broader bill before us, I feel that section 1004 of the bill is a worthwhile section. I hope you will support my amendment seeking to improve it.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MENG). The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. HUFFMAN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 7 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of title X add the following:

SEC. — GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE STUDY.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study examining the effects of a ban of the trade in of fossilized ivory from mammoths and mastodons on the illegal importation and trade of African and Asian elephant ivory within the United States, with the exception of importation or trade thereof related to museum exhibitions or scientific research, and report to Congress the findings of such study.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, today I am offering an amendment to the SHARE Act to direct the Government Accountability Office to delve deeper into an important issue, and that is the ivory trade, which has sparked international concern.

Last year my home State of California became the third State in the country to approve tougher restrictions on the intrastate ivory trade, joining New York and New Jersey in that regard.

The new California law, AB 96, closes a loophole that had allowed the import of ivory harvested from animals killed before 1977.

Now, this loophole made a ban of the import of elephant ivory nearly impossible to enforce because distinguishing between pre- and post-1977 ivory products would require very expensive isotope testing.

The California law also included a ban on the growing trade in mammoth ivory—this is ivory discovered in Siberia and elsewhere—ironically made easier because of warming weather and melting tundra due to the impacts of climate change.

There is growing concern that Chinese ivory traders are passing off illegal elephant tusks as mammoth ivory in order to avoid international elephant ivory bans.

But distinguishing between mammoth ivory and elephant ivory requires technical testing, which makes, again, enforcement of an elephant ivory ban very difficult unless the mammoth ivory trade is also addressed.

Now, some argue that, despite this difficulty, legal mammoth ivory can reduce the market for illegal elephant ivory. Although I don't agree with that, I do understand the concerns.

That is why, with this amendment, we are simply asking the GAO to study

the issue, to look at what various experts have to say, and give us some advice.

To make smart policy decisions, we need that kind of information on how a ban on the trade of fossilized ivory from mammoths would affect the illegal importation and trade of elephant ivory within the United States.

So I respectfully request your support of this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I would request an "aye" vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. BEYER

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Beginning at page 69, line 1, strike title XIV.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, title XIV of this bill would give States and territories the authority to override Federal fishing rules in coastal waters of national parks, national marine sanctuaries, and some marine national monuments. This is simply not right.

Places like Biscayne National Park, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, and Rose Atoll Marine National Monument belong to all Americans, not just to the fishing interests in Florida, Hawaii, and American Samoa.

Protection of these special ocean places has overwhelming public support and is recognized by the scientific community as critical to making fisheries more productive.

What is more, most of these areas do not even preclude fishing. California's national marine sanctuaries generate more than \$140 million a year in economic impact from commercial fishing.

Recreational anglers spend more than \$100 million a year on fishing in the Florida Keys.

I attended the public hearing in Homestead, Florida, last year on closing a very small part—less than 6 percent—of Biscayne National Bay for a marine national monument simply to bring the fish back, many fish that fishermen there hadn't seen in years.

But fishing is not the only important use of these waters. Whale watching, snorkeling, scuba diving, and scientific research all generate enormous bene-

fits, not to mention the impact that protecting coral reefs and other diverse productive habitats has on stabilizing our oceans and our fisheries in the face of global warming.

Sometimes it is necessary to protect certain areas of the ocean, particularly those that have been over-fished in the past or are particularly sensitive to fishing impacts, if we want to support a wide variety of uses and keep our oceans healthy. Science shows that this benefits fishermen in the long run as well.

My amendment is simple. It strikes title XIV of H.R. 2406 and leaves fishery management decisions in the waters of marine parks, sanctuaries, and monuments up to the Federal agencies charged with managing these resources in trust for all Americans.

We would never think of allowing Wyoming to set hunting rules for Yellowstone, but without this amendment, this bill would allow the same thing to happen for our ocean parks that are every bit as magnificent.

I urge a "yes" vote on the amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, yesterday I noted that one of our principal objectives of the Federal lands policy must be to restore the Federal Government as a good neighbor to the communities impacted by the Federal lands.

Gifford Pinchot, the founder of the Forest Service, advised his foresters to find out in advance what the public will stand for. If it is right and they won't stand for it, postpone action and educate them.

That is essentially what this bill does. It says that the Federal Government needs to listen to States and territories before imposing fishing regulations in State waters.

This amendment would strip this language and say, in effect: We don't care what local communities think. We know what is best.

It speaks volumes about why States and communities are openly revolting against Federal lands policy.

Pinchot also advised us to get rid of an attitude of personal arrogance or pride of attainment of superior knowledge. I would commend that advice to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, with respect to my colleague and friend from California, I don't think that is the way the system works.

In fact, right now fishing limitations are developed in coordination with

their respective States and territories. They are just not given final, blanket veto power. The Park Service and the States benefit from cooperative fisheries research and management and full participation. My only personal experience is with the Biscayne Bay where there were many, many public hearings. The public was fully involved. The fishermen, pro and con, were fully involved in it.

The idea is not to eliminate the close coordination of partnership with the States and with the territories, but, rather, to avoid giving the States and territories the ultimate veto power over what essentially are national decisions.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Chairman, I thank my good friend for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to this amendment.

Now, we know the Natural Resources Committee is a rowdy one to manage, with lots of difficult decisions and inflamed passions.

But I thank Chairman BISHOP and the great subcommittee chairmen and all of the members for doing a great job in ensuring that the American people are the ultimate beneficiaries of our amazing public lands and waters.

This title XIV language that would be stripped out of the underlying bill by this amendment was taken from my bill, the Preserving Public Access to Public Waters Act, which has 36 bipartisan cosponsors, including nearly two-thirds of the Florida delegation.

Floridians understand the importance of balancing environmental, recreational, and economic considerations along our coast because our State is the fishing capital of the world.

With that balance in mind, we worked to carefully develop and tailor this language so that it would only apply to a very small area of near-shore waters with deep importance to fishermen.

My colleague and this amendment's sponsor himself said in the committee markup that the National Park Service and the National Marine Sanctuaries cover a negligible percentage of waters within traditional State jurisdiction.

He is right that we are talking about a relatively small area, but these waters have outsized importance to the folks living in nearby communities.

In my district, the National Park Service is attempting to close over 30 percent of Biscayne National Park's reefs to fishing in perpetuity as part of its new general management plan and in opposition to the scientific and management expertise of the FWC, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

FWC has worked for over a decade to develop mutually agreeable and scientifically supported fishing restrictions that stop short of a full closure in these waters, but the National Park Service has completely disregarded the State's authority to manage its own fishing resources in Biscayne National Park.

Rather than work with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Committee, what did the National Park Service do? It decided to abdicate its responsibility to the American public to try to balance environmental, recreational, and economic considerations.

Instead, the National Park Service kowtowed to the whims of a single special interest group that bankrolled tens of thousands of form letters from across the country to hijack the public comment section in favor of closing fishing access to State waters upon which local fishermen depend.

That is not the proper use of the public comment process. It is not in the best interests of south Floridians. It is not in the best interests of the American people. It is not reflective of how we should manage public waters.

Let me be clear. The title XIV language in this bill is narrowly targeted. It is simply to keep States involved in the management of their own waters. It does not apply in any way to Federal waters. This language is not anti-environment. It does not roll back any existing environmental protections nor fishing regulations currently enshrined in law.

Without keeping this language in the bill, Mr. Chairman, the example that the National Park Service is setting in Biscayne National Park will create a terrible precedent for other State and territorial waters in similar circumstances.

Mr. Chairman, I strongly urge all of our colleagues to oppose this harmful amendment.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. CARTER of Georgia). The gentleman from Virginia has 2¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, in response and with respect to my friend, the representative from Florida, Biscayne Bay National Park is 164,800 acres. These are Federal lands. This is a national park, Federal waters.

She mentioned that only they are going to close 30 percent of the reefs. It is very important to note that the reef that existed 100 years ago is down to only 6 percent that is left. So the 30 percent that is going to be closed is 2 percent of the original reef.

The whole purpose is to actually serve that special interest, the fishing interest of Florida, who desperately need the revival of the fish.

We found at the public hearing that at least half of the fishermen there were for closing it, and all the fishermen pointed out that the water was so far away, it was rarely fished at all. The worry was the precedent, not the specific part that is closed.

We point out that Biscayne Bay itself is only less than 2 percent—1.4 percent—of all Florida's waters. So this is a very tiny part. But the point here is not for any special interest, but to revise, because study after study after study have shown that where these marine sanctuaries are created, the fish recover much faster even than scientists expected.

This is for the long-term benefit of the fishing community, for anglers throughout the world, especially serving the larger interests of the American public.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this important amendment. We resist giving veto power over Federal decisions to State governments and territorial governments.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 9 OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF MISSOURI

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 9 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 71, Line 13, insert "the Mark Twain National Forest in the State of Missouri," after "Mississippi,".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, the great outdoors and hunting traditions of the United States are a way of life for folks all over our great country.

Throughout our history, they have been championed by Presidents George Washington, Dwight Eisenhower, and

Teddy Roosevelt, who established national forests, game preserves, and national parks. The SHARE Act continues these great traditions.

My amendment, which adds Mark Twain National Forest to the list of forests provided in the section, assures the residents of Missouri that no executive order, no executive action, or no bureaucrat sitting in Washington, D.C., who has never set foot on Mark Twain National Forest will write a rule inhibiting the ability to hunt or fish in our national forests.

This amendment secures our freedom to be avid sportsmen. Folks in Missouri don't want an overzealous administration to be able to come in and dictate to the hunters and anglers of Missouri by executive fiat.

Over 1.3 million Missourians hunt or fish, and many go to the Mark Twain National Forest each year. It covers roughly 2,331 square miles, 1.5 million acres, most of which reside in Missouri's Eighth Congressional District.

I ask the body to support the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I am opposing this amendment, first and foremost, because it, like so many provisions already in the bill, seeks to prevent U.S. public lands from being managed for the benefit of all Americans.

National forests are lands of many uses, including hunting and fishing. But how those uses are balanced should be decided by expert land managers at the Forest Service through a process that is open to the public and consistent with our national conservation laws, not by a few well-connected hunters and their allies in Congress.

Furthermore, the practice that this section of the bill is trying to protect is using dogs to hunt deer. Not only is this an ethically questionable hunting tactic, it is wildly controversial in the States listed in this title as well as in my State of Virginia.

Its opponents, Mr. Chairman, are not who you might think. These are not what was described yesterday as radical leftists. In fact, it is the complaints from private landowners and not overbearing bureaucrats, not environmentalists, that led the Forest Service to ban deer hounding in Louisiana's Kisatchie National Forest in 2012.

Don't take my word for it. A 2014 column in Louisiana Sportsman stated:

The boot that finally stamped the life out of deer hunting with dogs in Kisatchie National Forest was trespassing on private property . . . homeowners reported people standing on the public roads in front of their

homes with guns, waiting for deer to appear. They reported dogs on their property sometimes attacking their chickens or other livestock. And, worst of all, the homeowners reported belligerent and insolent behavior by these people standing on the roads and entering their property to retrieve their dogs.

Missouri's Mark Twain National Forest, the subject of this bill, was the scene of a major law enforcement action that found 46 people guilty of illegally hunting deer with dogs in 2013, this in spite of the fact that the practice had already been banned in Missouri.

Mr. Chairman, I urge a "no" vote.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN).

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment that is a commonsense amendment that prevents discrimination against hunters on public Federal lands by preventing the Forest Service from creating their own hunting laws that are in conflict with State laws on neighboring State and privately owned lands.

Mr. Chairman, for many people, the public lands on the national forests are the only place they have to hunt. There are many traditions and many different ways that people enjoy hunting in the outdoors in my State as well as others.

We already have similar language in the bill for national forests in Louisiana, Oklahoma, Mississippi, and Arkansas, and I support adding the Mark Twain National Forest in Missouri to this bill.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to emphasize that the Forest Service doesn't prohibit hunting right now in the Mark Twain National Forest. It simply prohibits hunting deer with dogs.

It does this because of complaints from private landowners, not from the environmentalists and not from bureaucrats. This is literally respect for the public input that comes from that.

I continue to urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is just a commonsense amendment that adds the Mark Twain National Forest to the several other forests that are mentioned in the four other States.

I ask the body to support the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Missouri will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MR. NEWHOUSE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 10 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

After section 1502, insert the following:

SEC. 1503. PUBLICATION OF CLOSURE OF ROADS IN FORESTS.

The Chief of the Forest Service shall publish a notice in the Federal Register for the closure of any public road on Forest System lands, along with a justification for the closure.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

□ 1015

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of my amendment to H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act, and urge my colleagues to support its adoption.

This amendment is very straightforward. It simply requires the Forest Service to publish a notice in the Federal Register along with a justification explaining the decision for the closure of any public road on Forest Service lands.

Some of you may ask why this amendment is necessary, and that is understandable because, fortunately, many Americans have never had to deal with this issue. However, in my district in the Pacific Northwest and in many Federal forests across the country, many people have faced the reality that a public road that they have used for decades is suddenly closed. When I say "closed," if I could refer your attention to this photograph, there is a picture indicating that a road is no longer even available for use. It is not just a chain going across the road.

However, the reality is far worse. When the Forest Service closes many of these public roads, they do so by piling gravel, downing trees, or both, in order to block access. At other times, they create what are called tank traps, essentially large ditches dug into the ground that makes passage impossible. Furthermore, these practices create

impediments that not only block human access but can also restrict the movement of wildlife in our national forests.

This has become a serious issue in central Washington. For many people who use these roads, it can have detrimental impacts on their everyday lives, whether by making their daily travel much longer or by restricting access to campsites or treasured areas in our national forests.

Some of these roads have been in use for 70 or 80 years, with generations of Washingtonians using them for forest access and recreation. Yet, in most cases, the Forest Service has closed them without even first notifying local residents and the surrounding communities.

Mr. Chairman, I believe the first indication of a public road being closed should not come when an individual or a family is faced with an impassable roadway, but rather through adequate public notice from the Forest Service. That is why I have introduced this amendment today.

Just to be clear, my amendment simply requires the Forest Service to provide notification when closing a public road on Forest Service land as well as justification for such a decision. This is an important first step in ensuring that rural communities and residents are given proper warning and advance notice when a public roadway will suddenly be blocked and access to a Federal forest area will no longer be available.

Local residents and communities deserve to know when such an action is taking place and whether forest action will be denied. This amendment will guarantee the Forest Service is being transparent in future decisions and closures.

Mr. WITTMAN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. NEWHOUSE. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank Mr. NEWHOUSE for yielding.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this amendment.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chairman, rural communities deserve better from their government. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. NEWHOUSE. I yield to the gentleman from Alaska.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I want to compliment Mr. NEWHOUSE on introducing this amendment.

These roads were built with taxpayer dollars, yet the Forest Service arbitrarily goes in and shuts those roads down so people don't have access to them.

We have the same problem in our forests in Alaska: no notification, and then they will spend millions of dollars

closing down a road that the public had access to. Their excuse is: well, it is our land. We don't have to worry about other people using this road now, so we will just isolate everybody from it.

So I compliment the gentleman for the introduction of his amendment.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the comments from the good gentleman from Alaska.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in ambivalent opposition to my friend's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, first, I want to let Representative NEWHOUSE know I completely appreciate the dilemma that he is in and appreciate the motivation for this amendment.

My one concern is that it will require the chief of the Forest Service to publish notice in the Federal Register, along with a justification, any time a national Forest Service road is closed, and there may be some unintended consequences which we should at least think about.

For example, the amendment will require the Forest Service to publish the Federal Register notice to close a road that is being engulfed by wildfire, or a road that is covered with debris after a tornado or in jeopardy of being swept away after a landslide, a power line down on the road, or even one that is closed to prevent militants from coming and going, as we have recently seen.

I certainly am sympathetic to the idea that there should be a justification for anything that closes a public road that people have used for many, many years, but I also don't want to hamstring them from closing roads that are necessary for the public safety.

I tepidly encourage a "no" vote on the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chairman, I would only say that since this is a bill, the SHARE Act, about public access, about use of our treasures, our national forests and public lands, all we are asking from the Forest Service is a little bit of transparency, notice so that people aren't caught off guard. Certainly there are extenuating circumstances where notice, if there is a downed power line or debris is in the middle of a road that makes it impassable, it seems to me that is a time when notice is even more necessary and imperative for the public good.

I appreciate the gentleman's comments, but would still urge my colleagues to support the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 11 OFFERED BY MR. FLEMING

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 11 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

TITLE XVII—UTILITY TERRAIN VEHICLES
SEC. 1701. UTILITY TERRAIN VEHICLES IN KISATCHIE NATIONAL FOREST.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Forest Administrator shall amend the applicable travel plan to allow utility terrain vehicles access on all roads nominated by the Secretary of Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries in the Kisatchie National Forest, except when such designation would pose an unacceptable safety risk, in which case the Forest Administrator shall publish a notice in the Federal Register with a justification for the closure.

(b) UTILITY TERRAIN VEHICLES DEFINED.—For purposes of this section, the term "utility terrain vehicle"—

(1) means any recreational motor vehicle designed for and capable of travel over designated roads, traveling on four or more tires with a maximum tire width of 27 inches, a maximum wheel cleat or lug of $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch, a minimum width of 50 inches but not exceeding 74 inches, a minimum weight of at least 700 pounds but not exceeding 2,000 pounds, and a minimum wheelbase of 61 inches but not exceeding 110 inches;

(2) includes vehicles not equipped with a certification label as required by part 567.4 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(3) does not include golf carts, vehicles specially designed to carry a disabled person, or vehicles otherwise registered under section 32.299 of the Louisiana State statutes.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. FLEMING) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my amendment to H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act, which would allow hunters better access to and from hunting areas in the Kisatchie National Forest in northern Louisiana.

The Louisiana Legislature passed House Bill 581 by Louisiana Representative James Armes in 2015. This new State law would allow municipalities to designate certain local roads for use by utility terrain vehicles, also known as UTVs or side-by-sides. These are not to be confused with ATVs, or all-terrain vehicles. They are larger, weigh more, seat multiple passengers, and are often equipped with safety features like roll cages, seatbelts, and enclosed cabs.

My amendment would build on the Louisiana law to allow seamless access from these designated local roads into hunting areas within Kisatchie National Forest. The size of these vehicles makes them more difficult to transport when compared with ATVs. The ever-

increasing list of features for UTVs makes them very attractive to hunters in order to recover game and transport supplies and equipment.

This amendment would allow the Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to nominate roads that would be opened in the Kisatchie Forest travel plan, unless the Chief of the Forest Service determined that such an opening would pose an unacceptable safety risk. If so, the Forest Service would have to publish a justification in the Federal Register as to why the road could not be opened.

I believe my amendment strikes the right balance of public safety and hunter access, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM), my good friend.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Chairman, I thank my good friend, Dr. FLEMING, for introducing this very important amendment. He and I both know that hunting is a major part of Louisiana's heritage and culture. In Louisiana, hunters themselves are usually the best steward of our environment.

This amendment would give authority to the Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to nominate roads that could be open for utility terrain vehicles in the Kisatchie National Forest.

Like Dr. FLEMING said, these vehicles have a minimum footprint and are much safer than our traditional ATVs. They are often used by hunters to recover game and carry supplies and equipment in and out. For far too long, they have been prohibited from sharing municipal roads with other users.

Dr. FLEMING's amendment would simply make Federal law more consistent with existing State laws of Louisiana where these UTVs are commonly used in a safe and responsible manner. This would allow hunters greater access to roads within the Kisatchie Forest travel plan.

If the Chief of the Forest Service determined that opening a road to UTVs would pose an unacceptable safety risk, then they would have the authority to override this nomination. However, they would be required to publish their justification in the Federal Register. This is important to ensure transparency and accountability in the Federal decisionmaking process.

The Kisatchie National Forest is one of Louisiana's national treasures. The citizens of Louisiana should not be unnecessarily limited in how they can use this beautiful public space.

I urge my colleagues to support Dr. FLEMING's amendment.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, it is difficult to be debating two doctors on one amendment.

I do think that one of the dilemmas here is that this amendment, like so much of H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act, continues the essential idea that we should be turning over decisions that have been made at the Federal Government level by the National Park Service, by the Bureau of Land Management, and by the Forest Service to State governments and even to local governments.

This is not a debate on UTVs. I respect that automobiles and all kinds of transportation continue to evolve. Rather, it is the idea that we are setting a damaging precedent with regard to our conservation laws and regulations that again and again we are saying that, rather than taking a national perspective, we are turning to the local folks to decide what works best for the country.

This amendment allows the State of Louisiana, not the Forest Service charged with managing the Kisatchie National Forest for the benefit of the American people, to determine where and whether it is permissible to chase down deer with motorized vehicles. These are thoughtful rules established through an open, public process. They seek to balance multiple uses and prevent abuses in our national forests.

The fact that this amendment focuses on off-road vehicles brings to mind the illegal 2014 ATV ride through Recapture Canyon in Utah. That is the last thing we want to happen in Kisatchie National Forest.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment and the precedent that it would set.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask how much time I have remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Louisiana has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, I would like to just say in rebuttal to my good friend that it is very interesting the radical environmental lobby wants to set aside the forest for the enjoyment of humans. The only problem is they cut off all access through their lobbying power by humans to this valuable land, like Kisatchie National Forest.

If we are going to have a national forest set aside for the American people, let the American people enjoy it. As such, they can't get in there without some type of vehicle. If they have game, they can't get the game out unless they have some type of vehicle.

As for the Forest Service, yes, of course, the Forest Service opens for public comment, but they still do what they want to do anyway. That is the whole problem.

It is time that we allow the American people to step forward and speak in favor of their lifestyles, particularly the hunter lifestyle, the "Sportsman's

Paradise" lifestyle that we enjoy in Louisiana.

Mr. WITTMAN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FLEMING. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, I would just simply like to close and say let's think about the American people, and let's give the American people access to the valuable and beautiful land that we have here in this Nation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. FLEMING).

The amendment was agreed to.

□ 1030

AMENDMENT NO. 12 OFFERED BY MR. GRIFFITH

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 12 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end the following:

TITLE XVII—INTERSTATE TRANSPORTATION OF FIREARMS OR AMMUNITION
SEC. 1701. INTERSTATE TRANSPORTATION OF FIREARMS OR AMMUNITION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 926A of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 926A. Interstate transportation of firearms or ammunition

“(a) Notwithstanding any provision of any law, rule, or regulation of a State or any political subdivision thereof:

“(1) A person who is not prohibited by this chapter from possessing, transporting, shipping, or receiving a firearm or ammunition shall be entitled to transport a firearm for any lawful purpose from any place where the person may lawfully possess, carry, or transport the firearm to any other such place if, during the transportation, the firearm is unloaded, and—

“(A) if the transportation is by motor vehicle, the firearm is not directly accessible from the passenger compartment of the vehicle, and, if the vehicle is without a compartment separate from the passenger compartment, the firearm is in a locked container other than the glove compartment or console, or is secured by a secure gun storage or safety device; or

“(B) if the transportation is by other means, the firearm is in a locked container or secured by a secure gun storage or safety device.

“(2) A person who is not prohibited by this chapter from possessing, transporting, shipping, or receiving a firearm or ammunition shall be entitled to transport ammunition for any lawful purpose from any place where the person may lawfully possess, carry, or transport the ammunition, to any other such place if, during the transportation, the ammunition is not loaded into a firearm, and—

“(A) if the transportation is by motor vehicle, the ammunition is not directly accessible from the passenger compartment of the vehicle, and, if the vehicle is without a compartment separate from the passenger compartment, the ammunition is in a locked container other than the glove compartment or console; or

“(B) if the transportation is by other means, the ammunition is in a locked container.

“(b) In subsection (a), the term ‘transport’ includes staying in temporary lodging overnight, stopping for food, fuel, vehicle maintenance, an emergency, medical treatment, and any other activity incidental to the transport, but does not include transportation—

“(1) with the intent to commit a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year that involves the use or threatened use of force against another; or

“(2) with knowledge, or reasonable cause to believe, that such a crime is to be committed in the course of, or arising from, the transportation.

“(c)(1) A person who is transporting a firearm or ammunition may not be arrested or otherwise detained for violation of any law or any rule or regulation of a State or any political subdivision thereof related to the possession, transportation, or carrying of firearms, unless there is probable cause to believe that the person is doing so in a manner not provided for in subsection (a).

“(2) When a person asserts this section as a defense in a criminal proceeding, the prosecution shall bear the burden of proving, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the conduct of the person did not satisfy the conditions set forth in subsection (a).

“(3) When a person successfully asserts this section as a defense in a criminal proceeding, the court shall award the prevailing defendant a reasonable attorney’s fee.

“(d)(1) A person who is deprived of any right, privilege, or immunity secured by this section, section 926B or 926C, under color of any statute, ordinance, regulation, custom, or usage of any State or any political subdivision thereof, may bring an action in any appropriate court against any other person, including a State or political subdivision thereof, who causes the person to be subject to the deprivation, for damages and other appropriate relief.

“(2) The court shall award a plaintiff prevailing in an action brought under paragraph (1) damages and such other relief as the court deems appropriate, including a reasonable attorney’s fee.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for such chapter is amended in the item relating to section 926A by striking “firearms” and inserting “firearms or ammunition”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Chairman, this is a civil liberties amendment. It clarifies and strengthens existing Federal law.

The amendment is necessary, unfortunately, because while the underlying law protects a traveler who is transporting a firearm under the Federal regulations that the firearm has to be locked in a proper container and out of

the reach of the person if he is in a car, et cetera, in one’s traveling from State A to State B, sometimes on the way from State A, where the gun is lawful, to State C, where the gun is lawful, one must pass through State B, where the gun may or may not be lawful.

What we have found is that, notwithstanding the fact that it is lawful in State A and is lawful in State C and is protected by Federal law while being transported, some State and local governments have decided that they are not going to follow the Federal law, and they end up arresting the otherwise law-abiding traveler. We have examples of this. It is not just that they are out and are necessarily looking for the traveler, but there are circumstances that occur.

One example that happens fairly frequently is that an airline passenger has done everything he is supposed to have done in that he has followed all of the security rules. Then, for reasons beyond his control, his flight in State B is missed. So he has traveled lawfully and he has checked his gun lawfully, he has done everything he is supposed to have done, but when he gets to the lay-over terminal, his flight is either already gone or it has been canceled.

In one case in particular, the gentleman was told “you need to go a hotel. Take your bags. Come back the next morning.” When he went back the next morning, he was arrested by State law enforcement individuals because his gun was not legal, notwithstanding the fact that he had done everything he was supposed to have done.

In another very tragic situation, a gentleman was traveling from New Jersey to South Carolina. He was a veteran, so he stopped off in Washington, D.C., at Walter Reed, to see one of his doctors. He was lawfully transporting the firearm under Federal law and he was arrested.

Now, while most of these cases end up getting worked out either as a misdemeanor or by some other arrangement, it is still a great impediment on the traveler to use the Federal law lawfully.

This amendment says if that happens, if one is stopped by the State or the local government, that the prosecutor in that State or local area must prove his case beyond a reasonable doubt that this individual was not following the Federal law. It sounds like a pretty reasonable American principle.

If it is determined that the traveler was lawful and was actually arrested and has to go to court to defend himself, the court will award attorneys’ fees to that individual.

We are just trying to make him whole. We are not paying him for the time he served in jail. We are not paying him for the fact that his vacation plans or his travel plans were disrupted. We are just saying that there

ought to be something that tells the local and State governments that you ought not do this again or you are going to pay this gentleman or this gentlewoman her attorneys’ fees.

To me, that is taking care of civil liberties and is making sure that the people who are following the law are not wrongfully arrested without their having any recourse. I see this as a civil liberties amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN).

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Virginia, and I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, this amendment would weaken current law, undermine State laws concerning the carrying of firearms, and harm the efforts of law enforcement to take action against illegal firearms trafficking.

Current law applies only to the transportation of a firearm in a motor vehicle. This bill would expand current law to allow a person to transport a gun outside a motor vehicle so long as the firearm is unloaded and locked in a container or is secured with a safety device. This would allow a person to walk down the street with an unloaded gun as long as the gun had a trigger lock on it, regardless of the State’s laws on carrying guns in public.

This amendment would also allow guns on trains, cable cars, and trolleys so long as the guns are unloaded and locked, regardless of State or local laws. This is because trains, cable cars, and trolleys are not considered to be motor vehicles under the applicable Federal definition. Current Federal law gives State governments the authority over firearms in these forms of transportation, but the Griffith amendment would remove that authority.

The proposed amendment would also have a negative impact on our law enforcement officers’ ability to enforce our gun laws. Specifically, this amendment would make it more difficult for officers to investigate suspected gun traffickers and people who illegally carry weapons.

Mr. Chairman, I include in the RECORD a letter from the Police Foundation.

STATEMENT OF THE POLICE FOUNDATION REGARDING PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE SPORTSMAN’S BILL (HR 2406), FEBRUARY 25, 2016

The Police Foundation expresses its grave concerns with a proposed amendment to the Sportsman’s Bill (HR 2406), by Congressman Morgan Griffith from Virginia, which will have a chilling effect on enforcement of illegal gun possession and other gun crimes. We strongly oppose the amendment’s provision that could make law enforcement agencies

liable for investigative stops and detentions of armed subjects.

Further, the proposed amendment will drastically undermine states' concealed carry licensing laws. States must be able to determine their own concealed carry statutes and regulations that fit the values and enhance the safety of their communities and constituents.

At a time when many cities and counties have just witnessed 2015 come to an end with increased homicides and non-fatal shootings, Congress should strengthen, not weaken enforcement of our nation's gun laws.

We call on Members of Congress to support law enforcement officers as they perform the most dangerous job of confronting shooters and other armed criminals, and to uphold state and local efforts to make communities safer.

We urge Members of Congress to oppose the proposed amendment.

Mr. BEYER. The letter expresses the Police Foundation's grave concerns with this amendment. They write that this amendment "will have a chilling effect on the enforcement of illegal gun possession and other crimes."

Why would Congress narrow the limited set of enforcement tools our police officers currently have to pursue suspected gun traffickers?

The Griffith amendment subjects a police officer to a personal lawsuit when he or she detains or arrests someone whom the officer reasonably believed at the time of detainment was illegally trafficking or was carrying a firearm.

We must respect our officers' ability to use discretion, albeit limited, when determining if gun trafficking is occurring; so subjecting them to personal lawsuits when they are simply trying to do their jobs to protect us seems a little reckless. These brave men and women should not be afraid to carry out their investigative duties due to the fear of being sued.

For this reason, I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN).

Mr. HUFFMAN. I thank the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. Chairman, I am glad that the gentleman brought up the dilemma that this amendment would pose for law enforcement. It would, shockingly, actually, impose individual penalties on law enforcement officers who are just trying to do their jobs but who might mistakenly detain someone in connection with his possession of a firearm if he were transporting it in a way that is protected under this amendment.

This is going to have a chilling effect on law enforcement's ability to protect Americans from gun trafficking, to make us safer at a time when there are more guns in the hands of more people than ever before, when we have more accidents, when we are experiencing a tragic gun violence epidemic.

I am also concerned that this amendment goes a little further than just being a narrow cleanup of the anecdotal stories we heard about travelers who were inconvenienced or detained. As I read the amendment, it not only would allow a person to walk down the street with an unloaded gun, as long as that gun had a trigger lock on it—regardless of State law, regardless of any local rules that may be in effect—it would allow one to take that gun onto trains, cable cars, and trolleys even if local jurisdictions prohibited that. Again, so long as the gun had a trigger lock in place.

Now, in my district we had a tragic incident a couple of years ago in which a young teenager had a toy AK-47, and law enforcement believed that it was an actual gun that was threatening members of that community. They fired shots that took that young man's life. Imagine the dilemma, whether intended or unintended, as a consequence of this bill, and people could suddenly go into parks or even onto public transportation with real AK-47s.

What kind of dilemma would law enforcement face?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Chairman, I have to tell you that I am really surprised that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle aren't supporting this civil liberties amendment. Clearly, they have misinterpreted the amendment.

First of all, it only applies if somebody is lawfully transporting a gun—where it is lawful in State A to another State where it is lawful. If you are going to be on a trolley car or on a cable car, you have to be transporting that gun from one State to another and it has to have been lawful to begin with and lawful at the terminis. It is only in the interim that that would be an issue.

I would say to the gentleman that this is not about any kind of personal lawsuits against law enforcement officers. It says the court shall award attorneys' fees against the local government or the State that is prosecuting the individual. I would also say to the gentleman that it is only for wrongful arrest.

I practiced criminal law for 28 years. There is a huge difference between detention, which my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have alleged this bill would affect, and arrest. This bill does not do one single thing. They are simply mistaken on detention. It doesn't do anything. If you want to stop somebody, if you want to investigate, he may miss his flight. Arrest means one has been placed into custody, has been taken down to the station, has been booked, and is having to post bond.

That is what this bill deals with. When someone is wrongfully arrested, when he has been following the Federal law, he should, in fact, have his attorneys' fees restored to him. It is reason-

able attorneys' fees. It is not whatever—the sky and the Moon—the attorney might ask for. A court determines if they are reasonable attorneys' fees.

This is just a small measure to make sure that when somebody makes a mistake and a local government goes forward with a prosecution, that you get some of that back. We are not paying you for being in jail. We are not paying you for being arrested. We are not paying you for having your rights taken.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out that we are certainly not objecting to reasonable attorneys' fees and to making people whole. It is the idea that law enforcement officers can be held personally responsible and can be, actually, personally sued for doing their jobs that we object to.

I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) very much. I sit on the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. Chairman, I would say to the gentleman who is the proponent of the legislation that, first of all, we have a responsibility to keep law and order; we have a responsibility to protect the Second Amendment; and we have a responsibility to law enforcement officers.

Tragically, in the backdrop of this debate was an individual who secured guns and killed and slaughtered people just last night. We want to make sure that we are safe and that we are dealing with issues that are important to protecting our law enforcement.

First of all, this amendment is unnecessary. Current Federal law already entitles a person to transport a firearm from one place to another so long as the firearm is unloaded and the needs of the firearms or any ammunition being transported is not readily accessible or directly accessible from the passenger compartment, et cetera.

This amendment intends to make a Federal open carry law. This open carry law should be one of the State's determinations. It happens to exist in the State that I am from. It should not be placed upon the entire country by Federal law.

Why?

Because whether a gun is supposed to be locked or has a trigger on it, it still poses a threat, possibly, to our law enforcement.

I oppose this amendment because it is unnecessary and because it puts our law enforcement persons in danger.

I would ask my colleagues to oppose the amendment and acknowledge the shooting in Kansas as evidence that we don't need more guns being carried back and forth on the streets.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 13 OFFERED BY MR. HARDY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 13 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HECK), I offer amendment No. 13.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

TITLE XVII—GOOD SAMARITAN SEARCH AND RECOVERY

SEC. 1701. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act”.

SEC. 1702. EXPEDITED ACCESS TO CERTAIN FEDERAL LAND.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ELIGIBLE.—The term “eligible”, with respect to an organization or individual, means that the organization or individual, respectively, is—

(A) acting in a not-for-profit capacity; and

(B) composed entirely of members who, at the time of the good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission, have attained the age of majority under the law of the State where the mission takes place.

(2) GOOD SAMARITAN SEARCH-AND-RECOVERY MISSION.—The term “good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission” means a search conducted by an eligible organization or individual for 1 or more missing individuals believed to be deceased at the time that the search is initiated.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, as applicable.

(b) PROCESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each Secretary shall develop and implement a process to expedite access to Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary for eligible organizations and individuals to request access to Federal land to conduct good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—The process developed and implemented under this subsection shall include provisions to clarify that—

(A) an eligible organization or individual granted access under this section—

(i) shall be acting for private purposes; and

(ii) shall not be considered to be a Federal volunteer;

(B) an eligible organization or individual conducting a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section shall not be considered to be a volunteer under section 102301(c) of title 54, United States Code;

(C) chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code (commonly known as the “Federal Tort Claims Act”), shall not apply to an eligible organization or individual carrying out a pri-

vately requested good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section; and

(D) an eligible organization or entity who conducts a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section shall serve without pay from the Federal Government for such service.

(c) RELEASE OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FROM LIABILITY.—The Secretary shall not require an eligible organization or individual to have liability insurance as a condition of accessing Federal land under this section, if the eligible organization or individual—

(1) acknowledges and consents, in writing, to the provisions described in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of subsection (b)(2); and

(2) signs a waiver releasing the Federal Government from all liability relating to the access granted under this section and agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States from any claims or lawsuits arising from any conduct by the eligible organization or individual on Federal land.

(d) APPROVAL AND DENIAL OF REQUESTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall notify an eligible organization or individual of the approval or denial of a request by the eligible organization or individual to carry out a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section by not later than 48 hours after the request is made.

(2) DENIALS.—If the Secretary denies a request from an eligible organization or individual to carry out a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section, the Secretary shall notify the eligible organization or individual of—

(A) the reason for the denial of the request; and

(B) any actions that the eligible organization or individual can take to meet the requirements for the request to be approved.

(e) PARTNERSHIPS.—Each Secretary shall develop search-and-recovery-focused partnerships with search-and-recovery organizations—

(1) to coordinate good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions on Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary; and

(2) to expedite and accelerate good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission efforts for missing individuals on Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary.

(f) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries shall submit to Congress a joint report describing—

(1) plans to develop partnerships described in subsection (e)(1); and

(2) efforts carried out to expedite and accelerate good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission efforts for missing individuals on Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary pursuant to subsection (e)(2).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HARDY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada.

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of a critically important amendment being offered by my friend and colleague from Nevada, Congressman JOE HECK.

This amendment would ensure the inclusion of the text of H.R. 373, the Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act of 2015, in the underlying bill.

The Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act, of which I was an original cosponsor, is a commonsense, bipartisan solution to tearing down the bureaucratic roadblocks that are preventing grieving families from achieving closure when their loved ones go missing on Federal lands.

□ 1045

This issue was first brought to light by the separate, but tragically similar, cases in Las Vegas of the taxi driver Keith Goldberg and Air Force Staff Sergeant Antonio Tucker.

Mr. Goldberg and Staff Sergeant Tucker were missing and presumed dead, with their remains believed to have been missing somewhere within the Lake Mead National Recreation Area.

In both cases, the local, experienced search and recovery groups volunteered their time and resources to help locate the remains of the missing individuals.

Unfortunately, due to the unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles from the Federal Government, the group volunteering to help locate and recover Mr. Goldberg's remains was denied access to the Park Service land to conduct its search for 15 months and the group volunteering to help locate the remains of Staff Sergeant Tucker were denied access for 10 months, needlessly delaying the closure their families sought. This is absolutely unacceptable, and it must change. This amendment will do that.

Once these bureaucratic hurdles were finally cleared and the Good Samaritan search and recovery groups were allowed access to the park, Mr. Goldberg's remains were recovered in less than 2 hours and the remains of Staff Sergeant Tucker were recovered in less than 2 days.

Dr. HECK, a former member of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's search and rescue team, originally introduced this legislation because he could no longer stomach the cases where unnecessary red tape continued to get in the way of providing closure for families faced with tragically similar circumstances.

During the 113th Congress, a similar bill passed the House with a unanimous vote of 394-0, further proving its bipartisan support. Unfortunately, the Senate failed to take action on the measure. Last April the House again passed this important legislation 413-0.

Mr. Chairman, those are two votes on this Good Samaritan bill totaling 807 in favor and none opposed. Given our current political climate, it just doesn't get more bipartisan than that.

We cannot afford to let the Senate's inaction get in the way of achieving this critical fix that will provide closure for so many Americans. We must pass this amendment so that future families won't have to suffer the mental anguish and heartache that the families of Keith Goldberg and Antonio Tucker did.

In closing, I again thank my colleague from Nevada for offering the amendment that will truly help the people we serve.

I also thank the chairman and ranking member of the Natural Resources Committee for all their diligent work in the Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act.

I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN).

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Nevada. I urge my colleagues to strongly support this amendment.

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Chairman, I urge support of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HARDY).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 14 OFFERED BY MR. RIBBLE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 14 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill add the following:

TITLE —GRAY WOLVES

SEC. 01. REISSUANCE OF FINAL RULE REGARDING GRAY WOLVES IN THE WESTERN GREAT LAKES.

Before the end of the 60-day period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall reissue the final rule published on December 28, 2011 (76 Fed. Reg. 81666), without regard to any other provision of statute or regulation that applies to issuance of such rule. Such reissuance shall not be subject to judicial review.

SEC. 02. REISSUANCE OF FINAL RULE REGARDING GRAY WOLVES IN WYOMING.

Before the end of the 60-day period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall reissue the final rule published on September 10, 2012 (77 Fed. Reg. 55530), without regard to any other provision of statute or regulation that applies to issuance of such rule. Such reissuance shall not be subject to judicial review.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RIBBLE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am proud today to offer the only bipartisan amendment that has been found in order on this bill. I am really proud, after working in Congress now for three terms, that Members from both the majority and the minority have come together in an effort to protect the Endangered Species Act.

This amendment speaks directly to the issue of gray wolves protected by the Endangered Species Act in the

western Great Lakes region of Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota, as well as Wyoming.

There was a period of time that the gray wolves had become almost extinct in these areas and the scientists at the Fish and Wildlife Service decided to protect them from extinction by listing the gray wolf as an endangered species.

That work was so successful that, in 2011, the Fish and Wildlife Service decided to de-list the gray wolf. In fact, there are now hundreds of mating pairs in these regions. However, those wolves have created some problems.

In spite of this remarkable recovery, in spite of how robust this is, a surprise Federal court ruling took place in 2014 and invalidated the scientists at the Fish and Wildlife Service who were given the responsibility under law of the Endangered Species Act to manage this population.

So my amendment is simple. It just simply restates and delists the wolves in these four States only. That is what my amendment does. It protects the Endangered Species Act and the scientists who work at the Fish and Wildlife Service.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, that was extraordinary. We are here to protect the Endangered Species Act by preempting litigation for violations of the Endangered Species Act. That is pretty extraordinary.

I mean, we are not only having Groundhog Day here—because this bill has passed three times before and failed to receive any consideration in the Senate and the same thing will happen yet again with this bill—but now we are wandering into Alice in Wonderland. That is extraordinary.

Yes, the Fish and Wildlife Service did delist in the States the gentleman mentioned, but they required that each of those States adopt scientifically based management plans.

Well, the scientifically based management plan in Wyoming is open season on wolves. Let's try and exterminate them again. There has also been a tremendous loss of population in a number of the other States that the gentleman referred to.

So a judge has found that they violated the Endangered Species Act because they didn't adopt scientifically based management plans.

You know, these are horrible predators, as you can see here. They are very, very fierce. They are, of course, responsible for huge, huge, unbelievable—big, as Donald Trump would say, really big—depredation on cattle.

Let's look at the causes for loss of cattle. Well, let's see. Seventy-four percent died because of health issues—perhaps we need a little education on husbandry for some of our ranchers—7.8 percent died due to weather—well, we are not having climate change; so, there is nothing we can do about the weather. We don't want to mess with that—2.7 percent is due to other predators, mostly coyotes.

Animal damage control, now renamed very aptly Wildlife Services, has killed well over a million coyotes. And guess what. There are more coyotes now, more distributed than when they started trying to exterminate them.

The wolves are in a much more fragile place. They are responsible for 0.9 percent of the depredation, and they are at critical population levels. They were required to keep 10 breeding pairs in Wyoming. Boy, that is a lot of wolves in a State the size of Wyoming, 10 breeding pairs.

Well, they violated that, and that is why the judge made this ruling. Now we are being told we are here to protect the Endangered Species Act.

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Chairman, I include in the RECORD, in light of the gentleman from Oregon's comments, a letter from the Fish and Wildlife Service supporting this amendment.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE,

Bloomington, Minnesota, January 30, 2015.

Hon. REID J. RIBBLE,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE RIBBLE: Thank you for your January 16, 2015, letter to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) Director Dan Ashe and to me regarding the Service's views on the status of gray wolf populations in the states of Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, as well as our view on state management of gray wolves since the Western Great Lakes Distinct Population Segment (DPS) was removed from Endangered Species Act protection in 2011. An identical letter is being sent to each member who signed the original correspondence. Director Ashe has asked that I respond on his behalf.

Most of the information provided below is taken from the 2014 report on post-delisting status of gray wolves in the Western Great Lakes DPS (enclosed). Enclosed, you will also see our gray wolf post-delisting monitoring plan for the Western Great Lakes DPS.

Our post-delisting monitoring plan used the recovery goals in the 1992 Recovery Plan for the Eastern Timber Wolf to identify the population characteristics that needed monitoring as well as to identify circumstances that could prompt closer scrutiny by the Service and potential consideration of re-listing. Those circumstances include the following:

A decline that reduces the combined Wisconsin-Michigan (excluding Isle Royale and the Lower Peninsula) late winter wolf population estimate to 200 or fewer wolves;

A decline that brings either the Wisconsin or the Michigan (excluding Isle Royale and the Lower Peninsula) wolf estimate to 100 or fewer wolves; and,

A decline that brings the Minnesota winter wolf population point estimate or lower end

of the 90% confidence interval to 1500 or fewer wolves.

Since delisting in 2011 through the winter of 2013–2014, numbers of wolves in the three states remained well above established recovery goals (Table 1). Population surveys are conducted by the three states in late winter after hunting and trapping seasons and before the birth of pups in the spring. Thus, the surveys are conducted at a time that the wolf population is at its lowest level during the annual cycle.

TABLE 1.—RECENT POPULATION ESTIMATES FOR GRAY WOLVES IN MICHIGAN, MINNESOTA, AND WISCONSIN. INCLUDED IS THE LAST POPULATION ESTIMATE COMPLETED BEFORE THE WOLF WAS DELISTED AND TWO ESTIMATES COMPLETED AFTER DELISTING.

State	Gray Wolf Population Estimates		
	2011–2012	2012–2013	2013–2014
Michigan	687	602–714	594–678
Minnesota	2,921 (2007–2008)	2,211	2,423
Wisconsin	815–880	809–834	660–689

Differences in the trends of wolf numbers among the three states are likely due to dif-

TABLE 2.—WOLF DEATHS CAUSED BY TWO SOURCES OF HUMAN CAUSED MORTALITY, CONTROL OF DOMESTIC ANIMAL DEPREDAATION AND HARVEST BY HUNTERS AND TRAPPERS, IN THE WESTERN GREAT LAKES DISTINCT POPULATION SEGMENT DURING THE PERIOD WHEN WOLVES IN THE REGION WERE NOT LISTED AS ENDANGERED OR THREATENED, 2012–2014.

State	2012			2013			2014		
	Depredation	Harvest	Total	Depredation	Harvest	Total	Depredation	Harvest	Total
Michigan	17	No season	17	10	23	33	13	No season	13
Minnesota	295	413	708	127	238	365	211	272	483
Wisconsin	76	117	193	65	257	322	35	154	189

The relationship between human-caused mortality and wolf population numbers is well established and evident in the population trends among the three states. In Wisconsin, 14% of the population was harvested by hunters and trappers in 2012, yet no change in wolf numbers was detected in the subsequent survey completed during late winter of 2012–2013 (Tables 1 and 2). In 2013, 32% of the population was harvested and the wolf population declined by about 18%. In Minnesota, the decline of the population between 2007–2008 and 2012–2013 was 24 to 25% and was likely caused by hunter/trapper harvest, depredation control, and a 23% decline in deer between 2007 and 2012. In response to the wolf population decline, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources reduced wolf harvest levels and the population appears to have stabilized. In Michigan, human-caused mortality of wolves by hunters and for depredation control has been relatively minor after delisting and the Michigan wolf population has shown no significant change (Tables 1 and 2).

Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin have managed wolves according to state wolf management plans that the Service evaluated as part of our decision to delist the species in 2011. Our evaluation led to a determination that each state's plan provided for the long-term conservation of a viable wolf population in the region. The state management plans and our evaluation acknowledged that the states could carry out regulated harvests after delisting. In the final rule to delist the Western Great Lakes DPS we made the following comment:

“Unregulated killing was the primary threat to the species historically. The State management plans that will be implemented after delisting provide protection from unregulated killing. It is not the Service's position to decide whether a regulated harvest in and of itself is an appropriate management tool. Instead the Service is concerned with whether the use of that tool might reduce the number of wolves in such a way that they would again be considered a threatened or endangered species under the Act. A regulated harvest of wolves can be carried out in a manner that would not threaten their continued existence.”

Since delisting, the states have demonstrated effective management to ensure wolf populations remain viable.

We value the cooperation and contributions that state and tribal biologists have made to ensure that the Service could mon-

itor the post-delisting status of wolf populations. Staff from each Department of Natural Resources has been highly responsive to our requests for information, even after the wolf was relisted. We believe that each state has demonstrated an ability to respond to the challenges that are unique to conservation of wolves in the wild. Moreover, they have done so in ways that demonstrate their intent to maintain the wolf as a viable component of their ecosystems.

Thank you for your concerns regarding the wolf and its status. If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Mr. Peter Fasbender, Field Supervisor for our Twin Cities Ecological Services Field Office.

Sincerely,

THOMAS O. MELIUS,
Regional Director.
HON. REID J. RIBBLE,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
HON. COLLIN C. PETERSON,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
HON. DAN BENISHEK,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
MEGAN KELHART,
Division of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, DC.
Mr. PETER FASBENDER,
Field Supervisor, Twin Cities Ecological Services Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bloomington, MN.

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS).

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Chair, I am just stunned by the misrepresentations of the previous opponent of this bill. Let me show you what is going on really.

Here is the habitat of the wolf. Clearly, it is not endangered. On the red list, it is considered a species of least concern.

ferent levels of human-caused mortality (Table 2). Also, it is suspected that a decline in white-tailed deer may have played a role in the initial decline of Minnesota wolves after delisting (Table 1). Regardless of the different trends, the wolf population remains well above the original recovery goals for the entire population and within the individual states. In Michigan and Wisconsin, there were at least 594 and 660 wolves, respectively, in early 2014 and the number of wolves in Minnesota appears to have stabilized at around 2,400 wolves (Table 1).

Let's look at the habitat of the Shiras moose. This is Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, and going into Montana. The Shiras moose is in rapid decline, and it is because of this critter.

Now, the gentleman from Oregon showed you little puppies as if they do no damage. Look at this moose. This Shiras moose is surrounded by wolves, and they are attacking that baby.

The reason this is such a big issue is they are wiping out the babies. So there is no longer a breeding population of moose or elk in major areas of this country, including the Lolo elk herd in Montana and the moose around the Greater Yellowstone area in Wyoming.

It is these baby moose they are after. They surround the mother. Two of them distract the mother. The rest of them take the babies.

There are not enough breeding females left. So when the older females age out of the population, there are no breeding females to take their place. It is the wildlife that is getting decimated, Mr. Chairman. This is a wildlife issue.

To save the moose, I strongly encourage the adoption of this amendment.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, actually, I think wolves are part of wildlife. I heard a mention of Montana Yellowstone.

Actually, in Yellowstone, the rivers were in horrible, horrible condition because all of the browse that was being done by elk and other critters right down into the streams. Fish populations were crashing. The water was too hot and lost all of the riparian cover.

Now you find we have restored balance because there are wolves there and the elk and others stay in herds and they stay in the forest. They don't go down and stomp around in the streams.

Natural balance is sometimes problematic. The gentlewoman showed a picture of a moose under attack. Fairly natural.

I don't believe that that is the total cause for the problems with the moose population. In fact, those moose are still hunted. So I guess we need to save the moose from the wolves so the hunters can hunt the moose.

So I am on the side of the wolves on this one. I think most American people would like to see this iconic predator restore balance.

Coyotes are three times the predators on cattle. If you want to protect cattle, guess what. Wolves kill coyotes. But when you don't have wolves, the coyotes spread and take over.

The gentlewoman showed Russia and China and then Canada and a few other areas on a map. Those aren't gray wolf populations in many of those areas.

I don't know what Siberian wolves look like, but I don't think that—since the land bridge went away, whenever that was, they haven't been coming to the United States. And I don't know about Chinese wolves. I don't know anything at all about Chinese wolves.

I do know that wolves here are in a fragile state of recovery. If you hunt them back to extinction, which is what basically is going on in Wyoming, or you hunt below the levels for sustainable populations, as some of these other States are doing with trophy hunting and that, then we are going to be back where we started with the wolves being extinguished in the lower 48 and more coyotes.

Maybe you will have some more moose. Maybe the elk can go back in the streams in Yellowstone. They probably miss thrashing around in there and eating all the riparian cover.

I think that this amendment, to substitute political science for sound science and for Congress to preempt litigation with this, is somewhat unprecedented, to say the least.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Chairman, I have not mentioned protecting cattle at all. Maybe some of my colleagues will. I have only mentioned trying to protect the Endangered Species Act.

□ 1100

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1¼ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK).

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for this amendment and the time.

I rise today in support of this amendment for the SHARE Act. This amendment directs the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to reissue a rule to delist the gray wolf in Wyoming and the Great Lakes region, which includes my State of Michigan.

In 2011, the Fish and Wildlife Service determined that the wolf recovered in

Wyoming and the Great Lakes and would remain recovered under federally approved State management plans.

I can speak from personal experience about the impact that wolves and their recovery are having on my district. This photo next to me is of a constituent in my district. One of his calves was attacked and eaten by a wolf, which may not mean much to the opponents of this, but it means pretty much to small farmers in Michigan. It isn't just the cattle.

As the number of wolves have increased well beyond the recommended number for recovery, we have seen drastic declines in the deer population in northern Michigan. My camp has no deer. The economy of the whole area is in collapse because there is no hunting anymore.

I understand that some are opposed to ever delisting the wolf, but as numbers continue to expand, we must consider the impact the wolf has on the landscape as a whole. This amendment does not change the Endangered Species Act. It simply allows for the following of true sound science.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. RIBBLE. I yield the gentleman an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. BENISHEK. The gray wolf was recovered in the Great Lakes and ready for delisting and State management.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Chairman, I will go ahead and close.

About two decades ago, there were only 15 gray wolves in the western Great Lakes States. Today the gray wolf population exceeds 3,700, and yet we are to act as if some judge someplace decides that that is not enough, that the States of Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Wyoming in and of themselves cannot manage these populations in accordance with the Fish and Wildlife's actions and with their scientific help.

This is not unprecedented, as the minority has mentioned. This exactly has happened with Montana and Idaho before.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of the Ribble, Lummis, Benishek, and Peterson amendment.

Managing gray wolves continues to be a huge problem in my state of Minnesota. In spite of the overwhelming evidence by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that the gray wolf population in the Western Great Lakes States has not only recovered, but thrived in the past few years, a single judge in Washington, D.C. unilaterally decided that gray wolves somehow need federal protection. In 2014, Minnesota had nearly 2,500 gray wolves, by far the highest number in any state besides Alaska.

This has put the farmers and ranchers in my district in a very difficult situation. They are

now forced to choose between following the law or protecting their livestock and livelihoods. Our amendment simply reinstates Fish and Wildlife's original decision to delist gray wolves in the Western Great Lakes States from Endangered Species Act protections and allows the agency to relist gray wolves if science supports it. I believe this amendment is scientific and fair.

This is a real problem that needs immediate solution. The states—not the federal government—are best equipped to manage gray wolf populations and provide assistance when problem wolves harass my constituent's livelihoods.

I urge Members to support this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RIBBLE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 15 OFFERED BY MR. YOUNG OF ALASKA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 15 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end the following:

TITLE —MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS
SEC. —01. PROHIBITION ON ISSUANCE OF FINAL RULE.

The Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service shall not issue a final rule that—

(1) succeeds the proposed rule entitled “Non-Subsistence Take of Wildlife, and Public Participation and Closure Procedures, on National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska” (81 Fed. Reg. 887 (January 8, 2016)); or

(2) is substantially similar to that proposed rule.

SEC. —02. WITHDRAWAL OF EXISTING RULE REGARDING HUNTING AND TRAPPING IN ALASKA.

The Director of the National Park Service shall withdraw the final rule entitled “Alaska; Hunting and Trapping in National Preserves” (80 Fed. Reg. 64325 (October 23, 2015)) by not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall not issue a rule that is substantially similar to that rule.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment is a relatively complicated amendment in the sense that a lot of people don't

have any history of the Alaska National Lands Act.

My amendment prohibits the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service from issuing a final ruling that would seize authority from the State of Alaska's Alaska Fish and Game to manage fish and game on all lands. That was under ANILCA.

My amendment also withdraws the existing National Park Service rule that interferes with State wildlife management authority under the National Preserve Lands of Alaska, agreed to by this Congress. The Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act, ANILCA, passed by Congress, signed into law in 1980, protects the ability of the State of Alaska to manage wildlife across the State on State, private, and Federal lands.

As Alaska's lone Representative and someone who was intimately involved in the process of producing ANILCA, an agreement with my colleagues, it is my conclusion that the proposed rule set forth by the Fish and Wildlife Service and Park Service is in clear violation of Federal law.

The scope of the proposed Fish and Wildlife Service rule is enormous. There are 76.8 million acres of wildlife refuges in Alaska, an amount of land about the size of four Michigans, at least two or three Virginias, and on top of that there is 20 million acres of national preserves in Alaska, a total of 100 million acres in the State of Alaska.

But when that agreement was set out, we were to retain management of fish and game on all lands, and that is in the law. Very frankly, my colleagues, this is a regulatory overreach by this administration, promoted by this administration, breaking the law.

Now, the Fish and Wildlife Service asserts their actions are allowed by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act. However, as the original sponsor of that act, I can knowingly and affirmatively state that the Fish and Wildlife Service proposal goes beyond the original intent of my legislation that was passed by this House.

The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act specifically states that ANILCA takes priority over any other conflicts regarding refuge lands in the State of Alaska. I find it somewhat concerning that the Fish and Wildlife would cite a law which forbids them from taking such actions and then say the justification is because of the law. It is not. This is a special interest pressuring group that says that Fish and Wildlife will take away the States' rights.

If you believe in States' rights, you will take and support this amendment that I am offering. If you believe in the Federal Government only, not the United States of America, the United States as the Federal Government, you will oppose this amendment.

I am asking my colleagues to think about what is occurring here: the overreach of this Federal Government that has taken away the rights of States and is continuing to try to do it.

I urge the passage of this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. WOMACK). The gentlewoman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Chairman, with nothing but the deepest respect for my colleague from Alaska—and I even want to tell him, I was afraid to stand up without getting clearance from one of your other good friends, the resident hunter in my household—but this amendment is yet another attempt to allow a State to override perfectly reasonable conservation policies on U.S. public lands.

This amendment would prevent the Park Service from managing wildlife on these lands, even though they are owned by the American taxpayers, not by the State of Alaska.

Of particular concern is Alaska's policy of eradicating keystone predator species. Because of this policy, allowing wolves and bears to seek refuge on these Park Service lands may be the only way to keep them from requiring protection under the Endangered Species Act.

I want to be clear about what this rule does and does not do. It does not deny access to hunting. This rule does not reduce hunting in the national preserves in Alaska, period. In fact, it keeps existing hunting rules in place.

What the rule does do is ban some of the most inhumane and ecologically damaging forms of hunting, things that a true sportsman would never do anyway. Let me share examples. This rule would prevent spotlighting black bears and shooting them and their cubs, babies in their den. It would prevent using bait to attract and kill bears. It would prevent killing wolves during their denning season. Again, babies. And it would prevent the killing of caribou from a motorboat while under power. Yes, if a deer is swimming and you go after it in a boat, it would prevent that caribou that is swimming from being shot.

If you think people should be allowed to do any of these what I think are unsportsmanlike things, then this amendment is for you. But if you are like most Americans, you will be deeply disturbed by these practices and will join me in opposing this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, may I remind my good friend from Michigan—and she is a dear friend and her husband is a dear friend of mine, he voted for my bill, ANILCA—it is the law. It was an agreement that the State would manage.

By the way, it is against the law to shoot species of animals from a boat. This doesn't change that. It changes the management concept. It is overreach by the Federal Government. It is overreach by Fish and Wildlife. They would not be fish and wildlife managers anymore. They are becoming the preservationist group without the management ability in the State that lives there.

I am not changing anything other than just the fact that the State still has authority under ANILCA. He voted for it. I am suggesting, respectfully, if you want the Federal Government to manage everything, 100 million acres that we agreed that we could manage in the ANILCA law, the State, if you want the government to take that all over, let's just give the government all the land. Let's stop having free land.

You talk about being public land, the public that lives there, they want the State to manage the land. So far they have done a great job.

As far as shooting bears, that is against the law in the State of Alaska. Now, why are we saying that?

Because it is emotionally acceptable. So let's stick to the facts. This is a fact.

Do you want the administration, the government to manage all lands or do you want to follow the law that we passed in this Congress?

The law.

We have a tendency here to forget what happened, this Congress. Look at the history of ANILCA. It was a compromise. A lot of it I objected to, but we passed it in this House and it was accepted by the State with the understanding that the State would manage fish and game and not the Federal Government.

By the way, the Park Service in the State of Alaska, the Fish and Wildlife in the State of Alaska, in the beginning the BLM are not partners anymore. It is all run from Washington, D.C.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Chairman, I have nothing but the utmost respect for my colleague from Alaska. I actually think that he and my spouse share the same sportsmanship policies of hunting, but this rule just simplifies and updates procedures for closing an area or restricting an activity. It updates obsolete subsistence regulations and it prohibits very specifically some of these things that I spoke about. I think we will respectfully disagree.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by

the gentleman from Alaska will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 16 OFFERED BY MR. HUFFMAN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 16 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end the following:

TITLE —PRESERVATION OF ARCTIC COASTAL PLAIN AS WILDERNESS

SEC. _01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wilderness Act”.

SEC. _02. FINDINGS AND STATEMENT OF POLICY.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) Americans cherish the continued existence of expansive, unspoiled wilderness ecosystems and wildlife found on their public lands, and feel a strong moral responsibility to protect this wilderness heritage as an enduring resource to bequeath undisturbed to future generations of Americans.

(2) It is widely believed by ecologists, wildlife scientists, public land specialists, and other experts that the wilderness ecosystem centered around and dependent upon the Arctic coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska, represents the very epitome of a primeval wilderness ecosystem and constitutes the greatest wilderness area and diversity of wildlife habitats of its kind in the United States.

(3) President Dwight D. Eisenhower initiated protection of the wilderness values of the Arctic coastal plain in 1960 when he set aside 8,900,000 acres establishing the Arctic National Wildlife Range expressly “for the purpose of preserving unique wildlife, wilderness and recreational values”.

(4) In 1980, when the Congress acted to strengthen the protective management of the Eisenhower-designated area with the enactment of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (Public Law 96-487), Representative Morris K. Udall led the effort to more than double the size of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and extend statutory wilderness protection to most of the original area.

(5) Before the enactment of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, the House of Representatives twice passed legislation that would have protected the entire Eisenhower-designated area as wilderness, including the Arctic coastal plain.

(6) A majority of Americans have supported and continue to support preserving and protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, including the Arctic coastal plain, from any industrial development and consider oil and gas exploration and development in particular to be incompatible with the purposes for which this incomparable wilderness ecosystem has been set aside.

(7) When the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1980 by paragraph (2) of section 303 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (Public Law 96-487; 94 Stat. 2390; 16 U.S.C. 668dd note), subparagraph (B)(iii) of such paragraph specifically stated that one of the purposes for which the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is established and managed would be to provide the opportunity for continued subsistence uses by local residents, and, therefore, the lands designated as wilderness within the Refuge,

including the area designated by this title, are and will continue to be managed consistent with such subparagraph.

(8) Canada has taken action to preserve those portions of the wilderness ecosystem of the Arctic that exist on its side of the international border and provides strong legal protection for the habitat of the Porcupine River caribou herd that migrates annually through both countries to calve on the Arctic coastal plain.

(9) The extension of full wilderness protection for the Arctic coastal plain within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge will still leave most of the North Slope of Alaska available for the development of energy resources, which will allow Alaska to continue to contribute significantly to meeting the energy needs of the United States without despoiling the unique Arctic coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

(b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—The Congress hereby declares that it is the policy of the United States—

(1) to honor the decades of bipartisan efforts that have increasingly protected the great wilderness ecosystem of the Arctic coastal plain;

(2) to sustain this natural treasure for the current generation of Americans; and

(3) to do everything possible to protect and preserve this magnificent natural ecosystem so that it may be bequeathed in its unspoiled natural condition to future generations of Americans.

SEC. _03. DESIGNATION OF ADDITIONAL WILDERNESS, ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, ALASKA.

(a) INCLUSION OF ARCTIC COASTAL PLAIN.—In furtherance of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), an area within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in the State of Alaska comprising approximately 1,559,538 acres, as generally depicted on a map entitled “Arctic National Wildlife Refuge—1002 Area Alternative E—Wilderness Designation” and dated October 28, 1991, is hereby designated as wilderness and, therefore, as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System. The map referred to in this subsection shall be available for inspection in the offices of the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary of the Interior shall administer the area designated as wilderness by subsection (a) in accordance with the Wilderness Act as part of the wilderness area already in existence within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, there are some iconic places in this country that define America. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in northeastern Alaska is one of those places. It is a one-of-a-kind treasure.

Today, for the first time, the full House of Representatives has an opportunity to cast a vote to permanently preserve and protect this special place.

Now, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK), my Republican friend, has joined me in introducing the underlying bill that is incorporated in this amendment. To-

gether, we are carrying the torch that prior generations of bipartisan leaders have carried. They have understood that America's Arctic is a uniquely wild place.

It was Republican President Dwight Eisenhower who first established Federal protections for the coastal plain in 1960 and Democratic Chairman Mo Udall who expanded the refuge, doubling its size in 1980.

I had the great privilege to visit the Arctic Refuge last summer. I camped in the wilderness and I came away with an increased sense of urgency to permanently protect the Arctic Refuge's coastal plain.

Allowing drilling in the Arctic Refuge would irreparably disrupt a very important ecosystem. It would impact the way of life for the Gwich'in people and forever destroy one of our Nation's last great wild places. That is why I am offering this amendment to the SHARE Act, to ask that we protect this American wilderness once and for all.

My amendment would designate the threatened biological heart of the refuge, the coastal plain, as wilderness, to finally recognize the intrinsic value of this land and what it holds to ensure that it remains pristine for generations to come.

Congress has been debating whether to drill in this area for nearly three decades. As our public lands suffer from the effects of climate change, most significantly in Alaska, I believe time is of the essence.

Now, the Arctic Refuge is wild, it is spectacular, and most importantly, it is owned by all Americans, not by the oil industry. That is why Congressman FITZPATRICK and I introduced our bipartisan legislation to permanently designate it as wilderness, following the bipartisan legacy that this legislation has enjoyed for decades.

□ 1115

Arctic Refuge support has always been diverse and nationwide. During the recent public comment period for the draft conservation plan, the Fish and Wildlife Service received nearly 1 million comments in support of wilderness for the Arctic Refuge and in opposition to oil and gas exploration and development. Alaskans showed overwhelming support at public hearings and sent thousands of comments, including from 100 businesses across the State from Kaktovik to Juneau.

This legislation has been introduced in every Congress for almost three decades and has never come to a full vote on the House floor. I am grateful that, in January of 2015, for the first time, the Department of the Interior released a conservation plan for the Arctic Refuge that recommended wilderness protection—a recommendation that was transmitted to Congress.

Only Congress can act to designate the coastal plain as wilderness. Now is

the time to seize that historic opportunity.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I always admired my friend from California, who doesn't know squat about the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. That is the truth. He may have camped out in it, but he didn't camp out in the area which we would like to drill for oil, which this Congress set aside for that purpose.

By the way, we did pass opening ANWR 11 times. This Congress did it. And it got stopped in the Senate every time but one. Bill Clinton, bless his heart, vetoed it.

We have 18 billion barrels of oil—that is a minimum estimate—74 miles away from an existing pipeline on the coastal plain.

You say, well, we don't need the oil now. I heard that in 1960. We didn't need the oil, but it went all the way up to \$4.50 for gasoline at the pump.

This is a reserve set aside by Scoop Jackson—a Democrat—myself, and Ted Stevens so it would be potentially there for development when Congress acts. You want to include this as a wilderness area in the bill on the behalf and behest of a group of people that really don't understand this.

You say Alaska supports your amendment? In that case, I won't be back here next year. Don't applaud. Don't keep that in mind. I have been running, now, longer than anybody in this House except for one other man. Apparently, Alaska does support this ANWR provision.

It is Federal oil. It is not our oil. We have infrastructure in place right now that can be used to move that oil if and when it is needed.

I am glad the gentleman said only the Congress can designate this, because your Fish and Wildlife Service recommended it all be wilderness—another act of this administration.

I happen to agree, very frankly, that the Congress will vote some day.

And, by the way, if you want to get rid of me, take a vote to open it up, and I might retire. But until that time, I am staying here, because it is right for this Nation.

I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK).

Mr. McCLINTOCK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment would forbid development of one of the most promising and untapped oilfields in the world. I have to ask: How is the cause of American energy independence advanced by forbidding development of America's own vast energy resources? We are talking about reserves that are larger than the reserves in the entire nation of Mexico or Norway,

whom we currently depend on for importing oil.

The gentleman from California is right: that land is owned by the American people. So is the oil under it. That means about \$300 billion of revenues into the Federal Treasury. That is about \$2,400 for every family in this country.

The proposed development of the Arctic oil requires about 2,000 acres out of 19 million acres of the wildlife reserve. That is one-one hundredth of 1 percent of that land area. That is how extreme this measure is.

It would sacrifice American prosperity. It would sacrifice oil reserves larger than those in all of Mexico. It would sacrifice revenues to the Treasury of \$2,400 for every family to place off limits a tiny part of the frozen Arctic tundra.

If you want to know why our economy is stagnating, if you want to know why our country is going bankrupt, you need only look to measures like the amendment before us.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, with great respect to the senior legislator from Alaska, I have no doubt that he knows and understands the coastal plain and that area far better than I do and that anyone else in this body does, but I do know this: every Member of this body—in fact, every American—has a stake in protecting the coastal plain of the Arctic wilderness.

Migratory birds from the coastal plain go to all 49 of the other States. We are connected, whether we know it or not, with this critical, vital ecosystem in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge.

The whole point of wilderness is to protect areas that we actually may never camp out in, that we may never see, but that are, nevertheless, of such great intrinsic value that they deserve this special protection. That is what this is all about.

As to the argument that we need lots of new oil extraction and development in the Arctic, I would just point out that right next door to the Arctic Refuge is an enormous, essentially equal-sized area that we set aside for that purpose. It is called the National Petroleum Reserve. The oil industry has not seen fit to develop in that area, nor does it look like they will any time soon, with oil hovering around \$30 a barrel and this week the Saudis saying they may be taking it all the way down to \$20 a barrel.

Right now, because of its overdependence on the oil economy, the State of Alaska is hemorrhaging. Oil revenues are down by half. The permanent fund is hemorrhaging. Meanwhile, the tourist economy, which is built around preserving and protecting natural resources, is growing and will soon eclipse oil revenues in terms of the economic impact.

Let's look to the future.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I always listen to these well-written arguments by the Sierra Club and others that like to take this Nation to its knees, which is a reality.

We talk about the petroleum reserve set-aside. It was a reserve set aside for use by this Nation. And they are drilling. They are drilling today. ConocoPhillips is going in.

Ironically, for some reason, the sales that were put up by this administration are not where they wanted to drill. I have an old saying—and people laugh at me when I say it: you don't hunt rabbits on a pool table just because it is green. All right. You don't drill oil if it is not there.

Ironically, this administration, bless their hearts, put up sales where there was nothing there. It was like the pool table. So why would the oil company drill? They can't and will not.

And I always ask them: Why don't you ask the oil companies where they would like to drill? We can't do that because someone has asked us to preserve that great area. The other area is just as pretty, but it doesn't have any oil.

This is an attempt to take 18 billion barrels of oil away from the American people and an attempt by special interest groups to make sure this country cannot grow.

Oil will be here forever. Let's keep it. Let's oppose this amendment. It is mischievous. It is wrong for this Nation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 17 OFFERED BY MR. LOWENTHAL

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 17 printed in House Report 114-429.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end the following:

TITLE _____—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS
SEC. _____. PERIODIC INCREASE IN PRICE OF MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING AND CONSERVATION STAMP TO ACCOUNT FOR INFLATION.

Section 2 of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act (16 U.S.C. 718b) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by striking "The Postal" and inserting "Except as provided in subsections (c) and (d), the Postal"; and

(2) by adding at the end of the following:

“(d) INCREASE IN PRICE OF STAMP.—

“(1) INCREASE AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary may, after notice and public comment, increase the price of each stamp sold under this section by an amount not to exceed \$10 for a hunting year if the Secretary determines the increase—

“(A) is commensurate with the level of inflation as determined by the adjustments in the Consumer Price Index since the last increase; and

“(B) is approved unanimously by the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission.

“(2) EFFECTIVE DATE OF INCREASE.—An increase in price under paragraph (1) shall take effect—

“(A) no earlier than 2 years after the effective date of the last increase in price; and

“(B) no later than January 1 of the calendar year preceding the hunting year.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment is very straightforward. It would simply allow the price of the Federal duck stamp to be changed by the rate of inflation.

Inflation is something that each and every one of us cannot avoid. Just as inflation decreases the value of a dollar for all Americans over time, it also steadily decreases the real value of a duck stamp. That is very unfortunate, because the duck stamp is a highly effective conservation program.

The revenue from the Federal duck stamp that all hunters must buy each year as a permit to hunt waterfowl is used to preserve wetlands and maintain a sustainable population for hunters and bird watchers alike.

Moreover, the preservation of wetland habitat from the duck stamp, in conjunction with the National Wildlife Refuge System, has reversed the decline in waterfowl populations across this country. Also, not insignificant, co-benefits are that these wetlands buffer our communities from flooding, saving billions of dollars in damages, and they help filter water and recharge, Mr. Chair, aquifers that are vital to our groundwater supplies.

The duck stamp works. Ninety-eight cents of every dollar spent on a duck stamp goes back to preserving wildlife habitat. To date, more than \$800 million from duck stamp sales have been spent on the preservation of over 6 million acres of habitat. The duck stamp is a true user fee, where all the funds are spent to benefit the fee payer.

I hope this is an amendment that the chairman can support as a common-sense update to address the reality of inflation that inevitably will erode the ability of the duck stamps and the National Wildlife Refuge System to con-

tinue this highly successful conservation program.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognize for 5 minutes.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I certainly agree with the gentleman from California that the duck stamp program is a great program. It does a tremendous amount of good. We all know the wetlands that are preserved with that. We all know it is a great opportunity for the hunting community and the conservation community to come together.

As you know, last year, the duck stamp fee was increased, for the first time in 24 years, from \$15 to \$25. I, myself, am an avid duck hunter. I buy multiple duck stamps because I firmly believe in the program.

The increase last year we believe will yield about \$119 million over 10 years; but we also know, looking historically, that when you put these increases in fees, for the first couple of years the revenue drops because people that would buy them without the need don't do that, and then they come back to actually purchasing it.

So we understand that. That is why we have asked the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to look specifically at how the implementation of this fee is going to play out and how the costs associated with the program are, so that we can understand how to best manage this, as you said, to get the most dollars to wetlands conservation.

With the idea of now going to an inflationary factor right on the heels of a \$10 increase without getting, from the Fish and Wildlife Service, what the impacts are going to be so we can best maximize the dollars, I think, is premature.

I serve as a member of the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, and still, I believe the responsibility for any type of increases should still be on the backs of all Members of Congress, not just the four that are on the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission.

I applaud the gentleman's effort to draw attention to the duck stamp program. We all understand the good it does, but I would argue that this inflationary increase measure is premature, especially in the face of a \$10 increase last year. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I would oppose this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chair, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chair, it is unfortunate that we can't come together today to support such a simple fix to, as Mr. WITTMAN pointed out, such a highly successful program. I

think the operative word that you have said is that it is premature at this point, not that you really oppose the ability to protect our waterfowl populations to keep them vibrant and make sure that duck hunters have ducks to hunt. I think we all agree upon that.

I also just want to say that the one issue is just to make clear that we are not talking about automatically increasing inflation. All we are saying is that when inflation does come—which will erode this program—that there is a process in place that the Secretary of the Interior will make a recommendation to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission. That Commission has to support it. At most, it would have been a 35-cent increase.

□ 1130

But I hear what you are saying about that, and if you will work with me as we go forward to see when is the best time that we can work on this, I will ask to withdraw this amendment.

Can I get a commitment that we will work together?

Mr. WITTMAN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LOWENTHAL. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. WITTMAN. Yes, I will tell the gentleman from California that we will indeed work with you in looking at the future of the duck stamp program, making sure that it is managed in the proper way, making sure that, indeed, is getting dollars to where they need to go, and that is to preserve those critical wetlands.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The amendment is withdrawn.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in House Report 114-429 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 2 by Mr. BEYER of Virginia.

Amendment No. 3 by Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas.

Amendment No. 8 by Mr. BEYER of Virginia.

Amendment No. 9 by Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

Amendment No. 12 by Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia.

Amendment No. 14 by Mr. RIBBLE of Wisconsin.

Amendment No. 15 by Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

Amendment No. 16 by Mr. HUFFMAN of California.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. BEYER

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 161, noes 244, not voting 28, as follows:

[Roll No. 92]

AYES—161

Adams	Gabbard	Nolan
Aguilar	Galleo	Norcross
Bass	Garamendi	O'Rourke
Beatty	Graham	Pallone
Bera	Grayson	Pascarell
Beyer	Green, Al	Payne
Blumenauer	Grijalva	Pelosi
Bonamici	Gutiérrez	Perlmutter
Boyle, Brendan	Hahn	Peters
F.	Heck (WA)	Pingree
Brady (PA)	Higgins	Pocan
Brownley (CA)	Himes	Poliquin
Bustos	Hinojosa	Polis
Capps	Honda	Price (NC)
Capuano	Huffman	Quigley
Cárdenas	Israel	Rangel
Carney	Jackson Lee	Rice (NY)
Carson (IN)	Jeffries	Richmond
Cartwright	Johnson (GA)	Roybal-Allard
Castor (FL)	Johnson, E. B.	Ruiz
Castro (TX)	Kaptur	Ruppersberger
Chu, Judy	Keating	Rush
Cicilline	Kennedy	Ryan (OH)
Clark (MA)	Kildee	Sánchez, Linda
Clarke (NY)	Kilmer	T.
Clay	Kuster	Sarbanes
Cleaver	Langevin	Schakowsky
Cohen	Larsen (WA)	Schiff
Connolly	Larsen (CT)	Schrader
Conyers	Lawrence	Serrano
Courtney	Lee	Sewell (AL)
Crowley	Levin	Sherman
Cummings	Lieu, Ted	Sires
Davis (CA)	Lipinski	Slaughter
Davis, Danny	Loeb sack	Speier
DeFazio	Lofgren	Swalwell (CA)
DeGette	Lowenthal	Takai
Delaney	Lowe y	Takano
DeLauro	Lujan Grisham	Thompson (CA)
DelBene	(NM)	Thompson (MS)
DeSaulnier	Luján, Ben Ray	Titus
Deutch	(NM)	Tonko
Dingell	Lynch	Torres
Doggett	Maloney,	Tsongas
Dold	Carolyn	Van Hollen
Doyle, Michael	Maloney, Sean	Vargas
F.	Matsui	Veasey
Duckworth	McCollum	Vela
Edwards	McDermott	Velázquez
Ellison	McGovern	Visclosky
Eshoo	McNerney	Wasserman
Esty	Meng	Schultz
Farr	Moore	Waters, Maxine
Foster	Moulton	Watson Coleman
Frankel (FL)	Nadler	Welch
Fudge	Neal	Yarmuth

NOES—244

Abraham	Bilirakis	Brady (TX)
Aderholt	Bishop (GA)	Brat
Allen	Bishop (MI)	Bridenstine
Amash	Bishop (UT)	Brooks (AL)
Ashford	Black	Brooks (IN)
Babin	Blackburn	Buchanan
Barr	Blum	Buck
Barton	Bost	Bucshon
Benishkek	Boustany	Burgess

Byrne	Hurd (TX)	Ratcliffe
Calvert	Hurt (VA)	Reed
Carter (GA)	Issa	Reichert
Carter (TX)	Jenkins (KS)	Renacci
Chabot	Jenkins (WV)	Ribble
Chaffetz	Johnson (OH)	Rice (SC)
Clawson (FL)	Johnson, Sam	Rigell
Coffman	Jolly	Roe (TN)
Cole	Jones	Rogers (AL)
Collins (GA)	Jordan	Rogers (KY)
Collins (NY)	Joyce	Rohrabacher
Comstock	Katko	Rokita
Conaway	Kelly (MS)	Rooney (FL)
Costa	Kelly (PA)	Ros-Lehtinen
Costello (PA)	Kind	Roskam
Cramer	King (IA)	Ross
Crawford	King (NY)	Rothfus
Crenshaw	Kinzing er (IL)	Rouzer
Cuellar	Kline	Royce
Culberson	Knight	Russell
Curbelo (FL)	Labrador	Salmon
Davis, Rodney	LaHood	Sanford
Denham	LaMalfa	Scalise
Dent	Lamborn	Schweikert
DeSantis	Lance	Scott (VA)
DesJarlais	Latta	Scott, Austin
Donovan	LoBiondo	Scott, David
Duffy	Long	Sensenbrenner
Duncan (SC)	Loudermillk	Shimkus
Duncan (TN)	Love	Shuster
Elmros (NC)	Lucas	Simpson
Emmer (MN)	Luetkemeyer	Sinema
Engel	Lummis	Smith (MO)
Farenthold	MacArthur	Smith (NE)
Fincher	Marchant	Smith (NJ)
Fleischmann	Marino	Smith (TX)
Fleming	Massie	Stefanik
Flores	McCarthy	Stewart
Forbes	McCaul	Stivers
Fortenberry	McClintock	Stutzman
Fox	McHenry	Thompson (PA)
Franks (AZ)	McKinley	Thornberry
Frelinghuysen	McMorris	Tiberi
Garrett	Rodgers	Tipton
Gibbs	McSally	Trott
Gibson	Meadows	Turner
Gohmert	Meehan	Upton
Goodlatte	Messer	Valadao
Gosar	Mica	Wagner
Gowdy	Miller (FL)	Walberg
Granger	Miller (MI)	Walden
Graves (GA)	Mooleenaar	Walker
Graves (LA)	Mooney (WV)	Walorski
Graves (MO)	Mullin	Walters, Mimi
Griffith	Mulvaney	Walz
Grothman	Murphy (PA)	Weber (TX)
Guinta	Neugebauer	Webster (FL)
Guthrie	Newhouse	Wenstrup
Hanna	Noem	Westerman
Hardy	Nugent	Whitfield
Harper	Nunes	Williams
Harris	Olson	Wilson (SC)
Hartzler	Palazzo	Wittman
Heck (NV)	Palmer	Womack
Hensarling	Paulsen	Woodall
Hice, Jody B.	Pearce	Yoder
Hill	Perry	Yoho
Holding	Peterson	Young (AK)
Hudson	Pittenger	Young (IA)
Huelskamp	Pitts	Young (IN)
Huizenga (MI)	Poe (TX)	Zeldin
Hultgren	Posey	Zinke
Hunter	Price, Tom	

NOT VOTING—28

Amodei	Fitzpatrick	Napolitano
Barletta	Green, Gene	Pompeo
Becerra	Hastings	Roby
Brown (FL)	Herrera Beutler	Sanchez, Loretta
Butterfield	Hoyer	Sessions
Clyburn	Kelly (IL)	Smith (WA)
Cook	Kirkpatrick	Westmoreland
Cooper	Lewis	Wilson (FL)
Diaz-Balart	Meeks	
Fattah	Murphy (FL)	

□ 1151

Messrs. MULLIN, COLLINS of New York, REICHERT, NEUGEBAUER, DENT, and BISHOP of Utah changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

Mr. DELANEY, Mrs. LOWEY, Messrs. POLIQUIN, COHEN, CROWLEY, and

GUTIÉRREZ changed their vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Chair, during rollcall vote No. 92 on H.R. 2406, I mistakenly recorded my vote as “no” when I should have voted “yes.”

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 159, noes 242, not voting 32, as follows:

[Roll No. 93]

AYES—159

Adams	Esty	McCollum
Aguilar	Farr	McDermott
Bass	Foster	McGovern
Beatty	Frankel (FL)	Meng
Bera	Fudge	Moore
Beyer	Gabbard	Nadler
Blumenauer	Galleo	Neal
Bonamici	Garamendi	Nolan
Boyle, Brendan	Graham	Norcross
F.	Grayson	O'Rourke
Brady (PA)	Green, Al	Pallone
Brownley (CA)	Grijalva	Pascarell
Bustos	Gutiérrez	Payne
Capps	Hahn	Pelosi
Capuano	Heck (WA)	Perlmutter
Cárdenas	Higgins	Pingree
Carney	Himes	Pocan
Carson (IN)	Hinojosa	Polis
Cartwright	Honda	Price (NC)
Castor (FL)	Huffman	Quigley
Castro (TX)	Israel	Rangel
Chu, Judy	Jackson Lee	Reichert
Cicilline	Jeffries	Rice (NY)
Clark (MA)	Johnson (GA)	Richmond
Clarke (NY)	Johnson, E. B.	Roybal-Allard
Clay	Kaptur	Ruiz
Cleaver	Keating	Ruppersberger
Cohen	Kennedy	Rush
Connolly	Kildee	Ryan (OH)
Conyers	Kilmer	Sánchez, Linda
Courtney	Kuster	T.
Crowley	Langevin	Sarbanes
Davis (CA)	Larsen (WA)	Schakowsky
Davis, Danny	Lawrence	Schiff
DeFazio	Lee	Scott (VA)
DeGette	Levin	Scott, David
Delaney	Lieu, Ted	Serrano
DeLauro	Lipinski	Sewell (AL)
DelBene	Loeb sack	Sherman
DeSaulnier	Lofgren	Sires
Deutch	Lowenthal	Slaughter
Dingell	Lowe y	Speier
Doggett	Lujan Grisham	Swalwell (CA)
Dold	(NM)	Takai
Doyle, Michael	Luján, Ben Ray	Takano
F.	(NM)	Thompson (MS)
Duckworth	Lynch	Titus
Edwards	Maloney,	Tonko
Ellison	Carolyn	Torres
Engel	Maloney, Sean	Tsongas
Eshoo	Matsui	Van Hollen

Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky

Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch

Whitfield
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Herrera Beutler
Hoyer
Kelly (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Larson (CT)
Lewis

McNerney
Meeks
Murphy (FL)
Napolitano
Pompeo
Roby

Sanchez, Loretta
Sessions
Smith (WA)
Stivers
Westmoreland

Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano

Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez

Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Whitfield
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—242

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Ashford
Babin
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Billirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman

Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo

Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stutzman
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—32

Amodei
Bartlett
Becerra
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Carter (TX)
Clyburn
Cook
Cooper
Cummings
Diaz-Balart
Fattah
Pitzpatrick
Green, Gene
Hastings

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR
The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1154

So the amendment was rejected.
The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. BEYER
The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished
business is the demand for a recorded
vote on the amendment offered by the
gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER)
on which further proceedings were
postponed and on which the noes pre-
vailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the
amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amend-
ment.

RECORDED VOTE
The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote
has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.
The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-
minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic de-
vice, and there were—ayes 169, noes 236,
not voting 28, as follows:

[Roll No. 94]

AYES—169

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael
F.

Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Poster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Grayson
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebach
Lofgren
Lowenthal

Lowey
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Nadler
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)

NOES—236

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Babin
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Billirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith

Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—28

Amodei	Diaz-Balart	Murphy (FL)
Barletta	Fattah	Napolitano
Becerra	Fitzpatrick	Pompeo
Bost	Green, Gene	Roby
Brown (FL)	Hastings	Sanchez, Loretta
Butterfield	Herrera Beutler	Sessions
Carter (TX)	Hoyer	Smith (WA)
Clyburn	Kelly (IL)	Westmoreland
Cook	Kirkpatrick	
Cooper	Meeks	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1158

Mr. TURNER changed his vote from
“aye” to “no.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 9 OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF
MISSOURI

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished
business is the demand for a recorded
vote on the amendment offered by the
gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH)
on which further proceedings were
postponed and on which the ayes pre-
vailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the
amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amend-
ment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote
has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-
minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic de-
vice, and there were—ayes 232, noes 173,
not voting 28, as follows:

[Roll No. 95]

AYES—232

Abraham	Cramer	Guinta
Aderholt	Crawford	Guthrie
Allen	Crenshaw	Hanna
Babin	Culberson	Hardy
Barr	Curbelo (FL)	Harper
Barton	Davis, Rodney	Harris
Benishek	Denham	Hartzler
Bilirakis	Dent	Heck (NV)
Bishop (GA)	DeSantis	Hensarling
Bishop (MI)	DesJarlais	Hice, Jody B.
Bishop (UT)	Donovan	Hill
Black	Duffy	Holding
Blackburn	Duncan (SC)	Hudson
Blum	Duncan (TN)	Huelskamp
Bost	Ellmers (NC)	Huizenga (MI)
Boustany	Emmer (MN)	Hultgren
Brady (TX)	Farenthold	Hunter
Brat	Fincher	Hurd (TX)
Bridenstine	Fleischmann	Hurt (VA)
Brooks (AL)	Fleming	Issa
Brooks (IN)	Flores	Jenkins (KS)
Buchanan	Forbes	Jenkins (WV)
Buck	Fortenberry	Johnson (OH)
Bucshon	Foxx	Johnson, Sam
Burgess	Franks (AZ)	Jolly
Byrne	Frelinghuysen	Jones
Calvert	Garrett	Jordan
Carter (GA)	Gibbs	Joyce
Carter (TX)	Gibson	Katko
Chabot	Gohmert	Kelly (MS)
Chaffetz	Goodlatte	Kelly (PA)
Clawson (FL)	Gosar	King (IA)
Coffman	Gowdy	King (NY)
Cole	Granger	Kinzinger (IL)
Collins (GA)	Graves (GA)	Kline
Collins (NY)	Graves (LA)	Knight
Comstock	Graves (MO)	Labrador
Conaway	Griffith	LaHood
Costello (PA)	Grothman	LaMalfa

Lamborn	Paulsen	Smith (NE)
Lance	Pearce	Smith (NJ)
Latta	Perry	Smith (TX)
LoBiondo	Peterson	Stefanik
Long	Pittenger	Stewart
Loudermilk	Pitts	Stivers
Love	Poe (TX)	Stutzman
Lucas	Poliquin	Thompson (PA)
Luetkemeyer	Posey	Thornberry
Marchant	Price, Tom	Tiberi
Marino	Ratcliffe	Tipton
Massie	Reed	Trott
McCarthy	Reichert	Turner
McCaul	Renacci	Upton
McClintock	Ribble	Valadao
McHenry	Rice (SC)	Wagner
McKinley	Rigell	Walberg
McMorris	Roe (TN)	Walden
Rodgers	Rogers (KY)	Walker
McSally	Rohrabacher	Walorski
Meadows	Rokita	Walters, Mimi
Meehan	Rooney (FL)	Weber (TX)
Messer	Ros-Lehtinen	Webster (FL)
Mica	Roskam	Wenstrup
Miller (FL)	Ross	Westerman
Miller (MI)	Rothfus	Whitfield
Moolenaar	Rouzer	Williams
Mooney (WV)	Royce	Wilson (SC)
Mullin	Russell	Wittman
Mulvaney	Salmon	Womack
Murphy (PA)	Sanford	Woodall
Neugebauer	Scalise	Yoder
Newhouse	Schweikert	Yoho
Noem	Scott, Austin	Young (AK)
Nugent	Sensenbrenner	Young (IA)
Nunes	Shimkus	Young (IN)
Olson	Shuster	Zeldin
Palazzo	Simpson	Zinke
Palmer	Smith (MO)	

NOES—173

Adams	Engel	Maloney,
Aguilar	Eshoo	Carolyn
Amash	Esty	Maloney, Sean
Ashford	Farr	Matsui
Bass	Foster	McCollum
Beatty	Frankel (FL)	McDermott
Bera	Fudge	McGovern
Beyer	Gabbard	McNerney
Blumenauer	Gallego	Meng
Bonamici	Garamendi	Moore
Boyle, Brendan	Graham	Moulton
F.	Nadler	
Brady (PA)	Neal	
Brownley (CA)	Nolan	
Bustos	Norcross	
Capps	O'Rourke	
Capuano	Pallone	
Cardenas	Pascarell	
Carney	Payne	
Carson (IN)	Pelosi	
Cartwright	Perlmutter	
Castor (FL)	Peters	
Castro (TX)	Pingree	
Chu, Judy	Pocan	
Cicilline	Polis	
Clark (MA)	Price (NC)	
Clarke (NY)	Quigley	
Clay	Rangel	
Cleaver	Rice (NY)	
Cohen	Richmond	
Connolly	Roybal-Allard	
Conyers	Ruiz	
Costa	Ruppersberger	
Courtney	Rush	
Crowley	Ryan (OH)	
Cuellar	Sanchez, Linda	
Cummings	T.	
Davis (CA)	Sarbanes	
Davis, Danny	Schakowsky	
DeFazio	Schiff	
DeGette	Schrader	
Delaney	Scott (VA)	
DeLauro	Scott, David	
DeBene	Serrano	
DeSaulnier	Sewell (AL)	
Deutch	Sherman	
Dingell	Sinema	
Doggett	Sires	
Dold	Slaughter	
Doyle, Michael	Speier	
F.	Swalwell (CA)	
Duckworth	Takai	
Edwards	Takano	
Ellison	Thompson (CA)	

Thompson (MS)	Veasey	Waters, Maxine
Titus	Vela	Watson Coleman
Tonko	Velázquez	Welch
Torres	Visclosky	Wilson (FL)
Tsongas	Walz	Yarmuth
Van Hollen	Wasserman	
Vargas	Schultz	

NOT VOTING—28

Amodei	Fitzpatrick	Napolitano
Barletta	Green, Gene	Pompeo
Becerra	Hastings	Roby
Brown (FL)	Herrera Beutler	Rogers (AL)
Butterfield	Hoyer	Sanchez, Loretta
Clyburn	Kelly (IL)	Sessions
Cook	Kirkpatrick	Smith (WA)
Cooper	Lummis	Westmoreland
Diaz-Balart	Meeks	
Fattah	Murphy (FL)	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1201

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina
changed her vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 12 OFFERED BY MR. GRIFFITH

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished
business is the demand for a recorded
vote on the amendment offered by the
gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIF-
FITH) on which further proceedings
were postponed and on which the ayes
prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the
amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amend-
ment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote
has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-
minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic de-
vice, and there were—ayes 239, noes 165,
not voting 29, as follows:

[Roll No. 96]

AYES—239

Abraham	Chaffetz	Foxx
Aderholt	Clawson (FL)	Franks (AZ)
Allen	Coffman	Frelinghuysen
Amash	Cole	Garrett
Ashford	Collins (GA)	Gibbs
Babin	Collins (NY)	Gibson
Barr	Comstock	Gohmert
Barton	Conaway	Goodlatte
Benishek	Costello (PA)	Gosar
Bilirakis	Cramer	Gowdy
Bishop (GA)	Crawford	Graham
Bishop (MI)	Crenshaw	Granger
Bishop (UT)	Cuellar	Graves (GA)
Black	Culberson	Graves (LA)
Blackburn	Curbelo (FL)	Graves (MO)
Blum	DeFazio	Griffith
Bost	Denham	Grothman
Boustany	Dent	Guinta
Brady (TX)	DeSantis	Guthrie
Brat	DesJarlais	Hanna
Bridenstine	Duffy	Hardy
Brooks (AL)	Duncan (SC)	Harper
Brooks (IN)	Duncan (TN)	Harris
Buchanan	Ellmers (NC)	Hartzler
Buck	Emmer (MN)	Heck (NV)
Bucshon	Farenthold	Hensarling
Burgess	Fincher	Hice, Jody B.
Byrne	Fleischmann	Hill
Calvert	Fleming	Holding
Carter (GA)	Flores	Hudson
Carter (TX)	Forbes	Huelskamp
Chabot	Fortenberry	Huizenga (MI)

Hultgren	Mica	Schrader	Rush	Slaughter	Veasey	Hice, Jody B.	McMorris	Rouzer
Hunter	Miller (FL)	Schweikert	Ryan (OH)	Speier	Vela	Hill	Rodgers	Royce
Hurd (TX)	Miller (MI)	Scott, Austin	Sánchez, Linda T.	Swalwell (CA)	Velázquez	Holding	McSally	Russell
Hurt (VA)	Moolenaar	Sensenbrenner	T.	Takai	Visclosky	Hudson	Meadows	Salmon
Issa	Mooney (WV)	Shimkus	Sarbanes	Takano	Wasserman	Huelskamp	Meehan	Sanford
Jenkins (KS)	Mullin	Shuster	Schakowsky	Thompson (CA)	Schultz	Huizenga (MI)	Messer	Scalise
Jenkins (WV)	Mulvaney	Simpson	Schiff	Thompson (MS)	Waters, Maxine	Hultgren	Mica	Schweikert
Johnson (OH)	Murphy (PA)	Sinema	Scott (VA)	Titus	Watson Coleman	Hunter	Miller (FL)	Scott, Austin
Johnson, Sam	Neugebauer	Smith (MO)	Scott, David	Tonko	Welch	Hurd (TX)	Miller (MI)	Sensenbrenner
Jolly	Newhouse	Smith (NE)	Serrano	Torres	Wilson (FL)	Hurt (VA)	Moolenaar	Shimkus
Jones	Noem	Smith (NJ)	Sewell (AL)	Tsongas	Yarmuth	Issa	Mooney (WV)	Shuster
Jordan	Nugent	Smith (TX)	Sherman	Van Hollen		Jenkins (KS)	Moulton	Simpson
Joyce	Nunes	Stefanik	Sires	Vargas		Jenkins (WV)	Mullin	Smith (MO)
Katko	Olson	Stewart				Johnson (OH)	Mulvaney	Smith (NE)
Kelly (MS)	Palazzo	Stivers				Johnson, Sam	Murphy (PA)	Smith (TX)
Kelly (PA)	Palmer	Stutzman				Jolly	Neugebauer	Stefanik
Kind	Paulsen	Thompson (PA)				Jones	Newhouse	Stewart
King (IA)	Pearce	Thornberry				Jordan	Noem	Stivers
Kinzinger (IL)	Perry	Tiberi				Joyce	Nolan	Stutzman
Kline	Peterson	Tipton				Kelly (MS)	Nugent	Thompson (PA)
Knight	Pittenger	Trott				Kelly (PA)	Nunes	Thornberry
Labrador	Pitts	Turner				Kind	Olson	Tiberi
LaHood	Poe (TX)	Upton				King (IA)	Palazzo	Tipton
LaMalfa	Poliquin	Valadao				King (NY)	Palmer	Trott
Lamborn	Posey	Wagner				Kinzing (IL)	Paulsen	Turner
Lance	Price, Tom	Walberg				Kline	Pearce	Upton
Latta	Ratcliffe	Walden				Knight	Perry	Valadao
LoBiondo	Reed	Walker				Labrador	Peterson	Wagner
Long	Reichert	Walorski				LaHood	Pittenger	Walberg
Loudermilk	Renacci	Walters, Mimi				LaMalfa	Pitts	Walden
Love	Ribble	Walz				Lamborn	Poe (TX)	Walker
Lucas	Rice (SC)	Weber (TX)				Lance	Poliquin	Walorski
Luetkemeyer	Rigell	Webster (FL)				Latta	Posey	Walters, Mimi
MacArthur	Roe (TN)	Wenstrup				Long	Price, Tom	Walz
Marchant	Rogers (KY)	Westerman				Loudermilk	Ratcliffe	Weber (TX)
Marino	Rohrabacher	Whitfield				Love	Reed	Webster (FL)
Massie	Rokita	Williams				Lucas	Reichert	Wenstrup
McCarthy	Rooney (FL)	Wilson (SC)				Luetkemeyer	Renacci	Westerman
McCaul	Ros-Lehtinen	Wittman				Lummis	Ribble	Williams
McClintock	Roskam	Womack				MacArthur	Rice (SC)	Wilson (SC)
McHenry	Ross	Woodall				Marchant	Rigell	Wittman
McKinley	Rothfus	Yoder				Marino	Roe (TN)	Womack
McMorris	Rouzer	Yoho				Massie	Rogers (KY)	Woodall
Rodgers	Royce	Young (AK)				McCarthy	Rohrabacher	Yoder
McSally	Russell	Young (IA)				McCaul	Rooney (FL)	Yoho
Meadows	Salmon	Young (IN)				McClintock	Ros-Lehtinen	Young (AK)
Meehan	Sanford	Zeldin				McHenry	Roskam	Young (IA)
Messer	Scalise	Zinke				McKinley	Ross	Zeldin
							Rothfus	Zinke

NOES—165

Adams	Donovan	Lewis
Aguilar	Doyle, Michael F.	Lieu, Ted
Bass	F.	Lipinski
Beatty	Duckworth	Loebsack
Bera	Edwards	Lofgren
Beyer	Ellison	Lowenthal
Blumenauer	Engel	Lowe
Bonamici	Eshoo	Lujan Grisham
Boyle, Brendan F.	Esty	(NM)
Brady (PA)	Farr	Luján, Ben Ray
Brownley (CA)	Foster	(NM)
Bustos	Frankel (FL)	Lynch
Capps	Fudge	Maloney,
Capuano	Gabbard	Carolyn
Cárdenas	Galleo	Maloney, Sean
Carney	Garamendi	Matsui
Carson (IN)	Grayson	McCollum
Cartwright	Green, Al	McDermott
Castor (FL)	Grijalva	McGovern
Castro (TX)	Gutiérrez	McNerney
Hahn	Hahn	Meng
Chu, Judy	Heck (WA)	Moore
Cicilline	Higgins	Moulton
Clark (MA)	Himes	Nadler
Clarke (NY)	Hinojosa	Neal
Clay	Honda	Nolan
Cleaver	Huffman	Norcross
Cohen	Israel	O'Rourke
Connolly	Jackson Lee	Pallone
Conyers	Jeffries	Pascarell
Costa	Johnson (GA)	Payne
Courtney	Johnson, E. B.	Pelosi
Crowley	Kaptur	Perlmutter
Cummings	Keating	Peters
Davis (CA)	Kennedy	Pingree
Davis, Danny	Kildee	Pocan
DeGette	Kilmer	Polis
Delaney	King (NY)	Price (NC)
DeLauro	Kuster	Quigley
DelBene	Langevin	Rangel
DeSaulnier	Larsen (WA)	Rice (NY)
Deutch	Larson (CT)	Richmond
Dingell	Lawrence	Roybal-Allard
Doggett	Lee	Ruiz
Dold	Levin	Ruppersberger

NOT VOTING—29

Amodei	Fattah	Murphy (FL)
Barletta	Fitzpatrick	Napolitano
Becerra	Green, Gene	Pompeo
Brown (FL)	Hastings	Roby
Butterfield	Herrera Beutler	Rogers (AL)
Clyburn	Hoyer	Sanchez, Loretta
Cook	Kelly (IL)	Sessions
Cooper	Kirkpatrick	Smith (WA)
Davis, Rodney	Lummis	Westmoreland
Diaz-Balart	Meeks	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1204

So the amendment was agreed to.
The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 14 OFFERED BY MR. RIBBLE

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished
business is the demand for a recorded
vote on the amendment offered by the
gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr.
RIBBLE) on which further proceedings
were postponed and on which the ayes
prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the
amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amend-
ment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote
has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-
minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic de-
vice, and there were—ayes 232, noes 171,
not voting 30, as follows:

[Roll No. 97]

AYES—232

Abraham	Carter (TX)	Fleischmann
Aderholt	Chabot	Fleming
Allen	Chaffetz	Flores
Amash	Clawson (FL)	Forbes
Ashford	Coffman	Fortenberry
Babin	Cole	Foxx
Barr	Collins (GA)	Franks (AZ)
Barton	Collins (NY)	Frelinghuysen
Benishek	Comstock	Garrett
Bilirakis	Conaway	Gibbs
Bishop (GA)	Costa	Gibson
Bishop (MI)	Cramer	Gohmert
Bishop (UT)	Crawford	Goodlatte
Black	Crenshaw	Gosar
Blackburn	Cuellar	Govdy
Blum	Culberson	Granger
Bost	Davis, Rodney	Graves (GA)
Boustany	Denham	Graves (LA)
Brady (TX)	Dent	Graves (MO)
Brat	DeSantis	Griffith
Bridenstine	DesJarlais	Grothman
Brooks (AL)	Donovan	Guinta
Brooks (IN)	Duffy	Guthrie
Buck	Duncan (SC)	Hardy
Bucshon	Duncan (TN)	Harper
Burgess	Ellmers (NC)	Harris
Byrne	Emmer (MN)	Hartzler
Calvert	Farenthold	Heck (NV)
Carter (GA)	Fincher	Hensarling

NOES—171

Adams	Deutch	Langevin
Aguilar	Dingell	Larsen (WA)
Bass	Doggett	Larson (CT)
Beatty	Dold	Lawrence
Bera	Doyle, Michael F.	Lee
Beyer	F.	Levin
Blumenauer	Duckworth	Lewis
Bonamici	Edwards	Lieu, Ted
Boyle, Brendan F.	Ellison	Lipinski
Brady (PA)	Engel	LoBiondo
Brownley (CA)	Eshoo	Loebsack
Buchanan	Esty	Lofgren
Bustos	Farr	Lowenthal
Capps	Foster	Lowe
Capuano	Frankel (FL)	Lujan Grisham
Cárdenas	Fudge	(NM)
Carney	Gabbard	Luján, Ben Ray
Carson (IN)	Galleo	(NM)
Cartwright	Garamendi	Lynch
Castor (FL)	Graham	Maloney,
Castro (TX)	Grayson	Carolyn
Chu, Judy	Green, Al	Maloney, Sean
Cicilline	Grijalva	Matsui
Clark (MA)	Gutiérrez	McCollum
Clarke (NY)	Hahn	McDermott
Clay	Hanna	McGovern
Cleaver	Heck (WA)	McNerney
Cohen	Higgins	Meng
Connolly	Himes	Moore
Conyers	Hinojosa	Nadler
Costello (PA)	Honda	Neal
Courtney	Huffman	Norcross
Crowley	Israel	O'Rourke
Cummings	Jackson Lee	Pallone
Curbelo (FL)	Jeffries	Pascarell
Davis (CA)	Johnson (GA)	Payne
Davis, Danny	Johnson, E. B.	Pelosi
DeFazio	Kaptur	Perlmutter
DeGette	Katko	Peters
Delaney	Keating	Pingree
DeLauro	Kennedy	Pocan
DelBene	Kildee	Polis
DeSaulnier	Kilmer	Price (NC)
	Kuster	Quigley

Rangel	Serrano	Van Hollen	DesJarlais	King (NY)	Rice (SC)	Loebsack	Pelosi	Sires
Rice (NY)	Sewell (AL)	Vargas	Donovan	Kinzinger (IL)	Rigell	Lofgren	Perlmutter	Slaughter
Richmond	Sherman	Veasey	Duffy	Kline	Roe (TN)	Lowenthal	Peters	Speier
Roybal-Allard	Sinema	Vela	Duncan (SC)	Knight	Rogers (KY)	Lowey	Pingree	Swailwell (CA)
Ruiz	Sires	Velázquez	Duncan (TN)	Labrador	Rohrabacher	Lujan Grisham	Pocan	Takai
Ruppersberger	Slaughter	Visclosky	Elmers (NC)	LaHood	Rokita	(NM)	Polis	Takano
Rush	Smith (NJ)	Wasserman	Emmer (MN)	LaMalfa	Rooney (FL)	Luján, Ben Ray	Price (NC)	Thompson (CA)
Ryan (OH)	Speier	Schultz	Farenthold	Lamborn	Ros-Lehtinen	(NM)	Quigley	Thompson (MS)
Sánchez, Linda	Swalwell (CA)	Waters, Maxine	Fincher	Lance	Roskam	Lynch	Rangel	Titus
T.	Takai	Watson Coleman	Fleischmann	Latta	Ross	Maloney,	Reichert	Tonko
Sarbanes	Takano	Welch	Fleming	LoBiondo	Rothfus	Carolyn	Rice (NY)	Torres
Schakowsky	Thompson (CA)	Whitfield	Flores	Long	Rouzer	Maloney, Sean	Richmond	Tsongas
Schiff	Titus	Wilson (FL)	Forbes	Loudermilk	Royce	Matsui	Roybal-Allard	Van Hollen
Schrader	Tonko	Yarmuth	Fortenberry	Love	Russell	McCollum	Ruiz	Vargas
Scott (VA)	Torres		Fox	Lucas	Salmon	McDermott	Ruppersberger	Veasey
Scott, David	Tsongas		Franks (AZ)	Luetkemeyer	Sanford	McGovern	Rush	Vela
			Frelinghuysen	Lummis	Scalise	McNerney	Ryan (OH)	Velázquez
			Garrett	MacArthur	Schrader	Meng	Sánchez, Linda	Visclosky
			Gibbs	Marchant	Schweikert	Moore	T.	Walz
			Gibson	Marino	Scott, Austin	Moulton	Sarbanes	Wasserman
			Gohmert	Massie	Sensenbrenner	Nadler	Schakowsky	Schultz
			Goodlatte	McCarthy	Shimkus	Neal	Schiff	Waters, Maxine
			Gosar	McCaul	Shuster	Nolan	Scott (VA)	Watson Coleman
			Gowdy	McClintock	Simpson	Norcross	Scott, David	Welch
			Granger	McHenry	Smith (MO)	O'Rourke	Serrano	Whitfield
			Graves (GA)	McKinley	Smith (NE)	Pallone	Sewell (AL)	Wilson (FL)
			Graves (LA)	McMorris	Smith (NJ)	Pascarell	Sherman	Yarmuth
			Graves (MO)	Rodgers	Smith (TX)	Payne	Sinema	
			Griffith	McSally	Stefanik			
			Grothman	Meadows	Stewart			
			Guinta	Meehan	Stivers			
			Guthrie	Messer	Stutzman			
			Hanna	Mica	Thompson (PA)			
			Hardy	Miller (FL)	Thornberry			
			Harper	Miller (MI)	Tiberi			
			Harris	Moolenaar	Tipton			
			Hartzler	Mooney (WV)	Trott			
			Heck (NV)	Mullin	Turner			
			Hensarling	Mulvaney	Upton			
			Hice, Jody B.	Murphy (PA)	Valadao			
			Hill	Neugebauer	Wagner			
			Holding	Newhouse	Walberg			
			Hudson	Noem	Walden			
			Huelskamp	Nugent	Walker			
			Huizenga (MI)	Nunes	Walorski			
			Hultgren	Olson	Walters, Mimi			
			Hunter	Palazzo	Weber (TX)			
			Hurd (TX)	Palmer	Webster (FL)			
			Hurt (VA)	Paulsen	Wenstrup			
			Issa	Pearce	Westerman			
			Jenkins (KS)	Perry	Williams			
			Jenkins (WV)	Peterson	Wilson (SC)			
			Johnson (OH)	Pittenger	Wittman			
			Johnson, Sam	Pitts	Womack			
			Jolly	Poe (TX)	Woodall			
			Jones	Poliquin	Yoder			
			Jordan	Posey	Yoho			
			Joyce	Price, Tom	Young (AK)			
			Katko	Ratcliffe	Young (IA)			
			Kelly (MS)	Reed	Young (IN)			
			Kelly (PA)	Renacci	Zeldin			
			King (IA)	Ribble	Zinke			

NOT VOTING—30

Amodei	Fitzpatrick	Pompeo
Barletta	Green, Gene	Roby
Becerra	Hastings	Rogers (AL)
Brown (FL)	Herrera Beutler	Rokita
Butterfield	Hoyer	Sanchez, Loretta
Clyburn	Kelly (IL)	Sessions
Cook	Kirkpatrick	Smith (WA)
Cooper	Meeks	Thompson (MS)
Diaz-Balart	Murphy (FL)	Westmoreland
Fattah	Napolitano	Young (IN)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1207

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 97, there was an error in the transaction of my electronic vote. My office and the Clerk are looking into the matter. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

AMENDMENT NO. 15 OFFERED BY MR. YOUNG OF ALASKA

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 236, noes 169, not voting 28, as follows:

[Roll No. 98]

AYES—236

Abraham	Boustany	Coffman
Aderholt	Brady (TX)	Cole
Allen	Brat	Collins (GA)
Amash	Bridenstine	Collins (NY)
Ashford	Brooks (AL)	Comstock
Babin	Brooks (IN)	Conaway
Barr	Buchanan	Costello (PA)
Barton	Buck	Cramer
Benishek	Bucshon	Crawford
Bilirakis	Burgess	Crenshaw
Bishop (GA)	Byrne	Cuellar
Bishop (MI)	Calvert	Culberson
Bishop (UT)	Carter (GA)	Curbelo (FL)
Black	Carter (TX)	Davis, Rodney
Blackburn	Chabot	Denham
Blum	Chaffetz	Dent
Boat	Clawson (FL)	DeSantis

Adams	Courtney	Green, Al
Aguilar	Crowley	Grijalva
Bass	Cummings	Gutiérrez
Beatty	Davis (CA)	Hahn
Bera	Davis, Danny	Heck (WA)
Beyer	DeFazio	Higgins
Blumenauer	DeGette	Himes
Bonamici	Delaney	Hinojosa
Boyle, Brendan	DeLauro	Honda
F.	DelBene	Huffman
Brady (PA)	DeSaulnier	Israel
Brownley (CA)	Deutch	Jackson Lee
Bustos	Dingell	Jeffries
Capps	Doggett	Johnson (GA)
Capuano	Dold	Johnson, E. B.
Cárdenas	Doyle, Michael	Kaptur
Carney	F.	Keating
Carson (IN)	Duckworth	Kennedy
Cartwright	Ellison	Kildee
Castor (FL)	Engel	Kilmer
Castro (TX)	Eshoo	Kind
Chu, Judy	Esty	Kuster
Ciциlline	Farr	Langevin
Clark (MA)	Foster	Larsen (WA)
Clarke (NY)	Frankel (FL)	Larson (CT)
Clay	Fudge	Lawrence
Cleaver	Gabbard	Lee
Cohen	Gallego	Levin
Connolly	Garamendi	Lewis
Conyers	Graham	Lieu, Ted
Costa	Grayson	Lipinski

NOES—169

NOT VOTING—28

Amodei	Fattah	Napolitano
Barletta	Fitzpatrick	Pompeo
Becerra	Green, Gene	Roby
Brown (FL)	Hastings	Rogers (AL)
Butterfield	Herrera Beutler	Sanchez, Loretta
Clyburn	Hoyer	Sessions
Cook	Kelly (IL)	Smith (WA)
Cooper	Kirkpatrick	Westmoreland
Diaz-Balart	Meeks	
Edwards	Murphy (FL)	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1210

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 16 OFFERED BY MR. HUFFMAN

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 176, noes 227, not voting 30, as follows:

[Roll No. 99]

AYES—176

Adams	Capps	Cleaver
Aguilar	Capuano	Cohen
Ashford	Cárdenas	Connolly
Bass	Carney	Conyers
Beatty	Carson (IN)	Courtney
Bera	Cartwright	Crowley
Beyer	Castor (FL)	Cuellar
Blumenauer	Castro (TX)	Cummings
Bonamici	Chu, Judy	Davis (CA)
Boyle, Brendan	Ciциlline	Davis, Danny
F.	Clark (MA)	DeFazio
Brady (PA)	Clarke (NY)	DeGette
Brownley (CA)	Clawson (FL)	Delaney
Bustos	Clay	DeLauro

DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duckworth
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gibson
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Huffman
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebach
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maloney
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Nadler
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel

NOES—227

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Babin
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foss
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan

Reichert
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Speier
Swell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Wahl
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roe (TN)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)

NOT VOTING—30

Amodei
Barletta
Becerra
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Clyburn
Cook
Cooper
Diaz-Balart
Edwards
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Green, Gene
Hastings
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hoyer
Kelly (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Meeks
Murphy (FL)
Napolitano
Pompeo
Roby
Rogers (AL)
Sanchez, Loretta
Scott, David
Sessions
Smith (WA)
Westmoreland

□ 1214

So the amendment was rejected.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. FLEISCHMANN). The question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) having assumed the chair, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2406) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 619, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Mrs. LAWRENCE. I am opposed in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mrs. Lawrence moves to recommit the bill H.R. 2406 to the Committee on Natural Resources with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

TITLE XVII—PROTECTING WATER SUPPLY FOR PUBLIC RECREATION AND SAFE DRINKING

SEC. 1701. FINDINGS.

Congress finds as follows:

(1) Every year in the United States, an estimated 4,000 tons of lead are lost in ponds and streams as fishing tackle, such as fishing lures and sinkers.

(2) The lead content of fishing tackle has the potential to contaminate water supplies.

SEC. 1702. PROTECTING WATER SUPPLY FOR PUBLIC RECREATION AND SAFE DRINKING.

Section 4 of the Toxic Substances Control Act (15 U.S.C. 2603) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(h) PROTECTING WATER SUPPLY FOR PUBLIC RECREATION AND SAFE DRINKING.—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this subsection, any manufacturer or processor of an article containing a chemical substance or mixture that has the potential to contaminate water supplies used for public recreation or drinking water provided by a public water system shall generate and provide to all applicable Federal and State agencies responsible for protecting health or the environment data sufficient to understand the risks such article would present to human health and the environment, including studies of the cancer-causing effects, reproductive toxicity, and neurotoxicity of the chemical substance or mixture contained in the article. Exposing the public or the environment to such article without generating such studies shall be considered a prohibited act under this Act.”

Mrs. LAWRENCE (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the reading be dispensed with.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, my amendment will ensure that our public water systems and waterways which are used for public recreation will be protected from an estimated 4,000 tons of lead that are contaminating our ponds and streams from lost fishing tackle.

My amendment will ensure that all manufacturers of products that contain any type of substance with the potential to contaminate our water systems

provide to Federal and State agencies the research so we may understand the risks to human health and the environment.

Members of Congress, the manmade water crisis in Flint has shown us the devastating effects of having contaminated water sources. The 100,000 residents of Flint lost a basic human right: access to clean water.

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, our drinking water infrastructure has a D grade. That is A, B, C, D. According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, \$126 billion will be needed to restore water and wastewater infrastructure over the next 4 years, which leaves a funding gap of \$84 billion.

It is significant to note that the American public overwhelmingly supports investment in our Nation's water infrastructure, as drinking water is not a luxury. It is a basic need for life.

A poll released just a week ago by the Value of Water Coalition showed that 95 percent of Americans—and that means on both sides of the aisle—believe it is important to invest in water infrastructure.

I regret to say that we in Congress have kicked the can down the road year after year when it comes to investing in our infrastructure.

I know that mayors and Governors and Members of this Congress have sounded the warning sign over and over again about the possibility of a disaster, but we never imagined that it would come in the form of the mass poisoning of an entire American city.

The children of Flint, the parents, other citizens of Flint, and the citizens of these United States need Congress, not one side of the aisle or the other, to act so that we don't see another generation of children potentially suffer from the negative effects of lead poisoning.

I urge all Members of this 114th Session of the United States Congress to support this motion to recommit on H.R. 2406.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, the minority's motion to recommit is an issue about chemicals in drinking water. Chemicals in drinking water is an issue that was addressed in the Toxic Substances Control Act, which was before this House.

There were multiple opportunities to have a debate about that and to determine what we do to address that issue. That bill passed out of the House. It is now in a preconference committee with the Senate. That was the opportunity.

This bill, the SHARE Act, is a package of commonsense bills that will in-

crease opportunities for hunters, recreational shooters, and anglers; will eliminate unneeded regulatory impediments; will safeguard against new regulations that impede outdoor sporting activities; and will protect Second Amendment rights. It does not pertain to chemicals in drinking water.

Outdoor sporting activities, including hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting, are deeply ingrained in the fabric of America's culture and heritage. Values that are instilled by partaking in these activities are passed down from generation to generation and play a significant part in the lives of millions of Americans.

This important legislation will sustain America's rich hunting and fishing traditions, will improve access to our public lands for responsible outdoor sporting activities, and will help to ensure that the current and future generations of sportsmen and -women are able to enjoy the sporting activities this country holds dear.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on this important legislation and to defeat the motion to recommit.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by a 5-minute vote on the passage of the bill, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 165, nays 238, not voting 30, as follows:

[Roll No. 100]

YEAS—165

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brownlee (CA)
Bustos
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)

Clay
Cleaver
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty

Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee

Kilmer
Kind
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
Meng
Moore
Moulton

Nadler
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascarella
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)

Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NAYS—238

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Babin
Barr
Barton
Benishke
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores

Forbes
Fortenberry
Fox
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long

Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roe (TN)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus

Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik

NOT VOTING—30

Amodei
Barletta
Becerra
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Clyburn
Cook
Cooper
Diaz-Balart
Edwards

□ 1229

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 242, noes 161, not voting 30, as follows:

[Roll No. 101]

AYES—242

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Ashford
Babin
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman

Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson

Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

Murphy (FL)
Napolitano
Pompeo
Roby
Rogers (AL)
Sanchez, Loretta
Scott, David
Sessions
Smith (WA)
Westmoreland

Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kind
King (IA)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin

NOES—161

Adams
Aguilar
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brownley (CA)
Capps
Capuano
Cardenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
DeSaulnier
Deutsches
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duckworth

Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roe (TN)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schrader
Schweikert

Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton

NOT VOTING—30

Amodei
Barletta
Becerra
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Clyburn
Cook
Cooper
Diaz-Balart
Edwards

Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Green, Gene
Hastings
Herrera Beutler
Hinojosa
Hoyer
Kelly (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Meeks

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. STEFANIK) (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1235

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, February 23; Wednesday, February 24; Thursday, February 25; and Friday, February 26, 2016, I was on medical leave while recovering from hip replacement surgery and unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted:

“Yes” on rollcall vote No. 83 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4408, as amended).

“Yes” on rollcall vote No. 84 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4402, as amended).

“No” on rollcall vote No. 85 (on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 618).

“No” on rollcall vote No. 86 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 618).

“Yes” on rollcall vote No. 87 (on agreeing to the Cartwright Amendment to H.R. 3624).

“Yes” on rollcall vote No. 88 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 3624, with instructions).

“No” on rollcall vote No. 89 (on passage of H.R. 3624).

“No” on rollcall vote No. 90 (on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 619).

“No” on rollcall vote No. 91 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 619).

“Yes” on rollcall vote No. 92 (on agreeing to the Beyer Amendment to H.R. 2406).

“Yes” on rollcall vote No. 93 (on agreeing to the Jackson Lee Amendment to H.R. 2406).

“Yes” on rollcall vote No. 94 (on agreeing to the Beyer Amendment to H.R. 2406).

“No” on rollcall vote No. 95 (on agreeing to the Smith of Missouri Amendment to H.R. 2406).

“No” on rollcall vote No. 96 (on agreeing to the Griffith Amendment to H.R. 2406).

“No” on rollcall vote No. 97 (on agreeing to the Ribble Amendment to H.R. 2406).

“No” on rollcall vote No. 98 (on agreeing to the Young of Alaska Amendment to H.R. 2406).

“Yes” on rollcall vote No. 99 (on agreeing to the Huffman Amendment to H.R. 2406).

“Yes” on rollcall vote No. 100 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 2406, with instructions).

Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Nadler
Neal
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires

"No" on rollcall vote No. 101 (on passage of H.R. 2406).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. COOK. Madam Speaker, on February 26, 2016, I was unavoidably absent. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

On rollcall No. 92, 93, 94, 99, and 100, I would have voted "no."

On rollcall No. 95, 96, 97, 98, and 101, I would have voted "yes."

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 2406, SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that, in the engrossment of H.R. 2406, the Clerk be authorized to correct section numbers, punctuation, and cross-references and to make such other technical and conforming changes as may be necessary to accurately reflect the actions of the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY COMMITTEE ON RULES REGARDING AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR H.R. 3716, ENSURING TERMINATED PROVIDERS ARE REMOVED FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT, AND H.R. 4557, BLOCKING REGULATORY INTERFERENCE FROM CLOSING KILNS ACT OF 2016

(Mr. WOODALL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WOODALL. Madam Speaker, this week the Rules Committee issued two announcements outlining the amendment processes for H.R. 3716, Ensuring Terminated Providers are Removed From Medicaid and CHIP Act, and H.R. 4557, Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act of 2016.

The amendment deadline for H.R. 3716 has been set for Monday, February 29, at noon. The amendment deadline for H.R. 4557 has been set for 10 a.m. on Tuesday, March 1.

For details and text of the bills, folks can visit the Rules Committee Web site. Feel free to contact the Rules Committee with any questions that Members may have.

ADJOURNMENT FROM FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2016, TO MONDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2016

Mr. WOODALL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns, it adjourn to meet on Monday, February 29, 2016, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and at 2 p.m. for legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

WELFARE REFORM

(Mr. PITTINGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTINGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address one of the Nation's greatest concerns: welfare reform.

America's most important resource is our people. The last thing we want any of our citizens to believe is that they are forever stuck in a situation that they cannot rise above.

Welfare reform was originally successful because it required work in return for assistance, gave more power and responsibility to the States in fighting poverty, and ensured that States were rewarded for reducing poverty instead of increasing dependency.

Today, given the slow growth of our economy, many job seekers become frustrated when they are unable to find adequate work. This creates a system where many become trapped and dependent on State and Federal assistance.

Solutions to welfare reform have to come from a local level, not from Washington. It is imperative that we encourage family values and education more than anything.

Washington's primary role is to strengthen the economy, facilitate growth, and encourage a positive business climate, thus creating jobs and reducing dependency on State programs.

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2015

(Mr. CÁRDENAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Madam Speaker, today Congress voted to make it easier to import killed polar bears and ivory into our Nation.

The SHARE Act is a piece of legislation most closely resembling George Orwell's novel "1984," riddled with doublespeak and nightmarish visions.

The Polar Bear Conservation and Fairness Act, part of this bill, would encourage the further hunting and importation of polar bears as long as they follow the rules.

The African Elephant Conservation and Legal Ivory Possession Act, another title, would encourage the needless and malicious slaying of innocent and endangered animals for their tusks.

And for what? So that gun owners can have a shiny grip on their Smith & Wesson .357 Magnum made of a tusk

that once was part of a beautiful, majestic elephant. Have we really come to this place in our history in which the ivory trimming on a gun is more important than a life?

I urge the Senate and the President to reject this ethically reprehensible and morally repugnant bill.

VAIL UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

(Ms. MCSALLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MCSALLY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Vail Unified School District for their outstanding education achievements. Year after year the Arizona Department of Education recognizes Vail as a top-performing school district and its schools are continuously labeled A-plus.

As with any organization, leadership matters. Vail superintendent Cal Baker, who I have worked with on many issues related to education, sets a tone from the top of innovation and excellence, but he is not alone.

He has many wingmen and wingwomen, including an engaged school board, dedicated staff and teachers, involved parents, and selfless volunteers, who all work together to provide high-quality education to kids.

Vail's out-of-the-box learning model doesn't just benefit its students, but benefits others across the State where Vail's best practices are exported to other school districts.

Recently it was my honor to participate in Vail Pride Day where we recognized excellent performance in so many students. I gave out the Board Community Award to members of the Vail Parent Network for their work in advocating for education.

I congratulate Vail on their many achievements and their impact on so many kids by setting them on a course to achieve their dreams and full potential.

CONGRATULATING WEST WINDSOR-PLAINSBO RO HIGH SCHOOL SOUTH

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the talent, teamwork, and intelligence of the West Windsor-Plainsboro High School South National Science Bowl team, who are regional champions for the second year in a row.

This year's team includes Dhruva Byrapatna, Eric Mischell, William Jiao, Angela You, and Tanishq Aggarwal. They were coached by Ms. Sunila Sharma.

In a few weeks, these students will head to Washington, D.C., to compete in the Department of Energy's National Science Bowl. I am proud to

know that New Jersey's 12th District will be represented.

I wish both the coach and the team the best of luck in the national competition.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Mr. DOLD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOLD. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition and in celebration of Black History Month.

This month is a reminder of both the incredible sacrifices and the remarkable contributions that African Americans have made during our Nation's history.

153 years ago Illinois' own Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. For 153 years since then, our Nation has struggled to overcome bigotry and achieve equality for all.

Countless courageous leaders have taken up the cause of justice, including former Illinois Senator Everett Dirksen and our own colleague here in the United States Congress, Congressman JOHN LEWIS.

Walking on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma with Congressman LEWIS for the 50th anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery marches is one of the highlights of my tenure in the United States Congress.

As we look back on the accomplishments of the past, we cannot lose sight of the urgency with which we must address inequality in our society today.

African Americans today face an unacceptable likelihood of being incarcerated, a poverty rate that our Nation's leaders should be ashamed of, and everyday discrimination that flies in the face of everything our Nation stands for.

In memory of the heroes who have fought for equality throughout our Nation's history, we are compelled to act. I am committed to fighting for a more just and equal society. I implore my colleagues to do the same.

□ 1245

HONORING THE LIFE OF DEBBIE SMITH

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TITUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and memory of late State Senator Debbie Smith, who passed away on Sunday.

Debbie was a fighter and a powerful advocate for improving Nevada's public schools. From her days with the State PTA to her work as a legislative leader, she served the community in countless ways for over 20 years, constantly advocating for Nevada to invest in what matters most: our children.

After having a brain tumor removed early last year, she returned to the legislature to work on the front lines for major education reform. Cancer couldn't stop her from making sure that her vision came to fruition. In her last political battle, she was able to claim a victory that will long benefit Nevada's students.

Debbie was a true friend and a real inspiration. She was a hero who never asked for recognition for herself. The angels are fortunate to now have her on their side.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF ALFRED MANN

(Mr. ROHRABACHER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to note the passing of an American hero, Alfred Mann.

At 17 years of age, Al Mann was a navigator on a B-29 during World War II. After the war, he was educated with the GI Bill, and he used his genius, his creative skills, to upgrade America's antitank weapons of the day.

A short time after that, he said he was so happy because he had his chance to use his creative genius in building things that helped people. He revolutionized heart pacemakers at that time, and then he went on to help us and help millions of Americans live better through his technology that helped diabetics, people who were deaf, even people who were amputees.

Al Mann made a major difference. He represented the very best in America. He was a hero. He passed away at 91 years of age. He will be missed, but he has left a wonderful legacy. Now we live better and freer because of people like Al Mann.

WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

(Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt* next Tuesday, a case challenging the Texas law that has deprived women of their constitutional right to make their own healthcare decisions. I was proud to join 163 of my colleagues in an amicus brief in support of women's health centers.

Texas is home to 5.4 million women of reproductive age, and this appalling law would leave only 10 clinics open in the entire State—10—in Texas.

As a mother of two daughters, I find this unacceptable. It is a moral outrage when legislatures full of mostly male politicians interfere in women's healthcare decisions. From Texas to

my home State of Florida, to this very body, we are seeing an unprecedented attack on women's health, and I will not be silent about it.

These laws have not and will not make women safer. They are intrusive and invade women's personal, most private decisions. It is my deepest hope that the Supreme Court overturns this offensive Texas law.

WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE DECISIONS

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. VEASEY. Madam Speaker, we are less than 5 days away from hearing oral arguments in the Supreme Court case that could steal the right away from women to make their own healthcare decisions.

In 2013, the Texas State legislature passed House Bill 2, a very strict anti-abortion law that imposed medically unnecessary restrictions on women's healthcare providers. Lawmakers claimed their motivation was to protect women's health care, but Texas women can attest that the law has done little to expand their access to health care.

Since the passage of HB 2, over 20 clinics in Texas have shut down. Women in Dallas are facing delays as long as 20 days for an initial abortion consultation. Other States have followed the lead, with 22 States passing similar laws that are targeting abortion providers just in the last few years.

Roe v. Wade made it clear that women have a constitutional right to make choices about their own bodies.

Planned Parenthood v. Casey reaffirmed that a State cannot create an undue burden on women when they seek to exercise their right to safe and legal abortions. Ultimately, a constitutional right means nothing without the ability to exercise that right.

I am confident that the Supreme Court will reaffirm that women are constitutionally protected to make their own healthcare decisions.

ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FLORES).

HONORING MAJOR SHAWN M. CAMPBELL

Mr. FLORES. I thank the gentleman from Texas.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor U.S. Marine Corps Major Shawn M. Campbell of College Station, Texas.

Major Campbell died on January 14, 2016, when he and 11 additional marines were involved in a helicopter training accident off the coast of Hawaii's Oahu Island.

Major Campbell attended Klein High School in suburban Houston and went on to graduate from Texas A&M University. Upon graduation, Major Campbell decided to follow his lifelong dream of becoming a pilot. He accepted his commission and began a career as a Marine Corps aviator. During his time in the Marine Corps, Shawn served four tours in the Middle East, including one in Iraq.

After serving our country overseas, Major Campbell returned to the U.S., where he became a flying instructor at the Naval Air Station located in Pensacola, Florida. Major Campbell, along with his wife, Kelli, and their children were later transferred to Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay in Hawaii in 2014. During his time stationed at the Marine Corps base, Shawn served as a CH-53E Super Stallion pilot with Squadron 463, Marine Aircraft Group 24.

Throughout his tenure, Major Campbell garnered numerous awards and decorations for his bravery. These decorations include: the Air Medal with strike/flight device, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, the Navy Unit Commendation, the National Defense Service Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

Madam Speaker, Major Campbell was a fearless leader and a decorated veteran. His selfless devotion to protect our country will be forever remembered. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of Major Shawn Campbell. He will be forever remembered as an outstanding husband, father, and marine. We thank him and his family for their service and their sacrifice for our country. His sacrifice truly reflects the words of Jesus in John 15:13: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

The loss of Major Campbell and his fellow marines serves as a reminder of the sacrifices the men and women of our Armed Forces make each day to preserve freedom for this great Nation. We are forever in debt to these great individuals who serve our country.

As I close, I ask all Americans to continue to pray for our country during these difficult times, for our military men and women who protect us from external threats, and for our first responders who protect us from threats here at home.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas. He and I were at Texas A&M together in the Corps of Cadets, and I know he didn't have to look down to read what John 15:13 was because that used to be

a Campusology question that freshmen had to memorize.

The question was: What is the inscription on the Memorial Student Center at Texas A&M?

The proper correct answer, succinct: The inscription on the Memorial Student Center at Texas A&M is "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends, John 15:13."

It is also touching to me each time I come through the southern entrance of the Capitol, the main entrance for visitors coming into the Capitol—I guess more visitors come in through that entrance—immediately as you pass through the metal detectors, up on the right is a statue of a Catholic priest named Father Damien.

The statue is a bit strange in the way it is squared off, but there is nothing strange about the life that he lived. The fact that Hawaii would pick as one of the two allowable statues it has, Father Damien to be represented, I think, is most noble.

It also indicates, I think, that 50 years-plus ago, when Hawaii came into the Union, at that time our Nation was still a Christian nation. Our motto still above the Speaker's head here, "In God We Trust," was front and center most everywhere. So it shouldn't have been a surprise that Hawaii wanted to pay tribute for one of its two statues a man who learned of lepers being sometimes just thrown off a passing ship if they had leprosy. Sometimes they would dock and let them go to shore, but there was nothing but squalor, as I understand, back in those days.

People knew that leprosy was contagious. It is terrible to think, but in the words of the poet, the inhumanity to man. But it was an island full of lepers that knew they were going to die as their skin and parts rotted off.

Father Damien heard about the situation, went to the island knowing that by going to that island he would indeed get leprosy. He prayed it would be later rather than sooner so he could minister to all those hurting on the island. But he helped them set up a way of life, and instead of just having hopeless, non-societal squalor to live in, he helped them build a way of life, a sense of normality, a way in which they could finish out their life with some element of peace.

I believe it was around 15 years or so before he got the leprosy that eventually took him. On the plaque of Father Damien's statue, one of the first you see when you come in our Capitol from the southern entrance, the words inscribed at the top of the plaque, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." That is certainly what Father Damien did. That is certainly what our fellow Aggie, Major Shawn Campbell, did when he laid down his life for his country.

With that background, we ought to approach most every issue that this Federal Government faces. We have an obligation to those who have gone before us and have laid down what Lincoln called the last full measure of devotion. They have given their lives that we might have a better life.

How tragic it is that political correctness has so infiltrated and overwhelmed the United States of America, that when you study history, the colleges are often described as the intelligentsia, the people who are well educated that really figured things out, who are open-minded, where they used to be the most open minded.

□ 1300

When I attended Texas A&M, it was, if not the most conservative, one of the most conservative colleges, universities in America. I was proud to be there, proud to be in the Corps of Cadets, proud to have an Army scholarship that committed me to 4 years in the United States Army after I graduated, proud to look forward to serving my country.

As conservative as we were, we were not afraid of inviting very liberal speakers, and we were not afraid of having debate with them, very civilized debate.

I recall helping usher Ralph Nader around when he came to Texas A&M, as one of my friends was a host. That was no big deal. It was really an opportunity for a conservative like me and others to have a dialogue with Ralph Nader.

It sometimes shocks people that a conservative like me can have some very liberal friends, just like the great Antonin Scalia was very close friends with Ruth Bader Ginsburg. They had totally different views. He believed in upholding the letter of the law of the Constitution and she didn't, but they were friends.

So you can have that friendship, but it is an embarrassment—should be an embarrassment—to this Nation that so many who proclaimed in the sixties and seventies to be the most open-minded among us ended up becoming professors at colleges and began to teach the teachers. Those teachers, in turn, went back and taught elementary school, middle school, and high school.

Somehow, over the last 50 years, we have gone from a Nation that recognizes that true conservatism is confident enough in itself that it is not afraid to have debate and dialogue and hear from all types of viewpoints.

Tragically, as the intelligentsia in America become more and more established in the universities, they have allowed these open-minded, broad-minded liberals to have places of prominence in our institutions of higher learning, and somehow they have become the most close-minded people in America. They don't want to hear from

conservatives. They are embarrassed to have a conservative come speak.

It is rather tragic, because no longer are our universities, generally speaking, places where all types of thought are analyzed. They are not taught all types of thought. They are given a very narrow version. It is usually very critical of anyone who is conservative, anyone who believes the Constitution should mean what it says, anyone who stands up for the Judeo-Christian principles on which this Nation was founded.

One of the great things about being founded on Judeo-Christian principles has been that if true Christian principles are applied to government, then anyone of any religion is free to practice that religion or not practice that religion, unless the religion is actually a religion of politics that dictates that their believers cannot follow the letter of the law within the United States Constitution.

From this podium, I have spoken many times about the Holy Land Foundation trial in the United States District Court in the Northern District of Texas. It was the largest prosecution regarding terrorism in our Nation's history.

The Holy Land Foundation was found to be a front organization for radical Islamists who were funneling money. They called themselves a charity. Some would be funded to charities, some would be for the children, but they also funneled money to terrorist organizations that were used to terrorize people here and abroad.

The Bush administration Justice Department, since President George W. Bush did not have a heavy thumb on the scales of justice and allowed the Justice Department to pursue any crime that they saw, any threat to America—unlike the present day—they went after the Holy Land Foundation. They had evidence to show that the Holy Land Foundation and many organizations and many leading people claiming the Muslim faith were actually tied together and were coconspirators in funneling money to charities, for sure, but also to terrorist organizations.

As I understand from former members of the Justice Department who are still friends, the strategy was to get convictions in that first massive prosecution. I think there were over 100 counts of supporting terrorism. They were to get convictions there.

In the same case, having named many coconspirators who were not actually indicted, if they could get those convictions, as they knew the evidence indicated they should, then they would go after the named coconspirators who were unindicted at that point and go ahead and indict them and get prosecution and conviction of coconspirators.

Well, there were some names of groups and individuals in that prosecu-

tion named as coconspirators supporting terrorism who were offended. Perhaps they were more concerned with their public image of being charitable when, actually, they were being exposed through this prosecution by the evidence that existed that they were coconspirators in supporting terrorist groups and terrorist acts. They filed a motion to have their name struck as coconspirators in supporting terrorism.

One such group was CAIR, or the Council on American-Islamic Relations. People like Imam Magid, who has been president of the Islamic Society of North America, was also named as a coconspirator.

Anyway, they filed motions to have their names stricken as coconspirators. There was an evidentiary hearing, evidence produced, and the United States district judge ruled in the case that there was plenty of evidence to support that those individuals named were indeed coconspirators to fund terrorism.

Well, not happy with that, they appealed to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. They said: Gee, we should have our name struck as being coconspirators in supporting terrorism.

I have even read from the opinion of the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals that ruled that not only is there evidence that these individuals—like CAIR, the Islamic Society of North America—not only is there evidence, but there is actually substantial evidence that they have been coconspirators in funding and supporting terrorism.

Well, I believe it was November 2008, right after Senator Barack Obama was elected President, that the convictions were obtained in over 100 counts. Before the conviction could become completely final, there was a new administration coming in. We had a new Attorney General coming in.

The new President and the new Attorney General, Eric Holder, had a different agenda. They were not going to prosecute radical Islamist supporters, people that funded radical Islam and their terrorist activities. There would no longer be those prosecutions. So they were dropped. They were dropped.

None of those who were listed as coconspirators were going to be prosecuted by the Obama Justice Department—or, perhaps a better way of saying it is the Obama-Holder “just us” department—because they didn't prosecute. As the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals indicated, there was plenty of evidence to support that they were conspirators.

But if that were the end of the story, that would be bad enough. Instead of not prosecuting, this administration made the Council on American-Islamic Relations, CAIR, one of the most influential organizations with a voice inside the White House. If they objected to anything, then the White House imme-

diately flew into action and did whatever CAIR—this named coconspirator of radical Islam, of terror—indicated by phone or otherwise, in person. Whatever they indicated was offensive to them as named coconspirators in supporting terrorism, whatever offended them, this administration made sure it was blotted out, covered up, or stopped, whether it was a seminar or conference being given at Langley or an intelligence facility.

A 2-day conference for law enforcement on radical Islam that was going to be led by people who had spent their adult lives studying radical Islam and who knew the dangers and would warn of the dangers, CAIR finds out, they call the White House, and from what we understand, that is what led the White House to call Langley and cancel the conference on radical Islam for law enforcement and come out with new directives.

In effect, it seemed like they were saying, unless CAIR approves of somebody—these conspirators who support terrorism, according to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals—unless this coconspirator that supports terrorism agrees to any comment about Islam, you can't make it, you can't have it in training materials.

So then began a partnership between what were alleged to be supporters of radical Islamic terrorism and the FBI. Actually, some of that began during the Bush administration. But they had this partnership with many of the named coconspirators supporting radical Islamic terrorism. They are still partners with the President, with this administration.

When I say “coconspirator,” I am referring to as named in the pleadings in the prosecution in Federal court that were ruled on in the district court, ruled on by the Court of Appeals, and they said, yes, there is plenty of evidence to support that they have supported radical Islamic terrorism.

So those coconspirators have been a great help to this administration in advising them of things that offended them as, apparently, coconspirators to support radical Islamic terrorism.

Some years back, when we found out the FBI training materials had been completely purged of any information that CAIR found objectionable, we wanted to see those documents.

□ 1315

But we were told that they had been classified. The documents, the training materials, that were cut from what FBI trainees could see, they classified them because they didn't want the country to know how ridiculous some of the things that were removed from the training material were when trying to train people on what radical Islam was.

Because they are classified, I can't say specifically what training materials were removed. But I can make the

global statement that, to me, if a student training to be an FBI agent is needing to learn about the most radical enemy of the United States that has been—some of my Muslim friends in the Middle East and North Africa have said: They have been at war with you since 1979, and you are still helping them. We don't get it.

Well, this administration not only helps those coconspirators, they listen and are sensitive to anything the coconspirators supporting terrorism find to be troublesome.

But, to me, if you have, say, a verse from what they call the Holy Koran and you are showing FBI agents Scripture that a radical Islamic terrorist holds as Gospel and that the percentage of Muslims who have taken this radical Islamic path utilized to help radicalize themselves and others, that would be something an FBI agent should know.

But, unfortunately, since CAIR objects to FBI trainees knowing verses from the Koran that have helped radicalize Muslims into becoming radical Islamic terrorists, it makes it tough to really be a well-informed FBI agent.

Even if you are in the FBI and you happen to know some of those Scriptures, even though they have been blotted out, hypothetically speaking, from training materials, you know you have got to keep your mouth shut because anybody in the FBI, Justice Department, CIA, any of our intelligence agencies, that makes the political or occupational mistake in this administration of pointing out some truth about radical Islamic terrorism, their career will be over, as my friend—and I can now call his name, since he has retired—after he knew so much, tried to warn so many about radical Islam, about groups within radical Islam, including the ones that conducted the terrorism murders in California, tried to warn, provided information.

But since his information was offensive to radical Islamic terrorists, then he had to be purged from Homeland Security. A man that helped start Homeland Security, had been with them from the beginning, who had won acclaim and notoriety within Homeland Security for identifying hundreds of people with terrorist ties, became a problem.

I tried to work with him for a number of years. We couldn't get enough assistance. No assistance in the administration. We knew they would come after him. So we were privately trying to help this would-be whistleblower go through proper channels.

When Homeland Security and Congress recommended he go file an IG complaint, I knew it was a mistake. We should have taken action ourselves. But he filed the IG complaint.

The IG's office in Homeland Security had already been condemned for alter-

ing an IG report in order to protect the administration. They were going to do an investigation on thousands of pages of records that linked some people that advised this administration with terrorists and terrorist organizations? They deleted those thousands of pages?

I knew that, if he filed an IG complaint, they would come after him because the evidence was so damning for this administration that they would do what they always do.

You don't go after the people that are conspiring to harm America. You go after the whistleblower who has blown the whistle on your callousness toward those who would hurt America. And they did, even having a grand jury empanelled to just harass and destroy the personal lives of him and his wife.

This man is a patriot. Phil Haney is a patriot. He should have been getting all kinds of awards, not just one letter commending him for finding all these terrorist ties. Instead, they go after him.

And the grand jury, after they have probed every orifice, figuratively speaking, that they possibly could, couldn't come up with anything.

So then they put him in, basically, a closet, gave him no responsibility, in essence, forcing him to go ahead and retire, which he has.

This is no way to treat one of the most wonderful and intelligent patriots I have ever met. His wife ended up in the hospital during all that harassment by Homeland Security and the Justice Department.

But that is what this administration does. If you are a coconspirator, according to the courts, in supporting radical Islamic terrorism, then we want you as an adviser to this administration.

If you are going to blow the whistle, say, on potential perpetrators of the Boston massacre at the Marathon or the California terrorism that could have been prevented had they properly followed up on the warnings from Philip Haney, you go after the heroes, go after the patriots, and allow the supporters, according to the courts, of radical Islamic terrorism to be your advisers.

So, with that background, Mr. Speaker, I see this article today. It was published on 25 February 2016 by Allum Bokhari from Breitbart. The title is "FBI Scrubs References to Islam from Anti-Radicalization Game After CAIR Complaints."

Okay. So CAIR, this named coconspirator supporting radical Islam that two Federal courts said absolutely there is plenty of evidence to support that, not only does this administration not prosecute them, but they have a wonderful office right down the street.

In fact, I saw some of them at a hearing this week that Chairman GOODLATTE called in the Judiciary Committee. It was an excellent hearing ex-

ploring the naming of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist activity.

So the Muslim Brotherhood, CAIR, I mean, you know, are two peas in a pod. So of course CAIR is going to be there at the hearing, and they were. One of them was kind enough to wave at me. Nice to be recognized.

So the article says: "Earlier this month, the FBI launched Don't Be A Puppet, a browser-based video game designed to counter recruitment propaganda from violent extremists."

We call them violent extremists because this administration will not call them the radical Islamic terrorists that they are.

Our Muslim leader friends in the Middle East and in North Africa, not in our public meetings, but in the private meetings, are appalled that this administration won't call it what it is because it makes it difficult for peace-loving Muslims to say: This is a part of Islam we need help stamping out. They can't say that when this administration is saying it is actually not part of Islam.

So people can be comforted. The named coconspirators for radical Islamic terrorism objected to radical Islam being mentioned in this game to try to stop radical Islamist converters or people being converted. And so the FBI has now removed and replaced references to Islam and Islamic terrorism on the site.

"The FBI originally intended to launch the site in November, but progress was stalled by CAIR's complaints. At the time, the Islamic lobby complained that the Web site, which is targeted at young people at risk of extremist recruitment"—that is code for radical Islamic recruitment—"would lead to the 'stigmatization' and 'bullying' of young Muslims. CAIR also contended that the Web site should instead focus on rightwing extremists, which they argued were a greater threat to American youth."

And parenthetically inserting here, of course, radical Islamists are not a threat to America. Oh, yeah. They tried to blow up a plane on Christmas Day, the Christmas bomber, the underwear bomber, yeah, radical Islamist.

Oh, yeah. They were behind the bombing of Americans at the Boston Marathon. Oh, yeah. They killed all those people in San Bernardino.

And oh, yeah, our FBI Director says there are Islamic State cells and investigations in every State in the union, but since this coconspirator to support radical Islam is objecting to using the term "Islam" or "radical Islam," we can't refer to that.

So we have to start talking about rightwing radicals, this Clinton-esque, rightwing conspiracy that we later found out actually was not a rightwing conspiracy at all. It was a relationship between a President and an intern.

And you can be sure your sins will find you out from the stains it leaves.

But the article goes on: "The game still includes a scenario where players are invited to go on an 'overseas mission'—but the character's Arabic name has been replaced with a western-sounding one, (Sean S)."

Oh, my dear friend Sean Hannity's name is Sean. So it was nice of them to put the initial S there after Sean so they wouldn't think of Sean Hannity, the most popular Sean in America.

But how wonderful that this radical Islamic game is now using the name Sean. That is lovely.

Anyway, no longer radical Islamic name.

But the article says: "The FBI also appears to have heeded CAIR's advice to focus on rightwing extremists, with a new example featuring a 'white supremacist rally' where players are told to commit violent acts in the name of white supremacy."

"According to the IJ Review, 'the new version of the game does not mention Islam, Muslims, or any particulars of Islamic ideology or targets at all, aside from the usual disclaimers that ISIS does not represent mainstream Islam.'"

□ 1330

"While the FBI avoids mentioning the terrorist group at CAIR's behest, the Islamic State remains among the largest terrorist hubs in the world, with recent estimates from the U.S. intelligence community putting its number of foreign recruits at approximately 30,000."

"Still, you never know, the FBI may be right to shift focus. Maybe animal rights activists are planning to set up their own terrorist state too?"

I hadn't thought about that. Maybe animal rights activists are out there planning some massive international caliphate starting in Syria and Libya, and, boy, do they want Egypt back. That is why the Muslim Brotherhood is fighting so hard to overcome our friend. And when I say "our," I am not including the President. I know there is no love lost there. Why? Because President el-Sisi there in Egypt is a Muslim who has stood up to radical Islam. That does not endear him to this administration.

So it is important to note where we are. I think it is also an indication as to why so many Americans are concerned about where our country is and how fundamentally it has been transformed for the worse. There is more racial tension.

I understand Karl Rove was accused of doing some division politics where you find a group, divide the group against each other, and you know the majority will be on your side. You create groups. But this administration has been the master of division politics even though it has created more racial strife than we have had since the sixties and even though we had a Nation

that elected an African American President. I have talked probably to thousands of people who have said: Well, I voted for President Obama because I wanted to be able to say that I voted for the first African American President.

What happened to Martin Luther King's dream of a day in America when we are judged by the content of our character, not the color of our skin? For heaven's sake, to elect a man because of his race is as racist as any of the wackos in America who indeed actually are racist. You shouldn't be electing somebody because of the color of their skin. Elect them because of who they are, what they believe, and whether they will help the country. We have seen the divisions in this country.

We have seen more debt arise than was ever imaginable. How can a man accuse George W. Bush of being unpatriotic because in 2006, for heaven's sake, we had a \$160 billion deficit, about \$160 billion or so more going out than we had coming in? That is un-American. That is unpatriotic. He is accusing George W. Bush. And what happens? He becomes President, and he demands a \$1.6 trillion deficit.

So if Bush were unpatriotic for having a budget that helped create \$160 billion deficit—obviously, it is Congress that passes the ultimate budget, with no thanks to the Senate. But I guess that makes it 10 times more unpatriotic for anyone who supports a budget that creates 10 times more of a deficit.

It is interesting that Americans have gotten so upset in this election cycle. Some are actually scared. Some of them reflect the opinion that I have mentioned that I heard from a senior gentleman from Togo, Africa, when I was visiting there in years past. Before I left, he wanted to meet me and visit with me.

As he explained: "We were so excited here when you elected your first Black President. But since he has been President, we have seen America grow weaker and weaker. And please tell people in Washington"—so I keep telling people here, Mr. Speaker, I want them to know what he said. "Since he has been President, we have seen America grow weaker and weaker. And when America is weaker, we suffer."

They are Christians. They know where they are going when they die. But he was making emphatically clear that, as America has gotten weaker and weaker in this administration and there is more domestic division in this country under this President, friends around the world are suffering more than ever before. There are more Christians being persecuted than ever in history and more Jews being persecuted than ever in history.

Despite this administration's repeated statements about all of the hate crimes against Muslims, the FBI statistics do not, have not, and will not

bear that out. It is not Muslims in America that are the number one victims of hate crimes. Try looking at Jews. Try looking at others, because it is not the Muslims.

So it begins to be a bit offensive as more Christians are being persecuted and killed in the world than ever at any time in our world history to continually defend those whom courts have said are coconspirators in persecuting Christians and Jews. It is basically anathema to what America has been and thought in the past.

So as that has gone on and people have gotten so upset, it has been amazing to see an ally in Congress, TED CRUZ, being attacked for being for amnesty. I was here. I was thrilled when TED CRUZ got elected. I had known him. I knew he was brilliant and I knew he was truthful, so I was thrilled. A number of us would meet sometimes at his office, sometimes other places, trying to strategize: How do we stop the Republican establishment's caving in and doing the will of the administration to allow a massive amnesty?

We knew the administration was not enforcing the border properly. We knew that they were allowing people in in droves; and the more they came in illegally, the more others heard that you can come in illegally. As one of the border patrolmen told me in the wee hours of the morning:

We are called logistics by the drug cartels and the gangs in Mexico. All they say they have to do is get people across the river and Homeland Security is logistics. We ship them anywhere they want to go.

There is a great deal of truth to that.

So it has been amazing to see this reinvention of what really happened back in those days.

We had a fantastic election in Florida where our friend was elected there, a Tea Party favorite. Thank goodness. We were so thrilled, because it meant because of his promises we had another ally in the Senate that would help us stop the Republican establishment's cave to the Obama administration's desire for amnesty.

CHUCK SCHUMER, for all he is, he actually can be quite persuasive. And JOHN MCCAIN, for all his efforts in 2007 that nearly cost him a chance to be the nominee so he could lose in defeat to the Democrats, his push for amnesty in 2007 nearly kept him from being the nominee to lose in the general election. Gosh, if he had continued to push his amnesty, he would not have gotten the nomination. Who knows? Maybe Barack Obama would not have won in 2008. It is interesting to think about.

I was looking at this article by Sarah Rumpf back in January of 2015. She had been asking about problems that I had, and I pointed out, I referred back to broken promises by our Speaker and why we needed a new Speaker, and it was the same Republican establishment problem we had had.

As the article says, one of the biggest broken promises included “promising to ‘fight tooth and nail’ against Obama’s executive amnesty orders, but then allowing the CR/Omnibus bill to proceed forward.”

But it wasn’t just that. It was so much that had been going on for a number of years. So there was no one who felt more dejected than our little group that was gathering regularly trying to come up with ways to slow down the Gang of Eight bill because we knew that once this handsome, young, articulate guy that had just been elected from Florida was talked into being the leader on the bill—very clever getting him to be the leader on the bill—we knew it was going to be a very, very, very difficult thing to stop.

Going back, here is an article from April 15 of 2013 by Byron York of the Washington Examiner: “A Look Deep Inside the Gang of Eight Bill—and How They’ll Sell Immigration Reform to Conservatives.”

He points out regarding this Gang of Eight bill, he says: “Of course some in the GOP are still panicked by last November’s election results and will be inclined to sign on to almost any deal. But many of the more conservative Republican lawmakers on Capitol Hill will have to be convinced that the Gang’s proposal is an acceptable way to go. It won’t be easy.”

Anyway, he points out that, “Starting this week, with the release of the bill, the Gang will launch an extensive public information campaign”—with Senator RUBIO leading—“lots of press releases, frequently asked questions, and fact sheets specifically addressing the concerns about reform that conservatives have raised in recent months.”

It also talks about, “The GOP Gang”—the GOP Gang of Eight, he is talking about—“members know full well that the Federal Government has promised all those measures and more over the years, and the border is still not secure and businesses still hire illegal immigrants. For example, Congress has passed multiple laws requiring entry-exit systems similar to what the Gang will propose, and the system has never been built. So Gang members know that conservatives, at least, will be skeptical.”

“The answer the Gang hopes will reassure those skeptics is the concept of triggers. They’ve set up three points at which the bill’s requirements will have to be met before the process”—of amnesty is what he is talking about—“can continue.”

But anyway, it goes on and discusses the Gang of Eight bill.

Americans had heard these promises before, going back to 1986 when a hero of mine and a hero of my friend DANA ROHRBACHER, who was a former speechwriter, got talked into signing off on an amnesty that turned Cali-

fornia blue probably for the rest of my lifetime. That was a Republican President that got tricked into doing that. They got the amnesty, never got the enforcement. And that is what the Gang of Eight bill was going to do. Americans knew it, but we had to fight it like crazy.

So anyway, I just find it interesting, as someone who met with Senator CRUZ on a regular basis trying to strategize, my friend, STEVE KING, and I met in his office sometimes about all of these efforts to stop this Gang of Eight bill that would have given amnesty.

Here is another, from June 11, 2013, “‘Gang of Eight’ Immigration Bill Clears Senate Hurdle.” I know Senator CRUZ was doing all he could to stop it—greatly appreciated. Actually, if they hadn’t slowed that down, that gave us the ability to slow it down even further.

Here is an article from The Daily Signal by Amy Payne and Kelsey Lucas, June 24—my anniversary—2013. It talked about that Gang of Eight bill now has “ballooned to 1,190 pages.” That makes it what you would call comprehensive.

As I pointed out to friends before, when you hear the words “comprehensive bill,” the loose definition of a comprehensive bill in Congress is one in which some people want to hide things that could never possibly get passed if people knew what they were voting on. So it is comprehensive and massive so you can hide those things that could never pass on their own if people knew what they were voting on.

So it is amazing to see in politics how perception that is completely false can be considered true just because people are saying it. I know. I was here, and I am grateful that TED CRUZ got elected. Without his advice, his meeting with us, encouraging, doing all he could in the Senate, I don’t believe we would have stopped amnesty, and I don’t believe this election would even be competitive. The Democratic nominee would walk away with this thing had the Gang of Eight bill been passed as they wanted.

Mr. Speaker, might I inquire how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YOUNG of Iowa). The gentleman from Texas has 7 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOHMERT. One other thing that has been really intriguing, Mr. Speaker, this verse has been quoted time and time again in recent years. I know there are people that freak out when I quote Bible verse because they had one of these liberal teachers that didn’t teach them the truth about American history and the fact that the Bible has been the most quoted book—nothing even close—so many times more than any other book or any other author ever in American history. The Bible has been quoted on the House floor and

Senate floor by Presidents more than any other book.

□ 1345

The President says we are not a Christian Nation. I used to say I won’t debate that, and now I think he is right. But we were. We started out based on Judeo-Christian principles, so much so that a very thorough decision by the U.S. Supreme Court back in the late 1800s, when we had finally done the right thing and eliminated the scourge to this Nation that had held this Nation back for many decades, called slavery, was finally ended.

The Supreme Court went through all of the foundations, the Founders, the statements of the Founders, statements and founding documents, statements of State constitutions, and concluded after all of the recitation of evidence—130, 140 years later—they said: This is a Christian Nation. Well, it was back in the late 1800s.

It doesn’t hurt to still quote scripture. We have other religions represented in the House—friends. You can be Muslim, Buddhist, atheist, agnostic, whatever you want to be. I have got a number of really wonderful Jewish friends in Congress. You can be whatever you want to be because a government based on Judeo-Christian principles will protect everyone’s rights.

Islam will not protect rights like that. There is really not another religion that, beliefs of which, will protect every religion, no religion, equally. That is because we know. God gives us those choices. So who are we to take them away?

Back in 2 Chronicles, the verse is very clear, and God was pointing this out. I realize Moses—it is up there, the only full face profile here in this room—was considered the greatest lawgiver of all times, although the Supreme Court last summer basically said: Forget what Moses said and God said. He didn’t know what he was talking about. When Jesus quoted Moses about marriage, he didn’t know what he was talking about. They were a bunch of fools. They didn’t know. We are much smarter than Moses and Jesus. Now our Supreme Court majority is our God.

But 2 Chronicles 7:14: “If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

I preached a sermon on that last summer entitled “Humble or Crumble.” We do need to humble ourselves as a Nation, but we don’t even have to do it as a Nation. It makes clear it is not everybody. It doesn’t have to be everybody in America. Just those who are called by the Lord’s name. If you humble yourself, pray, see God’s face, turn from your wicked ways: I will

hear from heaven, I am going to heal your land. You will be blessed beyond.

I really think that after the Civil War and we finally ended the scourge of slavery, that is when we started being blessed beyond measure. So the 20th century was just absolutely incredible, and we became a superpower blessed beyond measure. When we became a superpower, of course, like so many times in history, nations that were begun on the Judeo beliefs, once they turned from acknowledging God, then God let them go.

That is why Christians had believed this was such an important verse. I have heard it thousands of times in recent years.

I just have to note, Mr. Speaker, it is interesting now that Christian leaders across the Nation have said: I think we are going to have to change this. Let's have a new translation. How about if we say: If my people are called by my name, we'll select a leader who says he has never humbled himself, he has never asked forgiveness of God. If we can just get a leader who will never humble himself, then God will hear that from heaven and he will heal our land.

I want to close with these words from Francis Scott Key, April 14, 1814. As a captive on a British ship and the British unmercifully bombed Fort McHenry, he didn't figure there was much left. When the morning came and there was Old Glory, he penned The Star Spangled Banner.

I will close with the last verse, Mr. Speaker:

"O! thus be it ever, when free men shall stand Between their loved home and the war's desolation; Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the Heav'n-rescued land Praise the Pow'r that hath made, and preserved us as a Nation! Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just; And this be our motto, 'In God is our trust!' And the star spangled banner in triumph shall wave O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!"

May we remember those words.

I yield back the balance of my time.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 238. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to authorize the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to issue oleoresin capicum spray to officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on February 25, 2016, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 890. To revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida.

H.R. 3262. To provide for the conveyance of land of the Illiana Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Danville, Illinois.

H.R. 4056. To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States to the property known as "The Community Living Center" at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida.

H.R. 4437. To extend the deadline for the submittal of the final report required by the Commission on Care.

H.R. 487. To allow the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma to lease or transfer certain lands.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, February 29, 2016, at noon for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4478. A letter from the Director, BPMS, Agricultural Research Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes to Fees and Payment Methods (RIN: 0518-AA05) received February 25, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4479. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's affirmation of interim rule as final rule — Golden Nematode; Removal of Regulated Areas in Orleans, Nassau, and Suffolk Counties, New York [Docket No.: APHIS-2015-0040] received February 25, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4480. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Report to Congress on the Study on Raising the Minimum Age to Purchase Tobacco Products, pursuant to Public Law 111-31 Sec. 104(2); (123 Stat. 1841); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4481. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Quality: Revision to the Regulatory Definition of Volatile Organic Compounds — Requirements for t-Butyl Acetate [EPA-HQ-OAR-2013-0795; FRL-9942-80-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AR65) received February 25, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4482. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agen-

cy's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Utah; Revisions to the Utah Division of Administrative Rules, R307-300 Series; Area Source Rules for Attainment of Fine Particulate Matter Standards [EPA-R08-OAR-2014-0369; FRL-9935-54-Region 8] received February 25, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4483. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; Prevention of Significant Deterioration; Fine Particulate Matter [EPA-R03-OAR-2016-0006; FRL-9942-90-Region 3] received February 25, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4484. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of Iowa's Air Quality Implementation Plans; Iowa Plan for the 2008 Lead Standard [EPA-R07-OAR-2015-0582; FRL-9942-79-Region 7] received February 25, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4485. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — D-Glucitol, 1-deoxy-1-(methylamino)—, N-C8-10 acyl derivatives; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0249; FRL-9942-43] received February 25, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4486. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Federal Plan Requirements for Sewage Sludge Incineration Units Constructed on or Before October 14, 2010 [EPA-HQ-OAR-2012-0319; FRL-9940-50-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AR77) received February 25, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4487. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Trifloxystrobin; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0709; FRL-9941-92] received February 25, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4488. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Addition of Certain Persons and Modification of Certain Entries to the Entity List; and Removal of Certain Persons from the Entity List [Docket No.: 151209999-5999-01] (RIN: 0694-AG81) received February 25, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4489. A letter from the Chairman, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting the Commission's Annual Performance Report for FY 2015, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1116(a); Public Law 111-352, Sec. 4; (124 Stat. 3871); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4490. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's 2015 Annual Report, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3515(a); Public Law 101-576, Sec. 303(a); (104 Stat. 2849); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4491. A letter from the Architect of the Capitol, transmitting the Semiannual Report of Disbursements for the operations of the Architect of the Capitol for the period of July 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 1868a(a); Public Law 113-76, div. I, title I, Sec. 1301(a); (128 Stat. 428) (H. Doc. No. 114—108); to the Committee on House Administration and ordered to be printed.

4492. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's Report of Lobbying Disclosure Act Enforcement for January 1, 2012, through June 30, 2015, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 1605(b)(1) Public Law 104-65, as amended by Public Law 110-81; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4493. A letter from the Executive Director, World War I Centennial Commission, transmitting the Commission's Periodic Report for the period ending December 31, 2015, pursuant to Public Law 112-272, Sec. 5(b)(1); (126 Stat. 2450); jointly to the Committees on Financial Services, Natural Resources, and Oversight and Government Reform.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. MENG (for herself, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ROSENLEHTINEN, and Mr. DEUTCH):

H.R. 4633. A bill to modify and extend reporting requirements on the use of certain Iranian seaports by foreign vessels and use of foreign airports by sanctioned Iranian air carriers; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CALVERT:

H.R. 4634. A bill to direct the United States Postal Service to designate a single, unique ZIP Code for Eastvale, California; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4635. A bill to provide for a prescription drug take-back program for members of the Armed Forces and veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, the Judiciary, and Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MULLIN (for himself, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. SENSENBRENNER):

H.R. 4636. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to require agencies to respond to comments from congressional committees about proposed rulemaking, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SANFORD (for himself and Mr. MCCLINTOCK):

H.R. 4637. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to permit the Government of Puerto Rico to opt out of the applicable Federal minimum wage under such Act; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. GARRETT (for himself and Mr. CHABOT):

H.R. 4638. A bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to allow for the creation of venture exchanges to promote liquidity of venture securities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. BLUM (for himself and Mr. MEADOWS):

H.R. 4639. A bill to reauthorize the Office of Special Counsel, to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide modifications to authorities relating to the Office of Special Counsel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. JOLLY (for himself, Ms. TITUS, Mr. ABRAHAM, and Ms. GABBARD):

H.R. 4640. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a review of the deaths of certain veterans who died by suicide, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana (for herself and Mr. KENNEDY):

H.R. 4641. A bill to provide for the establishment of an inter-agency task force to review, modify, and update best practices for pain management and prescribing pain medication, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. COLLINS of New York (for himself and Mr. MCNERNEY):

H.R. 4642. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a Medicare diabetic eye disease prevention and early treatment demonstration project; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself and Mr. HONDA):

H.R. 4643. A bill to improve the literacy and English skills of limited English proficient individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 4644. A bill to establish dual language education programs in low-income communities; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 4645. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide support to environmental justice communities and environmental justice projects; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. LOFGREN (for herself, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. HOYER, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. HONDA, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CARDENAS, Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. VARGAS, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. POLIS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mrs. TORRES, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. NORTON, Ms. HAHN, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. GALLEG0, Ms. MOORE, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. SIREs, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DOGETT, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. KIND, Mr. COHEN, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr.

CASTRO of Texas, Mr. NADLER, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. CAPPS, and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ):

H.R. 4646. A bill to provide access to counsel for children and other vulnerable populations; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER (for himself, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 4647. A bill to establish regulatory relief for certain financial institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. PASCARELL, Mr. HOYER, and Mr. REICHERT):

H. Con. Res. 120. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the 3rd Annual Fallen Firefighters Congressional Flag Presentation Ceremony; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 4633.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. CALVERT:

H.R. 4634.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress).

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4635.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I; Section 8; Clause 1 of the Constitution states The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . .

By Mr. MULLIN:

H.R. 4636.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 1 of the U.S. Constitution states: All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

By Mr. SANFORD:

H.R. 4637.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GARRETT:

H.R. 4638.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 ("The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect

Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States"), 3 ("To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes"), and 18 ("To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof")

By Mr. BLUM:

H.R. 4639.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4640.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution

By Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana:

H.R. 4641.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. COLLINS of New York:

H.R. 4642.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 4643.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Const. art. I, §§1 and 8.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 4644.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Const. art. I, §§1 and 8.

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 4645.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Ms. LOFGREN:

H.R. 4646.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 of the Constitution.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER:

H.R. 4647.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS TO PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 93: Mr. PALLONE.

H.R. 267: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 528: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.

H.R. 539: Ms. MENG.

H.R. 542: Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H.R. 592: Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 699: Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H.R. 802: Mr. STIVERS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. YODER, and Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 816: Mr. LABRADOR.

H.R. 932: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 986: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.

H.R. 997: Mr. YOHO.

H.R. 1170: Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 1292: Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 1343: Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 1397: Mr. HENSARLING.

H.R. 1399: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, and Mr. ZELDIN.

H.R. 1488: Mrs. HARTZLER and Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 1602: Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 1769: Mr. ABRAHAM.

H.R. 1941: Mr. CONNOLLY.

H.R. 1977: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 1995: Mr. BLUM.

H.R. 2124: Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, and Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 2197: Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 2227: Mr. MOULTON.

H.R. 2246: Mr. GUINTA.

H.R. 2264: Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. NOLAN, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 2268: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2367: Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 2403: Mr. NORCROSS.

H.R. 2515: Mr. DEFazio, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. MOULTON, and Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 2655: Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 2656: Mr. PERLMUTTER and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 2698: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.

H.R. 2737: Miss RICE of New York and Mr. BECERRA.

H.R. 2805: Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 2896: Mr. CHABOT.

H.R. 2901: Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 2939: Mr. CONYERS and Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 2963: Mr. VISCLOSKEY.

H.R. 3012: Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 3071: Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 3080: Mr. BUCHANAN.

H.R. 3099: Mr. TAKANO, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 3110: Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 3235: Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. MOORE, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. TSONGAS, and Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 3250: Mr. HUFFMAN and Mr. KATKO.

H.R. 3307: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 3463: Mr. BLUM.

H.R. 3515: Mr. WOMACK.

H.R. 3566: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 3779: Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 3817: Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 3818: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 3861: Mr. BERA, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. DONOVAN, and Mr. WOMACK.

H.R. 3865: Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 3879: Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 3892: Mrs. HARTZLER and Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 3917: Mr. WELCH, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. LEE, Mr. GUTHRIE, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 3926: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 4073: Mrs. DINGELL and Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 4088: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 4126: Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 4132: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 4134: Mr. ZINKE.

H.R. 4219: Mr. GOSAR and Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 4238: Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 4249: Ms. FUDGE.

H.R. 4262: Mr. COLLINS of New York and Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 4277: Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 4281: Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 4293: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. NUNES, and Mr. REICHERT.

H.R. 4294: Mr. ZINKE, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. NUNES, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 4305: Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 4320: Ms. DUCKWORTH.

H.R. 4336: Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. BUCK, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 4361: Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 4376: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRAYSON, and Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 4380: Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 4381: Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 4430: Mr. BLUM, Mr. COLE, and Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 4436: Mr. CURBELO of Florida and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 4446: Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 4474: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 4479: Mr. HONDA, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 4480: Mr. BEYER and Ms. LEE.

H.R. 4499: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.

H.R. 4526: Ms. WILSON of Florida and Mr. COLE.

H.R. 4533: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 4539: Ms. DUCKWORTH and Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 4540: Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 4550: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.

H.R. 4570: Mr. GIBSON, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.

H.R. 4571: Ms. BASS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. LEE, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 4582: Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. MCCLINTOCK.

H.R. 4585: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. NOLAN, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 4592: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. CAPUANO, and Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 4597: Mr. KING of Iowa and Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 4598: Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 4599: Mr. TONKO, Ms. TSONGAS, and Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 4601: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 4611: Ms. BASS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. HONDA, Mr. NADLER, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. LEE, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. ELLISON, and Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 4615: Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. BERA, Mr. THOMPSON of California, and Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 4620: Mr. MESSER.

H. Con. Res. 19: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. LONG and Mr. GOSAR.

H. Res. 346: Mr. PEARCE.

H. Res. 417: Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H. Res. 432: Miss RICE of New York.

H. Res. 591: Mr. KLINE, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, and Mr. KING of Iowa.

H. Res. 615: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. BRAT and Mr. YOHO.

H. Res. 616: Mr. PAYNE, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. GRAHAM, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. PLASKETT, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Ms. MENG.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN HONOR OF THE FILIPINO
WOMEN'S CLUB OF SALINAS

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Filipino Women's Club of Salinas (FWCS) on the occasion of its 86th Anniversary. The FWCS has been a pillar of Central Coast community service through most of the 20th Century, and exemplifies its motto of faith, worth, courage, and service. I am confident that the leadership and members of the FWCS have the vision, skill, and motivation to carry the organization forward into the 21st Century.

The FWCS grew out of the struggles of Filipino farm workers for recognition and fair treatment in the early 20th Century. Many of the Filipino immigrants who came to California in the years around WWI gravitated to farm work in the Salinas and Central Valleys. In the Salinas Valley, some of the more enterprising fieldworkers had developed their own abilities to manage teams of workers and the regions' growers began to work with them as labor contractors. Most of these successful contractors were married—a rarity in that time given the laws that limited the immigration of Filipino women and interracial marriage. These wives cared for and counseled many Filipino field workers, most of whom had no family in the United States. Thus many Pinoy workers enjoyed the support of a surrogate mother or big sister.

This economic success led many Filipinos to become active in the civic life of the Salinas Valley. Filipinos started businesses, founded churches, and even published a Filipino community newspaper, the Philippines Mail. The leaders of this civic activism founded the FWCS as an extension of this passion for community service. One of the early FWCS presidents, Paulina Morales, was emblematic of that spirit. She organized a Filipino youth marching band, promoted Filipino folk music performances, and generally brought Filipino culture to the general public.

As the decades passed, the FWCS build on this foundation to become an integral part of the Salinas Valley's community fabric. In the wake of WWII, the FWCS helped to support U.S. and Filipino veterans. It established a scholarship fund for local youth. Following the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in the Philippines, the FWCS raised funds to help the disaster's victims. And in just the last decade, the FWCS has joined in a civil society effort to support nation building in the Philippines.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply honored to represent this remarkable community of leaders. I know I speak for the whole House in recognizing the accomplishments and long tradition of service exemplified by the FWCS. I am con-

fident that this tradition will carry on for many years to come. Mabuhay!

SHIELD OF HONOR

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of a real American Hero, and the presentation of The Medal of Honor to United States Navy SEAL Chief Special Warfare Operator Edward Byers at The White House by President Obama. I ask that this poem penned in his honor by Albert Carey Caswell be placed in the RECORD.

All in the battle, all in the fight
When death looms so all in sight
When valor is on the rise, at its height
When who lives and dies, and lives to see another sunrise so all depends on you

Rescue me this night
To shield another with ones life
Is but the SEAL of Honor at its height
For such things Angels up on high are in flight

As truly stands at Honor's height
When, hearts of courage so ignite
Rescue me, rescue me this night
When the most courageous souls burn bright
While, all in the darkest hours they bring their light

Who with Strength In Honor win the fight
As there you stood Edward for all that's right

You and your Brothers In Arms,
with such magnificent hearts so warm in sight

So willing for each to lay down your life
Ode to be one of those men of honor who fight the fight

Who shield us all, with their call to duty in their most heroic lives

Bringing tears to the angels eyes
Whose loved ones at home worry and cry
So on this day Edward,

we bestow The Medal of Honor all in full sight

To teach our children well,
of what within hearts of Honor dwells so very bright

For men like you Edward live and die,
by an Honor Code so very high to win the fight

And do not ask why
All in service to Country Tis of Thee you strive

Who Shield us all as they stand tall with all their might

To rescue me all in the darkest nights
Who run towards the fight
This Medal of Honor America's Son,

we now bestow upon you this night
For your Shield of Honor,
while all in Honor's light

IN RECOGNITION OF THE VICTIMS
OF THE SUMGAIT POGROMS

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the Sumgait pogroms, one of the most horrific attacks against the Armenian people, committed at the hands of Azerbaijanis 28 years ago.

On February 27, 1988, hundreds of Armenian civilians living in the city of Sumgait in Azerbaijan were indiscriminately killed, raped, maimed, and even burned alive for no reason other than their ethnicity. This senseless violence was instigated by hostile, anti-Armenian rhetoric from Azerbaijani citizens and officials against innocent Armenians.

For nearly three decades, Azerbaijan has taken steps to cover up these crimes against humanity and dismiss the atrocities at Sumgait. Even more disturbing is that perpetrators of this event and similar violent attacks have since been lauded as national heroes.

I condemn these horrific attacks. Tragically, the Azerbaijani government's approach toward the Armenian people has not changed much since these attacks were perpetrated. In 2016, we hear the same violent rhetoric and witness the intimidation tactics by the Azerbaijani government against the people of Nagorno Karabakh.

If we do not condemn crimes against humanity and allow them to go unpunished and unrecognized we only strengthen the resolve of those seeking to perpetrate these crimes in the future. The Armenian people have known this for too long, as we prepare to commemorate the 101st anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in April.

I will continue to work with my colleagues on the Congressional Armenian Issues Caucus to remember the victims of the pogroms at Sumgait and to condemn all acts of violence against people who are targeted simply because of their existence. I hope my colleagues will join me in rejecting violent rhetoric and intimidation and renewing our commitment to achieving a collective peace.

HONORING CAAP CO. INC. AND
FOUNDER JIM MORAVECK AS
THEY CELEBRATE THEIR 40TH
ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand today to join the Milford community and the employees of CAAP

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

CO. Inc. as they celebrate the company's 40th Anniversary and pay tribute to its founder, Jim Moraveck.

Incorporated in 1976, Jim Moraveck founded CAAP Co. Inc. with the goal of providing the Air Force with a centralized source for the newly developed rain and high temperature resistant coating for their B-1 program. Their aerospace specification material was initially manufactured for the B-1 and F-16 aircraft. Ground-breaking design and research brought CAAP Co.'s color matched, antistatic, rain erosion resistant coatings, marking a new era in radome technology and providing the aircraft industry with the first truly antistatic coatings. Today, this small company continues to be an innovative leader in the development and manufacturing of specialty coatings for the F-35, F-22 and the F-18. What began as one man's vision of improving a product has become an international leader in the industry—that is what Yankee ingenuity is all about!

Over the last 40 years, CAAP Co. has earned many accolades for excellence as a small supplier. They have been recognized by Boeing, Northrup Grumman, and Vought Aircraft Industries just to name a few. This company exemplifies the greatest qualities of a Connecticut small business: innovation, reliability, and the remarkable leadership of Jim Moraveck. Jim has made enormous contributions to the aircraft coating industry, and has brought so much pride to our state, but more than that he has earned the trust, respect and admiration, not only of those companies he supplies, but of the employees that make up the CAAP Co. family.

The letter of invitation I received to the event celebrating this special anniversary was signed by each of the twenty-four employees and it read in-part: "Not only would we like to have Mr. Moraveck recognized for his technological advancements, but also for his commitment to being a wonderful boss and human being who continues to be passionate about the products his company develops. The loyalty of his employees is a testament to his dedication to CAAP Co., and his work. At 83 years old, he enjoys coming into work every day, and being involved in all aspects of his company." Those beautiful words of sentiment speak volumes about the person Jim Moraveck is and the incredible company he has successfully built from the ground up.

I am honored to join the CAAP Co. family in extending my sincere congratulations to Jim Moraveck as he marks this special 40th Anniversary milestone. Small businesses, like CAAP Co., are the backbone of thriving communities and I cannot thank Jim enough for his many outstanding contributions to the industry and the Milford community. My very best wishes for many more years of health, happiness, and success.

RECOGNIZING MRS. STEPHANIE DUFFY AS THE 2016 SANTA ROSA COUNTY, FLORIDA, TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mrs. Stephanie Duffy as the 2016 Santa Rosa County Teacher of the Year. For more than two decades, Mrs. Duffy has served the students of Gulf Breeze High School and Santa Rosa County with exceptional enthusiasm, an infectious positive attitude, and an unwavering commitment to academic excellence.

In Northwest Florida, we are blessed with an abundance of world-class educators and schools, as evidenced by the many schools in the Florida Panhandle that consistently receive the highest possible ratings each year from the State of Florida. Gulf Breeze High School is one of many exceptional schools in Northwest Florida, and for over 21 years, Mrs. Duffy has been integral to the success of Gulf Breeze High students, working tirelessly to fulfill the school's lofty motto to "Expect Excellence."

As a math teacher, Mrs. Duffy provides rigorous math instruction to hundreds of students each year in a wide-range of vital math subjects. Whether she is teaching Pre-Algebra, Algebra I Credit Recovery, Algebra I, Algebra II, Informal Geometry, Geometry, Geometry Honors, Analytic Geometry, Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus, or Math Analysis, Mrs. Duffy's assiduous work ethic and warm demeanor combine to create a learning environment where her students are simultaneously challenged and supported. By expecting excellence, and providing a positive environment for students to engage with important math subjects, Mrs. Duffy motivates her students to attain their educational goals and develop the math skills that our Nation needs in tomorrow's leaders.

While there is no question that Mrs. Duffy is an exceptional teacher in the classroom, she also goes the extra mile to ensure that her students are successful in both their academic and extracurricular endeavors, helping to build well-rounded students that will become future civic leaders. Mrs. Duffy is known for providing free tutoring sessions to any student that is looking for a little extra help to achieve their goals, or looking to excel beyond the curriculum. By making herself available both before and after school, Mrs. Duffy ensures that all the students who want additional instruction have an opportunity for extra learning. Mrs. Duffy also sponsors myriad extracurricular activities to give students a chance to grow and gain valuable life skills. As the sponsor of study body classes, the National Honor Society, the Optimist Club, and the Geometry Team, Mrs. Duffy demonstrates a constant commitment to her students, school, and the entire Northwest Florida community.

The importance of teachers is unquantifiable, and each and every teacher should be commended for their commitment to our Nation's future. Throughout her career as

a teacher, Mrs. Duffy has shown time and again that she understands the important position that teachers serve as role models for their students, and her incontrovertible commitment to professionalism extends beyond the boundaries of her classroom. Her success and the success of her students speaks for itself; however, her selection as Santa Rosa County Teacher of the Year, chosen from a large pool of extremely qualified applicants, is further reflection of Mrs. Duffy's tremendous work ethic and steadfast dedication to the students of Northwest Florida. She has proven to be among the many exceptional teachers in our Nation, and I am proud to have her as a constituent in Florida's First Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Mrs. Stephanie Duffy for her accomplishments and her continuing commitment to excellence at Gulf Breeze High School and in the Santa Rosa County School District. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Mrs. Duffy, and we wish her all the best for continued success.

IN RECOGNITION OF WINFRED PARNELL, M.D. ELECTED AS CHAIR OF PARKLAND BOARD

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Winfred Parnell, MD, a board certified physician in obstetrics and gynecology. On February 19, 2016, Dr. Parnell was named chairman of the Parkland Health & Hospital System Board of Managers. Dr. Parnell has been a pillar in the medical community and in 2004 he was named one of "The Best Doctors in Dallas" by D Magazine.

Dr. Parnell practices obstetrics and gynecology at Carlos and Parnell, MD, PA, a medical practice he cofounded more than 30 years ago. He serves as a regional director for Doctors of America and is a member of the Parkland Foundation Physicians Council. He also serves as a delegate to the Texas Medical Association as well as board of directors of BBVA Compass Bank Dallas. Dr. Parnell previously served as a board member of the Dallas County Medical Society and for more than 15 years served as a board trustee at Medical City Hospital Dallas.

A native Floridian, Dr. Parnell earned a bachelor's degree in pre-medical science at Florida A&M University in 1974 and a medical degree at the University of Florida College of Medicine in 1977. He completed residency training in obstetrics and gynecology at Parkland in 1982. Dr. Parnell and his wife, Debra, are the proud parents of twins, Winfred and Wendy. His daughter, Wendy Parnell, MD, completed residency training at Parkland in 2011 and practices obstetrics and gynecology. His son, Winfred Parnell, MD, is pursuing residency training in family medicine.

Dr. Parnell's dedication to the field of medicine has proven his willingness to serve his community. He is an exemplary physician and is highly regarded among his peers. It is an

honor to serve someone who has sacrificed so much for his community in the U.S. House of Representatives.

IN RECOGNITION OF ROBERT
FISHER

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Robert Fisher of Marshfield, MA on his 600th career win as a high school basketball coach and for the incredible work he has done to educate and inspire so many young people.

With over 35 years of experience as head coach, Coach Fisher has earned respect as one of the greatest coaches in Massachusetts history. As of this season, only three other boys' basketball coaches in the Commonwealth have reached the lofty heights of over 600 wins.

Coach Fisher's talents as a business teacher at Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School in Massachusetts and his efforts to cofound the basketball program at Bentley College where he had attended brought him to the attention of then-varsity basketball coach and athletic director of Rockland High, A. Scott MacKinlay. In 1966, Coach Fisher started off as assistant coach and by the start of the 1969-70 season was named as the new head coach by Principal MacKinlay. Coach Fisher, or "Fish" as he was known to his friends, went on to coach for 23 years off and on at Rockland High before moving to his alma mater in Quincy, MA for four years. He has since been successfully coaching in Marshfield, MA for 8 seasons.

Coach Fisher's success does not only show in his teams' wins. Perhaps his most incredible feat is that for 35 years his boys have been going to the state tournament and even won 2 titles in 1974 and 2004. For his tremendous efforts and passion of the sport, Coach Fisher has been enshrined in three different Halls of Fame—Rockland High, New England Basketball and Bentley College.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in honor of Coach Fisher, who exemplifies what it means to be a coach and role model for so many young men over the decades. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this distinguished educator and in wishing him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING PIPER-DANAY
SMITH ON RECEIVING THE CITIZEN
SCHOLAR AWARD FROM
MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Piper-Danay Smith, an outstanding student at Missouri State University, on her selection to receive the Citizen Scholar Award.

Each year, this prestigious award is given by Missouri State University's Board of Governors to students who have contributed to the university, furthered the university's public affairs mission, and have been significantly engaged in extra-curricular accomplishments and/or in important service activities in the community. Since the award was created in 2007, only forty-seven students have been recognized for their stellar achievements.

Piper-Danay, from Grandview, Missouri, was one of a handful of exceptional students to receive the award this year. She is a senior nursing major who plans to become a nurse and has further aspirations to eventually obtaining a doctorate degree. Described by her professor as a strong leader and role model, Piper-Danay has displayed a dedication to helping others that extends past her own career goals in order to serve the people in her community.

Mr. Speaker, Piper-Danay Smith's accomplishments have set a great example of what a Citizen Scholar should be. This award represents a great deal of her hard work and dedication. I am proud to represent students like her and I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating her on this well-deserved achievement.

IN HONOR OF ELLEN STOVALL

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Ellen Stovall, a true champion for cancer survivors.

For decades, Ellen worked tirelessly to improve the lives of people with cancer. She knew the issue well, having been diagnosed with cancer three times. Ellen died on January 5 from cardiac complications related to her cancer treatments.

On Wednesday, I joined her family, friends, and colleagues across the cancer advocacy community to mourn her loss, both in the professional sense and the personal. She was a woman who could really get things done; yet through all her hard work she never forgot the importance of relationships, comforting so many in some of our toughest hours.

When I think about Ellen, and the great deal she accomplished over the course of her life, I know there is truly so much to celebrate. She was a force. She looked around, found what needed to be fixed, and poured herself into doing it.

Ellen broke through the traditional silos in cancer—she has brought together the work of different disease types, patients and providers, researchers and drug developers, caregivers, and support workers. And she worked across the cancer spectrum, from basic research, clinical trials, treatment access, symptom management, and palliative care.

And in doing so she brought attention to survivorship.

"Survivorship became what I did," she once said. "I lived with the cancer, I lived through the cancer, and I lived beyond the cancer.

Survivorship became a way that I lived my life after the cancer. I live with the fact that I had cancer, and that knowledge has been empowering for me."

And in being a survivor, and dedicating herself to cancer survivorship issues, Ellen was able to amplify the community's impact in Washington and in communities across the country.

Her passion was contagious. She was smart and strategic, with excellent political acumen. But most important was Ellen's ability to connect with others, empathize with their situation, and put herself in their shoes. That ability informed her work—especially in support of cancer care planning.

The same tenacity she brought to her battle with cancer, she brought to the halls of Congress. The same passion she had for life, she brought to those she comforted as they underwent diagnosis and treatment. And she did it all with great humility. There are few, if any of us, who can say we have improved the lives of so many.

But Ellen's work—her calling—has been to change the system so that each of those individuals, and their families, might have a better experience.

Ellen had said it herself. She had the kind of coordinated care and roadmap that helped make the cancer journey a little bit easier. But she recognized that for far too many individuals facing a cancer diagnosis, this coordinated care planning is lacking or non-existent. She also recognized that there are health care providers who want to do more to help patients navigate their cancer journey, but are currently unable to do so.

So, like she had so many other times, Ellen rolled up her sleeves and got to work. And that is how our Planning Actively for Cancer Treatment—or PACT Act—was born. I am so honored to have worked with Ellen and NCCS as I authored this legislation with Congressman BOUSTANY from Louisiana. Our bipartisan bill would provide a treatment roadmap for patients that would lay out a plan to address both the cancer and the side-effects of treatment. This active care planning empowers patients and families while helping them navigate from diagnosis through survivorship. It helps bring cancer care best practices to all in need.

It is a testament to Ellen that she would dedicate her life to helping others get the care that they deserve, even when she was satisfied with her own. And it is something that I know so many in the cancer advocacy community will continue to champion on behalf of Ellen.

So with that, I am hopeful. Ellen might be gone, but in each of us, we know that her spirit lives on. Her commitment to improving the cancer journey lives on and her passion for life lives on.

I'd like to offer my condolences to her husband and son whose strength and support were always evident in Ellen's work. And I'd like to extend my sympathy to her friends and colleagues at NCCS and all the many organizations she partnered with.

Ellen will truly be missed, but we are still here to carry the torch and improve cancer care for all who need it.

RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY AS NATIONAL MARFAN AWARENESS MONTH

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in observance of February as National Marfan Awareness Month and to pay tribute to the hundreds of thousands of Americans who are living with Marfan syndrome and related connective tissue disorders.

I am proud to represent the nation's foremost organization working to support the Marfan community, The Marfan Foundation, based in Port Washington, New York. The Foundation was founded in 1981 by Priscilla Ciccariello, a woman of tremendous compassion and vision. Since then, The Marfan Foundation has worked tirelessly to improve the lives of individuals affected by Marfan syndrome and related connective tissue disorders by advancing research, raising awareness, and providing support.

It is estimated that 200,000 people in the United States are affected by Marfan syndrome or a related condition. Marfan syndrome is a genetic disorder of the connective tissue that can affect many areas of the body, including the heart, eyes, skeleton, lungs and blood vessels. It is a progressive condition and can cause deterioration in each of these body systems. The most serious and life-threatening aspect of the syndrome is a weakening of the aorta. The aorta is the largest artery carrying oxygenated blood from the heart. Over time, many Marfan syndrome patients experience a dramatic weakening of the aorta which can cause the vessel to dissect and tear.

Aortic dissection is a leading killer in the United States, and 20% of the people it affects have a genetic predisposition, like Marfan syndrome, to developing the complication. If patients receive an early and accurate diagnosis, the disease process can be slowed. However, due to a lack of education and awareness, physicians often do not diagnose a patient until an adverse cardiac event occurs.

High school athletes represent the most alarming group of individuals affected by adverse cardiac events, with an estimated incidence of once or twice per week. The inadequate health screening of athletes contributes annually to the untimely deaths of many young adults, especially those affected by structural cardiovascular abnormalities, such as Marfan syndrome. A recent example of the need for consistent cardiovascular screening guidelines is Isaiah Austin, who was diagnosed with Marfan syndrome when entering the National Basketball Association (NBA) Draft and thus previously unaware that he was at risk for sudden cardiac death during his entire scholastic basketball career.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me and The Marfan Foundation in raising awareness of this life-threatening disorder so we can prevent future unnecessary tragedies. I urge my colleagues to stand with me and reflect on what we can do to efficiently and effectively address this growing public health

concern of health screenings for high school athletes. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to increase support for health screening programs in public and private high schools throughout the nation that aim to identify this silent enemy of our young athletes.

HONORING THE TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH ON THE GREEN AS THEY CELEBRATE THEIR 200TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, in December of 1812, the Town Council of New Haven, Connecticut, voted to allow the construction of Trinity Episcopal Church on the town green. This vote represented a unique moment of tolerance and acceptance in the City's history as since its inception the community and indeed the state was controlled by the Congregational Church with deep Puritan roots. Four years later, construction of Trinity Episcopal Church, affectionately known locally as Trinity on the Green, was completed. Two hundred years later, the Gothic-style church, the first of its kind in North America, continues to proudly call the New Haven Green its home.

Over the course of its 200-year history, Trinity on the Green has been much more than simply a house of worship. Its parish members have also given back to the community, particularly through Chapel on the Green. Serving the homeless and others, every Sunday, 52 weeks a year, outdoors regardless of weather, Trinity offers a short Eucharist service followed by a simple lunch. Gathered participants sing, offer prayers, celebrate a simple Eucharist and partake of a meal. Throughout the year the services also include a foot washing clinic, handing out of socks and clothing, and a moving memorial to the homeless who have died the past year. Trinity on the Green also donates generous resources to a variety of charitable organizations and parish members can often be found volunteering throughout the City at soup kitchens and shelters.

Trinity on the Green is also home to the Trinity Choir of Men and Boys. With members as young as age eight and ranging to men well into adulthood, it is the oldest such choir in Connecticut, one of the oldest in the United States, and one of very few that have been in continuous service since inception. In addition to providing choral music at Trinity worship services, the Choir also performs at the Christmas and Spring Concerts as well as throughout events in the wider community. The dedication and talent of its membership has earned the Choir a distinguished reputation and they have regularly appeared with other well-known musical organizations. The youngest of the group have a separate identity as the Trinity Boys Choir and their service to the community is certainly something to be recognized. Their frequent outreach activities have included benefit performances for the Children's Center, Ronald McDonald House, Sage Services, Newington Children's Hospital, the

Fair Haven Parents' Ministry, the Smilow Cancer Center, and for WFSB Channel 3's annual Joy for Kids Holiday Show at the Hartford Stage. They have sung in the Cathedrals of the British Isles and have been invited to appear at five Christmastime celebrations at the White House.

Our churches play a vital role in our communities—providing people with a place to turn to for comfort and guidance when they are most in need. Trinity on the Green gives its members a place to find their spiritual center and to solidify and support their values. For 200 years, Trinity on the Green has been a fixture in our community—a poignant reminder of religious tolerance and acceptance. Their parish members are dedicated to making a difference in our community and have shown a remarkable dedication to serving those most in need. I am proud to stand today and extend my very best wishes to them as they mark this milestone in their history. Happy 200th Anniversary!

RECOGNIZING MS. KRISTY IMHOF AS THE 2017 ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA, TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Ms. Kristy Imhof as the 2017 Escambia County, Florida, Teacher of the Year. For more than a decade, Ms. Imhof has inspired her students through an enthusiastic teaching style that allows students to engage with their learning materials, develop their skills, and reach their highest potential.

Throughout her career as an educator, Ms. Imhof has exemplified many of the most important characteristics of a world-class educator. Upon graduating from Florida State University, Ms. Imhof began her teaching career at Emerald Coast Academy in Pensacola, developing a curriculum to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities, before joining the Escambia County School District as a seventh grade history teacher at Ransom Middle School in Pensacola. Ms. Imhof was at the forefront of educators integrating new technology into the teaching experience to help better engage her students to connect with our Nation's storied history, and during this time, she also led workshops with her fellow teachers to help them incorporate technology into their lesson plans.

Thanks in large part to her success leading her fellow coworkers at Ransom, Ms. Imhof then joined an educational consulting company, CompassLearning, where she was responsible for training teachers and administrators from Pensacola to Tallahassee on how to implement new plans to bring computers into the classroom and utilize the expanding array of educational software.

Like many great teachers, Ms. Imhof is also deeply committed to serving and improving her local community, as evidenced by her time spent as an English literacy and civics teacher at Santa Rosa Adult School in Milton. In this

capacity, she played an integral role in a new district program to improve academic achievement for students from non-English speaking homes, which included her simultaneously teaching civics lessons to non-English speaking parents, to better integrate them into the Northwest Florida community, and tutoring their children during school hours. In this capacity, Ms. Imhof consistently went above and beyond, conducting weekly home visits and serving as a liaison to bridge language and cultural gaps, thereby improving the educational experience, and as a result the academic achievements, of many Northwest Florida students.

In 2013, Ms. Imhof returned to Ransom Middle School, where she began her tenure in the Escambia County School District. In her current capacity as a seventh grade English teacher, Ms. Imhof strives to challenge and motivate her students to develop a passion for reading and language arts, while also focusing on how to translate their studies into real-world writing skills using extensive modeling and mentor texts. In addition to her success in the classroom, Ms. Imhof continues to be a leader amongst her peers, serving as a Mentor Teacher to help pass on the lessons she has learned to those entering the educational field. In addition, she also serves on the Interview Committee, is the Student of the Month Chairperson, Grade Level Treasurer, and Bostops for Education Coordinator, while also serving the Ransom student body further as the Cross Country Club Sponsor and Assistant Track Coach.

Teachers are amongst our Nation's most valuable public servants. Both in and out of the classroom, they help mentor their students and ensure that our next generation emerges ready to lead our Nation in the future. Ms. Imhof's assiduous work ethic, unbridled enthusiasm, creativity, and commitment to student engagement exemplify the characteristics of an extraordinary teacher, and her selection as the 2017 Escambia County Teacher of the Year is a well-deserved reflection of her success and leadership in and out of the classroom.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Ms. Kristy Imhof for her accomplishments and her continuing commitment to excellence at Ransom Middle School and in the Escambia County School District. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Ms. Imhof, and we wish her all the best for continued success.

CELEBRATING THE ALTOONA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION FOR 100 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Altoona City Planning Commission (APC) on its 100th year of service to the Altoona community.

The APC was officially introduced in a 1916 ordinance, by then-mayor Charles E. Rhodes, during a message to City Council. Shortly after

the official ordinance was introduced, the City Council unanimously passed it, thereby creating the Department of City Planning and the Altoona City Planning Commission. While the ordinance received unanimous backing from the council, it had previously faced political opposition. Thus, a great deal of thanks is due to those who provided concerted support for the planning commission's creation.

Today, the APC consists of a seven-member Board of area residents, which is appointed by the Mayor. Acting in an advisory role to the City Council, the APC helps direct the short and long-term development of the city. As such, I would like to express my appreciation and that of Altoona's residents to all those who have served on this Board throughout its 100 years of existence. I believe it is also worth highlighting that the APC is the longest continuously operating planning commission in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

I am privileged to congratulate the APC on a century of history and service to the Altoona community, and to thank all who have helped this commission continue its success.

IN RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA ORGANIZATION WEEK

HON. ROD BLUM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. BLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the young future farmers in the First District of Iowa celebrating the 2016 National Future Farmers of America Organization Week.

The National Future Farmers of America Organization, more commonly known as the FFA, formed in 1928 to provide an opportunity for young farmers to develop their leadership skills and embrace their profession in agriculture. Since that time, this organization has grown to be and mean so much more to the students that participate.

Through the FFA, middle and high school students are engaged in a wide range of curriculum and activities, preparing them for hundreds of different career opportunities in agriculture.

Across the country, the FFA provides a path to achievement for young men and women aspiring to be teachers, scientists, business owners, and other important professions within agriculture. The Future Farmers of America provides the skills necessary for the next generation of farmers to face challenges and develop their talents in an ever changing and dynamic field.

The Iowa Future Farmers of America has 14,800 students within 226 chapters across the state. I am proud of the job the Iowa FFA is doing training our young people and setting them on a rewarding path for career success in agriculture. Without a doubt, the FFA is preparing these next generation of Iowans to be innovators and leaders, as farming continues to evolve to meet the requirements of production necessary to feed our country.

I recognize them for their passion and achievements, and wish the organization and

the students all continued success for many more years.

HONORING THE LATE CHARLES E. CROWNSHIELD

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the late Mr. Charles E. Crownsfield of Port Kent, New York, who was extremely dedicated to community service.

Charlie spent 44 years of his life as the dock master for the Lake Champlain Transportation Company and lived his entire life in Port Kent, New York, located in New York's 21st Congressional District. Charlie will be remembered by the family and friends that surrounded him as a loyal and dedicated man, with a wonderful sense of humor and a deep faith.

Charlie devoted many years to organizations in his community including the Au Sable River Masonic Lodge #149, Keeseville Kiwanis, Town of Chesterfield Zoning Board of Appeals, the North Star Underground Railroad Museum and the Keeseville Elks Lodge. Charlie also served as the chair of the Town of Chesterfield Republican Committee and was a member of the Essex County Republican Committee.

Charlie often spoke of his two true loves, his wife Sue and politics. Charlie will be missed by many for his dedication to civics through his involvement in many local organizations in Upstate New York and beyond.

I thank Charlie's family for sharing him with the community and send them my most heartfelt condolences on his loss.

HONORING JOSEPH CARBONE ON THE CELEBRATION OF HIS 20TH ANNIVERSARY AS PRESIDENT & CEO OF THE WORKPLACE, INC.

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, It is with great pleasure that I rise today to join the friends and colleagues gathered this evening to pay tribute to Joseph Carbone as he marks his 20th Anniversary as President and CEO of the WorkPlace, Inc. It is an extraordinary milestone for Joe and this remarkable organization.

Under Joe's leadership, the WorkPlace has evolved into a nationally recognized leader in skill development and worker training. His innovative vision and approach has brought a myriad of unique programs to life, expanding the agency's capacity to assist our community's vulnerable populations and transforming countless lives. Successfully pursuing both government and private funding resources, Joe has ensured that the programs and services offered at the WorkPlace continue to

meet the ever-changing needs of those they serve.

Over the course of the last two decades, Joe and the WorkPlace have been at the forefront of innovative programming. The SWCT Works Assisted Services Center is the first of its kind and only one in Connecticut. It focuses on ensuring the American workforce system is accessible to people with disabilities. The WorkPlace has taken the initiative to provide veterans, including those who are homeless or incarcerated, a variety of job training, re-employment assistance and support services with a particular focus on opportunities in the green energy industry. Maturity Works is a program that helps unemployed people 55 or older, gain skills to reenter the workforce through paid community service opportunities.

Joe's crowning achievement is his program Platform to Employment, a privately funded program that created a pathway back to employment for individuals who have exhausted their maximum 99 weeks of unemployment benefits. P2E provides customized training in job skills, eight weeks of subsidized employment, personal support, and access to existing jobs open with local employers in several industries, including finance/banking, media, manufacturing, and entertainment. P2E gained Joe and the WorkPlace national attention as it took on a serious problem that impacted communities and families across the country.

With programs like these, the WorkPlace is more than simply a job resource center—it is a think tank for workforce solutions. Joe and his team are able to identify the challenges at the root of unemployment and develop programs and services that help them to turn their lives around.

Joe is not only an extraordinary leader in our community, and he is more than a dear friend—he is family. Joe and I grew up in the same neighborhood and we have known each other for more years than either of us would care to admit. He has always been a source of inspiration and guidance for me and I am grateful for that friendship.

Today, as he marks his 20th Anniversary as President and CEO of the WorkPlace, Joe can look back on his career with pride and know that his dedication, hard work, and compassion have touched the lives of thousands. I am proud to rise today to join the WorkPlace Board of Directors and staff in extending my sincere thanks and appreciation to Joseph Carbone for his invaluable contributions to this outstanding organization and our community. My heartfelt congratulations and very best wishes for continued success.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. ALBERT F. GIALLORENZI, SCRANTON UNICO'S "UNICAN OF THE YEAR"

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Albert F. Giallorenzi who was named the Scranton Chapter of UNICO's "UNICAN of the Year," and will be recognized on February 27, 2016 during their Annual Ball.

Dr. Giallorenzi is a graduate of the College of the Holy Cross and the University of Pennsylvania School of Dentistry. Following dental school, he interned at the Philadelphia General Hospital and was an oral and maxillofacial surgical resident at Hahnemann Medical College. Dr. Giallorenzi maintained a private practice for forty years in association with Drs. Christopher Kotchick, Mark Giallorenzi, and Justin Burns, with offices in Scranton, Carbondale, and Tobyhanna. In 2013, Dr. Giallorenzi retired from his practice.

Licensed in Pennsylvania for dentistry, Dr. Giallorenzi held memberships in a wide variety of professional associations including Chief of Service at Mercy Hospital for thirty-seven years, President and later Chairman of the Scranton Dental Society, Chairman of the United Way Dental Division, and member of the Advisory Committee to the American Board of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery. In addition, Dr. Giallorenzi served as an Examiner for Board Certification for the Committee of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, and he volunteered his time with the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Jewish Federation Indigent Dental Clinic, Third District Dental Society Board of Governors, Pennsylvania Dental Association, and on the dental staff of St. Michael's School for Boys.

Dr. Giallorenzi has received both Diplomate and Fellow Honors from the American Board of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, American College of Dentists, American Dental Society of Anesthesiology, the American Dental Board of Anesthesiology, International College of Dentists, and the Pierre Fauchard International Dental Honor Society. In addition, he contributed articles to the Journal of Prosthetic Dentistry, Journal of Oral Surgery and Oral Health, and was an editor for the Bulletin of the Scranton District Dental Society.

Today, Dr. Giallorenzi is an active participant in the community, including volunteering service to the American Cancer Society, St. Gregory's Church, Clarks Green, Cub Scout Pack 152, Abington Junior Soccer League, Waverly Community House, and the Holy Cross Club of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Dr. Giallorenzi also serves on the Board of the Scranton Chapter of UNICO National. He is married to the former Diane Valera, and they have two adult children, Dr. Mark A. Giallorenzi and Christina Giallorenzi.

It is a distinct honor to recognize Dr. Albert F. Giallorenzi for his superb service to his profession and community, and I congratulate him on being named Scranton UNICO's "UNICAN of the Year."

TRIBUTE TO BECCA PIZZI

HON. KATHERINE M. CLARK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of one of my constituents, Becca Pizzi of Belmont, Massachusetts. Becca is a single mother, a child care provider, a local ice cream shop manager, and just recently, a world record-breaking athlete.

In the early hours of January 30, 2016, in Sydney, Australia, Becca became the first

woman from the United States to complete the World Marathon Challenge. This international marathon began in Antarctica and is comprised of seven marathons on seven continents, all over seven days. In her race around the world, Becca set two world records: the fastest average marathon time among women at 3 hours, 55 minutes, and 11 seconds, and shortest time frame for a female to complete marathons on all seven continents at 6 days, 18 hours and 38 minutes.

Upon her return, Becca's hometown of Belmont greeted her and her family with a parade in celebration of her accomplishment.

Through all of her training and through the grueling race, Becca credited her 8 year old daughter Taylor as her source of inspiration.

Becca's story exemplifies our community's unique grit and determination to reach the highest heights despite any obstacle. I thank Becca for inspiring athletes around the world and congratulate her on her historic achievement.

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATED SERVICE OF MILTON CHIEF OF POLICE GREGORY BRAND

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Chief Gregory Brand for his dedicated service to the Gulf Coast community on the occasion of his retirement as the Chief of Police from the City of Milton, Florida.

Always striving for greatness, Chief Brand earned his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Saint Thomas University in Miami, Florida, where he was elected to "Who's Who among students in American Universities and Colleges." Upon graduation, Chief Brand began his law enforcement career in South Florida with the Hollywood Police Department in February 1977. After more than twenty-five years in Hollywood, during which he rose to the rank of Major, Chief Brand retired from the Hollywood Police Department and accepted the position of Chief of Police for the City of Milton in May 2002. Although now retiring, Chief Brand will remain in the city which he has grown to love so dearly.

As a former Deputy Sheriff, I understand the important and sometimes underappreciated role that law enforcement officers play in the local community in Northwest Florida and in communities across the country. Each and every day, dedicated law enforcement officers put themselves in danger to protect and serve their community as an officer of the law. Chief Brand has been a true pillar of the Northwest Florida community and exemplifies all of the qualities of a world-class law enforcement officer.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of a grateful community, I am pleased to congratulate Chief Gregory Brand on his well-earned retirement. His decades of service are a testament to his commitment to the State of Florida, and my wife Vicki and I wish him all the best in his well-earned retirement with his wife, children and grandchildren.

TRIBUTE TO THE SPRING ARBOR
UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S SOCCER
TEAM

HON. TIM WALBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Spring Arbor University women's soccer team on their 2015 National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics National Championship.

Under the leadership of the NAIA National Coach of the Year, Jason Crist, the Cougars earned the program's first-ever national title on December 5, 2015. Led by a strong defensive effort, the team recorded its 10th consecutive shutout of the season against the defending champs, and top-ranked, Lindsey Wilson College.

With the shutout, Spring Arbor became the only team in NAIA history to make it through the tournament without conceding a single goal.

From tournament MVP and National Player of the year—Bethany Balcer—scoring two goals, to tournament defensive MVP and goalkeeper—Sarah Yancer—refusing to surrender a single goal, the entire team rose to excellence in their championship victory.

The record breaking season for the Cougars concluded with a program-best 23 wins and included a 19-match winning streak.

The achievements of the team were not only limited to the field of play. Throughout the season, the team carried themselves in a way that proudly represented our community and the university. When faced with adversity, they responded with integrity, character, and selflessness. In the classroom, the team maintained an outstanding 3.5 cumulative grade point average.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Spring Arbor University women's soccer team on their remarkable accomplishments throughout the 2015 season.

WELCOMING CAROLINE MARTIN
SCHOTHORST

HON. RYAN A. COSTELLO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate my Chief of Staff, Lauryn Schothorst, and her husband, Bret, on the birth of their daughter, Caroline Martin Schothorst. Caroline was born on February 8, 2016 at 1:34 p.m. in Washington, DC.

I would also like to congratulate their son, Owen, on becoming a big brother. I have full confidence that Owen will teach his baby sister everything there is to know about dinosaurs and how to cheer for his favorite baseball team, the Washington Nationals.

Caroline is welcomed by her grandparents John and Debra Bernier of Strafford, Pennsylvania, and James and Deborah Schothorst of Grand Forks, North Dakota.

We're blessed to welcome Caroline to our extended office family, and I extend my most

sincere congratulations to Lauryn, Bret, and Owen on this wonderful addition to their family.

HONORING LIEUTENANT BOB IRISH
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RE-
TIREMENT FROM THE EXETER
FIRE DEPARTMENT AFTER 38
YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my congratulations to Lt. Bob Irish on his retirement after 38 years with the Exeter Fire Department, and 36 years as a fire instructor at the NH Fire Academy.

Lt. Irish's continuous progression within the Exeter Fire Department and the NH Fire Academy during his time exemplifies his intelligence, positive attitude, and commitment to protecting and serving his community with the utmost professionalism.

Although Lt. Irish will now shift his focus from serving his community to spending more time with his five grandchildren, it's clear he leaves an example of strong leadership and compassion for others to emulate in his wake.

It is with great admiration that I congratulate Lt. Irish on his retirement, and wish him the best on all future endeavors.

HONORING THE WEST HAVEN COM-
MUNITY HOUSE AS THEY CELE-
BRATE THEIR 75TH ANNIVER-
SARY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to join the West Haven community as they gather to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of an outstanding organization—the West Haven Community House. Over the course of the last seven decades, the West Haven Community House has provided invaluable programs and services to those most in need—touching the lives of thousands and improving not only the quality of their lives but of the community as a whole.

The West Haven Community House was a community effort from the very beginning. In 1939, social worker Pauline Lang, a visionary leader, gathered a group of volunteers to facilitate a series of public meetings where residents could talk about what issues they felt were most important to their community. Through these discussions there came a clear mandate for a community center that would enhance the quality of life for all West Haven residents, and would serve as a hub of positive activities for children. Soon after, a capital campaign was undertaken, a Victorian home at 227 Elm Street was purchased, and in August 1941, incorporation papers were signed establishing the West Haven Community House Association.

The Community House has always strived to ensure that the programs and services they offer meet the needs of every community member. Since the beginning every effort has been made to create an environment that welcomed children and adults, individuals and families alike. And as the needs and interests of residents have changed over the years, so has the Community House. Teen dances, Saturday cooking classes, after-school activity programs and children's day camps were typical offerings in the 40s, 50s, and 60s. Today, the Community House offers a host of programs for children, teens, and parents, and has expanded its outreach to include support for adults with developmental disabilities. Current programs and services include a Head Start Program; before and after school care for elementary school children as well as a summer program; the Positive Youth Development & Kids in the Neighborhood, an after-school enrichment program for elementary school children; and Community Connections, integration day activities and residential services for adults with developmental disabilities.

It is not an understatement to describe the Community House as the cornerstone social service agency of West Haven. Serving thousands of area residents every year, the Community House stays true to its mission to facilitate healthy, productive, independent and meaningful lives for individuals with disabilities, and children, adolescents, and families. A leading voice of advocacy and quality care, this remarkable organization has left an indelible mark on the West Haven community. I am proud to stand today and extend my sincere thanks and heartfelt congratulations to the West Haven Community House on its 75th Anniversary. Their good work has made a real difference in countless lives and I wish them all the best for many more years of success.

RECOGNIZING ROBERT NICKOVICH
UPON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand before you and my colleagues today to honor Mr. Robert Nickovich and to wish him well upon his retirement. Since 1981, Bob has served as Chief Executive Officer of the Lake County, Indiana, Parks and Recreation Department. Throughout the years, he has devoted his time and efforts to improving the quality of life for residents and visitors of Northwest Indiana. For his lifetime of service, Mr. Nickovich will be honored at a retirement dinner at Turkey Creek Banquet Hall in Merrillville, Indiana, on Friday, February 26, 2016.

Robert began his career with the Lake County Parks and Recreation Department as a recreation supervisor in 1972, at which time there was only one park site managed by the department. Since then, the Lake County Parks land has grown immensely, expanding from 400 to nearly 7,000 acres within eleven parks throughout the county. This land includes nature preserves, historic sites, trails,

parks, and family-friendly facilities. In 1995, Bob played a major role in the creation of Deep River Waterpark in Merrillville. The facility is nationally recognized and continues to be a tremendous asset to the economy of Lake County, generating millions of visitors since its opening. Bellaboo's Play and Discovery Center was also created under Mr. Nickovich's direction in 2006. Located at Three Rivers County Park in Lake Station, Bellaboo's provides a hands-on early learning experience for children. The award winning facility exhibits the significant connection between play and early learning. Through his work with the Indiana Park and Recreation Association, the National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials, the Great Lakes Regional Council, the Indiana Grand Kankakee Marsh Restoration Project Steering Committee, and the North American Coastal Project, Bob has been an exceptional leader and passionate activist for parks and recreation in Northwest Indiana and beyond.

What is little known is Bob's inestimable help with the creation of the Marquette Plan. At its genesis, if there was a question on a concept or utilization issue, Robert received my first call. The Plan is in every way improved because of his sage counsel.

In addition to his work with parks and recreation in Lake County, Mr. Nickovich has also given of his time through his involvement in various community organizations including, but not limited to, Lake County's Community Foundation—The Legacy Foundation, and Waterfowl USA—Northwest Chapter, and he has also served on the board of directors for the Drifting Dunes Girl Scout Council.

Bob's dedication to his community throughout his career is exceeded only by his devotion to his amazing family. Bob and his wonderful wife, Julie, have one son, Jim, and two beloved grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I have known Bob Nickovich for my entire adult life and am lucky to have him as a friend. Our region and state have been enriched because of his life of selfless public service. Future generations will profit from his foresight and exemplary work, and his impact on the region will be witnessed for years to come. For his many contributions, Bob is worthy of our gratitude and admiration. I ask that you join me in wishing him well upon his retirement.

TRIBUTE TO HERSHEL SOLOMON
GRAUBARD

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Hershel Solomon Graubard on the advent of his Bar Mitzvah.

This is an important milestone in this young man's life and his family is immensely proud, as am I, to see him cross this threshold.

The term Bar Mitzvah originates from the "son of the commandment," signifying a young person's coming of age and assumption of full responsibility for performing commandments.

It is also at this age that a youngster is first called to bless and recite from the Torah Scroll.

For all these reasons, this is a momentous event in Hershel's journey to adulthood.

Mr. Speaker, Hershel Solomon Graubard is growing into a wonderful young man and we are all deeply proud of him.

He is someone who cares a great deal about his community and civic engagement—something we would all like to see among more young people. I fully expect that Hershel will do great things in coming years.

I am proud to count him and his entire family among my friends.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing Hershel and his family all of the best for a wonderful day and a joyous celebration.

May he continue exhibiting wisdom and maturity beyond his years.

IN HONOR OF THE 104TH
BIRTHDAY OF RODGER WILLIAMS

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize the birthday of Rodger Williams. He turned 104 on October 15th.

Rodger was born on October 15, 1911, to Carrie Lee Humphries and Frank Williams in Waverly, Alabama. He was the fourth of five children, William, Mary, Jack and Susie and was the youngest boy.

Rodger served in the United States Army in World War II. In 1946, he married Bessie B. Caldwell and they were blessed with eight children. His children include: Eddie James, Dorothy Jean (deceased), Clarence (deceased), Joseph, Marguerite, Jenese, Jacqueline and Christine. Bessie died in 1989. He also had one daughter prior to marrying Bessie, Jean Knight (deceased).

Rodger purchased over 100 acres of land after the war and much of his family still resides on the property. After the war, he worked in a steel mill in Chicago and returned to Alabama in 1955 working as a farmer. He also worked as a custodian at Auburn University for 17 years before retiring.

Rodger only finished 6th grade, but believes strongly in education. His children and grandchildren have attended Tuskegee College, Miles College, Southern Union, the University of Alabama, Troy University, Faulkner University, Vanderbilt University, Howard College and Alabama State University.

Rodger loves spending time with his family and enjoying fresh vegetables.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the life and achievements of Rodger Williams and wishing him a happy 104th birthday.

IN HONOR OF FUTURE FARMERS
OF AMERICA WEEK

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this week my home state of Texas joined the rest of the country in celebration of Future Farmers of America's annual National FFA Week: recognizing the importance of and advocating for agricultural education and FFA. The tradition was started back in 1947 when the National FFA Board of Directors designated the week of George Washington's birthday as National FFA Week in recognition of his legacy as an agriculturalist and farmer. Today, thousands of chapters around the country and hundreds of thousands of members celebrate National FFA Week and advocate for increased agricultural education and FFA membership.

The Future Farmers of America organization is a staple of our country's agricultural education; it cultivates young men and women into competent leaders who possess an intimate knowledge of agriculture. The organization is rich in history with its foundation dating back to 1928 when 33 students from 18 states congregated in Kansas City, Missouri and constructed the organization. Today, the organization is 629,367 members strong with 7,757 chapters, at least one in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Although FFA membership nationwide is something to celebrate, I want to highlight the state with the largest FFA membership in the country: my home state of Texas.

Currently, Texas leads the country in FFA membership with 1021 chapters and 103,379 members. Texas FFA serves as a shining example to the rest of the country as to what membership and participation in FFA should be. Texans understand the great importance of agricultural education and cultivating the next generation into competent leaders; no organization does that better than FFA and no state does FFA better than Texas.

And that's just the way it is.

IN RECOGNITION OF MEDICAL
CENTER OF LEWISVILLE'S 40TH
ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Medical Center of Lewisville as they mark their 40th anniversary. With a full-service medical and surgical facility offering 24-hour emergency services, MCL is licensed to accommodate 186 patients. Excellent customer service and patient safety are among their top priorities. Originally named Lewisville Memorial Hospital, MCL opened its doors on February 29, 1976. On March 15, 1976 they admitted their first patient and 11 months to the day of their induction, the first baby was delivered. Denton County became the fastest growing county from 1980–1990 and MCL was the cornerstone of Denton County's successful growth-rate.

MCL has received many accreditations and honors. Of these, the more notable accreditations and honors include: Magnet Designation by American Nurses Credentialing Center (2015); Bill Aston Award recipient (2012); Texas Hospital Association Quality Improvement Silver Award (2014); and recognition in Becker's Hospital Review: 100 Great Places to Work in Healthcare.

I have a close connection to the Medical Center of Lewisville as I spent a part of my career practicing medicine there. It has been a great honor to witness the staggering growth that MCL has seen in the last 40 years.

Their dedication to serve the Denton County community has been vital to their success as a leading medical center in the northeast region of Texas. It is an honor to serve the staff of Medical Center of Lewisville in the U.S. House of Representatives.

IN RECOGNITION OF SAMUEL AND
JUDITH LORUSSO

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Samuel and Judith Lorusso on being honored by the Falmouth Education Foundation. This well-deserved recognition comes as no surprise to those closest to the Lorusso family as they have been nothing but a source of positivity and strength in the community for decades.

Mr. Lorusso followed in his father's footsteps in the family business when he and his brothers bought his company Hyannis Sand and Gravel, renaming it Cape Cod Aggregates Corporation, in 1981. Today, Cape Cod Aggregates has six locations across Massachusetts and frequently makes generous contributions to local events and organizations, such as helping to fund a 4th of July fireworks display.

The Lorusso family have been active members of the Falmouth, Massachusetts community, giving back to the education system in the community since 1980. Mrs. Lorusso discovered her passion for supporting our schools and teachers when she began volunteering at Teaticket Elementary School. She eventually went on to serve on the Falmouth School Committee for one term and as the president of the Teaticket Parent Teacher Organization for many years. The Lorusso family were also integral to the creation of a walking track at Teaticket Elementary as well as a greenhouse at Falmouth High School.

But the Lorusso family's dedication of time and resources does not just stop with our educators. Mrs. Lorusso serves as a Falmouth Town Hall member—sitting on the board of the Falmouth Service Center, as well as the Falmouth Chamber of Commerce. And, three years ago, Mr. and Mrs. Lorusso cofounded the Falmouth Veterans Day Breakfast to honor the service of local veterans through a complimentary reception.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to honor Mr. and Mrs. Lorusso for their many years of extraordinary service to their fellow citizens and for

the sterling example they have set for their friends and family. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating them for being recognized by the Falmouth Education Foundation.

HONORING THE MILFORD CHAPTER
OF THE LINKS INCORPORATED
AS THEY CELEBRATE
THEIR 30TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is my great privilege to rise today to join all of those gathered in honoring the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Across Connecticut there will be a multitude of events paying tribute to Dr. King, but in Milford, Connecticut a remarkable milestone for an outstanding organization will also be celebrated. With this year's "Reflections XXX: A Tribute to Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr." the Milford Chapter of The Links Incorporated will mark the organization's 30th Anniversary and it is with great pride that I stand today to extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to them for their invaluable contributions to the Milford community.

The Milford Chapter is one of two hundred eighty two chapters of The Links Incorporated throughout the United States and in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. Established in 1946, this non-profit organization internationally includes 14,000 professional women of color who are committed to enriching, sustaining and ensuring the culture and economic survival of African Americans and others of African ancestry.

For each of the last thirty years, the Milford Chapter has sponsored this remembrance event. In this traditional time of re-evaluation and reflection, this annual event reminds us all to consider how we, whether as an individual or in a larger group, can make more of a difference in the lives of others and strengthen the bonds of friendship and sense of harmony within our communities. Yet this is only one of many ways the Milford Chapter supports and enriches our community.

The five guiding "facets" for The Links Incorporated include Service to Youth, Health and Human Services, National Trends and Services, International Trends and Services, and The Arts. Throughout the year Milford Links members sponsor and participate in a variety of events and projects that promote these five pillars. From supporting projects to help recovery efforts in Haiti and bring irrigation systems to farmers in Africa to raising awareness on breast cancer and sponsoring scholarships and promoting literacy, Milford Links members are not only making a difference in the lives of others but also inspiring a new generation to give back to their community.

Today, a monument stands—the first monument on the National Mall not dedicated to a white man, a war, or a president—a great granite sculpture of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. And in the line of sight just beyond that statue, you can make out the columns of the Lincoln

Memorial. In his iconic speech on the steps of that memorial, Dr. King spoke of "the fierce urgency of now." He did not just mean a moment in 1963. Over the course of its thirty year history, the Milford Chapter of The Links Incorporated has worked with "the fierce urgency of now" to make our community a better place to live, learn, and grow.

I am honored to rise today and extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Milford Chapter of The Links Incorporated for all of their good work on behalf of our community. There is a legacy of service and generosity that serves as an inspiration to us all. My heartfelt congratulations on their 30th Anniversary and very best wishes for continued success.

BOKO HARAM

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in 2010, we saw a similar dip in Boko Haram's capability. Its founder was killed and many of its fighters wiped out. Boko Haram went into hiding and all was quiet, but that quiet did not last. Boko Haram regrouped, appointed a new leader even more radical than its founder, and came back deadlier than ever. We can't let that happen again. Boko Haram is still capable of launching deadly asymmetric attacks throughout the Lake Chad Basin. My staff has been tracking their attacks. There is hardly a day that goes by when there is not some sort of Boko Haram attack that kills innocents.

Over the past few years, relations between Nigeria and the U.S. have been strained. Joint military trainings were cancelled and the U.S. hesitated to supply weapons to Nigeria's military citing concerns about human rights abuses.

It took the United States 11 years to designate Boko Haram as a foreign terrorist organization. Finally on November 12, 2013, the night before this Subcommittee and the Africa Subcommittee held a joint hearing on why Boko Haram was not on the FTO list, State Department called to say it was designating the group. That was an important step but there are questions about the implementation of the designation. It does not seem that all the tools that a designation carries are being brought to bear on the group, especially when it comes to stopping its financing.

The U.S. has started to do more to help Nigeria combat Boko Haram since the election of Nigerian President Buhari in late May of 2015. Infantry training has been restarted and we are seeing an increased level of cooperation between AFRICOM and the Nigerian military. In October, the Administration announced that it was sending troops and drones to Cameroon as well as surveillance aircraft to Niger. But like the FTO designation these are steps that should have been taken years ago, before Boko Haram was allowed to become more lethal than ISIS. Now we must do more to support our African partners to stamp out this Islamist menace once and for all.

The fight against Boko Haram is essential to U.S. national security interests. In ISIS, we

have already seen what happens when we underestimate a terrorist group. While Boko Haram may not have the capability to attack the United States today, neither did al Qaeda in the years prior to 9/11. We cannot wait for an attack to happen on American soil before getting serious about destroying those who want to destroy us. Now is the time, when it costs far less blood and treasure, to stamp out Boko Haram.

And that's just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING ENGINEERS WEEK 2016

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to draw your attention to a special event, Engineers Week, taking place from February 21st through the 27th. This honorary week is a time to recognize the hard work of all engineers and the innumerable contributions they have made, especially within my district and state.

The scientific skills and specialized knowledge of the engineers in my district have fulfilled my constituents' daily needs and resolved some of the major technological challenges of our time. Often referred to as the stealth profession, engineers have influenced nearly everything around us—even when we may not recognize it. Whether designing efficient urban environments, protecting towns from natural disasters, or making simple tasks more accessible, engineers provide the lifeblood that drives our modern societies.

Engineers Week is a formal coalition of more than 70 engineering, education, and cultural societies, with more than 50 corporations and government agencies focused on raising public awareness of engineers' positive contributions to our communities. This week also prompts parents, teachers, and students to consider the importance of a technical education and a high level of math, science and technology literacy, and motivates youth to pursue engineering careers in order to provide a diverse and vigorous engineering workforce.

Mr. Speaker, it has been an honor to represent the engineers of my district and their families. I am grateful for their contributions to society and benefit daily from their tireless work. I invite everyone to take this week to thank our nation's engineers for their dedication, to recognize the countless ways they have made our world safer and more efficient, and to encourage the next generation of great engineers in their future endeavors.

INTRODUCING THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ACT OF 2016

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today and introduce the Environmental Justice Act of 2016.

Twenty-four years ago, I first introduced the Environmental Justice Act of 1992, with my good friend and former colleague Senator Al Gore. After introducing our bill, we worked tirelessly to advance many of the policies proposed in our legislation. On February 11, 1994, President Clinton signed Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations". This historic Executive Order established the federal infrastructure to identify and address environmental risks—especially in minority and low-income communities that were often overlooked and underserved.

At that time, Senator Gore and I believed that every person has the right to safe water and clean air. We believed children and parents in every community deserve access to green public spaces. Since then many of the ideas that we proposed in our 1992 bill have been adopted by the EPA. For example, resources like EJSCREEN, help anyone in the country find a report on the quality of their neighborhood's water and air.

Mr. Speaker, there is still much work to be done. The threats and needs are changing, but the urgency of and my commitment to this important and evolving challenge remain the same. In Georgia's 5th Congressional District and across the country, many people find that even when a serious environmental problem is discovered, it is difficult for them to take action. This bill responds to this grave reality and makes progress in the fight for every person to have equal access to a healthy environment.

The Environmental Justice Act of 2016 will create a tax incentive for 501(c)(3) organizations, like colleges and universities, to devote staff and resources to the hard work of environmental justice. This bill is intended to encourage scientists, activists, and organizers to invest their talents into ensuring that existing environmental protections are improved and enforced in every community. People must know their rights and the tools that are available to them. This bill will not only advance the conversation but also invest in the effort.

Mr. Speaker, I know that we can come together to address this important national issue. We cannot ignore the public health and safety of our communities. We cannot cut corners at the expense of our friends and neighbors. We must fully respect the life and dignity of each and every person, and uphold their right to live, learn, and work in a clean and safe environment.

We must cherish this Earth; for it is the only home we will likely ever know. I hope that all of my colleagues will join me in supporting this common-sense legislation.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MR. VEVESI LEMAFU

HON. AUMUA AMATA COLEMAN RADEWAGEN

OF AMERICAN SAMOA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the lifelong service and career

of Mr. Veesi Lemafa, a son of American Samoa.

Veesi, was born in Pago Pago American Samoa, and attended high school at Faga'itua High School, graduating in 1976.

Following his academic career; longing to see other parts of the world, Veesi joined United States Army in March of 1977, and attended Basic Training at Fort Knox, Kentucky. During Veesi's time in the military, which spanned 15 years, he served several overseas tours in Germany, and Korea before separating at the rank of Sergeant in 1991.

Veesi, and his lovely wife Matautu E. Lemafa, who also served in the U.S. Army are the parents to three wonderful children; two sons, Evile and Vesi, and their daughter Meleane, as well as their grandson Veesi TeToa Fiapa'i Lemafa.

Following his military career, Veesi and his wife Matautu continued their service to our nation, and were both employed with the Department of the Army as civilian employees.

In his civilian role, Mr. Lemafa has served as the Administrative Officer and Human Resources Specialist for Schofield Barracks in Hawaii for 22 years, which combined with his military service, gives him a total of 37 years of federal service to our nation.

As a member of the Mission Support Element (MSE)—Hawaii, under the Senior Commander of the U.S. Army Pacific Command, Veesi has served as the Administrative Officer/Civilian Human Resources Specialist with the utmost honor, professionalism, dedication and loyalty.

Veesi has assisted managers of the Mission Support Element—Hawaii through his effective programming, and vast knowledge of the many facets of the civilian human resources program.

Known to always go the extra mile when performing his duties, Veesi's people-oriented style earned himself the reputation of "the-go-to-man" for his exceptional, customer-first-based service, and accurate analysis with a positive and "can do" attitude.

Though Veesi is retiring, those Mission Support Element employees who have worked with him have truly benefited through his selfless devotion to duty, and he has earned the respect and admiration of his command.

Due to his truly remarkable and commendable service to our grateful nation, I want to also state my support for his nomination for the Meritorious Civilian Service Award, and wish him the very best on his retirement.

God bless the United States and American Samoa.

CONGRATULATING ZANE CLARK ON RECEIVING THE CITIZEN SCHOLAR AWARD FROM MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Zane Clark, an outstanding student at Missouri State University, on his selection to receive the Citizen Scholar Award.

Each year, this prestigious award is given by Missouri State University's Board of Governors to students who have contributed to the university, furthered the university's public affairs mission, and have been significantly engaged in extra-curricular accomplishments or in important service activities in the community. Since the award was created in 2007, only forty-seven students have been recognized for their stellar achievements.

Zane, from Cameron, Missouri, was one of a handful of exceptional students to receive the award this year. He is presently a senior organizational communication major with minors in general business and economics. Zane has been recognized for his social awareness and compassion, along with his undying determination to significantly improve the world around him.

Mr. Speaker, Zane Clark's accomplishments have set a great example of what a Citizen Scholar should be. This award represents a great deal of his hard work and dedication. I am proud to represent students like him and I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating him on this well-deserved achievement.

HONORING MR. MADISON MARYE

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I submit these remarks in honor of Mr. Madison Marye, who passed away on February 23 at the age of 90. Madison was a longtime state senator from Montgomery County, and I had the honor of serving in the Virginia General Assembly with him. Though we disagreed from time to time, he was always a gentleman and a person I liked very much.

Madison loved the communities of Shawsville and Elliston where he grew up. Madison joined the United States Army, and served in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War before he retired as a major, which he said is further than he ever expected to have advanced in the military.

He returned to Elliston to farm, and he opened a gas station as well. In 1973, Madison ran for and was elected to the Virginia Senate. While in Richmond, he served on various committees but was most proud of his seat on the Senate Finance Committee as well as his service on the Senate Agriculture Committee. Without a doubt, Madison, for decades, was a feisty legislator and fierce advocate for his rural constituency.

Madison is survived by his wife Charlotte; his daughter, Charlotte Hawes and husband Michael; his son, James; four beautiful grandchildren, Madison Tyler, Jim, Julia, and Emily; and one great-granddaughter, Romina.

Madison was a great, memorable personality and a good man. He will be fondly remembered and missed by many in Shawsville and the greater New River Valley. While I note with great sadness Madison's passing, I am confident that his legacy will live on. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and loved ones.

HONORING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF BRIDGE STREET A.M.E. CHURCH

HON. HAKEEM S. JEFFRIES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 250th anniversary of the historic and illustrious Bridge Street African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church. Reverend David B. Cousin, Sr. and members of the congregation will commemorate this special milestone on Sunday, February 28, 2016 at Bridge Street A.M.E. Church in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, New York.

Bridge Street is a church with a rich history that spans two and a half centuries. From its missionary origins in 1766 to its current location at 277 Stuyvesant Avenue in Brooklyn, it continues to be an extraordinary institution deeply rooted in social justice and spiritual transformation. As a stop on the Underground Railroad and platform for speaking out against injustice on both local and national issues, Bridge Street is a voice of conscience representing the least of those in our society.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church is a global religious body with over 2.5 million members, who belong to more than 6,000 congregations throughout 20 Episcopal districts across the Americas, Africa, Europe and India. In 1818, Bishop Richard Allen served as the first preacher of the A.M.E. Church, one of the oldest Protestant denominations established on American soil, at Bridge Street.

The people of New York are grateful for the exemplary leadership of Reverend David B. Cousin, Sr., who was installed as the Pastor of Bridge Street A.M.E. Church in 1997. Under his guidance, and that of his predecessors, the congregation has touched the lives of countless individuals through their extensive services and wide range of active ministries, which include notable educational, civic engagement, health and wellness, music and youth mentorship programs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating the Bridge Street A.M.E. Church in commemoration of its 250th anniversary. This church community has dedicated itself to serving the people of New York, and those of our country, in pursuit of a just and moral nation.

COMMEMORATING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Sisters of St. Francis of the Immaculate Conception on the celebration of 125 years of service by making God's compassionate presence known throughout Central Illinois.

Since 1891, the Sisters of St. Francis have dedicated their lives to serving the people of God through prayer, community activism, and striving to meet the needs of the Peoria and Springfield Diocese.

By playing an active role within the Roman Catholic Church, these women have made great strides in promoting public awareness of their mission. Their ongoing efforts make a difference every day in the lives of the people in our community. Their commitment to help the lives of the poor, uneducated, and the hungry embodies the attributes of true servants of Christ.

On February 2, 2016, the women of St. Francis celebrated 125 years encompassed in the spirit of charity, religion, and community. As a native of Peoria and practicing Catholic, I consider myself fortunate that our community has women devoted to spreading a "Caring, Praying Presence" and the love of God through compassion and service.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF MS. MARGARET HOSTETLER

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today, Margaret Hostetter ends her decades of service to the Committee on Ways and Means. Margaret has served the Committee for many years, first starting in 1987, and will be deeply missed.

Most recently, Margaret worked on the Social Security Subcommittee staff, and is the Committee's all-time expert on budgets, trust funds, debt limits and more.

Margaret's service to the Congress and the Nation extends back even before her time with the Committee to the early 1980s when she served on the House Budget Committee staff for then-Chairman Bill Roth of Delaware. She helped design the Thrift Savings Plan for federal workers, the original Gramm Rudman law and the 1986 tax reforms.

Margaret is a walking encyclopedia of Committee and Congressional history, and we wish her the very best in the next phase of her life.

A TRIBUTE ON THE 28TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SUMGAI T POGROMS

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 28th anniversary of the pogrom against the Armenian residents of the town of Sumgait, Azerbaijan. On this day in 1988, and for three days following, Azerbaijani mobs assaulted and killed Armenians. When the violence finally subsided, hundreds of Armenian civilians had been brutally murdered and injured, women and young girls were raped, and

victims were tortured and burned alive. Those that survived the carnage fled their homes and businesses, leaving behind everything they had in their desperation.

The pogroms were not an accident. They were the culmination of years of vicious anti-Armenian propaganda, spread by the Azerbaijani authorities. The Azerbaijani authorities made little effort to punish those responsible, instead attempting to cover up the atrocities in Sumgait to this day, as well as denying the role of senior government officials in instigating the violence. Unsurprisingly, it was not the end of the violence, and was followed by additional attacks, including the 1990 pogrom in Baku.

The Sumgait massacre and the subsequent attacks on ethnic Armenians, resulted in the virtual disappearance of a once thriving population of 450,000 Armenians living in Azerbaijan, and culminating in the war launched against the people of Nagorno Karabakh. That war resulted in thousands dead on both sides and created over one million refugees in both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Time has not healed the wounds of those murdered in the pogroms in Sumgait, Kirovabad, and Baku. To the contrary, hatred of Armenians is celebrated in Azerbaijan, a situation most vividly exemplified by the case of Ramil Safarov, an Azerbaijani army captain who savagely murdered an Armenian army lieutenant, Gurgen Margaryan with an axe while he slept. The two were participating in a NATO Partnership for Peace exercise at the time in Hungary. In 2012, Safarov was sent home to Azerbaijan, purportedly to serve out the remainder of his sentence. Instead, he was pardoned, promoted, and paraded through the streets of Baku as a returning hero.

The assault on ethnic Armenian civilians in Sumgait helped touch off what would become a direct conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabakh. And today, Azerbaijan's dangerous behavior on the Line of Contact threatens peace and stability in the region. Artillery and sniper fire across the Line of Contact has become a fact of daily life for civilians in the Nagorno Karabakh Republic, causing numerous casualties. I have urged the OSCE Minsk Group to deescalate the situation by ending a policy that equates unprovoked attacks by the Azerbaijan with the defensive responses of Karabakh and Armenian troops, and by pressuring Azerbaijan to accept the installation of technological monitoring devices along the border. The anniversary of Sumgait is a reminder of the consequences when aggression and hatred is allowed to grow unchecked.

Mr. Speaker, this April we will mark the 101st Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, an event the Turkish government, Azerbaijan's closest ally, goes to great lengths to deny. We must not let such crimes against humanity go unrecognized, whether they occurred yesterday or 28 years ago or 100 years ago. Today, let us pause to remember the victims of the atrocities of the Sumgait pogroms. Mr. Speaker, it is our moral obligation to condemn crimes of hatred and to remember the victims, in hope that history will not be repeated.

TRIBUTE TO AL MANN

HON. DANA ROHRBACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, America lost one of her greatest sons this week. Al Mann, physicist, entrepreneur, executive, and philanthropist, spent his more than nine decades on this earth working mostly to help others.

At age seventeen, when America was embroiled in the Second World War, Al Mann volunteered for the Army Air Corps, later becoming a pioneer in guidance systems for missiles and solar power for satellites. His technological advances helped us win that war, saving countless lives throughout.

Afterward, he resisted pleas to continue his extraordinary work in military hardware, following his heart and turning his mind toward the health of humanity. Al's ingenuity, insight, and resourcefulness focused on projects to restore sight to the blind, to bring hearing to the deaf, and return mobility to the disabled.

He did all this while developing a system to deliver insulin to diabetics without needles and creating pacemakers that those afflicted with heart disease would not need to replace frequently, thus sparing them great expense and disruption of their lives.

It has been my honor and privilege to know Al Mann for many years. As he benefited humankind he in turn benefited from a patent system that has been the envy of the world; indeed, he warned against politicians who would tamper with it to advantage powerful business interests against individual innovators like him.

Clearly, he wanted other Americans to succeed by their good works just as he had done.

Because he was one of the most inspirational men I have ever known, I made a point of introducing my children to him so that they, too, might live by his example.

If our country is to know more inspiring individuals like Al Mann, it is imperative that we reclaim and protect the conditions that made his exemplary creativity possible.

IN HONOR OF RAY LAUGHTER

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as my friend, Ray Laughter, prepares to retire as Vice Chancellor of External Affairs for the Lone Star College system, he is leaving big shoes for his successor to fill. How do you replace a driving force for education and economic development in our district such as Ray?

Since 2002, Ray has led the Lone Star College Foundation, the Community Leadership Institute, the Small Business Development Center, as well as the college's public information and publications, governmental relations, and regional economic development departments. He was also the driving force in the

passage of bond issues that ensures the college system is meeting the needs of our growing region.

Prior to becoming vice chancellor, Ray served the college system as executive director of the Center for Business and Economic Development and the director of the Small Business Development Center. If you ever wondered why Ray sets such sky-high goals and achieves them, just remember he was once chief administrative officer for an international helicopter manufacturer.

Ray's community and civic commitments don't stop with his work at Lone Star. He shared his invaluable experience by serving on numerous national, state and local boards, and various committees focused on economic development and educational needs.

Development Councils, Partnerships, Chambers, and boards in The Woodlands and across the state and the south rely on Ray to bring together education and economic development projects in innovative and thoughtful ways.

As a military officer's son who settled in Texas, Ray graduated from the University of Houston, where he also earned his MBA. Ever since then, his days and many nights have been filled helping our community learn, grow and prosper.

While his wife and kids are hoping to see more of him now, Ray has already committed to serving as chairman of the Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce board next year. My friend Ray is a servant leader who has set a high example for others to follow.

Many thousands of students and families have lifetimes of opportunities ahead because of Ray's hard work. I can't imagine the Lone Star College System without him, but then I know that he is always just a phone call or email away whenever our community needs him.

Thank you Ray Laughter, for showing us all that the sky is the limit for a true leader.

SUPPORT FOR H. RES. 551

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Israel is the United States' most important ally in the Middle East. But the President made a bad nuclear deal with Iran that brought a whole host of new security threats to Israel. H. Res. 551 is about bringing the importance of the U.S.-Israel relationship back into focus.

While security is the cornerstone of our relationship, many do not realize that we have very strong economic ties to Israel. Bilateral trade and investment has strengthened our partnership in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

I look forward to exploring new agreements with Israel in energy, medicine, technology, and security. Fostering deeper economic dialogue will more firmly cement the bond between the U.S. and Israel.

I support H. Res. 551 because it recognizes the importance of a strong U.S.-Israel alliance. Together with our Israeli allies we can initiate

new areas of cooperation. It's time this Administration shows Israel how much the U.S. values our partnership.

And that's just the way it is.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, during Black History Month, we honor the contributions and achievements of African-Americans, and recommit ourselves to achieving the day when no person is judged by anything but the content of their character.

Let us stand on the shoulders of individuals like Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Dr. King, Rosa Parks, Shirley Chisholm, Louis Stokes, and our colleagues, JOHN LEWIS and JOHN CONYERS, who sacrificed so much to secure equal rights for all Americans, including generations yet unborn.

However, more progress must be made.

We must close the gaps in employment opportunities for African-Americans, eliminate the school-to-prison pipeline, and restore the full protections of the Voting Rights Act.

Today, let us resolve to continue to march toward a day when every person is guaranteed the unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

IN RECOGNITION OF EVELYN MARY LABRAKE

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Rep. DUNCAN HUNTER and I rise today to honor the life of Evelyn Mary LaBrake, Sycuan tribal elder and former Secretary of the Sycuan Tribe. Ms. LaBrake is survived by her nine children, her brother, as well as twenty-eight grandchildren and thirty-five great grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Ms. LaBrake was the granddaughter of Solomon Paipa, an original allottee of the Sycuan Indian Reservation.

Evelyn was born on December 22, 1936 at Mercy Hospital in San Diego, to parents Louis Murphy and Martha Paipa, and grew up on the Sycuan Indian Reservation. She was recognized for being a passionate advocate for the causes of Native Americans and a defender of tribal self-determination and sovereignty. She was instrumental in the adoption of the tribe's Articles of Association of 1972 and many other critical tribal government documents.

As a former Secretary and Councilwoman of the Sycuan Tribe from the 1960s to the 1980s, Evelyn fought for and obtained major improvements in the tribe's water, housing and community building needs. She was also a champion of tribal government gaming, and was a driving force in creating the Sycuan Bingo Pal-

ace in 1983, the first tribal gaming establishment in the nation.

In the words of Cody Martinez, current Sycuan Tribal Chairman and grandson of Ms. LaBrake, "She was an active participant in our general membership meetings as recently as this month. All Sycuan is today, is from the hard work of her and her contemporaries."

Evelyn was a firm believer in hard work and did so all her life, as a Secretary and Councilwoman of her tribe, but also as a machinist at Whittaker Survival System, where she worked for 20 years. She cherished her large family and deeply enjoyed their gatherings. She took special pride in the resurgence of cultural values expressed by her family.

I want to commemorate Evelyn Mary LaBrake for her lifetime of service to her community.

RECOGNIZING MICHAEL SANBORN AS THE METROCREST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Michael Sanborn of Carrollton, Texas, on being named Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce's "Citizen of the Year." Michael's leadership and dedication to the Metrocrest community in the Dallas/Fort Worth area has made a lasting impression that North Texas will not soon forget. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Michael for his many years of selfless service to our community.

Michael has earned recognition as one of the most prominent and influential leaders in North Texas' medical community. Michael attended the University of Kansas, where he received his undergraduate and Master of Science in Pharmacy Administration. Beginning as a pharmacist, Michael was quickly promoted to System Director of Pharmacy of NCH Healthcare System and eventually Corporate Vice President of Cardiovascular Services for the entire Baylor Healthcare System. In his current position as President of Baylor Scott & White at Carrollton, Michael oversees the 235 bed acute care facility with more than 700 employees and 500 medical staff members. In addition, he is responsible for managing services at several specialty care clinics and diagnostic centers throughout Carrollton and surrounding cities.

The "Citizen of the Year" award is presented annually by the Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce to an individual who has made a significant impact in the community. Michael has shown honesty, integrity, and leadership while serving others, which has left a wide reaching and lasting effect on many in North Texas. At Baylor Scott & White Medical Center, Michael has made local healthcare his top priority. Additionally, Michael is actively engaged and regularly works with local non-profits and service organizations. Michael currently serves on the boards of Metrocrest

Services and the Children's Advocacy Center of Denton County, and is the former Chairman of the Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I recognize Michael Sanborn for receiving the Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce's "Citizen of the Year" award. I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing his contributions to the Metrocrest community.

HONORING 2015 "MR. AMIGO" ITATI CANTORAL

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Charro Days Fiesta and commend the 2015 "Mr. Amigo," chosen by the Mr. Amigo Association of Brownsville, Texas, and Matamoros, Tamaulipas, in Mexico.

A talented Mexican actress, singer, and dancer, Itati Cantoral has been selected as the 2015 "Mr. Amigo." Her style and charisma have won the admiration of audiences across the world. Through her work as a performer, Ms. Cantoral has brought communities together for more than 20 years. She is an excellent choice to represent the spirit of friendship.

First awarded in 1964, the title of "Mr. Amigo" is an annual tribute to an outstanding Mexican citizen who has made a lasting contribution during the previous year to international solidarity and goodwill. "Mr. Amigo" acts as an ambassador between the United States and Mexico and presides over the annual Charro Days Fiesta.

Charro Days dates back to 1937, when the citizens of Brownsville organized the event in the midst of the Great Depression to celebrate the cultural heritage shared between Brownsville and its sister city across the Rio Grande, Matamoros. The first Charro Days celebration featured a parade with horse-drawn floats and participants dressed in traditional Mexican costumes reminiscent of charros, or Mexican cowboys.

From these humble beginnings, Charro Days has evolved into a multi-day event, which includes dances, fiestas, a children's parade, and the Grand International Parade. Thousands of participants from both sides of the border celebrate these traditions each year.

The 78th annual Charro Days celebration commenced on February 22nd, with a grito, or celebratory yell. And just yesterday, the Mayor of Brownsville and the Mayor of Matamoros met at the Gateway International Bridge to extend their hands across the border, symbolizing the friendship between the two cities.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to honor the Charro Days Fiesta and for joining me in recognizing the importance of this annual celebration, which continues to strengthen the relationship between Brownsville and Matamoros, and the bonds between the United States and Mexico.

SENATE—Monday, February 29, 2016

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JONI ERNST, a Senator from the State of Iowa.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Lord of life, hear our prayers. Fill us with Your Spirit so that we may please You. Empower our lawmakers. Help them not to have an excessive focus on temporary things while ignoring an eternal perspective. May their lives bring glory and honor to Your Name, as You create in them humble and contrite hearts that are willing to serve You and humanity.

And Lord, as our Nation prepares to elect a new President, may Your providence, not our wisdom, prevail. Demonstrate Your power so that we may remember that nothing is too difficult for You.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 29, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JONI ERNST, a Senator from the State of Iowa, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. ERNST thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, there is an epidemic sweeping across our Nation, ripping through communities, tearing families apart, striking at the vulnerable—even babies who have yet to take their first breath. The prescription opioid and heroin epidemic does not discriminate by demographic or socioeconomic status, by age or by gender. It touches parents and children, neighbors and coworkers in all 50 States. It is ending lives at recordbreaking rates, and it is getting worse. Deaths from opioids have surged by 200 percent over the last decade and a half alone. In my home State of Kentucky, drug overdoses continue to outpace the number of fatalities from traffic accidents.

This is an issue we have been combating for some time, and we have made some important strides along the way, but there is a lot more to do. This week we have an opportunity to take an important step forward. One of the most painful aspects of this epidemic, as I mentioned, is the increasing number of infants who are born dependent on opioids such as prescription pain killers and heroin. These children start their lives suffering from drug dependence, which is nearly as hard to imagine as it is heartbreaking.

Last year, I sponsored a bipartisan measure designed to help address this specific issue. I appreciate the senior Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. CASEY, for working across the aisle with me to advance the Protecting Our Infants Act through Congress, and I am proud to say it was signed into law just a few months ago. It is an example of one of the many steps we have already begun to take as we address this epidemic.

We took another step forward last week when the Senate voted to confirm a new FDA Commissioner. I have been very clear that the FDA must take a stronger approach in regard to this epidemic and its prevention efforts, which is why I appreciated Dr. Califf's expressed vision for positive change at the agency. I voted for his nomination last week, but as I told him, he should know that we will continue to ensure oversight over his agency's response going forward.

This week, we have another opportunity to take a step forward—an important step forward. Before us today is bipartisan legislation that would help combat the prescription opioid and heroin epidemic at every level. The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA, is the product of a lot of hard work and bipartisan work by a number of Senators.

I would like to recognize the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the Senator from Iowa, and the ranking member, the Senator from Vermont, for acting swiftly to pass this bill through committee on a voice vote. I appreciate the assistance and cooperation of other leaders on this important issue, such as the chairman of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the ranking member from the State of Washington.

I also want to thank the sponsors of this bill, the junior Senators from Ohio, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, and the senior Senator from Minnesota. These leaders understand the toll this epidemic is taking on our communities. They have studied the issue closely in their home States, and they have worked with Senators from across the aisle to advance this legislation through the legislative process. It is thanks to their hard work that we are debating this bipartisan bill today.

The junior Senator from Ohio has called CARA the only bipartisan legislation that includes a comprehensive and evidence-based approach to help communities combat this epidemic. It would strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs, it would improve treatment initiatives, it would expand prevention and education, and it would give law enforcement more of the tools it needs to fight back against this epidemic.

It is no wonder this bipartisan legislation is supported by more than 130 national anti-drug groups. In a recent letter, they noted the only way to “stop and reverse current trends” was with a comprehensive approach, such as that included in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015, that leverages evidence-based law enforcement and health care services, including treatment.

So this bill takes the kind of comprehensive approach that is needed and at the same time, as these groups also noted in their letter, “the cost of the bill is kept low” with “no impact on mandatory spending.”

I ask colleagues to join with us in working to pass this bipartisan authorization bill. We will also have opportunities through the appropriations process this spring to continue important funding, just as we did last year. Indeed, just a few months ago we appropriated \$400 million to opioid-specific programs—nearly one-third more than what the Senate appropriated the preceding year—and we understand that all \$400 million of those funds still remains available to be spent today. That is right. All \$400 million remains available to be spent.

I sincerely hope our friends across the aisle will join us in supporting this legislation to address our national crisis. This is an important bill for each of us in this Chamber, and I look forward to taking action today to get us closer to seeing it become law. I have talked about the urgency and the multifaceted complexity associated with this epidemic, and I want to underline the hard work being done in the Senate to address it.

The chairs of the Judiciary Committee and the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, whom I recognized earlier, have been looking at ways to both improve law enforcement tools and increase education and awareness respectively. The chair of the Committee on Finance has, as his committee explored in a hearing last week, been focused on how this issue affects our child welfare system. And of course, we again recognize the cooperation of Members of both parties—chairs and ranking members and a bipartisan list of sponsors on both sides of the aisle.

Working together across the aisle—with State and local governments, agencies and law enforcement—we can help end this crisis once and for all. I look forward to taking the next step toward that objective later today.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Madam President, “History won’t forget this misstep by Grassley,” this poster says. “History won’t forget this misstep by Grassley.” That is from the Burlington Hawk Eye, Iowa’s oldest newspaper. That is what they said. It is the headline from the oldest newspaper, as I indicated—the Burlington Hawk Eye.

The misstep referenced here is the unprecedented statement by the senior Senator from Iowa and the Republican leader to deny the President the right to fill the current Supreme Court vacancy. The article ends with this declaration:

A few weeks back, when the longest-tenured U.S. Senator from Iowa passed a vote that gave him the record of most consecutive votes in the Senate, we lauded his service to us. We noted in casting votes on matters before the Senate, he was doing what Iowans elected him to do. We gave Grassley an attaboy for that. We take it back.

“We take it back.” That is a blistering statement, a revealing statement, a substantive statement. “We take it back.”

There is a lesson that Senator GRASSLEY and my Republican colleagues

should learn from this editorial. By refusing to give President Obama’s Supreme Court nominee a meeting, a hearing or a vote, they are abandoning the oath of office they swore when they became Senators. This abdication of their constitutional responsibilities will epitomize their work as Senators. Whatever they may have accomplished during their careers will be secondary to their decision to place electoral politics over their job.

Remember that our job here is to vote. That is what we swore to do—to follow the Constitution. And the Constitution couldn’t be clearer on this issue. So the stakes should even be higher for Senator GRASSLEY and the other Republican Senators. Why? Because as chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY presides over one of the most important and prestigious committees in the entire Senate. This has been the case for 200 years—200 years.

The Senate Judiciary Committee was established 200 years ago. In 1816, it was one of the original 11 standing committees. Twenty decades have passed. That is how long the committee has been in operation. Throughout history, Judiciary Committee chairs have traditionally wielded immense power—from President Martin Van Buren, when he was in the Senate, to Senator Ted Kennedy, Senator Arlen Specter, and Senator JOE BIDEN.

Judiciary Committee chairmen have historically prized their independence and guarded it at all costs from being manhandled for partisan purposes. It was so independent, in fact, that past chairmen have stood firm in the face of opposition from Presidents and Senate leadership.

At crucial times in American history, the Senate and the Nation have looked to the Judiciary Committee to do the right thing. During the Civil War, Chairman Lyman Trumbull of Illinois and his committee authored the Thirteenth Amendment. The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery during the Civil War. We know that during that period of time there was great consternation as to what should be done. Even the great President Lincoln had trouble deciding what should be done during the early days of the Civil War.

In 1889, Chairman George Hoar of Massachusetts and his committee drafted the Sherman Antitrust Act, refusing to give in to the special interests of Carnegie, Vanderbilt, and the Rockefeller monopolies. That was big-time independence.

In 1937, Chairman Henry Ashurst from Arizona, who was born in Winnemucca, NV, led his committee in standing firm against President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s attempt to pack the Supreme Court. Chairman Ashurst was a Democrat, just like President Roosevelt. Yet Ashurst and his committee

maintained their independence, even against the wishes of Senate Majority Leader Alben Barkley, a longtime Senator who became Vice President later. Imagine that. He was the Senate majority leader. He was from Kentucky. Imagine that Judiciary Committee chair standing up to a majority leader from Kentucky.

The accomplishments of these powerful chairmen and many others are the historic models against which the senior Senator from Iowa will be measured. If he keeps his current obstruction, history will not be kind to his tenure as chairman of the committee. As of today, the chairman has yielded his committee’s long-held authority and independence to the Republican leader for the sole purpose of weakening President Obama, of weakening the Presidency of the United States, and obstructing the Senate’s work.

The chairman has turned the impartial reputation of the Judiciary Committee into an extension of the Trump campaign. Just last month Chairman GRASSLEY spoke at a rally for Donald Trump in Iowa. At that rally, the chairman said:

We’ve had this trend going this way, away from the basic principles that established our government. And so we have an opportunity, once again, to make America great again.

Before I close, let’s remember what he said: “We’ve had this trend going this way, away from the basic principles that established our government.”

My friend from Iowa would do well to look at his own committee as it trends away from—again, the quote, “away from the basic principles that established our government.” That is what the Senator from Iowa said at the Trump rally.

Even now, he and his committee are wasting millions in taxpayer dollars developing partisan opposition research on Secretary Clinton. It has been going on for many months, more than a year, including asking for maternity leave records for staffers and time sheets from her office—just basic staff people. For months, Senator GRASSLEY blocked the confirmation of vital State Department officials, even career Foreign Service officers who are here, so we could give them a raise after their valiant service all around the world. He held that up, and people couldn’t understand it. It had nothing to do with Secretary Clinton. He did it as a way to weaken the Presidency of President Obama. What he has done is damage U.S. diplomacy worldwide.

Election day is more than 8 months away, but it is affecting nearly every action taken by the Grassley Judiciary Committee. There is much more at stake than Senator GRASSLEY’s reputation. When the committee’s independence is threatened by partisan politics, the future of this institution hangs in

the balance, and when the Senate is undermined, our democracy is undermined. Future generations will suffer irreparably if the Senator from Iowa continues to do the bidding of the Republican leader and the Donald Trumps of the new Republican Party.

Senator GRASSLEY and I have worked together for three decades. I served a couple terms in the House. Then I came here. My seat was way back there. When I gave my maiden speech, my first speech, I talked about the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, an idea I had in the House and I couldn't get past first base.

Presiding in the Senate that day was Senator David Pryor from Arkansas, who was chairman of the subcommittee on the Internal Revenue Service. Senator GRASSLEY was also listening. They both contacted me. In fact, I received a note from Senator Pryor and a call from Senator GRASSLEY saying: I like that legislation. I will work to help you. And they did, and we got that passed. So I have nothing personal against Senator GRASSLEY. I like him. He helped me pass something that was landmark legislation as a brandnew freshman Senator, but today, as a U.S. Senator, I have a duty to speak when the Republican Senate refuses to follow its constitutional obligations to provide advice and consent on the President's Supreme Court nomination.

As a Senator, I have a duty to demand that the Judiciary Committee considers important judicial nominees, especially—especially—someone to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court. As Senate Judiciary chair, the senior Senator from Iowa has a job to do. I repeat, my criticism is not personal. It is professional and it is substantive.

The senior Senator from Iowa outlined that job himself when he assumed the chairmanship of the Judiciary Committee. When he took over as chairman, he promised Republicans would “restore the Senate to the deliberative body that the founders intended.” Listen to that. That is what he said, to “restore the Senate to the deliberative body that the founders intended.” That is a quote.

Another quote. He said he took the responsibility of “vetting of nominees for lifetime appointments to the federal judiciary very seriously.”

The senior Senator from Iowa is failing this commitment that he made to himself. He made it. He made the commitment to “restore the Senate to the deliberative body that the founders intended.” The Founders are the people who wrote the Constitution. He is the first chair of this important committee to take the unprecedented step of refusing to meet, conduct hearings or hold a vote on a Supreme Court nomination. He is following the Republican leader's call to refuse the President's nominee a meeting, a hearing or a vote. The senior Senator from Iowa, of

all people, should know how important a vote is.

My friend has a lot of rollcall votes, 7,545 consecutive votes as of today, but what good are 7,500 consecutive votes if you simply sweep the votes you don't like to take under the rug? It taints this achievement. If he doesn't like President Obama's nominee, then he doesn't have to vote for the nominee, but don't run from a hard vote. Don't hide. What good is a chairmanship if it is just a rubberstamp for partisan politics? What good is a chairmanship if it is used to weaken the Senate and disrupt our Constitution's system of checks and balances? And that is what it does.

Last week the Des Moines Register published an open letter from one of Senator GRASSLEY's former employees. It was stunning. He worked in the Senate. This man's words capture what is at stake:

The institution of the Senate has managed to perform its constitutional obligations for well over 200 years. Every single nominee for the Supreme Court that has not withdrawn from consideration has received a vote within 125 days. Today, I feel nothing but shame for the fact that my senator, my former friend, will be bringing that unbroken history to an end.

That was the headline last week in the Des Moines Register, Iowa's largest newspaper.

I hope the chairman of the Judiciary Committee doesn't continue down this path. It will not benefit him, his committee, the Senate, the State of Iowa or this great country. Instead, he should follow the examples of his predecessors and give President Obama's Supreme Court nominee a meeting, a hearing, and a vote. He simply should do his job. If he doesn't, history will never forget this unprecedented misstep. History will never forget this misstep by Senator GRASSLEY.

I yield the floor.

Madam President, I ask the Chair to announce the business for the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from West Virginia.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, as we are all sadly aware, the United States is experiencing an epidemic of

drug overdose deaths. The statistics are just startling. Since 2000, the rate of deaths from drug overdoses has increased 137 percent, including a 200-percent increase in overdose deaths attributed to the use of opioids.

West Virginia has the unfortunate distinction of leading the Nation in drug-related overdose deaths—more than twice the national average. As I travel across the State, I hear constantly about the devastation caused by this epidemic. West Virginia communities are grappling with the seriousness and pain of addiction. No family or community—mine included—is immune from this pain.

As one of my constituents put it, “We must give our young people a reason not to start using something that robs them of everything they have.”

Other West Virginians have bravely shared their family's stories of addiction's pain with me. In the powerful words of one of my constituents, “It only takes a few seconds to use drugs—but a lifetime to fight.”

Drug addiction is a diseases that knows no boundaries, and West Virginia is certainly not alone in this fight. My colleagues in the Senate—including, I am sure, the Acting President pro tempore—return each week with similar stories. No matter our political party, we should all agree on one thing, we must act to change these horrifying statistics and to save lives.

Some steps have already been taken to address this drug epidemic. The appropriations bill we passed last December included funding to expand prevention efforts. It included improved data collection and new treatment services, training for our servicemembers who are battling addiction, and training for the first responders who are responding to these drug overdoses.

Today we hope to begin debate on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. I thank my colleagues Senator PORTMAN, Senator AYOTTE, and Senator WHITEHOUSE for their leadership on this important legislation.

This bipartisan bill, known as CARA, addresses the opioid epidemic by expanding prevention and education. It also promotes the resources needed for treatment and recovery. It includes reforms to help law enforcement respond to the drug epidemic, and it supports long-term recovery efforts—which, as we see in my State of West Virginia, we don't have enough treatment options, particularly in the long-term recovery area.

The legislation also expands the availability of naloxone, a lifesaving drug that helps to reverse the effects of an overdose, and we are also creating disposal sites for unwanted prescriptions.

CARA provides resources for treatment alternatives to incarceration, such as the successful and expanding drug court programs that operate in

West Virginia and many other States. We just had a graduation the other day with some great success stories included in that from the drug court. According to the Beckley Register Herald, counties with drug courts have already seen cost savings and deep declines of recidivism rates among graduates.

CARA also provides a provision to improve treatment programs for pregnant women and mothers who have substance abuse disorder. Another startling statistic is the number of babies born with neonatal abstinence syndrome that has increased fivefold from the years 2000 to the year 2012.

Last fall, I introduced the Improving Treatment for Pregnant and Postpartum Women Act, with Senators AYOTTE, WHITEHOUSE, and KLOBUCHAR. The CARA act provides a provision that could play a critical role in preventing neonatal abstinence syndrome and getting treatment to pregnant women and new mothers.

Also, last fall I worked with Senator MARKEY and others to help restore drug take-back days and keep medications out of the wrong hands. We all probably have some medication in our own medicine chests that are no longer necessary and that we don't need to have. It might have been for a family member. It is time to clean out those medicine chests. I participated in last year's program in Charleston, WV, and was pleased to see the overwhelming response. CARA focuses on the programs that work and will streamline efforts across multiple Federal agencies.

In order to further address the needs of our communities, I am working on several bipartisan amendments on this bill. These amendments include solutions to improve prescribing practices and prevent overprescribing. Too many stories of addiction start with patients taking painkillers after a minor surgery or a minor injury.

That is why I am pleased to be working with Senator GILLIBRAND on an effort that would require clear CDC guidelines for prescribing opioids for acute pain—a tooth extraction, maybe a broken arm, something that doesn't last forever, but the pain is acute in the beginning but fades rather quickly.

I also am pleased to be working with Senator WARREN on an amendment that allows doctors to partially fill certain opioid prescriptions. These will reduce the number of unused painkillers sitting in our medicine cabinets and help to prevent future cases of drug abuse and addiction.

In order to reduce the number of overdose deaths, I am working with Senator KAINE to allow doctors to co-prescribe the lifesaving drug naloxone when they prescribe an opioid. This would make naloxone more widely available in Federal health care settings, such as community health cen-

ters, VA clinics, and DOD facilities. I am also focused on tackling one of the saddest realities of this epidemic.

In my State of West Virginia, babies born exposed to opioids during pregnancy are approximately three times the national average. Every 25 minutes in this country a baby is born with addiction. Nationwide, this condition has increased fivefold from the years 2000 to 2012.

This amendment will provide clear guidelines to encourage the creation of residential pediatric recovery centers, like the wonderful Lily's Place in Huntington, WV. I am pleased to be working with Senator KING from Maine and Congressman EVAN JENKINS from West Virginia on this effort.

CARA represents a positive step forward in addressing the opioid crisis. The four amendments that I have outlined, I believe, will strengthen the bill. They would prevent addiction, promote recovery, and curb the scourge of drug addiction in my State and in others across this country. There is much work ahead for all of us in this area. The actions we are hopefully taking here this week in Washington are simply first steps.

This bill builds on the tireless work being done at the State and local levels by communities, law enforcement, and health professionals all across this country. They are working together. By working together, we can change these statistics and stop more tragedies from occurring—stop the human tragedy of losing a loved one, of losing a mother or father.

I urge my colleagues to begin debate on CARA this evening and to support this important legislation. I am concerned we are in jeopardy of losing the next generation. So we have much work to do.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, as we have heard from the Senator from West Virginia, this week the Senate will begin consideration of a bipartisan bill that targets an epidemic that is raging across the country, but apparently it is especially hard-hitting in places such as West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and the like. But this abuse of prescription painkillers and heroin is not just isolated to those areas, even though the leaders of this particular legislation come from places such as Minnesota, Rhode Island, Ohio, and New Hampshire. Sadly, Texas has been no exception.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that in Texas opioid-related drug deaths have increased by 30 percent since 2002. Houston is widely recognized by the DEA and law enforcement officials as a key hub for the trafficking of illicit prescription drugs. In South Texas, right next to the U.S.-Mexico border, the transnational criminal organizations are exploiting

our porous border to import increasingly large amounts of hard narcotics like heroin, which ultimately wreaks havoc in towns and cities across America.

In 2014 alone, drug cartels successfully smuggled more than 250,000 pounds of heroin across our borders and into the United States at a street value of approximately \$25 billion. These are the same criminals who traffic in human beings, including young girls and boys. These are the same people who traffic in illegal immigrants. These are the same people who traffic in illegal drugs. Indeed, this has become such big business and the network so large that these transnational criminal organizations are basically in on everything and anything that will make them money, including transporting these terrible drugs like heroin across the border.

As we all know and have heard, this epidemic destroys families, it increases the crime rate, and it robs millions of Americans of their future. As I mentioned a moment ago, thousands are dying every year. That is why the bill we are voting on this afternoon, called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, is so important. It will help give families and law enforcement additional resources to beat drug addiction through proven treatment programs. I am proud to cosponsor the legislation.

The reason we have been able to move this bill forward so far—and it passed unanimously out of the Senate Judiciary Committee 2 weeks ago—is because it reflects bipartisan input as well as bipartisan concern with this epidemic.

As I mentioned earlier, I wish to particularly recognize the junior Senators from Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Ohio—Senators WHITEHOUSE, PORTMAN, and AYOTTE—for their laserlike focus on this legislation and making sure that it is at the top of our list of things we need to do this legislative session. By highlighting how bad the problem is in our country and providing legislation to address it, they are helping us attack this epidemic head-on.

I must say that while so far this legislation has moved forward on a strong bipartisan basis, there are some signals on the horizon that indicate some potential trouble. At a press conference after the Judiciary Committee unanimously passed the bill, several of our friends on the other side of the aisle were explicit. They said that if the Senate did not add hundreds of millions of dollars in duplicative funding, they might withhold their support.

This legislation is an authorization bill, and it does not appropriate funds. Our friends across the aisle know that if an appropriation is added to this legislation, particularly if it is duplicative, it causes a number of problems.

First of all, a spending bill can't originate here in the Senate. So it raises a so-called blue-slip problem. But perhaps just as importantly, this is not an orderly process by which we determine what is actually needed and to make sure that we are appropriating money in a fiscally responsible sort of way.

I don't have to remind the Acting President pro tempore or anybody else who is listening that we have a \$19 trillion debt in our country, and recklessly throwing money at a problem rather than carefully targeting it in a fiscally responsible way is simply irresponsible.

It seems to be part of the message: Give us what we want or we might hijack a bipartisan bill that would literally save lives. I hope I am wrong, and I hope the signals on the horizon don't prove to ultimately be true. But it does seem like this is part of a new political strategy.

Earlier this month, we know that our Democrat colleagues blocked a bipartisan Energy bill from moving forward on an unrelated issue—something on which Senator MURKOWSKI has shown the patience of Job, trying to work through this process so we can get back on the Energy bill rather than having it hijacked by an extraneous subject that could well and should well be handled in a different way, certainly separately.

This is not the way the Senate gets anything accomplished. As I have said before, playing political games with important issues like fighting drug addiction is what lost our friends the majority in 2014. I urge the Democratic leadership to listen to those in their own caucus who have worked alongside Republicans in a responsible fashion to draft and put forward this bill that is so clearly needed in this country.

This afternoon I hope we will move forward on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. I hope we will consider it and consider amendments that are being offered in good faith on both sides to try to improve the legislation. But what we should not do is allow anyone to hijack this important legislation for partisan purposes. I think we should restrain ourselves from any impulse to do so. It happened, unfortunately, on the bipartisan Energy bill. It has been threatened on this legislation. But my hope is that cooler heads will prevail.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I rise today to speak in support of the

Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015, also known as the CARA Act. Our country is facing a prescription drug epidemic, and today is a good step toward addressing this crisis. This is a crisis I have been dealing with since my days as Governor of the great State of West Virginia.

Opioid abuse is not only ravaging my State, it is ravaging the country. Drug overdose deaths have soared by more than 700 percent since 1999. We lost 600 West Virginians to opioids last year alone. But our State is not unique; every day in our country, 51 Americans die from opioid abuse, and since 1999 we have lost almost 200,000 Americans to prescription opioid abuse. Think about that. That is more people than we have in any city in the State of West Virginia.

This bill is an important first step. First of all, it will authorize \$77.9 million in grant funding for prevention and recovery efforts. It will expand prevention and educational efforts—particularly aimed at teens, parents and other caretakers, and aging populations—to prevent the abuse of opioids and heroin and to promote treatment and recovery. It will expand the availability of naloxone to law enforcement agencies and other first responders to help in the reversal of overdoses to save lives. It will expand disposable sites for unwanted prescription medications to keep them out of the hands of our children and adolescents. It will launch an evidence-based opioid and heroin treatment and intervention program to expand best practices throughout the country. It will also strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs to help States monitor and track prescription drug diversion.

While this bill is a good start and addresses critical problems, there is more that needs to be done. I will be offering several amendments to improve the bill by changing the FDA's mission, providing grants for consumer education, and requiring prescriber training.

I firmly believe we need cultural change at the FDA, and that is why I introduced Changing the Culture of the FDA Act. It simply does exactly what it says—it changes that culture. My amendment to CARA, based on the Changing the Culture of the FDA Act, would amend the FDA's mission statement to include language that will require the agency to take into account the public health impact of the Nation's opioid epidemic when approving and regulating opioid medications and will hold the agency responsible for addressing the opioid epidemic. It is hard to believe that right now as all of these new drugs are coming to the market and all of these pharmaceutical manufacturers are producing this new product, basically the mission statement has never taken into account the impact of the opioid epidemic on the

public's health in this Nation. Now that we see it is truly an epidemic, we think this is a much needed change, and hopefully it will be approved.

This builds on and solidifies the FDA's recently stated goal to fundamentally reexamine the risk-benefit calculations for opioids and ensures that the agency considers the wider public health effects. We need a change in the culture of the FDA, but we also need to make sure the advocacy groups that fight this battle every day are armed with the resources they need to stem this tide.

I am also submitting an amendment that will establish consumer education grants through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to raise awareness about the risk of opioid addiction and overdose.

This epidemic is one that needs to be fought on all fronts, but most importantly, we need to fight it on the frontlines with the prescribers, those people whom we trust to get the training they need. That is why I will also submit an amendment that will require that medical practitioners receive the needed training on the safe prescribing of opioids prior to renewing their DEA registration to prescribe controlled substances. If you talk to any of our medical physicians throughout the country, they get very little training as far as the effects of these drugs, and we think it is well past time that they get the needed education, as well as continuing education, so that we can keep ahead of the prescriptions they are putting on the markets and basically keep them from harming people every day.

According to the National Institutes of Health, in 2012, more than 250 million prescriptions were written in the United States for opioid painkillers. That equals one bottle of pain pills for every U.S. adult. Can you imagine one bottle of pain pills for every U.S. adult in this country? It is unbelievable. We are the most addictive Nation on Earth. Five percent of the population in the United States of America—there are 330 million of us and 700 billion humans on the planet Earth—consumes 80 percent of the opioids in the world. It is just unheard of.

Until we ensure that every prescriber has a strong understanding of safe opioid prescribing practices and the very great risk of opioid addiction, abuse, and overdose deaths, we will continue to see too many people prescribed too many of these dangerous drugs which can lead them down a tragic path, and that is why we need to educate people.

There is one other subject I wanted to address, and I hope the FDA and this administration will look at it very seriously, and that is the professionals on advisory committees. When an opioid is coming to market, I believe and I believe a lot of Americans believe

that this goes through a review process. These professionals basically are looking at this, and they make a recommendation as to whether this drug should be on the market, the need for this drug, and the effect this drug will have on people's lives. If they rule against this drug—and let's say they have an 11-to-2 ruling, such as Zohydro did—then the request for that drug to come to market should have to come before Congress. The FDA—the director and the staff—needs to basically come and explain to Congress why this potent drug needs to come on the market when basically their advisory committee and those people who are the professionals basically agree not to let it come to market.

This is a conversation that has to be had. We have to make sure we understand why we are putting all of these products on the market and the effect they are going to have on the public. That is another topic we hope to address also as this bill comes to the floor.

The bottom line is that I am pleased the Senate is working in a bipartisan manner. This is how we need to work to solve the major challenges our country faces. By working in a bipartisan way, we will have, as I understand, an open amendment process which is so needed and critical to move this legislation through. I appreciate that.

I believe my amendments will strengthen this bill, but I also believe more needs to be done. We must provide the critical resources needed to stem this tide. I look forward to working with my colleagues to strengthen this bill and to begin to address this crisis head-on.

This country has faced every crisis we have ever had, and we have overcome it. This is one we haven't attempted. For some reason, it is a silent killer—out of sight, out of mind. It will take all of us being Americans and basically using our faith that we have that we can fix these problems, to save Democrats, save Republicans, save Independents, and save everybody. This cannot be a partisan issue because I can tell my colleagues that opiates and the addiction of opiates have no partisan home. It is truly bipartisan. It attacks us all.

I appreciate my colleagues, and I look forward to working with them to work through this important piece of legislation.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WOMEN'S RIGHT TO HEALTH CARE

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, this week the Supreme Court—which is lacking a ninth Justice for the foreseeable future for reasons that most of the American public doesn't understand since my fellow Senators—my Republican colleagues—simply refuse to do their job—will hear arguments on yet another case that threatens women's right to health care. The case the Supreme Court will hear on Wednesday—*Whole Women's Health v. Hellerstedt*—originated in Texas, but, as all Supreme Court cases do, this case has implications for the entire country. It is part of a sustained, coordinated attack on women's right to make personal, private health care decisions for themselves. It is Big Government reaching into women's homes and bedrooms, getting between the women and their health care providers, between the women and their religious counselors; it is reaching into women's homes, telling women that they no longer have the right to make personal, private health care decisions for themselves and to access safe and affordable care.

If the Court rules in favor of the Texas law, which has closed health clinics across the State—imagine that. You are a legislator taking an oath of office in Austin, TX, to do the best you can for your State, and you pass legislation that closes health clinics not for financial reasons but for ideological reasons. So if the Court rules in favor of this Texas law, which, as I said, closes health clinics across the State, it will set a dangerous precedent that could lead to more clinic closures across this country. My interest is especially Ohio. Ohio will be weakened by this too.

These clinics are often the only place women and men have to turn for their basic health services. Most of the health care women are getting at these clinics has nothing to do with abortions, but it is the kind of care that women need in these clinics. Millions of women rely on Planned Parenthood and other clinics like it for lifesaving screenings, for testing, for preventive care, and for treatment.

In Ohio, Planned Parenthood centers provide health care services to 100,000 men and women each year. Many of them have nowhere else to turn. Many of them are moderate-income women. Many of them are women working two jobs. Many of them go to Planned Parenthood because, first, it gives good care; second, it takes care of them in kind, decent, empathetic ways; and third, it is what they can afford. They either cannot afford health care elsewhere or they live too far away to have access to health care.

A new law in Ohio threatens that access. The bill was passed by the Ohio Legislature and signed by Governor Kasich—that is Governor Kasich of Presidential primary fame, Presi-

dential Republican debate fame. The bill, which was signed by Governor Kasich a week ago, will strip Federal funding not only from Planned Parenthood—why they would want to do that is all about ideology and playing to their far-right political base—will strip Federal funding not only from Planned Parenthood but any health care facility that could be perceived as “promoting” safe and legal abortion. But these health care clinics are mostly not about abortion; they are about providing health care to women—mostly to women. This includes health clinics that simply work with other providers to refer women to other facilities so that women can make decisions that should be between them and their doctors.

Now, I repeat, so many of my colleagues love to talk about Big Government, but when Big Government—mostly a bunch of privileged—if I may, privileged, White men on the other side of the aisle, mostly—when they want to inject themselves between women and their doctors, between women and their families, between women and their religious counselors, it strikes me as—let's just say hypocritical.

We are talking about a rule that is far, far more sweeping than just defunding—that is what they like to say, “defunding”—Planned Parenthood.

If you are watching the Republican debates week after week, even when they sound like food fights, which it did last week—when you are watching these debates, you can see that whenever one of these White, privileged men—candidates running for President and one other privileged African-American man running for President on the Republican side—whenever they say “defund Planned Parenthood,” the crowd goes wild. They play to that base to defund Planned Parenthood, that base that for whatever reason, with their ideological agenda, doesn't seem to care much about women's health.

Let's be clear. This isn't about defunding abortion. The Federal Government doesn't provide funding for abortion, period. I will say that again. The Federal Government does not provide funding for abortion, period.

Health officials in Ohio—health officials that play it straight, which is 99-point-something percent of providers—real doctors, real health providers, real health care officials are scared that the new law could take funding away from local health departments, if we can imagine that. The director of public health policy in Columbus—the State's capital—told the Columbus Dispatch that the law would have a “significant impact” on their department's ability to coordinate with hospitals and insurance companies.

So stand back for a second and see what they are doing. A bunch of right-wing, privileged, mostly White men in

the legislature have decided that their political agenda trumps everything else, and they are willing to follow their—so that they can play to their far-right base, they are willing to jeopardize women's health. They are willing to go right up against what the Columbus Dispatch says—few papers in America are more conservative—when they talk about a significant impact on the department's ability to coordinate with hospitals and insurance companies. Why would they do that? They do it because they are playing to this far-right base who votes overwhelmingly in primaries.

The director said that because the bill is so broadly written, "we wouldn't be able to work with any hospital in our jurisdiction."

This Ohio law explicitly targets critical health and health education services for women. Don't take my word for it; all you have to do is read the bill. This chart shows that it prohibits Ohio clinics and hospitals from using Federal dollars—and I am quoting directly from the bill—for any of the programs established by the Violence Against Women Act, the Minority HIV/AIDS Initiative, the Infertility Prevention Project, the Personal Responsibility Education Program, and the Breast and Cervical Cancer Mortality Prevention Act. Think about that—the Mortality Prevention Act. This bill prohibits Ohio clinics and hospitals from using Federal dollars to implement these laws.

It means no Federal dollars for the program administered by the Administration for Children and Families in the Department of Health and Human Services to educate adolescents on abstinence and contraception for the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. So this legislation that Governor Kasich signed that these privileged, mostly White men in the State legislature—politically far to the right, the majority of the State legislature—the bill they passed and Governor Kasich signed would mean that we wouldn't be able to use the Federal dollars we have to educate adolescents on abstinence and contraception for the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

So what are they doing? The extremists on the other side are saying no Federal dollars for abortion. There aren't Federal dollars for abortion. But they are saying no Federal dollars to preach abstinence and to educate young people about abstinence and sexually transmitted diseases. So what are they doing and why are they doing this to the women in Ohio?

This law bars women from accessing cancer screenings, fertility services, AIDS prevention, and help coping with abuse and violence. Do these far-right members of the legislature know no low-income or moderate-income young women? Do they know no teenagers, no

female teenagers and young male teenagers, too, who maybe could benefit from some of these programs, including abstinence education, learning about contraceptives, and learning about how sexually transmitted diseases are in fact transmitted?

I support a woman's right to make personal, private health care decisions for herself with her doctor. But no matter your personal feelings about abortion, surely we can agree—although the legislature can't in my State—surely we can agree that cancer screenings and programs that have helped bring Ohio's teen pregnancy and STD rates down are a good thing.

I would say that Ohio right now—and this is embarrassing for me to say on the Senate floor in front of colleagues—my State is 50th for Black babies and infant mortality and 47th overall in infant mortality. We are 47th overall, 50th for Black infant mortality.

The legislature underfunds public health, and they then undercut—because of this legislature's action with Governor Kasich's signature—they undercut the Violence Against Women Act, they undercut minority HIV and AIDS education, they undercut the personal responsibility education program, they undercut breast and cervical cancer mortality prevention, and they undercut infertility prevention projects. I just don't get it.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 5 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. A woman in New Carlisle wrote to me saying:

There was a time when I could not find full-time employment, I did not have health insurance, and I also was not eligible for any assistance from the government. My husband and I were newly married and trying to build a responsible life together.

I was 21. I had a family history of breast cancer and ovarian cancer, so access to healthcare was crucial for me. Planned Parenthood was the only place that would help me look after my health and plan my own family and lifestyle in a way that I could afford.

Another woman went on to say: "Planned Parenthood made an impoverished young woman feel safe and comfortable and valued."

Another woman in Boardman, OH, wrote: "Along with many other women, I was treated at Planned Parenthood, and I received a referral to a specialist, which saved my reproduction."

Another woman wrote saying that she had a child at 13 and gave up the child for adoption. After that she made the choice to get educated about family planning and birth control. She couldn't afford to go to a family doctor, so Planned Parenthood was where

she turned to make sure she never had to go through that experience again.

A young woman from Columbus told the Canton Repository newspaper that while she was speaking at the statehouse. Half of the lawmakers looked like they were about to fall asleep. Many were looking at their cell phones. They didn't want to listen to a young, low-income woman talk about her personal life and what Planned Parenthood meant to her.

What is happening is not all that different in Ohio than across the country. There is an organized attack on women's rights to make health care decisions for themselves. It is not about health or safety. Look at these examples. It is about politicians thinking they know better than women and their doctors. It is happening as we speak. These so-called TRAP laws in Ohio and in dozens of other States have created gaps in care that threaten women's ability to see the providers of their choice.

Health clinics in Texas have shut their doors. If the Supreme Court upholds the Texas law being challenged, the remaining clinics in the State may be forced to turn their patients away for good.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, in the last 2 minutes I would like to say a few more words about the Supreme Court vacancy.

Four former U.S. attorneys from Ohio, Washington State, California, and Virginia published an op-ed that went around the country urging the Senate to promptly consider a Supreme Court nominee to replace Justice Scalia.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the writings of the former U.S. attorneys.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Steve Dettelbach, Jenny Durkan, Melinda Haag and Tim Heaphy are Democratic former U.S. attorneys for, respectively, Northern Ohio, Western Washington, Northern California and Western Virginia. As former U.S. attorneys in diverse districts that are home to more than 20 million Americans, we urge that the president promptly nominate, and the Senate promptly consider, a Supreme Court nominee to replace Justice Antonin Scalia. Both the plain language of the Constitution and plain truths regarding public safety and national security demand that result.

For federal prosecutors, agents and criminal investigations, a year is a lifetime. We have seen real threats, whether it is the heroin epidemic or the threat of ISIS recruitment, facing the people in our communities each day.

While law enforcement stands ready to protect the public from those threats, they need to know the rules of the road. Uncertainty about those rules impedes their efforts. Just as with the economy, uncertainty

prevents good agents and prosecutors from deciding on investigative strategies and tactics, and making important charging decisions. The Supreme Court is the ultimate arbiter of the hardest and most important questions facing law enforcement and our nation.

Even as we write today, unsettled legal questions regarding search and seizure, digital privacy and federal sentencing are either pending before the Supreme Court or headed there. It is unfair and unsafe to expect good federal agents, police and prosecutors to spend more than a year guessing whether their actions will hold up in court. And it is just as unfair to expect citizens whose rights and liberties are at stake to wait for answers while their homes, emails, cell phones, records and activities are investigated. Equally important, as lawyers and former public officials committed to the Constitution and the rule of law, it is incredible to us that anyone who claims fidelity to those ideas can argue that either the president or the Senate should not fulfill their duties. And we should be clear on what those duties are. Announcing ahead of time that the Senate will reject any nominee, or refusing to hold fair hearings, does not fulfill the Senate's duty to provide "advice and consent" on court nominees. The "advice" called for in the Constitution does not include, "Just forget it, Mr. President."

It is ironic that the arguments being made by those urging a year-plus delay are precisely the types of arguments that Scalia abhorred. They are based on politics and some vague notions of Senate "interpretations" of the Constitution. As U.S. attorneys we were constantly assessing the strength of constitutional and other legal arguments. And there was no more demanding jurist than Scalia when it came to supporting those arguments with written law.

One argument is based on the "Thurmond rule," named for the former senator from South Carolina, which calls for no confirmations in the final months of a president's term. But this "rule" has never been applied to the Supreme Court and it finds no home in the text of the Constitution. We would all have bought tickets to see Scalia question a lawyer who dared to raise an argument like that. Few things in the Constitution seem as unambiguous as term length. The president is elected for four years under Article II. There is no clause diminishing the president's duties in the last year, and as even Jeb Bush acknowledged, such notions are dangerous.

Should the president stop fighting ISIS in his last year? Should senators facing an election year not be allowed to vote on judicial nominees so that the "people can decide?" Certainly not. The people already did decide what would happen from January 2013 to January 2017. They elected President Obama. In both our communities and court system, we don't have more than a year to blithely waste for political reasons. The safety concerns and dangers are pressing, and our leaders in the White House and the Senate do not have built-in vacation time on our dime.

Mr. BROWN. I close just begging, urging, imploring, and beseeching my colleagues on the Republican side to move forward on the Supreme Court nominee.

We have not had a Supreme Court vacancy for as long as a year since the Civil War because we were at war in the 1860s. The average nomination process for confirming a Supreme

Court nominee when there are 8 members of the Supreme Court is only about 6 weeks. The longest, Justice Thomas, took 99 days. The President of the United States is elected for 4 years—not a 3-year term. A 4-year term has 300-plus days in the term.

This Senator is disappointed—I will leave it at that—to hear that my colleagues have said there will not be hearings. Then they said that not only will there not be hearings for the President's nomination, they will not even meet with a nominee. This Senator finds it rather shameful for an institution with this kind of heritage and this kind of reputation that we don't do better than that. I urge my colleagues to do our jobs, do what we were elected to do, what we were sworn in to do, and do what we are paid to do to bring this nominee—vote against them if you like but bring up this nominee for real Senate consideration.

I yield the floor, and I thank Senator GRASSLEY for allowing me more time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Well, Madam President, it is another day and another tantrum from the minority leader, but it doesn't matter how much the minority leader jumps up and down or how much the minority leader stomps his feet, we aren't going to let liberals get away with denying the American people an opportunity to be heard. Letting the American people decide this question is a reasonable approach, it is a fair approach, and it is the historical approach. It is the approach the other side advocated when the shoe was on the other foot, and it is what the American people deserve.

They deserve an opportunity and responsibility that we do it right instead of rushing to judgment. Voters deserve the right to be heard. The American people want a reasonable justice, a person who will make the right decisions.

As the American people continue voting during the Presidential election, they face a choice: Do they want just another Justice who will look to her heart and apply her own ethics and perspective when deciding important constitutional questions that impact every American or do they want a Justice who, like Justice Scalia, adheres to the Constitution and the rule of law and decides cases based on wherever the text takes him or her. We can't overstate how critical it is for the American people to understand what is at stake in this debate.

Today take a little bit of time to discuss the impact that these two different visions would have on everyday Americans. Many leading Court observers believe that adding yet another liberal Justice to the Court whose decisions are unmoored from the constitutional text would lead to major changes in the Court's jurisprudence. As a recent New York Times article

put it, adding another liberal to the Supreme Court "would be the most consequential ideological shift on the Court . . . creating a liberal majority that would almost certainly reshape American law and American life."

So it will impact all of us. According to the same article, a host of Supreme Court precedents on free speech, freedom of religion, the right to keep and bear arms, the death penalty, and abortion would be overturned. The article speculates that "abortion rights would become more secure, and gun rights less so. . . . First Amendment arguments in cases on campaign finance, public unions, and commercial speech would meet a more skeptical reception."

In that same article, one law school dean noted that with another liberal on the Court, "the judicial debate over the fundamental possibility of *ObamaCare* would likely draw to an end." So let's consider just a few of the Supreme Court precedents that would likely be overturned with another liberal Justice on the Court.

First and foremost, it is our Second Amendment rights that would fall squarely within the liberals' sights. The *Heller* decision, authored by Justice Scalia, recognized, based on the intent of the Framers, that the Second Amendment guarantees an individual constitutional right to gun ownership.

Again, as one law professor noted in the *New York Times*, with another liberal in the Court, "The five would narrow *Heller* to the point of irrelevancy." Another said: "If we got a fifth liberal on the court, the pendulum would swing pretty quickly on gun control. . . . I expect that we'd see a major shift in the kind of gun control laws that get approved by the court."

In other words, *Heller* and the individual constitutional rights it guarantees would be turned into a relic. It would be an ornament without any practical limiting effect on the government's infringement upon the constitutional right of an individual to have gun ownership. Once this happens, all bets are off on the right to keep and bear arms.

Next, the First Amendment right of the American people to make their voices heard would be drastically curtailed if the Court overturns *Citizens United*. In fact, as a University of Chicago Law School professor said in the *New York Times*, "*Citizens United* is on every liberal's list of opinions that ought to go."

Freedom of religion protections under the First Amendment wouldn't be far behind. Another liberal Justice could allow the government to force Americans to comply with laws that violate their deeply held religious views. For example, a new Justice could provide the fifth vote to overturn the *Hobby Lobby* decision, which recognized the right of the owners of a

closely held corporation to resist laws on religious grounds, such as ObamaCare's contraception mandate.

Of course, we all know free speech protections are being eroded and diluted in this country. On college campuses across the country, speech isn't being protected because of the speaker's viewpoint. Rather than debate openly with opponents as Justice Scalia did, too many people today want to shut down debate and muzzle anybody who disagrees with them.

What other rights are at stake in this election? Incredibly important precedents under the First Amendment's establishment clause would be at risk. Of course, I am talking about Supreme Court cases allowing prayer at town-hall meetings or permitting low-income parents to receive public school vouchers to defray the cost of the child's private school, including religious schools. Of course, while yet another liberal Justice could read narrowly the First and Second Amendments that are in the Constitution, he or she could read broadly those rights that are not in the Constitution at all.

If yet another liberal is nominated to the Court, even reasonable restrictions on abortion enacted into law through the democratic process would be swept away. Just a few years ago the Court upheld the ban on partial birth abortion by a 5-to-4 vote in the case of *Carhart*. Partial birth abortion is a horrific practice that crushes an unborn baby's skull, killing it while its head is still in the womb. It is one very small step short of infanticide. If the American people elect a liberal during this Presidential election, and that President nominates another liberal to replace Justice Scalia, we can all expect a constitutional right to abortion on demand without limitation. In the words of one law professor, "At-risk precedents run from campaign finance to commerce, from race to religion, and they include some signature Scalia projects, such as the Second Amendment. . . . Some would go quickly, like *Citizens United*, and some would go slower . . . but they'll go."

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask unanimous consent for 4 more minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. That leads me to a broader point. There is more at stake than the results of any particular case as important as those cases are. The American people need to consider whether they want their next Justice to decide cases based on the text of the Constitution as it was understood at the time it was adopted or whether Justices are free to update the Constitution according to their own moral and political philosophies. Should Justices apply accepted legal principles

through sound reasoning of new facts or should they do legal back flips to reach their desired public policy goals?

Of course, this second approach is not law. Instead, it is what Justice Scalia called "legalistic argle-bargle" and "jiggery-pokery." Justice Scalia knew the rule of law was a law of rules. The rule of law is not a law of whatever is in the Justice's heart. When a Justice believes, as President Obama does, that any time he views the Constitution as unclear, he can apply his own life experience and empathy for his or her favorite causes. The Justice has a clear incentive to think the Constitution is unclear, but a Justice isn't entitled to read those views into the Constitution and impose them on the American people. Our Constitution sets up a Republic, not a government by judiciary.

Unless the Constitution specifically prohibits the democratic process from reflecting the will of the people, the decisions are made by elected individuals who are accountable to the voters. The Supreme Court plays a very important role in keeping the branches of the Federal Government within constitutional powers, keeping the Federal and State governments within their constitutional sphere, and it ensures the government complies with the Bill of Rights. That is the basis for its legitimacy.

When the Court reads the Constitution in ways that reflect the Justice's personal policy views rather than the text, it does not act legitimately. Instead, it denies the people the legal right to govern themselves. Justice Scalia understood this better than anyone. The more the Court reaches out and grabs power it is not entitled to hold, the more it legislates from the bench, the more decisions it robs from the American people.

As a direct result, step-by-step and inch-by-inch, liberty is lost. As John Adams observed, "Liberty, once lost, is lost forever."

Since the days of the Warren Court, this is what liberal Justices have done. Under the guise of constitutional interpretation, they have imposed liberalism on the American people. They have done it on issues and in ways they couldn't achieve through the ballot box.

This is the decision facing the American people during this Presidential election. If the American people elect a liberal as their next President, and he or she nominates a like-minded judge to replace Justice Scalia, liberalism will be imposed on the American people to a degree this country has never before witnessed. I hope anyone who cares about these important issues will take very serious note.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nebraska.

BEEF AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I rise to congratulate Nebraska's beef producers for continuing to reach new areas of the world with our very high-quality American beef. Earlier this month it was announced that WR Reserve, a beef-processing plant in Hastings, NE, will have the honor of delivering the first U.S. shipments to Israel in nearly 13 years. In December 2003, Israel was one of many countries to suspend imports of U.S. beef, following a confirmed case of BSE in the United States. Because of this, America's beef producers have been unable to ship their products to this close friend and ally. However, during my visit to Israel last fall, U.S. Ambassador to Israel Dan Shapiro asked me to begin a dialogue with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and find a way to bring Nebraska beef to Israel. The Ambassador was especially interested in serving that Nebraska beef at the Embassy's annual 4th of July celebration.

Over the last few months, I have worked with the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service and with officials at the Nebraska Department of Agriculture in a concerted effort to find a solution. I am extremely pleased to inform this body that an agreement was achieved, the ban was lifted, and Nebraska will supply the first shipments of beef to Israel in over a decade.

Ambassador Shapiro was quick to praise this breakthrough, noting:

This agreement gives Israeli consumers access to the world's highest-quality beef. At the same time, it creates and supports jobs in the great state of Nebraska.

I couldn't agree with the Ambassador more. Israel is a critical ally of the United States, and I was pleased to work with the USDA and the Israeli Government to supply the first American beef shipments to Israel in over a decade.

Nebraska's beef producers are the best in the world, and this agreement is a testament to their tireless commitment to delivering safe and high-quality beef to millions of dinner tables around the world. In Nebraska, cattle outnumber people more than 3 to 1. With nearly \$7.2 billion in annual cash receipts, our beef production is the largest sector of the State's economy, and Nebraska leads the Nation in every aspect of beef production. I would also like to note that this agreement shows that science-based trade can overcome myth and misinformation.

By ending this ban, Israel becomes one of the last countries to reopen its market to U.S. beef and abide by international trade regulations. In doing so, this agreement reinforces the progress made by the U.S. beef industry to eliminate BSE-related trade restrictions.

I also join the Nebraska Agriculture Department director, Greg Ibach, in

congratulating WR Reserve. Their hard work made this agreement possible after complying with a rigorous inspection process that included regular visits from the Israeli Government.

Prior to this agreement, according to the USDA, Israel imported beef products from other nations worth \$405 million in 2014. Ninety-five percent of these imports originated in Latin America with smaller volumes coming from Australia and the European Union.

Now the United States will have the opportunity to showcase our world-famous beef to a new global market, and Nebraska is very proud to lead that charge. I was honored to work collaboratively with State, Federal, and international officials to ensure that Nebraska's beef producers achieved those necessary approvals.

I am proud to represent the people of Nebraska. Through this agreement, new markets are now open to Nebraska's producers, businesses, and to the communities that rely on them for economic progress. I will continue to work to ensure Nebraska's beef producers have the opportunity to do what they do best—feed the world.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

PHIL NOWAK

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, last month I came to the floor—in fact, I come to the floor just about every month—to highlight the great work being done by the men and women of the Department of Homeland Security.

Last month I focused on the folks who work at FEMA, which is one of 22 agencies that collectively make up the Department of Homeland Security—the newest, youngest Department in the Federal Government.

Just a few days before my speech, much of the east coast was inundated, as you may recall, by one of the largest snowstorms we have had in a long time, and on that day FEMA was working around the clock to prepare for and respond to what could have been a much more devastating storm. We were hit hard, but we would have been a lot worse off if not for the preparation and the training FEMA had done in not just the days, weeks, and months, but literally years ahead leading up to the storm in order to make us better prepared.

For more than a year now, I have come to the floor and I have focused on a different agency within the Department of Homeland Security. It will take about 2 years to knock them all out, but we are making some progress, and I have done so to highlight the exemplary and important work done by more than some 200,000 people who comprise the Department of Homeland Security. They work around the country, and they work outside our country—in Mexico, Central America, South America, Europe, and all over the place in order to make us safer in this country.

These men and women perform a wide range of vitally important work, and they do it every day. They inspect the fruit and vegetables that arrive at our ports of entry, much like the Port of Wilmington in my State. It is the top banana port in the country. They patrol our borders, like the Border Patrol agents dealing with increased migration from Central America. They defend our computer networks in cyber space, responding to a new and growing 21st-century threat. They keep our Presidents and Vice Presidents and their families and former Presidents and their families, as well as candidates for those positions, along with visiting foreign dignitaries, safe from harm. They have a lot of work to do.

The work of these DHS personnel deployed at the frontlines is made possible in part because of the dedicated work of the men and women behind the scenes at the Department of Homeland Security's Management Directorate. As my colleagues have often heard me say, management really does matter. I will say it again: Management really does matter. And there are few places where that is more true than at the Department of Homeland Security.

The Management Directorate works to support the missions and employees of all 22 component agencies which together comprise the Department of Homeland Security. They rent field offices, they buy essential equipment and vehicles, and they help to ensure that Department employees receive the paychecks and benefits they have worked for and earned. Within the Management Directorate, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer works to ensure that the Department is doing what is best for its employees, while providing the Department managers with the guidance and resources they need to help DHS take care of their own.

One member of the Management Directorate is an especially committed fellow whose name is Phil Nowak. He is committed to DHS employees—his fellow colleagues. He is the Chief of Staff in the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer.

Phil grew up not in Iowa or Delaware, he grew up in San Francisco, not far from where I served in the Navy for

a while. He joined the U.S. Coast Guard right after college. After serving in the Coast Guard for 20 years, he retired as a commander. I was once a commander—my favorite rank. Both of us served and exchange salutes all the time, Madam President. But Phil retired as a commander in 2007 and joined the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help coordinate disaster response. In 2010 Phil moved to the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer, and in 2013 he took over as Chief of Staff.

As Chief of Staff, Phil supports the work of the Chief Human Capital Officer in managing the workforce of the third largest Cabinet agency in our Federal Government—the third largest. With 22 component agencies and DHS employees stationed literally around the world, Phil and his team of 200 men and women certainly have their work cut out for them. Supporting the Department employees and providing them with the resources they need to excel and grow in their work is critical to maintaining a motivated, effective, and capable Department.

With some notable exceptions, we know many of the components of this relatively young Department have struggled with employee morale almost from its inception. Each year the Partnership for Public Service releases its “Best Places to Work in the Federal Government” survey, and each year the Department of Homeland Security ranks at or near the bottom of all the agencies when it comes to overall employee morale.

With Congress imposing shortsighted budget cuts across government, imposing pay freezes, and just last week threatening a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security in the middle of our fight against ISIS, it is no wonder that sometimes DHS employees feel unappreciated. We probably would too. Despite these setbacks, leaders such as Phil Nowak are working every day and every night to right the ship and improve morale at DHS. And a bunch of us here in the Senate, Democrats and Republicans, are trying to be helpful in that regard.

In providing leadership and direction for human capital management for the Department, Phil Nowak makes sure that the Department's efforts to improve morale translate to each of the 22 different component agencies of the Department of Homeland Security and are felt by each of its 240,000 employees. To help do this, Secretary Jeh Johnson has created what he calls a Unity of Effort Initiative to bring the Department of Homeland Security components together and make the Department greater than the sum of its parts. Phil leads one of the Unity of Effort Initiatives. It is called the Human Capital Leadership Council, which brings together human resources managers from across the Department. Through this coordination and other

Unity of Effort Initiatives, Phil's team works hard to better ensure that the Department's 240,000 employees feel like part of a larger DHS family.

In such a large agency, with so many people with diverse talents and backgrounds spread around the world, it is easy to focus on the broader mission and lose sight of the individuals who help the Department achieve its many missions, but Phil, I am happy to say, hasn't lost sight of them. Phil and his team do yeomen's work, and they focus on the value that each and every employee adds to the Department's mission. It is fitting, then, that Phil's colleagues describe him as caring deeply for them and for other employees throughout the Department. His commitment to them is clear, it is welcome, and it is unwavering.

In his own life, Phil values professional resilience, and in a job that is sometimes overlooked, yet incredibly important, I think that is a necessary trait. It is also a fitting quality for a runner, and Phil is an avid runner. I like to run, but this man, Madam President is the real deal. He has completed both the Marine Corps Marathon and the JFK 50 Mile ultra-marathon twice. I am not fit to carry his running shoes. When he isn't running, Phil is building or fixing something around the house, cheering on those San Francisco 49ers and the San Francisco Giants—I hope it is not when they are playing my Detroit Tigers—and spending time with his wife of 26 years, Cristy, and their three children, Sam, Elizabeth, and Andrew. We are grateful to them for sharing their husband and their dad.

Phil Nowak is just one example of the thousands of men and women at the Department of Homeland Security who work behind the scenes every day to support their colleagues and make our country safer for all of us. Phil and his team focus on individuals, they bring together components through a unity of effort, and they work tirelessly to improve employee morale. Management really does matter, and without Phil and his colleagues at the Management Directorate, the Department's mission to protect our homeland would suffer.

To Phil Nowak and to his team in the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer, to every other hard-working employee at the Department of Homeland Security and at the Directorate for Management, I want to say a couple of words: Thank you. Let me say them again: Thank you.

This past week I was doing some traveling and going through some airports. We usually try to use the TSA precheck, which goes a little more smoothly because people have been prescreened. At one place we were flying out of, they advertised TSA precheck was open, but it wasn't, so we had to be regular, ordinary people. At

each of those places, the folks at TSA—right there at the frontline trying to protect us as we fly around the country, around the world in these airplanes—they were doing their job. It is a hard job, and I would say probably a thankless job. Everyone wants to get through. They do not want to take their shoes off or their belts off or have to take their toiletries out. They want to get through there, get on the plane, and go someplace, but not get harmed and arrive safely.

When I fly, a lot of times I will tell the folks at TSA who I am and the committee I serve on just to let them know we appreciate the work they do for all of us. Every now and then—including over the weekend—a TSA officer will say to me: Nobody has ever thanked me before. How about that. Nobody has ever thanked me before.

So I say: Well, let me thank you again. And keep doing your job well, and hopefully you will get a lot of thanks.

But to all the folks at DHS who are taking on a hard job and doing it well, we thank you for what you do every day to protect our country, the land of the free and the home of the brave. And may God bless you.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, this is a day-night double header. That was the day game, and what I want to do now is focus on the second half of the story as long as time will allow me to do that.

As the Presiding Officer knows, I come from the State of Delaware. Delaware is noted for a number of things, and one of the things we are noted for is that before any other State ratified the Constitution, we did it. For 1 whole week, Delaware was the entire United States of America. We opened it up and we let in Maryland and New Jersey and Pennsylvania, ultimately Iowa and other States, and I think it has turned out pretty well most days. But we were the first to ratify the Constitution.

My family and I live in northern Delaware, and just up the road from us is Philadelphia. That is where the Constitution was first debated, and folks from throughout the 13 Colonies came and argued for and against different provisions and how we should set up the structure of our government. One of the hardest provisions they argued on and debated was whether there should be a legislative branch at all, and if there should be, should it just be unicameral—just one entity, one body within that legislative branch—or should there be two. Should the number of votes and the power that States have be in accordance with the size of their State, how many people they have, or how would they balance things out.

Some of them worked out the Connecticut Compromise that said that every State will have two Senators—the same number—and they will be part of the U.S. Senate, and the House of Representatives would be comprised such that the more people who live in a State, the more Representatives they would have. That was the Connecticut Compromise. It was worked out. It was maybe not a perfect compromise in the eyes of some, but it enabled them to move forward, and most people think it is fair and reasonable.

Another really tough issue they wrestled with in those days was with respect to the third branch of government. We have the executive and the legislative and the judicial branch. The question was, What are the judges going to do, these Federal judges? How are they going to be appointed? Who is going to pick them? And if it is the Chief Executive Officer, should the President be able to name by himself or herself who the judges are going to be, the Federal judges and the Supreme Court Justices? Should it be left up to the Senate? Should it be left up to the House of Representatives? Should it be a joint effort by the House and the Senate? Should there be some role for the President, the Chief Executive, to play? How should it work out?

Time and again they voted on this issue at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. Finally, after a number of votes that were just not successful—they couldn't come to a successful conclusion—they actually called out for clergy to come in and called on Divine intervention to get over this issue on how to pick, how to select Federal judges. I don't know if it was Divine intervention, but at the end of the day the deal said: The President shall nominate—not appoint, not name, but shall nominate—folks to serve as Federal judges, including the Supreme Court, and the Senate would have an opportunity to provide advice and consent to the President.

We have argued a lot over the years about what advice and consent should be, but it makes very clear that the President has a job to do with respect to the naming of judges. I believe we have a job to do as well.

About 300 yards from the tavern where the Constitution was first ratified on December 1787 in Delaware, with one hand on the Bible I raised my other hand and took an oath to defend the Constitution as Governor of Delaware. I had never thought very much about what kind of qualities I would look for in a judge.

With my Republican opponent in the Governor's race, a wonderful guy named B. Gary Scott, in 1992, we had 35 joint appearances together, debates. In all those forums, no one ever asked: What quality would you look for in the people you would nominate to be a supreme court justice for the State of

Delaware or a member of the court of chancery, which is a court that has a national and international role to play?

The superior court also hears not just Delaware cases but national cases as well. In all those forums, nobody ever asked me: What would you consider? As it turned out, that was a very important part of my job. I am proud to say the Delaware judiciary is one of the highest regarded of any State judiciaries that we have. We have a very unusual system where there has to be an equal balance between Democrats and Republicans on the judiciary. It is not a spoils system. If there is one more Republican than a Democrat and there is a vacancy, you have to name a Democrat. That is the way the system works.

When I was Governor, we had a person who had been chancellor of the court of chancery, which is a high honor. He decided he was going to leave. So we had a vacancy to fill. I named a Republican. In that case, I actually had the flexibility to name a Democrat or Republican. I wanted to name the best person that I thought was interested in serving. The criteria I used in nominating people to serve on the judiciary in Delaware was that I wanted people who were really smart. I wanted to nominate folks who knew the law. I sought to nominate people who embraced the Golden Rule, who treat other people the way they want to be treated, so that folks who came before them in a courtroom received fair and equal treatment. I wanted to nominate people who worked hard. I wanted to nominate people who had good judgment. I sought to nominate people who were able to make a decision. Sometimes people can have a lot of those qualities but have a hard time making a decision. I didn't want to do that. I wanted to have people who could do all those things.

My hope is that this President will look at Democrats, Republicans, and Independents and find among them the man or woman who meets all that criteria and more. That is the President's job.

I was up at the Detroit Auto Show. I know the Presiding Officer has a lot of assembly and supply operations in his State. Delaware used to, until fairly recently, build more cars and trucks per capita than any other State. So I care a lot about who is running GM and Chrysler. We lost both plants a few years ago when they went into bankruptcy. But I still go back to the Detroit Auto Show most years to keep in touch with the industry.

This last January, a month ago, I was in Detroit. It was the opening day of the Detroit Auto Show, with tens of thousands of people converging on the Detroit Auto Show, going this way and that way to see the different reviews and different vehicles, concept cars or

new production vehicles that are going to be launched maybe later this year.

During the afternoon, I was looking for a restroom. I found one and so did hundreds of other people—in and out of this one restroom. I noticed an older gentleman who was a custodian standing with his cart, his mop and bucket, and his broom, outside of the mass of humanity. I walked in. In spite of all of those people, the place was remarkably clean.

I figured he was the janitor who had responsibility for this restroom. When I came out, I said to him: I just want to say, sir, that this is a really clean restroom. With all the different kinds of people you have coming in and out of here, I don't know how you do it. I just want to say thank you for doing your job really well.

He looked me in the eye and said: That is my job. He said: This is my job. And he said: I try to do my job well. He said: Everybody has a job, and everybody should try to do their job well.

I thought to myself: Wow, wow, what insight, what a message.

Under the Constitution, the President has a job. Apparently he is moving—not with haste, but I think with dispatch—to try to meet his responsibilities. I know we have had any number of times when Presidents have nominated Supreme Court Justices in a Presidential election year. I know a dozen or more times it has happened. I think every single time we had hearings for that nominee. There has been the opportunity to debate the nominee, question the nominee, meet with the nominee, debate here on the floor, and vote on the nomination up or down. I don't know of any time when we have not done that, even when a nominee came to us during a Presidential election year.

I know we are in a crazy election season. It is still 8 months, 9 months before the election. But I hope that, at the end of the day, just like that janitor at the Detroit Auto Show intent on doing his job, the rest of us have the feeling that we have a job to do and that we should be in town doing our job. We have that need. We have that responsibility. I hope we will fulfill it. (Mr. COATS assumed the Chair.)

Mr. President, the other thing I want to say is "baseball." When the Presiding Officer and I were House Members together, we used to play baseball. We played in the congressional baseball game maybe 10 years ago—me on the Democratic side, him on the Republican side. For a year or two, I was almost selected as the most valuable Republican player—and I am a Democrat. So I wasn't always a great player, but I gave it my best.

I was in Florida for an event over the weekend, and last week in Florida and Arizona something wonderful happened. What happened was that spring training camps opened. Pitchers and

catchers reported, and then the full teams started to report. When they start the spring training games in a day or two—maybe tomorrow—teams will take the field and they will take the field with nine players.

When Justice Roberts was going through his confirmation hearing before the Judiciary Committee, he was asked: What is the job of the Supreme Court? How would you describe it, in a simple way?

He said: Our job basically is to call balls and strikes.

When baseball teams take the field, they have nine players in nine positions. When the Supreme Court is in session, they have nine justices—or at least they did until the death of Justice Scalia. Just like you can't have a baseball team take the field without the shortstop or without the catcher or even without the second baseman or the center fielder and play well and do their job, at the end of the day, the Supreme Court is a team. They need nine—not players but nine justices—to be able to do their job well. Let's keep that in mind.

The last thing I would say is that the American people are frustrated with us and our inability to get things done. Sometimes I can understand why they would feel that way. We have a great opportunity to get something done. I hope the President will nominate a terrific candidate, and I hope our Republican friends will at least have the courtesy of meeting with that man or woman, give him or her a chance to present themselves and explain what they are about, have a hearing on that person, and then give them the honor of a vote. I think they deserve that.

Mr. President, I yield the floor for my friend from Vermont, the senior Democrat on the Senate Judiciary Committee, Mr. LEAHY.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 524, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 369, S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. will be equally divided between the two managers or their designees.

The Senator from Vermont.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of the senior Senator from Delaware. We have plenty of time to get a nomination to the Supreme Court from the President and to confirm a Justice, just as this body has done 12 times in Presidential election years. I think probably the most recent, of course, was when Democrats controlled the Senate and we confirmed unanimously President Reagan's nomination in an election year, his final year in office. So it can easily be done. Besides, let us just do our job. We get paid to be here and to do our job. We ought to do it.

We also have the matter that each one of us has taken a very solemn oath before God to uphold the Constitution. The Constitution says the President shall nominate and the Senate shall advise and consent. We ought to do just what we all have solemnly sworn to do. I take my oath very seriously. I hope other Senators do too.

Now, Mr. President, today the full Senate is going to begin a discussion about one of the most challenging public health crises of our time—addiction to prescription painkillers and other opioids. In my home State of Vermont, there are few issues more pressing than opioid addiction. It is tearing apart families and communities—families and communities I have known all my life.

In March 2008, nearly 8 years ago, when I was chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I first held a hearing in Rutland, VT, about the challenges this epidemic presents in rural parts of our country. In subsequent field hearings, we learned about how communities like Rutland, VT—a beautiful community—were constructively seeking ways to get ahead of addiction. But we also learned—and I think we knew this—that there are no easy answers, and we need a comprehensive approach. Education, prevention, and treatment are essential if we are to reverse the tide in this fight.

Vermont's all-hands-on-deck example serves as a model for other States and communities across the Nation. In fact, just last week an article in the *Christian Science Monitor* detailed how Vermont's pioneering approach has been embraced well beyond Vermont's borders.

So, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the *Christian Science Monitor* article entitled "How one state turned its 'heroin crisis' into a national lesson" be printed in the *RECORD* at the conclusion of my remarks.

Opioid addiction is not a new issue. It is not new to me, and it is not new to Vermont. But it is about time that the full Congress gave this public health crisis the attention it deserves. The bill we begin to consider today, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recov-

ery Act, or CARA, represents a positive step forward, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of it.

For decades, the knee-jerk response in Congress to those who struggled with addiction was misguided. We embraced harsh and arbitrary mandatory minimums, we ignored effective treatment options, and we pushed addicts further underground and away from recovery. Such policies reflect a complete misunderstanding of the problem of addiction.

At my hearings and everywhere I went, we saw police officers, faith communities, educators, medical professionals, parents, and addicts coming together, saying that no one group had the answer but the community had to come together. Because we know addiction is a disease, we know our tools for combating addiction must be the same as other disease—a commitment to evidence-based education and proven techniques for prevention, treatment, and recovery programs.

As one who has served in law enforcement, I know that law enforcement is an important element in a comprehensive approach. That is why I worked to include in this bill an authorization for funding to expand State-led anti-heroin task forces. But this legislation is important because it treats addiction as the public health crisis that it is. The bill authorizes a crucial program that I helped create that expands access to medication-assisted treatment programs—programs that have been plagued by massive waiting lists. The clinic in Chittenden County, VT—that is the largest of our 14 counties—has seen its wait list lengthened to nearly a year. What happens when that wait list is long? Several people have overdosed and died while waiting for treatment. Those deaths were probably preventable. We shouldn't die waiting for treatment. We have to do better.

The bill also recognizes the devastating impact that opioid abuse has on rural communities. Just as in your State and every other State, we have rural communities. Vermont is predominantly rural communities. My home where my wife and I have lived since we got married is on a dirt road. We know rural America. We know it has been hit hard by addiction. Emergency medical services in rural communities are often limited. I am glad that the bill we reported out of committee includes my provision to support our rural communities for the overdose reversal drug naloxone.

Over the last decade, death rates from opioid overdoses have steadily climbed across the country. But there is a real disparity between rural communities and major cities. We found the more rural a location, the higher the death rate. Getting lifesaving drugs into more hands will save lives across the country, especially in our rural communities that are among the hardest hit.

This is not a partisan issue. I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator GRASSLEY for working with me on this legislation in our Judiciary Committee. I hope we will soon see its passage here in the Senate. But one authorization bill by itself is not going to end addiction. It is not going to end the deaths that we are seeing in rural America and in urban America.

We need a significant commitment of targeted funding to implement this bill. Senator SHAHEEN's \$600 million emergency supplemental appropriations bill provides those resources, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of that legislation, as well.

In your State, my State, and the other 48 States right now, we passed larger emergency supplemental bills that addressed swine flu and Ebola. We do not have Ebola in our country, but we passed an emergency supplemental bill to address that. We need to address what we have right here within our country today. Swine flu and Ebola presented far, far fewer dramatic health risks to our communities. We need to take this challenge just as seriously.

The bill we are considering today has received strong bipartisan support and deservedly so. But I hope all the Senators supporting CARA today will also support Senator SHAHEEN's legislation. One goes hand in hand with the other. We need to authorize these advances in dealing with the opioid crisis, but then we actually need to fund them.

We cannot pretend that solving a problem as large as opioid addiction costs nothing. We have an opportunity to equip our communities with the support and resources they need to finally get ahead of addiction. Programs will save lives. That is a worthy investment.

It is very easy to say we will pass a law to stop opioid addiction. We can all feel good about voting for that. Who is going to vote for legislation to say "let us continue opioid addiction"? But if we do not put the money in it, then, basically, we are saying we want to feel good but we are not going to do anything for you.

We spend money worldwide. Some of it is for good causes, and some of it is totally wasted. Here we have a problem in the United States of America, where our priorities are first and foremost to our country. If you saw some of the people I heard in these hearings all over our beautiful State, some of the families with whom I have talked across their kitchen tables, and a young woman who had been addicted and is now helping to counsel others and the story she told, or if you saw a movie or TV program, you would say it couldn't be that grim. Well, it was. It is.

These people go across all income brackets, all brackets of education. It is tearing apart parts of our communities across the country. Fortunately,

we have had some very brave people stand up. I hope Senator SHAHEEN's appropriation goes through because, if it does not, we are saying all the right things, as we should, except for one thing: We are not going to pay for it. This is too important to say the check is in the mail; just wait and wait. We can do better. We can do better.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From The Christian Science Monitor,
Feb. 23, 2016]

HOW ONE STATE TURNED ITS 'HEROIN CRISIS'
INTO A NATIONAL LESSON

(By Gail Russell Chaddock)

Paths to Progress: Vermont's pioneering focus on treatment amid an opioid crisis is being embraced by politicians of both parties—well beyond the state.

America's opioid addiction crisis, now claiming 78 lives a day, is sweeping aside party lines both at the state level and even in famously gridlocked Washington.

The nation's governors, from deep-red Alabama to bluest-of-the-blue Vermont, are moving rapidly to a strategy of treating illegal drug users rather than jailing them.

It's a shift that runs deep in public opinion, as well. Some two-thirds of Americans now typically say that they prefer providing treatment to long prison sentences.

"This is an area where I can get agreement from Bernie Sanders and Mitch McConnell," President Obama said at a White House meeting with governors on Monday. "That doesn't happen that often, but this is one. And it indicates the severity of the issue."

But the governors are, in fact, well ahead of Washington on this issue—as they were on welfare reform in the 1990s and, more recently, sentencing reform.

Gov. Peter Shumlin (D) of Vermont, a leader in the pivot from prisons to treatment, says he got into the addiction fight after talking to people in his state.

"I found we were doing almost everything wrong," he told a forum on opioid and heroin addiction at The Pew Charitable Trusts in Washington on Friday.

The best hope is to get more people into treatment, he said. And the best time to do that is "when the blue lights are flashing and the handcuffs are on."

Vermont, like other states in the Northeast, is facing severe opioid challenges. In 2014, Governor Shumlin devoted his annual State of the State address entirely to Vermont's "full-blown heroin crisis." Annual overdose deaths from opioids had nearly doubled since 2004. The number of people seeking treatment for opioid addiction had spiked 770 percent since 2000.

WHAT VERMONT HAS DONE

And so Vermont has taken a hard look at its approach. Instead of jail, nonviolent offenders are given the option of going into treatment. They start in one of the state's new central clinics (hubs) and move on to a family doctor, counselor, or therapist closer to home (spokes).

Vermont law also shields people seeking medical help for an overdose from prosecution for manufacturing or selling drugs, not just for minor crimes. It also was the first state to legalize the sale of naloxone over the counter in pharmacies—a drug aimed at reversing overdoses and saving lives.

Other states have moved toward treatment instead of incarceration, but Vermont has done it on a grander scale, experts say.

"You've seen some elected officials support legalizing marijuana, some want to reform sentencing, some talk about overdoses, but very few have tied all these together in a comprehensive narrative," says Bill Piper, senior director of national affairs for the Drug Policy Alliance in Washington.

"Vermont's governor is at the forefront, and what makes him unique is that he's one of the few elected officials that has connected the dots on the various issues," he adds.

As a pioneer state, Vermont has also identified some of the limits of a treatment-centric strategy.

"As you build out treatment, and particularly in rural America, we can't get enough docs who are able to meet the demand of our waiting lists," Shumlin told the president at the White House meeting Monday.

But the most important issue, he told Mr. Obama, is to "come up with a more rational approach to prescribing prescription drugs."

A BID TO REIN IN PRESCRIPTIONS

Governors see legal prescriptions for drugs like OxyContin as the gateway to heroin. "Overprescribing of opioid painkillers has fueled the nation's addiction crisis," according to a report from the National Governors Association's Health and Human Services Committee. In a bid to rein in prescriptions, governors on that committee plan to develop a list of protocols to present to the full membership at the next NGA meeting in August.

"The United States represents 5 percent of the world's population and consumes 80 percent of the world's opioids," said Gov. Charlie Baker (R) of Massachusetts, who chairs the NGA's Health and Human Services Committee, on Saturday. That's "fundamentally flawed."

When prescriptions are too hard to get—or too expensive—addicts switch to heroin. "Most of the heroin addicts we treat started by using prescription opiates," says Brian McAlister, author of "Full Recovery" and CEO of the Full Recovery Wellness Center in Fairfield, N.J.

"Some were prescribed by a doctor or dentist, others were stolen from family or friends' medicine cabinets, and others were purchased illegally just to party—but the party ends very quickly. These drugs are highly addictive, and when the supply runs out, the problems get worse."

AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

The prospect of politicians reining in pharmaceutical sales is a stretch in the halls of Congress. In 1993, the GOP-controlled Congress explicitly barred government from negotiating lower drug prices with drug companies. Last year, Big Pharma spent more than \$235 million to influence policy outcomes in Washington—the largest budget of any lobby group in Washington.

Governors could set protocols on prescribing practices for painkillers on their own, Shumlin told the president. "But it takes time," and "it doesn't apply to all 50 states." Instead, he asked Obama to "consider a national approach which simply says, for minor procedures, we're going to limit this to 10 pills and after that you've got to come back for more."

"To be candid, the docs, the AMA [American Medical Association] are resistant to listening to politicians like us talking about how many pills to prescribe. But is there something you could do on a national level that would help us get out of this tragic mess?" he added. Obama answered, at length, but in the end deferred to the states. "A very specific approach to working with the docs,

the hospitals, the providers so that they are not overprescribing" can be done at the national level, he said. "But it is most profitably done, I think, if we have bipartisan support from the governors so that by the time it gets to the national level, there is consensus and there's not a lot of politics involved in it."

In a recent blog, AMA president Steven Stack called the opioid epidemic a "defining moment" for the profession. "Our nation is needlessly losing thousands of people to a preventable epidemic, and we must take action for our patients."

Mr. LEAHY. I see nobody else seeking recognition, so I suggest the absence of a quorum, and I ask the time be equally divided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 369, S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Mitch McConnell, Daniel Coats, Dan Sullivan, Orrin G. Hatch, Shelley Moore Capito, John Cornyn, Lindsey Graham, Roy Blunt, Ron Johnson, Chuck Grassley, Rob Portman, Susan M. Collins, Jeff Flake, Cory Gardner, Lamar Alexander, John Barrasso, John McCain.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea," the

Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) would have voted "yea", and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 89, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 27 Leg.]

YEAS—89

Ayotte	Flake	Murkowski
Baldwin	Franken	Murphy
Barrasso	Gardner	Murray
Bennet	Gillibrand	Nelson
Blumenthal	Graham	Paul
Booker	Grassley	Perdue
Boxer	Hatch	Peters
Brown	Heinrich	Portman
Burr	Heitkamp	Reed
Cantwell	Heller	Reid
Capito	Hirono	Risch
Cardin	Hoeven	Roberts
Carper	Inhofe	Rounds
Casey	Isakson	Sasse
Cassidy	Johnson	Schatz
Coats	Kaine	Schumer
Cochran	King	Scott
Collins	Kirk	Sessions
Coons	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Corker	Lankford	Stabenow
Cornyn	Leahy	Tester
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Manchin	Tillis
Daines	Markey	Udall
Donnelly	McCain	Warner
Durbin	McConnell	Warren
Enzi	Menendez	Whitehouse
Ernst	Merkley	Wicker
Feinstein	Mikulski	Wyden
Fischer	Moran	

NOT VOTING—11

Alexander	McCaskill	Sullivan
Blunt	Rubio	Toomey
Boozman	Sanders	Vitter
Cruz	Shelby	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 89, the nays are 0.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, an historic epidemic of drug overdose deaths is gripping our country. Over 47,000 Americans died from overdoses in 2014, an alltime high. Incredibly, that is more deaths than resulted from either car crashes or gun violence.

Addiction to opioids, primarily prescription pain killers and heroin, is driving this epidemic. It is destroying lives, families, and communities. It is a crisis. And it demands action.

Thankfully, the Senate can act this week, when we consider S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA.

CARA is a bipartisan bill authored by two Democrats and two Republicans—Senators WHITEHOUSE, PORTMAN, KLOBUCHAR, and AYOTTE.

These Senators have shown extraordinary leadership on this issue. They deserve credit for crafting a bill that addresses many of the different aspects of this epidemic, through evidence-

based solutions and best practices. This is a complex crisis that requires a multifaceted solution.

Over the past few months, I have worked hard with the bill's authors to refine it and move it through the Judiciary Committee. I am proud to say that a few weeks ago it passed the committee on a voice vote, with no opposition.

CARA is only the latest bipartisan legislative accomplishment by the Judiciary Committee this Congress. We have had 21 bills pass the Committee this Congress, all with bipartisan support. But there are a few major bills that stand out.

Last April, the committee passed the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act unanimously, 19-0. The bill enhances penalties for human trafficking and equips law enforcement with new tools to target predators who traffic innocent young people. The bill passed the Senate 99-0 and was signed into law by the President.

In October, the committee passed the landmark Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act with a strong 15-5 bipartisan vote. My bill would recalibrate prison sentences for certain drug offenders, target violent criminals, and grant judges greater discretion at sentencing for lower-level drug crimes. I am working hard to build additional support for the bill so that it can be taken up by the full Senate soon.

Then in December, the committee passed my Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act, again without opposition. The bill will ensure that at-risk youth are fairly and effectively served by juvenile justice grant programs. Again, we are working hard to move this bill through the full Senate.

The bipartisan reforms enacted by each of these bills address real problems that affect the lives of many people across the nation and in my home state of Iowa. I am proud of the work we have done so far—but there is a lot more to do.

And that brings me back to the heroin and prescription drug epidemic. It isn't as bad in Iowa as it is in many areas of the country, but the eastern part of my State has been hit hard recently.

The human cost of what is happening across so many of these communities is incalculable. Every life that is lost or changed forever by this epidemic is precious. Especially for many young people who fall victim to addiction early in their lives, there is so much human potential at stake.

Many Iowans have heard the story of Kim Brown, a nurse from Davenport, and her son Andy. Andy was prescribed pain pills when he had surgery at age 14. Whether it was connected to abuse of those pain pills or not, he developed a drug problem as a teenager that he couldn't shake. He overdosed on heroin

a few times but survived. And finally, at age 33, he died of an overdose, tragically leaving behind two young sons. Ms. Brown now speaks out around the State about the heroin epidemic.

Her story reflects a larger pattern. Over the last 20 years or so, doctors have increasingly prescribed opioids to help their patients manage pain. For many, these medicines have been the answer to their prayers. But for others, they have led to a nightmare of addiction.

According to numerous studies, prescription opioid addiction is a strong risk factor for heroin addiction. In some cases, those addicted to painkillers turn to heroin to get a similar high, because recently, it has become cheaper and more easily available.

And as Ms. Brown's story reflects, this epidemic is a matter of life and death. In fact, nationally, heroin overdose deaths more than tripled from 2010 to 2014.

But Iowans are fighting back. Last year, with the assistance of a new Federal grant, the U.S. Attorney's office and the Cedar Rapids Police Department formed the Eastern Iowa Heroin Initiative.

This partnership is focused on stemming the tide of heroin abuse through enforcement, prevention and treatment. I have been invited to participate in a townhall with them to discuss the epidemic, and I plan to do so soon.

When I do, I want to tell them that the Senate has acted on this crisis by passing CARA. CARA supports so many of the efforts to help stem the tide of addiction that are underway in Iowa and across the country.

As its name reflects, the bill addresses the epidemic comprehensively, supporting prevention, education, treatment, recovery, and law enforcement.

CARA starts with prevention and education. It authorizes awareness and education campaigns, so that the public understands the dangers of becoming addicted to prescription painkillers.

It creates a national task force to develop best prescribing practices, so that doctors don't expose their patients to unnecessary risks of addiction.

The bill encourages the use of prescription drug monitoring programs like Iowa's, which helps detect and deter "doctor shopping" behavior by addicts.

And the bill authorizes an expansion of the Federal initiative that allows patients to safely dispose of old or unused medications, so that these drugs don't fall into the hands of young people, potentially leading to addiction.

In fact, along with a few other committee members, I helped start this "take back" program in 2010 through the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act. It has been a highly successful effort. Since 2010, over 2,700 tons of

drugs have been collected from medicine cabinets and disposed of safely. Iowa also has a similar “take back” program that’s expanding rapidly.

CARA also focuses on treatment and recovery. The bill authorizes programs to provide first responders with training to use Naloxone, a drug that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose and directly save lives. Naloxone was used hundreds of times by first responders in Iowa in 2014.

Importantly, the bill provides that a set portion of Naloxone funding go to rural areas, like much of Iowa that is being affected most acutely. This is critical when someone overdoses and isn’t near a hospital.

The bill also authorizes an expansion of Drug Free Communities Act grants to those areas that are most dramatically affected by the opioid epidemic. And it also authorizes funds for programs that encourage the use of medication assisted treatment, provide community-based support for those in recovery, and address the unique needs of pregnant and postpartum women who are addicted to opioids.

Finally, the bill also bolsters law enforcement efforts as well. Amazingly, in 2007, only 8 percent of State and local law enforcement officials across the country identified heroin as the greatest drug threat in their area. But by 2015, that number rose to 38 percent, more than any other drug.

So the bill reauthorizes Federal funding for State task forces that specifically address heroin trafficking.

I am also pleased that I was able to include in the bill a reauthorization of the funding for the methamphetamine law enforcement task forces as well.

I held a Judiciary Committee field hearing in Des Moines last fall about the ongoing meth problem across Iowa. And one thing the hearing made clear is that our friends in State law enforcement need all the help we can give them on that front, too.

All in all, the bill authorizes about \$78 million per year to address this crisis.

It is no wonder that the bill is supported by a diverse range of stakeholders, including the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids, the National District Attorneys Association, the Major County Sheriffs’ Association, the National Association of Attorneys General, and so many organizations in the treatment and recovery communities.

I urge my colleagues to support it this week, when the Senate has the opportunity to act to address this epidemic. We owe it to those, like Kim Brown, who have lost sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, coworkers and friends to act now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, first I thank my colleague and chairman of the Judiciary Committee, CHUCK GRASSLEY.

Many years ago I went to Iowa with Senator GRASSLEY to set up an anti-drug coalition. We had done one in Ohio. I was the chair of that, and CHUCK GRASSLEY asked if I would come. This was probably 20 years ago that Senator GRASSLEY—and I was in the House.

We had a great visit. We had a couple of townhall meetings. CHUCK GRASSLEY is a guy who understands the issue, cares about it, and has devoted a lot of time and resources to it in Iowa. The people of Iowa know he is sincere about it because he has been on the ground setting up these coalitions and dealing with this issue.

Frankly, it is a little disappointing—probably to him and to me—to see that some 20 years later we are still facing this issue now and even different issues. He mentioned methamphetamines. He mentioned, of course, the heroin and opiate addiction problems with prescription drugs.

Twenty years ago it was more marijuana and cocaine, but I think the lesson we have all learned is these drugs will come and go in terms of their severity and their impact on our communities and our families, but it is always going to be there, and we need to keep up the fight.

Right now we have an urgent problem. That urgent problem was outlined by Senator GRASSLEY, but it is this growing use of opiates that leads to a horrible addiction. It has a grip on so many of our constituents, so many of our loved ones.

Over the weekend I had a townhall meeting. I asked—after we had talked about taxes, trade, energy, and other issues—if people would just raise their hands if they had been affected by the heroin and prescription drug addiction problem. I said: Has anybody in your family and friends been affected? Half of the hands in the room went up.

Unfortunately, that is the reality of this situation. In Ohio last year we lost almost 2,400 just to overdose deaths. That doesn’t account for the fact that so many people are being saved now by naloxone—which is something that is encouraged by our legislation and we will talk about it in a second. Narcan is being used, but even those who survive the overdoses, of course, are seeing their families broken apart, their communities devastated.

I talked to a prosecutor over the weekend in one of our more rural counties, and he said: ROB, over 80 percent of our crime is directly related to this issue now, heroin and prescription drugs. Often it is people committing crimes to pay for their habit.

The people who are the purveyors of these drugs have a business plan; that is, to get you hooked with a relatively

low cost at first and then you need more and more to be able to feel the same high. It gets more expensive to the point that it might go from \$50 to \$100 the first time to \$1,000 or \$1,500 a day by the end of your addiction. This is how horrible it is and it leads to so many collateral consequences.

I am very pleased the Senate voted tonight to proceed to this legislation called CARA, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. CARA is a Federal response to this issue. It is attempting to make the Federal Government a better partner with State and local governments, with nonprofits, to be able to help to reverse this tide to deal with this urgent problem in our communities. I would call it an epidemic. It certainly is at epidemic levels in my State of Ohio. Sadly, we are the top five in the country in terms of overdose deaths, but again it goes well beyond just those deaths. There are so many people who are affected by it negatively and so many who have not been able to fulfill their God-given purpose because of this horrible addiction.

This legislation called CARA is bipartisan. It is comprehensive. As Senator GRASSLEY said, he got it through the Judiciary Committee. I appreciate that. He got it through with something very extraordinary around here, which is a unanimous vote—meaning nobody objected. That never happens around here. It just means that every Senator is addressing this issue back home, understands it, and wants to do something about it. This legislation is built on common sense, research, and experts from around the country who have come in.

I thank Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, who is the lead Democrat on this legislation and my lead cosponsor. He and I are the coauthors of this legislation. I also thank Senators KELLY AYOTTE and AMY KLOBUCHAR, who have been terrific partners. Then there are 34 other bipartisan cosponsors. I thank them all for their support.

I am excited that if this bill can pass, it will pass in the House as well because there is companion legislation. In fact, the House bill has 88 cosponsors right now—also bipartisan. So the idea is to get this bill passed, get it through the House, and have it signed into law by the President of the United States. It is urgent we do it.

This is a bill that not only has a lot of support on both sides of the aisle, but—much more importantly to me—it has the support of people all over the country who are experts in this field: doctors; those in recovery; experts in prevention, treatment, and recovery; and law enforcement.

The legislation actually comes—I hope you can see on this chart, the words are kind of small—but it comes from the last few years, putting together these experts from all around the country. We had five different summit meetings in Washington, DC.

One was with the criminal justice system. We brought in experts from all around the country to talk about treatment and alternatives to incarceration. As you will see in this legislation, we have ways to divert people from incarceration into treatment programs, which we think is part of the way to solve this problem.

We then had one that focused on women, the special interests and needs of women who are facing addiction and how to ensure they get into treatment. As we will talk about later, this has a lot to do with one of the problems that is out there right now, which is more and more babies who are born with addiction and having to take those babies through withdrawal. The care and compassion involved in that is truly impressive, but that was a good forum for us. We had one on the science of addiction and addressing the consequences of addiction. There are a lot of good people around the country who understand the science of this and what medication might work and what future medication might be better to deal with it.

We talked about youth drug prevention and developing communities of recovery. This is a very important aspect of our legislation. We don't just talk about treatment, as important as that is, we talked about how you divert people from getting into it in the first place through better prevention and education.

Finally, we had a forum on veterans focusing on substance abuse and PTSD and other issues. I recently visited one of our veterans courts in Columbus, OH, and saw the good work they are doing. Most people going through that court have mental health issues. Most also now have, sadly, opioid addiction issues, usually starting with prescription drugs and moving to heroin.

As I said, there is strong bipartisan support for this legislation in the House and the Senate. It is endorsed by more than 130 groups nationwide. By the way, those groups include some groups you might not expect normally to be together on something such as this—the Fraternal Order of Police, the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the Faces and Voices of Recovery, the Coalition for a Drug Free America, the Children's Hospital Association, the National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers, the Partnership for Drug Free Kids, the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, groups who are in all of our States, the National Council for Behavioral Health, and, of course, the Major County Sheriffs' Association. So law enforcement, treatment, recovery, education—everybody is coming together on this because we realize this is going to take that kind of comprehensive approach with all sectors of our community being involved and engaged.

CARA now has support not only of a lot of these groups from around the country, but because of these groups—they helped us write a better bill.

What does the bill do? Here are the basic elements of CARA:

First, with regard to prevention and education, it does establish new task forces to develop better practices for prescribers simply because there has been overprescribing, particularly of prescription drugs. These narcotics have been overprescribed to the point that many people end up on heroin as a less expensive alternative to the prescription drugs to which they have become addicted. The task force is an interagency task force that is reporting back to the Congress on how to develop these best practices for the medical community.

The bill also establishes a national awareness campaign with regard to prevention and education. That is critical for us to get the word out. It has grants to local coalitions. This is in the Drug-Free Communities Act area. The Drug-Free Communities Act goes back to the 1990s. Since 1998 there has been \$1.3 billion spent under the Drug-Free Communities Act. I was the author of that in the House. It is good legislation that helped create over 2,000 community coalitions around America. I chaired ours in Cincinnati, OH, for 9 years and am still very involved with it, and they do great work. But, again, we now have this new issue, this new threat we must address. This helps with regard to specific grants where there is a high degree of opioid addiction and the negative consequences of it, to be able to blend with the drug-free community program.

Law enforcement. The bill provides for training for Narcan—what is known as naloxone—for first responders to prevent overdoses. I think everybody in this Chamber has run into this back home. I went to a firehouse recently because we had lost a brave firefighter in a house fire, and I went to talk to his shift about him and to thank them for their service. After talking to them about their fallen comrade, they wanted to talk about this issue. They told me: RoB, we are spending more time administering Narcan than we are fighting fires these days. In other words, they are going out and helping people who are having overdoses and are saving their lives.

A friend of mine who is a firefighter in Cincinnati told me just a couple of weeks ago that he was responding to an overdose, saving someone in front of a house, when, in an entirely different group in the back of the house, an overdose occurred.

In Toledo last week, there was a response by emergency medical services to somebody who had hit a telephone pole. They found him with a syringe in his arm. He had overdosed. While they were responding to him, there were two

other overdose calls in Toledo—one city in Ohio. There were three at the same time. Two of the three were saved by Narcan. The third died.

Our folks in law enforcement and our first responders, our firefighters, are doing a terrific job. They need help. They need more Narcan and more training to be sure they can continue to do what they are doing to prevent these overdoses. It is not the answer. Of course, the answer is prevention, education, and better treatment. But in the meantime, we have to provide them the help they need.

The law enforcement side also expands these drug prescription take-back programs. They work very well, as Senator GRASSLEY said, in some of our States. We need to do more to expand those, and that is usually done through our law enforcement communities.

It also authorizes a task force to combat heroin and methamphetamines. These are the law enforcement task forces we talked about earlier, which will help to coordinate Federal, State, and local law enforcement to deal with this issue.

On the treatment and recovery side, it expands medication assisted treatment for opioid and heroin addiction. It creates diversion, education, and treatment programs in the criminal justice system. We talked about that earlier. That is so important.

I have been at roundtable discussions all around my State and at a number of treatment centers talking to recovering addicts about how they got into the situation they are in and what advice they have. A young man told me a classic story. He had an injury. He started using prescription drugs. He got addicted. He needed money to buy these expensive pain pills. He actually stole from a family member, and he ended up in the law enforcement system and in jail. It was in jail that he was told for the first time that it was actually cheaper to buy heroin. He got out and bought heroin and became a heroin addict. He is now in treatment. He hit rock bottom, as he said, and I think it was because he had an overdose.

This is something where we need to figure out a better way to get people diverted and use the criminal justice system to provide the incentive to get them into the right treatment program.

It also supports recovery for youth and building communities of recovery, again focusing on our youth to get them to make the right decisions but also steering our youth who are addicted into the recovery they need. Sadly, this is now necessary in many of our high schools and in our colleges and universities.

It also establishes a task force to review some of the recovery and collateral consequences. This is an inter-agency task force that is going to report back to us on what is truly working and what is not working in order to do a deeper dive to ensure we are using this money most effectively in order to make a difference.

It has treatment services for women and veterans included. This is a special interest of ours in this legislation—expanding treatment for pregnant women who are struggling with addiction, again to avoid this horrible situation where babies are born with an addiction.

It also supports care for our veterans. Our veterans right now can enter treatment, of course, following discharge with this legislation. This is important. Our veterans have some special needs and special circumstances—often trauma, PTSD, and other things related to their addiction. We find these veterans courts are incredibly helpful, to be able to have them surrounded by fellow veterans in order to make more progress. That is in here as well.

Finally, the legislation incentivizes the States themselves to enact comprehensive initiatives to address the opioid and heroin abuse problem—the prescription drug monitoring program, for instance. This is very important. The Federal Government has a big role to play here. Think about it. If you are in one State and you are monitoring someone's prescription drug medications, knowing where they are going and how much they are getting to avoid overprescribing, if that person crosses State lines, it is very difficult. So our legislation expands on what can be done there to ensure that, for instance, my State of Ohio knows whether someone has gone to Kentucky, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana, or Michigan to get prescription drugs. So the prescription drug monitoring program will work better for every State.

Prevention and education on heroin abuses—this is to incentivize States to do a better job on the prevention and education side and, of course, to prevent overdose and to improve drug treatment.

These are all aspects of this legislation. It is comprehensive because the problem is complex and requires a comprehensive approach.

Here are some statistics—we have already talked about some this evening—that are shocking. We know that 28,647 Americans died in the last year for which we had data, which is 2014, from a drug overdose. The 2015 numbers will be higher than that. That is roughly 120 Americans dying every day.

There were 27,000 diagnosed cases of neonatal abstinence syndrome in 2013, the last numbers we have. It is even worse this year. This means babies were born with an addiction. A baby is

born dependent on opioids every 19 minutes in America. So while I am speaking today, there will be another baby born who is addicted.

I have gone to hospitals in Cincinnati; in Lima, OH, to St. Rita's; to Rainbow Babies Children's Hospital in Cleveland, OH. They are incredible caregivers. My wife Jane was at Nationwide Children's Hospital today, actually, on this very issue. These are babies who are so tiny, you can almost hold them in the palm of your hand. They need caregivers to take them through a process where they go through withdrawal. And we are not sure what the long-term consequences are because we don't have the data yet because this is such a new issue. There has been a substantial increase over the last several years. In Ohio, the same thing I said earlier—750 percent increase in the number of babies diagnosed with neonatal abstinence syndrome since 2004. There has been a 750-percent increase in babies born addicted.

These are the issues this legislation gets at. Again, it does so in a way that is not just bipartisan, which is important, and not just House and Senate, which is important—the House has its own companion bill, one the President will be able to sign into law—but most importantly, it is because of the input of people from all over this country, the experts, people who are recovering themselves, and those who are most affected by this, that this legislation makes sense, and not just for my State but for our country.

The Judiciary Committee had a number of good witnesses. One was a woman named Tonda DaRe. Tonda DaRe is from Ohio. She had a daughter named Holly. On her 21st birthday, Holly, who had a bright future ahead of her—she was engaged to be married, and she had been very involved in her high school and active in sports—tried heroin for the first time. She became addicted. She went into recovery, and unfortunately, as in many cases, she had a relapse. At age 23 her young life ended in an overdose.

Her mom, Tonda DaRe, set up an organization called Holly's Song of Hope. She testified before the Judiciary Committee about the importance of her work—talking to other mothers and fathers and sons and daughters about the devastating consequences of this heroin and prescription drug addiction. This legislation needs to be passed so that we can help Tonda. She testified on behalf of this legislation because she has looked at it and knows it will make a difference in her life and her community.

This is an urgent problem, as I said earlier. It is also one we have a lot of bipartisan consensus around. There will be opportunities during this debate to hear from a lot of different people on a lot of different ideas on amendments

to the legislation. That is good. It is good to have a debate. But I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will keep focused on the importance of getting this done. It is important to get it done in terms of providing immediate help to our communities and also providing a structure to more effectively spend funds this year—and yes, we have funds to spend this year that have been appropriated consistent with CARRA—but also next year and the year after and the year after. Some will support more resources, and that is fine. We need to have that debate. I myself think it is a priority, and we should be providing the resources to be able to deal with this issue.

I would also urge my colleagues to ensure that we get this over the finish line. It is too important. We can't play politics with it. This is one of those issues, again, like so few around here, that got out of the committee without a single dissenting vote. We have done the right thing on a bipartisan basis to bring in the experts. We have a good solution to an urgent problem we all face.

I am pleased with the vote tonight, and I urge my colleagues to have a good debate on the floor. Let's get this done for the sake of Tonda DaRe and so many other mothers, fathers, and others out there who deserve to have a little help in their fight against opioid addiction.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate majority leader.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I just want to congratulate the Senator from Ohio for his extraordinary leadership on this issue. This is an epidemic that affects us all, and he has definitely been at the fore in providing exceptional leadership on this, and I want to commend him for that.

MORNING BUSINESS

BLACK HISTORY MONTH AND THE PULLMAN PORTERS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this year marks the 90th anniversary of historian and scholar Dr. Carter G. Woodson's launch of Negro History Week—and is the 40th anniversary of the inaugural Black History Month. This year, as Black History Month is coming to a close, I want to celebrate by paying tribute to a Chicago neighborhood that has played a significant part in our country's African-American and labor history—the Pullman Historical District.

One year ago this month, President Obama designated the South Side Chicago's Pullman Historic District as the Nation's 406th national park. The Pullman National Historical Park has a special place in our Nation's history. It has been the site of some major historical events. The men and women of the

Pullman community—the birthplace of the Nation's first Black labor union—the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters—helped shape our country as we know it today. By fighting for fair labor conditions in the 19th century, the Pullman workers advanced America's civil rights movement.

In the 1890s, the Pullman community was the catalyst for the first industry-wide strike during one of the worst economic depressions our Nation ever faced—and led to the creation of Labor Day as a national holiday. These railroad workers aren't always mentioned in the history books or picked to join the parades during Black History Month—but they made history and deserve to be honored. One hundred and one years ago, fearing that the history of African Americans was fading into obscurity, Dr. Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History. His goal was to raise awareness of African Americans' contributions to civilization. He believed that truth could not be denied—and realized that past contributions by African Americans needed to be documented and taught. He once said, "if a race had no recorded history, its achievements would be forgotten and, in time, claimed by other groups." I agree with Dr. Woodson—and so does the A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum in Chicago.

Earlier this month, with the help of DePaul University, the A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum launched a new online registry that gives voice to the stories of Black railroad workers. By capturing stories from scholars and the relatives of these workers, we will preserve oral histories that otherwise might be lost to history. If you listen to the oral histories, you will hear stories from people like Theodore Berrien, who worked as a Pullman porter from 1940 to 1969. Berrien worked on President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's funeral train from Georgia to Washington, DC. On the registry, Berrien's grandson says: "He spoke of how kind Mrs. Roosevelt was and thanked him for his services during the trip."

Or take Blaine McKinley Fitzgerald, who worked as a Pullman porter on the Illinois Central and Louisville and Nashville railroads from 1920 to 1946—his relatives wrote: "Blaine's major route was from Birmingham to New York. He also worked the Rose Bowl trips to California when Alabama was a major contingent." You will hear how Blaine raised a family of six children on his salary as a Pullman porter—all college educated—who became teachers, lawyers, and engineers. Blaine's story is just one of many examples of how the Pullman porters helped build the African-American middle class in Chicago.

But even as the African-American middle class expanded in Chicago and

across the country, the struggle for justice, equality, and equal opportunities for African Americans in this country has continued.

And the State of Illinois has played a significant role in that struggle. Springfield, IL native President Abraham Lincoln led our Nation through a war to save the Union, abolished slavery, and began the work we continue today to end discrimination. In 1909, the centennial of Lincoln's birth, 2,000 people gathered at a dazzling gala to honor the centennial of Lincoln's birth. Even though this was an event celebrating the centennial of the President that helped abolish slavery—like most in America at that time, it was segregated.

The Chicago Tribune reported, that it "is to be a lily white affair from start to finish." But across town, the Black community organized its own Lincoln centennial at the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The Reverend L.H. Magee spoke at that gathering and noted the widespread feeling of hurt over the exclusion of people of color from the main Lincoln banquet. Reverend Magee made a prediction about the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth in 2009—100 years in the future: "prejudice shall have been banished as a myth and relegated to the dark days of Salem witchcraft."

In many ways, his prediction was correct. We have come a long way to banish discrimination in our communities—our legal system recognizes that all men and women are created equal and should be free from discrimination in schools, housing, and employment. And in 2009, President Barack Obama, a former Illinois Senator, was sworn in as the first African-American President of the United States of America.

Pastor Magee had a vision of a new America, but he may not have imagined that bricks laid by the hands of slaves would make a home in our White House for a family of color. But, while progress has been made, we cannot ignore that we still have more to do. When one in three African-American men will go to prison in their lifetime, we have more to do. When the unemployment rate for African Americans are more than double the rate for Whites, we have more to do. And when efforts exist across the country to make it harder to vote, rather than easier, we have more to do. But it is when the climb is the steepest that we can come together as Americans, to take the mountaintop once and for all.

This month, let's celebrate these achievements and honor Dr. Carter G. Woodson's legacy by remembering all the contributions of the extraordinary men and women of the civil rights movement—including the Pullman porters. We have come a long way, but we still have work to do to fulfill the promise to make our Nation fairer and

more equal and to do what Lincoln called on us to do: "nobly save . . . the last best hope of earth."

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mrs. McCASKILL. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for today's vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015. I would have voted yea.●

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 15-75, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Jordan for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$115.1 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-75

NOTICE OF PROPOSED ISSUANCE OF LETTER OF OFFER PURSUANT TO SECTION 36(b)(1) OF THE ARMS EXPORT CONTROL ACT, AS AMENDED

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Jordan.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment: \$0 million

Other: \$115.1 million

TOTAL: \$115.1 million

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Scheduled and unscheduled depot module maintenance, in addition to Augmenter Module support, for fifty-two (52) F100-PW-220E F-16 A/B (Block 15) Engines.

(iv) Military Department: USAF (QCC).
 (v) Prior Related Cases, if any: FMS Case: JO-D-QAW-17 APR 12-\$14M.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: FEB 25 2016.

*as defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

JORDAN-REPAIR AND RETURN OF F-16 ENGINES, SUSTAINMENT AND SUPPORT

The Government of Jordan has requested approval to amend its F-16 engine program for repair and return of its F100-PW-220E engine modules. This effort is in support of the Royal Jordanian Air Force's ongoing scheduled maintenance activities for its 52 F100-PW-220E engines. Services requested under this proposed sale include contract support for parts, components, accessories, and labor to remanufacture the current propulsion fleet at scheduled maintenance intervals. There is no Major Defense Equipment associated with this case. The overall total estimated value is \$115.1 million.

The proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a friendly country which has been, and continues to be, an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East. Jordan is a key partner in the coalition working together to defeat Islamic State in Iraq and Levant (ISIL) forces. This engine and sustainment program will maintain Jordan's fighter aircraft capabilities and support its national defense. Jordan will have no difficulty absorbing this support.

The proposed sale of this equipment, services, and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

Jordan has accounted for the cost of engine sustainment in its budget over the course of multiple years.

The prime contractor will be Pratt and Whitney, East Hartford, Connecticut. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will entail periodic Program Management Reviews in the United States or Jordan. There are no additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives anticipated to be stationed in Jordan as a result of this potential sale.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

ANNIVERSARY OF PROTESTS IN BAHRAIN

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, this month marks 5 years since Bahrainis of all backgrounds took to the streets in Manama in peaceful protest, calling for reform in their country. As Senators have heard me recount here before, the Government of Bahrain responded with violence and repression, torture and retaliation. In response, the monarchy set up an independent commission: the so-called Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, or BICI. And I say this is important to recall because many of the BICI's 26 specific, concrete

recommendations remain unfulfilled 5 years later.

That certainly isn't what the government of Bahrain wants you to believe. In fact, the regime's representatives continue to insist that they have fully implemented all of the BICI recommendations. As they tell it, they have turned the page on that chapter of Bahrain's history.

But members of Bahrain's peaceful opposition feel trapped in a never-ending story. Nongovernmental organizations like Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain, Amnesty International, Human Rights First, Human Rights Watch, and the Project on Middle East Democracy have all documented the regime's ongoing repression. The State Department's most recent annual human rights report for Bahrain states that protestors face "arbitrary deprivation of life," "arrest and detention of protestors . . . occasionally leading to their torture," and "restrictions on civil liberties, including freedom of speech, press, assembly association, and religion." And as some colleagues know, the State Department could last certify that Bahrain had only fully implemented 5 of the 26 BICI recommendations. That is a pretty far cry from full implementation.

As the son of a journalist, I want to take a minute to highlight one particular aspect of the regime's repression: the crackdown on speech and expression. As recently as this month, a Bahraini court sentenced an internationally known photographer to serve jail time for participating in an unlicensed protest. The regime has similarly targeted bloggers as well as prominent and award-winning photojournalists for merely capturing Bahrain's ongoing unrest. And just this month, a Bahraini court sentenced a Sunni opposition leader to 1 year in prison for giving a political speech.

Despite these concerns, the Obama administration chose last year to resume selling or transferring certain arms to the Government of Bahrain. I was one of the biggest proponents of the arms ban dating back to 2011, and I saw no reason to revisit the policy last year. In fact, I introduced the bipartisan BICI Accountability Act, legislation that would block the administration's decision to overturn the weapons ban until the State Department could certify that all 26 BICI recommendations were fully implemented.

I am not here to make broad pronouncements about what the Government of Bahrain should look like—that is very much a conversation for Bahrain's people and its rulers to have. But as President Obama said in 2011, "you can't have a real dialogue when parts of the peaceful opposition are in jail." For Bahrain to move forward, the government will need to release the opposition leaders still languishing in its prisons.

The United States and Bahrain have ties that go back decades; our countries are partners and allies. Indeed, I am not disappointed with the Government of Bahrain despite our bilateral relationship; I am disappointed with the Government of Bahrain because of our bilateral relationship. The United States of America has an obligation, it strikes me, to ask more of her friends and allies around the world. And when they falter or fail, the U.S. has a duty to help them live up to their potential. And of course, there is always the real danger that continued unrest or even greater instability could impact the safety of our soldiers in Bahrain or the future of the American presence there.

For these reasons, I speak out today against further oppression, and I call again for reconciliation and reform in Bahrain.

HONORING SENIOR DEPUTY PATRICK DAILEY AND SENIOR DEPUTY MARK LOGSDON

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the tragic deaths of two fellow Marylanders. Senior Deputy Patrick Dailey and Senior Deputy Mark Logsdon of the Harford County Sheriff's Office were killed in the line of duty on February 10. I join the people of Maryland and law enforcement communities across the country in mourning the loss of two dedicated public servants. The men and women of law enforcement put themselves at great risk to protect our communities. Law enforcement officers are the embodiment of the rule of law. An attack on them is an attack on the rule of law itself.

The word "hero" does not do justice to the legacies of Senior Deputies Dailey and Logsdon. Both men served the people of Harford County with distinction. On his 16th birthday, Deputy Patrick Dailey began his career in public service by joining the Joppa-Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company. His two sons, Bryan and Tyler, are also members of Joppa-Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company. Deputy Dailey was a member of the U.S. Marine Corps before joining the Harford County Sheriff's Office where he would serve for 30 years.

On Christmas Eve 2002, Deputy Dailey saved the life of a teenager traveling in an SUV that collided head on with a cement mixing truck. Deputy Dailey, a number of fellow sheriffs, and two civilians emptied six fire extinguishers in an attempt to quell a fire that threatened to engulf the vehicle and the unresponsive driver. Using only their bare hands and batons, the group managed to free the driver seconds before the fire consumed the passenger compartment. The teen was able to thank his rescuers 3 months later at the Harford County Sheriff's Office awards banquet.

Deputy Logsdon also served in the military before becoming a Harford County Sheriff. He was a member of the 115th Military Police Battalion and deployed to Iraq in 2003 with the Maryland National Guard.

Exactly 11 years before his death, Deputy Logsdon confronted a suicidal man who was armed with a loaded shotgun. In a display of great bravery and at great risk to himself, Deputy Logsdon managed to talk the man into surrendering his weapon. After the man was disarmed, Deputy Logsdon continued to help the man by transporting him to the hospital where he received medical care.

The deaths of Deputy Dailey and Deputy Logsdon represent a profound loss for the people of Maryland. In the days since the February 10 shooting, Marylanders across the State have responded with a groundswell of support for the Dailey and Logsdon families, as well as the Harford County Sheriff's office. I think that speaks to the character of Marylanders and the esteem in which law enforcement officers are held.

I would like to offer my most sincere thanks to other deputies who responded to the call, the Abingdon and Joppa Magnolia Volunteer Fire Departments, the University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center, and University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Medical Center, all of whom administered aide to both deputies. On behalf of my fellow U.S. Senators, I offer my deepest condolences to the Dailey and Logsdon families as they navigate this difficult time.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today, as I have every year since I came to the Senate, in commemoration of Black History Month, to recognize an individual who has made a considerable contribution to society and the African-American community.

Today, we honor the Reverend Dr. W. Wilson Goode, Sr., a trailblazing figure whose public service and private works have touched lives in Pennsylvania and around the country. Dr. Goode was born to tenant farmers in North Carolina, rose to become the first African-American mayor of Philadelphia, and now runs a nationally renowned organization called Amachi that mentors children whose parents have been incarcerated. Wilson Goode's story is a story of faith and perseverance and also provides an appropriate backdrop this Black History Month to talk about some of the barriers standing in the way of young people in this country today.

Dr. Goode has dedicated his life after leaving elected public office to Amachi because, in his words, in these communities, "the children were invisible." This ethos—a commitment to serving

those whom the Bible calls "the least of these"—has guided Dr. Goode's life and career since long before he helped organize Amachi. Empowering young people to achieve their potential is personal for Dr. Goode, who had to overcome a series of roadblocks himself growing up in the Jim Crow South.

Dr. Goode went to segregated lower schools in Northampton County, NC, and Greensville County, VA, before moving to Philadelphia at the age of 16. He arrived in Philadelphia on the first Monday in January in 1954. That same Monday 30 years later, this sharecroppers' son, who grew up drinking from separate fountains and eating at separate counters, was sworn in as the first African-American mayor of Philadelphia. In the intervening years, Dr. Goode's career proved a testament to all that can go right when young people are allowed a fair chance to succeed based purely, as a great man once said, on the "content of their character."

Dr. Goode graduated from John Bartram High School in Philadelphia in 1957 and went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Morgan State University, a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania, and a doctorate of ministry from Palmer Theological Seminary. He also served as an officer in the U.S. Army for 2 years.

Along the way, Wilson Goode helped found the Black Political Forum, a Philadelphia-based group that brought together a coalition of Black community and business leaders to elect African Americans to public office. The forum transformed the political landscape in the city and Dr. Goode's career along with it.

Dr. Goode was later chosen as Pennsylvania's first Black member of the Public Utilities Commission. In less than 6 months, he rose to become the first Black chairman of the PUC and soon thereafter was recruited to become the managing director of the city of Philadelphia under Mayor Bill Green in 1980. When Mayor Green did not seek reelection in 1983, Wilson Goode ran, won the election, and was sworn in as the first African-American mayor of Philadelphia on January 2, 1984, exactly 30 years after he first set foot in the city.

During his two terms in office, Dr. Goode accomplished a great deal. He worked to transform the city's skyline, helping businesses to grow and create jobs. He helped to level the playing field for minorities to work in city government and minority-run businesses to win government contracts. He created the Mayor's Commission on Literacy, which has now helped over 550,000 Philadelphians get the skills they need to live productive lives. He created the Philadelphia Anti-Graffiti Network, PAGN, and the Mural Arts Program, two pioneering programs to make Philadelphia a nicer place to live and work.

And he always looked to help those who needed it most, whether through his consistent advocacy for AIDS support programming or through his tireless efforts to reduce the number of homeless people living on the streets. The latter goal still animates him today—he is the chairman and CEO of Self, Inc., a nonprofit dedicated to serving homeless men and women.

Dr. Goode left the mayor's office after two terms in 1992, but his commitment to public service remained. He went on to work as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Education in the Clinton Administration. There, he devoted himself to the task of improving our education system for 7 years until a unique opportunity presented itself. John J. DiIulio, Jr., President Bush's first director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, invited Dr. Goode to lead a mentoring organization that would later be called Amachi.

Amachi's model, which is based on DiIulio's research, is quite simple: identify neighborhoods disproportionately impacted by incarceration and seek out children living in those neighborhoods to mentor. Amachi matches one mentor and one child for at least 1 hour, at least once a week, for at least 1 year. The goals are equally simple: it is a success if, after a year, the kids improve their school attendance, their grades, their behavior, and their relationships with the adults in their lives.

Part of the reason for Amachi's success is its simplicity. It makes sense. The real power of the Amachi philosophy comes from its inherent recognition of how much young people can achieve with a consistently positive and loving mentoring presence in their lives. And young people growing up in communities impacted by over-incarceration, the invisible children that Dr. Goode takes the time to see, stand to benefit most.

Amachi now receives Federal, State, and private funding, but it has modest roots. To find the first mentors, Dr. Goode walked around throughout Philadelphia, neighborhood by neighborhood, to community churches where he would recite neighborhood statistics on incarceration to local pastors. The terrible reality was that one in nine Black children has a parent in prison, compared to 1 in 57 white children—one in nine. People of faith were interested in mentoring because two out of three families with an incarcerated member are unable to meet their basic needs and since 50 percent of the over 2.5 million children with an incarcerated parent in this country are age 9 or younger.

These numbers motivated Wilson Goode to recruit his mentors and to travel to prisons seeking parents whose kids he could help. This is what he means when he says he is "on a rescue mission." Standing in front of these

prisoners, his message was simple: "I am here on behalf of your children."

And they believed him. He recruited 500 children his first year. Maybe they believed him in part because he could relate to these challenges—his own father was sent to prison when he was a teenager. His mother worked hard to make ends meet while Wilson Goode sought refuge in his church and in God. He found it, and now he works to provide the same refuge to young people in need.

Doctor Goode's story perfectly embodies the idea of Amachi. Amachi is a West African word that means: "who knows but what God has brought us through this child." Who knew that Dr. Goode, who grew up without electricity, who saw his father imprisoned in his adolescence, who gazed up at the leadership in his city and saw no one who looked like him, would be elected mayor of one of America's largest cities. "Who knows but what God has brought us through this child." I have often said that every child is born with a light inside them, and it is our obligation to make sure that that light burns as brightly as the full measure of his or her potential. Dr. Goode's work with Amachi is a testament to this idea.

But as we commemorate Black History Month, we must acknowledge that reality is unkind to this worthy aspiration for all our children: in this country, nearly half of Black men are arrested by the time they hit their mid-20s, and Black men are six times more likely to be incarcerated than White men, a worse disparity than in the 1960s. This means that the bright shining light of potential for an African-American child is too often extinguished by the darkness of a jail cell.

Looking at the system can be abstract and overwhelming—it is hard to see a child's potential from 30,000 feet. So Dr. Goode works on the ground—because he knows we have to break this cycle. Today Amachi-modeled programs have helped over 300,000 children in more than 250 cities nationwide. Maybe this is what Dr. King meant when he talked about "dangerous unselfishness." Dr. Goode is up against an abstract and overwhelming system, but wields from the goodness of his heart the power to disrupt the status quo.

Dr. Goode has faith that, in the months and years to come, we will see our criminal justice system reshaped to be fairer and more effective in targeting the people who pose the most danger to society. He has faith that we will make progress in helping those released from prison more easily reintegrate into their communities. But as he often says, "no entry is the best reentry plan." So his work continues.

Every day Amachi-trained mentors work to help thousands of children overcome the wide variety of challenges related to having a parent in

prison or living in an area with a high rate of incarceration. In addition to the common financial struggles, these kids need help navigating the relationship changes that often take place when a loved one is sent to or returns from prison; or channeling powerful and confusing emotions into constructive activities; or overcoming the stigma that comes with having an incarcerated parent. What began as a local partnership between faith-based organizations has expanded to include volunteer mentors from a variety of sources on a national scale.

All of this can be traced to Dr. Goode's deeply held belief that God has a very special interest in how we treat our children and that helping the children who need it most is God's work. His conviction has earned him great acclaim, whether through receiving the Civic Ventures Purpose Prize, the Philadelphia Inquirer's Citizen of the Year Award, or being honored by the White House as a Champion of Change.

But I imagine the biggest reward for Dr. Goode is knowing he has created something lasting that will benefit generations to come. There are more than 81,000 children with a parent in prison in Pennsylvania. How many future doctors, lawyers or CEOs, preachers, teachers or Presidents may be among these children? They have infinite potential, and with God in his heart, the Reverend Dr. W. Wilson Goode, Sr., has stood alongside them.

On the Senate floor today, we express our profound gratitude for his service on behalf of the children of Philadelphia, our Commonwealth and our country.

Thank you.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF NCIS

Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I ask the Senate to join me in honoring the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, or NCIS, as it celebrates 50 years of service in support of the Department of the Navy, its military and civilian personnel, their families, and the communities in which they live. I am proud to add my voice to those who applaud the consistent and effectual work of this elite organization.

NCIS has deep roots in our military history, dating back to 1882, when Secretary of the Navy William H. Hunt established the Office of Naval Intelligence, or ONI, to collect technical information on the world's major naval powers. Since that time, as the United States' role in the world evolved, the need for an elite and specialized investigative branch of ONI became apparent. The Naval Investigative Service, now called NCIS, was born and has fulfilled a vital role in mitigating threats and protecting our Nation.

Since then, NCIS has played a vital role in investigating and defeating threats to safety of our Navy and Ma-

rine Corps. The organization has grown to employ approximately 2,000 elite personnel and deploys to more than 150 locations around the globe. As such, the organization's broad, yet agile scope has enabled it to ensure the safety of our brave men and women, wherever they are stationed. Their missions have had such broad scope as deployment of special agents to Vietnam, response to the USS *Cole* and the September 11 terror attacks, and establishment of the Multiple Threat Alert Center for the Department of the Navy. NCIS has executed their duties with distinction and poise under the most strenuous circumstances.

I congratulate NCIS on 50 years of success as a premier Federal law enforcement agency. We owe them a debt of gratitude for the elite work they perform in service to our Nation, and I wish them continued success for years to come.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL FOOD AND BEVERAGE FOUNDATION

• Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, today I am honored to acknowledge the National Food and Beverage Foundation, an institute based in New Orleans and one that portrays the distinctive culture of Louisiana through its food and drink.

Louisiana is known for many things: its bald cypress swamps, Mardi Gras, and its delicious food. Louisiana's cuisine is as unique as the people who make it. From beignets to etouffee and jambalaya to gumbo, food is one of the many characteristics that make Louisiana culture so remarkable. The New Orleans branch of the National Food and Beverage Foundation, or NFBBF celebrates that culture through education and is home to the Southern Food and Beverage Museum, praised by CNN as one of the top 11 food museums in the entire world.

The National Food and Beverage Foundation is a tremendous example of a group of people using culinary practices to highlight Louisiana's culture while simultaneously enhancing the lives of the people around them. The NFBBF has dedicated \$5 million for a project to develop one of New Orleans' communities. The project is designed to reestablish sections of New Orleans as a hub of culinary commerce and aid the community in reaching their economic potential. NFBBF is also dedicated to education, as evidenced by the John & Bonnie Hospitality and Culinary Library, and to providing free cooking classes for children. The library contains over 17,000 volumes and houses culinary and mixology literature from across the globe. The foundation's Culinary Entrepreneurship Program, a program that aids

small businesses, restaurant startups, and product manufacturers, helps young businesses get off the ground. This program and programs like them are invaluable to small businesses throughout Louisiana.

The National Food and Beverage Foundation celebrates and encourages Louisiana culture, but it also celebrates cultures through cuisine nationwide. The NFBF is rapidly expanding across the country; Pacific Food and Beverage is based in Los Angeles and celebrates the culture of food and drink of the Pacific coast and the American West. Specifically, Pacific Food and Beverage focuses on contributions made by immigrants who have shaped our Nation's cuisine. Knowing firsthand how important food is to our culture, the preservation of culinary practices and history throughout our country is a crucial endeavor.

I want to thank the National Food and Beverage Foundation for all the work it has done with communities in my State and throughout the Nation to preserve and enhance the idea of culture through culinary means. From free children's cooking classes that teach the heritage and nutritional aspects of healthy food, to the Culinary Entrepreneurship Program, NFBF has made a tremendous contribution to Louisiana and the culture loved by so many. I am proud to have such a tremendous initiative in my State, one that explores something so embedded in the Louisiana culture and gives back to the community while doing so. I wish the National Food and Beverage Foundation nothing but successes now and in the future.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. CONNIE ADLER AND ELIZABETH WARD SAXL

● Mr. KING. Mr. President, I wish to honor two remarkable women, Dr. Connie Adler and Elizabeth Ward Saxl, who are new inductees to the Maine Women's Hall of Fame. Through their induction, we celebrate the tremendous impact that these women have on their communities and on women throughout the State of Maine.

Dr. Connie Adler, from Woolwich, ME, currently serves as secretary of the board of directors of Franklin Memorial Hospital in Farmington, as well as on the boards of the Maine Health Access Foundation and Maine Family Planning. During her illustrious career, she has played a leading role in the pursuit of reproductive rights and the prevention of domestic violence. She has also established programs to increase access to health care for women living in rural and impoverished areas. Connie's work has been integral to keeping our communities healthy and safe.

Elizabeth Ward Saxl, from Vassalboro, ME, has served as the executive director of the Maine Coalition Against

Sexual Assault for the last 16 years. She is a passionate advocate for joining public policy solutions with community-based approaches that address the complex problems impacting Maine's women and girls. Undertaking daunting projects like eliminating statute of limitations on child sexual abuse and creating housing protections for victims of sexual assault, Elizabeth has been a champion of abuse victims across the State. Her work also extends to immigrant, refugee, elder, and native populations, making her a valuable asset to all of Maine's marginalized populations.

Congratulations to both Connie and Elizabeth for their induction into the Maine Women's Hall of Fame. With this well-deserved honor, they join the likes of Senator Margaret Chase Smith as shining examples of character and fortitude. I thank Connie and Elizabeth for all that they have done for Maine women and for our State as a whole. Maine is fortunate to have such tireless advocates fighting for health, safety, and prosperity.●

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF ATLANTIC REGIONAL FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

● Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Atlantic Regional Federal Credit Union. This nonprofit institution has a long history of serving the people of Maine, and I am proud to add my voice to those in our grateful State in recognizing this milestone.

In 1941, Atlantic Regional Federal Credit Union began as St. John's FCU, with just 37 members, in the town of Brunswick. Strong leadership and steadfast dedication to community service has enabled it to become one of the largest credit unions in our State and a bedrock of a thriving Maine midcoast. This truly impressive and steady growth was only possible through a tireless commitment to good service and sound business ethics.

Through fundraising, scholarships, donations, and volunteering, Atlantic Regional has promoted the education, health, and wellness of the communities in which it serves. Perhaps most notably, they have undertaken a campaign against hunger by raising funds to donate to local hunger prevention programs. Through the Atlantic Regional Ending Hunger Campaign and Maine CU's Ending Hunger initiative, Atlantic Regional has been at the forefront of an effort that has raised over \$5.3 million to help end hunger in Maine. It is through actions like these that Atlantic Regional Federal Credit Union has developed a meaningful connection with its members and the greater community.

I extend my congratulations to the Atlantic Regional Federal Credit Union, its employees, its members, and

I wish them many years of success to come.●

TRIBUTE TO LACHLAN FORRESTER

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize the hard work of my Commerce Committee intern Lachlan Forrester. Lachlan hails from Yarrowonga, Australia, where he is a student at the Australian National University, studying law, political science, and Spanish.

While interning on the Commerce Committee, Lachlan has assisted the Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard Subcommittee, as well as the Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure Subcommittee. In addition to being a dedicated intern, Lachlan was also fortunate enough to see falling snow for the first time while here in the Nation's Capital. I again would like to thank Lachlan and wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on February 26, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 238. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to authorize the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to issue oleoresin capicum spray to officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2406. An act to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3624. An act to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) announced that on today, February 29, 2016, he has signed the following enrolled bill, which was previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

S. 238. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to authorize the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to issue oleoresin capicum spray to officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3624. An act to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment with a preamble:

S. Res. 377. An original resolution directing the Senate Legal Counsel to bring a civil action to enforce a subpoena of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (Rept. No. 114-214).

By Mr. BARRASSO, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1419. A bill to promote the academic achievement of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children with the establishment of a Native American language grant program (Rept. No. 114-215).

S. 1436. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to take land into trust for certain Indian tribes, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-216).

S. 1776. A bill to enhance tribal road safety, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-217).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KING, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. HELLER):

S. 2604. A bill to establish in the legislative branch the National Commission on Security and Technology Challenges; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. KING):

S. 2605. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide States with an option to provide medical assistance to individuals between the ages of 22 and 64 for inpatient services to treat substance use disorders at certain facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 2606. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the volume cap for private activity bonds shall not apply to bonds for facilities for the furnishing of water and sewage facilities; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. JOHNSON:

S. Res. 377. An original resolution directing the Senate Legal Counsel to bring a civil action to enforce a subpoena of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations; from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. SHAHEEN,

Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. KAINE):

S. Res. 378. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the courageous work and life of Russian opposition leader Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov and renewing the call for a full and transparent investigation into the tragic murder of Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov in Moscow on February 27, 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. REID, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. McCASKILL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. KAINE, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BENNET, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. BURR, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PAUL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. Res. 379. A resolution celebrating Black History Month; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. WARREN, Mr. COONS, and Mr. HATCH):

S. Res. 380. A resolution designating February 29, 2016 as "Rare Disease Day"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 524

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 524, *supra*.

S. 553

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 553, a bill to marshal resources to undertake a concerted, transformative effort that seeks to bring an end to modern slavery, and for other purposes.

S. 968

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 968, a bill to require the Commissioner of Social Security to revise the medical and evaluation criteria for determining disability in a person diagnosed with Huntington's Disease and to waive the 24-month waiting period for Medicare eligibility for individuals disabled by Huntington's Disease.

S. 1555

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island

(Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1555, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 1597

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1597, a bill to enhance patient engagement in the medical product development process, and for other purposes.

S. 1641

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1641, a bill to improve the use by the Department of Veterans Affairs of opioids in treating veterans, to improve patient advocacy by the Department, and to expand availability of complementary and integrative health, and for other purposes.

S. 1651

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1651, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 1775

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1775, a bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to accept additional documentation when considering the application for veterans status of an individual who performed service as a coastwise merchant seaman during World War II, and for other purposes.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 2236

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2236, a bill to provide that silencers be treated the same as long guns.

S. 2344

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2344, a bill to provide authority for access to certain business records collected under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 prior to November 29, 2015, to make the authority for roving surveillance, the authority to treat individual terrorists as agents of foreign powers, and title VII of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 permanent, and to modify the certification requirements for access to telephone toll and transactional records by the Federal Bureau

of Investigation, and for other purposes.

S. 2390

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) were added as cosponsors of S. 2390, a bill to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

S. 2408

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2408, a bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to issue an occupational safety and health standard to reduce injuries to patients, nurses, and all other health care workers by establishing a safe patient handling, mobility, and injury prevention standard, and for other purposes.

S. 2423

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of S. 2423, a bill making appropriations to address the heroin and opioid drug abuse epidemic for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

S. 2426

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2426, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 2426, *supra*.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

S. 2454

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2454, a bill to limit the period of authorization of new budget authority provided in appropriation Acts, to require analysis, appraisal, and evaluation of existing programs for which continued new budget authority is proposed to be authorized by committees of Congress, and for other purposes.

S. 2487

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms.

MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2487, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

S. 2540

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2540, a bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations.

S. 2549

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2549, a bill to require the Transportation Security Administration to conduct security screening at certain airports, and for other purposes.

S. 2602

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. McCONNELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2602, a bill to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from reclassifying broadband Internet access service as a telecommunications service and from imposing certain regulations on providers of such service.

S. RES. 372

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 372, a resolution celebrating Black History Month.

AMENDMENT NO. 3324

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3324 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. KING):

S. 2605. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide States with an option to provide medical assistance to individuals between the ages of 22 and 64 for inpatient services to treat substance use disorders at certain facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2605

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Medicaid Coverage for Addiction Recovery Expansion Act".

SEC. 2. STATE OPTION TO PROVIDE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR RESIDENTIAL ADDICTION TREATMENT FACILITY SERVICES; MODIFICATION OF THE IMD EXCLUSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1905 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(16)—

(A) by striking "effective" and inserting "(A) effective"; and

(B) by inserting "and (B) effective January 1, 2018, residential addiction treatment facility services (as defined in subsection (h)(3)) for individuals over 21 years of age and under 65 years of age" before the semicolon; and

(2) in subsection (h)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking "paragraph (16) of subsection (a)" and inserting "subsection (a)(16)(A)"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(3)(A) For purposes of subsection (a)(16)(B), the term 'residential addiction treatment facility services' means inpatient services provided—

"(i) to an individual for the purpose of treating a substance use disorder that are furnished to an individual for not more than 2 consecutive periods of 30 consecutive days, provided that upon completion of the first 30-day period, the individual is assessed by the facility and determined to have progressed through the clinical continuum of care, in accordance with criteria established by the Secretary, in consultation with the American Society of Addiction Medicine, and requires continued medically necessary treatment and social support services to promote recovery, stable transition, and discharge; and

"(ii) in a facility that—

"(I) does not have more than 40 beds; and

"(II) is accredited for the treatment of substance use disorders by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, the Council on Accreditation, or any other nationwide accrediting agency that the Secretary deems appropriate.

"(B) The provision of medical assistance for residential addiction treatment facility services to an individual shall not prohibit Federal financial participation for medical assistance for items or services that are provided to the individual in or away from the residential addiction treatment facility during any 30-day period in which the individual is receiving residential addiction treatment facility services.

"(C) A woman who is eligible for medical assistance on the basis of being pregnant and who is furnished residential addiction treatment facility services during any 30-day period may remain eligible for, and continue to be furnished with, such services for additional 30-day periods without regard to any eligibility limit that would otherwise apply to the woman as a result of her pregnancy ending, subject to assessment by the facility and a determination based on medical necessity related to substance use disorder and the impact of substance use disorder on birth outcomes."

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to items and services furnished on or after January 1, 2018.

SEC. 3. GRANT PROGRAM TO EXPAND YOUTH ADDICTION TREATMENT FACILITIES UNDER MEDICAID AND CHIP.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a program under which the Secretary

shall award grants to States for the purpose of expanding the infrastructure and treatment capabilities, including augmenting equipment and bed capacity, of eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that provide addiction treatment services to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries who have not attained the age of 21 and are in communities with high numbers of medically underserved populations of at-risk youth.

(2) **USE OF FUNDS.**—Grant funds awarded under this section may be used to expand the infrastructure and treatment capabilities of an existing facility (including through construction) but shall not be used for the construction of any new facility or for the provision of medical assistance or child health assistance under Medicaid or CHIP.

(3) **TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION; DURATION.**—

(A) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall award grants under the grant program.

(B) **DURATION.**—The Secretary shall award grants under the grant program for a period not to exceed 5 years.

(b) **APPLICATION.**—A State seeking to participate in the grant program shall submit to the Secretary, at such time and in such manner as the Secretary shall require, an application that includes—

(1) detailed information on the types of additional infrastructure and treatment capacity of eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that the State proposes to fund under the grant program;

(2) a description of the communities in which the eligible youth addiction treatment facilities funded under the grant program operate;

(3) an assurance that the eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that the State proposes to fund under the grant program shall give priority to providing addiction treatment services to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries who have not attained the age of 21 and are in communities with high numbers of medically underserved populations of at-risk youth; and

(4) such additional information and assurances as the Secretary shall require.

(c) **RURAL AREAS.**—Not less than 15 percent of the amount of a grant awarded to a State under this section shall be used for making payments to eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that are located in rural areas or that target the provision of addiction treatment services to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries who have not attained the age of 21 and reside in rural areas.

(d) **DEFINITIONS.**—For purposes of this section:

(1) **ADDICTION TREATMENT SERVICES.**—The term “addiction treatment services” means services provided to an individual for the purpose of treating a substance use disorder.

(2) **CHIP.**—The term “CHIP” means the State children’s health insurance program established under title XXI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397aa et seq.).

(3) **ELIGIBLE YOUTH ADDICTION TREATMENT FACILITY.**—The term “eligible youth addiction treatment facility” means a facility that is a participating provider under the State Medicaid or CHIP programs for purposes of providing medical assistance or child health assistance to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries for youth addiction treatment services on an inpatient or outpatient basis (or both).

(4) **MEDICAID.**—The term “Medicaid” means the medical assistance program established under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.).

(5) **MEDICAID OR CHIP BENEFICIARY.**—The term “Medicaid or CHIP beneficiary” means an individual who is enrolled in the State Medicaid plan, the State child health plan under CHIP, or under a waiver of either such plan.

(6) **MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS.**—The term “medically underserved populations” has the meaning given that term in section 330(b)(3) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(b)(3)).

(7) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(e) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated \$50,000,000 to carry out the provisions of this section. Funds appropriated under this subsection shall remain available until expended.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 377—DIRECTING THE SENATE LEGAL COUNSEL TO BRING A CIVIL ACTION TO ENFORCE A SUBPOENA OF THE PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. JOHNSON submitted the following resolution; from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; which was placed on the calendar:

S. RES 377

Whereas the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (in this preamble referred to as the “Subcommittee”) is currently conducting a duly authorized investigation of human trafficking on the Internet pursuant to section 12(e)(3) of Senate Resolution 73, 114th Congress, agreed to February 12, 2015, which authorizes the Subcommittee to issue subpoenas for the production of documents;

Whereas on October 1, 2015, the Subcommittee issued a duly authorized subpoena to Carl Ferrer, Chief Executive Officer of Backpage.com, LLC, directing him to produce certain documents to the Subcommittee by 10:00 a.m. on October 23, 2015;

Whereas on October 23, 2015, counsel for Mr. Ferrer and Backpage.com, LLC submitted to the Subcommittee legal objections to the compelled production of documents under the subpoena issued by the Subcommittee and declined to comply with the subpoena;

Whereas, having considered the legal objections that had been submitted by counsel for Mr. Ferrer and Backpage.com, LLC, on November 3, 2015, the Subcommittee overruled those objections in their entirety and ordered and directed that Mr. Ferrer comply with the subpoena issued by the Subcommittee by 10:00 a.m. on November 12, 2015;

Whereas Mr. Ferrer has refused to comply with the subpoena issued by the Subcommittee as ordered and directed by the Subcommittee; and

Whereas under sections 703(b) and 705 of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (2 U.S.C. 288b(b) and 288d), the Senate Legal Counsel shall bring a civil action under section 1365 of title 28, United States Code, to enforce a subpoena of a Senate subcommittee when directed to do so by the adoption of a resolution by the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate Legal Counsel shall bring a civil action in the name of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations to enforce the subpoena issued by the Subcommittee to Carl Ferrer, Chief Executive Officer of Backpage.com, LLC, and that the Senate Legal Counsel shall conduct all related civil contempt proceedings.

SENATE RESOLUTION 378—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE COURAGEOUS WORK AND LIFE OF RUSSIAN OPPOSITION LEADER BORIS YEFIMOVICH NEMTSOV AND RENEWING THE CALL FOR A FULL AND TRANSPARENT INVESTIGATION INTO THE TRAGIC MURDER OF BORIS YEFIMOVICH NEMTSOV IN MOSCOW ON FEBRUARY 27, 2015

Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. KAINE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 378

Whereas February 27, 2016, marks the first anniversary of the murder of former Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov (referred to in this preamble as “Dr. Nemtsov”);

Whereas Dr. Nemtsov dedicated his life to the causes of freedom and human rights for the Russian people and sought to reduce the corruption in the government of Russia;

Whereas on February 27, 2015—

(1) Dr. Nemtsov was murdered on the Bolshoi Moskvoretsky Bridge in Moscow in view of the Kremlin; and

(2) President Obama called for a “prompt, impartial, and transparent” investigation into the murder of Dr. Nemtsov;

Whereas on March 1, 2015, tens of thousands of people marched through central Moscow in remembrance of Dr. Nemtsov;

Whereas the Russian courts and the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation have consistently rejected requests to qualify the murder of Dr. Nemtsov under Article 277 of the Russian Criminal Code as “an attempt on the life of a public statesman”;

Whereas within 10 days of the murder of Dr. Nemtsov, Chechen suspect Zaur Dadayev admitted to killing Dr. Nemtsov at the behest of Ruslan Geremeyev, a senior officer in the Sever Battalion of Chechnya;

Whereas on March 8, 2015, Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov called Zaur Dadayev a “true patriot”;

Whereas on March 9, 2015, Mr. Kadyrov was awarded the Order of Honor by Russian President Vladimir Putin;

Whereas on January 20, 2016, Aleksandr Bastrykin, the chief of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation responsible for investigating the murder of Dr. Nemtsov, declared that the case had been fully solved;

Whereas the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation charged only Ruslan Muhudinov, the driver of Ruslan Geremeyev, with organizing the murder of Dr. Nemtsov;

Whereas on May 26, 2015, Russian opposition activist Vladimir Kara-Murza, a close friend and colleague of Dr. Nemtsov, was severely poisoned by an unknown assailant, resulting in multiple organ failures and a coma;

Whereas on January 25, 2016, the daughter of Dr. Nemtsov, Zhanna Nemtsova, appealed to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to investigate the murder of her father;

Whereas on February 1, 2016, Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov posted a video on Instagram that shows Russian opposition leaders Mikhail Kasyanov and Vladimir Kara-Murza through the crosshairs of a sniper rifle accompanied by the comment, "Those who did not understand, will understand"; and

Whereas the Russian Federation is a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, which have the capacity to conduct a more credible investigation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the legacy of courageous Russian opposition leader Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov, who dedicated his life to fighting corruption and promoting the principles of democracy, rule of law, and the inherent dignity of human beings;

(2) encourages the public release of all surveillance tapes in the area surrounding the crime scene to aid in the investigation;

(3) urges the United States Government, in official contacts with representatives of the Russian government, to emphasize the importance of bringing to justice all of the conspirators in the murder of Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov; and

(4) calls on the President to significantly increase United States Government support for the causes for which Boris Yefimovich Nemstov gave his life.

SENATE RESOLUTION 379—CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. REID, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. WICKER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. KAINE, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BENNET, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. BURR, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PAUL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. LEAHY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 379

Whereas in 1776, people envisioned the United States as a new nation dedicated to the proposition stated in the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness . . .";

Whereas Africans were first brought involuntarily to the shores of America as early as the 17th century;

Whereas African Americans suffered enslavement and subsequently faced the injustices of lynch mobs, segregation, and denial of the basic and fundamental rights of citizenship;

Whereas in 2016, the vestiges of those injustices and inequalities remain evident in the society of the United States;

Whereas in the face of injustices, people of good will and of all races in the United States have distinguished themselves with a commitment to the noble ideals on which the United States was founded and have fought courageously for the rights and freedom of African Americans and others;

Whereas African Americans, such as Lieutenant Colonel Allen Allensworth, Maya Angelou, Arthur Ashe Jr., James Baldwin, James Beckwourth, Clara Brown, Blanche Bruce, Ralph Bunche, Shirley Chisholm, Holt Collier, Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. Du Bois, Ralph Ellison, Medgar Evers, Alex Haley, Dorothy Height, Lena Horne, Charles Hamilton Houston, Mahalia Jackson, Stephanie Tubbs Jones, B.B. King, Martin Luther King, Jr., Thurgood Marshall, Constance Baker Motley, Rosa Parks, Walter Payton, Bill Pickett, Homer Plessy, Bass Reeves, Hiram Revels, Amelia Platts Boynton Robinson, Jackie Robinson, Aaron Shirley, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Booker T. Washington, the Greensboro Four, and the Tuskegee Airmen, along with many others, worked against racism to achieve success and to make significant contributions to the economic, educational, political, artistic, athletic, literary, scientific, and technological advancements of the United States;

Whereas the contributions of African Americans from all walks of life throughout the history of the United States reflect the greatness of the United States;

Whereas many African Americans lived, toiled, and died in obscurity, never achieving the recognition they deserved, and yet paved the way for future generations to succeed;

Whereas African Americans continue to serve the United States at the highest levels of business, government, and the military;

Whereas the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass inspired the creation of Negro History Week, the precursor to Black History Month;

Whereas Negro History Week represented the culmination of the efforts of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the "Father of Black History", to enhance knowledge of Black history through the Journal of Negro History, published by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, which was founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson and Jesse E. Moorland;

Whereas Black History Month, celebrated during the month of February, originated in 1926 when Dr. Carter G. Woodson set aside a special period in February to recognize the heritage and achievement of Black people of the United States;

Whereas Dr. Carter G. Woodson stated: "We have a wonderful history behind us. . . . If you are unable to demonstrate to the world that you have this record, the world will say to you, 'You are not worthy to enjoy the blessings of democracy or anything else.'";

Whereas since the founding of the United States, the Nation has imperfectly progressed toward noble goals;

Whereas the history of the United States is the story of people regularly affirming high ideals, striving to reach those ideals but often failing, and then struggling to come to terms with the disappointment of that failure, before committing to trying again;

Whereas on November 4, 2008, the people of the United States elected Barack Obama, an African-American man, as President of the United States; and

Whereas on February 22, 2012, people across the United States celebrated the ground-

breaking of the National Museum of African American History and Culture on the National Mall in Washington, District of Columbia, which will open to the public in the fall of 2016: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) acknowledges that all people of the United States are the recipients of the wealth of history provided by Black culture;

(2) recognizes the importance of Black History Month as an opportunity to reflect on the complex history of the United States, while remaining hopeful and confident about the path ahead;

(3) acknowledges the significance of Black History Month as an important opportunity to commemorate the tremendous contributions of African Americans to the history of the United States;

(4) encourages the celebration of Black History Month to provide a continuing opportunity for all people in the United States to learn from the past and understand the experiences that have shaped the United States; and

(5) agrees that, while the United States began as a divided country, the United States must—

(A) honor the contribution of all pioneers in the United States who have helped to ensure the legacy of the great United States; and

(B) move forward with purpose, united tirelessly as a nation "indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

SENATE RESOLUTION 380—DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 29, 2016 AS "RARE DISEASE DAY"

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. BARASSO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. WARREN, Mr. COONS, and Mr. HATCH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 380

Whereas a rare disease or disorder is one that affects a small number of patients and, in the United States, typically fewer than 200,000 individuals annually are affected by a rare disease or disorder;

Whereas, as of the date of approval of this resolution, nearly 7,000 rare diseases affect approximately 30,000,000 people in the United States and their families;

Whereas children with rare genetic diseases account for about 1/2 of the population affected by rare diseases in the United States;

Whereas many rare diseases are serious and life-threatening and lack an effective treatment;

Whereas, as a result of the Orphan Drug Act (Public Law 97-414; 96 Stat. 2049), there have been important advances made in the research of and treatment for rare diseases;

Whereas the Food and Drug Administration (in this preamble referred to as the "FDA") has made great strides in involving the patient in the drug review process as part of the Patient-Focused Drug Development program, an initiative that originated in the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act (Public Law 112-144; 126 Stat. 993);

Whereas, although approximately 500 drugs and biological products for the treatment of rare diseases have been approved by the FDA, millions of people in the United States have a rare disease for which there is no such approved treatment;

Whereas lack of access to effective treatments and difficulty in obtaining reimbursement for life-altering, and even life-saving, treatments still exist and remain significant challenges for people with rare diseases and their families;

Whereas rare diseases and conditions include epidermolysis bullosa, progeria, sickle cell anemia, spinal muscular atrophy, Duchenne muscular dystrophy, Tay-Sachs disease, cystic fibrosis, pulmonary fibrosis, many childhood cancers, fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva, Smith-Magenis syndrome, Batten disease, and hemophilia;

Whereas people with rare diseases experience challenges that include difficulty in obtaining accurate diagnoses, limited treatment options, and difficulty finding physicians or treatment centers with expertise in the rare diseases;

Whereas the rare disease community made significant progress during the 113th Congress, including the passage of the National Pediatric Research Network Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-55; 127 Stat. 644), which calls special attention to rare diseases and directs the National Institutes of Health (in this preamble referred to as the “NIH”) to facilitate greater collaboration among researchers;

Whereas the rare disease community continued this progress through the first session of the 114th Congress, including the passage of the Ensuring Access to Clinical Trials Act of 2015 (Public Law 114-63; 129 Stat. 549) and through increased funding for orphan products and rare disease research;

Whereas both the FDA and the NIH have established special offices to advocate for rare disease research and treatments;

Whereas the National Organization for Rare Disorders (in this preamble referred to as “NORD”), a nonprofit organization established in 1983 to provide services to and advocate on behalf of patients with rare diseases, remains a critical public voice for people with rare diseases;

Whereas 2016 marks the 33rd anniversary of the enactment of the Orphan Drug Act and the establishment of NORD;

Whereas NORD sponsors Rare Disease Day in the United States and partners with many other major rare disease organizations to increase public awareness of rare diseases;

Whereas Rare Disease Day is observed each year on the last day of February;

Whereas Rare Disease Day is a global event, first observed in the United States on February 28, 2009 and observed in more than 80 countries in 2015; and

Whereas Rare Disease Day is expected to be observed globally for years to come, providing hope and information for rare disease patients around the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 29, 2016 as “Rare Disease Day”;

(2) recognizes the importance of improving awareness and encouraging accurate and early diagnosis of rare diseases and disorders; and

(3) supports a national and global commitment to improving access to and developing new treatments, diagnostics, and cures for rare diseases and disorders.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3326. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the na-

tional epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3327. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3328. Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3329. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3330. Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3331. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3332. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3333. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3334. Mr. KIRK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3335. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3336. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3337. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3338. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3339. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3340. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3341. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3342. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3343. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3344. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3345. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3346. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3347. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3348. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3349. Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON, Mrs. ERNST, and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3350. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3326. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

_____. LIMITATION ON COPAYMENTS FOR NALOXONE.—Section 2713(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300gg-13) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraphs (3) and (4), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon;

(3) in paragraph (5), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) the prescription of naloxone or any opioid overdose anecdote drug.”.

SA 3327. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 65, after line 23, insert the following:

SEC. 504. ELIMINATION OF COPAYMENT REQUIREMENT FOR VETERANS RECEIVING OPIOID ANTAGONISTS OR EDUCATION ON USE OF OPIOID ANTAGONISTS.

(a) COPAYMENT FOR OPIOID ANTAGONISTS.—Section 1722A(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) Paragraph (1) does not apply to opioid antagonists furnished under this chapter to a veteran who is at high risk for overdose of a specific medication or substance in order to reverse the effect of such an overdose.”.

(b) COPAYMENT FOR EDUCATION ON USE OF OPIOID ANTAGONISTS.—Section 1710(g)(3) of such title is amended—

(1) by striking “with respect to home health services” and inserting “with respect to the following:

“(A) Home health services”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(B) Education on the use of opioid antagonists to reverse the effects of overdoses of specific medications or substances.”.

SA 3328. Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment

intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE —OVERDOSE PREVENTION

SEC. 01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Overdose Prevention Act”.

SEC. 02. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each day in the United States, more than 100 people die from a drug overdose. Among people 25 to 64 years old, drug overdose causes more deaths than motor vehicle accidents.

(2) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that nearly 44,000 people in the United States died from a drug overdose in 2013 alone. More than 80 percent of those deaths were due to unintentional drug overdoses, and many could have been prevented.

(3) Deaths resulting from unintentional drug overdoses increased more than 300 percent between 1980 and 1998, and more than tripled between 1999 and 2013.

(4) Nearly 92 percent of all unintentional poisoning deaths are due to drugs. Since 1999, in the United States the population of non-Hispanic Whites and the population of Indians (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b)) have seen the highest rates of unintentional drug poisoning deaths.

(5) Opioid medications such as oxycodone and hydrocodone were involved in nearly 46 percent of all unintentional drug poisoning deaths in 2013.

(6) Unintentional drug poisoning deaths involving heroin nearly tripled between 2010 and 2013 and were 23 percent of all unintentional drug poisoning deaths in 2013.

(7) Between 1999 and 2010, opioid medication overdose fatalities increased by more than 400 percent among women and 265 percent among men.

(8) Military veterans are at elevated risk of experiencing a drug overdose. Veterans who served in Vietnam, Iraq, or Afghanistan and who have combat injuries, posttraumatic stress disorder, and other co-occurring mental health diagnoses are at elevated risk of fatal drug overdose from opioid medications.

(9) Rural and suburban regions are disproportionately affected by opioid medication and heroin overdoses. From 2000 through 2013, the age-adjusted rate for drug poisoning deaths involving heroin has increased nearly 11-fold in the Midwest region and more than 3-fold in the South region.

(10) Urban centers also continue to struggle with overdose, which is the leading cause of death among homeless adults.

(11) In 2009 alone, estimated lost productivity and direct medical costs from opioid medication poisonings exceeded \$20,000,000,000.

(12) Opioid medication poisonings cost health insurers an estimated \$72,000,000,000 annually in medical costs.

(13) Both fatal and nonfatal overdoses place a heavy burden on public health and public safety resources, yet there is no coordinated cross-Federal agency response to prevent overdose fatalities.

(14) Naloxone is a medication that rapidly reverses overdose from heroin and opioid medications.

(15) Naloxone has no pharmacological effect if administered to a person who has not taken opioids and has no potential for abuse. Naloxone provides additional time to obtain necessary medical assistance during an overdose.

(16) Lawmakers in Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia have removed legal impediments to increasing naloxone prescription and its use by bystanders who are in a position to respond to an overdose.

(17) The American Medical Association and the American Public Health Association support further implementation of community-based programs that offer naloxone and other opioid overdose prevention services.

(18) Community-based overdose prevention programs have successfully prevented deaths from opioid overdoses by making rescue training and naloxone available to first responders, parents, and other bystanders who may encounter an overdose. A study funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of community-based overdose prevention programs provided by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health found that communities with access to overdose prevention programs experienced lower mortality rates from opioid overdoses than communities that did not have access to overdose prevention programs during the study period.

(19) Over 150,000 potential bystanders have been trained by overdose prevention programs in the United States. A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report credits overdose prevention programs with reversing more than 26,000 overdoses since 1996.

(20) At least 188 local overdose prevention programs are operating in the United States, including in major cities such as Baltimore, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City, Boston, San Francisco, and Philadelphia, and statewide in New Mexico, Massachusetts, and New York. Between December 2007 and March 2014, overdose prevention programs facilitated by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health trained more than 22,500 people who reported more than 2,655 rescues. Since 2004, a program administered by the Baltimore City Health Department has trained more than 11,000 people who reported more than 220 rescues. Project Lazarus, an overdose prevention program in Wilkes County, North Carolina, reduced overdose deaths 69 percent between 2009 and 2011.

(21) In Illinois, the Department of Human Services, Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse has enrolled over 20 drug overdose prevention programs with over 100 designated sites across Illinois targeting multiple service populations. These enrollees include police departments, county health departments, medical facilities, licensed substance abuse treatment programs, and community organizations. Statewide, over 2,000 police officers and more than 600 others have been trained thus far. The DuPage County Illinois Health Department has trained over 1,200 police officers and has reported 34 overdose reversals in 2014 alone.

(22) The Office of National Drug Control Policy supports equipping first responders to

help reverse overdoses. Police officers on patrol in Quincy, Massachusetts, have conducted 300 overdose rescues with naloxone since 2011. The police department has reported a 95-percent success rate with overdose rescue attempts by police officers. In Suffolk County, New York, police officers have saved more than 563 lives with naloxone in 2013 alone.

(23) Research shows that the cost per year of life gained by making naloxone available to reverse overdoses is within the range of what people in the United States usually pay for health treatments.

(24) Prompt administration of naloxone and provision of emergency care by a bystander can reduce health complications and health care costs that arise when a person is deprived of oxygen for an extended period of time.

(25) Overdose prevention programs are needed in correctional facilities, addiction treatment programs, and other places where people are at higher risk of overdosing after a period of abstinence.

(26) Timely, drug-specific fatal and nonfatal surveillance data at the local, State, and regional level is critically needed to target prevention efforts.

(27) People affected by drug overdose gather on August 31 of each year in communities nationwide for Overdose Awareness Day, to mourn and pay tribute to loved ones and raise awareness about overdose risk and prevention.

SEC. 03. OVERDOSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS.

Title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 241 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“PART W—OVERDOSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

“SEC. 3990O. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT PROGRAM TO REDUCE DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS.

“(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary, acting through the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, shall enter into cooperative agreements with eligible entities to enable the eligible entities to reduce deaths occurring from overdoses of drugs.

“(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible to receive a cooperative agreement under this section, an entity shall be a State, local, or tribal government, a correctional institution, a law enforcement agency, a community agency, a professional organization in the field of poison control and surveillance, or a private nonprofit organization.

“(c) APPLICATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity desiring a cooperative agreement under this section shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

“(2) CONTENTS.—An application under paragraph (1) shall include—

“(A) a description of the activities to be funded through the cooperative agreement; and

“(B) evidence that the eligible entity has the capacity to carry out such activities.

“(d) PRIORITY.—In entering into cooperative agreements under subsection (a), the Secretary shall give priority to eligible entities that—

“(1) are a public health agency or community-based organization; and

“(2) have expertise in preventing deaths occurring from overdoses of drugs in populations at high risk of such deaths.

“(e) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—As a condition of receipt of a cooperative agreement under

this section, an eligible entity shall agree to use the cooperative agreement to do each of the following:

“(1) Purchase and distribute the drug naloxone or a similarly effective medication.

“(2) Carry out one or more of the following activities:

“(A) Educating prescribers and pharmacists about overdose prevention and naloxone prescription, or prescriptions of a similarly effective medication.

“(B) Training first responders, other individuals in a position to respond to an overdose, and law enforcement and corrections officials on the effective response to individuals who have overdosed on drugs. Training pursuant to this subparagraph may include any activity that is educational, instructional, or consultative in nature, and may include volunteer training, awareness building exercises, outreach to individuals who are at risk of a drug overdose, and distribution of educational materials.

“(C) Implementing and enhancing programs to provide overdose prevention, recognition, treatment, and response to individuals in need of such services.

“(D) Educating the public and providing outreach to the public about overdose prevention and naloxone prescriptions, or prescriptions of other similarly effective medications.

“(f) COORDINATING CENTER.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish and provide for the operation of a coordinating center responsible for—

“(A) collecting, compiling, and disseminating data on the programs and activities under this section, including tracking and evaluating the distribution and use of naloxone and other similarly effective medication;

“(B) evaluating such data and, based on such evaluation, developing best practices for preventing deaths occurring from drug overdoses;

“(C) making such best practices specific to the type of community involved;

“(D) coordinating and harmonizing data collection measures;

“(E) evaluating the effects of the program on overdose rates; and

“(F) education and outreach to the public about overdose prevention and prescription of naloxone and other similarly effective medication.

“(2) REPORTS TO CENTER.—As a condition on receipt of a cooperative agreement under this section, an eligible entity shall agree to prepare and submit, not later than 90 days after the end of the cooperative agreement period, a report to such coordinating center and the Secretary describing the results of the activities supported through the cooperative agreement.

“(g) DURATION.—The period of a cooperative agreement under this section shall be 4 years.

“(h) DEFINITION.—In this part, the term ‘drug’—

“(1) means a drug, as defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321); and

“(2) includes controlled substances, as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802).

“(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated \$20,000,000 to carry out this section for each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2020.

“SEC. 39900-1. SURVEILLANCE CAPACITY BUILDING.

“(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shall award cooperative agreements to eligible entities to improve fatal and nonfatal drug overdose surveillance and reporting capabilities, including—

“(1) providing training to improve identification of drug overdose as the cause of death by coroners and medical examiners;

“(2) establishing, in cooperation with the National Poison Data System, coroners, and medical examiners, a comprehensive national program for surveillance of, and reporting to an electronic database on, drug overdose deaths in the United States; and

“(3) establishing, in cooperation with the National Poison Data System, a comprehensive national program for surveillance of, and reporting to an electronic database on, fatal and nonfatal drug overdose occurrences, including epidemiological and toxicologic analysis and trends.

“(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—To be eligible to receive a cooperative agreement under this section, an entity shall be—

“(1) a State, local, or tribal government; or

“(2) the National Poison Data System working in conjunction with a State, local, or tribal government.

“(c) APPLICATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity desiring a cooperative agreement under this section shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The application described in paragraph (1) shall include—

“(A) a description of the activities to be funded through the cooperative agreement; and

“(B) evidence that the eligible entity has the capacity to carry out such activities.

“(d) REPORT.—As a condition of receipt of a cooperative agreement under this section, an eligible entity shall agree to prepare and submit, not later than 90 days after the end of the cooperative agreement period, a report to the Secretary describing the results of the activities supported through the cooperative agreement.

“(e) NATIONAL POISON DATA SYSTEM.—In this section, the term ‘National Poison Data System’ means the system operated by the American Association of Poison Control Centers, in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for real-time local, State, and national electronic reporting, and the corresponding database network.

“(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$5,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2020.

“SEC. 39900-2. REDUCING OVERDOSE DEATHS.

“(a) PREVENTION OF DRUG OVERDOSE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary, in consultation with a task force comprised of stakeholders, shall develop a plan to reduce the number of deaths occurring from overdoses of drugs and shall submit the plan to Congress. The plan shall include—

“(1) a plan for implementation of a public health campaign to educate prescribers and the public about overdose prevention and prescription of naloxone and other similarly effective medication;

“(2) recommendations for improving and expanding overdose prevention programming; and

“(3) recommendations for such legislative or administrative action as the Secretary determines appropriate.

“(b) TASK FORCE REPRESENTATION.—

“(1) REQUIRED MEMBERS.—The task force under subsection (a) shall include at least one representative of each of the following:

“(A) Individuals directly impacted by drug overdose.

“(B) Direct service providers who engage individuals at risk of a drug overdose.

“(C) Drug overdose prevention advocates.

“(D) The National Institute on Drug Abuse.

“(E) The Center for Substance Abuse Treatment.

“(F) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“(G) The Health Resources and Services Administration.

“(H) The Food and Drug Administration.

“(I) The Office of National Drug Control Policy.

“(J) The American Medical Association.

“(K) The American Association of Poison Control Centers.

“(L) The Federal Bureau of Prisons.

“(M) The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

“(N) The Department of Justice.

“(O) The Department of Defense.

“(P) The Department of Veterans Affairs.

“(Q) First responders.

“(R) Law enforcement.

“(S) State agencies responsible for drug overdose prevention.

“(2) ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.—In addition to the representatives required by paragraph (1), the task force under subsection (a) may include other individuals with expertise relating to drug overdoses or representatives of entities with expertise relating to drug overdoses, as the Secretary determines appropriate.”

SEC. 404. OVERDOSE PREVENTION RESEARCH.

Subpart 15 of part C of title IV of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 285o et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 464Q. OVERDOSE PREVENTION RESEARCH.

“(a) OVERDOSE RESEARCH.—The Director of the Institute shall prioritize and conduct or support research on drug overdose and overdose prevention. The primary aims of this research shall include—

“(1) an examination of circumstances that contribute to drug overdose and identification of drugs associated with fatal overdose;

“(2) an evaluation of existing overdose prevention methods;

“(3) pilot programs or research trials on new overdose prevention strategies or programs that have not been studied in the United States;

“(4) scientific research concerning the effectiveness of overdose prevention programs, including how to effectively implement and sustain such programs;

“(5) comparative effectiveness research of model programs; and

“(6) implementation of science research concerning effective overdose prevention programming examining how to implement and sustain overdose prevention programming.

“(b) FORMULATIONS OF NALOXONE.—The Director of the Institute shall support research on the development of formulations of naloxone, and other similarly effective medications, and dosage delivery devices specifically intended to be used by lay persons or first responders for the prehospital treatment of unintentional drug overdose.

“(c) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ‘drug’ has the meaning given such term in section 39900.

“(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to

carry out this section \$5,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2020.”.

SA 3329. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 104. OPIOID ACTION PLAN.

(a) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

(1) NEW DRUG APPLICATION.—Except as provided in paragraph (4), prior to the approval of a new drug that is an opioid under section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355), the Commissioner of Food and Drugs shall refer such drug to an advisory committee of the Food and Drug Administration to seek recommendations from such Committee.

(2) PEDIATRIC OPIOID LABELING.—The Commissioner of Food and Drugs shall convene the Pediatric Advisory Committee of the Food and Drug Administration to seek recommendations from such Committee regarding a framework for the inclusion of information in the labeling of drugs that are opioids relating to the use of such drugs in pediatric populations before such Commissioner approves any labeling changes for drugs that are opioids intended for use in pediatric populations.

(3) PUBLIC HEALTH EXEMPTION.—If the Commissioner of Food and Drugs finds that referring a new opioid drug or drugs to an advisory committee of the Food and Drug Administration as required under paragraph (1) is not in the interest of protecting and promoting public health, and has submitted a notice containing the rationale for such a finding to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, or if the matter that would be considered by such advisory committee with respect to any such drug or drugs concerns bioequivalence or sameness of active ingredients, the Commissioner shall not be required to refer such drug or drugs to an advisory committee as required under paragraph (1).

(4) SUNSET.—Unless Congress reauthorizes paragraphs (1) and (2), the requirements of such paragraphs shall cease to be effective on October 1, 2022.

(b) CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION FOR PRESCRIBERS OF OPIOIDS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, in consultation with the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Director of the National Institutes of Health, the Administrator of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, and relevant stakeholders, shall develop recommendations regarding continuing medical education programs for prescribers of opioids required to be disseminated under section 505-1 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355-1), including recommendations for which prescribers should participate in such programs and how often participation in such programs is necessary.

(c) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of Food and Drugs shall issue guidance on if and how the approved labeling of

a drug that is an opioid and is the subject of an application under section 505(j) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355(j)) may include statements that such drug deters abuse.

SA 3330. Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. ____ . EXPANDING OPTIONS FOR ADDICTION TREATMENT UNDER MEDICAID AND CHIP.

(a) STATE OPTION TO PROVIDE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR RESIDENTIAL ADDICTION TREATMENT FACILITY SERVICES; MODIFICATION OF THE IMD EXCLUSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1905 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(16)—

(i) by striking “effective” and inserting “(A) effective”; and

(ii) by inserting “, and (B) effective January 1, 2018, residential addiction treatment facility services (as defined in subsection (h)(3)) for individuals over 21 years of age and under 65 years of age” before the semicolon; and

(B) in subsection (h)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking “paragraph (16) of subsection (a)” and inserting “subsection (a)(16)(A)”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3)(A) For purposes of subsection (a)(16)(B), the term ‘residential addiction treatment facility services’ means inpatient services provided—

“(i) to an individual for the purpose of treating a substance use disorder that are furnished to an individual for not more than 2 consecutive periods of 30 consecutive days, provided that upon completion of the first 30-day period, the individual is assessed by the facility and determined to have progressed through the clinical continuum of care, in accordance with criteria established by the Secretary, in consultation with the American Society of Addiction Medicine, and requires continued medically necessary treatment and social support services to promote recovery, stable transition, and discharge; and

“(ii) in a facility that—

“(I) does not have more than 40 beds; and

“(II) is accredited for the treatment of substance use disorders by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, the Council on Accreditation, or any other nationwide accrediting agency that the Secretary deems appropriate.

“(B) The provision of medical assistance for residential addiction treatment facility services to an individual shall not prohibit Federal financial participation for medical assistance for items or services that are provided to the individual in or away from the residential addiction treatment facility during any 30-day period in which the individual is receiving residential addiction treatment facility services.

“(C) A woman who is eligible for medical assistance on the basis of being pregnant and who is furnished residential addiction treatment facility services during any 30-day pe-

riod may remain eligible for, and continue to be furnished with, such services for additional 30-day periods without regard to any eligibility limit that would otherwise apply to the woman as a result of her pregnancy ending, subject to assessment by the facility and a determination based on medical necessity related to substance use disorder and the impact of substance use disorder on birth outcomes.”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to items and services furnished on or after January 1, 2018.

(b) GRANT PROGRAM TO EXPAND YOUTH ADDICTION TREATMENT FACILITIES UNDER MEDICAID AND CHIP.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a program under which the Secretary shall award grants to States for the purpose of expanding the infrastructure and treatment capabilities, including augmenting equipment and bed capacity, of eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that provide addiction treatment services to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries who have not attained the age of 21 and are in communities with high numbers of medically underserved populations of at-risk youth.

(B) USE OF FUNDS.—Grant funds awarded under this subsection may be used to expand the infrastructure and treatment capabilities of an existing facility (including through construction) but shall not be used for the construction of any new facility or for the provision of medical assistance or child health assistance under Medicaid or CHIP.

(C) TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION; DURATION.—

(i) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall award grants under the grant program.

(ii) DURATION.—The Secretary shall award grants under the grant program for a period not to exceed 5 years.

(2) APPLICATION.—A State seeking to participate in the grant program shall submit to the Secretary, at such time and in such manner as the Secretary shall require, an application that includes—

(A) detailed information on the types of additional infrastructure and treatment capacity of eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that the State proposes to fund under the grant program;

(B) a description of the communities in which the eligible youth addiction treatment facilities funded under the grant program operate;

(C) an assurance that the eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that the State proposes to fund under the grant program shall give priority to providing addiction treatment services to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries who have not attained the age of 21 and are in communities with high numbers of medically underserved populations of at-risk youth; and

(D) such additional information and assurances as the Secretary shall require.

(3) RURAL AREAS.—Not less than 15 percent of the amount of a grant awarded to a State under this subsection shall be used for making payments to eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that are located in rural areas or that target the provision of addiction treatment services to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries who have not attained the age of 21 and reside in rural areas.

(4) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection:

(A) ADDICTION TREATMENT SERVICES.—The term “addiction treatment services” means services provided to an individual for the purpose of treating a substance use disorder.

(B) CHIP.—The term “CHIP” means the State children’s health insurance program established under title XXI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397aa et seq.).

(C) ELIGIBLE YOUTH ADDICTION TREATMENT FACILITY.—The term “eligible youth addiction treatment facility” means a facility that is a participating provider under the State Medicaid or CHIP programs for purposes of providing medical assistance or child health assistance to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries for youth addiction treatment services on an inpatient or outpatient basis (or both).

(D) MEDICAID.—The term “Medicaid” means the medical assistance program established under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.).

(E) MEDICAID OR CHIP BENEFICIARY.—The term “Medicaid or CHIP beneficiary” means an individual who is enrolled in the State Medicaid plan, the State child health plan under CHIP, or under a waiver of either such plan.

(F) MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS.—The term “medically underserved populations” has the meaning given that term in section 330(b)(3) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(b)(3)).

(G) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(5) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated \$50,000,000 to carry out the provisions of this subsection. Funds appropriated under this paragraph shall remain available until expended.

SA 3331. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VI, insert the following:
SEC. 602. PRIORITY CONSIDERATION.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—The definitions in section 601(a) shall apply to this section.

(b) PRIORITY CONSIDERATION.—In awarding Federal funds under a program of the Department of Justice or the Department of Health and Human Services to be used for prescription drug monitoring programs of the States, the Attorney General or the Secretary of Health and Human Services, as the case may be, shall give priority consideration to an application from a State that—

(1) requires a prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance to, prior to the issuance of a prescription for a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance, consult the prescription drug monitoring database of the State;

(2) requires a dispenser of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance to, for the dispensing of each prescription of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance, input data to the prescription drug monitoring database of the State, within 24 hours of the dispensing, which shall include—

- (A) a patient identifier;
- (B) the national drug code of the dispensed drug;
- (C) the date of dispensing;
- (D) the quantity of the drug dispensed;
- (E) the Drug Enforcement Administration registration number of the prescriber; and

(F) the Drug Enforcement Administration registration number of the dispenser;

(3) authorizes access to a State board responsible for the licensure, regulation, or discipline of practitioners, pharmacists, or other person who is authorized to prescribe, administer, or dispense controlled substances; and

(4) requires that, not fewer than 4 times a year, the State agency that administers the prescription drug monitoring program of the State prepare and provide to—

(A) the State board described in paragraph (3), an informational report concerning the prescribing patterns of prescribers within the State, which shall include data on aggregate trends and individual outliers that indicate a substantial likelihood that inappropriate prescribing may be occurring; and

(B) each prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance, an information report that shows how the prescribing patterns of the prescriber compare to the prescribing practices of the peers of the prescriber and expected norms.

SA 3332. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF OPIOID MANUFACTURING QUOTAS.

Section 306 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 826) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(i) DISCLOSURE TO PUBLIC.—The Attorney General shall make available to the public, and accessible through the website of the Drug Enforcement Administration, each manufacturing quota fixed or adjusted by the Attorney General under this section for each registered manufacturer for each of the following controlled substances:

- “(1) Fentanyl.
- “(2) Hydrocodone.
- “(3) Hydromorphone.
- “(4) Oxycodone.
- “(5) Oxymorphone.”.

SA 3333. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 705. REMS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE OPIOID ANALGESICS.

Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall require a risk evaluation and mitigation strategy under section 505-1 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355-1) to be submitted for drugs that are immediate release opioid analgesics, including for such drugs for which there is an approved covered application (as defined in such section) and for such drugs for which a covered application has been submitted but not yet approved.

SA 3334. Mr. KIRK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by

him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 65, after line 23, insert the following:

SEC. 504. MANDATORY DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN VETERAN INFORMATION TO STATE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE MONITORING PROGRAMS.

Section 5701(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “may” and inserting “shall”.

SA 3335. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . REMOVING CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN PAIN-RELATED ISSUES FROM CALCULATIONS UNDER THE MEDICARE HOSPITAL VALUE-BASED PURCHASING PROGRAM.

Section 1886(o)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ww(o)(2)(B)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i)(II), by inserting “, subject to clause (iii),” after “shall”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(iii) EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN PAIN-RELATED MEASURES.—For value-based incentive payments made with respect to discharges occurring during fiscal year 2017 or a subsequent fiscal year, the Secretary shall ensure that measures selected under subparagraph (A) do not include measures based on any assessments by patients, with respect to hospital stays of such patients, of—

“(I) the need of such patients, during such stay, for medicine for pain;

“(II) how often, during such stay, the pain of such patients was well controlled; or

“(III) how often, during such stay, the staff of the hospital in which such stay occurred did everything they could to help the patient with the pain experienced by the patient.”.

SA 3336. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10, beginning on line 18, strike “and” and all that follows through “(I)” on line 19 and insert the following:

- (I) the Indian Health Service; and
- (J)

SA 3337. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 12, beginning on line 11, strike “and” and all that follows through “(E)” on line 12 and insert the following:

(E) the management of populations who have both a pain and a mental health diagnosis, including post-traumatic stress disorder and acute stress disorder; and
(F)

SA 3338. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. _____. FDA STATUS REPORT.

Not later than 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of Food and Drugs shall submit to Congress a report on the status of draft guidance for industry entitled "Individual Patient Expanded Access Applications: Form FDA 3926" that was published in February of 2015.

SA 3339. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the amendment, add the following:

TITLE VIII—BORDER SECURITY METRICS

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Department of Homeland Security Border Security Metrics Act of 2016".

SEC. 802. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives;

(C) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(D) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

(2) **CONSEQUENCE DELIVERY SYSTEM.**—The term "Consequence Delivery System" means the series of consequences applied by the Border Patrol to persons unlawfully entering the United States to prevent unlawful border crossing recidivism.

(3) **GOT AWAY.**—The term "got away" means an unlawful border crosser who—

(A) is directly or indirectly observed making an unlawful entry into the United States;

(B) is not a turn back; and

(C) is not apprehended.

(4) **KNOWN MIGRANT FLOW.**—The term "known migrant flow" means the sum of the number of undocumented migrants—

(A) interdicted at sea;

(B) identified at sea, but not interdicted;

(C) that successfully entered the United States through the maritime border; or

(D) not described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C), which were otherwise reported, with a significant degree of certainty, as having entered, or attempted to enter, the United States through the maritime border.

(5) **MAJOR VIOLATOR.**—The term "major violator" means a person or entity that has engaged in serious criminal activities at any land, air, or sea port of entry, including—

(A) possession of illicit drugs;

(B) smuggling of prohibited products;

(C) human smuggling;

(D) weapons possession;

(E) use of fraudulent United States documents; or

(F) other offenses that are serious enough to result in arrest.

(6) **SECRETARY.**—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

(7) **SITUATIONAL AWARENESS.**—The term "situational awareness" means knowledge and unified understanding of current unlawful cross-border activity, including—

(A) threats and trends concerning illicit trafficking and unlawful crossings;

(B) the ability to forecast future shifts in such threats and trends;

(C) the ability to evaluate such threats and trends at a level sufficient to create actionable plans; and

(D) the operational capability to conduct persistent and integrated surveillance of the international borders of the United States.

(8) **TRANSIT ZONE.**—The term "transit zone" means the sea corridors of the western Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea, and the eastern Pacific Ocean through which undocumented migrants and illicit drugs transit, either directly or indirectly, to the United States.

(9) **TURN BACK.**—The term "turn back" means an unlawful border crosser who, after making an unlawful entry into the United States, promptly returns to the country from which such crosser entered.

(10) **UNLAWFUL BORDER CROSSING EFFECTIVENESS RATE.**—The term "unlawful border crossing effectiveness rate" means the percentage that results from dividing—

(A) the number of apprehensions and turn backs; and

(B) the number of apprehensions, estimated unlawful entries, turn backs, and got aways.

(11) **UNLAWFUL ENTRY.**—The term "unlawful entry" means an unlawful border crosser who enters the United States and is not apprehended by a border security component of the Department of Homeland Security.

SEC. 803. METRICS FOR SECURING THE BORDER BETWEEN PORTS OF ENTRY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop metrics, informed by situational awareness, to measure the effectiveness of security between ports of entry. The Secretary shall annually implement the metrics developed under this subsection, which shall include—

(1) estimates, using alternative methodologies, including recidivism data, survey data, known-flow data, and technologically measured data, of—

(A) total attempted unlawful border crossings;

(B) the rate of apprehension of attempted unlawful border crossings; and

(C) the number of unlawful entries;

(2) a situational awareness achievement metric, which measures situational awareness achieved in each Border Patrol sector;

(3) an unlawful border crossing effectiveness rate;

(4) a probability of detection, which compares the estimated total unlawful border crossing attempts not detected by the Border Patrol to the unlawful border crossing effectiveness rate, as informed by paragraph (1);

(5) an illicit drugs seizure rate for drugs seized by the Border Patrol, which compares the ratio of the amount and type of illicit drugs seized by the Border Patrol in any fiscal year to the average of the amount and

type of illicit drugs seized by the Border Patrol in the immediately preceding 5 fiscal years;

(6) a weight-to-frequency rate, which compares the average weight of marijuana seized per seizure by the Border Patrol in any fiscal year to such weight-to-frequency rate for the immediately preceding 5 fiscal years;

(7) estimates of the impact of the Consequence Delivery System on the rate of recidivism of unlawful border crossers over multiple fiscal years; and

(8) an examination of each consequence referred to in paragraph (7), including—

(A) voluntary return;

(B) warrant of arrest or notice to appear;

(C) expedited removal;

(D) reinstatement of removal;

(E) alien transfer exit program;

(F) Operation Streamline;

(G) standard prosecution; and

(H) Operation Against Smugglers Initiative on Safety and Security.

(b) **METRICS CONSULTATION.**—In developing the metrics required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) consult with the appropriate components of the Department of Homeland Security; and

(2) work with other agencies, as appropriate, including the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Executive Office for Immigration Review of the Department of Justice, to ensure that authoritative data sources are utilized.

(c) **MANNER OF COLLECTION.**—The data used by the Secretary shall be collected and reported in a consistent and standardized manner across all Border Patrol sectors, informed by situational awareness.

SEC. 804. METRICS FOR SECURING THE BORDER AT PORTS OF ENTRY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop metrics, informed by situational awareness, to measure the effectiveness of security at ports of entry. The Secretary shall annually implement the metrics developed under this subsection, which shall include—

(1) estimates, using alternative methodologies, including survey data and randomized secondary screening data, of—

(A) total attempted inadmissible border crossings;

(B) the rate of apprehension of attempted inadmissible border crossings; and

(C) the number of unlawful entries;

(2) the amount and type of illicit drugs seized by the Office of Field Operations of U.S. Customs and Border Protection at United States land, air, and sea ports during the previous fiscal year;

(3) an illicit drugs seizure rate for drugs seized by the Office of Field Operations, which compares the ratio of the amount and type of illicit drugs seized by the Office of Field Operations in any fiscal year to the average of the amount and type of illicit drugs seized by the Office of Field Operations in the immediately preceding 5 fiscal years;

(4) in consultation with the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the United States Southern Command, a cocaine seizure effectiveness rate, which is the percentage resulting from dividing—

(A) the amount of cocaine seized by the Office of Field Operations; and

(B) the total estimated cocaine flow rate at ports of entry along the land border;

(5) the number of infractions related to travelers and cargo committed by major violators who are apprehended by the Office of

Field Operations at ports of entry, and the estimated number of such infractions committed by major violators who are not apprehended;

(6) a measurement of how border security operations affect crossing times, including—

(A) a wait time ratio that compares the average wait times to total commercial and private vehicular traffic volumes at each port of entry;

(B) an infrastructure capacity utilization rate that measures traffic volume against the physical and staffing capacity at each port of entry;

(C) a secondary examination rate that measures the frequency of secondary examinations at each port of entry; and

(D) an enforcement rate that measures the effectiveness of secondary examinations at detecting major violators; and

(7) a cargo scanning rate that includes—

(A) a comparison of the number of high-risk cargo containers scanned by the Office of Field Operations at each United States seaport during the fiscal year to the total number of high-risk cargo containers entering the United States at each seaport during the previous fiscal year;

(B) the percentage of all cargo that is considered “high-risk” cargo; and

(C) the percentage of high-risk cargo scanned—

(i) upon arrival at a United States seaport before entering United States commerce; and

(ii) before being laden on a vessel destined for the United States.

(b) METRICS CONSULTATION.—In developing the metrics required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) consult with the appropriate components of the Department of Homeland Security; and

(2) as appropriate, work with other agencies, including the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Executive Office for Immigration Review of the Department of Justice, to ensure that authoritative data sources are utilized.

(c) MANNER OF COLLECTION.—The data used by the Secretary shall be collected and reported in a consistent and standardized manner across all field offices, informed by situational awareness.

SEC. 805. METRICS FOR SECURING THE MARITIME BORDER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop metrics, informed by situational awareness, to measure the effectiveness of security in the maritime environment. The Secretary shall annually implement the metrics developed under this subsection, which shall include—

(1) situational awareness achieved in the maritime environment;

(2) an undocumented migrant interdiction rate, which compares the migrants interdicted at sea to the total known migrant flow;

(3) an illicit drugs removal rate, for drugs removed inside and outside of a transit zone, which compares the amount and type of illicit drugs removed, including drugs abandoned at sea, by the Department of Homeland Security’s maritime security components in any fiscal year to the average of the amount and type of illicit drugs removed by the Department of Homeland Security’s maritime components for the immediately preceding 5 fiscal years;

(4) in consultation with the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the United States Southern Command, a cocaine re-

moval effectiveness rate, for cocaine removed inside a transit zone and outside a transit zone; which compares the amount of cocaine removed by the Department of Homeland Security’s maritime security components by the total documented cocaine flow rate, as contained in Federal drug databases;

(5) a response rate, which compares the ability of the maritime security components of the Department of Homeland Security to respond to and resolve known maritime threats, whether inside and outside a transit zone, by placing assets on-scene, to the total number of events with respect to which the Department has known threat information; and

(6) an intergovernmental response rate, which compares the ability of the maritime security components of the Department of Homeland Security or other United States Government entities to respond to and resolve actionable maritime threats, whether inside or outside the Western Hemisphere transit zone, by targeting maritime threats in order to detect them, and of those threats detected, the total number of maritime threats interdicted or disrupted.

(b) METRICS CONSULTATION.—In developing the metrics required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) consult with the appropriate components of the Department of Homeland Security; and

(2) as appropriate, work with other agencies, including the Drug Enforcement Agency, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Justice, to ensure that authoritative data sources are utilized.

(c) MANNER OF COLLECTION.—The data used by the Secretary shall be collected and reported in a consistent and standardized manner, informed by situational awareness.

SEC. 806. AIR AND MARINE SECURITY METRICS IN THE LAND DOMAIN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop metrics, informed by situational awareness, to measure the effectiveness of the aviation assets and operations of the Office of Air and Marine of U.S. Customs and Border Enforcement. The Secretary shall annually implement the metrics developed under this subsection, which shall include—

(1) an effectiveness rate, which compares Office of Air and Marine flight hours requirements to the number of flight hours flown by such Office;

(2) a funded flight hour effectiveness rate, which compares the number of funded flight hours appropriated to the Office of Air and Marine to the number of actual flight hours flown by such Office;

(3) a readiness rate, which compares the number of aviation missions flown by the Office of Air and Marine to the number of aviation missions cancelled by such Office due to maintenance, operations, or other causes;

(4) the number of missions cancelled by such Office due to weather compared to the total planned missions;

(5) the number of subjects detected by the Office of Air and Marine through the use of unmanned aerial systems and manned aircrafts;

(6) the number of apprehensions assisted by the Office of Air and Marine through the use of unmanned aerial systems and manned aircrafts;

(7) the number and quantity of illicit drug seizures assisted by the Office of Air and Marine through the use of unmanned aerial systems and manned aircrafts; and

(8) the number of times that usable intelligence related to border security was obtained through the use of unmanned aerial systems and manned aircraft.

(b) METRICS CONSULTATION.—In developing the metrics required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) consult with the appropriate components of the Department of Homeland Security; and

(2) as appropriate, work with other agencies, including the Department of Justice, to ensure that authoritative data sources are utilized.

(c) MANNER OF COLLECTION.—The data used by the Secretary shall be collected and reported in a consistent and standardized manner, informed by situational awareness.

SEC. 807. DATA TRANSPARENCY.

The Secretary shall—

(1) in accordance with applicable privacy laws, make data related to apprehensions, inadmissible aliens, drug seizures, and other enforcement actions available to the public, academic research, and law enforcement communities; and

(2) provide the Office of Immigration Statistics of the Department of Homeland Security with unfettered access to the data described in paragraph (1).

SEC. 808. EVALUATION BY THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE AND THE SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

(a) METRICS REPORT.—

(1) MANDATORY DISCLOSURES.—The Secretary shall submit an annual report containing the metrics required under sections 803 through 806 and the data and methodology used to develop such metrics to—

(A) the appropriate congressional committees; and

(B) the Comptroller General of the United States.

(2) PERMISSIBLE DISCLOSURES.—The Secretary, for the purpose of validation and verification, may submit the annual report described in paragraph (1) to—

(A) the National Center for Border Security and Immigration;

(B) the head of a national laboratory within the Department of Homeland Security laboratory network with prior expertise in border security; and

(C) a Federally Funded Research and Development Center sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security.

(b) GAO REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after receiving the first report under subsection (a)(1), and biennially thereafter for the following 10 years, the Comptroller General of the United States, shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that—

(1) analyzes the suitability and statistical validity of the data and methodology contained in such report; and

(2) includes recommendations to Congress on—

(A) the feasibility of other suitable metrics that may be used to measure the effectiveness of border security; and

(B) improvements that need to be made to the metrics being used to measure the effectiveness of border security.

(c) STATE OF THE BORDER REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the end of each fiscal year through fiscal year 2025, the Secretary shall submit a “State of the Border” report to the appropriate congressional committees that—

(1) provides trends for each metric under sections 803 through 806 for the last 10 years, to the extent possible;

(2) provides selected analysis into related aspects of illegal flow rates, including legal flows and stock estimation techniques; and

(3) includes any other information that the Secretary determines appropriate.

(d) METRICS UPDATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—After submitting the final report to the Comptroller General under subsection (a), the Secretary may reevaluate and update any of the metrics required under sections 803 through 806 to ensure that such metrics—

(A) meet the Department of Homeland Security's performance management needs; and

(B) are suitable to measure the effectiveness of border security.

(2) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 30 days before updating the metrics under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall notify the appropriate congressional committees of such updates.

SA 3340. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 17, line 14, insert “and to describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the eligible entity to evaluate an activity funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity” before the period.

On page 23, line 21, strike “and”.

On page 23, line 25, strike the period and insert “; and”.

On page 23, after line 25, add the following:

(F) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the eligible entity to evaluate an activity funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity.

On page 39, between lines 3 and 4, insert the following:

“(3) APPLICATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A State substance abuse agency, unit of local government, nonprofit organization, or Indian tribe or tribal organization desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

“(B) CONTENTS.—As part of an application for a grant under this section, a State substance abuse agency, unit of local government, nonprofit organization, or Indian tribe or tribal organization shall describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used to evaluate an activity funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity.

On page 41, line 14, strike “and”.

On page 41, line 17, strike the period and insert “; and”.

On page 41, between lines 17 and 18, insert the following:

(C) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the eligible entity to evaluate a program funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program.

On page 46, between lines 17 and 18, insert the following:

“(c) APPLICATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary of Health and Human Services may require.

“(2) CONTENTS.—As part of an application for a grant under this section, an eligible entity shall describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the eligible entity to evaluate an activity funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity.

On page 46, line 18, strike “(c)” and insert “(d)”.

On page 48, between lines 23 and 24, insert the following:

“(d) APPLICATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A recovery community organization desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary of Health and Human Services may require.

“(2) CONTENTS.—As part of an application for a grant under this section, a recovery community organization shall describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the recovery community organization to evaluate an activity funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity.

On page 48, line 24, strike “(d)” and insert “(e)”.

On page 53, line 7, insert “The application shall describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the eligible entity to evaluate each program funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program.” after the period.

On page 55, line 2, strike “shall—” and all that follows through “paragraph (1)” on line 10 and insert “shall describe how each program funded with a grant under this section”.

On page 70, strike lines 17 through 20 and insert the following:

(III) a description of the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the State to evaluate an activity funded with a planning grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity; and

On page 71, line 15 insert “The application shall describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the State to evaluate an activity funded with an implementation grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity.” after the period.

SA 3341. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, insert the following:

SEC. 705. EXCISE TAX ON OPIOID PAIN RELIEVERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter E of chapter 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“SEC. 4192. OPIOID PAIN RELIEVERS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—There is hereby imposed on the sale of any taxable active opioid by the manufacturer, producer, or importer a tax equal to 1 cent per milligram so sold.

“(b) TAXABLE ACTIVE OPIOID.—For purposes of this section—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘taxable active opioid’ means any controlled substance (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this section) which is opium, an opiate, or any derivative thereof.

“(2) EXCLUSION FOR CERTAIN PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS.—Such term shall not include any prescribed drug which is used exclusively for the treatment of opioid addiction as part of a medically assisted treatment effort.

“(3) EXCLUSION OF OTHER INGREDIENTS.—In the case of a product that includes a taxable active opioid and another ingredient, subsection (a) shall apply only to the portion of such product that is a taxable active opioid.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The heading of subchapter E of chapter 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “**Medical Devices**” and inserting “**Other Medical Products**”.

(2) The table of subchapters for chapter 32 of such Code is amended by striking the item relating to subchapter E and inserting the following new item:

“SUBCHAPTER E. OTHER MEDICAL PRODUCTS”.

(3) The table of sections for subchapter E of chapter 32 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“Sec. 4192. Opioid pain relievers.”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to sales on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) REBATE PROGRAM FOR CERTAIN CANCER AND HOSPICE PATIENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with patient advocacy groups and other relevant stakeholders as determined by such Secretary, shall establish a mechanism by which any amount paid by an eligible patient in connection with the tax under section 4192 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (as added by this section) shall be rebated to such patient in as timely a manner as possible with as little burden on the patient as possible.

(2) ELIGIBLE PATIENT.—For purposes of this section, the term “eligible patient” means—

(A) a patient for whom any taxable active opioid (as defined in section 4192(b) of such Code) is prescribed to treat pain relating to cancer or cancer treatment;

(B) a patient participating in hospice care; and

(C) in the case of the death or incapacity of a patient described in subparagraph (A) or (B) or any similar situation as determined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the appropriate family member, medical proxy, or similar representative or the estate of such patient.

SEC. 706. BLOCK GRANTS FOR PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE.

(a) GRANTS TO STATES.—Section 1921(b) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x-21(b)) is amended by inserting “, and, as applicable, for carrying out section 1923A” before the period.

(b) NONAPPLICABILITY OF PREVENTION PROGRAM PROVISION.—Section 1922(a)(1) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x-22(a)(1)) is amended by inserting “except with respect to amounts made available as described in section 1923A,” before “will expend”.

(c) OPIOID TREATMENT PROGRAMS.—Subpart II of part B of title XIX of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x-21 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 1923 the following:

“SEC. 1923A. ADDITIONAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAMS.

“A funding agreement for a grant under section 1921 is that the State involved shall provide that any amounts made available by any increase in revenues to the Treasury in the previous fiscal year resulting from the enactment of section 4192 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, reduced by any amounts rebated under section 705(e) of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 (as described in section 1933(a)(1)(B)(i)) be used exclusively for substance abuse (including opioid abuse) treatment efforts in the State, including treatment programs—

“(1) establishing new addiction treatment facilities, residential and outpatient, including covering capital costs;

“(2) establishing sober living facilities;

“(3) recruiting and increasing reimbursement for certified mental health providers providing substance abuse treatment in medically underserved communities or communities with high rates of prescription drug abuse;

“(4) expanding access to long-term, residential treatment programs for opioid addicts (including 30-, 60-, and 90-day programs);

“(5) establishing or operating support programs that offer employment services, housing, and other support services to help recovering addicts transition back into society;

“(6) establishing or operating housing for children whose parents are participating in substance abuse treatment programs, including capital costs;

“(7) establishing or operating facilities to provide care for babies born with neonatal abstinence syndrome, including capital costs;

“(8) establishing or operating substance abuse treatment programs in conjunction with Adult and Family Treatment Drug Courts; and

“(9) other treatment programs, as the Secretary determines appropriate.”.

(d) ADDITIONAL FUNDING.—Section 1933(a)(1)(B)(i) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x-33(a)(1)(B)(i)) is amended by inserting “, plus any increase in revenues to the Treasury in the previous fiscal year resulting from the enactment of section 4192 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, reduced by any amounts rebated under section 705(e) of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016” before the period.

SA 3342. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 705. MISSION STATEMENT OF THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Commissioner of

Food and Drugs, is directed to amend the mission statement of the Food and Drug Administration to include the following statement: “The FDA is also responsible for protecting the public health by strongly considering the danger of addiction and overdose death associated with prescription opioid medications when approving these medications and when regulating the manufacturing, marketing, and distribution of opioid medications.”

SA 3343. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 705. APPROVAL OF OPIOID DRUGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Commissioner of Food and Drugs (referred to in this section as “the Commissioner”) shall ensure that, with respect to each application for an opioid drug submitted under section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355)—

(1) an advisory committee of the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research of the Food and Drug Administration evaluates the application and issues a recommendation regarding approval of such drug prior to a final decision to approve such drug; and

(2) if a final decision to approve such drug is inconsistent with the recommendation under paragraph (1), such final decision shall be made by the Commissioner and shall not be delegated.

(b) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—If the advisory committee recommends under subsection (a)(1) that the Commissioner not approve an opioid drug under section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355), and the Commissioner approves that drug under subsection (a)(2), the Commissioner shall—

(1) submit a report to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, and to any member of Congress that requests the report, that includes—

(A) medical and scientific evidence regarding patient safety that clearly supports the Commissioner’s decision to approve the opioid drug against the recommendation of the advisory committee; and

(B) a disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest that may exist regarding any official of the Food and Drug Administration who was involved in the decision to approve the drug prior to the Commissioner’s final decision under subsection (a)(2); and

(2) at the request of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate or the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, testify before that committee regarding the Commissioner’s decision to approve the opioid drug against the recommendation of the advisory committee.

(c) PROHIBITION ON MARKETING.—A drug described in subsection (b) shall not be introduced or delivered for introduction into interstate commerce until the report described in subsection (b)(1) has been submitted to Congress.

SA 3344. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by

him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. _____. CONSUMER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN.

Part A of title V of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290aa et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 506C. CONSUMER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall award grants to States and nonprofit entities for the purpose of conducting culturally sensitive consumer education about opioid abuse, including methadone abuse. Such education shall include information on the dangers of opioid abuse, how to prevent opioid abuse including through safe disposal of prescription medications and other safety precautions, and detection of early warning signs of addiction.

“(b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant under subsection (a), an entity shall—

“(1) be a State or nonprofit entity; and

“(2) submit to the Administrator an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Administrator may require.

“(c) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this section, the Administrator shall give priority to applicants that are States or communities with a high incidence of abuse of methadone and other opioids, and opioid-related deaths.

“(d) EVALUATIONS.—The Administrator shall develop a process to evaluate the effectiveness of activities carried out by grantees under this section at reducing abuse of methadone and other opioids.

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021.”.

SA 3345. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VIII—ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016
SEC. 801. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

(a) STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016, \$230,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Department of Justice for State law enforcement initiatives (which shall include a 30 percent pass-through to localities) under the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program, as authorized by subpart 1 of part E of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3750 et seq.) (except that section 1001(c) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 3793(c)) shall not apply for purposes of this Act), to be used, notwithstanding such subpart 1, for a comprehensive program to combat the heroin and opioid crisis, and for associated criminal justice activities, including

approved treatment alternatives to incarceration.

(2) **EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.**—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

(b) **HEROIN AND METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016, \$10,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Department of Justice to carry out section 2999 of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 204 of this Act, to be used to assist State and local law enforcement agencies in areas with high per capita levels of opioid and heroin use, targeting resources to support law enforcement operations on the ground.

(2) **EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.**—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

SEC. 802. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

(a) **SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016—

(A) \$300,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services, for “Substance Abuse Treatment”, to address the heroin and opioid crisis and its associated health effects, of which not less than \$15,000,000 shall be to improve treatment for pregnant or postpartum women under the pilot program authorized under section 508(r) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb-1), as amended by section 501 of this Act; and

(B) \$10,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services, for grants for medication assisted treatment for prescription drug and opioid addiction under section 2999A of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 301 of this Act.

(2) **EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.**—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

(b) **CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016, \$50,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the Department of Health and Human Services, for prescription drug monitoring programs, community health system interventions, and rapid response projects.

(2) **EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.**—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be

designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

SA 3346. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 11, beginning on line 7, strike “and” and all that follows through “(E)” on line 8 and insert the following:

(E) organizations recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code (commonly referred to as “veterans service organizations”); and

(F)

SA 3347. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 11, beginning on line 7, strike “and” and all that follows through “(E)” on line 8 and insert the following:

(E) veterans nonprofit organizations; and

(F)

SA 3348. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . PRACTITIONER EDUCATION.

Section 303 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(j)(1) The Attorney General shall not register, or renew the registration of, a practitioner under subsection (f), unless the practitioner submits to the Attorney General, for each such registration or renewal request, a written certification that the practitioner has completed a training program described in paragraph (2).

“(2) A training program described in this paragraph is a training program that—

“(A) includes information on—

“(i) safe opioid prescribing guidelines;

“(ii) the risks of over-prescribing opioid medications;

“(iii) pain management;

“(iv) early detection of opioid addiction; and

“(v) the treatment of opioid-dependent patients; and

“(B) is approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.”.

SA 3349. Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON, Mrs. ERNST, and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the

national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VIII—FAIR CHANCE ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016” or the “Fair Chance Act”.

SEC. 802. PROHIBITION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES PRIOR TO CONDITIONAL OFFER FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subpart H of part III of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“CHAPTER 92—PROHIBITION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES PRIOR TO CONDITIONAL OFFER

“Sec.

“9201. Definitions.

“9202. Limitations on requests for criminal history record information.

“9203. Agency policies; whistleblower complaint procedures.

“9204. Adverse action.

“9205. Procedures.

“9206. Rules of construction.

“§ 9201. Definitions

“In this chapter—

“(1) the term ‘agency’ means ‘Executive agency’ as such term is defined in section 105 and includes—

“(A) the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission; and

“(B) the Executive Office of the President;

“(2) the term ‘appointing authority’ means an employee in the executive branch of the Government of the United States that has authority to make appointments to positions in the civil service;

“(3) the term ‘conditional offer’ means an offer of employment in a position in the civil service that is conditioned upon the results of a criminal history inquiry;

“(4) the term ‘criminal history record information’—

“(A) except as provided in subparagraph (B), has the meaning given the term in section 9101(a);

“(B) includes any information described in the first sentence of section 9101(a)(2) that has been sealed or expunged pursuant to law, regardless of whether the information is accessible by State and local criminal justice agencies for the purpose of conducting background checks; and

“(C) includes information collected by a criminal justice agency, relating to an act or alleged act of juvenile delinquency, that is analogous to criminal history record information (including such information that has been sealed or expunged pursuant to law); and

“(5) the term ‘suspension’ has the meaning given the term in section 7501.

“§ 9202. Limitations on requests for criminal history record information

“(a) **INQUIRIES PRIOR TO CONDITIONAL OFFER.**—Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c), an employee of an agency may not request, in oral or written form (including through the Declaration for Federal Employment (Office of Personnel Management Optional Form 306), or any similar successor form), including through the USAJOBS Internet Web site or any other electronic means, that an applicant for an appointment to a position in the civil service disclose criminal history record information regarding the applicant before the appointing authority extends a conditional offer to the applicant.

“(b) OTHERWISE REQUIRED BY LAW.—The prohibition under subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to an applicant for a position in the civil service if consideration of criminal history record information prior to a conditional offer with respect to the position is otherwise required by law.

“(c) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN POSITIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The prohibition under subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to an applicant for an appointment to a position—

“(A) that requires a determination of eligibility described in clause (i), (ii), or (iii) of section 9101(b)(1)(A);

“(B) as a Federal law enforcement officer (as defined in section 115(c) of title 18); or

“(C) identified by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management in the regulations issued under paragraph (2).

“(2) REGULATIONS.—

“(A) ISSUANCE.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall issue regulations identifying additional positions with respect to which the prohibition under subsection (a) shall not apply, giving due consideration to positions that involve interaction with minors, access to sensitive information, or managing financial transactions.

“(B) COMPLIANCE WITH CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS.—The regulations issued under subparagraph (A) shall—

“(i) be consistent with, and in no way supersede, restrict, or limit the application of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.) or other relevant Federal civil rights laws; and

“(ii) ensure that all hiring activities conducted pursuant to the regulations are conducted in a manner consistent with relevant Federal civil rights laws.

“§ 9203. Agency policies; complaint procedures

“The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall—

“(1) develop, implement, and publish a policy to assist employees of agencies in complying with section 9202 and the regulations issued pursuant to such section; and

“(2) establish and publish procedures under which an applicant for an appointment to a position in the civil service may submit a complaint, or any other information, relating to compliance by an employee of an agency with section 9202.

“§ 9204. Adverse action

“(a) FIRST VIOLATION.—If the Director of the Office of Personnel Management determines, after notice and an opportunity for a hearing on the record, that an employee of an agency has violated section 9202, the Director shall—

“(1) issue to the employee a written warning that includes a description of the violation and the additional penalties that may apply for subsequent violations; and

“(2) file such warning in the employee's official personnel record file.

“(b) SUBSEQUENT VIOLATIONS.—If the Director of the Office of Personnel Management determines, after notice and an opportunity for a hearing on the record, that an employee that was subject to subsection (a) has committed a subsequent violation of section 9202, the Director may take the following action:

“(1) For a second violation, suspension of the employee for a period of not more than 7 days.

“(2) For a third violation, suspension of the employee for a period of more than 7 days.

“(3) For a fourth violation—

“(A) suspension of the employee for a period of more than 7 days; and

“(B) a civil penalty against the employee in an amount that is not more than \$250.

“(4) For a fifth violation—

“(A) suspension of the employee for a period of more than 7 days; and

“(B) a civil penalty against the employee in an amount that is not more than \$500.

“(5) For any subsequent violation—

“(A) suspension of the employee for a period of more than 7 days; and

“(B) a civil penalty against the employee in an amount that is not more than \$1,000.

“§ 9205. Procedures

“(a) APPEALS.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall by rule establish procedures providing for an appeal from any adverse action taken under section 9204 by not later than 30 days after the date of the action.

“(b) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER LAWS.—An adverse action taken under section 9204 (including a determination in an appeal from such an action under subsection (a) of this section) shall not be subject to—

“(1) the procedures under chapter 75; or

“(2) except as provided in subsection (a) of this section, appeal or judicial review.

“§ 9206. Rules of construction

“Nothing in this chapter may be construed to—

“(1) authorize any officer or employee of an agency to request the disclosure of information described under subparagraphs (B) and (C) of section 9201(4); or

“(2) create a private right of action for any person.”

(b) REGULATIONS; EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall issue such regulations as are necessary to carry out chapter 92 of title 5, United States Code (as added by this title).

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 9202 of title 5, United States Code (as added by this title), shall take effect on the date that is 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters for part III of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 91 the following:

“92. Prohibition on criminal history inquiries prior to conditional offer 9201”.

(d) APPLICATION TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1301 et seq.) is amended—

(A) in section 102(a) (2 U.S.C. 1302(a)), by adding at the end the following:

“(12) Section 9202 of title 5, United States Code.”;

(B) by redesignating section 207 (2 U.S.C. 1317) as section 208; and

(C) by inserting after section 206 (2 U.S.C. 1316) the following new section:

“SEC. 207. RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS RELATING TO CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms ‘agency’, ‘criminal history record information’, and ‘suspension’ have the meanings given the terms in section 9201 of title 5, United States Code, except as otherwise modified by this section.

“(b) RESTRICTIONS ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), an employee of an employing office may not request that an applicant

for employment as a covered employee disclose criminal history record information if the request would be prohibited under section 9202 of title 5, United States Code, if made by an employee of an agency.

“(B) CONDITIONAL OFFER.—For purposes of applying that section 9202 under subparagraph (A), a reference in that section 9202 to a conditional offer shall be considered to be an offer of employment as a covered employee that is conditioned upon the results of a criminal history inquiry.

“(2) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—The provisions of section 9206 of title 5, United States Code, shall apply to employing offices, consistent with regulations issued under subsection (d).

“(c) REMEDY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The remedy for a violation of subsection (b)(1) shall be such remedy as would be appropriate if awarded under section 9204 of title 5, United States Code, if the violation had been committed by an employee of an agency, consistent with regulations issued under subsection (d), except that the reference in that section to a suspension shall be considered to be a suspension with the level of compensation provided for a covered employee who is taking unpaid leave under section 202.

“(2) PROCESS FOR OBTAINING RELIEF.—An applicant for employment as a covered employee who alleges a violation of subsection (b)(1) may rely on the provisions of title IV (other than sections 404(2), 407, and 408), consistent with regulations issued under subsection (d).

“(d) REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT SECTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016, the Board shall, pursuant to section 304, issue regulations to implement this section.

“(2) PARALLEL WITH AGENCY REGULATIONS.—The regulations issued under paragraph (1) shall be the same as substantive regulations issued by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management under section 802(b)(1) of the Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016 to implement the statutory provisions referred to in subsections (a) through (c) except to the extent that the Board may determine, for good cause shown and stated together with the regulation, that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the rights and protections under this section.

“(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 102(a)(12) and subsections (a) through (c) shall take effect on the date on which section 9202 of title 5, United States Code, applies with respect to agencies.”

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of such Act is amended—

(A) by redesignating the item relating to section 207 as the item relating to section 208; and

(B) by inserting after the item relating to section 206 the following new item:

“Sec. 207. Rights and protections relating to criminal history inquiries.”

(e) APPLICATION TO JUDICIAL BRANCH.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 604 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(i) RESTRICTIONS ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

“(A) the terms ‘agency’ and ‘criminal history record information’ have the meanings given those terms in section 9201 of title 5;

“(B) the term ‘covered employee’ means an employee of the judicial branch of the United States Government, other than—

“(i) any judge or justice who is entitled to hold office during good behavior;

“(ii) a United States magistrate judge; or

“(iii) a bankruptcy judge; and

“(C) the term ‘employing office’ means any office or entity of the judicial branch of the United States Government that employs covered employees.

“(2) RESTRICTION.—A covered employee may not request that an applicant for employment as a covered employee disclose criminal history record information if the request would be prohibited under section 9202 of title 5 if made by an employee of an agency.

“(3) EMPLOYING OFFICE POLICIES; COMPLAINT PROCEDURE.—The provisions of sections 9203 and 9206 of title 5 shall apply to employing offices and to applicants for employment as covered employees, consistent with regulations issued by the Director to implement this subsection.

“(4) ADVERSE ACTION.—

“(A) ADVERSE ACTION.—The Director may take such adverse action with respect to a covered employee who violates paragraph (2) as would be appropriate under section 9204 of title 5 if the violation had been committed by an employee of an agency.

“(B) APPEALS.—The Director shall by rule establish procedures providing for an appeal from any adverse action taken under subparagraph (A) by not later than 30 days after the date of the action.

“(C) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER LAWS.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), an adverse action taken under subparagraph (A) (including a determination in an appeal from such an action under subparagraph (B)) shall not be subject to appeal or judicial review.

“(5) REGULATIONS TO BE ISSUED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016, the Director shall issue regulations to implement this subsection.

“(B) PARALLEL WITH AGENCY REGULATIONS.—The regulations issued under subparagraph (A) shall be the same as substantive regulations promulgated by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management under section 802(b)(1) of the Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016 except to the extent that the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts may determine, for good cause shown and stated together with the regulation, that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the rights and protections under this subsection.

“(6) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraphs (1) through (4) shall take effect on the date on which section 9202 of title 5 applies with respect to agencies.”.

SEC. 803. PROHIBITION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES BY CONTRACTORS PRIOR TO CONDITIONAL OFFER.

(a) CIVILIAN AGENCY CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Division C of subtitle I of title 41, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 4713. Prohibition on criminal history inquiries by contractors prior to conditional offer

“(a) LIMITATION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3), an executive agency—

“(A) may not require that an individual or sole proprietor who submits a bid for a contract to disclose criminal history record information regarding that individual or sole proprietor before determining the apparent awardee; and

“(B) shall require, as a condition of receiving a Federal contract and receiving payments under such contract that the contractor may not verbally, or through written form, request the disclosure of criminal history record information regarding an applicant for a position related to work under such contract before the contractor extends a conditional offer to the applicant.

“(2) OTHERWISE REQUIRED BY LAW.—The prohibition under paragraph (1) does not apply with respect to a contract if consideration of criminal history record information prior to a conditional offer with respect to the position is otherwise required by law.

“(3) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN POSITIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The prohibition under paragraph (1) does not apply with respect to—

“(i) a contract that requires an individual hired under the contract to access classified information or to have sensitive law enforcement or national security duties; or

“(ii) a position that the Administrator of General Services identifies under the regulations issued under subparagraph (B).

“(B) REGULATIONS.—

“(i) ISSUANCE.—Not later than 16 months after the date of enactment of the Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016, the Administrator of General Services, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall issue regulations identifying additional positions with respect to which the prohibition under paragraph (1) shall not apply, giving due consideration to positions that involve interaction with minors, access to sensitive information, or managing financial transactions.

“(ii) COMPLIANCE WITH CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS.—The regulations issued under clause (i) shall—

“(I) be consistent with, and in no way supersede, restrict, or limit the application of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.) or other relevant Federal civil rights laws; and

“(II) ensure that all hiring activities conducted pursuant to the regulations are conducted in a manner consistent with relevant Federal civil rights laws.

“(b) COMPLAINT PROCEDURES.—The Administrator of General Services shall establish and publish procedures under which an applicant for a position with a Federal contractor may submit to the Administrator a complaint, or any other information, relating to compliance by the contractor with subsection (a)(1)(B).

“(c) ACTION FOR VIOLATIONS OF PROHIBITION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.—

“(1) FIRST VIOLATION.—If the head of an executive agency determines that a contractor has violated subsection (a)(1)(B), such head shall—

“(A) notify the contractor;

“(B) provide 30 days after such notification for the contractor to appeal the determination; and

“(C) issue a written warning to the contractor that includes a description of the violation and the additional remedies that may apply for subsequent violations.

“(2) SUBSEQUENT VIOLATION.—If the head of an executive agency determines that a contractor that was subject to paragraph (1) has committed a subsequent violation of subsection (a)(1)(B), such head shall notify the contractor, shall provide 30 days after such notification for the contractor to appeal the determination, and, in consultation with the relevant Federal agencies, may take actions, depending on the severity of the infraction and the contractor's history of violations, including—

“(A) providing written guidance to the contractor that the contractor's eligibility for contracts requires compliance with this section;

“(B) requiring that the contractor respond within 30 days affirming that the contractor is taking steps to comply with this section; and

“(C) suspending payment under the contract for which the applicant was being considered until the contractor demonstrates compliance with this section.

“(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) CONDITIONAL OFFER.—The term ‘conditional offer’ means an offer of employment for a position related to work under a contract that is conditioned upon the results of a criminal history inquiry.

“(2) CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD INFORMATION.—The term ‘criminal history record information’ has the meaning given that term in section 9201 of title 5.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for division C of subtitle I of title 41, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 4712 the following new item:

“4713. Prohibition on criminal history inquiries by contractors prior to conditional offer.”.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 4713(a) of title 41, United States Code, as added by paragraph (1), shall apply with respect to contracts awarded pursuant to solicitations issued after the effective date described in section 802(b)(2) of this title.

(b) DEFENSE CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 2338. Prohibition on criminal history inquiries by contractors prior to conditional offer

“(a) LIMITATION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3), the head of an agency—

“(A) may not require that an individual or sole proprietor who submits a bid for a contract to disclose criminal history record information regarding that individual or sole proprietor before determining the apparent awardee; and

“(B) shall require as a condition of receiving a Federal contract and receiving payments under such contract that the contractor may not verbally or through written form request the disclosure of criminal history record information regarding an applicant for a position related to work under such contract before such contractor extends a conditional offer to the applicant.

“(2) OTHERWISE REQUIRED BY LAW.—The prohibition under paragraph (1) does not apply with respect to a contract if consideration of criminal history record information prior to a conditional offer with respect to the position is otherwise required by law.

“(3) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN POSITIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The prohibition under paragraph (1) does not apply with respect to—

“(i) a contract that requires an individual hired under the contract to access classified information or to have sensitive law enforcement or national security duties; or

“(ii) a position that the Secretary of Defense identifies under the regulations issued under subparagraph (B).

“(B) REGULATIONS.—

“(i) ISSUANCE.—Not later than 16 months after the date of enactment of the Fair

Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Administrator of General Services, shall issue regulations identifying additional positions with respect to which the prohibition under paragraph (1) shall not apply, giving due consideration to positions that involve interaction with minors, access to sensitive information, or managing financial transactions.

“(ii) COMPLIANCE WITH CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS.—The regulations issued under clause (i) shall—

“(I) be consistent with, and in no way supersede, restrict, or limit the application of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.) or other relevant Federal civil rights laws; and

“(II) ensure that all hiring activities conducted pursuant to the regulations are conducted in a manner consistent with relevant Federal civil rights laws.

“(b) COMPLAINT PROCEDURES.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish and publish procedures under which an applicant for a position with a Department of Defense contractor may submit a complaint, or any other information, relating to compliance by the contractor with subsection (a)(1)(B).

“(c) ACTION FOR VIOLATIONS OF PROHIBITION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.—

“(1) FIRST VIOLATION.—If the Secretary of Defense determines that a contractor has violated subsection (a)(1)(B), the Secretary shall—

“(A) notify the contractor;

“(B) provide 30 days after such notification for the contractor to appeal the determination; and

“(C) issue a written warning to the contractor that includes a description of the violation and the additional remedies that may apply for subsequent violations.

“(2) SUBSEQUENT VIOLATIONS.—If the Secretary of Defense determines that a contractor that was subject to paragraph (1) has committed a subsequent violation of subsection (a)(1)(B), the Secretary shall notify the contractor, shall provide 30 days after such notification for the contractor to appeal the determination, and, in consultation with the relevant Federal agencies, may take actions, depending on the severity of the infraction and the contractor's history of violations, including—

“(A) providing written guidance to the contractor that the contractor's eligibility for contracts requires compliance with this section;

“(B) requiring that the contractor respond within 30 days affirming that the contractor is taking steps to comply with this section; and

“(C) suspending payment under the contract for which the applicant was being considered until the contractor demonstrates compliance with this section.

“(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) CONDITIONAL OFFER.—The term ‘conditional offer’ means an offer of employment for a position related to work under a contract that is conditioned upon the results of a criminal history inquiry.

“(2) CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD INFORMATION.—The term ‘criminal history record information’ has the meaning given that term in section 9201 of title 5.”

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 2338(a) of title 10, United States Code, as added by paragraph (1), shall apply with respect to contracts awarded pursuant to solicitations issued after the effective date described in section 802(b)(2) of this title.

(3) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 137 of title 10, United

States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2337 the following new item:

“2338. Prohibition on criminal history inquiries by contractors prior to conditional offer.”

(c) REVISIONS TO FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council shall revise the Federal Acquisition Regulation to implement section 4713 of title 41, United States Code, and section 2338 of title 10, United States Code, as added by this section.

(2) CONSISTENCY WITH OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS.—The Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council shall revise the Federal Acquisition Regulation under paragraph (1) to be consistent with the regulations issued by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management under section 2(b)(1) to the maximum extent practicable. The Council shall include together with such revision an explanation of any substantive modification of the Office of Personnel Management regulations, including an explanation of how such modification will more effectively implement the rights and protections under this section.

SEC. 804. REPORT ON EMPLOYMENT OF INDIVIDUALS FORMERLY INCARCERATED IN FEDERAL PRISONS.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “covered individual”—

(1) means an individual who has completed a term of imprisonment in a Federal prison for a Federal criminal offense; and

(2) does not include an alien who is or will be removed from the United States for a violation of the immigration laws (as such term is defined in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101)).

(b) STUDY AND REPORT REQUIRED.—The Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, in coordination with the Director of the Bureau of the Census, shall—

(1) not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, design and initiate a study on the employment of covered individuals after their release from Federal prison, including by collecting—

(A) demographic data on covered individuals, including race, age, and sex; and

(B) data on employment and earnings of covered individuals who are denied employment, including the reasons for the denials; and

(2) not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 5 years thereafter, submit a report that does not include any personally identifiable information on the study conducted under paragraph (1) to—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives; and

(D) the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives.

SA 3350. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 104. ENHANCING BASIC AND APPLIED RESEARCH ON PAIN TO DISCOVER THERAPIES TO REDUCE THE CURRENT OVER-PRESCRIBING OF OPIOIDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Institutes of Health may intensify and coordinate fundamental, translational, and clinical research of the National Institutes of Health (referred to in this section as the “NIH”) with respect to the understanding of pain and the discovery and development of therapies for chronic pain.

(b) PRIORITY AND DIRECTION.—The prioritization and direction of the Federally funded portfolio of pain research studies shall consider recommendations made by the Interagency Pain Research Coordinating Committee in concert with the Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force, and in accordance with the National Pain Strategy, the Federal Pain Research Strategy, and the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2016–2020, the latter which calls for the relative burdens of individual diseases and medical disorders to be regarded as crucial considerations in balancing the priorities of the Federal research portfolio.

(c) FUNDING.—Funds shall be available to carry out this section from funds otherwise available to the NIH.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH AND NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 365 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 365) designating February 2016 as “American Heart Month” and February 5, 2016, as “National Wear Red Day.”

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 365) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of February 8, 2016, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 379, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 379) celebrating Black History Month.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 379) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the en bloc consideration of Calendar Nos. 468 through 471 and all nominations on the Secretary's desk; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Robert S. Williams

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Brook J. Leonard

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Michael A. Guetlein

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Steven L. Basham
Brig. Gen. Carl A. Buhler
Brig. Gen. James C. Dawkins, Jr.
Brig. Gen. Dawn M. Dunlop
Brig. Gen. Albert M. Elton, II
Brig. Gen. Michael A. Fantini
Brig. Gen. Cedric D. George
Brig. Gen. Patrick C. Higby
Brig. Gen. Mark K. Johnson
Brig. Gen. Brian T. Kelly
Brig. Gen. Brian M. Killough
Brig. Gen. Scott A. Kindsvater
Brig. Gen. Donald E. Kirkland
Brig. Gen. Robert D. LaBrutta
Brig. Gen. Russell A. Mack
Brig. Gen. Charles L. Moore, Jr.
Brig. Gen. Mary F. O'Brien
Brig. Gen. John T. Quintas
Brig. Gen. Duke Z. Richardson
Brig. Gen. Robert J. Skinner
Brig. Gen. Bradley D. Spacy
Brig. Gen. Ferdinand B. Stoss
Brig. Gen. Jeffrey B. Taliaferro
Brig. Gen. Christopher P. Weggeman
Brig. Gen. Stephen N. Whiting
Brig. Gen. John M. Wood

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN1065 AIR FORCE nominations (19) beginning ERIC R. BAUGH, JR., and ending JEANLUC G. C. NIEL, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 11, 2016.

PN1066 AIR FORCE nominations (25) beginning BRIAN J. ALENT, and ending BRYAN A. WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 11, 2016.

PN1096 AIR FORCE nomination of Khurram A. Khan, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1097 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning BRUCE E. STERNKE, and ending JEFFREY S. WOOLFORD, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1098 AIR FORCE nominations (7) beginning MARY E. CLARK, and ending JAMES A. JERNIGAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1099 AIR FORCE nomination of Margaret C. Martin, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1100 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning GREGORY J. MALONE, and ending GREGORY K. RICHERT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

IN THE ARMY

PN1073 ARMY nomination of Ricardo O. Morales, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 11, 2016.

PN1101 ARMY nomination of Christopher W. Wendland, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1103 ARMY nomination of Michael J. Mulcahy, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1104 ARMY nomination of Kelly K. Greenhaw, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1106 ARMY nominations (4) beginning GEORGE L. BARTON, and ending RICHARD A. WHOLEY, which nominations were re-

ceived by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1108 ARMY nomination of Nicholas H. Gist, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1110 ARMY nominations (86) beginning MATTHEW J. AIESI, and ending JASON D. YOUNG, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1140 ARMY nomination of D012199, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 1, 2016.

PN1142 ARMY nomination of James C. Sullivan, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 1, 2016.

PN1143 ARMY nomination of Mark R. Biehl, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 1, 2016.

PN1144 ARMY nominations (5) beginning RYAN P. BRENNAN, and ending PAUL E. PATTERSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 1, 2016.

PN1145 ARMY nominations (26) beginning SCOTT F. BARTLETT, and ending KENNETH G. VERBONCOEUR, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 1, 2016.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

PN1115 MARINE CORPS nomination of Lucas M. Chesla, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1116 MARINE CORPS nomination of Jaime A. Ibarra, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1118 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning CURTIS J. SMITH, and ending BRYAN E. STOTTS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1119 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning ALLEN L. LEWIS, and ending DAVID STEVENS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1120 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning MICHAEL J. MALONE, and ending MICHAEL C. ROGERS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1121 MARINE CORPS nomination of Conrad G. Alston, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1122 MARINE CORPS nomination of James C. Rose, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1124 MARINE CORPS nomination of Shawn A. Harris, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1125 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning DAVID F. HUNLEY, and ending ARLIE L. MILLER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1127 MARINE CORPS nominations (5) beginning MICHAEL J. BARRIBALL, and ending JOHN V. RUSSELL, IV, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1128 MARINE CORPS nominations (3) beginning JAMEEL A. ALI, and ending

AMBROSIO V. PANTOJA, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1131 MARINE CORPS nominations (3) beginning ISAAC RODRIGUEZ, and ending BRIAN G. WISNESKI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1132 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning KEITH D. BURGESS, and ending KEITH J. LUZBETAK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1133 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning CHRISTOPHER W. BENSON, and ending SHELTON WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1134 MARINE CORPS nominations (3) beginning KEVIN L. FREIBURGER, and ending JASON H. PERRY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1135 MARINE CORPS nominations (5) beginning CHARLES W. DEMLING, III, and ending GLEN F. TEDTAOTAO, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

IN THE NAVY

PN1112 NAVY nomination of Kielly A. Andrews, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1113 NAVY nominations (2) beginning JEFFREY C. CHAO, and ending JOSEPH A. MOORE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1114 NAVY nomination of Erik J. Kjellgren, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2016

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, March 1; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 524, postcloture; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings; finally, that all time during recess or adjournment of the Senate count postcloture on the motion to proceed to S. 524.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come be-

fore the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator WYDEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oregon.

OPIOID ADDICTION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, tonight the Senate voted to turn its attention to the issue of opioid addiction. Clearly, what we know now is that opioid addiction has carved a path of destruction across America—a path of destruction from Medford, OR, to Manchester, NH.

During a number of community forums I held across my State just a few days ago, we talked about how we are going to grapple with this great challenge and what it is going to take to really turn the problem around.

My home State has the dubious distinction of ranking fourth worst for abuse and misuse of opioids in America. In my State, citizens made it very clear: They are not going to accept being fourth worst.

I know from talking with many of my colleagues that a whole host of States are dealing with this challenge, and what I have been struck by is how opioid addiction keeps manifesting itself in ways we certainly wouldn't have known about even 10 or 15 years ago.

At home in Oregon, I was particularly struck with parents who told me about high school athletes struggling with addiction to opioids. When I played basketball, dreaming of playing in the NBA, there was never any talk in the locker room about opioids. Now the next generation of young athletes seems to be getting caught up in this. If they have an injury, young people get down when they are not able to play sports. They get depressed. Maybe they go to a party. Maybe it starts with some alcohol. Maybe it starts with a prescription. But all of a sudden, it mushrooms and grows. This is what parents were telling me at home, and it is clear that Congress cannot sit on the side lines while the opioid addiction problem continues to mushroom.

In the coming years, Medicare and Medicaid are expected to account for over a third of substance abuse-related spending. We are talking about billions of dollars each year. As the ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee, which is required to pay for these bedrock health programs, I want to talk just for a little bit tonight about the critical role these programs are going to play in stemming the tide of opioid abuse.

I would like to begin by saying that it is my view that the American people are paying for a distorted set of priorities. Our people are getting hooked on opioids, there is not enough treatment,

and vigorous enforcement is falling short. That, in my view, is a trifecta of misplaced priorities. And while it is not all going to be done this week, beginning this week the Congress has the opportunity to develop fresh policies that will begin to right the ship.

Last week the Senate Finance Committee held a hearing to discuss the opioid crisis. As I listened to the debate, there was a sense that policymakers are sort of lined up to choose between two sides. One is tough enforcement, which means cracking down on pill mills, fraudsters bilking Medicare and Medicaid with unneeded prescriptions, and unscrupulous abusers who doctor shop for their next bottle of pills. Then there is another side that believes there should be more focus on social services. My own view is that what is needed is a better approach that includes three priorities: more prevention, better treatment, and, yes, tougher enforcement. True success is going to require that all three work in tandem.

When it comes to preventing addiction, any discussion has to include how these drugs are prescribed in the first place. I have come to feel, as I got around Oregon and I listened to the testimony in the Finance Committee here recently, what has happened is America, for the last 15 or so years, has been on a prescription pendulum, where doctors were once criticized for not treating pain aggressively enough, today they seem to be criticized for prescribing too many opioids to manage pain.

In my view, our challenge is to work on a bipartisan basis to get this balance right. Of course we want our people to have an opportunity for science-based pain management, and we also don't want indiscriminate prescribing of opioids. It is about getting the balance right with respect to this prescription pendulum that our country has been on for the last 15 or 20 years.

I am pleased the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is breaking new ground with their guidelines for prescribing opioids. If successful, I believe they could provide a meaningful reduction in overprescribing. I have also been concerned about the influence opioid manufacturers have on prescribing practices. So I have sent to the ranking Democrat on the Finance Committee an inquiry to Secretary Burwell to ensure that any potential conflicts of interest have been properly disclosed for members of government panels who are evaluating the Centers for Disease Control guidelines as a result of funding they receive from drug manufacturers.

Our physicians ought to have the best information on prescribing these powerful drugs without undue influence from the companies that are manufacturing. In my view, a key piece of solving the opioid addiction puzzle has

to be prompt and effective treatment of those who are dealing with an addiction to opioids.

The Finance Committee had three witnesses last week: a witness who was chosen by our distinguished chairman, Senator HATCH, a witness I chose, and an expert who was well thought of by all sides. The question was, How do you solve this opioid addiction challenge if you just restrict access to opioids?

I personally believe that kind of enforcement regime should be part of a solution, and I support that, but if all you do is restrict access to opioids, each of these experts—the one chosen by Chairman HATCH, the one I chose, independent expert, all of them said if all you do is restrict access to opioids, the addiction does not go away. The addiction doesn't just magically disappear.

I hope we can emphasize this as the Senate begins our debate. Any lasting solution is going to have to have enforcement, which this bill focuses on, but it is also going to have to have treatment and prevention. We are going to have to improve access to addiction treatment and mental health services.

I know the distinguished President of the Senate, like my State, has a lot of rural communities, and it is going to be particularly important to ensure that they are served. I think the distinguished President of the Senate knows it is not a surprise that some of the rural communities have some of the highest rates of abuse and opiate overdose in the country.

Mental health treatment for addiction certainly has gotten short shrift for too long. It is too important to have that kind of policy, and it is high time for a change. For example, Congress ought to also be taking a look at what is called the IMD exclusion, an out-of-date policy from the 1960s that says services like rehab or some emergency mental health stay in an inpatient setting can't be covered by Medicaid. That is a big policy change. I think it is important that we debate it, and I think we all understand finding the vast sums needed for those services would be a unique challenge.

Like so many other important issues, at the end of the day, this requires that our Congress make some tough choices. Yet if prevention and treatment are not locked in upfront, we ought to realize that if those are our choices, to not give adequate emphasis to prevention and treatment, the overall bill is going to come in even higher—pregnant mothers giving birth to opioid-dependent babies, EMTs and emergency rooms dealing with overdose calls every night, county jails taking the place of needed substance abuse treatment, able-bodied adults in the streets instead of working in the private sector at a family wage job. America's tax dollars ought to be spent more wisely.

So as we begin this debate, we begin the debate by tackling the opioid scourge that has carved the path of destruction, a path of destruction from one end of the country to another.

The Senate has to find the right mix between prevention, treatment, and enforcement. It is going to be that kind of strategy, a fresh strategy where prevention, treatment, and enforcement work in tandem. That is going to make a real difference for our families and our communities struggling to heal.

I hope those who may have followed this speech will recognize that I haven't talked about Democrats and Republicans. I have been talking about a set of approaches we can all work on together. In fact, all three of the witnesses who were before the Finance Committee made it clear that you had to have those three approaches—prevention, treatment, and enforcement—work in tandem if you want to solve the problem.

I think it is important Democrats and Republicans recognize what those experts and others have said is going to be necessary to help our families and communities across this country heal. We can do it in a bipartisan fashion. I am committed to working in just that manner.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator withhold his request?

Mr. WYDEN. Yes.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:59 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 1, 2016, at 10:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate February 29, 2016:

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. ROBERT S. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. BROOK J. LEONARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. MICHAEL A. GUETLEIN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. STEVEN L. BASHAM

BRIG. GEN. CARL A. BUHLER

BRIG. GEN. JAMES C. DAWKINS, JR.

BRIG. GEN. DAWN M. DUNLOP
BRIG. GEN. ALBERT M. ELTON II
BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL A. FANTINI
BRIG. GEN. CEDRIC D. GEORGE
BRIG. GEN. PATRICK C. HIGBY
BRIG. GEN. MARK K. JOHNSON
BRIG. GEN. BRIAN T. KELLY
BRIG. GEN. BRIAN M. KILLOUGH
BRIG. GEN. SCOTT A. KINDSVATER
BRIG. GEN. DONALD E. KIRKLAND
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT D. LABRUTTA
BRIG. GEN. RUSSELL A. MACK
BRIG. GEN. CHARLES L. MOORE, JR.
BRIG. GEN. MARY F. O'BRIEN
BRIG. GEN. JOHN T. QUINTAS
BRIG. GEN. DUKE Z. RICHARDSON
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT J. SKINNER
BRIG. GEN. BRADLEY D. SPACY
BRIG. GEN. FERDINAND B. STOSS
BRIG. GEN. JEFFREY B. TALIAFERRO
BRIG. GEN. CHRISTOPHER P. WEGGEMAN
BRIG. GEN. STEPHEN N. WHITING
BRIG. GEN. JOHN M. WOOD

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ERIC R. BAUGH, JR. AND ENDING WITH JEANLUC G. C. NIEL, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 11, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH BRIAN J. ALENT AND ENDING WITH BRYAN A. WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 11, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF KHURRAM A. KHAN, TO BE MAJOR.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH BRUCE E. STERNKE AND ENDING WITH JEFFREY S. WOOLFORD, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MARY E. CLARK AND ENDING WITH JAMES A. JERNIGAN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF MARGARET C. MARTIN, TO BE COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH GREGORY J. MALONE AND ENDING WITH GREGORY K. RICHERT, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATION OF RICARDO O. MORALES, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF CHRISTOPHER W. WENDLAND, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF MICHAEL J. MULCAHY, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF KELLY K. GREENHAW, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH GEORGE L. BARTON AND ENDING WITH RICHARD A. WHOLEY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF NICHOLAS H. GIST, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MATTHEW J. AIESI AND ENDING WITH JASON D. YOUNG, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF D012199, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF JAMES C. SULLIVAN, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF MARK R. BIEHL, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH RYAN P. BRENNAN AND ENDING WITH PAUL E. PATTERSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 1, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH SCOTT F. BARTLETT AND ENDING WITH KENNETH G. VERBONCOEUR, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 1, 2016.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF LUCAS M. CHESLA, TO BE MAJOR.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF JAIME A. IBARRA, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CURTIS J. SMITH AND ENDING WITH BRYAN E. STOTTS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ALLEN L. LEWIS AND ENDING WITH DAVID STEVENS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MICHAEL J. MALONE AND ENDING WITH MICHAEL C. ROGERS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF CONRAD G. ALSTON, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF JAMES C. ROSE, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF SHAWN A. HARRIS, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DAVID F. HUNLEY AND ENDING WITH ARLIE L. MILLER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MICHAEL J. BARRIBALL AND ENDING WITH JOHN V. RUSSELL IV, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JAMEEL A. ALI AND ENDING WITH AMBROSIO V. PANTOJA, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ISAAC RODRIGUEZ AND ENDING WITH BRIAN G. WISNESKI, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KEITH D. BURGESS AND ENDING WITH KEITH J. LUZBETAK, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHRISTOPHER W. BENSON AND ENDING WITH SHELTON WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KEVIN L. FREIBURGER AND ENDING WITH JASON H. PERRY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE

AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHARLES W. DEMLING III AND ENDING WITH GLEN F. TEDTAOTAO, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

IN THE NAVY

NAVY NOMINATION OF KIELLY A. ANDREWS, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JEFFREY C. CHAO AND ENDING WITH JOSEPH A. MOORE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

NAVY NOMINATION OF ERIK J. KJELLGREN, TO BE COMMANDER.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Monday, February 29, 2016

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 29, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MAC THORNBERRY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

WE MUST UPDATE OUR WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, every day we are reminded by current events of how essential water and sanitation are to our very existence, whether it is Flint, Michigan, droughts in California, or the challenges of safe drinking water and sanitation for underdeveloped countries. This dominates the news and is at the root of an increasing number of conflicts, which will become only more serious.

Water policy is one of the most critical areas that this Congress ought to be able to address on a bipartisan basis. The facts are stark, opportunities vivid, and public support is strong.

That is why I have spent a great deal of time focusing on issues of water and sanitation since I first came to Congress. Legislation for international water and sanitation is critical not just for humanitarian reasons, but to protect the environment. It helps avoid conflict within societies and between nations because of water scarcity or shared river basins.

I have worked on legislation reforming flood insurance, rewriting the Corps of Engineers' outdated principles and guidelines that should inform their practices on water infrastructure and environmental management, and I have worked for a decade on the creation of a water trust fund. Unlike surface transportation, which has a highway trust fund and a source of revenue, the Federal Government has no similar mechanism for water and sanitation.

The status of our water infrastructure is appalling and getting worse, while support from the Federal Government has been in decline. In fact, there has been a slow, steady retreat on water infrastructure spending since the Carter administration.

The American Society of Civil Engineers has rated our water infrastructure a D. We have almost 170,000 drinking water systems around the country. While the useful life of pipes can be sometimes up to 100 years, we have facilities that date back to the 1800s.

A water main breaks every 2 minutes. The American Water Works Association anticipates the need of a trillion dollars, over the next 25 years, to replace the most critical of more than a million miles of pipe, while congressional appropriations have declined to less than \$1.5 billion a year, a tiny fraction of our needs.

The total mileage of sewer mains in the United States is unknown, but it is probably between 700,000 and 800,000 miles. Many of these pipes were installed right after World War II and are approaching the end of their useful life. The sewer systems with aging pipes and inadequate capacity mean almost a trillion gallons of untreated sewage each year that is discharged into our waterways.

The total needs over the next 20 years for both sewer and water are almost beyond our comprehension, but the current spending, it is clear, is completely inadequate. The public and the scientists are finding more problems, which will argue for even higher standards.

That is why I have developed bipartisan legislation for the creation of a water trust fund. I have been working on this for years with different bipartisan partners. Given that there appears to be little appetite now in Congress for any tax or fee increase, I have adjusted the bill so that the revenue comes from voluntary participation by companies that have a keen interest in clean drinking water and adequate sanitation—indeed, their very business depends on it.

They would be able, for a tiny fee, to voluntarily identify as being supportive of the water trust fund. A little seal of approval would raise several billion dollars a year. This could be used to deal with the problems of low-income ratepayers that make it hard for overall rates to be increased and to leverage more investment at a time of remarkably low costs of borrowing. We could have significant investment to deal with some of our greatest problems.

This is by no means the entire answer to the looming crisis, but we shouldn't wait for the next Flint or the problems in drought-stricken California or some other municipal breakdown. We should start now.

I urge people to cosponsor my bipartisan water trust fund legislation, H.R. 4468. Let's get started.

OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, on December 22, 2015, Zachary Paul-Allen Greenough, a veteran of the U.S. Army, lost his life to an accidental overdose of heroin in the city of West Haven, Connecticut.

The press accounts after his death, unfortunately, tell a story that is far too common in this country. During the time that he served in the Army, he suffered an injury, which caused great pain and resulted in the prescription of painkillers. That pathway started, which led to an opioid addiction and, unfortunately, him losing his life on December 22 to an overdose of heroin.

The Centers for Disease Control tells us that, in 2014, 27,000 Americans suffered accidental overdose deaths across the country, a drastic increase from 2013. This trend is happening again all across the country.

In the State of Connecticut, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner reported its statistics for 2015, which showed that 723 individuals lost their life, including Mr. Greenough, to overdoses of heroin and opioids. Again, this is a trend line which shows that it was a 20 percent increase from the year before.

We are in the midst right now of a problem that is sweeping across the country, that is affecting States that are Republican and Democrat, blue and red, and we as a Nation need to get all

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

hands on deck and come to grips with it.

President Obama, in his budget that he submitted a few weeks ago, made a promising start. He proposed \$1.1 billion in new funding to law enforcement, to folks who are involved in treatment, whether it is detox centers or treatment programs, or whether it is programs for education and prevention; because we know, from talking to people in the field, you need to get early and quickly to young people to make sure that they understand that this pathway, which has exploded across the country, is something that people need to know about and to avoid.

In New London, Connecticut, over the course of 2 days in February, we had a summit involving law enforcement, healthcare providers, and others. We had the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy from the White House, Michael Botticelli, come in. Again, the good news is that there is a lot of good work that is being done at the local level—not just in New London County, Connecticut, but all across the country—where people understand that this is a problem that requires everyone working together in all those factions and all those sectors.

But the fact of the matter is that President Obama's proposal is not until 2017. We need help now. We need to get an emergency appropriation, just as we would if there were a hurricane or an earthquake or a wildfire that was sweeping across different regions of this country.

We need to understand that emergency appropriations for our military, which the Speaker and I will be voting on together in the Committee on Armed Services, that this problem which is affecting thousands of families and resulting in fatalities for people, again, who follow a pathway that, through legally prescribed medications, needs to be addressed, and we need to get those resources out to people as soon as possible.

I have a bill in the House that tracks a bill sponsored by Senator SHAHEEN in New Hampshire, another State that has been hit hard by the problem. The bill provides \$600 million of emergency assistance—again allocated to police, providers, education, and prevention—and this week they will begin consideration in the U.S. Senate. It has been endorsed by law enforcement groups. It has been endorsed by people who are in the field dealing with this problem, who are dealing with families who can't get beds in detox centers, who can't get beds in treatment facilities, with police departments that are trying to get Narcan, a miracle drug, so that they can save lives. But the fact of the matter is we need everybody involved, particularly the Congress, to help communities solve this problem.

Last week the National Governors Association—Republicans and Demo-

crats—convened in Washington, D.C., to talk about their priorities. This emergency funding was their number one request to Congress because they are the ones on the front lines who are being confronted and forced to deal with this issue.

We have an opportunity to listen to the people who know what they are talking about, to just drain away the politics and the partisanship and understand that veterans, people living in rural communities, people living in suburban communities, people living in urban areas of our country are getting hit with this problem. Just like any other disaster, we as a Nation need to come together to address it now and not wait for 2017—now—to pass this measure.

We can do more in terms of reforming the protocols, as the VA and DOD and the civilian healthcare sector, frankly, have gone too far in terms of overprescribing. We can do more about the disposal of drugs. Walgreens, to their credit, has set up disposal sites all across the country where people can come in with excess opioids to get rid of them safely.

The fact of the matter is that the willingness is there but the resources are not to deal with a problem of this magnitude. Let's pass the Shaheen-Courtney measure. Let's get emergency funding to the folks who need that help and who are ready. They are on standby. They are there to help those families and those individuals who need the help that we, as Americans, should come together and support.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Merciful Lord, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

At the beginning of a new workweek, we use this moment to be reminded of Your presence and to tap the resources needed by the Members of this people's House to do their work as well as it can be done. May they be led by Your Holy spirit in the decisions they make.

May their faith in You deliver them from tensions that might tear the House apart and from worries that might wear them out.

All this day and through the week, may they do their best to find solutions to pressing issues facing our Nation. Please hasten the day when justice and love shall dwell in the hearts of all peoples and rule the affairs of the nations of Earth.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

SOUTH CAROLINA RECOGNIZED AS A TOP EXPORTER

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful today to recognize the State of South Carolina being named by Foreign Direct Investment magazine for its superior achievement in foreign direct investment.

South Carolina was identified for leading the Nation in foreign direct investment and also being the top State for expansion. The probusiness climate, superior workforce being trained by technical colleges, and quality of life make South Carolina the natural choice for any business looking to locate or expand, creating jobs, as done by Dr. Susan Windsor of Aiken Technical College.

In 2015, South Carolina was also recognized for their record-breaking total export sales. It was the top Southeastern State.

For the second consecutive year, the State was the top exporter in America for cars and tires. It is home to BMW, Volvo, Michelin, Bridgestone, Boeing, and more. Many of these businesses are located in the Second District, and I am honored to serve them in Congress.

I appreciate Governor Nikki Haley, Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt, along with the State legislative leaders, Senate President Hugh Leatherman and Speaker Jay Lucas, and the

State's Chamber of Commerce and economic development organizations, who work tirelessly to create job opportunities.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3:45 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1545

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia) at 3 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

MODERNIZATION OF TERMS RELATING TO MINORITIES

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4238) to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4238

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. MODERNIZATION OF TERMS RELATING TO MINORITIES.

(a) OFFICE OF MINORITY ECONOMIC IMPACT.—Section 211(f)(1) of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7141(f)(1)) is amended by striking “a Negro, Puerto Rican, American Indian, Eskimo, Oriental, or Aleut or is a Spanish speaking individual of Spanish descent” and inserting “Asian American, Native Hawaiian, a Pacific Islander, African American, Hispanic, Puerto Rican, Native American, or an Alaska Native”.

(b) MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISES.—Section 106(f)(2) of the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 (42 U.S.C. 6705(f)(2)) is amended by striking “Negroes, Spanish-speaking, Orientals, Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts” and inserting “Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific

Islanders, African American, Hispanic, Native American, or Alaska Natives”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to consider H.R. 4238, a bill to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms in the original legislation relating to minorities.

This bill replaces offensive terms relating to minorities found in decades-old energy legislation. I want to thank GRACE MENG for being the lead on this commonsense piece of legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague from the great State of New York (Ms. MENG) for her work in bringing forth H.R. 4238, a bill to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities.

Mr. Speaker, this commonsense bill received unanimous bipartisan support when it came before both the Energy and Power Subcommittee, on which I serve as the ranking member, and when it came before the full Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. Speaker, words matter. This bill strikes outdated, offensive terms related to minorities out of the Federal statute that can be found in the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976.

Mr. Speaker, this is a straightforward bill that helps bring these statutes up to modern times and into the 21st century, at least as far as getting rid of these offensive terms is concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MENG).

Ms. MENG. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that H.R. 4238 has made it to the House floor today.

As you know, this bill will strike the term “Oriental” from Federal law in

the last two places it is used to refer to a person. This legislation is long overdue, and I am thankful for your consideration and, I hope, passage of it.

I would like to thank my colleague and friend, Representative ED ROYCE, for being an original author of this bill with me, as well as every member of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus.

I would also like to thank Representative BUTTERFIELD and Representative SANCHEZ, chairs of the Congressional Black Caucus and Congressional Hispanic Caucus, respectively, for cosponsoring this legislation.

I would also like to personally thank Chairman UPTON and Ranking Member PALLONE for shepherding this legislation through the Energy and Commerce Committee, as well as Representatives WHITFIELD and RUSH, who moved it through the Energy and Power Subcommittee.

We are all aware that there are chapters of American history that are not perfect. This very body, for example, once found it appropriate to pass laws such as the Chinese Exclusion Act and the Geary Act. But we also found it appropriate to repeal them. Times change, what is acceptable changes, and this Congress more often than not yields to that change.

Toward that end, the time has come to repeal certain terms from Federal law that many in the Asian American community would find offensive. In the same way I would not want either of my children to be referred to as “Orientals” by their teachers at school, I hope we can agree that such terms no longer deserve a place in Federal law.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing this legislation to the floor for a vote today. I urge all of my colleagues to support this important measure.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank once again Ms. GRACE MENG for bringing this important issue to the attention of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

I would urge all Members to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of H.R. 4238, which was introduced by my colleague, the gentlewoman from New York, Representative MENG.

Racism and discrimination have no place in America today. We are a nation of immigrants that is proud of its diversity.

Despite our society's progression and growth over the last 100 years, the Federal Code still contains language on ethnicity that is antiquated, and, quite frankly, inappropriate. For example, the term “Orientals” is offensive, especially so when referring to the vibrant Asian American community. Using this term in federal law lends it a legitimacy it doesn't deserve.

I strongly believe that when we get the chance, we should correct the mistakes of the

past. This bill goes a long way towards correcting our mistakes.

H.R. 4238 eliminates outdated, disrespectful terms from federal law and replaces them with terms, such as "Asian American," "Alaska Natives," and "Hispanic," that are more appropriate for our times and in keeping with our values.

Last year, Representative MENG and I successfully amended H.R. 8 to strike these derogatory terms, which did not move in the Senate. As an original cosponsor of this standalone bill, I'm very happy that she and I are closer to having this language signed into law and these terms removed for good.

Deleting inappropriate terms from the U.S. Code is a simple, yet important, way of demonstrating respect for our Nation's diversity.

I strongly support this bill and urge my colleagues in the House to vote in support of it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4238.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EPS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2016

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4444) to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices designed to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination from energy conservation standards for external power supplies, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4444

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "EPS Improvement Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. APPLICATION OF ENERGY CONSERVATION STANDARDS TO CERTAIN EXTERNAL POWER SUPPLIES.

(a) DEFINITION OF EXTERNAL POWER SUPPLY.—Section 321(36)(A) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6291(36)(A)) is amended—

(1) by striking the subparagraph designation and all that follows through "The term" and inserting the following:

"(A) EXTERNAL POWER SUPPLY.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—The term"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(ii) EXCLUSION.—The term 'external power supply' does not include a power supply circuit, driver, or device that is designed exclusively to be connected to, and power—

"(I) light-emitting diodes providing illumination;

"(II) organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination; or

"(III) ceiling fans using direct current motors.".

(b) STANDARDS FOR LIGHTING POWER SUPPLY CIRCUITS.—

(1) DEFINITION.—Section 340(2)(B) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6311(2)(B)) is amended by striking clause (v) and inserting the following:

"(v) electric lights and lighting power supply circuits;".

(2) ENERGY CONSERVATION STANDARD FOR CERTAIN EQUIPMENT.—Section 342 of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6313) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(g) LIGHTING POWER SUPPLY CIRCUITS.—If the Secretary, acting pursuant to section 341(b), includes as covered equipment solid state lighting power supply circuits, drivers, or devices described in section 321(36)(A)(ii), the Secretary may prescribe under this part, not earlier than 1 year after the date on which a test procedure has been prescribed, an energy conservation standard for such equipment.".

(c) TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.—

(1) Section 321(6)(B) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6291(6)(B)) is amended by striking "(19)" and inserting "(20)".

(2) Section 324 of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6294) is amended by striking "(19)" each place it appears in each of subsections (a)(3), (b)(1)(B), (b)(3), and (b)(5) and inserting "(20)".

(3) Section 325(1) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6295(1)) is amended by striking "paragraph (19)" each place it appears and inserting "paragraph (20)".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring to the floor today H.R. 4444, the EPS Improvement Act of 2016.

I want to give special thanks to our colleagues, RENEE ELLMERS of North Carolina, DIANA DEGETTE of Colorado, MIKE POMPEO of Kansas, DORIS MATSUI of California, and Mr. CHARLES DENT of Pennsylvania, for their work on this piece of legislation.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. ELLMERS).

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina. I thank the chairman for yielding on this specific issue and for leading our subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4444, the EPS Improvement Act of 2016. This bipartisan bill would provide certainty to North Carolina lighting manufacturers that provide over 3,000 jobs in my home State. H.R. 4444 will resolve the underlying issues of the Department of Energy External Power Supply rule.

In 2005, Congress directed the Department of Energy to develop energy efficiency standards for external power supplies. The DOE initially stated that products intended to be covered by these standards "convert household electric current into DC or lower voltage AC to operate consumer products such as a laptop computer or a smartphone."

Years after the passage of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, new technologies such as OLED and LED drivers were introduced into the marketplace. While the development of these drivers increased energy efficiency, it has also caused uncertainty in the manufacturing sector. This is because DOE roped in drivers as products to also be covered under the EPS rule.

DOE is now attempting to regulate a product that was not in the marketplace at the time Congress initially directed the Department to set external power supply standards. Both manufacturers and the energy efficiency community agree that this was and is not the intent of Congress.

DOE has continued with this misguided rule despite the distinct difference in the design and use of LED drivers to that of the design and use of EPS. One example demonstrating the difference is that EPS uses single-stage power conversion while LED drivers use a two-stage power conversion.

Thankfully, H.R. 4444 is a promanufacturing, proconsumer piece of legislation that resolves this problem. It will exclude certain technologies from being included in other broad rulemakings.

I would like to thank my colleagues, Representatives DEGETTE, POMPEO, MATSUI, and DENT for their leadership on this important issue.

Additionally, I would like to thank Chairman WHITFIELD and the Energy and Power Subcommittee staff for their time and efforts in advancing this legislation.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee—Mrs. ELLMERS and Ms. DEGETTE, in particular—as well as all of my other colleagues who worked on H.R. 4444, the EPS Improvement Act of 2016.

This bipartisan piece of legislation would exclude the drivers that power light-emitting diodes, commonly known as LEDs, and direct-current ceiling fans from DOE's energy conservation standards for external power supplies.

Mr. Speaker, in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Congress directed DOE to establish conservation standards for external power supplies used to convert household electric current into DC current or lower voltage AC current.

At the time, external power supplies were almost exclusively the kind of wall chargers used to power laptops, cell phones, and other similar consumer devices.

□ 1600

Mr. Speaker, in 2005, LED lighting was in its infancy stages. LED lamps were not even on the market then, nor were they available in 2007, when Congress amended the definition of external power supply in the Energy Independence Act of 2007.

However, in just over a decade, Mr. Speaker, LED and other high-efficiency, solid-state lighting products have become widely available. These lights provide significant energy-efficiency cost savings to consumers when compared with traditional light bulbs.

LEDs get swept up in the energy conservation standards for external power supplies because they are powered by solid-state lighting drivers that bear superficial similarities to the kind of chargers that Congress directed DOE to set standards for.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one might ask, if these LEDs are so efficient, how is it that their drivers cannot meet the energy conservation standards for external power supplies?

Well, this is simply because in order to comply with the standards, an external power supply must be tested when it is disconnected from the object it is powering.

For example, Mr. Speaker, a laptop power supply would have to be tested when it is disconnected from the laptop. LED drivers are not designed to operate when disconnected from LEDs, and so they cannot be tested in the same way as other external power supplies.

This means that even though they are indeed very energy efficient, they cannot comply with the standards. The same is true of a new generation of energy-efficient ceiling fans.

Mr. Speaker, to be sure, this legislation still holds these devices accountable to energy and conservation standards. H.R. 4444 makes DOE's authority to prescribe separate energy and conservation standards for LED drivers explicit.

Ceiling fans with the direct current motors would still be required to meet DOE energy conservation standards for ceiling fans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the bill before us.

I ask unanimous consent to yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE), and that she may control that time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers other than myself, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to add my thanks to those of my colleague, Mrs. ELLMERS. I want to also thank Chairman UPTON, Ranking Member PALLONE. I want to thank Chairman WHITFIELD and Ranking Member RUSH, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. DENT, and Mrs. CAPPS, all for supporting this important measure.

This bill updates the DOE's energy conservation standards to keep with the innovations that have taken place over the last decade in household and commercial lighting.

While the latest lighting may look similar on the exterior, it actually runs on new and exciting technology. Frankly, as you have heard from the other speakers, we need to update our regulatory scheme to keep these innovations going.

Specifically, when the Energy and Commerce Committee wrote the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 2005, it directed the Department of Energy to develop a conservation standard for external power supply products.

Because of the inadvertently broad definition we created for external power supplies, emerging LED drivers were swept up into a standard that, as you have heard so eloquently from the other speakers, just doesn't make any sense.

That means that, although LED drivers are highly energy-efficient, they can't meet the EPS conservation standard, and their ability to compete in the competitive lighting market is now an open question.

Now, this might seem like a technicality, but in the real world, this bill is vitally important. Just last week, for example, General Electric and JPMorgan Chase rang the closing bell at the New York Stock Exchange to announce a deal for the world's largest single-order installation of LED lighting.

GE will install LED lighting at 5,000 JPMorgan Chase bank branches this year, which will cut the bank's lighting bill in half. But unless we pass this bill quickly, the new lighting at JPMorgan Chase locations technically won't meet basic efficiency standards.

It is urgent that we pass this bill now and that we pass it quickly through the other body because these new efficiency standards are going into effect. And while everybody agrees LED lighting is important, we are still coming against the letter of the law.

And so that is why I want to thank everybody on both sides of the aisle for realizing how incredibly important this is.

By passing the EPS Improvement Act of 2016, we will let the LED light-

ing revolution continue. We will help lower energy prices for every American business and household, and will continue our goal of more and more efficient energy.

Mr. Speaker, if my friend across the aisle still has no speakers, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

Mrs. CAPPS. I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4444. This overdue legislation is critically important to ensure that the innovation and implementation of LED technologies continues.

Our Nation has made great strides toward the production of accessible and affordable clean energy. To continue this momentum, we must do all we can to embrace and support technologies that strive to improve energy efficiency.

In so doing, we must support efforts toward greater energy efficiency by supporting technologies that use fewer resources for the same or better results. This allows us to balance our energy consumption with the need to protect the global environment. And that is exactly what this bill does.

When it comes to the lighting sector, LED technologies are at the forefront of meeting the efficiency demand. This technology is drastically reducing the energy required to provide light in both residential and industrial settings throughout the country and around the world.

While the reach of this technology is amazingly broad, LEDs are incredibly important to my district as well. There is a long history of researching, developing and innovating LEDs technologies in academia, industry, and nonprofits along the central coast of California.

The University of California Santa Barbara continues to lead the way in research to improve upon the light-emitting diodes, or LEDs, as we know them.

Furthermore, UCSB is fortunate to employ one of the leading researchers in the world, Dr. Shuji Nakamura, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for his work on LEDs.

And Cree Lighting, which translates this research into employable technologies has a facility in my district where they are continuing to develop cutting-edge applications for LEDs.

The promise of this technology really is a game changer. In fact, the Institute for Energy Efficiency at UC Santa Barbara has worked with the nonprofit Unite for Light to provide reading lights to people across the world, replacing dangerous kerosene lamps still used in places where electricity is not available with solar charged LED reading lights.

You know, I have one of these little reading lights in my home. They are about 12 inches tall. This is Unite for

Light. Instead of a power cord plugging into the wall, they have two little solar panels at the base.

If you set them in the sunlight during the day, then you have the ability in the evening, then a child in a Third World country, or some person who needs to do work or homework at night, can take this little lamp, reading light, and use it to further their employment, their education until we get the infrastructure in place to do that itself.

So there is no doubt that LEDs are an important technology to change lighting, as we know it, providing an accessible and efficient source of illumination.

H.R. 4444 ensures that the important research and development of LED technologies, such as the activities in my district, will be able to continue and that LEDs will be able to efficiently light the world around us.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, having no other speakers, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank all of those involved in bringing forth this legislation. We are all excited about it.

It does teach each one of us a lesson, though, and that is, sometimes we pass legislation, and we use language a little bit too broad; and the regulatory agencies take that and run. And now we see them trying to regulate something that was not even in existence when the 2005 Energy Policy Act was adopted.

I don't think that many Members of Congress or the American people ever thought that the Department of Energy would be setting efficiency standards for ceiling fans, for microwave ovens, refrigerators.

It reminds me of that Dire Straits song, and I hope you all liked them as much I did, but they had this song entitled "Money for Nothing" and the chicks are free. They talked about the importance of moving microwave ovens, refrigerators, and color TVs.

We find ourselves today living in a world in which everything is so micro-managed, and this is an example of that action. We understand we need regulations, but I am glad that we have a group of Democrats and Republicans coming together with common sense to say to the Department of Energy, hey, we need some balance here.

I would urge passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4444.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ENERGY AND MANUFACTURING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4583) to promote a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4583

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. ENERGY AND MANUFACTURING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Energy (in this Act referred to as the "Secretary") shall prioritize education and training for energy and manufacturing-related jobs in order to increase the number of skilled workers trained to work in energy and manufacturing-related fields when considering awards for existing grant programs, including by—

(1) encouraging State education agencies and local educational agencies to equip students with the skills, mentorships, training, and technical expertise necessary to fill the employment opportunities vital to managing and operating the Nation's energy and manufacturing industries, in collaboration with representatives from the energy and manufacturing industries (including the oil, gas, coal, nuclear, utility, pipeline, renewable, petrochemical, manufacturing, and electrical construction sectors) to identify the areas of highest need in each sector and the skills necessary for a high quality workforce in the following sectors of energy and manufacturing:

(A) Energy efficiency industry, including work in energy efficiency, conservation, weatherization, or retrofitting, or as inspectors or auditors.

(B) Pipeline industry, including work in pipeline construction and maintenance or work as engineers or technical advisors.

(C) Utility industry, including work in the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity and natural gas, such as utility technicians, operators, lineworkers, engineers, scientists, and information technology specialists.

(D) Nuclear industry, including work as scientists, engineers, technicians, mathematicians, or security personnel.

(E) Oil and gas industry, including work as scientists, engineers, technicians, mathematicians, petrochemical engineers, or geologists.

(F) Renewable industry, including work in the development, manufacturing, and production of renewable energy sources (such as solar, hydropower, wind, or geothermal energy).

(G) Coal industry, including work as coal miners, engineers, developers and manufacturers of state-of-the-art coal facilities, technology vendors, coal transportation workers and operators, or mining equipment vendors.

(H) Manufacturing industry, including work as operations technicians, operations

and design in additive manufacturing, 3-D printing, advanced composites, and advanced aluminum and other metal alloys, industrial energy efficiency management systems, including power electronics, and other innovative technologies.

(I) Chemical manufacturing industry, including work in construction (such as welders, pipefitters, and tool and die makers) or as instrument and electrical technicians, machinists, chemical process operators, chemical engineers, quality and safety professionals, and reliability engineers; and

(2) strengthening and more fully engaging Department of Energy programs and labs in carrying out the Department's workforce development initiatives including the Minorities in Energy Initiative.

(b) PROHIBITION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize the Secretary or any other officer or employee of the Federal Government to incentivize, require, or coerce a State, school district, or school to adopt curricula aligned to the skills described in subsection (a).

(c) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall prioritize the education and training of underrepresented groups in energy and manufacturing-related jobs.

(d) CLEARINGHOUSE.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall establish a clearinghouse to—

(1) maintain and update information and resources on training and workforce development programs for energy and manufacturing-related jobs, including job training and workforce development programs available to assist displaced and unemployed energy and manufacturing workers transitioning to new employment; and

(2) provide technical assistance for States, local educational agencies, schools, community colleges, universities (including minority serving institutions), workforce development programs, labor-management organizations, and industry organizations that would like to develop and implement energy and manufacturing-related training programs.

(e) COLLABORATION.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary—

(1) shall collaborate with States, local educational agencies, schools, community colleges, universities (including minority serving institutions), workforce-training organizations, national laboratories, State energy offices, workforce investment boards, and the energy and manufacturing industries;

(2) shall encourage and foster collaboration, mentorships, and partnerships among organizations (including industry, States, local educational agencies, schools, community colleges, workforce-development organizations, and colleges and universities) that currently provide effective job training programs in the energy and manufacturing fields and entities (including States, local educational agencies, schools, community colleges, workforce development programs, and colleges and universities) that seek to establish these types of programs in order to share best practices; and

(3) shall collaborate with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Department of Commerce, the Bureau of the Census, States, and the energy and manufacturing industries to develop a comprehensive and detailed understanding of the energy and manufacturing workforce needs and opportunities by State and by region.

(f) OUTREACH TO MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall—

(1) give special consideration to increasing outreach to minority serving institutions

and Historically Black Colleges and Universities;

(2) make existing resources available through program cross-cutting to minority serving institutions with the objective of increasing the number of skilled minorities and women trained to go into the energy and manufacturing sectors;

(3) encourage industry to improve the opportunities for students of minority serving institutions to participate in industry internships and cooperative work/study programs; and

(4) partner with the Department of Energy laboratories to increase underrepresented groups' participation in internships, fellowships, traineeships, and employment at all Department of Energy laboratories.

(g) **OUTREACH TO DISLOCATED ENERGY AND MANUFACTURING WORKERS.**—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall—

(1) give special consideration to increasing outreach to employers and job trainers preparing dislocated energy and manufacturing workers for in-demand sectors or occupations;

(2) make existing resources available through program cross-cutting to institutions serving dislocated energy and manufacturing workers with the objective of training individuals to re-enter in-demand sectors or occupations;

(3) encourage the energy and manufacturing industries to improve opportunities for dislocated energy and manufacturing workers to participate in career pathways; and

(4) work closely with the energy and manufacturing industries to identify energy and manufacturing operations, such as coal-fired power plants and coal mines, scheduled for closure and to provide early intervention assistance to workers employed at such energy and manufacturing operations by—

(A) partnering with State and local workforce development boards;

(B) giving special consideration to employers and job trainers preparing such workers for in-demand sectors or occupations;

(C) making existing resources available through program cross-cutting to institutions serving such workers with the objective of training them to re-enter in-demand sectors or occupations; and

(D) encouraging the energy and manufacturing industries to improve opportunities for such workers to participate in career pathways.

(h) **ENROLLMENT IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.**—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall work with industry and community-based workforce organizations to help identify candidates, including from underrepresented communities such as minorities, women, and veterans, to enroll in workforce development programs for energy and manufacturing-related jobs.

(i) **PROHIBITION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed as authorizing the creation of a new workforce development program.

(j) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **CAREER PATHWAYS; DISLOCATED WORKER; IN-DEMAND SECTORS OR OCCUPATIONS; LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD; STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD.**—The terms “career pathways”, “dislocated worker”, “in-demand sectors or occupations”, “local workforce development board”, and “State workforce development board” have the meanings given the terms “career pathways”, “dislocated worker”, “in-demand sectors or occupations”, “local board”, and “State board”, respectively, in section 3 of

the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102).

(2) **MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTION.**—The term “minority-serving institution” means an institution of higher education with a designation of one of the following:

(A) Hispanic-serving institution (as defined in 20 U.S.C.1101a(a)(5)).

(B) Tribal College or University (as defined in 20 U.S.C.1059c(b)).

(C) Alaska Native-serving institution or a Native Hawaiian-serving institution (as defined in 20 U.S.C.1059d(b)).

(D) Predominantly Black Institution (as defined in 20 U.S.C.1059e(b)).

(E) Native American-serving nontribal institution (as defined in 20 U.S.C.1059f(b)).

(F) Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institution (as defined in 20 U.S.C.1059g(b)).

SEC. 2. REPORT.

Five years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall publish a comprehensive report to the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on the outlook for energy and manufacturing sectors nationally. The report shall also include a comprehensive summary of energy and manufacturing job creation as a result of the enactment of this Act. The report shall include performance data regarding the number of program participants served, the percentage of participants in competitive integrated employment two quarters and four quarters after program completion, the median income of program participants two quarters and four quarters after program completion, and the percentage of program participants receiving industry-recognized credentials.

SEC. 3. USE OF EXISTING FUNDS.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

□ 1615

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased that we are considering today H.R. 4583, a bill to promote a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce, introduced by my colleagues, Mr. RUSH of Illinois and Mr. HUDSON of North Carolina.

This bill takes important steps to help make training for energy and manufacturing jobs available to women

and minorities as well as veterans and out-of-work coal miners.

I want to give a special word of thanks to Mr. RUSH because he and Mr. HUDSON were working on this legislation. They tried to get it included in the energy act that we passed a few weeks ago, and it didn't quite work out; but I am delighted that we are able to move this bill by itself.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by commending Chairman UPTON, Chairman WHITFIELD, Ranking Member PALLONE, and the committee staff for working with my office to bring the 21st century workforce legislation to the House floor today. I would also publicly acknowledge the leadership of my colleague, Mr. HUDSON of North Carolina, and his staff who played an instrumental role in helping us to get to this very point.

The good faith talks held between my office, the majority and the minority committee staff, and Mr. HUDSON's office have resulted in this bipartisan jobs bill that will go a long way in helping to get our Nation's economy back on track and working for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, this workforce bill before us provides an example of how Congress should function and how Congress should work on behalf of the American people. Here we have bipartisan members of the Energy and Commerce Committee who represent various constituencies from diverse regions of the country and who come from different political persuasions. However, Mr. Speaker, it must be well noted that we were able to put aside our differences and focus our efforts on bringing forth a jobs bill that will benefit all of our Nation's communities and help lift up the entire American economy.

And exactly what does this bill do, Mr. Speaker?

This bill directs the Secretary of Energy to prioritize the training of underrepresented groups, including minorities, women, veterans, as well as displaced and unemployed energy and manufacturing workers, in order to increase the number of skilled candidates trained to work in these same related fields.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will strengthen and more fully engage DOE programs and national laboratories in order to carry out the Department's workforce development initiatives. That includes the Minorities in Energy Initiative that was established 2 years ago, with my encouragement, under Secretary Moniz's leadership.

There will be a clearinghouse of information and resources on training and workforce development programs for energy and manufacturing-related

jobs, State by State and region by region all across our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will help increase outreach to minority-serving institutions to ensure that the wealth of existing resources at DOE are made available to these worthy establishments. It will also provide additional outreach to displaced and unemployed energy and manufacturing workers with the objective of improving the opportunities for these candidates to find employment.

This legislation, Mr. Speaker, will help to develop a skilled labor force, trained to work in a wide array of sectors, including renewables, energy efficiency, oil and gas, coal, nuclear, utility, pipelines, alternative fuels, as well as energy-intensive and advanced manufacturing industries.

Mr. Speaker, one of the challenges that I have heard far too many times from my constituents is of individuals participating in training programs that in many cases do not always lead to actually finding a job. With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, this bill will help industry, help schools, and help community-based workforce development organizations to identify candidates for enrollment into training and apprenticeship programs, with the objective of ensuring that the skills learned are immediately transferable to good-paying jobs and good-paying careers within the energy and manufacturing sectors regionally, nationally, and, indeed, all across this globe.

Mr. Speaker, as you well know, and as all Members in this House know, the energy and manufacturing industries are two of the most critical and fastest growing sectors both domestically as well as internationally. The potential of these two sectors can help bolster the American economy and are also vital to the growing number of people seeking middle class status all across the developing world.

It is important, Mr. Speaker, that we equip our citizens, those who need jobs and those who are out of work, with the skills needed and necessary to meet this growing demand so that we can tap into these tremendous opportunities. This very bill before us today will accomplish that goal.

Why is the 21st century workforce bill so very necessary? Mr. Speaker, just last week, my office had yet another visiting delegation, a meeting this time with an energy company out of the great State of North Carolina, whose representatives informed me that right now, today, as we stand here in this great Chamber today, they have over 1,000 job openings that they cannot fill because they cannot find enough qualified skilled workers.

The 21st century workforce bill will address that difficulty and be a solution to that and many other similar problems all across our country. In fact, Mr. Speaker, my office has been

holding many of these same types of meetings over the past 4 years with a variety of different energy and manufacturing industries that are indeed facing this very same predicament.

At a time when African American and Latino unemployment rates are still too high, when coal workers throughout Appalachia and beyond are finding themselves without work, when too many female heads of household cannot find adequate employment to take care of their families, and when veterans returning home from defending our Nation still cannot find a job, it is a travesty and a shame that eager employers still cannot find the trained workers they need.

Mr. Speaker, this is a commonsense jobs bill that will help to match up trained, qualified candidates with good-paying jobs and careers that will fit them and their families, help lift up their community, help strengthen the energy and manufacturing industry, and will bolster the entire American economy as a whole.

Whether you are a student pursuing your engineering degree at an HBCU or a single mother taking classes at your neighborhood community college, this bill seeks to provide additional opportunity to all those individuals who are out there looking to better themselves and improve the financial situation for their families.

Mr. Speaker, when this bill becomes law and its provisions are implemented, it will help out-of-work coal miners retool and retrain for the jobs of the 21st century. This bill will also help returning veterans use their skills and use their talents to find employment and provide a dignified future for their families.

So, Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank my distinguished colleague from the great State of Michigan, Chairman UPTON; my friend from the great State of Kentucky, Chairman WHITFIELD; Ranking Member PALLONE; my friend from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON); and all my colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee, as well as those who are on the Education and the Workforce Committee who helped bring us to this point today, where we are bringing forward this bill with this focus not only on underserved communities, such as minorities, women, and veterans, but also displaced and unemployed coal miners and out-of-work energy workers in other places.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, when this bill ultimately becomes law, it will go a long way in helping not only communities that look like the one I represent on the south side of Chicago, but every community in every district throughout this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to reiterate once again that there were a lot of people involved in bringing this legislation to the floor. It would not have happened except for the persistence and commitment of Mr. RUSH of Illinois. So I want to thank him again.

I also want to say that every Member of Congress comes to this floor, and we talk about regulations and the impact they have on creating jobs. We talk about uncertainty in tax policies, and we talk about the ability of America to be competitive in the global workplace. We talk about a lot of macro issues. But for men and women out there in the country, like coal miners who are losing jobs because of the policies of this administration, veterans who have extensive leadership skills but can't find good jobs, and minorities who are not trained in the right way, this legislation goes a long way in providing the training that people need to find a good job.

I urge all Members to support this legislation. I want to thank everyone who worked for it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1630

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4583, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMPLIFYING LOCAL EFFORTS TO ROOT OUT TERROR ACT OF 2016

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4401) to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide countering violent extremism training to Department of Homeland Security representatives at State and local fusion centers, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4401

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Amplifying Local Efforts to Root out Terror Act of 2016" or the "ALERT Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM TRAINING.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF TRAINING.—The Secretary of Homeland Security is authorized to provide training for personnel, including Department of Homeland Security personnel, State, local, tribal, and territorial representatives at State and major urban area fusion centers for the purpose of administering

community awareness briefings and related activities in furtherance of the Department's efforts to counter violent extremism, identify and report suspicious activities, and increase awareness of and more quickly identify terrorism threats, including the travel or attempted travel of individuals from the United States to support a foreign terrorist organization (as such term is described in section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189)) abroad.

(b) **COORDINATION.**—To the extent practicable, in providing the training under subsection (a), the Secretary shall coordinate with the heads of other Federal agencies engaged in community outreach related to countering violent extremism and shall also coordinate with such agencies in the administration of related activities, including community awareness briefings.

SEC. 3. COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM ASSESSMENT.

(a) **ASSESSMENT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with appropriate State, local, tribal, and territorial representatives, shall assess the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security to support countering violent extremism at the State, local, tribal, and territorial levels. Such assessment shall include each of the following:

(1) A cataloging of departmental efforts to assist State, local, tribal, and territorial governments in countering violent extremism.

(2) A review of cooperative agreements between the Department and such governments relating to countering violent extremism.

(3) An evaluation of departmental plans and any potential opportunities to better support such governments that are in furtherance of the Department's countering violent extremism objectives and are consistent with all relevant constitutional, legal, and privacy protections.

(b) **SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 150 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and consistent with the protection of classified information, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees the findings of the assessment required under subsection (a) together with any related information regarding best practices for countering violent extremism at the State, local, tribal, and territorial levels.

SEC. 4. DEPARTMENT-SPONSORED CLEARANCES.

Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall notify the appropriate congressional committees of the number of employees of State, local, tribal, and territorial governments with security clearances sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security. Such notification shall include a detailed list of the agencies that employ such employees, the level of clearance held by such employees, and whether such employees are assigned as representatives to State and major urban area fusion centers.

SEC. 5. PROHIBITION ON ADDITIONAL FUNDING.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act.

SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) The term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

(2) The term "violent extremism" means ideologically motivated international terrorism or domestic terrorism, as such terms are defined in section 2331 of title 18, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Just 3 short years ago, a group of domestic terrorists were plotting attacks in my hometown in northwest Georgia. Federal law enforcement was informed that these terrorists were trying to obtain pipe bombs and other improvised explosive devices. Once detonated, these weapons could have destroyed property, disabled utilities, and potentially taken innocent human life.

Because of the imminent threat, a Federal drug task force had to move quickly to intercept the suspects before they could carry out their attack. With such a short time to react to such a volatile situation, logic would suggest that Federal law enforcement would notify and enlist the assistance of the local sheriff's office.

Considering the raid was to take place in the parking lot of a busy shopping center adjacent to a hospital, having local law enforcement assistance was clearly justified. However, there was one problem. The sheriff didn't have the proper security clearance; so, he was not authorized to be briefed on the details of the case.

To stop these would-be terrorists, the FBI had to move quickly and could not wait for a waiver to brief the sheriff or to get approval to enlist his assistance. This bureaucratic hurdle put the FBI, our local law enforcement, and the community at greater risk.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this scenario plays out way too often across the Nation. While our FBI and Homeland Security agents are doing an exemplary job of countering terrorist activities, their resources are being stretched very thin. With the threat of terrorism on the rise, we must find a way to provide these agents with additional resources.

This is why I have introduced H.R. 4401, the ALERT Act. The Amplifying Local Efforts to Root Out Terror Act removes bureaucratic barriers and

paves the way for the Federal Government to enhance State and local law enforcement involvement in fighting the war on terrorism.

By providing the tools and training needed to combat terrorism on multiple levels, this act will provide more efficient cooperation and coordination with State and local officials.

Local law enforcement is crucial to our security, and they are too often overlooked as a valuable asset in fighting against terrorism. Through this legislation, the Department of Homeland Security will be authorized to train State and local law enforcement in the best methods used in combating evolving terrorist threats.

Proper security clearances are also vital for our local law enforcement officials so they may assist with countering terror activity as well as receiving notification of pending threats in their local jurisdictions.

This bill requires the Department to keep Congress apprised of the number of security clearances issued to State and local law enforcement so we can assess whether further congressional action is needed.

Because fighting terrorism is not a singular effort of the Federal Government, the ALERT Act provides increased community awareness of ongoing threats.

Radicalization is also a clear and present danger to Americans. The number of cases of homegrown terrorism is growing nationwide. Since September 11, 2001, there have been 139 homegrown jihadist plots.

Community involvement in countering violent extremism has proven to be effective, as more than 75 percent of U.S. foreign fighter arrests have involved tips from local sources, such as community members, relatives, or friends. This bill will provide even more resources to root out terrorists before they can act.

As we are moving into a new era of terrorism that directly threatens our own communities, we must reevaluate how we meet the current threat. Today everyone has a part to play in protecting against terrorism: the neighbor next door and the local police officer.

While this legislation will not in itself end the threat of terrorism against our Nation, it will allow for the better use of valuable resources already within our communities.

I urge all Members to join me in supporting this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 4401, the Amplifying Local Efforts to Root Out Terror Act, or the ALERT Act, of 2016.

Mr. Speaker, this is the latest in a series of efforts by this Congress and, in particular, the Homeland Security Committee in a bipartisan manner to work to thwart terrorist threats in our country.

Mr. Speaker, we work continuously to look back at the 9/11 Commission recommendations to make sure that we are fulfilling all of the areas of trouble that were identified by that commission where we can make ourselves more secure from terrorist threats.

We also worked very hard as a committee looking at the Boston Marathon bombing. We worked on that and found out that information sharing was not as great as it should have been. In fact, it was one of the things that could have prevented that from occurring.

The police commissioner of Boston testified in front of the committee and was asked: Did you know the information that the Federal law enforcement officials had?

His answer was: No.

Then he was asked: Would it have been helpful for you to know that?

And he said: Of course.

Yet, that information wasn't available.

We have worked in the committee to make sure that information is shared at the local, regional, county, and State levels as well as the Federal law enforcement agency communities.

We have worked together successfully with groups like the Joint Terrorism Task Force to make sure that information is shared on a daily basis, on a weekly basis, and, in a policy sense, even on a monthly basis, looking back and making sure that we have a seamless system.

Mr. Speaker, we had an initiative that I joined with my colleague from Georgia on as well as four other Members of this House where we traveled to look at the issue of foreign terrorist fighters and the threat to our country resulting from their actions.

Sadly, in the United States, there are over 200 people who have been identified as leaving this country to fight for ISIL in Syria and Iraq. Yet, we went through not only the Middle East, but through Europe with our allies there, to see what threats were there in terms of using those countries as portals into the United States, making sure that not only the 200-plus people from the U.S., if they came back, would be able to deal with their threats, but also the threats imposed by other countries coming back to the U.S.

We found out that in Istanbul, for instance, at the airport there, there are 61 million flights in that airport alone. That is probably 11 times, roughly, the whole population of my State of Massachusetts. Think of that. We found out that there wasn't security measures in place there that we take for granted in our own country.

We also worked hard with our allies in Europe so that they would do the basics and have passenger name records there so that we could trade information to find out who is boarding these planes. We are glad to report that the European Union has acted on that and

that has been closed. They are working on areas with the exterior borders that we talked to them about in our trip.

We also have been successful as a Congress to work on the visa waiver country issue to make sure that those areas where people are coming back and have traveled to Syria and Iraq are vetted the way they should be vetted.

We also realize that not only do we have to fight this war on multiple fronts, but we know that back home the threat of domestic violent extremists remains the number one threat, according to every expert. We know from the work that we have done collectively that we could do more on that front in preventing it.

We were told about fusion centers, which are tremendous assets to our security at the local, State, or Federal level, where we worked together gathering and compiling information on a realtime basis. Yet, those fusion centers and the employees there wanted to do more.

They were telling us how they could do more if they were given more training, more coordination, and more information to deal with at the local and State level. It would create a great multiplier effect with the frontline law enforcement people that would make our country safer.

Along those lines, the gentleman from Georgia put in legislation that I am proud to be a lead sponsor on to make sure that the Department of Homeland Security is there authorizing and providing these resources through the fusion centers to our State and local counterparts.

And I think that translating that not only as information to stop and coordinate activities reacting to terrorist acts, but working at the root cause of sharing information that they can use and apply at the root level to prevent that kind of activity, puts those people closer to the community in a position where they can do more. To me, that is one of the most important things we can do as a Congress, to make sure that that work is being done.

This is a very important bill. It is a bill that I think, once again, we are seeing the role of Congress in making sure that things don't fall between the cracks in terms of our national security, make sure that the resource is there for our local and State counterparts.

I favor this bill because I think it is one of those areas that we found most in need of amplification. I hope this bill is passed.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. REICHERT).

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and thank him for his hard work on this legislation, along with Mr. KEATING.

After listening to both of you speak on this legislation, I am really happy

that you get it, that you understand it. This is a great piece of legislation that we are about to enact.

I can speak from some experience, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that Mr. LOUDERMILK has asked me to speak this evening on this bill.

I was in law enforcement for 33 years. I started out in a patrol car and went through various stages of assignments and finally became the sheriff in King County, which is Seattle, Washington.

Some of the scenarios that you heard two gentlemen speaking about tonight, I have actually been there, done that, and have experienced some of the frustration that they just described tonight.

I know there are going to be some sheriff's deputies and police officers across the country tonight rejoicing in this bill. It will relieve much frustration and also provide some much-needed relief in creating that partnership between Federal and local law enforcement agencies.

I am in strong support of the ALERT Act. Today terrorism is not something that is in foreign countries. It is not somewhere outside of the United States. It is not outside our borders. It is right here. It is right here in Washington, D.C. It is right here in Seattle, Washington, as I said, where I come from.

□ 1645

Our sheriff's deputies and police officers have worked with the Federal agencies over these past few years, especially since 2001, in following up on hundreds and thousands of leads every day—of which the public, of course, is not aware—of possible threats and terrorism threats to our local communities.

I have had the opportunity to work with almost every Federal law enforcement agency that you can think of since 1972, when I joined the sheriff's office—leaving it in 2005 to come here. I had some great experiences and some not so great experiences. It especially relates back to the sharing of information, and it relates back to the inadequacy of our training and of our ability to connect to the Federal agencies in order to really form a true partnership and a true bond and a true trust.

If we can't, as Federal and local agencies, trust each other to share that information—and I know part of the effort here in the ALERT Act is to build that trust and to have the same training and the same information so we can protect the citizens of this country. That is our job, and that is what this law is designed to do.

We also need the partnership, the trust, of our communities because as we go out and investigate these leads and investigate these tips of possible terrorist attacks, we are interviewing people who live in our communities. They need to trust us. They need to respect, I should say, not only us here in

Congress, but they need to respect our law enforcement agencies and officers across the country.

Most of all, our law enforcement agencies need to respect them. That is when we will have that trust by which we can share information and truly come together. The cops cannot protect this country alone. The community cannot protect this country alone. They cannot protect their neighborhoods alone, let alone our country; but we have given more and more responsibility to our local officers, and they are being spread thin.

I think that is why, ladies and gentlemen and Mr. Speaker, we are divided today. Cops and community are divided. We don't have that interaction any longer, and that trust that we have built over many, many years is now beginning to erode. I think that this bill goes a long way in building that trust and relationship between the Federal agencies and the local agencies and in providing that training.

Most of all, what I appreciate about this legislation is that you have called attention to the fact that local law enforcement is key and is absolutely vital, absolutely critical, to protecting this country and that we are asking them to participate in the defense of our homeland. Not only that, but at the same time, we are asking them to answer those emergency calls—and I am going to mention, if you will allow me a moment—as Officer Ashley Guindon did on her first day as a sheriff's deputy, and she died. That is what we are talking about here: life and death, service to our community, protecting this country.

I thank the gentlemen for the hard work.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his leadership on this.

With regard to the gentleman from Washington State (Mr. REICHERT), I was a district attorney for 12 years and had my own attached State police force. I worked with local law enforcement, and I understand just what he was talking about in terms of the need to communicate, to work together cohesively, and to share information. We are all safer when that occurs.

Mr. Speaker, I started my day this morning in Boston. We met at the Federal Reserve. The "we" that met was something that, perhaps, you wouldn't have seen a few years ago but that we see today because of the efforts by Congress, the Homeland Security Committee, the gentleman from Georgia, and me in working together across the aisle and in making sure these things happen.

It was a meeting on surface transportation threats and terrorist threats. We had our staff and the head of the FBI in our region there. We had the head of the ATF. We had our regional

head of the TSA there. We had State officials, local officials, local police, regional police. We had authorities, like the transportation authorities, all present in the room—filling up the room—working together, sharing information. Yet we know we have to do a better job of making sure that occurs going forward.

With regard to many of the things we worked on in the committee, some of those agencies made procedural changes. They adopted new priorities that they had not had before. There is the reporting to Congress on the information of foreign terrorist fighters from our European allies, as well as making sure that the Joint Terrorism Task Force is sharing information.

With this legislation, we are making sure, going forward, that that is going to continue to be done because oftentimes, unfortunately, we react to a major crisis, respond, and provide the resources. Then, after a period of time, our attention wanes, and we are not constantly making sure that it is being done.

This legislation will make sure that it is being done going forward, and it will make sure that these groups are reporting back to Congress on a regular basis so that we are in a position to know that it continues to go forward all the time because, as our attention and our resources and our defensiveness might wane, the threats by terrorists will always be there, unfortunately, in the world we share. This will make sure that the reporting back to Congress occurs as well.

I am pleased to say that Congress has an integral role in this. We have crossed a very divided line, unfortunately, that we live with today from a partisan standpoint, and we will work together time and time again, because if we can't work together on issues of our national security, what can we work together on?

I thank my colleague from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK). I thank the chairman of the committee, Mr. MCCAUL; the ranking member, Mr. THOMPSON; and all of the committee members for their efforts going forward. This ALERT Act will keep us safer, not just tomorrow, but in the decades ahead.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me give a heartfelt thanks to my colleagues across the aisle, especially to my colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING), who mentioned that we have spent a good amount of time together in traveling to the Middle East and to Europe, looking at terrorism.

There was a time in our Nation's history when our focus on terrorism was isolated to areas overseas, but no longer. Terrorism is in our neighborhoods and it is in our communities. As you heard here today, from Massachu-

setts to Georgia to Washington State, there are no geographical boundaries on terrorism even within the United States.

While this bill will not end terrorism, it will give critical tools to those who know their communities best. The local law enforcement officer who is on the beat every day knows his community better than anyone. When something isn't just right, he is the first one to notice it. It is critical that we provide them with the training, the security clearances, and the tools that they need to become a force multiplier for our Federal agents who are operating on very limited resources today. In fact, they are stretched very thin.

Again, I thank all of those who are in support of this legislation. Of all I have worked on, I believe that this is one of the most important—that being the securing of our Nation so our children will have a nation that is free, safe, and full of opportunity. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4401.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4401, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CALLING ON GOVERNMENT OF IRAN TO ASSIST IN CASE OF ROBERT LEVINSON

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 148) calling on the Government of Iran to fulfill their promises of assistance in this case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 148

Whereas United States citizen Robert Levinson is a retired agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), a resident of Coral Springs, Florida, the husband of Christine Levinson, and father of their 7 children;

Whereas Robert Levinson traveled from Dubai, UAE, to Kish Island, Iran, on March 8, 2007;

Whereas after traveling to Kish Island and checking into the Hotel Maryam, Robert Levinson disappeared on March 9, 2007;

Whereas, in December 2007, Robert Levinson's wife, Christine, traveled to Kish Island to retrace Mr. Levinson's steps and met with officials of the Government of Iran who pledged to help in the investigation;

Whereas, for more than 8 years, the United States Government has continually pressed the Government of Iran to provide any information on the whereabouts of Robert

Levinson and to help ensure his prompt and safe return to his family;

Whereas officials of the Government of Iran promised their continued assistance to the relatives of Robert Levinson during the visit of the family to the Islamic Republic of Iran in December 2007;

Whereas, in November 2010, the Levinson family received a video of Mr. Levinson in captivity, representing the first proof of life since his disappearance and providing some initial indications that he was being held somewhere in southwest Asia;

Whereas, in April 2011, the Levinson family received a series of pictures of Mr. Levinson, which provided further indications that he was being held somewhere in southwest Asia;

Whereas Secretary John Kerry stated on August 28, 2013, "The United States respectfully asks the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to work cooperatively with us in our efforts to help U.S. citizen Robert Levinson.";

Whereas, on September 28, 2013, during the first direct phone conversation between the heads of the Government of the United States and Iran since 1979, President Barack Obama raised the case of Robert Levinson to President of Iran Hassan Rouhani and urged the President of Iran to help locate Mr. Levinson and reunite him with his family;

Whereas, on August 29, 2014, Secretary of State John Kerry again stated that the United States "respectfully request the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran work cooperatively with us to find Mr. Levinson and bring him home.";

Whereas on July 14, 2015, the Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, and Germany concluded 20 months of negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program;

Whereas, on January 16, 2016, the Government of Iran released five United States citizens detained in Iran, Jason Rezaian of California, Saeed Abedini of Idaho, Amir Mirzaei Hekmati of Michigan, Matthew Trevithick of Massachusetts, and Nosratollah Khosravi-Roodsari;

Whereas, on January 17, 2016, President Obama stated "even as we rejoice in the safe return of others, we will never forget about Bob", referring to Robert Levinson, and that "each and every day but especially today our hearts are with the Levinson family and we will never rest until their family is whole again.";

Whereas, on January 19, 2016, White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest stated that the United States Government had "secured a commitment from the Iranians to use the channel that has now been opened to secure the release of those individuals that we know were being held by Iran . . . to try and gather information about Mr. Levinson's possible whereabouts";

Whereas, on November 26, 2013, Robert Levinson became the longest held United States hostage in our Nation's history; and

Whereas the FBI has announced a \$5,000,000 reward for information leading to Mr. Levinson's safe return: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes that Robert Levinson is the longest held United States hostage in our Nation's history;

(2) notes the repeated pledges by and renewed commitment of officials of the Government of Iran to provide their Government's assistance in the case of Robert Levinson;

(3) urges the Government of Iran, as a humanitarian gesture, to act on its promises to

assist in the case of Robert Levinson and to immediately provide to the United States Government all available information from all entities of the Government of Iran regarding the disappearance of Robert Levinson;

(4) urges the President and the allies of the United States to continue to raise with officials of the Government of Iran the case of Robert Levinson at every opportunity, notwithstanding ongoing and serious disagreements the United States Government has with the Government of Iran on a broad array of issues, including Iran's ballistic missile program, sponsorship of international terrorism, and human rights abuses; and

(5) expresses sympathy to the family of Robert Levinson for their anguish and expresses hope that their ordeal can be brought to an end in the near future.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First, I would like to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for their leadership in bringing attention to Bob Levinson's plight and for guiding this resolution through our Foreign Affairs Committee and onto the House floor today.

Two weeks ago, we passed this resolution out of the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee, which I chair alongside Ranking Member TED DEUTCH, my friend from Florida. We were joined by Bob's wife, Christine, and their son Dan, as well as by Bob's sister-in-law, Suzi.

It was truly heart wrenching, Mr. Speaker, to see Christine, Dan, and Suzi again and to see how much they miss Bob and how much they worry about his well-being and his fate. All they want is Bob's safe and immediate return. Unfortunately, the Iranian regime's continued failure to honor its commitments and promises to assist in Bob's case and to help bring him home have left them without a father, without a husband, and without a friend for nearly 3,300 days.

In fact, next week will mark the ninth anniversary of Bob's disappearance from Kish Island, Iranian territory. I can't even begin to imagine what the family has had to endure for these past 9 years—all of the birthdays, all of the holidays, all of the anniver-

saries, all of the momentous family occasions that never really felt whole because Bob was unable to share them with his family. No family should ever have to go through that ordeal, and the U.S. and the Iranian Governments can and should do more to ensure Bob's immediate return.

That is why this resolution before us today, Mr. Speaker, is so important, not just for Bob and the Levinson family, but for all American citizens who may, one day, be in a similar situation. Our constituents and the American people need to know that their Representatives and their government will make the safety and security of U.S. citizens a top priority.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of the resolution.

I thank my good friend and partner, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, along with Congresswoman WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and Congressman DIAZ-BALART, for introducing this resolution with me and for their commitment to raising awareness to Bob Levinson's case and for always pushing for Bob's return.

I thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for helping to swiftly move this resolution to the floor as we prepare to mark the anniversary of Bob Levinson's disappearance. I thank Senator NELSON for spearheading a similar resolution, which passed the Senate earlier this month. I also thank all of my colleagues who have cosponsored this resolution.

□ 1700

Passing this resolution today is particularly significant. This Saturday, March 5, 2016, members of Bob's community in my district in south Florida will come together for a rally in support of the Levinson family and call for Bob's immediate return. Just 4 days later, on March 9, we will mark the ninth anniversary of Bob's disappearance from Kish Island in Iran.

When we received word in January that our government negotiated for the release of four Americans imprisoned in Iran, we welcomed the news. These were Americans who were wrongfully held, and this move made very clear that the United States does not forget about its own people.

We rejoiced as Amir Hekmati, Saeed Abedini, and Jason Rezaian were reunited with their families. Our colleagues, Congressmen KILDEE, HUFFMAN, and LABRADOR, have been tireless, tireless advocates for the release of their constituents. I am so pleased that each of them has returned to the United States. For their families, Mr. Speaker, the nightmare is over. Unfortunately, the nightmare continues for my constituents, the Levinson family.

Bob is now the longest held hostage in American history. Bob has now missed 9 years of birthdays with his seven children, anniversaries with his wife, Christine, weddings, the births of three of his four grandchildren, and so many other happy occasions that should have been celebrated together as a family. This is a family who, for 9 years, has never given up on bringing their husband, their father home.

We were so fortunate to be joined by Bob's wife, Christine, and his eldest son, Dan, when we passed this resolution in committee some weeks ago. We had the opportunity to tell them directly that this Congress will not forget about Bob. By passing this resolution today, this House of Representatives will now tell the world that we will never forget about Bob.

Bob Levinson dedicated his life to serving this country, first with the DEA and then over 20 years as an FBI agent. Bob is a patriot who loves this country dearly, and now, Mr. Speaker, it is time for this country to come through for Bob.

Over the years, the Levinson family has received proof of life in the form of pictures and video. We are grateful that throughout the nuclear negotiations with Iran, Secretary Kerry and others raised Bob's case at every single meeting, and we have been told that the deal to release the other Americans opened new avenues for consultation on Bob's case. But we cannot wait. Whatever information Iran has about Bob needs to be provided now so that Bob can be brought home.

This resolution before us today calls on Iran to follow through on its repeated promises of assisting the United States in locating Bob. The resolution calls on our government and those of our partners and allies to continue to press Iran for information about Bob at every opportunity.

President Obama and Secretary Kerry have repeatedly expressed their commitment to securing Bob's release, and Secretary Kerry reiterated that commitment during testimony in the House just last week. President Obama has stated in January, when referencing Bob's case, he said "we will not rest until their family is whole again."

For anyone who is watching this debate today, I encourage you to share this information about Bob Levinson, to tweet about Bob Levinson, to use the hashtag #whataboutbob.

For those in south Florida, I encourage you to come to support the Levinson family this Saturday in Coral Springs. We must keep talking about Bob. We must raise the level of awareness about Bob's case.

Our government and the government of our friends and allies must continue to work tirelessly to find Bob and to bring him home. The newly elected Parliament in Iran must know that we will never rest until Bob is home.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), who is the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairwoman of the Subcommittee on The Middle East and North Africa and chairwoman emeritus of the full committee, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for her leadership on this issue. I also thank TED DEUTCH, who authored this very, very important resolution. I also thank TOM RICE and ELIOT ENGEL for quickly bringing this legislation to the floor so that Members can vote on it in anticipation of the ninth anniversary of Bob Levinson's being held by the Iranians.

Almost 9 years ago, the Levinson family wrote, in part, on helppboblevinson.com. I quote them, in part. They said:

"If you pray for Bob, we thank you. If you frequently follow the news stories and blogs about Bob's situation, we thank you. If you have spread the word about his story and continue to do so, we thank you. We thank you all from the bottom of our hearts. Please continue to pray for Bob. We would love to have him home for Father's Day."

That was May 25, 2007. That, Mr. Speaker, was almost 9 years ago.

In a letter to Dad, also in May of 2007, Bob Levinson's children wrote:

"Dad . . . your seven children love and miss you very much. We are writing you this letter in the hopes that you will be able to read it wherever you are and know that you are in our thoughts and prayers every minute of every day."

The seven children continued:

"As you know, Mom is our rock. She has encouraged us to take each day one day at a time. While we are sure it will come as no surprise to you, she has amazing strength and has been an inspiration to all seven of us.

"We are all looking forward to your welcome home party. It cannot seem to come soon enough. We pray for you every day and look forward to having you come home to us safe and sound."

The seven Levinson children continued:

"Dad, you are the best dad anyone could ever ask for, and we love and miss you more than words can say. We are so proud of you, and the world now knows what we have known all along—what an intelligent, kind, and gentle man you are."

Again, that letter was from Bob's kids, and it was posted almost 9 years ago. Despite the emotional pain, Christine, his wife, and the entire family tenaciously press for Bob Levinson's freedom.

No one in American history, as Mr. DEUTCH pointed out a moment ago, has been held hostage longer than Bob Levinson. His ordeal and the agony and the heartbreak of his family must end.

When the reports that most of the Americans held by Iran were released but no freedom or even information about Levinson, the family was indeed crushed. In response, the family wrote: "We are happy for the other families. But once again, Bob Levinson has been left behind. We are devastated."

Devastated, yes, but they are absolutely committed to the return of their husband, father, grandfather, relative, and friend. Both the administration and Congress must not rest until this good, decent, and honorable American is returned to his family, friends, and a grateful Nation.

So I again thank Representative TED DEUTCH for sponsoring H. Res. 148 so all of us can express our deepest concern for Bob Levinson and press, as never before, for his return.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank Mr. SMITH for his powerful words and for sharing the very powerful and very moving words of Bob's family.

I ask my colleagues to think about the Levinson family as if they were your own and to use the opportunity that we have here today to send what is the most powerful message that this House can send—these days especially—and that is a message of unity.

Mr. Speaker, with this resolution today, we have an opportunity to recognize that, when a proud American has been missing from his family, has been missing from his community, he is missing from our family and he is missing from our community and our country. Our country is missing Bob Levinson. It is our country that will be made whole when Bob is returned.

I urge my colleagues in the strongest way that I can to stand together with me, with Bob's family, and on behalf of every person in this great country in moving this resolution forward and continuing to work tirelessly to bring Bob home.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank my good friend, Mr. DEUTCH, for his eloquent proposals time and time again in our committee, on the House floor, and in every public gathering on behalf of Bob Levinson's family. I am sure that the Levinson family feels a great sense of relief that they have such a tireless advocate by their side.

I hope that the administration continues to press the Iranian regime to do more to assist with the Bob Levinson case, and it needs to continue to raise the issue with the Iranian regime at the highest level and at every opportunity.

As Mr. DEUTCH pointed out, the community in south Florida will be rallying in support of Bob and his family this coming Saturday, March 5. It will be held at the Center for the Arts in Coral Springs at 2 in the afternoon.

What a powerful message it would send to the family were the House to adopt this resolution without dissent. It will also send a strong message to the Iranian regime that we will not relent until Bob is home with his family and Iran has honored its commitments and its promises.

I commend, again, my good friend and south Florida colleague, TED DEUTCH, for authoring this resolution, and I am honored to be his Republican lead. I have worked alongside Mr. DEUTCH for so many years in support of Bob and his family.

Bob, a south Florida resident, as you heard, is a constituent of Mr. DEUTCH's district. As I said, the Levinson family is so fortunate to have such a wonderful Representative, because TED has shown unwavering commitment to the family, for Bob in his fight to be reunited with his loving family. I can only say that we all support TED in his mission. We support the Levinson family. We will continue to work with Mr. DEUTCH in this effort.

I urge my colleagues to strongly support this measure, support Bob and the Levinson family in this one more anniversary of being in captivity who knows where.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 148, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title of the resolution was amended so as to read: "A resolution calling on the Government of Iran to follow through on repeated promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States hostage in our Nation's history."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEMA DISASTER ASSISTANCE REFORM ACT OF 2015

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1471) to reauthorize the programs and activities of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1471

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—FEMA REAUTHORIZATION

Sec. 101. Reauthorization of Federal Emergency Management Agency.

TITLE II—COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF DISASTER COSTS AND LOSSES

Sec. 201. Comprehensive study of disaster costs and losses.

TITLE III—STAFFORD ACT AND OTHER PROGRAMS

Sec. 301. Reauthorization of urban search and rescue response system.

Sec. 302. Statute of limitations.

Sec. 303. Action plan to improve field transition.

Sec. 304. Simplified procedures.

Sec. 305. Management costs.

Sec. 306. Debts owed to the United States related to disaster assistance.

Sec. 307. Statute of limitations for debts owed to the United States related to disaster assistance.

Sec. 308. Technical assistance and recommendations.

Sec. 309. Local impact.

Sec. 310. Proof of insurance.

Sec. 311. Authorities.

Sec. 312. Responsibilities.

Sec. 313. Earthquake and Tsunami Inter-agency Task Force.

Sec. 314. Mitigation assistance.

Sec. 315. Additional activities.

TITLE I—FEMA REAUTHORIZATION

SEC. 101. REAUTHORIZATION OF FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY.

Section 699 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-295; 6 U.S.C. 811) is amended—

(1) by striking "administration and operations" each place it appears and inserting "management and administration"; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking "; and";

(3) in paragraph (3), by striking the period and inserting "; and"; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

"(4) for fiscal year 2016, \$946,982,000;

"(5) for fiscal year 2017, \$946,982,000; and

"(6) for fiscal year 2018, \$946,982,000."

TITLE II—COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF DISASTER COSTS AND LOSSES

SEC. 201. COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF DISASTER COSTS AND LOSSES.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall commence, through the National Advisory Council, a comprehensive study related to disaster costs and losses (referred to in the subsection as the "Study").

(b) ADDITIONAL MEMBERSHIP.—For the purposes of the Study, as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall appoint additional qualified members to the National Advisory Council from the following:

(1) Individuals that have the requisite technical knowledge and expertise on issues related to disaster costs and losses.

(2) Representatives of the insurance industry.

(3) Experts in and representatives of the construction and building industry.

(4) Individuals nominated by national organizations representing local governments and personnel.

(5) Academic experts.

(6) Vendors, developers, and manufacturers of systems, facilities, equipment, and capabilities for emergency management services.

(7) Representatives of such other stakeholders and interested and affected parties as the Administrator considers appropriate.

(c) CONSULTATION WITH NONMEMBERS.—The National Advisory Council shall consult with other relevant agencies and groups that are not represented on the National Advisory Council to consider research, data, findings, recommendations, innovative technologies and developments, including—

(1) entities engaged in federally funded research; and

(2) academic institutions engaged in relevant work and research.

(d) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the National Advisory Council shall convene to evaluate the following topics and develop recommendations for reducing disaster costs and losses:

(1) DISASTER LOSSES.—

(A) COST TRENDS.—Trends in disaster costs including loss of life and injury, property damage to individuals, the private sector, and each level of government (State, local and tribal) since the enactment of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.), to the extent data is available.

(B) CONTRIBUTING FACTORS.—Contributing factors such as shifting demographics and aging infrastructure and their impacts on the trends in disaster losses and costs.

(2) DISASTER COSTS.—

(A) TRENDS IN DECLARATIONS.—Trends in disaster declarations, including factors contributing to the trends.

(B) DISASTER ASSISTANCE.—Disaster assistance available from all Federal sources, including descriptions of programs, eligibility and authorities, where assistance has been used geographically, how quickly the funds are used, how that assistance is coordinated among the various agencies and departments, and recommendations for ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of such assistance.

(C) COSTS.—Disaster costs borne by the private sector and individuals.

(3) DISASTER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY.—Fundamental principles that should drive national disaster assistance decision making, including the appropriate roles for each level of government, the private sector and individuals.

(4) REDUCTION OF COSTS AND LOSSES.—

(A) MECHANISMS AND INCENTIVES.—Mechanisms and incentives, including tax incentives, to promote disaster cost reduction, mitigation, and recovery, including cost data, projections for the return on investment, and measures of effectiveness.

(B) IDENTIFICATION OF CHALLENGES.—Identify fundamental legal, societal, geographic and technological challenges to implementation.

(5) LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS.—Legislative proposals for implementing the recommendations in the report compiled pursuant to the requirement in section 1111 of the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-2).

(e) REPORT TO ADMINISTRATOR AND CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the National Advisory Council shall submit a report containing the data, analysis, and recommendations developed under subsection (d) to—

(1) the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(2) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives; and

(3) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate. The Administrator shall make the data collected pursuant to this section publicly available on the Agency's website.

TITLE III—STAFFORD ACT AND OTHER PROGRAMS

SEC. 301. REAUTHORIZATION OF URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSE SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5141 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 327. NATIONAL URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSE SYSTEM.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following definitions apply:

“(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ‘Administrator’ means the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

“(2) AGENCY.—The term ‘Agency’ means the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

“(3) HAZARD.—The term ‘hazard’ has the meaning given that term by section 602.

“(4) NONEMPLOYEE SYSTEM MEMBER.—The term ‘nonemployee System member’ means a System member not employed by a sponsoring agency or participating agency.

“(5) PARTICIPATING AGENCY.—The term ‘participating agency’ means a State or local government, nonprofit organization, or private organization that has executed an agreement with a sponsoring agency to participate in the System.

“(6) SPONSORING AGENCY.—The term ‘sponsoring agency’ means a State or local government that is the sponsor of a task force designated by the Administrator to participate in the System.

“(7) SYSTEM.—The term ‘System’ means the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System to be administered under this section.

“(8) SYSTEM MEMBER.—The term ‘System member’ means an individual who is not a full-time employee of the Federal Government and who serves on a task force or on a System management or other technical team.

“(9) TASK FORCE.—The term ‘task force’ means an urban search and rescue team designated by the Administrator to participate in the System.

“(b) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—Subject to the requirements of this section, the Administrator shall continue to administer the emergency response system known as the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System.

“(c) FUNCTIONS.—In administering the System, the Administrator shall provide for a national network of standardized search and rescue resources to assist States and local governments in responding to hazards.

“(d) TASK FORCES.—

“(1) DESIGNATION.—The Administrator shall designate task forces to participate in the System. The Administration shall determine the criteria for such participation.

“(2) SPONSORING AGENCIES.—Each task force shall have a sponsoring agency. The Administrator shall enter into an agreement with the sponsoring agency with respect to the participation of each task force in the System.

“(3) COMPOSITION.—

“(A) PARTICIPATING AGENCIES.—A task force may include, at the discretion of the sponsoring agency, one or more participating agencies. The sponsoring agency shall enter

into an agreement with each participating agency with respect to the participation of the participating agency on the task force.

“(B) OTHER INDIVIDUALS.—A task force may also include, at the discretion of the sponsoring agency, other individuals not otherwise associated with the sponsoring agency or a participating agency. The sponsoring agency of a task force may enter into a separate agreement with each such individual with respect to the participation of the individual on the task force.

“(e) MANAGEMENT AND TECHNICAL TEAMS.—The Administrator shall maintain such management teams and other technical teams as the Administrator determines are necessary to administer the System.

“(f) APPOINTMENT OF SYSTEM MEMBERS INTO FEDERAL SERVICE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may appoint a System member into Federal service for a period of service to provide for the participation of the System member in exercises, preincident staging, major disaster and emergency response activities, and training events sponsored or sanctioned by the Administrator.

“(2) NONAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN CIVIL SERVICE LAWS.—The Administrator may make appointments under paragraph (1) without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service.

“(3) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER AUTHORITIES.—The authority of the Administrator to make appointments under this subsection shall not affect any other authority of the Administrator under this Act.

“(4) LIMITATION.—A System member who is appointed into Federal service under paragraph (1) shall not be considered an employee of the United States for purposes other than those specifically set forth in this section.

“(g) COMPENSATION.—

“(1) PAY OF SYSTEM MEMBERS.—Subject to such terms and conditions as the Administrator may impose by regulation, the Administrator shall make payments to the sponsoring agency of a task force—

“(A) to reimburse each employer of a System member on the task force for compensation paid by the employer to the System member for any period during which the System member is appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1); and

“(B) to make payments directly to a nonemployee System member on the task force for any period during which the nonemployee System member is appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1).

“(2) REIMBURSEMENT FOR EMPLOYEES FILLING POSITIONS OF SYSTEM MEMBERS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to such terms and conditions as the Administrator may impose by regulation, the Administrator shall make payments to the sponsoring agency of a task force to reimburse each employer of a System member on the task force for compensation paid by the employer to an employee filling a position normally filled by the System member for any period during which the System member is appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1).

“(B) LIMITATION.—Costs incurred by an employer shall be eligible for reimbursement under subparagraph (A) only to the extent that the costs are in excess of the costs that would have been incurred by the employer had the System member not been appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1).

“(3) METHOD OF PAYMENT.—A System member shall not be entitled to pay directly from the Agency for a period during which the System member is appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1).

“(h) PERSONAL INJURY, ILLNESS, DISABILITY, OR DEATH.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A System member who is appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1) and who suffers personal injury, illness, disability, or death as a result of a personal injury sustained while acting in the scope of such appointment shall, for the purposes of subchapter I of chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, be treated as though the member were an employee (as defined by section 8101 of that title) who had sustained the injury in the performance of duty.

“(2) ELECTION OF BENEFITS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If a System member (or, in the case of the death of the System member, the System member's dependent) is entitled—

“(i) under paragraph (1) to receive benefits under subchapter I of chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, by reason of personal injury, illness, disability, or death, and

“(ii) to receive benefits from a State or local government by reason of the same personal injury, illness, disability, or death, the System member or dependent shall elect to receive either the benefits referred to in clause (i) or (ii).

“(B) DEADLINE.—A System member or dependent shall make an election of benefits under subparagraph (A) not later than 1 year after the date of the personal injury, illness, disability, or death that is the reason for the benefits or until such later date as the Secretary of Labor may allow for reasonable cause shown.

“(C) EFFECT OF ELECTION.—An election of benefits made under this paragraph is irrevocable unless otherwise provided by law.

“(3) REIMBURSEMENT FOR STATE OR LOCAL BENEFITS.—Subject to such terms and conditions as the Administrator may impose by regulation, in the event that a System member or dependent elects benefits from a State or local government under paragraph (2)(A), the Administrator shall reimburse the State or local government for the value of those benefits.

“(4) PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER CLAIMS.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to bar any claim by, or with respect to, any System member who is a ‘public safety officer’, as defined in section 1204 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, for any benefits authorized pursuant to section 1001(a)(4) of that Act.

“(5) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 1086(d) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 is amended as follows (which amendments shall take effect as if enacted on January 2, 2013)—

“(A) in paragraph (1)—

“(i) by striking ‘paragraph (1)’ and inserting ‘paragraph (2)’; and

“(ii) in subparagraph (B) by striking ‘filed or’ and inserting ‘filed (consistent with pre-existing effective dates) or’; and

“(B) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking ‘amendments made by this Act’ and inserting ‘amendments made to section 1204 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796b) by this Act’.

“(i) LIABILITY.—A System member appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1), while acting within the scope of the appointment, is deemed an employee of the Federal Government under section 1346(b) of title 28, United States Code, and chapter 171 of that title, relating to tort claims procedure.

“(j) EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS.—With respect to a System member who is not a regular full-time employee of a sponsoring agency or participating agency, the following terms and conditions apply:

“(1) SERVICE.—Service as a System member is deemed ‘service in the uniformed services’ for purposes of chapter 43 of title 38, United States Code, relating to employment and reemployment rights of individuals who have performed service in the uniformed services (regardless of whether the individual receives compensation for such participation). All rights and obligations of such persons and procedures for assistance, enforcement, and investigation shall be as provided for in such chapter.

“(2) PRECLUSION.—Preclusion of giving notice of service by necessity of appointment under this section is deemed preclusion by ‘military necessity’ for purposes of section 4312(b) of title 38, United States Code, pertaining to giving notice of absence from a position of employment. A determination of such necessity shall be made by the Administrator and shall not be subject to judicial review.

“(k) LICENSES AND PERMITS.—If a System member holds a valid license, certificate, or other permit issued by any State or other governmental jurisdiction evidencing the member’s qualifications in any professional, mechanical, or other skill or type of assistance required by the System, the System member is deemed to be performing a Federal activity when rendering aid involving such skill or assistance during a period of appointment into Federal service under subsection (f)(1).

“(l) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall establish and maintain an advisory committee to provide expert recommendations to the Administrator in order to assist the Administrator in administering the System.

“(2) COMPOSITION.—The advisory committee shall be composed of members from geographically diverse areas, and shall include—

“(A) the chief officer or senior executive from at least three sponsoring agencies;

“(B) the senior emergency manager from at least two States that include sponsoring agencies; and

“(C) at least one representative recommended by the leaders of the task forces.

“(3) INAPPLICABILITY OF TERMINATION REQUIREMENT.—Section 14(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the advisory committee under this subsection.

“(m) PREPAREDNESS COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of appropriations for such purpose, the Administrator shall enter into an annual preparedness cooperative agreement with each sponsoring agency. Amounts made available to a sponsoring agency under such a preparedness cooperative agreement shall be for the following purposes:

“(A) Training and exercises, including training and exercises with other Federal, State, and local government response entities.

“(B) Acquisition and maintenance of equipment, including interoperable communications and personal protective equipment.

“(C) Medical monitoring required for responder safety and health in anticipation of and following a major disaster, emergency, or other hazard, as determined by the Administrator.

“(2) AVAILABILITY OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Notwithstanding section 1552(b) of title 31, United States Code, amounts made available for cooperative agreements under this subsection that are not expended shall be deposited in an agency account and shall remain

available for such agreements without fiscal year limitation.

“(n) RESPONSE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Administrator shall enter into a response cooperative agreement with each sponsoring agency, as appropriate, under which the Administrator agrees to reimburse the sponsoring agency for costs incurred by the sponsoring agency in responding to a major disaster or emergency.

“(o) OBLIGATIONS.—The Administrator may incur all necessary obligations consistent with this section in order to ensure the effectiveness of the System.

“(p) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out the System and the provisions of this section \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016, 2017, and 2018.

“(2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—The Administrator may use not to exceed 6 percent of the funds appropriated for a fiscal year pursuant to paragraph (1) for salaries, expenses, and other administrative costs incurred by the Administrator in carrying out this section.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) APPLICABILITY OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE.—Section 8101(1) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (D) by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by moving subparagraph (F) to appear after subparagraph (E);

(C) in subparagraph (F)—

(i) by striking “United States Code,”; and

(ii) by adding “and” at the end; and

(D) by inserting after subparagraph (F) the following:

“(G) an individual who is a System member of the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System during a period of appointment into Federal service pursuant to section 327 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act;”.

(2) INCLUSION AS PART OF UNIFORMED SERVICES FOR PURPOSES OF USERRA.—Section 4303 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (13) by inserting “, a period for which a System member of the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System is absent from a position of employment due to an appointment into Federal service under section 327 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act” before “, and a period”; and

(B) in paragraph (16) by inserting after “Public Health Service,” the following: “System members of the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System during a period of appointment into Federal service under section 327 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.”.

SEC. 302. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 705(a)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5205) is amended—

(1) by striking “Except” and inserting “Notwithstanding section 3716(e) of title 31, United States Code, and except”; and

(2) by striking “report for the disaster or emergency” and inserting “report for project completion as certified by the grantee”.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to disaster or emergency assistance provided to a State or local government on or after January 1, 2004—

(A) no administrative action may be taken to recover a payment of such assistance after the date of enactment of this Act if the action is prohibited under section 705(a)(1) of

the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5205(a)(1)), as amended by subsection (a); and

(B) any administrative action to recover a payment of such assistance that is pending on such date of enactment shall be terminated if the action is prohibited under section 705(a)(1) of that Act, as amended by subsection (a).

(2) LIMITATION.—This section, including the amendments made by this section, may not be construed to invalidate or otherwise affect any administration action completed before the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 303. ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE FIELD TRANSITION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall report to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate regarding the plans the agency will undertake to provide the following:

(1) Consistent guidance to applicants on FEMA disaster funding procedures during the response to an emergency.

(2) Appropriate record maintenance and transfer of documents to new teams during staff transitions.

(3) Accurate assistance to applicants and grantees to ease the administrative burden throughout the process of obtaining and monitoring assistance.

(b) MAINTAINING RECORDS.—The report shall also include a plan for implementing operating procedures and document retention requirements to ensure the maintenance of appropriate records throughout the lifecycle of the disaster.

(c) NEW TECHNOLOGIES.—Finally, the report shall identify new technologies that further aid the disaster workforce in partnering with State, local, and tribal governments and private nonprofits in the wake of a disaster or emergency to educate, assist, and inform applicants on the status of their disaster assistance applications and projects.

SEC. 304. SIMPLIFIED PROCEDURES.

Section 422(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5189) is amended—

(1) by striking “\$35,000” the first place it appears and inserting “\$1,000,000”; and

(2) by striking the second sentence.

SEC. 305. MANAGEMENT COSTS.

Section 324 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5165b) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a) by striking “any administrative expense, and any other expense not directly chargeable to” and inserting “direct administrative cost, and any other administrative expense associated with”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking “Notwithstanding” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding”.

(B) by striking “establish” and inserting the following: “implement the following”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT COSTS.—The Administrator shall provide the following percentage rates, in addition to the eligible project costs, to cover direct and indirect costs of administering the following programs:

“(A) HAZARD MITIGATION.—A grantee under section 404 may be reimbursed not more than 15 percent of the total amount of the grant

award under such section of which not more than 10 percent may be used by the grantee and 5 percent by the subgrantee for such costs.

“(B) PUBLIC ASSISTANCE.—A grantee under sections 403, 406, 407, and 502, may be reimbursed not more than 10 percent of the total award amount under such sections, of which not more than 6 percent may be used by the grantee and 4 percent by the subgrantee for such costs.”.

SEC. 306. DEBTS OWED TO THE UNITED STATES RELATED TO DISASTER ASSISTANCE.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “covered assistance” means assistance provided—

(1) under section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174); and

(2) in relation to a major disaster or emergency declared by the President under section 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170; 42 U.S.C. 5191) on or after October 30, 2012.

(b) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding section 3716(e) of title 31, United States Code, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency—

(1) subject to paragraph (2), may waive a debt owed to the United States related to covered assistance provided to an individual or household if—

(A) the covered assistance was distributed based on an error by the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(B) there was no fault on behalf of the debtor; and

(C) the collection of the debt would be against equity and good conscience; and

(2) may not waive a debt under paragraph (1) if the debt involves fraud, the presentation of a false claim, or misrepresentation by the debtor or any party having an interest in the claim.

(c) MONITORING OF COVERED ASSISTANCE DISTRIBUTED BASED ON ERROR.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Inspector General shall monitor the distribution of covered assistance to individuals and households to determine the percentage of such assistance distributed based on an error.

(2) REMOVAL OF WAIVER AUTHORITY BASED ON EXCESSIVE ERROR RATE.—If the Inspector General determines, with respect to any 12-month period, that the amount of covered assistance distributed based on an error by the Federal Emergency Management Agency exceeds 4 percent of the total amount of covered assistance distributed—

(A) the Inspector General shall notify the Administrator and publish the determination in the Federal Register; and

(B) with respect to any major disaster declared by the President under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) after the date of the determination, the authority of the Administrator to waive debt under subsection (b) shall no longer be effective.

SEC. 307. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS FOR DEBTS OWED TO THE UNITED STATES RELATED TO DISASTER ASSISTANCE.

Notwithstanding section 3716(g) of title 31, United States Code, and unless there is evidence of civil or criminal fraud, the Administrator, on behalf of the President, shall not initiate new administrative action in any form to recover—

(1) payments made to an individual or household under section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) more than 3

years after the last date on which such payments were made; or

(2) funds owed by an individual or household for assistance provided under section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) more than 3 years after the last date on which such funds were determined to be owed.

SEC. 308. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

(a) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall provide technical assistance to a common interest community that provides essential services of a governmental nature on actions that a common interest community may take in order to be eligible to receive reimbursement from a grantee that receives funds from the Agency for certain activities performed after an event that results in a disaster declaration.

(b) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall provide recommendations to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on how common areas of condominiums and housing cooperatives may be eligible for assistance, including any progress the Agency has made in its explorations of this issue and the potential challenges identified since the Agency issued its report on May 22, 2014.

SEC. 309. LOCAL IMPACT.

In making recommendations to the President regarding a major disaster declaration, the Administrator shall give greater weight and consideration to severe localized impact. Further, the Administrator shall make corresponding adjustments to the Agency's policies and regulations. Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall report to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate on the changes made to regulations and policies and the number of declarations that have been declared based on the new criteria.

SEC. 310. PROOF OF INSURANCE.

A State shall be deemed to have proven that an applicant has satisfied the purchase of insurance requirements under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et. seq.) when an encumbrance requiring the purchase and maintenance of insurance has been placed on the title of the property receiving the benefit of the grant or assistance. This section in no way removes or reduces the insurance requirements on an applicant under the Act and in no way limits the requirement that assistance provided under the Stafford Act be reduced or eliminated when the requirements are not met.

SEC. 311. AUTHORITIES.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency shall not, pursuant to consultation with another Federal agency or otherwise, expand its statutory authorities as they relate to floodplain management or floodplain mapping unless the requirement to do so is explicitly and specifically stated in statute, nor shall the Agency's authorities be construed to impute the privately-funded actions of private parties on private land to such Agency for the purpose of extending the requirements of any Federal law applicable to Federal agencies to such actions.

SEC. 312. RESPONSIBILITIES.

The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall be respon-

sible for the Nation's efforts to reduce the loss of life and property and to protect the Nation from an earthquake, tsunami or a combined earthquake and tsunami event by developing the ability to prepare and plan for, mitigate against, respond to, recover from, and more successfully adapt to such an event.

SEC. 313. EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall establish a Federal Interagency Task Force for the purpose of developing a comprehensive strategy and recommendations on how the Nation should prepare and plan for, mitigate against, respond to, recover from, and more successfully adapt to an earthquake, tsunami or a combined earthquake and tsunami event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone, including identifying potential administrative or legislative changes required to implement the strategy, the funding required to implement the strategy and recommendations, and the priority in which the strategy should be implemented.

(b) CHAIRPERSON.—The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or his designee, shall serve as the chairperson of the Task Force.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The membership of the Task Force shall include a cross section of subject matter experts representing the following:

(1) Relevant Federal agencies.

(2) The States of Oregon, Washington, and California.

(3) Indian tribes, local governments, and private sector representatives that may be impacted by a mega-thrust earthquake, tsunami or a combined earthquake and tsunami event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

(4) Universities, academia and research institutions with expertise in topics relevant to the work of the Task Force.

(d) DETAILED EMPLOYEES.—Members of the Task Force may detail employees to assist the Administrator, or his designee, in fulfilling the responsibilities of the Task Force.

(e) CASCADIA SUBDUCTION ZONE.—The term “Cascadia Subduction Zone” means the approximately 684 miles long landward-dipping fault that separates the Juan de Fuca and North America plates and that stretches along a portion of the western coast of the United States beginning off Cape Mendocino, California, along the State of Oregon, the State of Washington, to Northern Vancouver Island, British Columbia.

(f) STRATEGY.—The comprehensive strategy, which may build upon existing plans, studies, or other resources, shall include the following:

(1) Define how Federal agencies will coordinate to develop the ability to prepare and plan for, mitigate against, respond to, recover from, and more successfully adapt to the impacts of a mega-thrust earthquake, tsunami, or a combined earthquake and tsunami event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

(2) Ensure collaboration between the Department of Transportation, the Department of Energy, the United States Coast Guard, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and other Federal agencies as appropriate to complete a needs assessment of Federal facilities in need of hardening for an event and develop a strategic plan to mitigate and retrofit Federal, State, tribal, and local critical assets for freight, energy, and transit purposes to withstand an event and to help save lives during and immediately after an event.

(3) Assist State, tribal, and local governments in developing and implementing a coordinated and comprehensive plan to

prioritize Federal, State, tribal, local, and private investments and activities to develop the ability to prepare and plan for, mitigate against, respond to, recover from, and more successfully adapt to the impacts of a megathrust earthquake, tsunami, or a combined earthquake and tsunami event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone, and to link to any existing State-wide mitigation plan, including examining the feasibility of the public and private sector and individuals to acquire earthquake insurance.

(4) Identify existing funding opportunities across Federal agencies and other sources to implement the comprehensive strategy and any recommendations made by the Task Force and make recommendations for new funding opportunities.

(5) Identify barriers to obtaining funding and implementing the comprehensive strategy and to develop recommendations on how to remove such barriers.

(6) Collaborate with and assist State, tribal, and local governments in developing recommendations for cost-effective mitigation alternatives for aging State, tribal, or locally owned critical infrastructure.

(7) Assist State, tribal, and local governments with developing a recovery plan prior to an earthquake, tsunami, or combined earthquake and tsunami event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone as to how State, tribal, and local governments may want to rebuild after the event;

(8) Identify steps taken to date to develop an onshore and offshore earthquake early warning system and define the purpose and scope of an onshore and offshore earthquake early warning system.

(9) Evaluate types of offshore earthquake early warning systems and provide recommendations and a cost estimate for an earthquake early warning system appropriate for the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

(10) Make recommendations about how an earthquake early warning system should operate, including whether and how a system should interface with the private sector.

(11) Define appropriate roles and responsibilities for Federal, State, local, and tribal governments, including who should operate and maintain an earthquake early warning system, the cost of a system, and possible funding sources for a system.

(12) Develop a plan on how to integrate an earthquake early warning system into existing and new public alert warning systems and technologies, including mobile systems.

(g) **COLLABORATION.**—The Task Force shall work simultaneously and collaboratively with the National Academies.

(h) **NATIONAL ACADEMIES.**—The Task Force shall enter into an agreement with the National Academies under which the National Academies shall develop recommendations for a Federal research strategy to advance scientific understanding of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and resulting tsunami preparedness, including the following:

(1) Geologic conditions, ground motions, and tsunami hazard.

(2) Implications of an effective automated early warning system.

(3) Effects of mega-earthquake and tsunami events on the built and natural environment.

(4) Social and behavioral factors for effective disaster preparedness and response.

(5) Cost-effective mitigation alternatives for legacy and aging infrastructure.

(6) Strategic planning for freight, energy, and transit network robustness.

(7) Tools that help communities invest its resources for the greatest benefit.

(8) Any other topics identified as necessary by the Task Force or the National Academies.

(i) **REPORT.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs of the Senate a report of the Task Force that provides the following:

(1) The comprehensive strategy identified in subsection (f).

(2) Recommendations on administrative actions that may be taken to further the strategy.

(3) Recommendations for legislative changes that may be necessary to further the strategy.

(4) Recommendations on funding necessary to carry out the strategy.

SEC. 314. MITIGATION ASSISTANCE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 420 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5187) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

“(d) **HAZARD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE.**—Whether or not a major disaster is declared, the President may provide hazard mitigation assistance in accordance with section 404 in any area affected by a fire for which assistance was provided under this section.”

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 404(a) (42 U.S.C. 5170c(a))—

(A) by inserting before the first period “, or any area affected by a fire for which assistance was provided under section 420”; and

(B) in the third sentence by inserting “or event under section 420” after “major disaster” each place it appears; and

(2) in section 322(e)(1) (42 U.S.C. 5165(e)(1)), by inserting “or event under section 420” after “major disaster” each place it appears.

SEC. 315. ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES.

Section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) **USE OF ASSISTANCE.**—Recipients of hazard mitigation assistance provided under this section and section 203 may use the assistance to conduct the following activities to help reduce the risk of future damage, hardship, loss, or suffering in any area affected by—

“(1) a wildfire, including—

“(A) reseeding ground cover with quick-growing or native species;

“(B) mulching with straw or chipped wood;

“(C) constructing straw, rock, or log dams in small tributaries to prevent flooding;

“(D) placing logs and other erosion barriers to catch sediment on hill slopes;

“(E) installing debris traps to modify road and trail drainage mechanisms;

“(F) modifying or removing culverts to allow drainage to flow freely;

“(G) adding drainage dips and constructing emergency spillways to keep roads and bridges from washing out during floods;

“(H) planting grass to prevent the spread of noxious weeds;

“(I) installing warning signs;

“(J) establishing defensible space measures; and

“(K) reducing hazardous fuels; and

“(2) earthquake hazards, including—

“(A) improvements to regional seismic networks in support of building a capability for earthquake early warning;

“(B) improvements to geodetic networks in support of building a capability for earthquake early warning; or

“(C) seismometers, GPS receivers, and associated infrastructure in support of building a capability for earthquake early warning.”

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CARSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1471, as amended.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. BARLETTA. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman SHUSTER for his tremendous support and leadership on this bill. Few Members of Congress have had a greater impact on reforming our disaster programs since Hurricane Katrina than Chairman SHUSTER. This bill represents another important step in that effort, and I greatly appreciate the chairman's help.

I also want to thank Ranking Member DEFAZIO and Ranking Member CARSON for their bipartisan support of the bill.

The FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act has two primary goals: to help save lives and to save taxpayer money.

□ 1715

The bill helps save lives by fixing a longstanding problem that hinders the deployment of critical search and rescue teams between States. These reforms will help ensure our constituents receive the help they need when disaster strikes.

Additionally, this bill helps save money by improving the cost-effectiveness of FEMA's existing disaster assistance programs. For example, there are provisions that will speed up reconstruction and lower administrative costs. The bill also saves money by encouraging smart recovery practices and mitigation to lower the costs of the next disaster.

The bill commissions a comprehensive review of the growing disaster losses the Nation has experienced over the past decades. Experts estimated over \$1 trillion of disaster losses have occurred in North America since 1980. FEMA alone has spent almost \$200 billion on over 1300 major Presidential disaster declarations since 1989. These numbers are going up, and we should try to find ways to bring those costs down over time.

It has been over 20 years since we have had a comprehensive look at disaster spending. It is time for a big picture assessment of what is driving these costs and to review if we, as a Nation, are responding in the most appropriate and cost-effective way.

Right after I became a Member of Congress, my district was hit hard by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. I saw homes destroyed, lives and livelihoods upset. Disaster relief is critical at times like these, and people need help to rebuild their lives and rebuild their communities.

As I witnessed the recovery, I was amazed that folks were rebuilding back in the very same place, in the very same way, leaving themselves just as vulnerable to the next storm. We have to be compassionate and responsive to our citizens, but we also have a duty to be a good steward of the taxpayer dollars.

I am committed to establishing this study to see if we can tackle these tough issues and find solutions that are driven by facts and data rather than the emotion that inevitably follows a disaster. These reforms are one of my top priorities this Congress.

At the end of the day, the purpose of this bill is to ensure help will be there when disaster strikes and our constituents need that help the most.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, February 26, 2016.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER: I am writing to you concerning the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Homeland Security in H.R. 1471, the "FEMA Disaster Assistance Act of 2015." The bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Homeland Security.

I recognize and appreciate the desire to bring this legislation before the House of Representatives in an expeditious manner, and accordingly, the Committee on Homeland Security will not assert its jurisdictional claim over this bill by seeking a sequential referral. The Committee takes this action with the mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 1471 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction.

This waiver is also given with the understanding that the Committee on Homeland Security expressly reserves its authority to seek conferees on any provision within its jurisdiction during any House-Senate conference that may be convened on this or any similar legislation, and requests your support for such a request.

I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 1471, and ask that a copy of this letter and your response be included in the

Congressional Record during consideration of this bill on the House floor.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman,
Committee on Homeland Security.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COM-
MITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, February 26, 2016.

Hon. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCAUL: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Act of 2015. I appreciate your willingness to support expediting the consideration of this legislation on the House Floor.

I acknowledge that by waiving consideration of this bill, the Committee on Homeland Security does not waive any future valid jurisdictional claim to provisions in this or similar legislation. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving provisions within this legislation on which the Committee on Homeland Security has a valid jurisdictional claim.

I will include our letters on H.R. 1471 in the Congressional Record during House Floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation, and I look forward to working with the Committee on Homeland Security as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, February 25, 2016.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER: I am writing with respect to H.R. 1471, the "FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act," which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

As you know, H.R. 1471 contains provisions that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary. As a result of your having consulted with the Committee and in order to expedite the House's consideration of H.R. 1471, the Committee on the Judiciary will not assert its jurisdictional claim over this bill. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding and agreement that doing so will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 1471, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H.R. 1471.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COM-
MITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE,

Washington, DC, February 26, 2016.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Act of 2015. I appreciate your willingness to support expediting the consideration of this legislation on the House Floor.

I acknowledge that by waiving consideration of this bill, the Committee on the Judiciary does not waive any future valid jurisdictional claim to provisions in this or similar legislation. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving provisions within this legislation on which the Committee on the Judiciary has a valid jurisdictional claim.

I will include our letters on H.R. 1471 in the Congressional Record during House Floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation, and I look forward to working with the Committee on the Judiciary as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bipartisan measure before us today. H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015, as amended, contains several provisions important to State and local governments and emergency managers. I will only highlight a few of them. I also want to acknowledge Chairman BARLETTA and my good friend, Ranking Member DEFAZIO.

Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, the most important aspect of this bill is that it clarifies compensation and liability issues for urban search and rescue team members. These members provide critical services and put themselves in harm's way to help others involved in a disaster.

In Indianapolis, my city, our own urban search and rescue team, which consists of firefighters, paramedics, civilians, and others responded to Hurricane Sandy. They did so despite the uncertainties that they would be covered for any injuries. These protections, Mr. Speaker, are long overdue. Team members can now rest assured that they will be taken care of when activated for Federal service if they are injured.

Another important provision grows out of the individual States' and local governments' need to know that they can rely on FEMA's decisions and reimbursement amounts. Local governments make major decisions during the disaster recovery phase in reliance on FEMA's initial approval. There comes a time, Mr. Speaker, when FEMA should not be able to reverse its initial decisions or award amounts. Statute of limitations protections for individuals,

States, and local governments will provide peace of mind and certainty needed to go forward with the recovery process.

Climate change, Mr. Speaker, is causing more extreme weather patterns. So in order for us to become more resilient, we must encourage more local governments, communities to undertake mitigation measures. Some communities may forgo mitigation actions because they do not have the capacity to administer the funds. Ensuring that local governments will be reimbursed for management costs should help us all obtain more resilient communities.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, our subcommittee has embarked on discussions related to the trends and causes of rising disaster costs and losses. In furtherance of this discussion, the bill requires FEMA's National Advisory Council to study the issue and make recommendations to Congress and address causes and trends. Specifically, the bill requires the Council to examine mechanisms and incentives to promote mitigation and to make recommendations regarding the same.

The last few years, Mr. Speaker, I have introduced a bill to reauthorize the disaster mitigation program. Mr. Speaker, mitigation saves taxpayer funds over the long haul. I look forward to any recommendations from the National Advisory Council on how we can strengthen this available and very effective program.

I want to thank Chairman BARLETTA again and Ranking Member DEFAZIO for their leadership on this very important measure. As an original cosponsor of this measure, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting H.R. 1471.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS), who knows very well how important these disaster programs are when disasters have struck his State of Illinois.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill.

FEMA's disaster declaration process is broken. You don't need to look any further than the State of Illinois to see how FEMA's aid formula is failing the hardworking families of this country because it simply doesn't put all communities on a level playing field.

In 2012, Harrisburg, Illinois, was denied Federal assistance following tornadoes that swept across the Midwest, while Missouri and Kentucky received it. Recently, towns like Gifford and Washington in central Illinois were denied public assistance as well.

FEMA currently takes into account several factors when determining the need for public and individual assistance. However, there currently is no

standard to determine which factor is more important than another, which leads to highly subjective and uncertain processes that leave States and communities in limbo for weeks as their application is considered.

By working with this committee and this subcommittee that Chairman BARLETTA chairs, we were able to include language that was based on a bill that I introduced with many of my colleagues that requires the administrator of FEMA, when making recommendations to the President regarding a major disaster declaration, to give greater weight and consideration to localized impact.

Consideration of this important legislation is timely for my home State of Illinois. Just days ago, Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner submitted a request to President Obama asking him to declare a major disaster for Illinois following the extensive holiday flooding that we saw right at about the new year.

Much of this damage happened in my home county of Christian County, where four people tragically lost their lives after encountering flood waters. Sadly, two of the deceased, Brandon Mann and Devan Everett, were from my hometown of Taylorville. Certainly no amount of resources can compensate for the loss of human life when disaster strikes, and yet these communities still need to rebuild. Preliminary damage assessments determined that communities in Illinois experienced \$15 million in damages. Unfortunately, that doesn't meet FEMA's \$18.1 million threshold.

Mr. Speaker, it is just not right that States like Illinois, where a significant portion of the population is concentrated in a single area, can be denied disaster relief because of an arbitrary formula developed by bureaucrats in concrete buildings right here in Washington, D.C. That is what makes this bill and my provision so important. It levels the playing field. It tells rural America that, when disaster strikes, we are going to look out for you, too.

Mr. Speaker, I come from rural America. I know these people. These are not the type of people who expect help, who expect Washington to solve their problems; but we as Members of Congress and as Americans have an obligation to commit that we will be there for them when they need us and that we won't let arbitrary formulas prevent that help from being delivered.

We need this bill. We need these reforms. It will make a difference. Thank you again to Chairman BARLETTA, Chairman SHUSTER, and the ranking members.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), my good friend and ranking member.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, the ranking member of the subcommittee, for yielding, and I thank him for his excellent work on this bill, as I do the subcommittee chair and the full committee chairman.

This is a bill very much in the tradition of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure where, in fact, we have come together and put together a bipartisan proposal to reauthorize the Federal Emergency Management Agency, a critical, critical agency, as you have heard from some of the previous speakers.

In particular, in the West, we have some issues regarding wildfires. We had the worst wildfire season on record last year: 10 million acres burned; half the Forest Service budget went to fighting these wildfires. The perversity of that is that, when astounding amounts of money like that are required from the Forest Service, the Forest Service has to reduce other budgets, including preventative activities, particularly fuel reduction and other activities that would prevent future fires. So we are on this endless cycle that should end.

Unfortunately, this bill doesn't end that. I hope that happens later in the Congress. There is legislation pending in both the House and the Senate that we have come close to moving that would deal with declaring that catastrophic fires are disasters, just like tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, et cetera.

In this bill, we did make some progress. It makes State and private lands eligible for hazard mitigation assistance after wildfires. It is a commonsense solution to save on future disaster costs and losses. The bill also encourages States to direct the funds to the areas that experienced the wildfire.

I thank our colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ), for his extraordinary leadership on this issue. You have a fire, and particularly in California and elsewhere you have potential for catastrophic mudslides, future catastrophes, putting the public at risk. Hazard mitigation assistance on wildfires on State and private lands, encouraging wildfire mitigation, such as reducing hazardous fuels, and re-seeding ground cover will help reduce the costs of future disasters.

Further, there are other provisions in this legislation that deal with the potential for catastrophic earthquake and tsunami. The Cascadia subduction zone off the coast of Oregon, northern California has generated at least 12 major, great earthquakes, magnitude 8 to 9, yet we are woefully unprepared in terms of any sorts of early detection.

We have just begun the rudiments with some Federal assistance of a land-based early detection system. We need an ocean-based early detection system, such as the Japanese have deployed. Early warning of quakes and tsunamis

will save many lives on the coast of Oregon, Washington, and northern California. It will also save tremendous amounts in terms of infrastructure in the inland and more distant areas where they would have ample warning to shut down transit systems, get people off bridges, stop elevators in high-rise buildings, and otherwise accommodate the public, preventing more loss of life and also more catastrophic problems.

Again, Japan is far, far ahead of us. They can and have stopped their high-speed rail trains when they have distant warning of a coming tremor. Even though the tremors move quickly through the Earth, there is enough time to slow or stop those trains. They have had time to evacuate the coastal areas. Although, unfortunately, in the last quake, when they reestimated the size of the tsunami, they found out communications were down. Now they have taken care of this. Now they have moved to a cellular-based network to notify people the tsunami is coming and to get them to high ground.

So we can and should do a lot more there. This bill opens the door to those sorts of programs here in the United States of America.

Finally, it gives assurances—well, two more points—to State and local governments they will be reimbursed up to a certain amount for costs incurred during disaster recovery.

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This will encourage local governments to undertake new mitigation projects, which is a good deal for both the Federal Government and for taxpayers. Mitigation saves \$3 to \$4 for every dollar invested.

Finally, we have a power play by a minor Federal agency attempting to make FEMA become the national land use planning agency of the United States, trying to force FEMA to deny flood insurance to States that don't follow the directives of the National Marine Fisheries Service.

This is not authorized by law. They are way out of line, unfortunately. I talked to the woman who is head of that agency. She disagrees. Her regional representative is hell-bent to become the land use planning agency for Oregon, although, of course, it already has comprehensive land use planning, unlike his home State of Washington, which was not subjected to these dramatic changes in law.

We are making it clear that that is not the authority of FEMA in this bill. That is a reasonable position. It is a bipartisan position. I thank my colleague and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle for their help.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER), who was very helpful in adding very important language that strengthened this bill.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, in August of 2013, the southern portion of my district experienced a major disaster involving heavy flooding, which devastated infrastructure and caused significant hardship to many of my constituents.

Unfortunately, the Federal recovery efforts to this devastated region added insult to injury. Local officials dealt with multiple teams conducting duplicative site visits due to lost paperwork, inconsistent messages between various survey and evaluation teams, and unnecessarily long delays in recovery and reimbursement. Such a response to any disaster is unacceptable, and change is necessary.

Last year I introduced a bill to address the shortcomings of the FEMA response to the 2013 flooding in my district to ensure future disaster recoveries in Missouri and elsewhere are as painless and efficient as possible.

My bill, which is included in this reform package, requires FEMA to create an action plan to address inconsistent guidance, inappropriate recordkeeping procedures, and overall mixed assistance to local officials.

Additionally, it directs FEMA to issue a forward-looking report to identify new technologies that further aid the disaster workforce in partnering with private nonprofits as well as State and local governments in the wake of a disaster or emergency.

FEMA processes need to be streamlined and consistent in order to help those recovering from a disaster feel supported and assured the relief will come in a timely, efficient manner.

I rise today in full support of H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act. Making sure Federal agencies have the proper oversight and resources they need is an important function of the U.S. Congress.

This 3-year reauthorization is a shining example of a bipartisan, common-sense effort to make the people get the help and assistance they so desperately need in times of crisis.

I want to thank the sponsor of this bill, Mr. BARLETTA, and the ranking member for including my language in the FEMA reform package.

I encourage my colleagues to vote for H.R. 1471.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL), my good friend and a member of the committee.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act, and I thank the chairman and ranking member for their fine work.

The bill contains a bipartisan provision which I had the honor of working on with my friend and colleague from Florida, Congressman DAN WEBSTER.

As Floridians, we know hurricanes. In 2004 and 2005, Charley, Frances, Jeanne, Wilma, and Katrina tore through our State, leaving families stranded and property damaged. Trees crashed to the ground, ripping power lines and blocking flooded streets. Water systems were compromised.

Our local governments did a miraculous job cleaning debris from public ways, fixing broken infrastructure, and getting life back to normal. It takes a lot to get this done.

When hurricanes strike, communities are ravaged and so are their budgets. So I want to thank FEMA for the funding assistance it provided Florida at a time of great stress and need.

Now FEMA is asking some of our cities and counties to pay back money that they were given for disaster relief projects that were approved more than 10 years ago.

But here is the thing. There is no question that FEMA should do responsible audits of its relief payments to make sure that money was used properly. But unless there is fraud, the process should not be an endless journey into the Federal bureaucracy.

Our local governments, unlike the Federal Government, have to balance their budgets. They can't afford to wait 5, 10, or an infinite number of years for FEMA to do its assessment, especially when millions of dollars are at stake.

Simply said, the current practice unfairly stymies our local governments' ability to plan their future budgets. This legislation will make sure that the process is more balanced, giving FEMA adequate time to review its grant payments while allowing for financial security to local governments.

I urge my colleagues to support this very good legislation.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES), who spent a lot of time and worked very hard to make this bill better.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the reality, as the gentleman from Indiana noted earlier, is that we are going to have disasters and we are going to spend funds responding to those disasters.

The problem with the United States disaster management policy is that it is backward. It is entirely reactive. Rather than going in before a disaster happens and making areas more resilient, making our ecosystem more resilient, making our economy more resilient, we are dead set on this process of coming in after disasters and spending exponentially more dollars.

The ranking member referenced a few figures a little while ago. He referenced a figure of a CBO study indicating that, for every \$1 we invest in the right type of hazard mitigation, we save \$3 in disaster response cost.

There was another study that FEMA did. For every \$1 we invest, we have \$4 in cost savings. I think, Mr. Speaker, with the right criteria, you actually even save more.

Now, we are challenged as a Nation right now because the agency that is primarily responsible for making our communities more resilient is the U.S. Army Corps Engineers, which, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, is stuck on stupid.

What we have seen over the last several years is, rather than trying to fix that, we have seen other agencies coming up being granting agencies. We have seen FEMA. This year we have seen the Department of the Interior in the President's budget. In the recent years, we have seen HUD.

Rather than fixing the problem, we are just trying to go around it and put more granting agencies out there. It is creating a disparate approach, an approach that is not coordinated and an approach that is going to result in more taxpayers' funds being spent on the wrong projects, the wrong priorities, rather than being proactive. This bill addresses that, Mr. Speaker.

This bill actually includes a provision that has FEMA begin developing a coordinated, proactive approach to how we mitigate or reduce vulnerabilities from disasters.

In the last several years, in my home State of Louisiana, we have seen extraordinary disasters, whether it is Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 or Hurricanes Gustav and Ike in 2008.

We had the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2011. In 2012, we had Hurricane Isaac. In 2011 and again this year, we saw record-high water on the Mississippi River system causing flooding.

We are going to spend dollars. We have got to spend them in the right and principled places.

This bill does a number of things that are important. Number one, it eliminates bureaucracy and helps to streamline the process of getting dollars on the ground to some of our important impacted areas.

We have seen where this bill comes in and it actually changes criteria, where severely impacted local communities, like in Louisiana, where we just saw St. John Parish, Ascension Parish, Livingston Parish, the area of Kenner, and St. James Parish experience extraordinary impacts from tornadoes. Those areas actually could potentially qualify for Federal disaster because of the severe impacts in some of these limited areas.

Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the ranking member and the chairman for working with us on a provision that prevents FEMA from being able to move the goalpost on us, being able to come and change conditions after a grant is made that could result in homeowners having to pay back absurd amounts of money when they followed the criteria and followed

the commitments when they entered into these grant agreements.

Mr. Speaker, this bill goes a long way. I want to continue working with the leaders of this bill on these zones, on duplication of efforts, and other things. But I will say it again, Mr. Speaker: we are going to spend the money one way or another. We need to spend it in a principled manner.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend my colleagues for passing H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015. This important legislation authorizes appropriations for the Federal Emergency Management Agency for FY2016–FY2018 for management and administration. It also, directs FEMA, through the National Advisory Council, to undertake and report on a comprehensive study of disaster costs and losses.

H.R. 1471 includes provisions that I introduced that extends the authority of FEMA's Administrator to waive debts associated with an overpayment of individual assistance, so long as the overpayment was not a result of fraud.

This issue received national attention when about 30 residents at the Belle Harbor Manor, an assisted living facility in my district, received collection notices related to assistance provided by FEMA in the aftermath of Super Storm Sandy. FEMA's Administrator, Craig Fugate, later cancelled their debts. However, he is limited in canceling the debts of others who are in the exact same situation.

H.R. 1471 fixes this and provides FEMA's Administrator with expanded authority to waive debts of thousands of Super Storm Sandy survivors, as well as the debts incurred as a result of future natural disasters.

I want to thank my colleagues, Representative LOU BARLETTA and Representative PETER DEFAZIO, for their assistance in developing this language. I would also like to thank New York State Assemblyman Phillip Goldfeder for his tireless advocacy on behalf of Super Storm Sandy victims. It is my hope that this measure will receive speedy passage in the Senate so it can be signed by President Obama, and survivors of Super Storm Sandy can finally recover for this horrific act of God.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1471, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION CAPABILITIES ACT

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4084) to enable civilian research and development of advanced

nuclear energy technologies by private and public institutions and to expand theoretical and practical knowledge of nuclear physics, chemistry, and materials science, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4084

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act".

SEC. 2. NUCLEAR ENERGY.

Section 951 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 951. NUCLEAR ENERGY.

"(a) MISSION.—The Secretary shall conduct programs of civilian nuclear research, development, demonstration, and commercial application, including activities in this subtitle. Such programs shall take into consideration the following objectives:

"(1) Providing research infrastructure to promote scientific progress and enable users from academia, the National Laboratories, and the private sector to make scientific discoveries relevant for nuclear, chemical, and materials science engineering.

"(2) Maintaining National Laboratory and university nuclear energy research and development programs, including their infrastructure.

"(3) Providing the technical means to reduce the likelihood of nuclear weapons proliferation and increasing confidence margins for public safety of nuclear energy systems.

"(4) Reducing the environmental impact of nuclear energy related activities.

"(5) Supporting technology transfer from the National Laboratories to the private sector.

"(6) Enabling the private sector to partner with the National Laboratories to demonstrate novel reactor concepts for the purpose of resolving technical uncertainty associated with the aforementioned objectives in this subsection.

"(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this subtitle:

"(1) ADVANCED FISSION REACTOR.—The term 'advanced fission reactor' means a nuclear fission reactor with significant improvements over the most recent generation of nuclear reactors, which may include inherent safety features, lower waste yields, greater fuel utilization, superior reliability, resistance to proliferation, and increased thermal efficiency.

"(2) FAST NEUTRON.—The term 'fast neutron' means a neutron with kinetic energy above 100 kiloelectron volts.

"(3) NATIONAL LABORATORY.—The term 'National Laboratory' has the meaning given that term in paragraph (3) of section 2, except that with respect to subparagraphs (G), (H), and (N) of such paragraph, for purposes of this subtitle the term includes only the civilian activities thereof.

"(4) NEUTRON FLUX.—The term 'neutron flux' means the intensity of neutron radiation measured as a rate of flow of neutrons applied over an area.

"(5) NEUTRON SOURCE.—The term 'neutron source' means a research machine that provides neutron irradiation services for research on materials sciences and nuclear physics as well as testing of advanced materials, nuclear fuels, and other related components for reactor systems.

"(c) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the Congress that nuclear energy, through

fission or fusion, represents the highest energy density of any known attainable source and yields zero air emissions. This energy source is of national importance to scientific progress, national security, electricity generation, heat generation for industrial applications, and space exploration. Considering the inherent complexity and regulatory burden associated with this area of science, the Department should focus its civilian nuclear research and development activities towards programs that enable the private sector, National Laboratories, and universities to carry out such experiments as are necessary to promote scientific progress and enhance practical knowledge of nuclear engineering.”

SEC. 3. NUCLEAR ENERGY RESEARCH PROGRAMS.

Section 952 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16272) is amended—

- (1) by striking subsection (c); and
- (2) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively.

SEC. 4. ADVANCED FUEL CYCLE INITIATIVE.

Section 953(a) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16273(a)) is amended by striking “, acting through the Director of the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology,”.

SEC. 5. UNIVERSITY NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING SUPPORT.

Section 954(d)(4) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16274(d)(4)) is amended by striking “as part of a taking into consideration effort that emphasizes” and inserting “that emphasize”.

SEC. 6. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY CIVILIAN NUCLEAR INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES.

Section 955 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16275) is amended—

- (1) by striking subsections (c) and (d); and
- (2) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) VERSATILE NEUTRON SOURCE.—

“(1) MISSION NEED.—Not later than December 31, 2016, the Secretary shall determine the mission need for a versatile reactor-based fast neutron source, which shall operate as a national user facility. During this process, the Secretary shall consult with the private sector, universities, National Laboratories, and relevant Federal agencies to ensure that this user facility will meet the research needs of the largest possible majority of prospective users.

“(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—Upon the determination of mission need made under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall, as expeditiously as possible, provide to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a detailed plan for the establishment of the user facility.

“(3) FACILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) CAPABILITIES.—The Secretary shall ensure that this user facility will provide, at a minimum, the following capabilities:

“(i) Fast neutron spectrum irradiation capability.

“(ii) Capacity for upgrades to accommodate new or expanded research needs.

“(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the plan provided under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall consider the following:

“(i) Capabilities that support experimental high-temperature testing.

“(ii) Providing a source of fast neutrons at a neutron flux, higher than that at which current research facilities operate, sufficient to enable research for an optimal base of prospective users.

“(iii) Maximizing irradiation flexibility and irradiation volume to accommodate as many concurrent users as possible.

“(iv) Capabilities for irradiation with neutrons of a lower energy spectrum.

“(v) Multiple loops for fuels and materials testing in different coolants.

“(vi) Additional pre-irradiation and post-irradiation examination capabilities.

“(vii) Lifetime operating costs and lifecycle costs.

“(4) REPORTING PROGRESS.—The Department shall, in its annual budget requests, provide an explanation for any delay in its progress and otherwise make every effort to complete construction and approve the start of operations for this facility by December 31, 2025.

“(5) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall leverage the best practices for management, construction, and operation of national user facilities from the Office of Science.”.

SEC. 7. SECURITY OF NUCLEAR FACILITIES.

Section 956 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16276) is amended by striking “, acting through the Director of the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology,”.

SEC. 8. HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTATION AND SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH.

Section 957 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16277) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 957. HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTATION AND SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH.

“(a) MODELING AND SIMULATION.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to enhance the Nation’s capabilities to develop new reactor technologies through high-performance computation modeling and simulation techniques. This program shall coordinate with relevant Federal agencies through the National Strategic Computing Initiative created under Executive Order 13702 (July 29, 2015) while taking into account the following objectives:

“(1) Utilizing expertise from the private sector, universities, and National Laboratories to develop computational software and capabilities that prospective users may access to accelerate research and development of advanced fission reactor systems, nuclear fusion systems, and reactor systems for space exploration.

“(2) Developing computational tools to simulate and predict nuclear phenomena that may be validated through physical experimentation.

“(3) Increasing the utility of the Department’s research infrastructure by coordinating with the Advanced Scientific Computing Research program within the Office of Science.

“(4) Leveraging experience from the Energy Innovation Hub for Modeling and Simulation.

“(5) Ensuring that new experimental and computational tools are accessible to relevant research communities.

“(b) SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary shall consider support for additional research activities to maximize the utility of its research facilities, including physical processes to simulate degradation of materials and behavior of fuel forms and for validation of computational tools.”.

SEC. 9. ENABLING NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION.

Subtitle E of title IX of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 958. ENABLING NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION.

“(a) NATIONAL REACTOR INNOVATION CENTER.—The Secretary shall carry out a pro-

gram to enable the testing and demonstration of reactor concepts to be proposed and funded by the private sector. The Secretary shall leverage the technical expertise of relevant Federal agencies and National Laboratories in order to minimize the time required to enable construction and operation of privately funded experimental reactors at National Laboratories or other Department-owned sites while ensuring reasonable safety for persons working within these sites. Such reactors shall operate to meet the following objectives:

“(1) Enabling physical validation of novel reactor concepts.

“(2) Resolving technical uncertainty and increasing practical knowledge relevant to safety, resilience, security, and functionality of first-of-a-kind reactor concepts.

“(3) General research and development to improve nascent technologies.

“(b) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the National Laboratories, relevant Federal agencies, and other stakeholders, shall transmit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report assessing the Department’s capabilities to authorize, host, and oversee privately funded fusion and advanced fission experimental reactors as described under subsection (a). The report shall address the following:

“(1) The Department’s safety review and oversight capabilities, including options to leverage expertise from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and National Laboratories.

“(2) Potential sites capable of hosting activities described under subsection (a).

“(3) The efficacy of the Department’s available contractual mechanisms to partner with the private sector and Federal agencies, including cooperative research and development agreements, strategic partnership projects, and agreements for commercializing technology.

“(4) Potential cost structures related to physical security, decommissioning, liability, and other long-term project costs.

“(5) Other challenges or considerations identified by the Secretary.”.

SEC. 10. BUDGET PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E of title IX of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271 et seq.) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 959. BUDGET PLAN.

“Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, the Department shall transmit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate 2 alternative 10-year budget plans for civilian nuclear energy research and development by the Department. The first shall assume constant annual funding for 10 years at the appropriated level for the Department’s civilian nuclear energy research and development for fiscal year 2016. The second shall be an unconstrained budget. The 2 plans shall include—

“(1) a prioritized list of the Department’s programs, projects, and activities to best support the development of next generation nuclear energy technology;

“(2) realistic budget requirements for the Department to implement sections 955(c), 957, and 958 of this Act; and

“(3) the Department’s justification for continuing or terminating existing civilian nuclear energy research and development programs.”.

(b) **REPORT ON FUSION INNOVATION.**—Not later than six months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Energy shall transmit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that will identify engineering designs for innovative fusion energy systems that have the potential to demonstrate net energy production not later than 15 years after the start of construction. In this report, the Secretary will identify budgetary requirements that would be necessary for the Department to carry out a fusion innovation initiative to accelerate research and development of these designs.

SEC. 11. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

The table of contents for the Energy Policy Act of 2005 is amended by striking the item relating to section 957 and inserting the following:

“957. High-performance computation and supportive research.

“958. Enabling nuclear energy innovation.

“959. Budget plan.”.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act.

I want to thank Ranking Member JOHNSON and Chairman SMITH for cosponsoring this important legislation and for their leadership in advocating for nuclear energy research and development.

I am grateful for the opportunity to work with my fellow Texans to guide research that will keep America safe, globally competitive, and support nuclear innovation. I also want to thank my colleagues on the Science Committee who cosponsored H.R. 4084.

Mr. Speaker, the Science Committee has spent over a year examining U.S. nuclear energy policy and preparation for this legislation. We have been holding hearings on supercomputing, advanced nuclear energy technology, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the DOE Energy Innovation Hubs.

Witnesses from the national labs, universities, and the private sector have all testified in support of the various reforms and policies outlined in this bill.

We took our time developing this legislation. By working together and listening to all the relevant stakeholders, we have developed broad bipartisan and bicameral support for this bill.

We have worked with our colleagues in the Senate to develop companion legislation as well. Last month an amendment with the text of this legis-

lation passed, Mr. Speaker, with historic overwhelming support in the Senate.

For the first time in many years, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act will provide updated statutory direction to the Department of Energy’s nuclear research activities to ensure that fundamental research is prioritized and precious resources are not wasted.

This bill requires DOE to leverage its supercomputing infrastructure and use modeling and simulation capabilities to develop advanced fission and fusion reactors.

The bill lays out a clear timeline and parameters for DOE to complete a research reactor. A research reactor is a crucial part of ensuring materials and nuclear fuels R&D can take place in the United States.

This type of research requires access to fast neutrons, which, unfortunately, are currently only available for civilian research in Russia, Mr. Speaker.

While modeling and simulation can accelerate R&D, nuclear energy must be validated through a physical source. The versatile neutron source under section 6 of H.R. 4084 will provide the United States with that vital capability.

□ 1745

This legislation also directs DOE to partner with the private sector to construct and operate reactor prototypes at DOE National Labs.

Nuclear reactors are expensive and highly regulated. Designing a first-of-a-kind reactor requires a blend of creative freedom for engineers to test new designs while ensuring safety throughout the entire process.

DOE sites, particularly the DOE National Labs, can provide a unique environment that safely allows for this kind of creative testing and development for advanced nuclear technology, without a burdensome regulatory process which slows progress to a crawl.

DOE has fundamental authority to enter into these innovative research partnerships, but won’t have the confidence to act without direction from Congress, which is provided in this legislation, Mr. Speaker.

America must maintain our nuclear capabilities and continue to develop cutting-edge technology right here at home. Without the direction provided in this bill, we will continue to fall further and further behind, lose the ability to develop innovative nuclear technology, and be left importing reactor designs from overseas.

Today, we have the best nuclear engineers and manufacturing capacity in the world right here at home. We can’t put that expertise at risk, Mr. Speaker.

Even more importantly, this bill will maintain America’s capability to influence security and proliferation standards around the world, as more devel-

oping nations look to nuclear energy to grow their economies.

As a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I am constantly reminded of the need for American leadership in a dangerous world. H.R. 4084 reaffirms the United States’ commitment to safely advancing nuclear technology.

I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act.

Currently in the United States, nuclear power produces about 20 percent of our Nation’s electrical supply, and that makes nuclear power the single largest carbon-free power source in the country.

However, our current nuclear fleet is growing older. Many of the plants across our country are many decades old and rely upon nuclear technology that is even older.

There have been substantial efforts in the past decade to move towards constructing new nuclear generating units with more modern designs. However, these efforts have had mixed results.

There have been construction difficulties, regulatory hurdles, and financing issues, all of which have conspired to delay the construction of new nuclear plants in America.

Some of these hurdles, though, are unlikely to go away with our current technologies. The Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and Fukushima nuclear accidents have repeatedly highlighted the necessity of ensuring our nuclear fleet runs as safely as possible. This has led to much of the cost and difficulty of building the new plants.

I think the answer to these problems can be found in innovative new nuclear technologies. The Department of Energy and many different companies in the private sector are working on new forms of nuclear energy generation that hold the promise of much more effective and much safer nuclear generation stations.

Some of these technologies also address the extremely important issue of the radioactive waste streams that plague our current generation of nuclear plants.

H.R. 4084 takes several positive steps to help spur this innovation and deliver these very promising nuclear technologies to market.

I also want to highlight one additional reason to support H.R. 4084. As the world makes commitments to move toward a lower carbon future, as evidenced by the Paris climate agreement, it presents an opportunity to American Industry to supply low-carbon power platforms like nuclear power.

This bill will keep our country on the forefront of nuclear power technology, and it is my hope it will empower American Industry to be the suppliers of the next generation of nuclear plants throughout the entire world.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Congressman WEBER for sponsoring this legislation, and thank Science, Space, and Technology Committee Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON for bringing this bill to the floor in such a bipartisan manner.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve balance of my time.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I appreciate the gentleman's kind remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK).

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Texas (Mr. WEBER), for his leadership on this important issue and for allowing me a few moments to speak on it.

H.R. 4084 is a critical piece of legislation that will improve our Nation's nuclear energy research and foster the development of our next generation of nuclear reactors.

Throughout our history, the United States has led the world in developing new nuclear technologies, and this bill provides the tools to help us to continue this leadership into the future.

One of the many important provisions of this bill is that it directs the Department of Energy, through its National Laboratories, to develop new nuclear reactor concepts by partnering with the private sector.

With a national population of 320 million, and growing, we must be aggressive in our pursuit of new nuclear breakthroughs in order to power our Nation's future.

As a Member of Congress from Georgia, I understand the challenges of providing power to a rapidly growing population. Georgia's population is expected to increase by almost 2 million over the next 10 years, and without clean, affordable, reliable nuclear power, the task of bringing electricity to these new residents would be daunting.

The United States has not added any nuclear power generation for over 30 years. However, today, new power units are being built at Plant Vogtle in Georgia. These nuclear power generators will add the capacity to power 1 million homes and businesses once they are completed.

After visiting Plant Vogtle last year, I am confident that these new generators will reassure the country that nuclear power is safe, secure, and reliable, and will encourage the pursuit of future nuclear technology breakthroughs.

This bill is vital to the future of our Nation because it enables the private sector to utilize the research tools and

resources at the DOE National Labs so scientists and engineers in the private sector can assist in the development of new nuclear technologies. Nuclear power generation that is clean, sustainable, and safe, is what will power America's homes and businesses for years to come.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. KNIGHT).

Mr. KNIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. WEBER and Mr. BEYER for their congenial work on this issue.

I do rise today in support of H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, as I am a cosponsor. Some of us believe a nuclear energy policy is important to the State of California, which is home to private companies and universities pursuing advanced nuclear technologies.

I am proud to support this legislation because it would provide capabilities for our technology innovators to develop new reactors that will yield amazing benefits to society through increased resistance to proliferation, minimizing waste, and perhaps even consuming existing waste stockpiles.

The possibilities are endless when we allow our engineers to creatively tackle the world's challenges, and this is no different for nuclear energy.

This is important because in my district we have recently seen the issues that can arise when an area is dependent on a single energy source.

California is home to many of the companies seeking to partner with the DOE and benefit from our Nation's unparalleled supercomputer capabilities. Leveraging the Department's assets will help our domestic industry capture a significant share of a growing, multi-billion-dollar industry.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support from Tri Alpha, a California-based fusion company, and UPower, a California-based advanced fission reactor company.

TRI ALPHA ENERGY,
February 24, 2016.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, House Science, Space & Technology Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON,
Ranking Member, House Science, Space & Technology Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. RANDY WEBER,
Chairman, Energy Subcommittee, House Science, Space & Technology Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH, RANKING MEMBER JOHNSON, and REPRESENTATIVE WEBER: Tri Alpha Energy is a fusion energy science research company headquartered in Foothill Ranch, California. Our purpose is to deliver world-changing clean fusion energy for economical, commercial power generation as fast as possible. Tri Alpha started as a research project at the University of California-Irvine in 1990. Today we have 150 em-

ployees, over 350 patents issued or pending, and are conducting experiments on a state of the art plasma generation device.

We are writing to express support for your bill H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act. Global market and environmental conditions demand that new sources of clean, baseload electricity be developed. New nuclear designs hold tremendous promise as a sustainable and cost-competitive power solution, but the United States government must provide a favorable policy environment for the necessary technology developments to take place.

H.R. 4084 would make several improvements at the Department of Energy to help move advanced nuclear technology concepts, including fusion, out of the laboratory and toward commercialization. The Nuclear Innovation Center, for example, would enable shorter development and permitting timelines by allowing private companies to work hand-in-hand with federal researchers and regulators on design validation.

We commend you and your staff for recognizing the enormous positive potential that advanced nuclear, including fusion, holds in the United States and for offering thoughtful, bipartisan legislation to move the industry forward. We hope that H.R. 4084 will be offered for floor consideration soon and offer our support to help move the bill to final passage. We also look forward to working with your Committee on other fusion energy issues in the future. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

RICHARD C. BARTH, Ph.D.,
*Senior Vice President,
Government Relations,
Tri Alpha Energy.*

JANUARY 22, 2016.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH, *Chairman,*
Hon. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, *Ranking Member,*

Hon. RANDY WEBER, *Chairman,*
Subcommittee on Energy and the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH, RANKING MEMBER JOHNSON, CHAIRMAN WEBER, and SENATOR WHITEHOUSE, SENATOR BOOKER, and SENATOR RISC: On behalf of UPower Technologies, I am writing to commend your bipartisan leadership and foresight regarding the creation and passage of H.R. 4084 and the Senate companion which compose the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act (the Act).

UPower Technologies, Inc., soon to become Oklo, Inc., is a funded advanced reactor startup based in Silicon Valley. We believe that what is good for all advanced nuclear is what's best for the individual companies as well, and in turn what is best for the industry is best for the nation. Each entity in the advanced nuclear industry requires a high-functioning network of a diversity of companies, manufacturers, labs, suppliers, regulators, investors, and other expertise in order to thrive. And the United States will require this home-grown industry to be an international leader in clean energy, to provide high-paying, long-term jobs, and to provide clean power in a safe and reliable manner. Your commendable work on the Nuclear Innovation Capabilities Act will support these important U.S. goals.

The Act is a start to look critically at potential ways that the U.S. government can be more efficient both in utilizing its vast, existing investments in infrastructure and expertise, and in removing unreasonable blocks to American innovation.

The Act begins to lay out an important framework and focus for the Department of Energy (DOE) regarding advanced nuclear, especially regarding its relationship to industry. While the DOE has many resources in place, such as a wealth of valuable advanced codes and computational resources, a congressional mandate to focus on making these resources more accessible, cost effective, and utilized could make both the DOE complex and the advanced reactor industry more vibrant.

The Act also requires the DOE to consider locations for nuclear fueled advanced reactor testing. It will be critical as this process proceeds to ensure that locations for implementations are not limited among the various potential DOE sites and that fees and contracting are in line with reasonable costs and not compensating for irrelevant or excessive overhead.

The Act institutes a focus on having a fast reactor resource within the DOE complex. It will be a valuable asset to both the DOE and the industry.

The laudable goal of the Act is to streamline U.S. technology development to commercialization. As such, it will be critically important that the DOE work as seamlessly as possible with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) as far as providing data and allowing for the licensing activities required for commercialization, so that there need not be a duplication of nuclear-fueled implementations—possibly an exorbitant cost for any startup to survive.

The Act also asks the NRC for a report on timeline expectations for advanced reactor licensing. From the perspective of current or future advanced nuclear startup companies, an official report on timelines creates better certainty for private investment. This is potentially a very valuable provision to encourage private investment to further this relatively new U.S. industry. We also encourage continued dialog between the NRC, industry, and other stakeholders regarding how the regulatory process can benefit from significant advances in safety, further reducing uncertainty and accelerating deployment of safe, clean energy.

In summary, we support H.R. 4084 and the accompanying Senate bill. We appreciate the focus it brings to key areas to utilize U.S. investments and infrastructure to enhance U.S. innovation in clean energy. We also look forward to future legislation which may add appropriation and clarification of public-private contracting to further enable American innovation. UPower Technologies stands ready to support these important advances in U.S. energy leadership.

Sincerely,

JACOB DEWITTE,
CEO and founder,
UPower Technologies, Inc.
(changing to Oklo, Inc.), Sunnyvale, CA.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, having no further requests for time, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 12 minutes remaining.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to re-

visé and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 4084, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 4084 is vital to ensuring America's leadership in nuclear innovation. By harnessing the expertise of our Nation's National Labs, some of which we heard about today, its universities and entrepreneurs, the private sector can take the lead in developing groundbreaking advanced nuclear technology.

I especially want to thank my colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee; of course, Ranking Member EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON; those who have also cosponsored the bill, including DAN LIPINSKI, BARRY LOUDERMILK, ED PERLMUTTER, BARBARA COMSTOCK, PAUL TONKO, JIM BRIDENSTINE, BRIAN BABIN, DANA ROHRABACHER, RANDY HULTGREN, BRUCE WESTERMAN, STEVE KNIGHT, BILL POSEY, FRANK LUCAS, RANDY NEUGEBAUER, and the gentleman from Virginia for his kind remarks. I also want to thank the dozens and dozens of researchers and stakeholders who came in and provided feedback as we developed this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter exchange between the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Science, Space, and Technology Committee on H.R. 4084.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, February 29, 2016.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH: I write in regard to H.R. 4084, the "Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act." As you are aware, the bill was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, but the Committee on Energy and Commerce has a jurisdictional interest in the bill. I wanted to notify you that the Committee on Energy and Commerce will forgo action on H.R. 4084 so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

This is done with the understanding that the Committee on Energy and Commerce's jurisdictional interests over this and similar legislation are in no way diminished or altered. In addition, the Committee reserves the right to seek conferees on H.R. 4084 and requests your support when such a request is made.

I would appreciate your response confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 4084 and ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the House floor.

Sincerely,

FRED UPTON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY,

Washington, DC, February 29, 2016.

Hon. FRED UPTON,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 4084, the "Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act." Your support for this legislation and your assistance in ensuring its timely consideration are greatly appreciated.

I agree that a provision in the bill is within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I acknowledge that by waiving rights to further consideration of H.R. 4084, your Committee is not relinquishing its jurisdiction. A copy of our letters will be placed in the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the House floor.

I value your cooperation and look forward to working with you as we move ahead with this legislation.

Sincerely,

LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this commonsense, bipartisan legislation. I appreciate my colleagues' help.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4084, the "Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act," directs civilian nuclear energy research and development to contribute to American nuclear power.

I thank the Energy Subcommittee Chairman, RANDY WEBER, and Science Committee Ranking Member, EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, for their leadership on this issue.

I also want to thank many bipartisan cosponsors of the bill, which include Science Committee Vice Chairman FRANK LUCAS, Research and Technology Subcommittee Chairwoman BARBARA COMSTOCK and Subcommittee Ranking Member DAN LIPINSKI, Environment Subcommittee Chairman JIM BRIDENSTINE, Oversight Subcommittee Chairman BARRY LOUDERMILK, Space Subcommittee Chairman BRIAN BABIN, and full committee members DANA ROHRABACHER, ED PERLMUTTER, RANDY HULTGREN, PAUL TONKO, BRUCE WESTERMAN, STEVE KNIGHT, BILL POSEY, and RANDY NEUGEBAUER.

I am encouraged by the strong bipartisan support for the subsequently introduced Senate version of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, which passed as an amendment to the Energy Policy Modernization Act by a vote of 87–4 on the Senate floor in January.

Advanced nuclear energy technology is the best opportunity to make reliable, emission-free electricity available throughout the modern and developing world.

America must maintain a strong nuclear technology sector in order to influence global nonproliferation standards. This will help us prevent civilian nuclear energy technology from being misused for weapons development overseas.

H.R. 4084 harnesses the strengths of the Department of Energy (DOE) National Labs, universities, and the private sector. It ensures that America's best and brightest minds advance this groundbreaking science and technology.

This legislation provides DOE with the direction and certainty it needs to develop plans for long term research and infrastructure development within the Office of Nuclear Energy.

H.R. 4084 authorizes DOE to take advantage of the National Labs' supercomputers in order to accelerate research for advanced fission and fusion experimental reactors. This program will leverage expertise from the private sector, universities, and National Labs.

The bill provides a clear timeline for DOE to complete a research reactor user facility within ten years. This research reactor will enable proprietary and academic research to develop supercomputing models and also design next generation nuclear energy technology.

Finally, H.R. 4084 creates a reliable mechanism for the private sector to partner with DOE labs to build fission and fusion prototype reactors at DOE sites.

Nuclear power has been a proven source of safe and emission-free electricity for over half a century. Now, America's strategic investments in advanced nuclear reactor technology can play a more meaningful role to reduce global emissions. Unfortunately, the ability to move innovative technology to the market has been stalled by government red tape.

By working around these bureaucratic barriers, H.R. 4084 will spur American competitiveness and keep us on the forefront of nuclear energy technology.

This legislation enables our talented engineers in the private sector, academia, and at the National Labs to develop the next generation of nuclear technology here in the United States.

Nuclear energy can be a clean, cheap answer to an energy independent, pro-growth, secure future.

I thank Chairman WEBER and Ranking Member JOHNSON of Texas for their work on this bill and encourage my colleagues to support it.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, which I am very pleased to co-sponsor.

Today, nuclear power plays a vital role in providing our country with clean, reliable energy. Nuclear power is currently the single largest carbon-free component of our electrical supply. One of my top priorities as a Member of Congress is preventing and mitigating the potentially devastating impacts of climate change. I believe that nuclear power can and should play a key role in our efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of our electricity sector.

But there currently are technical, economic, and policy challenges that prevent nuclear energy from playing a larger role in enabling our clean energy future. The Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act takes several positive steps to address these challenges. Implementing the provisions in this bill will help accelerate the development of advanced nuclear energy technologies that are safer, less expensive, more efficient, and produce less waste than the current generation of nuclear reactors.

While the results of this research will clearly benefit the American consumers, it is my hope that it will also help spur American industry. As the world collectively moves towards

greenhouse gas reductions, we need to make sure that American industry is ready to supply the technologies to fuel the world's low carbon future. This bill will help ensure that American industry will lead the world in supplying next generation nuclear power.

I would like to express my appreciation for the process we followed to put this bill together. Majority and Minority staff worked closely together, from engaging stakeholders through crafting and incorporating suggested changes to bill language. This is a great example of what we can achieve when we leave politics at the door and look for common ground to address the challenges facing our nation's research enterprise. Specifically, I'd like to thank my Texas colleague Mr. WEBER for sponsoring this legislation, and my other Texas colleague Chairman SMITH for working with the Minority to advance this bill.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4084, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EDWARD "TED" KAUFMAN AND MICHAEL LEAVITT PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2015

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1172) to improve the process of presidential transition, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1172

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Edward 'Ted' Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 4, 5, and 6 as sections 5, 6, and 7, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 3 the following:

"SEC. 4. TRANSITION SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES BEFORE ELECTION.

"(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

"(1) the term 'Administrator' means the Administrator of General Services;

"(2) the term 'agency' means an Executive agency, as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code;

"(3) the term 'eligible candidate' has the meaning given that term in section 3(h)(4); and

"(4) the term 'Presidential election' means a general election held to determine the electors of President and Vice President under section 1 or 2 of title 3, United States Code.

"(b) GENERAL DUTIES.—The President shall take such actions as the President determines necessary and appropriate to plan and coordinate activities by the Executive branch of the

Federal Government to facilitate an efficient transfer of power to a successor President, including by—

"(1) establishing and operating a White House transition coordinating council in accordance with subsection (d); and

"(2) establishing and operating an agency transition directors council in accordance with subsection (e).

"(c) FEDERAL TRANSITION COORDINATOR.—The Administrator shall designate an employee of the General Services Administration who is a senior career appointee to—

"(1) carry out the duties and authorities of the General Services Administration relating to Presidential transitions under this Act or any other provision of law;

"(2) serve as the Federal Transition Coordinator with responsibility for coordinating transition planning across agencies, including through the agency transition directors council established under subsection (e);

"(3) ensure agencies comply with all statutory requirements relating to transition planning and reporting; and

"(4) act as a liaison to eligible candidates.

"(d) WHITE HOUSE TRANSITION COORDINATING COUNCIL.—

"(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 6 months before the date of a Presidential election, the President shall establish a White House transition coordinating council for purposes of facilitating the Presidential transition.

"(2) DUTIES.—The White House transition coordinating council shall—

"(A) provide guidance to agencies and the Federal Transition Coordinator regarding preparations for the Presidential transition, including succession planning and preparation of briefing materials;

"(B) facilitate communication and information sharing between the transition representatives of eligible candidates and senior employees in agencies and the Executive Office of the President; and

"(C) prepare and host interagency emergency preparedness and response exercises.

"(3) MEMBERSHIP.—The members of the White House transition coordinating council shall include—

"(A) senior employees of the Executive branch selected by the President, which may include the Chief of Staff to the President, any Cabinet officer, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Administrator, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, and the Archivist of the United States;

"(B) the Federal Transition Coordinator;

"(C) the transition representative for each eligible candidate, who shall serve in an advisory capacity; and

"(D) any other individual the President determines appropriate.

"(4) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the White House transition coordinating council shall be a senior employee in the Executive Office of the President, designated by the President.

"(e) AGENCY TRANSITION DIRECTORS COUNCIL.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall establish and operate an agency transition directors council, which shall—

"(A) ensure the Federal Government has an integrated strategy for addressing interagency challenges and responsibilities around Presidential transitions and turnover of noncareer appointees;

"(B) coordinate transition activities between the Executive Office of the President, agencies, and the transition team of eligible candidates and the President-elect and Vice-President-elect; and

“(C) draw on guidance provided by the White House transition coordinating council and lessons learned from previous Presidential transitions in carrying out its duties.

“(2) DUTIES.—As part of carrying out the responsibilities under paragraph (1), the agency transition directors council shall—

“(A) assist the Federal Transition Coordinator in identifying and carrying out the responsibilities of the Federal Transition Coordinator relating to a Presidential transition;

“(B) provide guidance to agencies in gathering briefing materials and information relating to the Presidential transition that may be requested by eligible candidates;

“(C) ensure materials and information described in subparagraph (B) are prepared not later than November 1 of a year during which a Presidential election is held;

“(D) ensure agencies adequately prepare career employees who are designated to fill non-career positions under subsection (f) during a Presidential transition; and

“(E) consult with the President’s Management Council, or any successor thereto, in carrying out the duties of the agency transition directors council.

“(3) MEMBERSHIP.—The members of the agency transition directors council shall include—

“(A) the Federal Transition Coordinator and the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget, who shall serve as Co-Chairpersons of the agency transition directors council;

“(B) other senior employees serving in the Executive Office of the President, as determined by the President;

“(C) a senior representative from each agency described in section 901(b)(1) of title 31, United States Code, the Office of Personnel Management, the Office of Government Ethics, and the National Archives and Records Administration whose responsibilities include leading Presidential transition efforts within the agency;

“(D) a senior representative from any other agency determined by the Co-Chairpersons to be an agency that has significant responsibilities relating to the Presidential transition process; and

“(E) during a year during which a Presidential election will be held, a transition representative for each eligible candidate, who shall serve in an advisory capacity.

“(4) MEETINGS.—The agency transition directors council shall meet—

“(A) subject to subparagraph (B), not less than once per year; and

“(B) during the period beginning on the date that is 6 months before a Presidential election and ending on the date on which the President-elect is inaugurated, on a regular basis as necessary to carry out the duties and authorities of the agency transition directors council.

“(f) INTERIM AGENCY LEADERSHIP FOR TRANSITIONS.—

“(1) OVERSIGHT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSITION.—Not later than 6 months before the date of a Presidential election, the head of each agency shall designate a senior career employee of the agency and a senior career employee of each major component and subcomponent of the agency to oversee and implement the activities of the agency, component, or subcomponent relating to the Presidential transition.

“(2) ACTING OFFICERS.—Not later than September 15 of a year during which a Presidential election occurs, and in accordance with subchapter III of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, for each noncareer position in an agency that the head of the agency determines is critical, the head of the agency shall designate a qualified career employee to serve in the position in an acting capacity if the position becomes vacant.

“(g) MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than November 1 of a year during which a Presidential election occurs, the President (acting through the Federal Transition Coordinator) shall, to the maximum extent practicable, negotiate a memorandum of understanding with the transition representative of each eligible candidate, which shall include, at a minimum, the conditions of access to employees, facilities, and documents of agencies by transition staff.

“(2) EXISTING RESOURCES.—To the maximum extent practicable, the memorandums of understanding negotiated under paragraph (1) shall be based on memorandums of understanding from previous Presidential transitions.

“(h) EQUITY IN ASSISTANCE.—Any information or other assistance provided to eligible candidates under this section shall be offered on an equal basis and without regard to political affiliation.

“(i) REPORTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The President, acting through the Federal Transition Coordinator, shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate reports describing the activities undertaken by the President and agencies to prepare for the transfer of power to a new President.

“(2) TIMING.—The reports under paragraph (1) shall be provided 6 months and 3 months before the date of a Presidential election.”

(b) OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.—Section 3 of the Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (8)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)(i)—

(I) by inserting “and during the term of a President” after “during the transition”; and

(II) by striking “after inauguration”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “or Executive agencies (as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code)” before the period; and

(B) in paragraph (10), by inserting “including, to the greatest extent practicable, human resource management system software compatible with the software used by the incumbent President and likely to be used by the President-elect and Vice President-elect” before the period;

(2) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “30 days” and inserting “180 days”;

(3) in subsection (g), by inserting “except for activities under subsection (a)(8)(A),” before “there shall be no”; and

(4) in subsection (h)(2), by adding at the end the following:

“(D) An eligible candidate shall have a right to the services and facilities described in this paragraph until the date on which the Administrator is able to determine the apparent successful candidates for the office of President and Vice President.”

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 3 of the Pre-Election Presidential Transition Act of 2010 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is repealed.

(2) The Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(A) in section 3—

(i) in subsection (a)(4)(B), by striking “section 6” and inserting “section 7”;

(ii) in subsection (b), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “section 3 of this Act” and inserting “this section”; and

(iii) in subsection (h)(3)(B)(iii), by striking “section 5” each place it appears and inserting “section 6”;

(B) in section 6, as redesignated by subsection (a) of this section, by striking “section 6(a)(1)”

each place it appears and inserting “section 7(a)(1)”;

(C) in section 7(a)(2), as redesignated by subsection (a) of this section, by striking “section 4” and inserting “section 5”.

(3) Section 8331(1)(K) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “section 4” and inserting “section 5”.

(4) Section 8701(a)(10) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “section 4” and inserting “section 5”.

(5) Section 8901(1)(I) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “section 4” and inserting “section 5”.

SEC. 3. NATIONAL ARCHIVES PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION.

Section 2203(g) of title 44, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) When the President considers it practicable and in the public interest, the President shall include in the President’s budget transmitted to Congress, for each fiscal year in which the term of office of the President will expire, such funds as may be necessary for carrying out the authorities of this subsection.”

SEC. 4. REPORTS ON POLITICAL APPOINTEES APPOINTED TO NONPOLITICAL PERMANENT POSITIONS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “agency” has the meaning given the term “Executive agency” in section 105 of title 5, United States Code;

(2) the term “covered civil service position” means a position in the civil service (as defined in section 2101 of title 5, United States Code) that is not—

(A) a temporary position; or

(B) a political position;

(3) the term “former political appointee” means an individual who—

(A) is not serving in an appointment to a political position; and

(B) served as a political appointee during the 5-year period ending on the date of the request for an appointment to a covered civil service position in any agency;

(4) the term “political appointee” means an individual serving in an appointment to a political position; and

(5) the term “political position” means—

(A) a position described under sections 5312 through 5316 of title 5, United States Code (relating to the Executive Schedule);

(B) a noncareer appointment in the Senior Executive Service, as defined under paragraph (7) of section 3132(a) of title 5, United States Code; or

(C) a position in the executive branch of the Government of a confidential or policy-determining character under schedule C of subpart C of part 213 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) REPORTING ON CURRENT OR RECENT POLITICAL APPOINTEES APPOINTED TO COVERED CIVIL SERVICE POSITIONS.—

(1) ANNUAL REPORT.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives an annual report regarding requests by agencies to appoint political appointees or former political appointees to covered civil service positions. Each report shall cover one calendar year and shall—

(A) for each request by an agency that a political appointee be appointed to a covered civil service position during the period covered by the report, provide—

(i) the date on which the request was received by the Office of Personnel Management;

(ii) subject to subsection (c), the name of the individual and the political position held by the individual, including title, office, and agency;

(iii) the date on which the individual was first appointed to a political position in the agency in which the individual is serving as a political appointee;

(iv) the grade and rate of basic pay for the individual as a political appointee;

(v) the proposed covered civil service position, including title, office, and agency, and the proposed grade and rate of basic pay for the individual;

(vi) whether the Office of Personnel Management approved or denied the request; and

(vii) the date on which the individual was appointed to a covered civil service position, if applicable; and

(B) for each request by an agency that a former political appointee be appointed to a covered civil service position during the period covered by the report, provide—

(i) the date on which the request was received by the Office of Personnel Management;

(ii) subject to subsection (c), the name of the individual and the political position held by the individual, including title, office, and agency;

(iii) the date on which the individual was first appointed to any political position;

(iv) the grade and rate of basic pay for the individual as a political appointee;

(v) the date on which the individual ceased to serve in a political position;

(vi) the proposed covered civil service position, including title, office, and agency, and the proposed grade and rate of basic pay for the individual;

(vii) whether the Office of Personnel Management approved or denied the request; and

(viii) the date on which the individual was first appointed to a covered civil service position, if applicable.

(2) **QUARTERLY REPORT IN CERTAIN YEARS.**—In the last year of the term of a President, or, if applicable, the last year of the second consecutive term of a President, the report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted quarterly and shall cover each quarter of the year, except that the last quarterly report shall also cover January 1 through 20 of the following year.

(c) **NAMES AND TITLES OF CERTAIN APPOINTEES.**—If determined appropriate by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, a report submitted under subsection (b) may exclude the name or title of a political appointee or former political appointee—

(1) who—

(A) was requested to be appointed to a covered civil service position; and

(B) was not appointed to a covered civil service position; or

(2) relating to whom a request to be appointed to a covered civil service position is pending at the end of the period covered by that report.

SEC. 5. REPORT ON REGULATIONS PROMULGATED NEAR THE END OF PRESIDENTIAL TERMS.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) The term “covered presidential transition period” means each of the following:

(A) The 120-day period ending on January 20, 2001.

(B) The 120-day period ending on January 20, 2009.

(C) The 120-day period ending on January 20, 2017.

(2) The term “covered regulation” means a final significant regulatory action promulgated by an Executive department.

(3) The term “significant regulatory action” means any regulatory action that is likely to result in a rule that may—

(A) have an annual effect on the economy of \$100,000,000 or more or adversely affect in a material way the economy, a sector of the economy, productivity, competition, jobs, the environment, public health or safety, or State, local, or tribal governments or communities;

(B) create a serious inconsistency or otherwise interfere with an action taken or planned by another agency;

(C) materially alter the budgetary impact of entitlements, grants, user fees, or loan programs or the rights and obligations of recipients thereof; or

(D) raise novel legal or policy issues.

(4) The term “Executive department” has the meaning given that term under section 101 of title 5, United States Code.

(b) **REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report regarding covered regulations promulgated during each covered presidential transition period.

(2) **CONTENTS OF REPORT.**—The report required under paragraph (1) shall, to the extent feasible, for each covered presidential transition period—

(A) compare the number, scope, and impact of, and type of rulemaking procedure used for, covered regulations promulgated during the covered presidential transition period to the number, scope, and impact of, and type of rulemaking procedure used for, covered regulations promulgated during the 120-day periods ending on January 20 of each year after 1996, other than 2001, 2009, and 2017;

(B) determine the statistical significance of any differences identified under subparagraph (A) and whether and to what extent such differences indicate any patterns;

(C) evaluate the size, scope, and effect of the covered regulations promulgated during the covered presidential transition period; and

(D) assess the extent to which the regularly required processes for the promulgation of covered regulations were followed during the covered presidential transition period, including compliance with the requirements under—

(i) chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Congressional Review Act”);

(ii) the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (5 U.S.C. 601 note);

(iii) sections 202, 203, 204, and 205 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1532-1535);

(iv) chapter 6 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Regulatory Flexibility Act”); and

(v) chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the “Paperwork Reduction Act”).

SEC. 6. ANALYSIS OF THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than February 15, 2016, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform and Homeland Security of the House of Representatives a report analyzing the threats and vulnerabilities facing the United States during a presidential transition, which—

(1) shall identify and discuss vulnerabilities related to border security and threats related to terrorism, including from weapons of mass destruction;

(2) shall identify steps being taken to address the threats and vulnerabilities during a presidential transition; and

(3) may include recommendations for actions by components and agencies within the Department of Homeland Security.

(b) **FORM.**—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall be prepared in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of S. 1172, the Edward “Ted” Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015, introduced by Senator THOMAS CARPER of Delaware.

By building on the Pre-Presidential Transition Act of 2010, S. 1172 improves the process of Presidential transition by mandating several processes that have been effective in past Presidential transitions.

The bill promotes early planning and supports communication by codifying the working groups put in place for the 2010 transition, which was one of the smoothest in our Nation’s history.

S. 1172 directs the White House to establish a transition council. It requires the General Services Administration to designate a Federal transition coordinator, and it ensures agencies designate staff to manage their internal transition activities needed to support the process of transitioning from one Presidential administration to another.

The bill requires that the transition teams be in place no later than 6 months before election day, and it authorizes GSA to provide services for the incoming administration up to 6 months after inauguration.

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S. 1172 also requires a report to Congress on national security threats related to terrorism and border security during a transition. The bill further requires the Office of Personnel Management to provide quarterly reports to Congress detailing requests by agencies to appoint political appointees and former political appointees to non-political civil service positions.

Mr. Speaker, S. 1172 will help ensure the incoming President has the information necessary to oversee our complex government. Together, these commonsense steps will support future Presidents as they prepare to govern

immediately after inauguration. Regardless of party, key management actions must be taken during transitions to support the smooth operation of government.

Mr. Speaker, this bill was also referred to the Committee on Homeland Security, and we deeply appreciate their cooperation in getting this bill to the floor.

I also would like to thank Senators JOHNSON and CARPER for their work to ensure the upcoming transition remains nonpartisan and supports the continuance of essential government operations.

Mr. Speaker, as we prepare for an upcoming Presidential transition, I urge my colleagues to support this important bipartisan legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,

Washington, DC, December 11, 2015.

Hon. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On October 9, 2015, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform ordered reported with an amendment S. 1172, the Edward “Ted” Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015, by unanimous consent. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, with an additional referral to the Committee on Homeland Security.

I ask that you allow the Homeland Security Committee to be discharged from further consideration of the bill so that it may be scheduled by the Majority Leader. This discharge in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill, and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on Homeland Security represented on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to include this letter and any response in the bill report filed by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, as well as in the Congressional Record during floor consideration, to memorialize our understanding.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, December 11, 2015.

Hon. JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CHAFFETZ: Thank you for letter regarding S. 1172, the “Edward ‘Ted’ Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions and Improvements Act of 2015.” As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions in S. 1172 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Homeland Security, I agree to discharge our Committee from further consideration of this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Committee on Homeland Security takes this action with our mutual understanding

that by forgoing consideration of S. 1172 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and I ask that your support any such request.

To memorialize our understanding, please include a copy of this letter exchange in the report filed by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, as well as in the Congressional Record during floor consideration.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation. I appreciate the leadership of Senator TOM CARPER in advocating for this bill which would improve the transition process for Presidential administrations.

When a new President takes office, it can take months for the new administration to put people in place. This bill would ensure that the Federal Government can continue its important functions during this transition and allow the head of an agency to put career employees in noncareer positions temporarily if necessary.

Under this legislation, a senior-level interagency transition council would be established to help develop an effective strategy for each Presidential transition. The General Services Administration would also be required to designate a Federal transition coordinator, and agencies would be required to designate senior career officials to oversee transition activities.

This bill would also help the National Archives carry out its mission by authorizing the President to include funds for the Archives to efficiently receive records from the outgoing administration.

Several changes were made to this legislation during consideration by the Oversight and Government Reform Committee to address concerns raised by Ranking Member CUMMINGS. For example, the Senate version of this bill would have required the Office of Personnel Management to report every quarter on requests for political appointees to convert to career employees. The bill before us today would still require OPM to report this information, but it would only be on an annual basis during nonelection years.

This bill will help future Presidents have a smooth and productive transition. I support this bill, and I have no additional speakers.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1172, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMPETITIVE SERVICE ACT OF 2015

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1580) to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1580

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Competitive Service Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL APPOINTING AUTHORITIES FOR COMPETITIVE SERVICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3318 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

“(b) OTHER APPOINTING AUTHORITIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—During the 240-day period beginning on the date of issuance of a certificate of eligibles under section 3317(a), an appointing authority other than the appointing authority requesting the certificate (in this subsection referred to as the ‘other appointing authority’) may select an individual from that certificate in accordance with this subsection for an appointment to a position that is—

“(A) in the same occupational series as the position for which the certification of eligibles was issued (in this subsection referred to as the ‘original position’); and

“(B) at a similar grade level as the original position.

“(2) APPLICABILITY.—An appointing authority requesting a certificate of eligibles may share the certificate with another appointing authority only if the announcement of the original position provided notice that the resulting list of eligible candidates may be used by another appointing authority.

“(3) REQUIREMENTS.—The selection of an individual under paragraph (1)—

“(A) shall be made in accordance with subsection (a); and

“(B) subject to paragraph (4), may be made without any additional posting under section 3327.

“(4) INTERNAL NOTICE.—Before selecting an individual under paragraph (1), and subject to the requirements of any collective bargaining obligation of the other appointing authority, the other appointing authority shall—

“(A) provide notice of the available position to employees of the other appointing authority;

“(B) provide up to 10 business days for employees of the other appointing authority to apply for the position; and

“(C) review the qualifications of employees submitting an application.

“(5) COLLECTIVE BARGAINING OBLIGATIONS.—Nothing in this subsection limits any collective bargaining obligation of an agency under chapter 71.”

(b) ALTERNATIVE RANKING AND SELECTION PROCEDURES.—Section 3319 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(c) SELECTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—An appointing official may select any applicant in the highest quality category or, if fewer than 3 candidates have been assigned to the highest quality category, in a merged category consisting of the highest and the second highest quality categories.

“(2) USE BY OTHER APPOINTING OFFICIALS.—Under regulations prescribed by the Office of Personnel Management, appointing officials other than the appointing official described in paragraph (1) (in this subsection referred to as the ‘other appointing official’) may select an applicant for an appointment to a position that is—

“(A) in the same occupational series as the position for which the certification of eligibles was issued (in this subsection referred to as the ‘original position’); and

“(B) at a similar grade level as the original position.

“(3) APPLICABILITY.—An appointing authority requesting a certificate of eligibles may share the certificate with another appointing authority only if the announcement of the original position provided notice that the resulting list of eligible candidates may be used by another appointing authority.

“(4) REQUIREMENTS.—The selection of an individual under paragraph (2)—

“(A) shall be made in accordance with this subsection; and

“(B) subject to paragraph (5), may be made without any additional posting under section 3327.

“(5) INTERNAL NOTICE.—Before selecting an individual under paragraph (2), and subject to the requirements of any collective bargaining obligation of the other appointing authority (within the meaning given that term in section 3318(b)(1)), the other appointing official shall—

“(A) provide notice of the available position to employees of the appointing authority employing the other appointing official;

“(B) provide up to 10 business days for employees of the other appointing authority to apply for the position; and

“(C) review the qualifications of employees submitting an application.

“(6) COLLECTIVE BARGAINING OBLIGATIONS.—Nothing in this subsection limits any collective bargaining obligation of an agency under chapter 71.

“(7) PREFERENCE ELIGIBLES.—Notwithstanding paragraphs (1) and (2), an appointing official may not pass over a preference eligible in the same category from which selection is made, unless the requirements of section 3317(b) and 3318(c), as applicable, are satisfied.”

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 9510(b)(5) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “3318(b)” and inserting “3318(c)”.

(d) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall issue an interim final rule with comment to carry out the amendments made by this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1580, the Competitive Service Act of 2015, introduced by Senator JON TESTER of Montana. This bill will allow Federal agencies to share their lists of best qualified candidates with other agencies needing to hire for similar positions.

Mr. Speaker, many applicants are reluctant to apply for jobs with the Federal Government due to the length of time it takes for some agencies to fill job announcements. This bill will expedite the Federal hiring process by allowing agencies to share their assessments of job applicants for competitive service positions.

S. 1580 allows an agency to hire from another agency's certified list of eligible candidates as long as the original job announcement provided notice that the list of eligible candidates may be used by another agency, that the position is in the same occupational category, and that the position is at a similar grade level.

However, before an agency can hire from another agency's certified list of eligible candidates, that agency must provide notice of the available position to its internal employees, give up to 10 business days for its employees to submit applications, and then consider those applications. S. 1580 provides that as long as all of these requirements are met, an agency does not need to make any additional postings and may hire from the list of certified eligible candidates.

In an April 2014 report, titled, “A New Civil Service Framework,” the Partnership for Public Service discussed allowing agencies to share those best qualified candidates with other agencies. PPS notes that creating cross-agency best qualified applicant pools is “another commonsense opportunity to create enterprisewide efficiencies for the Federal Government.”

With the Federal Government looking to fill critical vacancies, this bill will assist agencies with recruiting and hiring much-needed talent in areas

such as cybersecurity and information technology.

Mr. Speaker, the committee received letters of support for this legislation from the Professional Managers Association and the Partnership for Public Service. The Federal Managers Association also supports this bill, calling it commonsense legislation.

I want to thank Senator TESTER for this legislation. The House has a similar bill that was introduced by Representatives CONNOLLY and WITTMAN, and I want to thank them also for bringing this matter to the attention of the committee as well.

Mr. Speaker, as we move forward with legislation to make the Federal Government more effective and efficient, I urge my colleagues to support this important, bipartisan legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 1580, the Competitive Service Act of 2015. I commend Senators TESTER and PORTMAN and other colleagues in the Senate for their leadership on this important legislation. I also want to thank my friend and colleague, Congressman CONNOLLY of Virginia, for his work on this bill and introducing the companion bill in the House.

S. 1580 is a commonsense measure to streamline the Federal Government's hiring process. The legislation would reduce duplication in the vetting of candidates for Federal jobs by allowing agencies to share their list of best qualified candidates with other agencies that are hiring for a similar position.

Under this bill, an agency may hire an individual from another agency's certified list of candidates without any additional job posting if the agency meets certain requirements, including notifying its employees of the available position and allowing them to apply.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting in favor of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN). He has been a major player in this legislation.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding and thank him for his leadership.

As you have heard, this is just a commonsense bill, and I rise in strong support of S. 1580, the Competitive Services Act. I want to thank my colleague from Virginia, GERRY CONNOLLY, for his effort, along with my staff, in putting together the House version of this bill.

It is just a commonsense, bicameral, and bipartisan bill that allows agencies

in a very complex and competitive world to aggressively and timely recruit individuals for these positions. We want to get individuals into those positions quickly, and we want to understand where the talent lies so that these agencies can communicate back and forth. Many times that silo approach doesn't work. This breaks down those silos and allows agencies to share information about these applicants.

In today's world when we need to, in a timely way, gets folks into the cybersecurity realm, we need to get folks into the information technology realm, and even in the veterans' healthcare realm where we need to get healthcare providers there quickly, especially when there is demand, this is the perfect way to do that. When we go through the effort of having these individuals apply for these jobs, we know what their qualifications are. There is no reason why we shouldn't be sharing this information. It allows us to act in the best interests of taxpayers, it cuts down on the amount of expense that is put forth in recruiting these individuals, and it ensures that we get things done on time.

We understand, too, the talent pool that is out there. Many times, too, if you look at it and say that these are the individuals who are available and even if there is a challenge in getting somebody, you can immediately see that, instead of having to wait for time to communicate back and forth between agencies and say, "Well, it doesn't look like in this area that we have the number of individuals that we need; what is the next course of action?" this allows us to get through all of those particular issues and get people in these positions as quickly as possible.

It is just a commonsense piece of legislation that allows our managers to manage in the most effective way possible. It allows us to do the best job for our country, and it allows the best use of taxpayers' dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support S. 1580.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I urge adoption of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my strong support for the bipartisan, bicameral Competitive Service Act, S. 1580, before the House today. I am pleased to sponsor the House companion, H.R. 2827, of this common-sense legislation with my fellow Virginian, ROB WITTMAN.

Our bill reforms an antiquated and cumbersome hiring system that hinders our nation's ability to efficiently hire the most qualified candidates into federal service. Under cur-

rent law, federal agencies are prohibited from sharing information about vetted job applicants. For example, when agencies identify finalists for a vacant position in a highly competitive field, such as cybersecurity, no other agency can leverage those efforts and take advantage of applicant screening that's already been performed.

Our bill will empower agencies to share information about the most qualified candidates, allowing the federal government to effectively recruit the best and the brightest talent while saving taxpayer dollars. It represents a win-win for applicants and agency human resource professionals.

Further this is an important component of a comprehensive effort to modernize the federal hiring process to ensure we can recruit the next generation of civil servants. We are facing a retirement bubble within the federal ranks. Last year, GAO reported that nearly one-third of the federal workforce would be eligible to retire by the end of fiscal year 2017.

We need to begin repairing the significant damage that has been wrought on federal employees. The perception of public service, once lionized by President Kennedy as a noble profession, has steadily been whittled away by the current House majority, which has cut federal pay and benefits. Just try to go to a college campus today and convince a young graduate that they have a promising future federal service.

The relaunch of the USAJobs site later this week is another critical tool that will make the application process more user-friendly and transparent. Our Competitive Service Act will ensure all agencies have ready access to those qualified individuals once they're in the system.

I urge my colleagues to support this common-sense legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1580, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Georgia) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

MODERNIZATION OF TERMS RELATING TO MINORITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4238) to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 376, nays 0, not voting 57, as follows:

[Roll No. 102]

YEAS—376

Abraham	Conaway	Gosar
Adams	Connolly	Gowdy
Aguilar	Cook	Graham
Allen	Cooper	Granger
Amash	Costa	Graves (GA)
Amodei	Costello (PA)	Graves (LA)
Ashford	Courtney	Graves (MO)
Barletta	Cramer	Grayson
Barr	Crawford	Green, Al
Bass	Crenshaw	Griffith
Beatty	Crowley	Grijalva
Benishek	Cuellar	Grothman
Bera	Cummings	Guinta
Beyer	Curbelo (FL)	Guthrie
Bilirakis	Davis (CA)	Gutiérrez
Bishop (GA)	Davis, Danny	Hahn
Bishop (MI)	Davis, Rodney	Hanna
Bishop (UT)	DeFazio	Hardy
Black	DeGette	Harper
Blackburn	Delaney	Hartzler
Blum	DeLauro	Hastings
Blumenauer	DelBene	Heck (NV)
Bonamici	Denham	Heck (WA)
Bost	Dent	Hice, Jody B.
Boustany	DeSantis	Higgins
Boyle, Brendan	DeSaulnier	Himes
F.	DesJarlais	Holding
Brady (PA)	Deutch	Honda
Brat	Diaz-Balart	Hoyer
Bridenstine	Dingell	Huelskamp
Brooks (AL)	Dold	Huffman
Brooks (IN)	Donovan	Huizenga (MI)
Brown (FL)	Doyle, Michael	Hultgren
Brownley (CA)	F.	Hunter
Buchanan	Duckworth	Hurd (TX)
Buck	Duffy	Hurt (VA)
Bucshon	Duncan (SC)	Israel
Burgess	Duncan (TN)	Jeffries
Bustos	Edwards	Jenkins (KS)
Butterfield	Ellison	Jenkins (WV)
Calvert	Ellmers (NC)	Johnson (GA)
Capps	Emmer (MN)	Johnson (OH)
Cárdenas	Engel	Jolly
Carney	Eshoo	Jones
Carson (IN)	Esty	Jordan
Carter (CA)	Farr	Joyce
Carter (TX)	Fitzpatrick	Kaptur
Castor (FL)	Fleischmann	Katko
Chabot	Fleming	Keating
Chaffetz	Forbes	Kelly (IL)
Chu, Judy	Fortenberry	Kelly (MS)
Ciçilline	Foster	Kelly (PA)
Clark (MA)	Foxo	Kennedy
Clarke (NY)	Frankel (FL)	Kildee
Clawson (FL)	Franks (AZ)	Kilmer
Clay	Frelinghuysen	Kind
Cleaver	Fudge	King (IA)
Clyburn	Gabbard	King (NY)
Coffman	Gallego	Kinzinger (IL)
Cohen	Garamendi	Kirkpatrick
Cole	Garrett	Knight
Collins (GA)	Gibbs	Kuster
Collins (NY)	Gibson	LaHood
Comstock	Goodlatte	Lamborn

Lance	Norcross	Sensenbrenner
Langevin	Nugent	Serrano
Larsen (WA)	Nunes	Sherman
Larson (CT)	O'Rourke	Shimkus
Latta	Olson	Shuster
Lawrence	Palazzo	Simpson
Lee	Pallone	Sinema
Levin	Palmer	Slaughter
Lewis	Paulsen	Smith (MO)
Lieu, Ted	Payne	Smith (NE)
Lipinski	Pearce	Smith (NJ)
LoBlundo	Pelosi	Stefanik
Loebach	Perry	Stewart
Lofgren	Peters	Stivers
Long	Peterson	Stutzman
Loudermilk	Pingree	Swalwell (CA)
Love	Pittenger	Takai
Lowenthal	Pitts	Takano
Lowe	Pocan	Thompson (CA)
Lucas	Poe (TX)	Thompson (MS)
Luetkemeyer	Poliquin	Thompson (PA)
Lujan Grisham	Polis	Thornberry
(NM)	Pompeo	Tipton
Luján, Ben Ray	Posey	Titus
(NM)	Price (NC)	Tonko
Lummis	Quigley	Torres
Lynch	Rangel	Trott
MacArthur	Reed	Turner
Maloney, Sean	Reichert	Upton
Marino	Renacci	Valadao
Massie	Ribble	Van Hollen
Matsui	Rice (NY)	Vargas
McCarthy	Rice (SC)	Velázquez
McCaul	Richmond	Visclosky
McClintock	Rigell	Wagner
McCollum	Roe (TN)	Walberg
McDermott	Rogers (KY)	Walden
McHenry	Rokita	Walker
McKinley	Rooney (FL)	Walorski
McMorris	Ros-Lehtinen	Walters, Mimi
Rodgers	Roskam	Walz
McNerney	Ross	Wasserman
McSally	Rothfus	Schultz
Meadows	Rouzer	Waters, Maxine
Meehan	Roybal-Allard	Watson Coleman
Meeks	Royce	Weber (TX)
Meng	Ruiz	Webster (FL)
Messer	Ruppersberger	Welch
Mica	Rush	Westrup
Miller (FL)	Russell	Westerman
Miller (MI)	Ryan (OH)	Whitfield
Moolenaar	Salmon	Wilson (SC)
Mooney (WV)	Sánchez, Linda	Wittman
Moore	T.	Womack
Moulton	Sanford	Woodall
Mullin	Sarbanes	Yarmuth
Murphy (FL)	Scalise	Yoder
Murphy (PA)	Schakowsky	Yoho
Nadler	Schiff	Young (AK)
Neal	Schrader	Young (IA)
Neugebauer	Schweikert	Young (IN)
Newhouse	Scott (VA)	Zeldin
Noem	Scott, Austin	Zinke
Nolan	Scott, David	

NOT VOTING—57

Aderholt	Herrera Beutler	Ratcliffe
Babin	Hill	Roby
Barton	Hinojosa	Rogers (AL)
Becerra	Hudson	Rohrabacher
Brady (TX)	Issa	Sanchez, Loretta
Byrne	Jackson Lee	Sessions
Capuano	Johnson, E. B.	Sewell (AL)
Cartwright	Johnson, Sam	Sires
Castro (TX)	Kline	Smith (TX)
Conyers	Labrador	Smith (WA)
Culberson	LaMalfa	Speier
Doggett	Maloney,	Tiberi
Farenthold	Carolyn	Tsongas
Fattah	Marchant	Veasey
Fincher	McGovern	Vela
Flores	Mulvaney	Westmoreland
Gohmert	Napolitano	Williams
Green, Gene	Pascrell	Wilson (FL)
Harris	Perlmutter	
Hensarling	Price, Tom	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1849

Messrs. SIMPSON and RANGEL changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 102 on Feb 29, 2016, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 102. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, during the votes today, I was inescapably detained and away handling important matters related to my District and the State of Alabama. If I had been present, I would have voted: YES on H.R. 4238—To Amend the Department of Energy on Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, February 29, 2016, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 102. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4238—To amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on Monday, February 29, 2016, due to important events being held today in our district in Houston and Harris County, Texas.

If I had been able to vote, I would have voted as follows:

On H.R. 4238, to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities, I would have voted “yea.”

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR THE LIVES LOST IN THE STORM OF FEBRUARY 2016

(Mr. FORBES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I gather today with Representatives from the Virginia delegation, the South Carolina delegation, Mississippi, and Louisiana. We would like to take this opportunity to remember the victims who lost their lives during the devastating storms that ravaged the Gulf and East Coast last week.

In my district, our prayers and deep sympathy are with the loved ones of Larry Turner, Devine Stringfield, and Ian Lewis, who tragically lost their lives after their home was destroyed by the tornado that ripped through Waverly, Virginia, on Wednesday, February 24, 2016. Our thoughts and prayers are also with the many who were

injured and whose daily lives were disrupted or, in some instances, permanently altered by this storm.

As communities, we extend our deep gratitude to our local law enforcement, first responders, and emergency personnel for their quick, courageous, and compassionate response in the aftermath of these storms. We are proud, though not surprised, by the way citizens and communities in Virginia and across the East Coast are coming together to support those most affected.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in a moment of silence honoring those who lost their lives, their loved ones, the entire Waverly community, and all those across Virginia, South Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana who have been impacted by this storm.

HONORING OFFICER ASHLEY M. GUINDON

(Mr. CONNOLLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Officer Ashley Guindon, a law enforcement officer and Marine Corps Reserve veteran who answered the call to serve her community and her country.

In her heart, Officer Guindon was a guardian. She was willing to step into the breach to protect others.

On Saturday, February 27, one day, Mr. Speaker, after Officer Guindon was sworn in as an officer with the Prince William County Police Department, she did just that.

While responding to a call for help from a domestic violence victim, Officer Guindon was shot and killed by a gunman who had already taken the life of his wife, Crystal Hamilton, a loving mother who cared for our Nation's wounded warriors.

I ask that my colleagues join me in mourning the victims of this latest gun tragedy and, also, in paying tribute to the men and women in law enforcement who give more to this world than they ever ask in return. Mr. Speaker, we pray for their safety.

RARE DISEASE DAY

(Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on Rare Disease Day to raise awareness about this important issue and to advocate for those who are impacted.

A medical condition is considered rare if fewer than 200,000 people in the U.S. are known to be living with that particular disease.

But while each disease affects a relatively small segment of the population, with over 7,000 different diseases that fall into this category, rare

diseases are not uncommon. In fact, 1 in 10 Americans is affected.

I want to commend our researchers at the NIH and in hospitals and research facilities in my district and across the U.S. who have risen to the distinct challenges posed by rare diseases.

These men and women work tirelessly to remain on the cutting edge of medical breakthrough in their search for new treatments and cures, and they deserve our full support.

So, too, do the parents, advocates, and those afflicted who spend their time raising awareness and educating policymakers on issues impacting rare diseases.

I also want to remind us all that there is much left to be accomplished. In the time it takes for one new drug to be developed, tested, and approved for general use, countless other diseases have been newly discovered, leaving us with more questions than answers. That is why the House has taken a critical step by passing the 21st Century Cures Act.

As a member of the Rare Disease Caucus, I urge my colleagues in both Chambers to advance this bipartisan initiative. On this Rare Disease Day and every other day, let us remember that the stakes are high and families are counting on us.

REMEMBERING DR. MARGUERITA WASHINGTON

(Mr. ASHFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today saddened by the passing of a true public servant, Dr. Marguerita Washington, the long-time publisher of the Omaha Star newspaper.

When the Omaha Star began in 1938, it focused on printing positive news and being a champion for African American progress. When Dr. Washington succeeded her aunt, Mildred Brown, in running the paper, she successfully carried this responsibility for over three decades, making the Omaha Star a national landmark.

Dr. Washington was a robust and principled voice for social justice. Through the Omaha Star, she enlightened the public on a variety of matters, including health care, jobs, and education.

Her advocacy has garnered many well-deserved accolades and awards, including recognition by this body in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. She devoted her life to serving the citizens of Omaha, Nebraska, and the impact of her efforts will endure for generations to come.

May God bless Marguerita Washington. May her memory strengthen and comfort all who mourn this remarkable woman.

FIRST COLONY LITTLE LEAGUE

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, last Saturday, in the early afternoon, two beautiful words rang out: play ball.

The 2016 First Colony Little League season had begun. All the players are special, but one group stands out. It is called the Dream League.

This is season 9 for the Dream League. 100-plus more players with physical and intellectual challenges played baseball. Each player has at least one volunteer helping them, like Angel in the outfield in this picture to my left.

This picture is what the Dream League is all about, a big ear-to-ear smile for everyone involved. Our Dream League team played in the World Series for Little League in 2015.

America, if you want to see what makes our country so great, come to Sugar Land, Texas. Watch a Dream League game. See kids who are special because of what they can do and not because of what they cannot do.

Batter up.

RENEGOTIATION OF WASSENAAR ARRANGEMENT INTRUSION SOFTWARE CONTROLS

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today we learned of the Obama administration's decision to renegotiate a set of export controls that could have been hugely detrimental to our national security.

I want to thank President Obama for his leadership on cybersecurity generally and specifically on this issue.

In 2013, Wassenaar member states added intrusion software to the list of export-controlled products. While the addition was well-intentioned, since we certainly do not want companies making a profit selling hacking tools to repressive regimes, the language used was simply too broad and encompassed vital cybersecurity tools and even fundamental vulnerability research.

The plan to renegotiate is the culmination of a months-long process involving industry, a number of agencies, and 124 of my colleagues in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I deeply appreciate the work of the Bureau of Industry and Security in shepherding this process and the National Security Council for pushing for its resolution.

Now, we still have work to do with our international partners, but today is a validation of our ability to come together, government and industry, to address difficult challenges in cybersecurity policy. This is a good news story.

□ 1900

VOICE FOR THE ESSURE SISTERS

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to tell the story of Kendra Kilroy of Quincy, Massachusetts, one of tens of thousands of women harmed by the permanent sterilization device Essure.

Because of Essure, she has lived in debilitating pain. She has lived in anxiety, thinking maybe her doctor was right and her symptoms were really just in her head. She lived in sadness, missing out on field trips, school plays, and a Christmas concert for her children because she was too sick and too tired. Mostly, she lived in anger, finding out that the Essure coil was migrating through her fallopian tube and into her body. She now lives in hope, knowing we have people fighting with and for us to protect so many women from the same fate.

Mr. Speaker, I rise as a voice for the Essure sisters, to tell this Chamber that their stories are real, their pain is real, and their fight is real.

My bill, the E-Free Act, can halt this tragedy by removing this dangerous device from the market. Too many women have been harmed.

I urge my colleagues to join this fight because stories like Kendra's are too important to ignore.

RARE DISEASE DAY

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, today is Rare Disease Day. It is the reason why I am wearing this special tie given to me by Minnesotan Erica Barnes as part of the Chloe's Fight Rare Disease Foundation's Wear Something Rare campaign.

Now, a rare disease is generally defined as a condition that affects fewer than 200,000 people, and there are approximately 7,000 different types of rare diseases which impact the health of about 30 million Americans, half of which are children.

February 29, a day which is rare in itself, is also set aside to bring awareness and improve access to treatment and medical representation for people living with a rare disease. It is recognized by over 80 countries around the world.

Mr. Speaker, there is more that we can do to help. The House passed the 21st Century Cures Act with strong bipartisan support to help lower barriers to medical innovation and provide critical funding to find cures and treatment for medical afflictions, including rare diseases.

So on this Rare Disease Day, we raise attention to this issue and the need to

continue our work to help those who are suffering from rare diseases.

TECHNOLOGY IS THE FUTURE

(Mr. EMMER of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Tom Ardolf and Avant-Garde Technology Liberation for the recent win at the International Consumer Electronics Show. The group earned the Health and Wellness Project of the Year from the Consumer Technology Association.

Ardolf and his group designed an impressive home automation system for a woman who is a quadriplegic. Originally, they were asked to create a system that would allow the woman to easily change the volume on her television. Instead, they went above and beyond, creating a system that allows her to control her entire media center, unlock her door, adjust her lighting, and even place phone calls.

Technology's role in the world is rapidly increasing. With the increase, many new frontiers have been discovered and explored. I am proud to represent a State and district that is home to medical innovation.

I am constantly amazed by how technology has the capacity to improve and even save lives. That is exactly what Tom Ardolf and his team demonstrated with this automation system. I applaud their ingenuity.

RECOGNIZING THE GREENFIELD VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the Greenfield Volunteer Fire Department stationed in Erie County, which has been named Pennsylvania's EMS Agency of the Year.

I am proud to have these dedicated volunteers stationed in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District. Just 2 years ago, their department only had two active volunteers, two active members. Now they have a team of 25, with an additional 2 junior members.

Responders say 70 percent of their calls are for emergency services and that their department hasn't missed a call in 2 years. Department officials say that they are overjoyed with the support they have received from both the volunteers and their community.

At a time when many volunteer fire departments in my State and across the Nation are shrinking, it is great to see this kind of growth. Mr. Speaker, it is the dedicated men and women, like the volunteers of Greenfield Township, that make our communities across

Pennsylvania safe and great places to call home.

Well done, Greenfield Volunteer Fire Department.

NOAA FEES

(Mr. GUINTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will begin charging New England fishermen new fees—\$710 per fishing trip, to be exact—that could destroy an historic industry.

Granite State fishermen—just 10 remaining boat operators—are already struggling under regulations that severely limit their catch. Now fishermen like David Goethel will also be responsible for the cost of Federal contractors who monitor them at sea.

NOAA has always paid these associated costs. The agency has delayed implementation of new fees several times over the years, but somehow NOAA has always found the extra money in its \$6 billion budget. In my letter to the chief administrator, I asked where the money is going, and the agency can't account for much of it, nor can they appreciate nor understand the economic impact of its regulations.

The gentleman from Maine (Mr. POLIQUIN) and I introduced legislation to stop NOAA's new fees. An historic way of life and good jobs up and down the New England coast are at stake. I ask for your help.

WE MUST PROTECT OUR ANGELS ABROAD

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Peace Corps volunteers are America's angels abroad. These unique volunteers are some of our best diplomats. They travel to the ends of the Earth to spread the message of democracy in lands far, far away.

Sometimes they work alone, and they help in remote regions of the world, areas where most of us could not even locate with Google Maps. They help small villages with sanitation and lack of water, for instance, and they do it all with great passion.

These volunteers are called to serve. However, we must serve and protect these volunteers as well.

Sometimes bad things happen to Peace Corps volunteers overseas. If so, America must help with medical services. We must help with care and counseling if they are assaulted in a foreign country. That is why Congress passed the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act of 2011.

But Congress must continue to advocate for victims in the Peace Corps. We

need to make sure that our volunteers with service-related medical conditions and injuries are cared for and compensated both in the field and when they return home to America.

We must protect these angels abroad. After all, Mr. Speaker, they are ambassadors to the world from America.

And that is just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING AMPLIVOX SOUND SYSTEMS

(Mr. DOLD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize AmpliVox Sound Systems, a small business in Northbrook, Illinois.

The Northbrook Chamber of Commerce recently named AmpliVox Business of the Year for 2016. AmpliVox has been providing the community with innovative sound systems since the 1950s and has grown to become an industry leader. In the past 5 years, the company's revenue grew by over 60 percent.

Most admirably, throughout this growth, the company has not lost sight of the community it serves. CEO Don Roth sets an example for small businesses across the Nation through his integrity, vision, and emphasis on community involvement.

Small businesses like AmpliVox are truly the backbone of our economy and our communities. Unfortunately, backwards Federal regulations are making it harder and harder for small businesses to thrive and create more jobs.

I am committed to doing all that I can in this body to support small businesses and get more people back to work.

Congratulations, again, to AmpliVox Sound Systems and Don Roth. Thank you for representing the Northbrook community with passion and integrity.

SUPPORTING THE LIVE LIKE BELLA CHILDHOOD CANCER FOUNDATION

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge our south Florida community to attend the Live Like Bella Superhero 5K Run/Walk this Saturday, March 5, at 8 a.m. at Zoo Miami, as you can see here.

Bella Rodriguez-Torres was the oldest daughter of Shannah and Raymond, the founders of the Live Like Bella Childhood Cancer Foundation.

Bella was diagnosed with an aggressive type of cancer when she was only 4 years old. Doctors and medical experts only gave her a few months to live, but Bella miraculously lived and courageously fought cancer six times

until her death in 2013. During that time, Bella never feared. Instead, Bella encouraged everyone around her to enjoy life and appreciate each moment.

By creating this wonderful organization, Bella's parents and all of their supporters fight pediatric cancer while offering much-needed support for families. I encourage everyone in our community to attend this organization's run on Saturday and help end the number one disease killer of children today.

Let's all support the Live Like Bella Foundation.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOSEPH "NORMAN" O'CLAIR

(Mr. POLIQUIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, one of our brave American heroes is the late U.S. Army Corporal Joseph O'Clair of Ashland, Maine.

Corporal O'Clair fought for our freedom and was seriously wounded in the brutal month-long Battle of Heartbreak Ridge in Korea.

In November, our congressional office presented Corporal O'Clair with his long-overdue Purple Heart. Sadly, Norm passed away just 2 weeks ago.

Norm was a loving husband, father, and grandfather from a small town in Aroostook County, Maine. He and Lydia were married for more than 61 years and raised five terrific children. After the war, Norm worked alongside two of his three sons at the Fournier Logging and Pinkham Lumber companies. He was an avid outdoorsman, a terrific woodworker, and a lifelong member of the VFW, Post 9699, in Ashland.

For 240 years, patriotic Americans from small towns across this great country have fought for our freedoms and our way of life. Corporal Joe O'Clair of Ashland, Maine, was among 66,000 courageous veterans throughout Maine's Second Congressional District.

Thank you, Norm, for what you have given us. Your gift will last forever.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY POLICE OFFICER ASHLEY GUINDON

(Mrs. COMSTOCK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life of Prince William County Police Officer Ashley Guindon.

Ashley was 28 years old. She was shot and killed while responding to a domestic disturbance in Woodbridge, Virginia, on her first day on the job. She had just been sworn in the previous day, and the incident occurred only 90 minutes into her first training shift. She also had been serving her country

and community as a member of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve.

She was a gifted and skilled officer, and this great sense of service that she had to her country and her community will be so missed by her family, friends, and colleagues on the force.

Twenty-eight years old. She represented the best of our youth, and her tragic murder is a reminder of the sacrifices that law enforcement in my district, in all of Virginia, and throughout our country make every day. We honor her service and her sacrifice and that of all of our dedicated, selfless law enforcement officers. They deserve our honor and respect every day.

I also ask that we continue to pray for her fellow officers, Jesse Hempen and David McKeown, who were also shot during this incident, and we pray for their full recovery.

□ 1915

SUPREME COURT VACANCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and a privilege for me to once again stand on the floor of the House of Representatives along with my distinguished colleague from Ohio, Representative JOYCE BEATTY, coanchor of this CBC Special Order hour, this hour of power where, for the next 60 minutes, we will have an opportunity to speak directly to the American people about an issue of grave importance to the integrity of our democracy, and that is making sure that the United States Senate fulfills their constitutional obligation to advise and consent as it relates to considering any Supreme Court nomination that President Obama sends up to that body.

We know that Justice Antonin Scalia has moved on after a long and distinguished career. Though I disagree with almost every single judicial opinion that he has issued, he served this Nation well.

Now that he has moved on, the Supreme Court, which is contained in Article III of the United States Constitution, has a vacancy. It is the obligation of the United States Senate to fill that vacancy by considering whatever nominee President Barack Obama sends forward.

Members of the United States Senate take an oath of office to faithfully discharge their responsibilities. When you look at Article II, section 2, of the United States Constitution, which gives the President the power to nominate someone to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court, it is the Senate that must consider that nominee.

Since the early part of the 20th century, there have been eight different

Supreme Court nominees who have been voted on in an election year. Six of them actually were confirmed, but all eight of them received a hearing.

So, for the life of me, I can't figure out why Senator MITCH MCCONNELL thinks that he can get away with holding a nomination up without even the slightest bit of consideration. So we are going to explore that here today.

We will be joined by any number of distinguished Members of the House of Representatives and the Congressional Black Caucus, but let me proceed by yielding to my good friend and colleague from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY), my dynamic coanchor who does such a tremendous job on behalf of the people of the great State of Ohio and the city of Columbus.

Mrs. BEATTY. Thank you so much, Congressman JEFFRIES. It is certainly an honor and a privilege for me to join you this evening as coanchor for this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour.

Congressman JEFFRIES' scholarship and distinguished talents as a member of the Judiciary Committee have not gone unnoticed. I thank him for leading by example in challenging us to initiate and follow through in sending a message on Senate Republicans' refusal to act on the Supreme Court vacancy.

In part, tonight's Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour, Senate Republicans: Do Your Job, does just that.

As you reflected in your opening statement, Article II, section 2, of the Constitution expressly designates that the President has a duty to name and the Senate has a responsibility to advise and consent a nominee to fill the seat.

President Obama takes this very seriously. He has stated: "It's a decision to which I devote considerable time, deep reflection, careful deliberation, and serious consultation with legal experts, members of both political parties, and people across the political spectrum."

But Republicans have made a decision to completely refuse consideration of anyone that President Obama nominates to the Supreme Court. In fact, they have stated that they won't hold a hearing or a vote before the full Senate.

Senate Democrats never acted so recklessly when faced with this situation in 1988, when there was a vote to confirm Justice Kennedy. There was no talk of doing nothing until after that year's election because it was unthinkable then to leave the Court short-handed for that long. And it remains so now.

The power of the Court, Mr. Speaker, is reflected in the work it does. Its decisions often shape the policy as profoundly as any law passed by Congress or any action taken by the President of these United States.

When we look back to our history, especially as African Americans, the importance of the decisions handed down by the Supreme Court cannot be overstated.

For example, most of us are familiar with *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, which reversed *Plessy v. Ferguson* and its “separate but equal” ruling.

Striking down segregation in our Nation’s public schools provided a major catalyst for the civil rights movement and made advances in desegregating housing, public accommodations, and institutions of higher education possible.

After *Brown*, the Nation made some great strides towards opening the doors of education to all students. Unfortunately, the promise of the *Brown* decision remains unfulfilled in many ways.

More than 2 million Black students attend schools where 90 percent of the student body is made up of minority students. On average, schools serving more minority populations have less experienced, lower paid teachers who are less likely to be certified.

A report from the Center for American Progress found that a 10 percent point increase in students of color at a school is associated with a decrease in per-pupil spending of \$75.

In many ways, more than 60 years after *Brown v. Board of Education* school systems in the United States are still separate and unequal. And we are just not witnessing educational disparities at the elementary and secondary education level. College enrollment is racially polarized.

White students are overrepresented in selective colleges, which have more resources to educate and to support them, while African American students are overrepresented in less selective institutions.

Mr. Speaker and Congressman JEFFRIES, you see where I am going with that.

This is also why the late Justice Scalia’s comments during oral arguments of the pending United States Supreme Court case, *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin*, were so disturbing.

He stated, in part: Maybe the University of Texas ought to have fewer African Americans.

These comments are inaccurate and insulting to me and to African Americans. They undervalue the historic achievement that African Americans have made.

Thousands of Black Americans have excelled to the top tier of their universities. Many of them you will hear from tonight because they are members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

They are scholars. They are the conscience of the Congress. They represent the diversity of America’s best universities and of America’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentlewoman for her wonderful

thoughts and observations, and I look forward to our continued dialogue.

It is now my honor and privilege to yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), one of those individuals that Representative BEATTY mentioned who is really a legal giant amongst us.

He is someone who has served this institution well. He understands the Constitution, the notion of separation of powers, and the importance of a fair and equitable justice system.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I thank the gentleman from New York and the gentlewoman from Ohio for organizing tonight’s Special Order to call on our colleagues in the Senate to do their job and provide their advice and consent on the President’s upcoming nomination to the United States Supreme Court.

The Constitution is pretty clear on this issue. Article II, Section 2, doesn’t say the President might or the President should. It says the President shall nominate, and by and with advice and consent of the Senate, appoint judges to the Supreme Court.

There seems to be some suggestion that, if it is an election year, he ought to skip that process and let the next President make the appointment. They say there is very little precedence for a President nominating somebody in an election year.

That might be technically correct, but the fact of the matter is that there have been virtually no vacancies that have occurred during an election year. I think the last one was about almost 50 years. In that case, an appointment was made and considered.

That is the process that ought to take place in this case. The rarity of such an event should not preclude the Senate from fulfilling its constitutional responsibility. There is precedent for the President nominating and the Senate at least considering the nomination during an election year.

Now, Justice Kennedy was confirmed in an election year in 1988. That was a 7-month process that began with the appointment of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court. His nomination was considered and defeated.

And then there was the appointment of Douglas Ginsburg. We will just say his nomination went up in smoke. And then we had the nomination and confirmation of Justice Kennedy.

In 7 months, from start to finish, another nomination was made and collapsed and another nomination made, all within 7 months. We could complete that entire process by the first Monday in October, the beginning of the Supreme Court session.

There is no precedence for the President declining to nominate somebody and virtually no precedence for the Senate just to ignore a nomination that is made.

The people overwhelmingly reelected President Obama in 2012 to a term that

does not end until January 20, 2017, and we fully expect the President to fulfill his duty to nominate a qualified individual to the Supreme Court to fill the current vacancy.

A failure of the Senate to act this year would be unprecedented. There is ample time for that to take place. The longest confirmation process for a single nominee has been 125 days.

On historic average, it takes 25 days to confirm or reject a nominee. As of today, the Senate has 216 days until the first Monday in October.

If the Senate were to refuse to consider any of President Obama’s nominations—and they have said they want the next President to make the appointment—there has been no indication that they will give expedited consideration to the next President’s nomination. It could be well into the next year by the time the new Justice is confirmed and sworn in.

Even on an expedited schedule, the new President would not be able to nominate anyone until they are sworn in on January 20. The Senate Judiciary Committee would need time to prepare for hearings, which could not occur until probably February. And then the full Senate would need time to consider the nomination, with the confirmation not likely until probably March.

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Now, by March of a term, the term is effectively about over. Most of the oral arguments have already taken place and they are into decisions. You can’t participate in a decision if you skip the oral argument.

So not only would the vacancy occur through the rest of this term, almost half of a Supreme Court term, it would be well into the next term and, effectively, through most of the next term.

There is no excuse to leave the Court vacancy open in what then would be a historic new precedence. There is no precedence for keeping a vacancy open that long.

We need the justice appointed. The Senate ought to do its job. The President has indicated that he will do his job, as mandated by the Constitution, and so the Senate ought to just fulfill its responsibility under the Constitution and consider an appointment. Otherwise, you will have a vacancy not only through the rest of this term—and oral arguments have been taking place—you will have the vacancy through the rest of this term. You don’t need a vacancy through the entire rest of the next term.

There is plenty of time to consider and vote up or down on a nomination. And the unprecedented vacancy that would occur if the Senate fulfills its threat to stonewall any nomination is just unprecedented.

So I want to thank the gentleman from New York and the gentlewoman

from Ohio for giving us the opportunity to just say a word about the importance of everyone in our democracy fulfilling their constitutional responsibilities.

The President shall appoint, and the Senate shall consider, advise and consent, so that we can have a Supreme Court Justice appointed before the first Monday in October.

We have plenty of time to do that. There is no excuse for not doing it, and we expect the Senate to do its job.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Virginia for highlighting several important points, including the fact that there is no election year exception in Article II, section 2 of the United States Constitution.

This is all in MITCH MCCONNELL's mind, cooked up in some partisan laboratory in order to stop this President from being able to move forward and do the business of the American people.

We shouldn't be surprised, because we know MITCH MCCONNELL stated very early on that his objective was to grind everything to a halt here in the Capitol to try to prevent President Obama from being re-elected. Not my words, his words.

But here's the thing. President Obama was re-elected in an electoral college landslide. And his opponent in that race, Mitt Romney, tried to make it, in part, an election that was a referendum on the possibility that President Obama would have the opportunity to fill a Supreme Court vacancy.

That issue was laid before the American people by President Obama's opponent, and the American people responded, processed all of the facts, and decided to re-elect President Obama, send him back to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

The American people did their job. The President is prepared to do his job. The Senate Republicans need to do their job as well.

It is now my honor and my privilege to yield to someone who has been a stalwart for justice in this institution, a revered Member of the House of Representatives, the great whip of House Democrats, and someone who has the respect of everyone in the United States Capitol and beyond for his service to the House and his service to the country, a great friend to the Congressional Black Caucus, and we are so thankful that he is present here today.

I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the Democratic whip.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) for his excellent presentation.

I want to thank Mr. SCOTT, who, as the gentleman observed, is one of the leaders in this Congress on the Constitution and on the law and on equal justice.

I want to thank my friend from Ohio, the gentlewoman from Ohio, for her remarks.

I noticed that the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, Mr. G. K. BUTTERFIELD, formerly a judge on the Court in North Carolina, is here.

Mr. Speaker, I want to first say that I thank the Congressional Black Caucus for sponsoring this Special Order.

I want to tell every Member, and all Americans ought to know, this is not an issue related to one group, to one gender, to one race, to one nationality. The failure to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court will affect every American. So we rise tonight to ask the Senate to do its duty.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here on the floor this evening with my distinguished colleagues from the Congressional Black Caucus for this Special Order.

The Supreme Court now has a vacancy, as everyone knows, that must be filled. The American people deserve a Supreme Court operating at full strength.

Mr. Speaker, I am old enough to have been alive at the time that John Kennedy was assassinated. Within hours of his death, we swore in Lyndon Johnson as President of the United States because we wanted to make sure that there was a continuity of service. As sad and as tragic as those hours were, the responsibility of having a President of the United States was met within just a few hours.

Mr. Speaker, when a vacancy occurs in this House—and there are, after all, 434 of us left when that happens—the State laws put a time limit on the Governors' action to call an election so that that vacancy can be filled.

Why?

Because the Constitution of those States do not want to have a vacancy exist for very long and have their State or their district not represented.

Now, there is not a time limit with respect to the Supreme Court, per se. And the reason for that, of course, is the process, as Mr. SCOTT just pointed out, sometimes take a little longer, sometimes takes a little shorter.

But in 7 months, as the gentleman pointed out, they had three nominees considered. Two were defeated after debate and a vote, and the third was confirmed. The process worked, and it worked in the last year of an administration.

President Obama has a constitutional responsibility to nominate a candidate for the Court that will exercise sound judgment, uphold the principle that all people are created equal and must be treated equally under the laws.

The Founders of our country very wisely made the number on the Supreme Court an odd number, not an even number, because the Founders did not want gridlock. Now we are used to

gridlock in this Congress. But they did not want gridlock on the Court, and so they provided for a decision to be made by five members out of nine.

Now, however, with four and four, they will maybe not be able to make a decision. That was not contemplated by the Founders, nor would it have been welcomed by the Founders.

Shamefully, Senate Republicans have said they have no intention of even meeting with a nominee put forward by President Obama. That is not only disrespectful of the President of the United States, Barack Obama, but it is contrary to the best interest of the Supreme Court, but more importantly, to the people of this country.

It is appalling that Republicans would prefer to leave a vacancy on the Supreme Court, thereby rendering it in some cases unable to make a decision, unable to perform its duties of being the final arbiter when circuits may differ on an issue.

If Members of one party or another were simply to ignore the other side and refuse to carry out their duties within a divided government, our democracy would break down, and in some respects it has.

We ought not to carry that conduct to the Supreme Court. We must not let that happen and we must not allow this Supreme Court vacancy to remain unfilled.

The Court currently has a number, as the gentleman from New York has pointed out, of major cases pending that require a decision; not to be remanded to a lower court, because if that is done, that judgment may stand for that circuit, but there will be other circuits around the country who may make a different decision.

Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court has been a powerful safeguard of American's liberty and equality over the past century and beyond.

From recognizing the right of every child to attend desegregated schools, to protecting every loving couple who wishes to marry, the Court has breathed life into the words of our Declaration of Independence that all are "created equal, and they are endowed by their Creator," not by us, not by the Constitution, "by their Creator with certain unalienable rights."

That may be self-evident, Mr. Speaker, but it is not self-executed. And we have established the Supreme Court of the United States to make a decision so that that can be realized.

Melissa Hart, Director of the Byron White Center, a former member of the Supreme Court for Constitutional Law at the University of Denver said, if we don't act, "It would be a monumental crisis for the development of the law and the need to resolve legal questions."

Caroline Frederickson, president of the American Constitution Society for Law and Policy, wrote on February 19,

"It would be unfathomable to go through this term," and as Mr. SCOTT pointed out, the next term, "with a Supreme Court hobbled by a vacancy."

Mr. Speaker, let me remind you again, if a President dies, immediately we fill the vacancy. If a Member of Congress dies, every State has a time limit in which that must be filled so that democracy can be represented and operate in the way our Founders wanted it to operate.

When the President nominates a candidate to the Court, the Senate, in my view, Mr. Speaker, has a responsibility under the Constitution to give that nominee every due consideration. They do not have a constitutional responsibility to approve it, as Mr. SCOTT has pointed out, but they have a responsibility to consider it.

We must not allow politics, we must not allow politics, we must not allow politics to allow the obstruction of this most essential institution of our democracy and the rule of law.

I want to thank my friends in the Congressional Black Caucus for leading this Special Order and for their efforts to hold Senate Republicans accountable for their blatantly irresponsible action on this matter.

Mr. Speaker, there is always another election. It may be 2 years away, it may be 4 years away, but if we adopt the principle that if we don't think we can win now, we will obstruct now and hope to win later, America and Americans will not be well-served.

I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished Democratic whip for a very insightful and powerful observation, for pointing that the very fabric of the United States Constitution is threatened by the willingness of Senate Republicans to abdicate their legislative responsibilities to hold hearings and act on a nomination put forth by the President of the United States of America.

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It is now my great honor and privilege to yield to the distinguished chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, as was pointed out by Mr. HOYER, a former prominent member of the North Carolina judiciary, a legal scholar, a historian, and, of course, the leader of the conscience of the Congress here in the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the chairman, G. K. BUTTERFIELD.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, let me begin tonight by thanking the gentleman, Mr. JEFFRIES, for yielding to me this evening and to thank him for his extraordinary friendship and leadership in the Congressional Black Caucus.

I want to publicly thank you for coming to my district this past weekend. You spoke—some would say you

preached—at Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Durham, North Carolina, and I thank you so very much for the message that you brought to my constituents in North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, moments after the death of Justice Scalia, the majority leader of the United States Senate announced to the country in a tone of defiance that the Senate will not consider any nomination—any nomination—of President Barack Obama to replace Justice Scalia. Mr. Speaker, the American people can see right through this.

Though I represent a Democratic-leaning district in North Carolina, I represent many Republicans in North Carolina. Many of them have told me how disappointed they are with the Senate Republican leadership in making this announcement. Senator MCCONNELL is reinforcing the Republican political agenda to disrupt—to disrupt—governmental functions when the circumstances do not line up with their conservative philosophy.

It is imperative that we have nine members of the U.S. Supreme Court deciding constitutional issues that are important to the American people. The irony in all of this is that my Republican friends constantly on this floor talk about strict construction of the Constitution. A strict construction of the Constitution, as Mr. HOYER said a moment ago, requires the President to nominate an individual once there is a vacancy on the Court. The Senate, the United States Senate, has the awesome responsibility of having a hearing, deciding, and confirming the nomination by an up-or-down vote. So it is absurd to suggest that President Obama should be denied the opportunity to nominate a qualified Justice to replace Justice Scalia.

The American people should clearly understand that Senate Republicans have a political agenda to pack the Court with conservative Justices who would reverse years of commonsense progressive jurisprudence. So the Congressional Black Caucus tonight demands Senate Republicans to stop the complete blockade and the blatant disrespect of our President.

Senate Republicans' outright refusal to hold a hearing on any individual nominated by the President to serve on the Court is an affront to our Constitution and the American people. Such divisive actions undermine our democracy and reduce our standing in the world. This blockade is an obstruction and runs afoul of the duties held by those who hold a seat in the august Chamber of the United States Senate.

I have read that Senator GRASSLEY, Senator MCCONNELL, and others will meet with President Obama this week. I hope they meet. I hope they sit together and reconcile their differences because this issue needs to be put to rest. We call on Senate Republicans to

hold hearings once President Obama submits his nomination and follow the procedures set forth in the Constitution.

In short and in closing, the Congressional Black Caucus, the 45, 46 members of the Congressional Black Caucus—and, indeed, the American people—have one message—one message—for Senate Republicans: Do your job. Don't play partisanship. Don't play a partisan game with the Supreme Court of the United States of America. It is too serious. It is too important.

Thank you very much, Mr. JEFFRIES.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished chair for pointing out that this is a simple question for Senate Republicans: Do your job consistent with your obligations and responsibilities under Article II, section 2 of the United States Constitution.

The Senate Republicans' failure to act or consider any nominee put forth by the President of the United States of America is an abdication of responsibility, a dereliction of duty, and it would be a stunning act of legislative malpractice that undermines the rule of law, the Presidency, the Supreme Court, the United States Constitution, as well as the American people.

I am thankful now to be joined by someone who is a powerful voice for the voiceless here in the House of Representatives, who has ably served her constituents in northern California and consistently fought for a fair, equitable society. Let me now yield to my good friend, the distinguished gentlewoman from California, Representative BARBARA LEE.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentleman from New York for yielding, but also for his tremendous leadership.

You and Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY from Ohio really have sounded the alarm, beat the drum, and really brought to the American people the important issues that we are dealing with each and every day, so I just have to thank you for your diligence and for staying the course. Every week you are here, you are representing not only this Congress, but the country very, very well. So thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today with all my colleagues from the Congressional Black Caucus, with our whip, Mr. HOYER, and others to urge our Republican colleagues in the Senate to, of course, do your job.

Also, let me just remind us, once again, the President is trying to meet his constitutional obligation once again. He is trying to do what he is supposed to do, and that is to nominate Justice Scalia's replacement to our Nation's highest Court. And Senate Republicans have a constitutional responsibility to give the President's nominee a speedy and fair hearing, followed up with a simple up-or-down vote.

Sadly, these Senate Republicans said "no" to their constitutional responsibility. The Supreme Court has a huge

responsibility of deciding cases that impact every aspect of American life, from our elections, college admissions, to scientific patents and a woman's right to make her own healthcare decisions. It is imperative that the Supreme Court be allowed to function in its full capacity with nine Justices.

Former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who was appointed by a conservative President, President Ronald Reagan, did not mince words in her condemnation of Republicans playing politics with the Court. She said: "We need somebody in there to do the job and just get on with it."

Former Justice O'Connor, I could not agree more.

Despite the calls for action and a constitutional mandate, Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL of Kentucky has said that there will be no hearings, no votes, not even a meeting with President Obama to discuss the late Justice Scalia's replacement.

That is just wrong. His actions prompted The New York Times to editorialize that he "seems to have lost touch with reality and the Constitution," speaking of Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a couple of New York Times articles.

[From The New York Times, Feb. 17, 2016]

BLACKS SEE BIAS IN DELAY ON A SCALIA SUCCESSOR

(By Maggie Haberman and Jonathan Martin)

CHARLESTON, SC.—As he left Martha Lou's Kitchen, a soul food institution here on Wednesday, Edward Gadsden expressed irritation about the Republican determination to block President Obama from selecting Justice Antonin Scalia's replacement on the Supreme Court.

"They've been fighting that man since he's been there," Mr. Gadsden, who is African-American, said of Mr. Obama, before pointing at his forearm to explain what he said was driving the Republican opposition: "The color of his skin, that's all, the color of his skin."

When Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the majority leader, said after Mr. Scalia's death on Saturday that the next president, rather than Mr. Obama, should select a successor, the senator's words struck a familiar and painful chord with many black voters.

After years of watching political opponents question the president's birthplace and his faith, and hearing a member of Congress shout "You lie!" at him from the House floor, some African-Americans saw the move by Senate Republicans as another attempt to deny the legitimacy of the country's first black president. And they call it increasingly infuriating after Mr. Obama has spent seven years in the White House and won two resounding election victories.

"Our president, the president of the United States, has been disrespected from Day 1," Carol Richardson, 61, said on Wednesday as she colored a customer's hair at Ultra Beauty Salon in Hollywood, S.C., a mostly black town near Charleston. "The words that have been said, the things the Republicans have done they'd have never have done to another president. Let's talk like it is, it's because of his skin color."

Reflecting on the Supreme Court vacancy, Bakari Sellers, a former state representative from Denmark, S.C., likened the Senate treatment of the president to the 18th century constitutional compromise that counted black men as equivalent to three-fifths of a person.

"I guess many of them are using this in the strictest construction that Barack Obama's serving three-fifths of a term or he's three-fifths of a human being, so he doesn't get to make this choice," Mr. Sellers said. "It's infuriating."

The anger and outrage that Mr. McConnell's position has touched off among African-Americans could have implications for the presidential election. Leading African-American Democrats are trying to use it to motivate rank-and-file blacks to vote in November, the first presidential election in a decade in which Mr. Obama will not be on the ballot and in which Democrats fear black participation could drop.

"Anger becomes action when it's directly tied to a moment, and the moment now is the election on Nov. 8," said Stacey Abrams, a Democratic state representative from Georgia and the House minority leader there, adding that Mr. Scalia's death meant that this presidential campaign could no longer be construed as a mere "thought exercise."

For Hillary Clinton, who is increasingly relying on nonwhite voters to ensure her success against Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, the court issue could be especially crucial. Should she defeat Mr. Sanders, who has electrified many liberals, she will need a motivating issue to bring Mr. Obama's loyalists to the polls. She moved swiftly Tuesday to tap into the anger of blacks over the opposition of Senate Republicans to Mr. Obama's naming a replacement for Justice Scalia.

"Now the Republicans say they'll reject anyone President Obama nominates no matter how qualified," Mrs. Clinton said in remarks before a predominantly black audience in Harlem. "Some are even saying he doesn't have the right to nominate anyone! As if somehow he's not the real president."

Doing so, Mrs. Clinton added, is in keeping with a longstanding pattern of mistreatment.

"They demonize President Obama and encourage the ugliest impulses of the paranoid fringe," she said. "This kind of hatred and bigotry has no place in our politics or our country."

Republicans are especially sensitive about the notion that they are diminishing Mr. Obama because of his race, and spokesmen for several Republican senators, including Mr. McConnell and Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina, declined to comment or would not make the senators available for comment.

The suggestion that racism is playing a role angers Mr. McConnell's friends, who point out that his formative political experience was working for a Republican senator who supported civil rights, that he helped override President Ronald Reagan's veto of sanctions against the apartheid government in South Africa and that he is married to an Asian-American woman.

But in the aftermath of Mr. McConnell's statement on Saturday, a growing chorus of black voices is complaining that such a refusal to even consider a Supreme Court nominee would never occur with a white president.

"It's more than a political motive—it has a smell of racism," said Representative G. K. Butterfield, Democrat of North Carolina, the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

"I can tick instance after instance over the last seven years where Republicans have purposely tried to diminish the president's authority," Mr. Butterfield said. "This is just really extreme, and leads me to the conclusion that if this was any other president who was not African-American, it would not have been handled this way."

Even as Mr. Obama's popularity has risen and fallen, his base of support among black voters has been unshakable. A Gallup tracking poll this month showed that some 85 percent of African-Americans approved of the president's performance compared with only 36 percent of whites. And many African-Americans strongly identify personally with Mr. Obama, and have watched his tenure with pride.

Mr. Butterfield said that he believed that the effort to undermine, and even delegitimize, Mr. Obama began soon after he was sworn in, and that Congressional Republicans had blocked Mr. Obama's agenda wherever they could. Even more stinging were the suggestions from some on the right that Mr. Obama, a Christian, is actually a Muslim and that he was not born in the United States.

In interviews, members of the Congressional Black Caucus also bitterly recounted indignities, such as demands—most pointedly from the current Republican front-runner in the polls, Donald J. Trump, in 2011—that Mr. Obama prove he was born in Hawaii, and not in Kenya, as some critics claimed. Others recalled the calls to impeach Mr. Obama over his use of executive authority.

"You hear the thing about: 'He's not a citizen. He oversteps his bounds. He's divisive.' One thing after another," said Representative Marcia L. Fudge, Democrat of Ohio. "This has been going on since the day he was elected in 2008."

Republicans have had more success than Democrats in recent decades galvanizing their voters over who should control the courts. But Jennifer McClellan, a member of the Virginia House of Delegates and the Democratic National Committee, said the dispute over how to replace Justice Scalia could now become "an issue for the average citizen."

Ms. Abrams agreed, saying the Supreme Court and its powerful influence on people's lives is especially resonant with blacks. "Congress is denying our president his rights as a president, but, more than that, they're denying the legacy of his presidency," she said. "That will animate Democratic voters across the board but especially African-Americans, who realize more than many voters how great an impact the Supreme Court can have on freedom."

[From The New York Times, Feb. 24, 2016]

SENATE REPUBLICANS LOSE THEIR MINDS ON A SUPREME COURT SEAT

(By the Editorial Board)

Following the death of Justice Antonin Scalia, Senate Republicans apparently believe they can profit by creating a political crisis that the nation has never seen before. On Tuesday, the leadership doubled down on its refusal to take any action on any nominee from President Obama to replace Justice Scalia.

Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the majority leader who seems to have lost touch with reality and the Constitution, accused Mr. Obama of plunging the nation into a "bitter and avoidable struggle" should he name anyone to the court.

Forget an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor. Top Republicans are pledging not to

hold hearings or even to meet with a nominee.

In a statement dripping with sarcasm, Mr. McConnell said that Mr. Obama “has every right to nominate someone,” and “even if doing so will inevitably plunge our nation into another bitter and avoidable struggle, that is his right. Even if he never expects that nominee to actually be confirmed but rather to wield as an electoral cudgel, that is his right.”

Senator John Cornyn of Texas, the majority whip, said, “We believe the American people need to decide who is going to make this appointment rather than a lame-duck president.”

These statements are so twisted that it's hard to know where to begin. Let's take them one by one.

First, Mr. Obama is not a “lame-duck president.” The lame-duck period is broadly understood to run from after the November election until a new president is inaugurated in January. November is more than eight months off. Based on the average number of days it has taken the Senate to act on previous Supreme Court nominees, the seat could be filled by this spring.

Second, no matter how often Republicans repeat the phrase “let the people decide,” that's not how the system works. The Constitution vests the power to make nominations to the court in the president, not “the people.” In any case, the people have already decided who should make this appointment: They elected Mr. Obama twice, by large margins.

Third, it is preposterous to accuse Mr. Obama of causing a “bitter struggle” by nominating someone who will not be confirmed. The only reason a nominee would not be confirmed is that the Senate has preemptively decided to block any nominee sight unseen. Mr. Obama is once again the only adult in the room, carrying out his constitutional obligation while Senate Republicans scramble to dig up examples of Democrats trying to block nominees. But those examples show only that Democratic senators have pushed hard for Republican presidents to pick ideologically moderate nominees. Until now, neither party has ever vowed to shut down the nomination process entirely, even before it has begun.

Only two Republican senators, Mark Kirk of Illinois and Susan Collins of Maine, were brave enough to say that they would vote on President Obama's nominee. This is what passes for moderation in today's G.O.P.: simply stating a willingness to do the job you were elected to do.

Unfortunately, for too many Republicans moderation now equals apostasy. These Republicans have stubbornly parked themselves so far to the right for so many years that it is hard to tell whether they can hear how deranged they sound.

The truth is they are afraid—and they should be. They know Mr. Obama has a large pool of extremely smart and thoroughly mainstream candidates from which to choose a nominee. They know that if the American people were allowed to hear such a person answer questions in a Senate hearing, they would wonder what all the fuss was about.

So Mr. McConnell and his colleagues plan to shut their doors, plug their ears and hope the public doesn't notice. The Republican spin machine is working overtime to rationalize this behavior. Don't be fooled. It is panic masquerading as strength.

Ms. LEE. One of the titles of these articles is “Blacks See Bias in Delay on a Scalia Successor.” The other is

The New York Times article, “Senate Republicans Lose Their Minds on a Supreme Court Seat.”

Likewise, Judiciary Committee Chair CHARLES GRASSLEY of Iowa led a letter to the majority leader signed by all the Republican Committee members confirming their resolve to not have hearings or a vote on the nominee.

This is downright ludicrous. Republicans cannot and should not use the Supreme Court to push their radical political agenda.

The Constitution is clear, Mr. Speaker. Article II, section 2, “He shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate . . . shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, Judges of the Supreme Court.”

Nowhere in the Constitution does it say, “except in an election year” or “except when the President is a Democrat” or “when Republicans have spent the last 7 years actively working to subvert every policy proposed by a President elected by nearly 70 million Americans.” The Constitution doesn't say that. This is simply unacceptable, and the American people deserve better.

For more than a century, every single Supreme Court nominee has received a vote on the floor of the United States Senate. Just like all the Presidents before him, President Obama should nominate a Supreme Court Justice, and the Senate should determine if he or she is fit to serve on this Nation's High Court.

Instead, Republicans are holding the Supreme Court and the American people hostage.

Their action, in the words of The New York Times, is simply, “panic masquerading as strength.” The Senate has a responsibility to at least consider the President's Supreme Court nominee, and by refusing to do so, they are failing their constituents and their Nation.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is really past time for Majority Leader MCCONNELL and the rest of the Republican leadership to do their jobs and work together to get a new Supreme Court Justice. The Supreme Court is way too important to be used as a political bargaining chip. Enough is enough.

So, once again, I join my colleagues, Congressman JEFFRIES, Congresswoman BEATTY, members of the Congressional Black Caucus, and the American people in saying, “Do your job.”

Once again, thank you for giving me the opportunity to join with you tonight.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentlewoman from California for making several important points as it relates to the absence of any partisanship exception in the United States Constitution, the absence of any exception whereby the Senate will do

its job unless, of course, President Barack Obama happens to occupy 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. I see that nowhere within the four corners of the United States Constitution. I don't see an election year exception in the United States Constitution. So I am perplexed as to what is the situation we find ourselves in right now.

I thought that I may ask the distinguished gentlewoman, my colleague, my coanchor from Ohio, to reflect upon, if you might, a few comments that could shed light on the situation we find ourselves in right now as it relates to the Supreme Court vacancy made by Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL over the years during his time here in Congress.

In 1986, MITCH MCCONNELL said: “I believe that a heavy burden must be met by those who would have this nominee rejected. Under the Constitution, our duty is to provide advice and consent to judicial nominations, not to substitute our judgment for what are reasonable views for a judicial nominee to hold.” That was in 1986.

Then in 1990, he said: “It is clear under our form of government that the advice and consent role of the Senate in judicial nominations should not be politicized.” That was MITCH MCCONNELL in 1990.

In 2005, he said: “Our job is to react to that nomination in a respectful and dignified way, and at the end of the process, to give that person an up-or-down vote as all nominees who have majority support have gotten throughout the history of the country.”

I am trying to figure out what has changed, Representative BEATTY.

Mrs. BEATTY. Thank you so much, Congressman JEFFRIES.

Hearing you quote those things, three things come to mind. First, let me say that Congressman STENY HOYER was absolutely right when he says that this issue of not filling the vacancy is not related to only one group. So I want to say, after hearing what you said and many others of our members of the Congressional Black Caucus, it is important for us to know why we are calling on the Senate Republicans to do their job, and that is because we are the voice for those who are not often represented. We are the voice for those when you talk about issues related to women and women's rights, when you talk about issues that are related to things that affect you and me, and when you talk about the article that Congresswoman BARBARA LEE entered into the RECORD, “Blacks See Bias in Delay on a Scalia Successor.”

Now, that article says it all. That article specifically states that many folks believe, in this wonderful America that we live in, that it is also because of the color of his skin. I think that is another reason that we come as a strong 46 members of the Congressional Black Caucus, because the facts work against them.

Think about it. When we look at the number of people who have been appointed, when we look at the number of days, if you look at since 1975, it has only taken an average of 67 days to confirm a President's nominee to the Supreme Court. The Senate has never taken more than 125 days to vote on a Supreme Court nominee, and there are 325 days left in President Obama's term.

□ 2000

Since the early 1900s, six Supreme Court Justices have been confirmed in an election year. When I think about your question and I think about your sharing with us some of the comments that Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL has said, let me add this one to the RECORD. And it is something he got right.

He said that the American people should have the right to choose the President who will pick the next Supreme Court Justice deciding the future balance of the Nation's highest court. Well, he got that right. Because you know what. The people did pick the President when they picked President Barack Obama in 2012, who won the election by 5 million votes.

I am calling on him and the Senate Republicans to do their job, to allow the President to do what the Constitution tells us, to allow the President, who has already said that he is going to bring somebody who is full of scholarship, he is going to bring someone who is committed and capable to doing the people's work—I wanted to add that to your statement and share with everyone tonight that is why we are here.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I really appreciate that.

As we are simply trying to point out, all we are asking for is for the Senate to adhere to its constitutional responsibilities and, when the President sends forth a nominee, to conduct a rigorous hearing process before the American people and then, at the end of that process, provide that nominee with an up-or-down vote before the Judiciary Committee and then, ultimately, the floor of the United States Senate.

Now, I have been in this institution for a little over 3 years. If I had a dollar for every time some of my colleagues mentioned strict adherence to the United States Constitution, I would be a billionaire right now. For the life of me, I can't understand what is so complicated about this particular issue.

As Representative BEATTY so ably pointed out, from this moment, there are 325 days remaining in the Presidency of Barack Obama.

As this chart illustrates, if you just take a look at the current occupants of the Supreme Court, Justice Roberts, the Chief Justice, the most important position on the Supreme Court, a 23-

day confirmation process; Justice Scalia, confirmed in 85 days; Justice Kagan, 87 days; Justice Sotomayor, 66 days; Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a/k/a the notorious RBG—one of my personal favorites—50 days; Justice Clarence Thomas, 99 days.

You can add some of these confirmation periods together and you still wouldn't get to 325. So what is the problem?

Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining on my Special Order today?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 12 minutes remaining.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, one of the concerns that I think we in the Congressional Black Caucus have as it relates to the Presidency of President Obama—and Representative BEATTY pointed this out—is that there is a feeling in many corners of America that this President is treated differently.

I am not sure if it is because there are some people here in the Capitol who have something against folks from Hawaii. I am not sure if it is his Kansas roots. I don't know if they dislike the fact that he was a community organizer in terms of one of the jobs that he held after school.

I don't know if they dislike the fact that he is so well educated from Columbia and Harvard Law Schools. I don't know if it is the fact that he was the President of the Harvard Law Review or a constitutional law professor at the University of Chicago Law School, one of the top five law schools in this country.

I don't really know what it is about Barack Obama that they want to treat him differently than almost any other President who has served at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. I am trying to figure it out. What is it about Barack Obama that he has to be treated with such disrespect?

The amazing thing to me is that they have actually failed to stop this President. They gave him no assistance as it relates to trying to turn the economy around.

He inherited a train wreck from George W. Bush and has gotten the economy back on track. Not a single Member from the other side of the aisle voted for the stimulus package, which was necessary to stabilize the economy and then build it up.

There was 71 consecutive months of private sector job creation, and 14 mil-

lion-plus private sector jobs were created under this Presidency. The unemployment rate has gone from over 10 percent to under 5 percent. The stock market has gone from 6,000 to over 16,000.

The deficit has been reduced by more than \$1 trillion. Gas prices are below \$2 per gallon. More than 18 million previously uninsured Americans now have health coverage.

Not a single one of those accomplishments occurred with a vote from the other side of the aisle. What is it about this President that they don't like?

Now, in his final term—and, by the way, speaking to strict constructionists—when you look at the United States Constitution, I can't find a 3-year term. I can't find it. It is a 4-year term with 325 days left.

All we are asking is that they just do their job. It is pretty simple. Give whoever the President puts forth a fair hearing. They have the votes to defeat any of his nominees.

Let me ask my colleague from Ohio. What I haven't been able to understand is this Justice who I have disagreed with on many issues. Although he was strong—Justice Scalia—on the privacy rights of the American people, the Fourth Amendment—was concerned about the criminalization of politics, these are areas where there is some common ground.

And certainly he was a giant in terms of legal thought. The news of his demise was barely out for public consumption when MITCH MCCONNELL issued a statement saying: We are not considering anyone that President Obama puts forth.

How do you explain that? How do you interpret that reaction? We couldn't even respect the death of Justice Scalia before the vacancy was politicized, before he was even buried and funeralized.

Mrs. BEATTY. Congressman JEFFRIES, I think you answered that question for me when you gave the long list of successes that this President has done without their help.

That gave me pause to think: What is it that is keeping them from doing their job? Why is it that they are so threatened?

Maybe it is the success that this President has brought forth not for you and I, not for the 435 Members of us, but he has done this for this Nation. He has made it a better place.

When we look at what the Justices do and represent, when we think about liberties and freedoms and the economy and our rights, I think they are afraid that he will appoint someone who will have that same scholarship, who will have that same success, someone who will bring balance. I think they are afraid of the balance.

In the words of another one of our colleagues, I might add, from the great State of Ohio, Congresswoman MARCIA

FUDGE, former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus—she has words that she is entering, but I would like to quote from her words to remind us why we are saying: Senate Republicans, do your job.

She reminds us, as Members of Congress, we made a promise to our constituents that we would faithfully discharge the duties and the oath of office which we took, which we were elected to. She reminded me in her words that it is so important for us to say tonight to the Senate: Do your job. Do your job.

I think they are afraid. So I am going to issue a challenge. Congresswoman BARBARA LEE said that you are here tonight initiating this topic because we are sounding the alarm, we are ringing the bell.

I challenge them to answer that question. I challenge them to share with not only the Congressional Black Caucus, not only the Members of Congress, not only the Members of the Senate, but they have an obligation to America, to the citizens of these United States, Mr. Speaker, for them to tell us why they are not doing their job.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentlewoman for those very powerful words. I can only hope, as we close this Special Order hour, that our colleagues from across this Capitol will see fit simply to adhere to their constitutional responsibilities to consider any nominee put forth by President Obama comprehensively and fairly and to faithfully execute those obligations consistent with their oath of office, not for the good of this President, not for the good of this Article I Congress, but for the good of the United States of America.

I yield back the balance of my time. Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, when taking office, every Member of Congress swears to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. This includes Article II, Section 2, Clause 2, also known as the "Appointments Clause."

The Appointments Clause clearly states the President has the power to nominate Justices of the Supreme Court. Nowhere does this clause state the President abdicates this constitutional responsibility during a presidential election year. And, nowhere does it state the U.S. Senate can make threats against the President for exercising his constitutional authority. Our separate branches of government exist to provide checks and balances against tyranny, not to hijack Constitutional processes for political gain.

Many Republicans have argued that Supreme Court Justices are not typically appointed during presidential election years, and especially during a president's last term. To those claims I invoke Mahlon Pitney, Louis Brandeis, John H. Clarke, Benjamin Cardozo, Frank Murphy, and Anthony Kennedy—all examples of Supreme Court Justices who were confirmed during a presidential election year.

Supreme Court Justices Anthony Kennedy and Benjamin Cardozo in particular, were con-

firmed during President Reagan and President Hoover's last years, respectively. Justice Louis Brandeis was nominated and confirmed in 1916 to replace Justice Joseph Lamar, who died in early January of that same year.

Not only has the Senate voted on and confirmed Supreme Court nominees during presidential election years, the process has never taken more than 125 days. In fact, on average, nominees have been confirmed, rejected, or withdrawn within 25 days. Ample time remains for President Obama to work with Congress to approve a nominee.

However, Republican leadership has once again let politics get in the way of doing what the American people elected them to do.

The Constitution is clear. Just as we honor our First Amendment right to freedom of religion or our Second Amendment right to bear arms, so should we defend the constitutionality of the Supreme Court appointment process. We cannot pick and choose which sections we enforce.

As Members of Congress, we made a promise to our constituents that we would "faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which" we have been elected to. It is the Senate's duty to consider a Supreme Court nominee.

I implore my Republican colleagues: Put politics aside and do your job; do not block President Obama's nominee. Rulings handed down by the Supreme Court directly affect our economy, security, and civil rights. This seat is too important to leave vacant.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, barely an hour after Justice Scalia's death was confirmed, Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL issued a statement rejecting any judge President Obama chose to nominate to the Supreme Court.

At that point, the President hadn't even announced his intention to fill the vacancy on our highest court.

It's a sad state of affairs that the highest ranking Republican in the Senate would politicize the Court in such a grotesque way when many of us were still learning of Justice Scalia's passing.

But this is par for the course for the Republicans. On issue after issue, debate after debate, they continue to solidify their reputation as the party of "no," to the detriment of this great nation.

Senate Republicans continue to maintain that they will deny a confirmation hearing to any individual nominated by President Obama to serve on the Supreme Court.

This is part of the Republican political agenda to disrupt the work of government when it does not align with their far-right ideology.

It is a thinly-veiled attempt to obstruct the nomination process in hopes of packing the Supreme Court with conservative justices who will roll back the progress our nation has made, from marriage equality to reproductive rights.

We have already seen what is at stake here. In 2013, the Supreme Court struck down the heart of the Voting Rights Act—a major setback for civil rights and voting rights, and a major blow to fundamental democracy in this country.

The president has a constitutional responsibility to nominate a successor to Justice Scalia.

The Senate also has a constitutional responsibility—to give the nominee a fair hearing and a timely vote.

This is about democracy and protecting the institution of the Supreme Court.

What we are seeing from Republicans is a clear pattern of obstruction. They have shut down the government, threatened not to pay our debts, and halted the nomination process before it has even begun.

This divisiveness is a detriment to our democracy, an affront to justice, and an insult to the American people, who deserve to have their nation's highest court working at full capacity.

Republicans have said that there is no precedent for confirming a Supreme Court nominee during an election year. That is blatantly wrong: six Justices have been confirmed in presidential election years, including three Republican appointees.

Since the 1980s, Congress has almost never left any vacancy during a single Supreme Court session.

What is unprecedented in modern history is denying the President of the United States a hearing or vote on a nomination to the Supreme Court.

And yet that's what the Republican plan is. It's hard not to see this as an effort to delegitimize the nation's first black president.

Republicans have been trying to derail President Obama ever since he took office.

And now, whoever ends up being nominated for the Supreme Court, regardless of qualifications, will be rejected simply because he or she is an Obama nominee.

The disdain Republicans have for Obama is so great that they are willing to trample on the U.S. Constitution to prevent him from appointing a judge to the Supreme Court.

The U.S. Constitution—the very document that Republicans like to accuse the President of ignoring—states that the president "shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the Supreme Court."

Not only does he have the right, he has a duty to appoint a judge to the Court.

Now, President Obama made clear that he seeks judges "who approach decisions without any particular ideology or agenda, but rather a commitment to impartial justice, a respect for precedent, and a determination to faithfully apply the law to the facts at hand."

There is nothing radical about the President's position. His comments speak to his respect for the law and the seriousness he brings to the nomination process.

Republicans must do their job as it relates to that process—earnestly debate and then vote on the person nominated by the President.

There are many hotly debated issues in our country—immigration, gun reform, health care, campaign finance; issues that necessitate the maximum strength of the Supreme Court.

The American people deserve far better than attempts by Republican politicians in Washington to stack the Supreme Court with far-right judges who will forgo impartial justice to advance the conservative agenda.

They expect their government to work for them, and Senate Republicans must meet that expectation by swiftly filling the vacancy on the Court.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, sixteen days ago, and just moments after learning the sad news that Antonin Scalia, the most senior Justice on the Supreme Court, had died in his sleep at the age of 79, the Republican Senate Majority Leader, announced emphatically that "this vacancy should not be filled until we have a new President."

Later that evening, the Senate Majority Leader's position was echoed at a presidential primary debate in South Carolina by every Republican presidential candidate.

Justice Scalia may have had many qualities but none endeared him more to his admirers on that debate stage and across the country than his professed devotion to the rule of law, his exaltation of the doctrine of "original intent," and his insistence that the meaning of the Constitution is to be divined only from the strictest reading of the text.

Given the praise heaped on Justice Scalia by Republican senators and presidential candidates, it is passing strange indeed that they claim to be honoring his memory by taking a position that repudiates the very principles Justice Scalia devoted his life to advancing.

Mr. Speaker, so-called "strict constructionists" claim that the Constitution is to be interpreted according to its literal text.

Well, there is nothing clearer than the provision in Article II, Section 2, which states that the President "with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court[.]"

To read the Constitution as containing a limitation restricting the President's exercise of this power in the fourth year of his term of office would be to treat the Constitution as a "living document" and to engage in the type of judicial activism that Justice Scalia opposed and fought during his 30 years on the Court.

Indeed, just three years ago, at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Justice Scalia in discussing his judicial philosophy, expressed his view of the Constitution: "It's not a living document. It's dead, dead, dead."

If it had been the original intention of the Framers to restrict the President from nominating Supreme Court Justices to fill vacancies occurring in the fourth year of his or her term, they would have manifested that intent clearly, explicitly, and unmistakably, as they did in conditioning Supreme Court appointments to the advice and consent of the Senate and in prohibiting the President from exercising the Pardon Power in cases of impeachment.

Mr. Speaker, disregarding the procedure expressly set forth in the Constitution for filling vacancies on the Supreme Court because it may not result in the appointment of one's preferred justice makes a mockery of the "rule of law," adherence to which is claimed to be the most sacred principle of both judicial and political conservatives.

The bottom line is this: for those who revered Justice Scalia, cherish his memory, and wish to do honor to the work of his life, the way forward is clear.

And that is for Republican senators to gladly receive, when it is put forward, President Obama's nominee to fill the vacancy left by the death of their hero and discharge their constitutional duty to advise and consent (or

not consent) to the nomination as reflected by an up or down vote on the nominee.

Republican senators protest there is an 80 year precedent against confirming a Supreme Court nominee during an election year, and besides, there is not sufficient time even if they wished to do so.

This is a short horse soon curried.

The most recent instance where there was a vacancy on the Supreme Court in an election year occurred not 80 but 28 years ago, in 1988, during the administration of President Reagan.

That vacancy was filled on February 3, 1988 by the appointment of Justice Anthony Kennedy, who was confirmed 97-0 by a Democrat-controlled Senate.

The Justice Kennedy nomination is the controlling precedent, as Justice Scalia would recognize.

The erudite Justice would say to anyone claiming otherwise, "*Leges posteriores priores contrarias abrogant*," which is Latin for the canon of judicial interpretation that "the last expression of the people prevails."

There are 326 days left in President Obama's term, which is more than sufficient time for the President to nominate, and for the Senate to consider and vote to confirm or reject his nominee.

Since 1900, there have been 60 Supreme Court vacancies.

The average time taken to fill these 60 vacancies is 73 days, which is less than 25% of the time remaining in the President's term.

The average time to fill each of the 13 vacancies since 1975 is a mere 67 days.

And of the current members of the Supreme Court, the average time is 74 days, the longest being the 99 days taken to confirm the controversial nomination of Justice Clarence Thomas in October 1991.

Mr. Speaker, as is often noted, elections have consequences; they also impose responsibilities and duties.

And one of the most important duties imposed by the Constitution on the President is to nominate persons to fill vacancies on the Supreme Court and for the Senate to consider those nominations with dispatch.

The Supreme Court is the nation's highest court and its essential and indispensable role in our constitutional system is to provide definitive interpretations of American law and the Constitution.

Its decisions are the law of the land binding in every state and territory.

The Supreme Court is the only judicial tribunal capable of providing the legal clarity and certainty required for the legal system to function and give meaning to the rule of law.

President Obama has announced that he intends to fulfill the responsibility devolved upon him by the Constitution and will submit to the Senate a nominee to fill the large shoes left by the late Justice Antonin Scalia.

The Senate should fulfill its constitutional duty to advise and consent, or withhold its consent, by casting an up or down vote on that nomination.

That is the way to pay fitting tribute to Justice Scalia, to honor the Constitution, and to keep faith with the American people.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CULBERSON (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and March 1 on account of district business.

Ms. JACKSON LEE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and March 1 on account of representational duties in her congressional district.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and March 1.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today through March 4.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 1, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4494. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy for the Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing ten officers to wear the insignia of the grade of major general or brigadier general, as indicated, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 777(b)(3)(B); Public Law 104-106, Sec. 503(a)(1) (as added by Public Law 108-136, Sec. 509(a)(3)); (117 Stat. 1458); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4495. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy for the Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing Colonel Paul H. Pardew, United States Army, to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 777(b)(3)(B); Public Law 104-106, Sec. 503(a)(1) (as added by Public Law 108-136, Sec. 509(a)(3)); (117 Stat. 1458); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4496. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy for the Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of General John F. Campbell, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4497. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a letter regarding the potential for a public health emergency that exists involving the Zika virus, pursuant to 21 U.S.C. 360bbb-3; June 25, 1938, ch. 675, Sec. 564 (as added by Public Law 108-136, Sec. 1603(a)); (117 Stat. 1684); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4498. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-134, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4499. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-052, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4500. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No. DDTC 15-086, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4501. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No. DDTC 15-123, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4502. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No. DDTC 15-100, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4503. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting a certification for calendar year 2015, consistent with the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling, and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997, and Executive Order 13346 of July 8, 2004; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4504. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program [Docket No.: 151223999-6040-01] (RIN: 0648-BF68) received February 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4505. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Report of the Attorney General to the Congress of the United States on the Administration of the Foreign Agents Registration Act, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 621; June 8, 1938, ch. 327, Sec. 11 (as amended by Public Law 104-65, Sec. 19); (109 Stat. 704); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4506. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a letter and relevant documentation concerning the implementation of commitments in the Joint Plan of Action, pursuant to the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act of 2012, the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996, the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012, and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012; jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, Financial Services, and Ways and Means.

for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 1471. A bill to reauthorize the programs and activities of the Federal Emergency Management Agency; with an amendment (Rept. 114-436). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4401. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide countering violent extremism training to Department of Homeland Security representatives at State and local fusion centers, and for other purposes (Rept. 114-437). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Texas: Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. H.R. 4084. A bill to enable civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies by private and public institutions and to expand theoretical and practical knowledge of nuclear physics, chemistry, and materials science; with an amendment (Rept. 114-438). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 4557. A bill to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule (Rept. 114-439). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. KILMER (for himself and Mr. HECK of Washington):

H.R. 4648. A bill to provide incentives for investment in green stormwater infrastructure, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE (for herself, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. BASS, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. LEE, Ms. MOORE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. MEEKS, and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama):

H.R. 4649. A bill to support the International Decade for People of African Descent, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. BUCHANAN (for himself and Mr. PASCRELL):

H.R. 4650. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an extension of certain Medicare long-term care hospital payment rules; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCCAUL (for himself, Mr. LANDEVIN, Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. HURD of Texas, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, and Mr. REICHERT):

H.R. 4651. A bill to establish in the legislative branch the National Commission on Security and Technology Challenges; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and Foreign Affairs, for a period to be

subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. TAKAI (for himself, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. HONDA, Ms. NORTON, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. MOORE, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. LEE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. RANGEL, and Ms. JACKSON LEE):

H.R. 4652. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to codify the Revised Pay As You Earn Repayment plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. TONKO (for himself, Mr. PAL-LONE, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CARDENAS, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, and Mr. MCNERNEY):

H.R. 4653. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to increase assistance for States, water systems, and disadvantaged communities; to encourage good financial and environmental management of water systems; to strengthen the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to enforce the requirements of the Act; and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana (for himself, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARDENAS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MARINO, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. ROSS-LEHTINEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. YODER):

H. Res. 627. A resolution expressing support for the designation of February 29, 2016, as "Rare Disease Day"; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RICHMOND:

H. Res. 628. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the African-Americans who duly won election to the House during the post-Civil War Reconstruction Era but were wrongly denied the right to take their seats should be recognized as former Members of the House; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. THOMPSON of California (for himself, Mr. COSTA, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. LEE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. BONAMICI, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. DELAURO, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. HAHN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. SIREN, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. NADLER, Mr. KIND, Mr. POCAN, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. HONDA, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. TED LIEU

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk

of California, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. TITUS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PETERS, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. ESTY, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FARR, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. COHEN, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. VISCLOSKEY, and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H. Res. 629. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Women's History Month; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 4648.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 1 and 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE:

H.R. 4649.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill N. is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 3 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 4650.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

United States Constitution, Article I, Section 8, clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. MCCAUL:

H.R. 4651.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. TAKAI:

H.R. 4652.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 7 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. TONKO:

H.R. 4653.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 Clause 18: The Congress shall have power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying

into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 114: Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 223: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 346: Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 578: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida and Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 612: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 662: Mr. ALLEN and Mr. RIGELL.
H.R. 670: Mr. LANCE and Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.R. 799: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.
H.R. 842: Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 865: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.R. 915: Ms. TSONGAS.
H.R. 980: Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 1111: Ms. BROWN of Florida.
H.R. 1130: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 1147: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 1188: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut and Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 1197: Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 1221: Mr. FATTAH.
H.R. 1431: Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 1432: Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 1439: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 1516: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 1567: Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 1608: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 1623: Mr. ROHRBACHER.
H.R. 1651: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 1686: Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 1728: Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 1942: Mr. HANNA.
H.R. 2059: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 2102: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 2114: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. RANGEL, and Ms. BASS.
H.R. 2170: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 2210: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 2257: Mr. ZINKE and Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 2293: Mr. CLAWSON of Florida, Mr. RIGELL, and Mr. BLUM.
H.R. 2404: Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 2515: Mrs. BEATTY and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 2536: Mr. GUINTA and Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 2646: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.
H.R. 2648: Mr. COOPER and Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 2799: Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, and Mr. WALDEN.
H.R. 2802: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 2874: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 2896: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 2903: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 2939: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. DELAURO, and Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 2972: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 3048: Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 3061: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 3071: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 3177: Mr. WALDEN.
H.R. 3180: Mr. BYRNE.
H.R. 3235: Ms. LEE and Ms. BASS.
H.R. 3244: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 3294: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 3308: Mr. DEFazio, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 3355: Mr. DOGGETT.
H.R. 3363: Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 3381: Mr. LAMALFA and Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 3406: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 3463: Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 3471: Mr. BECERRA.
H.R. 3516: Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 3551: Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 3559: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.
H.R. 3608: Mr. REED.
H.R. 3643: Mr. MULVANEY.
H.R. 3687: Mr. RIGELL.
H.R. 3706: Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. JOYCE, Ms. SPEIER, and Mrs. DAVIS of California.
H.R. 3710: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 3741: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 3779: Mr. POLIQUIN and Mrs. WAGNER.
H.R. 3808: Mr. RATCLIFFE.
H.R. 3846: Mr. BYRNE, Mr. BLUM, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. TSONGAS, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 3852: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 3865: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 3880: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 3956: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 3958: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 3964: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 3970: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida and Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 4007: Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 4016: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 4065: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 4073: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
H.R. 4087: Mr. WESTMORELAND and Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 4126: Mr. HILL and Mr. WALKER.
H.R. 4223: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4319: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 4335: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
H.R. 4336: Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. ROSS, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. CARNEY.
H.R. 4351: Mr. ASHFORD and Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 4362: Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H.R. 4371: Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 4390: Ms. MOORE and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4401: Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 4433: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4447: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. NEAL.
H.R. 4463: Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 4474: Mr. MOOLENAAR and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4488: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. TAKANO, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4497: Mr. GRIFFITH.
H.R. 4499: ROE of Tennessee and Mrs. BLACK.
H.R. 4508: Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 4519: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 4544: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4554: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 4570: Mrs. WAGNER, Ms. LEE, and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 4597: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 4598: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 4612: Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, and Mr. WALKER.
H.R. 4614: Mr. THORNBERRY.
H.R. 4622: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi and Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 4625: Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. SIREs, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 4639: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 4646: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H. Con. Res. 51: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H. Con. Res. 89: Mrs. WAGNER and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H. Res. 28: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H. Res. 62: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MOORE, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina,

Ms. KUSTER, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, and Mrs.
NAPOLITANO.

H. Res. 112: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H. Res. 487: Mr. POLIQUIN.

H. Res. 615: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H. Res. 616: Ms. MOORE, Ms. KAPTUR, and
Mr. SERRANO.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE BRAINERD SENIOR
CENTER**HON. BOBBY L. RUSH**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to and honor Chicago's Brainerd Senior Center, which celebrated its fifth Black History Month celebration on Friday.

This year, the Center highlighted African American inventors and their inventions. This event, Mr. Speaker, helped educate many and remind others of the contributions of important people such as Madame C.J. Walker, Robert F. Flemming, Jr., and Sarah Boone.

I applaud the Brainerd Center for keeping the legacies of these and other great Americans alive and ensuring that their contribution not only to our Nation, but the world, is not forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to the Brainerd Senior Center.

ESTABLISHING ACCOUNTABILITY
AT THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY ORGANIZATION: IL-
LICIT TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS,
WHISTLEBLOWING, AND REFORM**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, a hearing I held earlier this week put a spotlight on an organization that is a critical component of a global system of intellectual property and patent protection, the World Intellectual Property Organization, or WIPO. It is an organization that, unfortunately, appears to have lost its way under its current Director General, Francis Gurry, and is in need of major reform.

We heard from whistleblowers who related how they uncovered illicit transfers of technology to rogue nations such as North Korea and Iran, and how WIPO under Director General Gurry, unbeknownst to member States, cut deals with China and Russia to open offices in those countries, potentially putting our intellectual property at risk.

The hearing was about national security as much as the importance of sound governance and oversight. China, for example, has a notoriously bad record on protecting intellectual property rights—WIPO ought to be part of the solution.

You may know that I serve as Chairman of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China; Senator MARCO RUBIO is co-chair.

Ominously, the Commission's latest annual report released last October concluded that human rights violations had significantly wors-

ened and were broader in scope than at any other time since the Commission was established in 2002.

Last week I travelled to China on a mission to promote human rights, the rule of law and democracy, which of course includes intellectual property rights.

In China I not only met and argued with government leaders, but I had the privilege of writing and delivering a keynote address to students and faculty at New York University-Shanghai.

Hopes in the 90's that China would eventually and inevitably matriculate from a dictatorship to democracy haven't even come close to materializing.

According to the Commission's report, U.S. companies faced significant difficulties related to intellectual property rights in China. And China is not the only place where these problems persist.

Two of our witnesses, Jim Pooley and Miranda Brown, recounted what they saw at WIPO, and what happened when they sought to bring to light what they saw. It is not a pretty story.

It is the personal aspect of governance and oversight that I want to emphasize, because at its heart the story we heard is a human drama, about brave individuals who at great personal cost to themselves and their comfort saw wrongdoing and decided to do something about it.

The hearing was timely as well as topical, as there has been an internal investigation of WIPO by the UN's Office of Internal Oversight Services into the allegations of wrongdoing. The results of this investigation are currently before the chairman of WIPO's General Assembly—this is a General Assembly of member states, including the United States, based in Geneva.

It is incumbent upon the General Assembly chairman—Gabriel Duque of Colombia—that he act upon this report, share it with the member states, and make it publically available. We also call upon our State Department to follow up on this, and to be persistent in pushing for reform, transparency and accountability of WIPO.

This week's hearing will have reverberations beyond WIPO, for there appears to be a culture of corruption at many international organizations, not only WIPO.

We hear revelations, for example, about FIFA and world soccer, and how the serpent of corruption wheedles its way even into the world of sport, undermining the nobility of athletic competition.

We hear of the sexual exploitation of minors occurring in UN peacekeeping missions—I chaired three hearings on that and traveled to DR Congo to investigate—transforming ostensible emissaries of mercy into envoys of exploitation, and supposed places of refuge maw pits of misery.

The hearing I held this week is the first in what we hope to be a series of hearings this

Congress holds to focus on the need for reform at the United Nations and its institutions, with our next in the series being on UN Peacekeepers and the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse.

We believe by shining a light, we can help victims and help end corruption, bringing healing and true reform.

Organizations such as WIPO are too important to be abandoned. It is essential that we conduct vigorous oversight and demand accountability to help refocus this organization on fulfilling its vital mission.

Finally, I would like to thank my co-chairs from the co-sponsoring subcommittees, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN and MATT SALMON, and our various ranking members, for joining me at the hearing earlier this week. Rep. ROS-LEHTINEN in particular has been dogged in pursuing this issue over many years now, and deserves praise for first addressing the issue of corruption at WIPO.

INDIAN CONSUL GENERAL IN
HOUSTON, MR. PARVATHANENI
HARISH**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I celebrate and congratulate my friend Mr. Parvathaneni Harish, Indian Consul General in Houston. I celebrate his efforts on behalf of the Indian community in Houston and congratulate him on his new assignment as Ambassador to Vietnam.

I have met with Mr. Harish on many occasions and he is a thoughtful and caring representative of India. We agree that the United States and India have a unique and special bond, both founded on the importance of democracy and that our two nations have the utmost mutual respect for one another. We are both strongly engaged with trade and intellectual property projects.

I recently attended the Republic Day in India, celebrating the adoption of the Indian Constitution. Both the US and India are proud to celebrate unity in diversity. We recognized our two countries' work for many years for peace and prosperity, true patriotism, and independence.

Mr. Harish's efforts have strengthened relationships on the city, state, and federal levels. He has promoted visits to India and ways to benefit the US and Indian economy. I wish him the very best on his new assignment. He will be greatly missed in Houston and all of Southeast Texas.

And that's just the way it is.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

IN RECOGNITION OF GEORGE W.
JETER

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great husband, father, philanthropist, entrepreneur, and friend of long standing to my wife, Vivian, and me—Mr. George W. Jeter. Sadly, George passed away on February 26, 2016. His funeral service will be held today, February 29, 2016 at St. Paul United Methodist Church in Columbus, Georgia.

George William Jeter was born March 29, 1935, in Montgomery, Alabama. He graduated from Coffee County High School in Enterprise, Alabama in 1953 and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from the University of Alabama in 1957. After graduation, he went on to serve his country with distinction as an army officer from 1957–59, serving as a Weapons Instructor.

George was also an Internal Revenue Agent and Field Audit Supervisor from 1959–1969. He served as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at AFLAC, Inc. and affiliates from 1969–86. He played a tremendous role in helping to grow the company in its early days and helped to launch the business in Japan, where AFLAC now does almost 75 percent of its business. Following his retirement from AFLAC, George continued to serve as a consultant to the company until his passing.

George loved collecting guns, samurai swords, and Japanese Art. Moreover, he also loved people and Columbus. He served on numerous community boards and in leadership positions to include: the Chattahoochee Council of Boy Scouts of America; the Columbus State University Foundation; the Columbus Regional Health Foundation; The Ronald McDonald House Charities of West Georgia; St. Paul United Methodist Church; Troy University; American Hospital Association; Georgia Hospital Association; The Rotary Club of Columbus; and the Columbus Technical College Foundation. He also served as a consultant to Denim North America where he was a constant advocate for the American Textile Industry. He loved young people and had a great love for Scouting. He has received numerous awards for his dedication to Scouting and its mission. And the current Boy Scout Service Center in Columbus is named in honor of him and his wife, Jo. He also established the George W. Jeter Foundation so that he could find other ways to support the causes that he championed throughout his life. It has been said that "The true person of success is not the person that climbs the ladder of this life with two hands, but climbs the ladder of this life with one hand and reaches back with the other." George William Jeter was always reaching back to help others to reach their full potential. Our country and humankind are better because he travelled this way.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with the 730,000 people of the Second Congressional District in

extending condolences to his wife, Jo, their four children and two grandchildren and our gratitude for his life of service to humanity.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent on Friday, February 26th, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following ways:

Yes on Roll Call Number 92 the Beyer of Virginia Amendment No. 2.

Yes on Roll Call Number 93 Jackson Lee of Texas Amendment No. 3.

Yes on Roll Call Number 94 Beyer of Virginia Amendment No. 8.

No on Roll Call Number 95 Smith of Missouri Amendment No. 9.

No on Roll Call Number 96 Griffith of Virginia Amendment No. 12.

No on Roll Call Number 97 Ribble of Wisconsin Amendment No. 14.

No on Roll Call Number 98 Young of Alaska Amendment No. 15.

Yes on Roll Call Number 99 Huffman of California Amendment No. 16.

Yes on Roll Call Number 100 Sportsmens Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015.

No on Roll Call Number 101 Sportsmens Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015.

HONORING SISTER DOROTHY COOK

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of an outstanding member of the East Bay community, Sister Dorothy Cook. We honor her life of service and spiritual devotion, and recognize the teachings she has given to our community.

Born in 1934 in Prescott, Arkansas, Sister Dorothy Cook has been a lifelong servant and messenger of the Lord's word. She attended Sunday school every weekend at Sweet Home Baptist Church, building her relationship with God and His word. Sister Cook relocated to San Francisco in 1947, where she then attended San Francisco City College and San Francisco State University.

Sister Cook's exemplary ministry promotes faith, family values, and the presence of God in every aspect of life. She seeks to bring religion back into the fabric of our society.

Ministry is the foundation and sole mission of Sister Cook's work. Whether building a gospel house or preparing videos, Sister Cook involved many believers in her endeavors. Ministry can be found anywhere, as Sister Cook has shown us, with many of these projects helping to train others to follow the path of their Lord.

Her patience is a testament to the endurance of service and devotion to God. She is

selfless and unwavering in her motivation to do God's work.

Furthermore, Sister Cook has produced numerous literary works which have impacted our local youth and church community.

Sister Dorothy Cook has also had a profound impact on the most vulnerable in our community, helping lead many voices toward the word of God by offering opportunity and appreciation to those who have never had such chances in their life. Her dedication to community is unrivaled and fueled by the word of God.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes the life of an exemplary individual and devoted community member, Sister Dorothy Cook. I join all of Sister Dorothy Cook's loved ones in wishing her continued happiness and success in life.

**GETTING THE WORDS RIGHT: OUR
NATION'S COURT REPORTERS
AND HOUSE CLERKS**

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the backbone of the court system, courtroom reporters make sure that the system works efficiently. Tasked with keeping complete, accurate and secure records, courtroom reporters handle verbatim documentation of criminal, civil or other court proceedings.

These individuals are highly skilled and trained in court reporting, which usually involves stenography. Reporting for the courts involves taking records of court proceedings, depositions, and administrative hearings, among other things.

They record everything that is being said in the courtroom by judges, witnesses, attorneys or other parties, as well as gestures and emotional reactions that accompany any statements.

While taking shorthand notes, they must accurately capture the spoken word. This does not mean paraphrasing or capturing every other word. Reporters must capture each word verbatim, with correct spelling and punctuation, despite the speed in which individuals are talking. After the hearing is over, they then must transcribe their notes into a readable, workable format for the public record.

Sometimes, a court reporter's work benefits those with special needs, such as the deaf or hard of hearing. Court reporters can even provide closed captioning or a real-time translation of spoken words.

During my 22 years as a judge in Texas, I had many court reporters who capably kept records of every word said in the courtroom. Being a court reporter is no easy feat, stressors come from every direction including security issues and daily deadlines.

In the House of Representatives, we have clerks who help us and our staff every day. These individuals serve as the congressional stenographers, working diligently, day in and day out. These individuals take notes on congressional hearings and floor debate, speeches and statements. They then work extremely

fast to enter all the statements into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Every single entry must be completely correct. Each statement made goes on the record in congressional history. These individuals' work ensures that history is written correctly. Without their diligence we would not be able to do our jobs as efficiently.

These highly trained and talented men and women work tenaciously to record correctly the proceedings of the court system as well as Congress.

Court reporters and floor clerks are truly a vital asset to judges and Members of Congress. We thank them for getting the words right.

And that's just the way it is.

SENATE REPUBLICAN SUPPORT OF OBAMA'S SUPREME COURT NOMINATION

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to urge the Senate Republicans to consider President Obama's Supreme Court nominee. It is disappointing that our democratic process is being so unduly hindered by Senate Republicans who refuse to carry out their basic duties clearly laid out for them in the Constitution. The Constitution clearly informs us that the President has the power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to nominate a successor for open seats in the Supreme Court. The message for Senate Republicans is simple—let the President do his job. It is time to put aside partisan issues and get back to the basics of governing.

In previous years, Supreme Court nominations have been at least considered during an election year; six times in our U.S. history to be exact. So I ask, why change now? If Senate Republicans fail to consider the President's Supreme Court nominee during the current election year, this will be the first time in U.S. history that our Supreme Court will have a vacancy for well over a year. There is simply no legitimate rationale for not giving consideration to the President's nominee once announced. There is an ample amount of time available for the Senate to consider the President's nominee.

The Supreme Court vacancy is a priority that deserves an unbiased hearing and timely vote. Justice and democracy are at stake and there is no time for this kind of divisiveness. Republican Senators have a constitutional obligation to put away partisan issues and fill this vacancy. Senate Republicans, I strongly urge you to fulfil your constitutional duty and consider President Obama's nominee for Supreme Court Justice.

RECOGNIZING BENNETT RICHARD "BEN" HOUSTON

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to recognize the passing of Mr. Bennett Richard "Ben" Houston on February 26th, 2016. Mr. Houston was a beloved and nationally distinguished leader within the livestock industry.

Mr. Houston received many distinct honors throughout his lifetime. He founded the Aristocrat Angus Ranch in 1966, with his wife Nita, where they raised their family. In 1992, Aristocrat Angus Ranch flew Angus seed stock and beef cattle genetics to the Ukraine, establishing them as a leader in the cattle industry.

In addition, Mr. Houston participated in many notable committees and associations. He was elected to the Executive Committee of the Western Stock Show in 1976. He went on to be President in 1985, and ultimately Chairman of the Board in 1999. He was inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation, served as a member of the American Angus Association for over 50 years, served as President of the Colorado Cattle Feeders, and was presented with the CSU Leadership in Agriculture Award. Mr. Houston was involved with a number of other organizations, where his limitless knowledge and service will always be remembered.

It is the hard work Mr. Houston embodied throughout his life that makes America exceptional. He has shown true leadership in his industry and community. I extend my deepest sympathies to Mr. Houston's family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Mr. Bennett Richard "Ben" Houston for his commitment to family, community, and the livestock industry.

HONORING MATT FRANKS

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Matt Franks for his outstanding achievement of being named the 2015 United Bowhunters of Missouri Conservation Agent of the Year for the Missouri Department of Conservation Ozark Region. Matt has earned this award after only six years of serving as a Howell County Conservation agent, displaying his exemplary determination and enthusiasm for Wildlife Code enforcement since joining the Conservation Agent Training Academy in 2009.

Matt has exhibited exceptional Wildlife Code enforcement presence throughout his six years as a Howell County Conservation Agent, making 19 arrests related to archery violations in the first two months of the 2015 archery season. In addition to Matt's admirable work ensuring conservation laws are adhered to, he has also served as an influential community leader and role model for local youth.

Matt has led numerous educational-involvement programs for youth over the last year, including bird hunting clinics and youth gigging classes. He has also hosted events for the National Wild Turkey Federation Hunting Heritage Program for young hunters known as Juniors Acquiring Knowledge, Ethics and Sportsmanship. Finally, he has served as a judge for Future Farmers of America public speaking contests, and assisted with their trap shooting team.

His involvement and contributions to the Howell County community make Matt an excellent selection for the United Bowhunters of Missouri Conservation Agent of the Year from the Ozark Region. For this award and his outstanding career achievements, it is my pleasure to recognize Matt Franks before the United States House of Representatives.

CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF INDIANA AVENUE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the month of February 2016 comes to a close to recognize a milestone anniversary in the life of Toledo's Indiana Avenue Baptist Church. This month the congregation has been celebrating its 70th anniversary with a series of special gatherings. I was privileged to join the congregation yesterday.

Founded by Reverend M. J. Stephenson in February 1946, the congregation has been shepherded by Reverend John Roberts for more than half a century. Pastor Roberts, in fact, was part of the organizational meeting of the church. Thus, this long standing beacon in our city has been blessed with a continuity of leadership since its beginnings.

Indiana Avenue Missionary Baptist Church's first services in its building were held in its lower level in 1948. An upper level was added twenty years later and since 1980 services have been held in its newer sanctuary. In 1989 a fellowship hall was added which has served the congregation very well, with special focus on activities for youth. The hall bears the name of founding Pastor Stephenson and longtime Pastor Roberts.

Starting with less than 100 members, the congregation of Indiana Avenue Missionary Baptist Church has served over 7,000 people through its seven decades and currently serves about 2,000 people. An anchor in our community, the church serves its faithful while ministering to the needs of its neighbors. One of the wonderful traditions at the church is the Interfaith Mass Choir. The choir's beautiful blend of voices soar in faith-filled praise, lifting up in joy those it reaches through song.

Psalms Chapter 18 Verse 2 tells us, "The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold." Through the days of its "three-score and ten" years, the shepherds and flock of Indiana Avenue Missionary Baptist Church have lived this truth as their lives have given

testament to Jesus' message of love which "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (1 Corinthians 13:7)

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 85, Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 618—The Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3624—Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act of 2015, had I been present, I would have voted YES.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on February 26, 2016, I was not present for roll call vote 93. Had I been present, I would have voted: YES on roll call vote 93.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF JOHN STEWART BRYAN III

HON. ROBERT HURT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. HURT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, Congressman DAVE BRAT and I submit these remarks to commemorate the life of John Stewart Bryan who passed away January 23, 2016 at the age of 77.

During Mr. Bryan's more than 50-year career, he worked as a newspaper journalist, served as publisher of four newspapers, the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Richmond News Leader, The Tampa Tribune, and The Tampa Times, and later became the Chairman, President, and Chief Executive of Media General. Mr. Bryan proudly and accurately referred to himself as a "newspaperman."

J. Stewart Bryan III was born on May 4, 1938 in Richmond. A Virginian through and through, he attended St. Christopher's School in Richmond, the Episcopal High School in Alexandria, and the University of Virginia. Afterwards, he served our country as an infantry officer in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Mr. Bryan's accolades were numerous and well deserved. He was awarded honorary doctor of humane letters degrees from Hampden-Sydney College, Emory & Henry College, College of William & Mary, and Randolph-Macon College, and he was inducted as a laureate of the Virginia Communications Hall of Fame and the Richmond Business Hall of Fame. He also received the outstanding service award of the Florida Press Association, the lifetime achievement award of the Virginia Press Association, the Frank Mayborn Leadership Award of the

Southern Newspaper Publishers Association, the George Mason Award for significant contributions to the advancement of journalism in Virginia from the Society of Professional Journalists, Virginia Pro Chapter (SPJVA), and the medal of honor of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Moreover, he was well known for supporting, and when necessary staunchly defending, his staff, and he fought steadfastly for the freedom of press.

But perhaps, his career and his passion are best summed up by the Richmond Times-Dispatch in an editorial after his passing: "Stewart Bryan's heart pumped ink. He devoted his life to newspapers. A life devoted to print is a life devoted to time and place. Bryan loved Richmond. He considered The Times-Dispatch and News Leader vehicles of public service. When the press does its job, it improves its surroundings. Bryan may have belonged to a newspaper family but he answered a vocation's call."

He is survived by his wife, Lisa-Margaret "Lissy" Stevenson Bryan; his daughters, Elizabeth Talbott Bryan Maxey "Talbott", and Anna Saulsbury Bryan (Stephen) Sullivan. Five grandchildren: Tennant and Alice Maxey, and Pryor, Stewart, and Harriett Sullivan. Two sisters: Mary Tennant Bryan Perkins and Florence Talbott Bryan Fowlkes.

Our thoughts and prayers remain with the entire Bryan family. Stewart Bryan's dedication to his craft is unmatched and admirable; he will be sorely missed.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$19,070,657,293,114.53. We've added \$8,443,780,244,201.45 to our debt in 7 years. This is over \$7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, February 26, I was unable to be present for recorded votes.

Had I been present, I would have voted the following on amendments to H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act: "no" on roll call no. 92, the Beyer amendment no. 2; "no" on roll call no. 93, the Jackson Lee amendment; "no" on roll call no. 94, the Beyer amendment no. 8; "yes" on roll call no. 95, the Smith amendment; "yes" on roll call no. 96, the Griffith amendment; "yes" on roll call no. 97, the Ribble amendment;

"yes" on roll call no. 98, the Young amendment; "no" on roll call no. 99, Huffman amendment; and "no" on roll call no. 100, the Democratic Motion to Recommit.

I would have voted "yes" on roll call no. 101, final passage of H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act, offered by Mr. WITTMAN. This bill will help ensure access to federal lands for sportsmen, and includes provisions to protect our Second Amendment rights.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 86, Adoption of H. Res. 618—The Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3624—Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act of 2015, had I been present, I would have voted yes.

SEVEN YEARS OF CHANGE THAT YOU CAN SEE AND FEEL

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, today is the last day of Black History Month, a time when the nation pauses to remember the contributions of African American men and women that have enriched the fabric of our nation.

That is why it is fitting and proper that we take a moment to recount and appreciate the extraordinary accomplishments of one of the singular figures in American history: President Barack Obama.

Mr. Speaker, those of us who were there remember well that the morning of January 20, 2009 was one of the coldest days on record in Washington, DC.

But it was nothing compared to the chill wind blowing through the American economy and body politic.

The nation was facing economic challenges unseen since the Great Depression: Americans were losing their jobs at a frightening rate of 800,000 per month; the national unemployment rate had risen to 7.8 percent and would continue to climb until reaching its peak of 10.0 percent in October 2009.

For African Americans, the numbers were much grimmer, a jobless rate of 13.5 percent in January 2009 which would grow to 16.5 percent by the end of the year.

And on top of this, tens of thousands of American families each month were losing their health insurance and their homes to foreclosure.

The United States was still bogged down in the quagmire that was the Iraq War and young people by the thousands were being forced to defer or drop out of college because of lack of financial aid.

And the average price of gas exceeded \$4 per gallon.

It was against this backdrop that I watched from the inaugural platform as Barack Obama,

surrounded by his radiant and beautiful wife, Michelle, and their two adorable daughters, rose to take the oath of office.

After being sworn in as the nation's 44th President of the United States, President Obama reassured an anxious but hopeful nation, saying:

Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real. They are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this America: They will be met.

Watching Barack Obama address the nation that day, spectators in attendance and viewers across the country and around the world understood they were witnessing a historic president, the first African American ever to hold the nation's highest office.

But more than being a historic president, Barack Obama's actions and leadership over the ensuing seven years would demonstrate his would be a consequential presidency that changed America for the better.

His first and most pressing task was to rescue an economy on the brink of collapse.

Working with the Democratic-controlled Congress, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was passed, which created 3.7 million jobs and saved the jobs of millions of teachers, firefighters, police officers, and social service providers.

The Recovery Act also cut taxes for working families, extended unemployment insurance, and expanded the Earned Income and Child tax credits, which disproportionately benefit African American families.

Seven years later the verdict is in on the economic plan put in place by President Obama and the Democratic Congress.

The Recovery Act ended the Great Recession, transformed the economy from one hemorrhaging jobs to one that has created over 16 million new jobs over a record 71 consecutive months.

The national unemployment rate has dipped under 5% for the first time since President Clinton left office, the deficit has been cut by 71%, and the Dow Jones stock market index topped 18,000 in 2015, an increase of 177% over where it stood the day President Obama took office.

And, as an added benefit, the average price of gasoline has been reduced from more than \$4.11 per gallon to \$1.80, the lowest price since before the tragedy of September 11.

These last seven years also effected policy changes in the areas of criminal justice reform, health and education, national security, and foreign affairs.

A partial listing of these achievements is substantial, impressive, and varied.

President Obama signed the Fair Sentencing Act in August 2010, which reduces the disparity in the amounts of powder cocaine and crack cocaine required for the imposition of mandatory minimum sentences and eliminates the mandatory minimum sentence for simple possession of crack cocaine.

In July 2015, President Obama became the first president ever to tour a federal prison when he visited the El Reno Federal Correctional Institution outside of Oklahoma City.

President Obama launched the Smart on Crime initiative through which the Department of Justice modified its charging policies for

certain federal low-level drug-related offenses, improved diversion and re-entry policies, and strengthened protections for the most vulnerable.

President Obama established Smart on Juvenile Justice grant program to expand the use of effective community-based alternatives to youth detention and launched the Second Chance Pell Pilot Program for incarcerated individuals to test new models to allow incarcerated Americans to receive Pell Grants and pursue the postsecondary education with the goal of helping them get jobs, support their families, and turn their lives around.

President Obama directed the Office of Personnel Management to take action where it can to "ban the box" by modifying its rules to delay inquiries into criminal history until later in the hiring process and called on Congress to enact legislation "banning the box" on job applications in the private sector.

President Obama increased the use of body-worn cameras through \$20 million in grants to state and local law enforcement.

President Obama issued an Executive Order to increase the capacity of VA mental-health programs by hiring 1,600 more mental-health professionals and expanding the capacity of the Veterans Crisis Line.

President Obama provided nearly \$60 billion in benefit payments under the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill to over 1.5 million individuals and relaxed the evidence requirements for veterans seeking disability pay for post-traumatic stress disorder with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

President Obama acted to reduce gun violence by issuing executive orders requiring background checks for people trying to buy some of the most dangerous weapons and other items through a trust or corporation and an overhaul of the background check system to make it more efficient and effective.

President Obama signed into law the Affordable Care Act passed by the Democratic Congress which has provided access to quality, affordable health insurance to nearly 20 million previously uninsured Americans.

President Obama launched the "My Brother's Keeper" Initiative in 2014 to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color and ensure that all young people can reach their full potential.

In October 2009, Congress passed and President Obama signed the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, historic legislation extending coverage of federal hate-crime law to include attacks based on the victim's race, religion, nationality, or actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

President Obama established the new Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy for young undocumented people who came to the U.S. as children in an effort to better focus enforcement resources.

President Obama expanded opportunity for America's children by strengthening Head Start.

President Obama made college more affordable by increasing Pell grants, keeping interest rates on student loans low, and helping students manageably repay their loans.

President Obama signed the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act, which made historic investments in improved child nutrition and health

for the 31 million children who rely on school meals and updated science-based school meal standards to increase fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein and low-fat dairy, while reducing fats and sodium.

In December 2010, the Congress passed and President Obama signed the Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act of 2010 into law, allowing gay men and women to serve openly and with integrity in the U.S. military.

President Obama also made history by appointing two women to the U.S. Supreme Court, including the first Hispanic American to serve on the Court.

President Obama appointed the first African American man and woman to serve as Attorney General and the first woman to Chair the Federal Reserve Board.

In the area of foreign affairs and national security, President Obama ended the Iraq War, assembled and led an international coalition to impose sanctions so crippling on Iran that it was forced to the negotiating table that yielded the Iran Nuclear Agreement that prevents Iran from ever attaining a nuclear weapon.

And of course, as the world knows, because of President Obama's leadership, General Motors is alive and Osama Bin Laden is dead.

For seven years, President Barack Obama has represented our country with grace, integrity, honor, and distinction.

He has provided consolation, hope, and healing in the face of unspeakable tragedies such as the massacre of innocent children at Sandy Hook, worshippers at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, spectators at the Boston Marathon, and mass shootings in Aurora, Colorado and Tucson, Arizona.

He expressed and symbolized our joy and pride in the progress made over the last half century—and the distance we still have to travel—when he marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge and addressed the multitude from the spot on the steps where the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. shared his dream for America's future.

So as President Obama serves the final year of his presidency, it is clear beyond doubt that he kept the promise he made to the nation seven years ago on that cold day in January when he said:

Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real. . . . But know this America: They will be met.

They were more than just met; under his leadership they were overcome with amazing grace.

And because of President Barack Obama, today the United States is stronger, more prosperous, and better positioned than ever to win the future.

As a presidential candidate in 2008, then Senator Obama promised the America people "change you can believe in."

In office, President Obama made good on that promise, delivering positive change that the American people can see and feel.

And that is what makes his one of the most consequential presidencies in American history.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on Friday, February 26, 2016 due to important events being held in our district in Houston and Harris County, Texas.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, March 1, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 2

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine S. 2446, to amend subtitle D of the Solid Waste Disposal Act to encourage recovery and beneficial use of coal combustion residuals and establish requirements for the proper management and disposal of coal combustion residuals that are protective of human health and the environment, S. 1479, to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to modify provisions relating to grants, and an original bill entitled, "Good Samaritan Cleanup of Orphan Mines Act of 2016".

SD-406

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of the Interior.

SD-124

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission.

SR-253

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the economic and geopolitical implications of low oil and gas prices.

SD-419

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Patrick Pizzella, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, and Julie Helene Becker, Steven Nathan Berk, and Elizabeth Carroll Wingo, each to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

SD-342

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

SD-G50

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Navy and Marine Corps.

SD-192

2 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Food and Drug Administration.

SD-124

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation.

SD-138

Joint Economic Committee

To hold hearings to examine the Economic Report of the President.

SH-216

MARCH 3

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Health and Human Services.

SD-138

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment

To hold hearings to examine regulatory reforms to improve equity market structure.

SD-538

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 2555, to provide opportunities for broadband investment, the nomination of Thomas F. Scott Darling, III, of Massachusetts, to be Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, and routine lists in the Coast Guard.

SR-253

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Energy.

SD-366

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine free trade agreement implementation, focusing on lessons from the past.

SD-215

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the path forward in Libya.

SD-419

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the dogs of the Department of Homeland Security, focusing on how canine programs contribute to homeland security.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

Business meeting to consider S. 247, to amend section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to deem specified activities in support of terrorism as renunciation of United States nationality, S. 2390, to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the nominations of Elizabeth J. Drake, of Maryland, Jennifer Choe Groves, of Virginia, and Gary Stephen Katzmman, of Massachusetts, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade, and Clare E. Connors, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

SD-226

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold hearings to examine the impacts of Federal fisheries management on small businesses.

SR-428A

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations.

CHOB-345

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Commerce.

SD-192

11 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 and fiscal year 2018 for the Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration.

SD-124

2 p.m.

Select Committee on Intelligence

To receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters.

SH-219

MARCH 8

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Forest Service.

SD-366

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Homeland Security.

SD-342

MARCH 9

10 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of General Joseph L. Votel, USA, for reappointment to the grade of general and to be Commander, United States Central Command, and Lieutenant General Raymond A. Thomas III, USA, to be general and Commander, United States Special Operations Command.

SD-G50

2 p.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the enforcement of the antitrust laws.

SD-226

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget re-

quest for fiscal year 2017 for Indian Country.

SD-628

MARCH 16

10 a.m.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations.

SD-G50

POSTPONEMENTS

MARCH 2

10 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine EB-5 targeted employment areas.

SD-226

SENATE—Tuesday, March 1, 2016

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Wise Creator, the architect of destinies, on this Super Tuesday 2016, when a dozen States hold their Presidential nominating contests, we look to You. You are the potter, and we are the clay. So mold and make the destiny of this Nation conceived in liberty. Let Your will be done.

Lord, we acknowledge that Your thoughts are different from our thoughts and Your ways are far beyond anything we can imagine. For just as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are Your ways higher than our ways and Your thoughts higher than our thoughts. Give us the wisdom to not second-guess the unfolding of Your loving providence, but help us to remember that in everything You are working for the good of those who love You.

Today, as You desire, use our lawmakers and all those who love freedom as instruments of Your glory.

We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 1, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COTTON thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY AND COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, and I will meet with President Obama later this morning. We will reiterate that the American people will have a voice in the vacancy on the Supreme Court as they choose the next President, who in turn will nominate the next Supreme Court Justice.

In other words, we will observe the Biden rule. Americans have by now become well acquainted with that advice from the Vice President.

Americans also know what both the current and future Senate Democratic leaders have had to say about judicial nominees when a different party was in the White House. They have heard the admonishment of the Senator from Nevada, Mr. REID, that “nowhere in [the Constitution] does it say the Senate has the duty to give presidential nominees a vote.” They know the Senator from New York didn’t even wait until the final year of President George W. Bush’s term to declare that the Senate should “not confirm a Supreme Court nominee except in extraordinary circumstances.”

So look, let’s use this debate to discuss ways we can work together to make progress for our country, such as tackling a drug crisis that is tearing communities apart in all 50 States.

I was pleased to see colleagues join together to advance the bipartisan Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act just yesterday. I hope we will see that kind of cooperation continue. It is important for our country, and I look forward to discussing with the President how his administration can be helpful.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Republicans, in an effort to try to cloud the

issue regarding selection of the Supreme Court replacement, usually don’t provide a full quote. For example, they keep talking about Senator BIDEN, but they should give the whole statement of Senator BIDEN, where he ended it by saying that “compromise is the responsible course, both for the White House and for the Senate. . . . [and] if the President consults and cooperates with the Senate . . . [on] his selections . . . then his nominees may enjoy my support, as did Justices Kennedy and Souter.”

Yesterday the Washington Post published an editorial by Barbara Perry, a professor at the University of Virginia and an expert on the Supreme Court. It is among the finest law schools in all the world. That is the University of Virginia.

In her opinion piece, Dr. Perry pushed back against Republican claims that Presidents have not historically nominated Supreme Court Justices during an election year. According to her, “14 Presidents have appointed 21 justices during presidential election years.” That is 14 out of 44 Presidents have appointed Supreme Court Justices in Presidential election years. That is about one-third of all U.S. Presidents who have appointed nominees during an election year.

Amy Howe, an expert on the Supreme Court and editor at SCOTUSblog—Supreme Court of the United States blog—agrees that past Presidents and Senates have considered election-year nominees. She writes:

The historical record does not reveal any instances since at least 1900 of the president failing to nominate and/or the Senate failing to confirm a nominee in a presidential election year because of the impending election.

Republicans are using one inappropriate statement or excuse after another to explain why they shouldn’t have to do their jobs the taxpayers sent them here to Washington to do. Instead of making excuses, wouldn’t it be easier just to do the right thing? The right thing would be to give President Obama’s Supreme Court nominee a hearing—a meeting before that—and a vote. We are simply saying: They should be doing their jobs.

Some Republicans are already starting to see the light. Last week, the Republican Senator from Maine ripped the Republican leader for politicizing the current Supreme Court vacancy in the aftermath of Justice Scalia’s death. Again, among other things, here is what the Republican Senator from Maine said:

I thought it was a shame . . . that instead of honoring his life and legacy and extending

our condolences, already we are embroiled in a political fight.

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie went a step further, urging the Senate Judiciary Committee to hold hearings. Governor Christie said:

As I've always said, I believe that's absolutely the right thing to do. People can vote up or down however they choose, but hearings should be held. There is no reason for them to not take on this nomination.

Governor Christie is absolutely right. There is no reason for a Supreme Court nominee not to have a full hearing and a vote. There is no reason for Senate Republicans not to give a nominee to the Supreme Court a meeting, a hearing, and a vote. All we are saying is: Do your job.

Montana Republican Congressman RYAN Zinke published an editorial in the *Missoulian*, one of the largest newspapers in the entire State, urging the Republican leader to give President Obama's nominee all due consideration. Here is what he said:

It is unfortunate that partisanship took over the conversation before the Justice even was laid to rest. The partisan bickering and demands to ignore the Constitution that unfolded after Scalia's death is an affront to his legacy. Scalia dedicated his life to serving the Constitution. It is time for the Senate to honor that service and carry out their constitutionally mandated duty to advise.

The Constitution reigns supreme. . . . My colleagues in the Senate have an obligation to provide advice to the President on nominees.

So I urge others to look at what the Congressman from Montana said, what the senior Senator from Maine said, and what Governor Christie said. I agree with them that the Constitution reigns supreme. It simply is saying to do your job, among other things.

In this situation there is no question what the Constitution mandates in times of Supreme Court vacancies. Article II, section 2 of our Constitution clearly outlines the President's legal authority to nominate Justices to the Supreme Court. It also defines the Senate's role in the nomination, which is to provide advice and consent. By denying their constitutional mandate, Republicans are refusing to do their job.

Senate Republicans should give President Obama's Supreme Court nominee a meeting, a hearing, and a vote, because, as Governor Christie said, there is really no reason not to do so.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, yesterday marked the end of Black History Month, which we honored here in the Senate by adopting a resolution sponsored by the junior Senator from New York, Mrs. GILLIBRAND.

The father of Black History Month was Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Now, I really didn't know who Carter Woodson

was, but there was a wonderful piece on public radio yesterday that outlined in detail this man, who had been a garbage man, who did menial labor, and I just didn't realize how smart he was. His personal story is remarkable.

Carter Woodson was born in Virginia to former slaves. He attended the University of Chicago—not an easy school to get into, certainly in the early part of the last century, when you are an African American. He then went on to receive his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1912, making him the second African-American man to do so.

As a professor at Howard University here in Washington, DC, Dr. Woodson decided there was a need for Americans—Black and White—to better understand African-American history. In 1926, Dr. Woodson organized the first week devoted entirely to African-American history. He coordinated lectures, panels, and hosted children's plays that celebrated the lives of important figures in Black history.

He had a tough time. They couldn't find places to meet. They wouldn't allow Blacks in many meeting halls. But he found rooms at the YMCA, churches, and Black fraternity houses to meet and to celebrate African-American history. He was relentless. Over the years, the celebration of Black history grew and grew until President Ford decided to make it not a history week but a history month. He did that in 1976. So February is always recognized—since President Ford did that in 1976—as Black History Month.

In addition to adopting this resolution to honor Black History Month, I hope my colleagues will take a moment to think about this great man, Dr. Woodson, who did so much to help Americans embrace Black history and the many contributions of African-American leaders, such as Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, W.E.B. Du Bois, and many others.

But we must do more than just adopt a simple resolution honoring Black History Month. We should work together to address the issues faced by Black Americans and all Americans today and every month of the year. It is the right thing to do.

Mr. President, I see my friends on the floor. Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 524, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 369, S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, known as CARA, of which I am proud to be a cosponsor. I want to begin by commending Senators WHITEHOUSE and PORTMAN for crafting this vitally important bill and also to thank Chairman GRASSLEY and Ranking Member LEAHY for their leadership in the Judiciary Committee.

The heroin and opioid crisis in this country is devastating to far too many families, including those in my State of Maine. This epidemic can be seen in emergency rooms, local jails, on Main Streets, and in homes throughout our country.

In 2014, there were a record 208 overdose deaths in the State of Maine, including 57 caused by heroin, and the problem is only getting worse. Last year, in the city of Portland, ME, 14 people overdosed in just 1 day. Two of them died as a result of those overdoses.

This last weekend, the Bangor Daily News had a special segment of the paper that chronicled the vivid and tragic story of a young man, Garrett Brown, whose spiral into addiction ultimately resulted in his death from a heroin overdose.

This epidemic is also having tragic effects on the most vulnerable in our society—the children and babies born to addicts. Last year in Maine nearly 1,000 babies were born drug-affected. That is about 8 percent of all births in our State. I have seen the videos of these babies in the neonatal intensive care unit. They are inconsolable. It is so tragic to watch them. Fortunately, the physicians and other health care providers in Maine have become very good at treating these babies, but I wonder what happens to them when they go back to their addicted mothers or fathers.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act takes the kind of multifaceted approach needed to address this epidemic. I have said we need a three-pronged approach.

First, we need to focus on education and prevention. That is education of the public at large, particularly our school children, but it is also education of health care providers and of law enforcement as well. I remember vividly when I was a young student sitting through a presentation by a recovered heroin addict. I don't know if that is done anymore in our schools, but I can tell you it had a marked impact on all of us who listened to him. None of us

ever would have wanted to be in the position in which he found himself as he struggled to recover from his addiction. I don't understand how heroin has lost its stigma, but it clearly has, and it is creating tragic results for our country. So education and prevention are critical.

Second is law enforcement. We need to do a better job of helping law enforcement. I have had so many sheriffs tell me we cannot arrest our way out of this epidemic. We need to connect people who voluntarily come into our jails, and we need to connect them to treatment. Unfortunately, there aren't enough treatment facilities or guidance counselors or substance abuse experts or physicians and nurses and others with this expertise in many rural areas of our country, particularly in States like Maine, and I suspect in urban areas like Chicago where the service providers are overwhelmed with the number of people who need help. There has been a tripling of people in Maine who need help.

Law enforcement has another critical role; that is, to work to interdict the heroin that is coming into the State of Maine—whether it originates in other States, or through ties to cities in Connecticut and Massachusetts, where inner-city gangs are bringing heroin into Maine and swapping it for guns. There is this trafficking that is going on where addicts with no records are being used as straw buyers, buying guns for the gang members who then exchange the heroin for these weapons. We need to have a greater effort to keep heroin out of our country when it is coming from those international cartels in Mexico as documented by the Portland Press Herald's excellent investigation into this matter.

Of course, the third prong is treatment. We need more treatment facilities. We need the ability of not just paramedics but law enforcement to administer the drug Narcan, which can reverse the effects of overdoses if it is administered in time.

The bill before us takes that kind of multifaceted approach. It includes strengthening treatment programs, supporting law enforcement, and increasing education and prevention efforts. It would encourage States and communities to expand these efforts and to increase evidence-based treatments for substance abuse disorders. It would authorize heroin and methamphetamine task forces to support safe law enforcement agencies, and it provides grants for communities facing drug crises. This crisis is by no means confined to the cities in our States. It is in the most rural areas imaginable in my State. It affects suburbia, and it affects neighborhoods throughout our country.

Part of the solution to this crisis includes examining pain management and prescribing practices. I have heard

from Maine families, from physicians, and from law enforcement about a disturbing pattern of a significant percentage of individuals using heroin after abusing legal opioid medications. According to a recent report from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, prescription opioid abuse does indeed put individuals at a much higher risk of heroin use. In fact, nearly 80 percent of individuals using heroin reported that they began on their road to addiction by abusing prescription pain medications.

CARA would create a task force to review, modify, and update best practices for pain management and prescribing pain medication. It would also expand the disposal sites for unwanted prescriptions through drug take-back programs, which is an important way for individuals to safely and securely dispose of their unused prescription drugs. I have long been a supporter of drug take-back programs, which have prevented tons of unused, unneeded or expired drugs from falling into the hands of children or drug dealers. At Maine's most recent drug take-back day, authorities safely disposed of nearly 10 tons of unused drugs. Think about that. In a State of just 1.3 million people, in just one of these drug take-back days, 10 tons of unused drugs were collected and safely disposed of. The bill would also authorize grants for strengthening State prescription drug monitoring programs to help prevent doctor shopping.

I have great sympathy for our county sheriffs who have talked to me about this problem. They tell me their jails are overwhelmed by those who are struggling with addiction. Jails are not designed to take the place of treatment centers. Yet sheriffs and police chiefs must train their officers to look for signs of withdrawal and to monitor mental health status. CARA would establish a demonstration program to help identify addicted individuals who may benefit more from treatment than incarceration.

Funding would also be authorized to purchase and train first responders in the use of Narcan, a drug that as I mentioned can reverse the effects of an overdose if administered in time, and a portion of this funding is designated to support rural areas in our country.

There have been many discussions in this Chamber, in our committees, and in our caucuses about the heroin crisis. Last December, the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee on which I serve held a hearing to examine prescribing practices, expanding access to addiction treatment, reducing overdoses, and partnering with law enforcement.

Just last week, the Special Committee on Aging—which I have the privilege to chair—examined opiate use among seniors and other Medicare participants, the potential for diversion of

powerful pain killers and Medicare reimbursement policies that may penalize physicians who, in their best medical judgment, decide not to prescribe powerful opiate pain killers and instead provide other kinds of pain relief for their patients. Yet because of the way the surveys are worded, under the Medicare patient satisfaction program, their hospitals can actually lose reimbursement if it is found that a patient was not satisfied enough with control of their pain. Clearly, pain does need to be managed, but these questions are so biased in the way they are asked that they invite overprescription and the prescription of powerful pain killers when they may not be needed. I am not talking about individuals with cancer or end-of-life conditions for whom opiate pain killers may be exactly what is needed to relieve their pain, but we know there are better alternatives for many people who do not need that kind of pain relief. I am working with Senator LANKFORD, Senator DONNELLY, Senator CASEY, and others to see if we can come up with an amendment to this bill on this issue.

It is clear we need to take a comprehensive approach to this epidemic, and the bill before us is a vital step forward. It recognizes opioid and heroin abuse for the public health crisis that it has become, and it offers meaningful and effective ways to support communities seeking to expand treatment prevention, law enforcement, and recovery efforts.

Again, I salute the sponsors of this legislation. I am pleased to be a cosponsor, and I urge all of our colleagues to come together to support this much needed bill.

My thanks to my colleague from Illinois for deferring to me.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, before I speak on a separate issue, I would like to address the issue raised by the Senator from Maine.

Her experience in Maine is exactly the same as my experience in Illinois. There is no town too small, no suburb too wealthy not to have been touched by heroin overdoses and deaths. It is interesting—the Senator may be encouraged to know that in one small town in downstate Illinois, when they were desperate when two or three teenagers died in 1 week in a small town, they heard about a program in Gloucester, MA, where the chief of police, reacting to what the Senator said earlier, realized that we just can't keep arresting addicts. It is not working.

He announced that if someone who was addicted came into the sheriff's office or the police department and reported their addiction, they wouldn't arrest them; they would take them to a treatment center immediately. The next day, 27 teenagers showed up in this small town in downstate Illinois.

Then, of course, the challenge was where to take them. In rural areas, it is a long drive. Some of them were not in good shape for a drive. But they went into treatment.

What they told me after I visited the town was that something happened immediately: The jail was empty because the jail had been filled with petty criminals who had been stealing, burglarizing, trying to feed their habits. Now they were in rehab. So it made it a safer community and at least gave them a chance to straighten out their lives.

One of the amendments I am offering with your colleague from Maine is about treatment. We decided a number of years ago, for fear that we would be warehousing patients, to limit substance abuse treatment facilities under Medicaid to no more than 16 beds. Sixteen beds may work in a rural area; it certainly doesn't work in the city of Chicago. We are not expanding it dramatically, but we allow treatment facilities to have up to 40 beds for residential treatment for substance abuse. We don't want to go back into the bad old days of warehousing, but we certainly want to expand treatment because the problem you have seen and I have seen is growing.

As you noted, if we don't move quickly on treatment, we can't expect to turn it around. I thank the Senator for bringing this to our attention. The bill before us truly is a bipartisan bill, and it should be.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 1 week ago the Republican majority leader made an announcement that stunned a lot of observers on Capitol Hill. Senator MCCONNELL said that the Senate Republicans would basically turn their backs on what I consider to be a constitutional responsibility and that they would refuse to consider the nomination to fill the vacancy of Justice Scalia, who recently passed away.

In article II, section 2 of the Constitution, the Founding Fathers established a very clear process for appointing Supreme Court Justices. Under the Constitution, the President "shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court." That is the language of the Constitution. It is explicit.

The President has a constitutional obligation to send a Supreme Court nominee to the Senate, and the Senate has a constitutional obligation to consider the nominee. But the majority leader for the Republicans said last week that he would not give any consideration to a nominee sent by President Obama—not a hearing, not a

vote—and then he went so far as to say he will not even meet with that nominee. This is a stunning abdication of the Senate's constitutional responsibility. All of us, as Senators, walk down this aisle, stand over to the side, raise our right hands, and swear to support and defend the Constitution of the United States and to bear true faith and allegiance to it. It is an oath each of us takes very seriously.

The majority leader has tried to justify his decision by noting that this is an election year. Well, it turns out it doesn't take much constitutional study to realize that the Constitution applies to election years as well as every other year. There is nothing in the Constitution that directs the President or the Senate to ignore their responsibility when there is a political Presidential campaign underway. I have searched the Constitution. There is no reference whatsoever to a Presidential campaign year absolving either the President or the Senate from their constitutional obligations.

One of the great ironies of the decision by the Senate Republican leadership was the way they reached it. Shortly after Justice Scalia passed away, Majority Leader MCCONNELL issued a statement saying: "The American people should have a voice in the selection of their next Supreme Court Justice." Then last Tuesday he summoned the Republican members of the Senate Judiciary Committee to his office, and there he decided with them that they would deprive the American people of a chance to view a hearing on President Obama's nominee to fill the Scalia vacancy. This is an unprecedented obstruction of a Supreme Court nominee, and this decision to obstruct certainly wasn't made by the American people. It was a unilateral, partisan decision made by a handful of Senators behind closed doors. The Republican Senators didn't bring their decision out into the open, not to a hearing of the Judiciary Committee, which they chair; they did it quietly behind closed doors.

But the American people heard what happened. Last Friday a letter was sent to the Republican members of the Judiciary Committee by the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and Human Rights and 81 other national organizations.

I ask unanimous consent to have the letter printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

FEBRUARY 26, 2016.

Hon. CHARLES GRASSLEY, *Chairman*,
Hon. ORRIN HATCH,
Hon. JEFF SESSIONS,
Hon. LINDSEY GRAHAM,
Hon. JOHN CORNYN,
Hon. MICHAEL LEE,
Hon. TED CRUZ,
Hon. JEFF FLAKE,
Hon. DAVID VITTER,
Hon. DAVID PERDUE,
Hon. THOM TILLIS,
Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS: We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to reconsider your unprecedented and destructive refusal to give fair consideration to any Supreme Court nomination until after the next President is sworn into office on January 20, 2017, as announced in your February 23rd letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.

Your letter claims that your refusal to hold a hearing on—or to even meet with—any potential nominee is part and parcel to executing your "constitutional authority to withhold consent on any nominee." This is a clear perversion of your constitutional duties as understood by almost every scholarly authority on the topic and by most Americans.

It is a dereliction of your constitutional duty to handcuff the Supreme Court for two terms. Your proposed course of action would cause a constitutional crisis that would shake the very foundation of our democracy.

We condemn this unprecedented overreach, and call on you to uphold the Constitution by giving fair consideration, including timely hearings and votes, to the next nominee to the Supreme Court.

Under Article II, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution, the President shall nominate a Justice to the Supreme Court "by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate." This does not give a select few senators veto power over the President's role in selecting and nominating a candidate. The Senate's duty is to evaluate a nominee's fitness and qualifications, not to pick the President making the nomination.

Our legal system is based on the rule of law and requires stability and certainty. The course you have charted would mean that a new justice would not be confirmed until well into 2017 at the earliest. Shackling the court for two terms would undermine the rule of law, leave legal questions unresolved, and hamper the administration of justice across our nation.

Refusing to consider any nominee, without due evaluation of his or her merits, credentials, and experiences, is a direct repudiation of your constitutional duties.

We believe in upholding the Constitution. So should you.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights; Philip Randolph Institute; AFL-CIO; African American Ministers In Action; Alliance for Justice; American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity; American Association For Justice; American Family Voices; American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; American Federation of Teachers; American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; Americans for Democratic Action (ADA); Americans United for Change; Andrew Goodman Foundation; Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum; Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF); Asian Americans Advancing Justice/AAJC; Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance;

AFL-CIO (APALA); Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO); Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law.

Bend the Arc Jewish Action; Center for American Progress; Center for Community Change; Center for Pan Asian Community Services, Inc. (CPACS); Coalition on Human Needs; Common Cause; Communications Workers of America; Constitutional Accountability Center; Defenders of Wildlife; Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund; Earthjustice; Equal Justice Society; Feminist Majority Foundation; Human Rights Campaign; International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA); Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc.; Japanese American Citizen League; Jewish Labor Committee; Korean American Resource & Cultural Center; Korean Resource Center.

Lambda Legal; Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; League of Conservation Voters; League of United Latin American Citizens; MALDEF; Moveon.org Civic Action; NAACP; NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.; NAACP-National Voter Fund; NARAL Pro-Choice America; National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse; National Association of Social Workers (NASW); National Black Justice Coalition; National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development; National Congress of American Indians; National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA); National Council of Jewish Women; National Education Association; National Employment Law Project; National Employment Lawyers Association.

National Fair Housing Alliance; National Korean American Service & Education Consortium; National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund; National Partnership for Women & Families; National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance; National Tongan American Society; National Urban League; National Women's Law Center; People For the American Way; Planned Parenthood Federation of America; PolicyLink; Project Vote; Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association; Service Employees International Union; Sierra Club; South Asian Bar Association of North America; Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC); Southern Poverty Law Center; TASH; Union for Reform Judaism; United Auto Workers (UAW); Workmen's Circle.

Mr. DURBIN. The letter described the Republicans' obstruction as "a clear perversion of your constitutional duties as understood by almost every scholarly authority on the topic and by most Americans." The letter said that the Constitution "does not give a select few Senators veto power over the President's role in selecting and nominating a candidate. The Senate's duty is to evaluate a nominee's fitness and qualifications, not to pick the President making the nomination."

I agree with that statement. By unilaterally refusing to give any consideration to any nominee made by this President, Senate Republicans are trying to stop this President from fulfilling his constitutional responsibility to nominate and appoint Supreme Court Justices under article II, section 2. They did it in secret in a back room, behind closed doors. Why are they so afraid to give President Obama's nominee a fair hearing? Are they concerned

that if the nominee is well qualified and they turn that person down, it will reflect poorly on the Senate Republicans?

The Senate Republican process of secrecy and obstruction is inconsistent with the Constitution. It does a disservice to the Supreme Court, to the President, and to the American people.

I raised a point last week which is worth returning to. The argument is made that the next President should pick the nominee to fill this vacancy. The argument is made that the American people, when they select the next President in November of this year—that we will be saying to the American people: You make the choice. You select the President. And then you will know the Supreme Court nominee.

Well, there may be some logic to that but for one thing: We have a President. He was elected in 2012 with a 5 million-vote majority. This is the fourth year of his Presidency.

When you listen to the Republicans argue, you would think, wait a minute, Barack Obama was not elected for 4 years, only for 3 years and 2 months. They argue at this point in time that this President does not have the constitutional authority or responsibility to fill the vacancy of Justice Scalia. The American people spoke. It wasn't all that close. By a margin of 5 million votes, they chose this President for 4 years, not for 3 years or 3 years and 2 months. He is the President, he has the authority of the Presidency, and he has that authority not given to him by God but by the American people. It is authority which should not be taken away by the Republican majority of the Senate.

Their argument, "Wait for the next election"—do you know what that means? It means that if they have their way, if they fail to do their job, if they don't even have a hearing for President Obama's nominee, don't even bring it to a vote, and the vacancy continues on the Supreme Court, it will be historic. The last time we will have left a vacancy of this duration on the Supreme Court dates back to the Civil War. A nation at war with itself left a vacancy for more than a year on the Supreme Court. Now the Senate Republicans of 2016 want to leave a vacancy on the Supreme Court for over a year. There is no need for it, and the Constitution certainly makes it clear how this vacancy should be filled.

There is no secret that there is a political motive. The Senate Republicans hope Justice Scalia's seat will be filled by a person they choose. This is a political calculation they are willing to make, to take the heat for not following their constitutional responsibility in the hopes that a President Trump will pick someone to fill this vacancy or some other Republican President in the future. That is what they are counting on. That is political.

Politics shouldn't trump the Constitution. Nothing should trump the Constitution when it comes to governing the United States. Because it is an election year doesn't mean Senators can take a yearlong break and ignore their own oath of office.

It is time for the Senate Republicans to do their job. The President and the Senate must fulfill their constitutional responsibility in times of war, in economic depression, and even in an election year.

Last week Majority Leader McCONNELL reportedly told a group of House Republicans that there isn't "a snowball's chance in hell" that he would back down from his plan of obstruction. Nevertheless, today President Obama has invited Majority Leader McCONNELL to meet with him in the White House to discuss the Supreme Court vacancy. They have also invited the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY; the ranking Democrat, Senator LEAHY; and the minority leader of the Senate, Senator REID.

Why did the President offer this meeting? Because that is what always happens. When a President is about to consider filling such a historic vacancy, he brings together the leaders of the Senate to discuss his thought process and perhaps to solicit names from them of potential nominees. Even when we have disagreed in the past and have Presidents and Senators from different political parties, they still extended that courtesy to one another. President Obama is extending the majority leader that courtesy even if the majority leader has made it clear and publicly stated repeatedly that he will not even meet with, let alone consider, the President's nominee.

The President is setting a good example of what should be done in this circumstance where the President follows tradition and the Constitution. I am glad the President is taking this seriously. I know he is in the midst of a careful, deliberative process to choose a nominee. The President should select an outstanding person who has the qualifications, a commitment to justice, a deep respect for the role of the judiciary, and life experience that points toward integrity and good judgment.

The President is doing his job as the Constitution requires. My Republican colleagues in the Senate should do their job as well. They should honor the process established in the Constitution and give the President's nominee fair consideration, a hearing, and a vote.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate unanimously voted to advance consideration of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, commonly known as CARA, and that is because this legislation gets at a big problem. The abuse of heroin and prescription painkillers is devastating families and communities across the country, including Texas. The truth is, the problem is getting worse, not better. Deaths due to heroin and prescription drug overdoses have even surpassed car accidents as the No. 1 cause of injury-related deaths nationwide.

It is time for Congress to do something significant to address this disturbing trend. This bill is a good example of how Republicans and Democrats, working on a bipartisan basis, can zero in on a problem that is harming our Nation and work together to address it.

I am proud to cosponsor this legislation, and I look forward to continuing to work on this bill and to voting on amendments that will actually improve it. Speaking of amendments, while this bill touches on how to battle drug addiction in this country, we need to do more to cut these drugs off at the source and keep them from getting into our country in the first place.

The Senate Armed Services Committee recently heard about the supply side of this equation—this primarily goes to the heroin coming from Mexico—when they heard testimony from the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper. In his testimony, Director Clapper talked about how Mexico has ramped up the production of heroin in response to this growing demand in the United States.

I know the Presiding Officer is also from a border State and has had frequent conversations with our Mexican counterparts. When we complain about the supply, they usually turn it on me and say: Well, what about the demand in the United States? The truth is, we have to get at both components—both the supply and demand.

In 2014, drug cartels smuggled more than a quarter of a million pounds of heroin across our borders. This was done by the same transnational criminal organizations that traffic human beings for sex or forced labor and who man the illegal immigration pipelines into our country. This is no longer a mom-and-pop operation. These are major criminal networks and organizations that will do anything for money and, of course, are happy to make money from the heroin that comes across our border.

If we are going to make significant strides in the fight against addiction and drug abuse, we need to take a critical look at where the drugs are com-

ing from and consider the strategies we can employ to keep them from even coming onto our soil. Unfortunately, even while the production and demand of these illegal drugs have been growing, we have not done enough to combat it.

Earlier I mentioned that the U.S. Southern Command—that is the combatant command for the U.S. military that is south of Mexico and goes into Central and South America—has been given zero Navy ships to conduct counter-trafficking missions, and that is because our Navy fleet is simply too small and these resources have been diverted elsewhere to counter the growing threats around the world. It is irresponsible to ignore the transnational criminal threats in our own backyard. We need a strategy to interdict drug shipments and cut them off before they reach our shores, so I have submitted several amendments that would help focus our resources to interdict these shipments and to help stem the growing tide of illicit drugs entering the U.S. market.

One amendment would simply require the Defense Department, when it allocates funding to the States for the National Guard Counterdrug Program, to prioritize drug interdiction. More effectively using the National Guard's military capabilities to help interdict drug flows would provide a needed boost to law enforcement and counter-narcotics efforts, especially on our southern border. Too often, law enforcement agencies have been left with scant resources to handle this growing problem, so this amendment would allow the National Guard to play a bigger role in drug interdiction.

Another amendment I have submitted would require the President to create a plan—a strategy, really—to increase interdiction of illegal drugs that enter across the southwest border. It would require the interdiction goal of 90 percent of those drugs, which would be a great leap forward from the current levels.

Last year, General Kelly, then the commander of Southern Command, estimated that only 15 to 20 percent of drugs bound for the United States were interdicted, just 15 percent to 20 percent. General Kelly said that, due to a lack of resources in the Southern Command, basically many times they were relegated to being observers as illegal drugs would transit across their area of operation.

Given our shortfall here, it is pretty amazing that a comprehensive plan across all relevant agencies doesn't already exist. It is shocking really. This amendment would make sure that one is created to boost the amount of drugs that we successfully interdict. It would also require the President to submit this plan to Congress so we can have a conversation between the executive branch and the legislative branch and

so the American people could review it, could hold us accountable, and to make sure we are making progress on this front.

Finally, I have submitted an amendment to strengthen the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program. This would help Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials use task force funding to implement a multidisciplinary heroin response strategy. This has been tested in several high-intensity drug trafficking areas with great success. This amendment would help implement this strategy nationwide, giving law enforcement additional tools to combat the growing threat of heroin from both the supply and demand side.

Mr. President, I am glad we are making some progress on this legislation. I am optimistic that we will be able to complete it this week in a bipartisan fashion, which is the only way you get these done around here. We desperately need to target the opioid epidemic happening across the Nation, and we also need to cut off as much of the supply of the cheap heroin as we can. When people can't get access to prescription drugs, too often they turn to cheap heroin, and that is why the supply issue is so important. But we need both pieces in order to make real progress and restore our communities currently plagued by addiction and drug abuse.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. This is a bill that we have been working on for 2 years—Senator PORTMAN, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and Senator KLOBUCHAR. I thank them for their partnership and leadership on this bill. This is something the four of us got together on because we saw in our own States the public health epidemic that was happening with our constituents: individuals struggling with addiction, people who were addicted to prescription drugs and overusing and misusing prescription drugs, and then with the price of heroin on our streets so low that people are turning to heroin and also a combination of heroin and a deadly drug called fentanyl.

I thank Senators PORTMAN, WHITEHOUSE, and KLOBUCHAR for the work we have been doing together over the last several years on this bill to see this bill come to this Senate floor. This is a very important piece of legislation and will help us address the public health epidemic facing my home State of New Hampshire and this country. This is something I have come to the floor about on several occasions before.

Traveling around my State, I can't tell you the number of stories I have heard from people in New Hampshire about what we are facing and the number of lives that are lost, the number of

lives that are devastated by heroin and fentanyl and misuse of prescription drugs.

This is a life-or-death issue in my State. The number of drug overdose deaths has been staggering. Before I came to the Senate, I served as attorney general of our State, and so I worked with law enforcement on these issues, whether it was methamphetamine, cocaine, or other illegal drugs, but I have never seen anything like this. As of last week, the chief medical examiner's office had recorded that there were 420 drug deaths in 2015, and that was a dramatic increase in New Hampshire from the year before. The year before, we had about 320 drug deaths. So this is more than one person dying a day in my State. Many more than die in traffic accidents are dying from drug overdoses, and it is a combination, again, the driver of this—heroin and Fentanyl. Fentanyl is 40 to 50 percent times more powerful than heroin, and when the drug dealers mix it up with the heroin, it is a killer.

As Eric Spofford told me—he is an incredible guy who is in recovery and has opened treatment facilities in our State. He got it right when he said fentanyl is a serial killer because that is what it is.

In the month of February alone, there were 14 suspected opioid overdose deaths just in the city of Manchester—14 in just one city in my State. That is a record high in Manchester, NH. These are not just numbers that we are talking about. Behind every statistic is a life, a life that is taken from us far too soon and has been tragically lost—a mother, a daughter, a son, a brother, a neighbor, a friend, a coworker. This hits all of us, and these are people who are being lost from this horrible epidemic.

Behind the statistics and behind the headlines we see every day in the news, there are family members, friends, and communities that have been deeply impacted by this public health crisis, such as the mother from Greenville, NH, who wrote to me. She spends her days actually doing incredibly important work, helping people who are struggling with addiction. She helps them, and yet she has been coming home to see her own son struggling with heroin. She told me, “As I tried to comfort those who have been affected by this tragedy, I think that my son will be next.”

In Laconia, a man helps those struggling to get treatment, but he feels helpless when they are faced with a 5-month waiting period for a rehabilitation facility. He wrote, “In 5 months, these individuals may be dead.”

A parent from Salem, NH, contacted me and told me her son is struggling with heroin addiction, and she needs help finding a treatment program for him since she could not afford to pay for treatment herself. Parents don't know where to go.

I have met many parents who want to get help for their kids, and they are having a hard time finding a place and knowing where to go. Another mother of three children had to revive her son from an overdose before the paramedics could arrive.

The Griffin family from Newton, whom I have gotten to know well, lost their beautiful 20-year-old daughter Courtney to an overdose. Now, Courtney's father Doug and Courtney's mother Pam have made it their mission to bring awareness to this issue and to make sure that others don't suffer from the same tragedy they have suffered in the lost life of a beautiful young woman named Courtney, who had so much of life before her and so much potential. Doug and Pam and so many other dedicated people in New Hampshire are working tirelessly to turn the tide against this epidemic.

Over the past 2 years, I made it a priority to travel the State and hear from our public safety community, treatment providers, addiction experts, families, and individuals in recovery about finding effective strategies to address this problem. On ride-alongs with the police and fire, I have been to overdoses. I have seen them bring people back to life, administering Narcan only to say that they face this every single day. If we don't focus on prevention and we don't focus on treatment, and the important work that our first responders are doing, then we are not going to get at this problem and make sure people who are struggling get out of this cycle of addiction.

Treatment facilities in New Hampshire are certainly working tirelessly, and individuals are stepping up to expand our capacity in New Hampshire to support individuals who need help, and they need more support. I want to take a moment to recognize some of their hard work. Among so many others, I am grateful that there are so many working hard together in New Hampshire: Hope for New Hampshire Recovery, Families in Transition Willows Program, the Farnum Center, Westbridge Community Services in Manchester, GateHouse Sober Community in Nashua, Hope on Haven Hill, Bonfire Recovery Services in Dover, The Granite House in Derry, and the New Freedom Academy in Canterbury. I have met many incredible people who are dedicating their lives to this.

I have had the opportunity to visit these facilities and hear directly from the dedicated professionals who work there. They do critically important work. You have average people coming together, whether to organize a 5K race or to gain resources and support for people who are on the frontlines. This is what those who are on the frontlines are saying: Tackling this epidemic and reversing the tide of addiction will take a comprehensive, thoughtful approach, and include strategies for

treatment, prevention, education, support for individuals in recovery, and interdiction. That is why we have to pass CARA.

CARA is important because it embodies the comprehensive approach that so many in my State have told me they need. Here is what it looks like. It gives more support to first responders and law enforcement, expanding the availability of lifesaving drugs like Narcan, which our first responders are using every day. And because CARA will help make this happen, it has been endorsed by the National Fraternal Order of Police, National District Attorneys Association, and National Association of Attorneys General, including New Hampshire's own attorney general, Joe Foster.

It strengthens prescription drug monitoring programs to help prevent “doctor shopping.” This is something I have been advocating for since I was attorney general of our State so that our public health officials can have the tools—because we know from SAMHSA research that four out of five people started by misusing or overusing prescription drugs and transferred to heroin. So this is critical.

It increases access to treatment, including evidence-based medication assisted treatment, which can help people have more access. We need to turn the tide. Over 130 stakeholder groups have gotten behind this legislation, groups that are on the frontline of this issue. Just to name some of them, it has been endorsed by the National Council for Behavioral Health, American Psychological Association, American Society of Addiction Medicine, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, Harm Reduction Coalition, Faces and Voices of Recovery, Mental Health America, Young People in Recovery, National Association of State Alcohol and Substance Abuse Directors, among many others. I thank these groups for their feedback.

It would support additional resources to identify and treat incarcerated individuals suffering from substance abuse disorders and expand prevention. It is so important we address prevention.

It would establish a campaign to bring greater awareness to the association between the overuse and misuse of prescription drugs and what happens as people misuse prescription drugs and then go to heroin and deadly drugs like fentanyl.

This bill has overwhelming bipartisan support. It has 42 bipartisan cosponsors.

I see my colleague from New Hampshire on the floor. I want to thank her for her sponsorship of this legislation. This crisis does not discriminate. It doesn't care. Heroin, fentanyl—the devastating impact of this drug does not care whether you're a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, whatever your background.

This is something that affects all of us. A high school student from Manchester who wrote to me, sharing how concerned he is about the negative impact this epidemic is having on his city. When he walks home from school, he sometimes sees discarded needles on the sidewalk, and tragically he lost his best friend to a fentanyl overdose.

Abi, who lives in the Seacoast Region, struggled with an opioid use disorder through her pregnancy until she was finally able to receive help and treatment and enter recovery. I met Abi, and I am so inspired by her because she shows us we can make a difference and we can turn this around.

A woman in Londonderry, who spoke to me at a community forum, was terrified her brother would suffer a reoccurrence as soon as he was released from prison because he wasn't getting treatment. She was worried about his path to a successful life because he was still suffering from a substance abuse disorder.

Then there is Angela from Nashua, who has turned her story into a rallying cry for others. Angela lost her mother to a heroin overdose 17 years ago and has adopted the children of several of her aunts and cousins who have lost their battles with addiction. After all of this, Angela's son and his girlfriend have become addicted to opioids and his girlfriend overdosed in Angela's home. Her son is still battling with heroin addiction.

There are so many groups that are working to support these individuals and we need to give them our support. They cannot and should not have to do this alone.

I see my colleague, Senator SHAHEEN from New Hampshire on the floor. I really appreciate her leadership on this issue. I am a cosponsor of Senator SHAHEEN's standalone legislation which would provide emergency appropriations in order to combat the heroin and prescription opioid crisis facing our State. In fact, she and I have both written to Health and Human Services and asked them to designate this as a public health emergency. We have seen the impact on our State and we have seen the lives that are being lost and impacted by this. So I am going to be cosponsoring Senator SHAHEEN's amendment to CARA and supporting it on the floor. I very much support her getting a vote on this amendment, and I hope that happens.

In addition, I appreciate that the President has put in additional resources in his budget to address this issue. This is an issue that we all have to work together on.

At the end of the year, there was also important funding that was passed that CARA would provide a very important framework for. Last year during the appropriations process, Congress worked to increase by 284 percent funding for programs at CDC and

SAMHSA related to combating opioid abuse. While this is a positive step forward, these dollars actually haven't been distributed yet. It is important we pass CARA to make sure that as we go forward with the dollars that have already been appropriated and as we go forward in the appropriations process this year, that we have the framework to properly redirect this funding for prevention, treatment, and first responders, to make sure we have the feedback of 130 stakeholder groups and law enforcement throughout the country and to ensure that these dollars are appropriately spent to address the epidemic we are facing.

I have been honored to work over the last several years, again, with Senators PORTMAN, WHITEHOUSE, and KLOBUCHAR in introducing this bill. In fact, I also thank the head of drug policy in the administration, Director Botticelli. He summed it up well when we asked him what he thought about CARA. He said in a hearing before the Judiciary Committee in January:

There is clear evidence that a comprehensive response looking at multidimensional aspects of this that are embedded in the CARA Act are tremendously important. We know we need to do more, and I think that all of those components put forward in this bill are critically important to making headway in terms of this epidemic.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act would be a significant step forward in a Federal response to this public health epidemic that is facing New Hampshire and so many other States in the country. I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation, to listen to the people of New Hampshire and to the people of this country who are asking us to act.

This is what they are saying in New Hampshire.

In Center Barnstead: "Please pass legislation to save my son's life."

In Manchester: "I wake up every morning with a fear that I will find my son dead. I am crying out for help."

In Spofford: "I want my voice to be heard so that no one else falls through the cracks."

In Londonderry: "Addiction can happen to anyone."

In Tilton: "We need action, and we need it right now."

We have an opportunity on this floor right now, in this debate, with very thoughtful legislation, very bipartisan legislation—the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act—to take action now. We owe it to all those who have lost their lives, their families who have been impacted, and those who are struggling with addiction. We owe it to the first responders in our community and to the people who are working hard to turn this around in New Hampshire and across this country. To all, I thank them for the incredible work they are doing.

We need to pass this legislation. I urge my colleagues to join me in sup-

porting passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. This bill will make a difference, and I believe it will help save lives in New Hampshire and across the country.

There is no doubt that passing this bill will make a difference. We will all need to continue to do more. We will all need to continue to fight for more and more support through the appropriations process and any way we can. I intend to keep up this fight because I know lives are on the line. I know this issue is impacting my State. I know that as I talk to the mothers, the daughters, the fathers, the sons, the friends who are telling me the stories of the people they have lost, that we can turn this around. It is so important that we pass this legislation.

Again, I wish to thank my colleague from the State of New Hampshire for her work on this.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 30 minutes, and I wonder if the Chair will advise me when I have about 3 minutes remaining.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Chair will so notify the Senator.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. I thank the Presiding Officer.

I am pleased to join my colleague from New Hampshire on the floor and the others who have spoken this morning so eloquently about the heroin and opioid epidemic that is ravaging families and communities in every one of our States.

As Senator AYOTTE said so well, we have seen in New Hampshire that we are at ground zero for this epidemic. In terms of the percentage of people affected in New Hampshire, we are losing a higher percentage than almost every State in the Nation. This is an issue we need to work together to address. I think we have to respond much more robustly than we have done at the Federal level because this epidemic is becoming a pandemic. It is affecting young and old, urban and rural, rich and poor, Whites and minorities.

As others have said, the Senate is now considering the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act or CARA. I want to congratulate the sponsors of the legislation because this is a good bipartisan bill. It is important as we look at what we need to do to address the epidemic we face.

In addition to the authorizations and the good work that is in the CARA legislation, we also need to provide the resources that law enforcement and health professionals who are on the frontlines of dealing with this crisis are going to need. Despite heroic efforts, law enforcement and treatment professionals are increasingly overwhelmed by the sheer scope and scale

of the opioid and heroin crisis. Everywhere I go in New Hampshire, the lack of resources is abundantly clear. Our communities need additional funding—and they need it urgently.

So this is why I have submitted an amendment cosponsored by the author of CARA, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and I am pleased my colleague from New Hampshire has also joined in cosponsoring this amendment. This amendment would provide \$600 million in emergency funding for critical programs that we know will help address this crisis.

I am on the floor to urge the majority leader and the leadership of the Senate to allow a vote on this legislation because this is a nationwide emergency of the first order, and it is time for us in Congress to treat it like a nationwide emergency.

In 2014, more than 47,000 Americans died from lethal drug overdoses—more fatalities than from car accidents. Each day 120 Americans die of drug overdoses—2 deaths every hour. In our State of New Hampshire, where we have 1.3 million people, we are losing more than a person a day to drug overdose deaths.

Here we have a map of America that shows the increases in deaths from drug overdoses. We can see in 2003 the majority of the map is lighter colored, so it means it doesn't have the same number of deaths. In 2008 we can see this dark red color which shows the deaths from drug overdoses increasing. Here, in 2014, we see the impact of those 47,000 people lost.

The State of the Presiding Officer, like in New Hampshire, is at ground zero in the State of Arizona. In West Virginia, in Tennessee, and in Kentucky, they are seeing the same dramatic increase in the number of deaths from drug overdoses. This chart represents overdose deaths per 100,000 people. Again, it demonstrates how truly national in scope the crisis has become. No State is immune from the scourge.

Across the country, our communities are asking why this is happening. They are asking why so many of our family members and neighbors are overdosing on these drugs. Sadly, as we have heard from people who have spoken on the floor, one of the primary reasons is because so many people are becoming addicted to prescription opioid drugs, better known as painkillers. In 2012, 259 million prescriptions were written for these drugs—almost 1 for every American. That is more than enough to give every American adult their own bottle of pills. During a 3-month stretch in 2015 in New Hampshire, 13 million doses of schedule II painkillers were dispensed at New Hampshire pharmacies in just one 3-month period—13 million pills in 3 months for a State with a population of 1.3 million, and nearly 80 percent of these prescriptions were for heavy painkillers like oxycodone, morphine, and fentanyl.

If we look, we can see how this graph dramatically tracks the increase in drug prescribing and the number of deaths that resulted. The number of drug overdose deaths has risen as opioid prescriptions have increased. This orange line is the number of deaths. The green line is the number of prescriptions that are being written. We are missing the data for the year 2012, but there is no doubt that those deaths track the number of prescriptions for painkillers that are being written.

The National Institutes of Health have found that people who are addicted to opioid painkillers are 40 times more likely to be addicted to heroin. So when someone gets addicted to pain pills and can no longer get prescriptions, they turn to drugs like heroin and fentanyl.

What I heard from law enforcement in New Hampshire and from the medical community is that people turn to heroin because it is cheaper and easier to get than prescription drugs after they become addicted. Of course, we have seen that drug traffickers are taking advantage. They are flooding our streets with these drugs. In many of our communities, that bag of heroin is cheaper than a six-pack of beer. Of course the end result is a staggering increase in overdose deaths, which we can see on this chart.

Again, in 2014, nearly 21,000 people died from opioid abuse. There were more than 10,000 deaths from heroin. That is a 222-percent increase from 2009 levels.

So we can see that these are opioid deaths, these are deaths from cocaine, and these are deaths from heroin. We can see the red line and the green line have gone up dramatically.

A professor at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, Brendan Saloner, describes opioid addiction as “a chronic relapsing illness, just like diabetes.”

We know treatment is the only effective answer. Again, what I have heard from law enforcement in New Hampshire is that they know they can't put drug users in jail. That is not the answer to deal with this challenge. We need to put the bad guys in jail, but we need to provide treatment to the people who need it because that is the only effective answer. Unfortunately, it is a tragic reality that nationwide nearly 9 out of 10 people with substance use disorders don't receive treatment. They are being turned away and denied treatment due to a chronic lack of resources.

My colleague from New Hampshire spoke very eloquently about some of the people she heard from. We have heard from people in the same way in New Hampshire. Of the 1.3 million people in our State, it is estimated that 100,000 people—almost 10 percent—are currently seeking treatment for substance use disorders. We are able to

offer services to only a small fraction of that total.

Over the last decade the number of people admitted to State treatment programs increased 90 percent for heroin use and 500 percent—500 percent—for prescription drug use, with the largest increases occurring in the past several years.

As we can see from this chart, lack of treatment is a national problem: the darker the green, the more people in that State who are not receiving treatment for addiction. Sadly, New Hampshire is a very dark green, as is Arizona, the Presiding Officer's State. You can see this dark green line coming down the east coast and going up the west coast.

In 2014, in Kentucky, 82,000 people needed addiction treatment but failed to get it—in Tennessee, 116,000 people; in Arizona, 157,000; in Nevada, 55,000; in North Carolina, 200,000 people. These are all people who needed treatment who didn't get it. When people don't get treatment, they are overdosing in overwhelming numbers.

Sadly, this map of the United States shows where the overdose death rates are the highest. Where the darkest colors are shown the death rates are greater than 19 per 100,000 of population. We can see many of the same States, such as New Hampshire, that have the most difficulty in people finding treatment. Those are the States where we are finding the highest death rates. In 2014 in Kentucky, 1,100 people died from a drug overdose; in Tennessee, 1,200 people; in Arizona, 1,200 overdose deaths; in Nevada, 500; and in North Carolina, 1,300.

In recent days I have had a chance to visit three treatment centers in my home State, Headrest in Lebanon, Serenity Place in Manchester, and Seacoast Youth Services in Seabrook. These treatment centers are staffed by skilled, dedicated professionals. They are saving lives every day, but they tell me that for every life they save, many more are being lost for lack of treatment capacity, lack of facilities, and lack of funding.

I had a chance on some of those visits to meet with some of the people in recovery. I can remember one young man up in Lebanon at Headrest who had been in and out of prison because of crimes committed when he was using. He said to me that it costs thousands of dollars to keep someone in prison. The figure he used was \$35,000. He said: Don't you all know that it is cheaper to give somebody treatment? It is absolutely more cost effective for us to provide treatment for people who are in recovery, people who need help.

I heard from a young woman in Manchester who said that she had been arrested for drug use. She said: I am not a criminal. My problem is I need treatment to deal with these drugs.

Another young woman who was in her early twenties who had been in and

out of the Manchester jail—the Valley Street jail—said: You know, they don't provide treatment in the Valley Street jail. I learned when I got picked up that I don't tell them that I have a drug problem or that I have mental health issues because if I do, they put me in the bubble where I get observed 24 hours a day, regardless of what I am doing. What I need is treatment. I don't need to be in the bubble.

Well, that is why this supplemental amendment would increase resources for treatment and recovery—because the answer is treatment. Our amendment includes \$300 million for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant Program. This program is the premier Federal initiative to boost State and local resources for prevention, treatment, and recovery support. In 21 States this block grant program represents at least 75 percent of the State agency's substance abuse prevention budget. In some States, sadly, it is the only funding for substance abuse prevention. If we are going to get a handle on this problem, we are going to have to provide some additional resources for the treatment that these programs need. This funding will result in an immediate increase in the number of addicted individuals who will receive lifesaving treatment. It will also save taxpayer dollars in the future, just as I heard from that young man at Headrest, who said it is cheaper to provide treatment than to build prisons. He is absolutely right.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse estimates that for every dollar spent on substance use disorder treatment programs there is a \$4 to \$7 reduction in the cost of drug-related crime. An outpatient treatment program can result in savings that exceed costs by a factor of 12 to 1.

I live in Stratford County in New Hampshire. It has used the modest funding from this block grant program, the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant Program, to accomplish important things, including expanding the peer-based addiction recovery efforts and working at schools to engage at-risk students in the middle school years. If we can prevent addiction, that is obviously the best thing we can do.

Unfortunately, many prevention and treatment efforts in Stratford County remain chronically underfunded. I recently learned about one local woman, a mother and waitress, who overdosed in front of her 2-year-old child. Fortunately, she received inpatient treatment, and now she is doing well. Others have not been so lucky. Like cities and counties all across America, Stratford has a months-long waiting list for those needing treatment. When people with substance use disorders are turned away, they remain on the streets—desperate, often committing crimes to support their addiction, always at constant risk of a lethal overdose.

Vice News in New Hampshire recently profiled the opioid epidemic. The reporter interviewed one desperate user who said this:

I tried to get help and stop, but at the treatment center they said I would have to wait 3 months. I had to go to the hospital and tell them I was going to kill myself just to get admitted.

That should not happen in America.

Another critical tool in the effort to stem the tide of this crisis is prescription drug monitoring programs. These State-run programs collect, monitor, and analyze electronically transmitted prescribing and dispensing data submitted by pharmacies and dispensing practitioners. We know that monitoring works. We have the data to show that it works, but only half of the 50 States are receiving Federal support.

The emergency supplemental amendment would include \$50 million for the CDC to expand and bolster State drug monitoring programs. Our amendment also allocates \$10 million to improve access in high-risk communities to medication-assisted treatment services for heroin and prescription opioids because numerous studies have shown the effectiveness in including medication in the treatment of some individuals with substance use disorders. Medications like methadone, buprenorphine, and naltrexone have been shown to reduce opioid use.

Our supplemental spending amendment would also speed emergency resources to law enforcement agencies. This Senator has heard from police in New Hampshire. They can't solve this problem by putting people in jail. They can help to solve it by putting traffickers in jail and by breaking up those networks that are supplying drugs.

In recent years, the opioid epidemic has spread to small towns and rural areas in every part of the country. If we went back to that first map of the United States, we could see just how much the spread has been to rural parts of this country. Heroin traffickers in New York expressly target New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine—all States with a large rural population. We don't have any real urban areas in our States, but we can see the spread of those drugs in northern New England.

This amendment will provide \$230 million in emergency funding for Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grants, and \$10 million for COPS Anti-Heroin Task Force Grants. The Byrne JAG Grant Program is the Nation's cornerstone crimefighting program. It has proved its effectiveness in each of our States, which is why it enjoys such strong bipartisan support. But the program has suffered cuts. In New Hampshire, we received \$1.7 million in Byrne funding in 2007. Last year we received less than \$1 million—almost a 50-percent reduction.

I had the chance to travel with Senator HOEVEN down to our southern bor-

der of Texas last spring because we both are on the Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security. We talked with some of our Customs and Border Patrol employees who were down on the border in Laredo and were interdicting drugs down on our southern border. One of the things they talked about is that drugs are coming across our southern border and they are going up the Interstate Highway System. They are going up Interstate 95 to northern New Hampshire. They are going up Interstate 35 through the middle of the country. We have to provide law enforcement with the funds they need to interdict those traffickers. We need an infusion of new funding to mobilize so that the programs are more aggressive for stopping opioid traffickers and dealers.

Our amendment requires that Byrne JAG funds be used directly to combat the opioid crisis for this emergency funding. That will allow for programs that emphasize treatment over incarceration, such as drug courts.

In New Hampshire we have seen what a difference it can make to have well-resourced, ambitious law enforcement initiatives. From May to December of last year, the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas Task Force, or the HIDTA Task Force, based in Bedford, NH, carried out Operation Trident. They draw on Federal, State, and local law enforcement resources in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. It makes sense because the more we cooperate, the more we can respond.

Operation Trident resulted in 240 arrests. They took down four major heroin fentanyl trafficking organizations. They dismantled three processing mills, and they seized more than \$1.2 million in assets. What we have to do is continue to recreate these successes all across the country by moving aggressively to take down the gangs and other trafficking organizations that are feeding the opioid epidemic. To do that we have to provide the resources.

This emergency funding amendment doesn't create any new programs. Instead, we fund proven and effective initiatives like Byrne JAG and the substance abuse preventive and treatment block grants. These initiatives have earned bipartisan support because Senators have seen the good work it has done in each of our States. By allocating these emergency resources to these proven programs, this amendment will provide law enforcement and treatment professionals with the resources they need to go on the offensive to mobilize a real war on opioid trafficking and addiction.

Perhaps most importantly, our emergency supplemental funding amendment funds the programs that are included in the CARA bill. I want to thank Senator WHITEHOUSE and other

drafters of CARA, who have made important statutory steps and programmatic changes to improve programs that help treat addiction.

But CARA, as important as it is, is an authorization bill that doesn't provide any funding. If we support making the changes in the law that are included in the CARA bill, then we should also support the funding needed to make these programs work.

This chart shows a quote from the National Governors Association. Recently, they came together and they endorsed emergency appropriations to address this crisis. They wrote:

Governors applaud the introduction of legislation that would provide emergency assistance to states working on the front lines of the opioid crisis. . . . [I]nvestment is needed to help states mount an effective response to opioid addiction, from increasing prevention and education regarding the dangers of illicit drugs to strengthening state prescription drug monitoring programs, expanding access to addiction treatment and enhancing support for law enforcement.

The Fraternal Order of Police has endorsed this amendment, saying:

This bill will help our State and local law enforcement officers by giving them the necessary funding and tools to battle their communities' heroin and opioid problems. Something needs to be done.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the support letter from the Fraternal Order of Police.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER
OF POLICE,

Washington, DC, February 29, 2016.

Hon. JEANNE SHAHEEN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR SHAHEEN: I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our support for your bill S. 2423, the "Opioid and Heroin Epidemic Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act." This legislation will make available \$210 million to help law enforcement fight the heroin and opioid epidemic that is destroying our communities.

This bill will help our State and local law enforcement officers by giving them the necessary funding and tools to battle their communities' heroin and opioid problems. This funding will be used for expenses relating to drug treatment and enforcement programs, law enforcement programing, and drug addiction prevention and education programs. Something needs to be done and Congress is correct to provide law enforcement with the resources we need to combat this epidemic.

On behalf of more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I thank you for your continued leadership and support of law enforcement. I look forward to working with you and your staff to get this bill through Congress to put an end to the heroin and opioid epidemic. If I can be of any additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Executive Director Jim Pasco at my Washington office.

Sincerely,

CHUCK CANTERBURY,
National President.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. We have also received support from groups such as the American Academy of Pain Management; the American Public Health Association; the American Society of Addiction Medicine; the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses; the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids; the American College of Physicians; and the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the list of groups.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL FOR HEROIN AND
OPIOID ABUSE SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

Fraternal Order of Police, American Academy of Pain Management, American College of Physicians, American College of Sports Medicine, American Osteopathic Association, American Public Health Association, American Society of Addiction Medicine, Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses, College on Problems of Drug Dependence, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America.

Connecticut Certification Board, Friends of NIDA, IC & RC, Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association, California Consortium of Addiction Programs and Professionals, National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, Partnership for Drug-Free Kids, Physician Assistant Education Association, SAI, Trust for America's Health.

NATIONAL GOVERNOR'S ASSOCIATION
STATEMENT

Provide emergency supplemental funding to help states and communities turn the tide on the opioid epidemic. Governors applaud the introduction of legislation that would provide emergency assistance to states working on the front lines of the opioid crisis. Congress has provided billions in emergency aid to address natural disasters, security threats and other crises, including more than \$5 billion last year to combat Ebola at home and abroad. A similar investment is needed to help states mount an effective response to opioid addiction, from increasing prevention and education regarding the dangers of illicit drugs to strengthening state prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs), expanding access to addiction treatment and enhancing support for law enforcement.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. The question is, Why do we need emergency funding? Some of my colleagues have argued that additional funds are not needed because there was enough money for the opioid crisis in last year's omnibus. Yes, it is true there is additional funding for these programs in the omnibus. I sit on the Appropriations Committee; I was one of many on that committee who worked very hard to fight for those dollars. But with spending caps in place, these increases are modest at best.

The majority of my supplemental amendment appropriates resources to two programs: The Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant and The Byrne JAG Program. These

programs have been critically underfunded in recent years. For example, the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant received a small increase in the omnibus. That was good, but the reality is that over the last 10 years, funding for this program has not kept up with health care inflation. So we have a 26-percent decrease in the real value of funding despite the small increase we got in the appropriations process. In order to restore the block grant to its purchasing power from 10 years ago—10 years ago, before we had the explosion of the opioid and heroin crisis—just to get back to that level, Congress would need to allocate an additional \$483 million for fiscal year 2017. My amendment provides \$300 million for this program. It is a downpayment—only a downpayment—on where we need to be. The Byrne JAG Program has been flat-funded for the last 3 years.

Fifteen years ago—again, before the explosion of the heroin and opioid crisis—Congress provided more than \$1 billion in support to State and local law enforcement through Byrne JAG and block grant funding. By 2015 that number had been reduced to \$376 million. Right now, despite the explosion in this heroin and opioid crisis, we are providing only about one-third of the support we provided 15 years ago.

The reality is that criminal justice and prevention and treatment have been chronically underfunded and, as a result, deaths have continued to rise.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has consumed 27 minutes.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. President. I should be finished shortly.

We have talked to the Department of Justice and to Health and Human Services, and they are ready to get this funding out the door immediately because there is no time to wait. Law enforcement and health care providers on the frontlines need this money, and they need this money now.

In the past, Congress has risen to the challenge of epidemics. In 2009, Congress appropriated nearly \$2 billion in emergency funding to fight swine flu, which claimed the lives of about 12,000 Americans. That emergency appropriations bill passed the Senate 86 to 3. Mr. President, 51 Senators who voted for that bill are still serving in this Chamber, including 23 Republican Senators and every Member of the Republican leadership. Last year, Congress approved \$5.4 billion in funding to combat the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, an outbreak that killed only one American. Surely we can come together now, this year, in this session, to fight a raging epidemic here at home. We cannot avert our eyes from 47,000 Americans who are being killed by lethal overdoses each year. We cannot accept that 9 out of 10 Americans with substance abuse disorders go without treatment. We cannot avoid the fact

that law enforcement officers in communities across this country are overwhelmed by aggressive drug traffickers and a rising tide of opioid-related crimes.

CARA will help fight the heroin and opioid epidemic in the longer term, but I urge my colleagues to also support this emergency supplemental funding amendment because it will provide urgent emergency funding to ramp up this fight in the months immediately ahead. This is a nationwide crisis, and it is time we mobilize a nationwide response that is equal to the challenge.

I urge my colleagues, I urge the majority leader to allow a vote on my amendment and to pass this out so we can give our local communities and States the resources they need.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess as under the previous order.

RECESS

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:23 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, you know more than just about anybody else here that across the Nation there has been a dramatic increase in the incidence of opioid addiction, which is now at the point of being a full-blown crisis.

In my home State of North Carolina, we have seen this devastation firsthand, with 1,358 overdose deaths in 2014 alone fueled by the combination of abuse of opioid-based prescription painkillers and heroin. To put that figure into context, that is more than the number of North Carolinians who lost their lives in automobile accidents in 2014.

For far too long the conventional thinking was that drug addiction deserved the stigma it receives: a choice made by criminals who were intent on destroying the lives of themselves and others. It was a dark and painful embarrassment for their families. It is long overdue for us to come to grips with reality because we know the truth: Drug addiction doesn't discriminate based on one's gender, race, or so-

cioeconomic status. Successful CEOs of major companies have succumbed to addiction. Straight-A students and valedictorians with once bright futures ahead of them have succumbed to addiction. PTA moms and dads, who were pillars of their communities, have succumbed to addiction. We know it because we have seen it in our inner cities, our suburbs, and our tight-knit rural areas.

Two weeks ago I picked up my hometown newspaper, The Charlotte Observer. On the front page was a report that highlighted the rising prescription overdose epidemic. It started off with a terrifying story of a North Carolina mother that encapsulates the kind of crisis we are dealing with.

The story began:

The Charlotte woman didn't know her daughter was a drug addict until she heard a thud upstairs.

Her daughter, a bright Myers Park High graduate, had returned from college for the weekend with a sack of dirty laundry. Her mother was folding clothes in the den when she heard the fall of her daughter's unconscious body.

She sprinted upstairs. "She's unconscious on the floor, blue, not breathing. No heartbeat," said the mother.

That is what the mother saw on the floor of her daughter's bedroom. Fortunately, in this case, the young woman survived the painkiller overdose. With the support of a loving family, she has an opportunity to get her life back on track and seize the chance to reach her full potential. But let's not kid ourselves. This near tragedy could have happened anywhere in America, and any parent could have experienced it.

It is important to reflect on how it got to this point, though. In 2012 the CDC completed a report that said that in North Carolina, there were 97 painkiller prescriptions written per 100 people. So what does that mean? It doesn't mean 97 percent of the people in North Carolina are getting painkillers; it means there is a group of people who are getting dozens and dozens, sometimes hundreds of prescriptions for opioids. In part, this is a result of a greater awareness of the importance of pain management. And many people do need pain medication, but the wider availability of these life-improving and lifesaving surgeries and treatments has actually contributed to the epidemic.

The medical community rightly recognized that managing patient pain was the compassionate thing to do and started holding providers accountable for doing so. However, the risk of the wider availability of these powerful medicines must be urgently and rigorously addressed. That is because for Americans from all walks of life, the nightmare of addiction begins with something as unassuming as a routine prescription for a painkiller such as OxyContin or Percocet. Due to the highly addictive nature of these drugs, a patient's body can become dependent

and they experience debilitating withdrawal. Once the prescription runs out, the physical addiction unfortunately influences people to make really bad decisions that can be life-changing—seeking more pills on the black market when their doctor says "no more" or turning to cheaper or even more deadly opioid drugs, such as heroin.

Opioid addiction is a slippery slope, and it is a deadly slope. The CDC has concluded that people are 40 times more likely to be addicted to heroin if they are addicted to prescription painkillers.

Our country desperately needs coordination from Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials to develop comprehensive strategies to combat heroin trafficking and to prevent prescription drug diversion. Federal dollars and resources come with so much redtape and so many mandates that State and local experts cannot use funding for different initiatives, and that is what the CARA bill seeks to address. For example, there simply are not enough treatment slots for mothers with children, and there isn't enough assistance provided to pharmacists and doctors to teach them how to best manage their prescriptions and help the people with the highest risk of addiction.

It has been heartening to see Members of Congress set aside their partisan differences in order to take immediate action to address the current shortcomings. I am proud to be a cosponsor of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which is the bipartisan legislation that brings together the experiences and recommendations of drug addiction experts, law enforcement, health care providers, first responders, and the patient community most affected by the opioid epidemic.

The legislation expands abuse prevention and education initiatives. It provides grants to substance abuse agencies, local governments, and nonprofit organizations in North Carolina and the rest of the Nation that are being hit hardest by the heroin and painkiller epidemic.

Local first responders will receive help through expanded availability of naloxone, a powerful antidote that is used to prevent overdose deaths. It has had amazing impacts on saving the lives of people, such as the young lady I talked about earlier.

The legislation also addresses the strain the addiction crisis places on our criminal justice system by providing more resources to identify and treat incarcerated Americans, helping put them on the path to recovery, which in turn could lower the Nation's recidivism and crime rates.

We can never forget that the solution to so many of America's problems can be found in our local communities—our schools, our churches, townhalls, and

VFW halls. The Federal Government can help support these efforts through smart, commonsense approaches, such as the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA. However, we must be honest in recognizing that success will be neither quick nor easy. We are confronted with the reality that addiction is a vicious and devastating cycle of abuse and despair, with consequences that can result in the destruction of loving families and the end to once-promising lives. It affects us all, Mr. President. The fight against addiction is one we must wage together, and we cannot afford to lose.

Mr. President, I want to thank the Presiding Officer personally for his leadership on this issue.

I look forward to seeing the CARA bill come to the Senate and then on to the President's desk.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I also want to take a few moments today to discuss the devastation drugs are bringing to too many families and communities across our Nation and also to congratulate the Presiding Officer for his great work on this issue. The bill before us today is a collaborative effort of his and Senators AYOTTE, TOOMEY, and others who have worked very hard to address what has become an epidemic across our country. It is particularly hitting States hard, it is hitting communities hard and families hard, and it needs to be dealt with. The destructive effects of illegal drug use have been well documented, and anything we say about the problem is likely to have been said many times before, but it is still worth saying because we cannot afford to forget what is at stake in this effort.

In my home State of South Dakota, methamphetamine use has hit our Indian reservations very hard over the past few years. Numerous individuals have become trapped in a cycle of meth abuse, their plans and dreams for their futures erased as their world shrinks to nothing more than their next dose. Of course, drug abuse doesn't just affect the individual using drugs; it ripples out into families and communities. Since meth abuse spiked on our reservations, there has been a significant increase in the number of babies born addicted to meth, and that is about as heartbreaking as it gets, Mr. President—a newborn baby screaming in agony as her body suffers withdrawal.

The meth epidemic on our reservations has also caused a significant increase in the number of meth-related crimes, including sexual assaults, domestic violence, child neglect, car accidents, and gang violence.

The meth epidemic has worsened the housing shortage facing South Dakota tribes because meth has contaminated a number of homes across our reserva-

tions. Cleaning up a house that has tested positive for meth costs thousands of dollars.

Several South Dakota tribes have seen so much devastation from meth abuse that they have declared a State of public emergency to gain access to additional government resources to fight the problem.

Today we are considering legislation to address another drug epidemic that has caused similar devastation—the abuse of prescription painkillers and heroin.

Since 1999, drug overdose deaths from prescription opioids, such as oxycodone and hydrocodone, have quadrupled. Forty-four Americans die every single day after overdosing on prescription opioid painkillers, and the numbers on heroin abuse are similarly disturbing. Heroin abuse in the United States nearly doubled between 2002 and 2013, while overdose deaths related to heroin nearly quadrupled. Between 2013 and 2014 alone, heroin use in the United States increased nearly 35 percent. Behind those numbers are thousands of broken families, suffering children, and devastated communities.

Any response to a problem as deep and complex as drug abuse has to approach the problem from a number of different angles. It has to address education and prevention. It has to target the drug supply by going after those who trade in and produce drugs. And it has to ensure that individuals trying to escape the cycle of addiction have access to the resources they need to overcome their dependence. The bill before the Senate today, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, targets all these priorities. A substantial part of the bill is focused on funding programs that provide treatment and support for individuals trying to escape painkiller or heroin dependence. The bill also provides grants for education and prevention and for local communities' anti-drug efforts.

An important section of the bill focuses on developing best practices for prescribing pain medication. Right now, prescription painkillers are heavily prescribed in the United States. In fact, the United States consumes more opioids than any other country in the world. Our country accounts for almost 100 percent of hydrocodone used globally and 81 percent of oxycodone use. In 2012 doctors prescribed enough prescription opioids to give every adult in the United States a month's supply. Let me repeat that. In 2012 doctors prescribed enough prescription opioids to give every adult in the United States a month's supply.

It goes without saying that prescription painkillers can be a key part of medical treatment, but it is essential that we make sure these potentially addictive drugs are being carefully prescribed and that they are only being prescribed when they are really needed.

Reviewing and updating prescribing practices will help us prevent attempts to use these drugs inappropriately.

One of the most important parts of preventing drug abuse is going after the people who prey upon the vulnerabilities of their fellow man by engaging in the drug trade. One significant reason for the recent spike in heroin abuse is the sharp increase in supply of affordable heroin here in the United States over the past several years. This increase has been driven by a major surge in heroin production in Mexico. Between 2013 and 2014 heroin production in Mexico increased a staggering 62 percent—62 percent, in 1 year. A large part of that production increase has ended up here in the United States. Any successful strategy to combat the heroin epidemic in the United States has to include efforts to check the flow of heroin coming across our borders. The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act addresses this priority by authorizing grants to State law enforcement agencies to investigate the illegal trafficking and distribution of heroin and prescription painkillers, and Republicans will continue to look for ways to support Federal, State, and local law enforcement as they seek to stem the flow of drugs into our communities.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act is an important bill. It is supported by Senators of both parties and by a number of law enforcement and drug treatment associations. It takes the kind of comprehensive approach we need to address the abuse of heroin and prescription painkillers, but our efforts are not limited to this bill.

Last year we passed the Protecting Our Infants Act to help prevent and treat prescription painkiller abuse in pregnant women and provide care for newborns who suffer as a result of their mothers' abuse of opioids. We also increased funding for efforts to combat painkiller abuse and provided grants to States to help them prevent and treat drug abuse. As chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, I worked with my colleagues last year to provide new resources to the Coast Guard, the leading Federal agency for combating the drug trade on the high seas. The Senate Finance Committee recently held a hearing on the Stopping Medication Abuse and Protecting Seniors Act, which establishes a Medicare Program to prevent painkiller abuse.

Too many lives across our country have been wrecked by drug abuse, too many children have lost a mother or a father to addiction, and too many communities are bleeding from the violence and brokenness that accompany the drug epidemic in this country.

Republicans remain committed to doing everything we can to support those fighting drug abuse, whether they serve in law enforcement agencies, emergency rooms or classrooms.

We are committed to reaching a day when fewer lives are destroyed by the scourge of drugs.

The legislation before us today—which Senators PORTMAN, AYOTTE, TOOMEY, and others have been involved with—is an important step forward in helping to address something that has become a crisis in this country and which is impacting, in a harmful and negative way, way too many families and way too many individuals and ruining the hopes and aspirations of too many young people and children across the country.

Let's pass this legislation, let's get the House to pass a similar piece of legislation, and let's get something on the President's desk that can be signed into law that will bring the relief that is needed.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, no one appears to be seeking the floor right now, so I will take the opportunity to speak about our CARA legislation. Since the Senator from Ohio, who has been my partner in this, is now presiding, this is an opportune time to give some remarks.

I think like many States, just from the remarks we heard on the floor already, it is not unusual to have a terrible toll at home from opioid abuse and from overdoses. In 2014, 239 Rhode Islanders lost their lives to overdoses. That is more than were killed in automobile accidents, more than were killed in homicides, more than were killed by suicide. Indeed, that is more than all of those categories—automobile accidents, homicides, and suicides—combined.

In one small community, Burrillville, RI, the beginning of last year was marked by six opioid overdose deaths. Burrillville is a very small town in northern Rhode Island. There are probably 5,000 people who live there. In one quarter, the opening quarter of last year, to lose six people, to have six police calls to the scene, to have six wakes, six funerals in a community that small—that is sadly emblematic of what is going on all around the country.

Rhode Island is not alone. The addiction overdoses are claiming lives, creating tragedy, and destroying families across the United States. Our emergency rooms in America treat almost 7,000 people every single day for the misuse or abuse of drugs. There are 7,000 people who come through the ER doors needing treatment, which, by the

way, runs up costs to our health care system. More than 120 people die every day as a result of an overdose. The latest year for which we have figures is the year that Senator THUNE just mentioned, 2014—47,000 dead in 1 year.

If you leave this building and walk down to the Mall, you will find the Vietnam war memorial. The Vietnam war memorial has about 58,000 names on it. From the entire Vietnam conflict, there are 58,000 names on the Vietnam war memorial. From 1 year of opioid overdose, there are 47,000 deaths. I am afraid it probably went up in 2015. We don't have the figures in yet.

Behind this tragedy of death and sorrow lies a terrible failing, which is that, according to the most recent estimates, nearly 9 out of 10 people who need drug treatment don't get it. They just don't get it. When you think of that death toll, you think of the cost and you think of the sorrow. The idea that we are still letting 9 out of 10 people who need treatment not even get it, not have access to it, is a terrible failing.

The economic cost of all of this is something we always think about here in Congress. Whether it is from health care costs or criminal justice-related costs or loss of productivity at work, that has been estimated at as much as \$70 billion per year.

One thing we have seen is that the ongoing substance abuse epidemic does not discriminate by race, by ethnicity, by gender, or by age. Overdose rates are up in both men and women, in non-Hispanic Whites and Blacks, and in adults of almost all ages. The dynamic nature of this epidemic demands that we respond in a comprehensive way—a way that brings together the public health, the public safety, the behavioral health care, the addiction recovery, and other communities.

It was out of this recognition, this realization that this pandemic, as some have aptly called it, requires an all-hands-on-deck approach that the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act was born. Starting in the spring of 2014, Senator PORTMAN of Ohio, Senator KLOBUCHAR of Minnesota, Senator AYOTTE of New Hampshire, and I hosted a series of bipartisan, bicameral congressional forums addressing various aspects of addiction—from the role of addiction in our criminal justice system, to the special challenges faced by women, by veterans, by young addicts, and the collateral consequences that we impose on people when they are in recovery. We hosted five forums, as the Presiding Officer will well recall, that brought together experts from these various fields to come here from all around the country. This was a national pilgrimage to Washington to highlight best practices and to share success stories from their States.

I have more remarks that I will be pleased to make as the day goes on, but

I am here managing the floor, and so I will yield the floor to my colleague and fill in again when there is a gap in the proceedings.

I yield the floor, and I will pursue this later.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

GUANTANAMO DETAINEES

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, yesterday I joined Senators GARDNER and MORAN on a factfinding mission to Guantanamo Bay. Guantanamo Bay was a humble reminder of the services our military provides overseas to get these terrorists off the battlefield and ensure they don't end up in Americans' backyards.

President Obama has signed multiple pieces of legislation into law that explicitly prohibit the transfer of enemy combatants from Guantanamo Bay to our shores. Most recently, the 2016 National Defense Authorization Act signed by the President specifically prohibited funds to be utilized to transfer detainees from Guantanamo Bay to the United States.

Among those being held are detainees such as Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, who is the principal architect of the September 11, 2001, attacks in New York City, according to the "9/11 Commission Report." Khalid Shaikh Mohammed is just part of the 9/11 five who are currently detained in Guantanamo Bay who allegedly masterminded and facilitated the 9/11 terror attacks on our country. In fact, other prisoners include Osama Bin Laden's bodyguard, who fought U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

We need to do the right thing for our country and keep them locked up in Guantanamo and not help President Obama fulfill a campaign promise and bring these terrorists to our communities.

I am exceedingly proud of our men and our women serving at Guantanamo Bay. They are impressive, they are professional, and I am honored to represent their interests in the U.S. Senate. I will continue working tirelessly to prohibit the transfer of these detainees to America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I will continue my remarks.

We were discussing the forums that the Presiding Officer, Senator AYOTTE, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and I organized. Out of that developed a national working group of stakeholders from the public health community, from behavioral health folks, prevention, treatment, recovery, and law enforcement. The forums informed us and the working groups supported us as we worked to draft legislation that would promote effective, evidence-based policies and increase collaboration among what are too often siloed areas of activity and expertise.

The bill we developed would do a great number of things. They fall into four major categories:

First, it would expand prevention and educational efforts—particularly aimed at teens, parents, and other caretakers, and elderly folks, aging populations—to prevent the abuse of opioids and heroin and to promote treatment and recovery.

Second, it would expand the availability of naloxone to law enforcement agencies and other first responders to help in the reversal of overdoses and save lives.

Third, it would expand the resources to identify and treat incarcerated individuals suffering from addiction disorders promptly by collaborating with criminal justice stakeholders and by providing evidence-based treatment.

Fourth, it would strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs to help States monitor and track the diversion of prescribed drugs out of the proper and legitimate market and to help at-risk individuals get access to the services they need.

It does a number of other things, but I will not summarize them all now.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act recognizes what we have learned from science and from experience, and it promotes those practices that we know work best to confront the multiple facets of this new epidemic. It sends the message that we in Congress understand that addiction is a disease, a public health crisis that requires more than the enactment of stiffer criminal penalties. We tried that road. We know it was not a success.

The bill we worked on and prepared has been endorsed by over 130 community and national organizations on the frontlines of this epidemic, including the National Council on Behavioral Health, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation, the National District Attorneys Association, the National Association of Attorneys General, major county sheriffs, the American Correctional Association, and many others.

Here in the Senate, at the last count, we had 38 cosponsors and myself. I am sure that number is climbing.

As committed as I am to the principles in this legislation and to the need to encourage and support these policies, I recognize that this bill alone is not enough. Without adequate resources to fund the programs in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA, they will remain out of reach to too many of the individuals, communities, and first responders who most need them. Without adequate resources for prevention, treatment, and recovery, we will continue to spend billions of dollars elsewhere in economic and societal costs that would be avoidable if we got this right. Without ade-

quate resources, too many people who desperately want to turn their lives around will be told to wait another day. Anybody who knows about addiction recovery knows what the consequences can be of being told to wait another day.

Senator SHAHEEN of New Hampshire has proposed an amendment which provides emergency appropriations to address this crisis. I am a cosponsor of that amendment because I agree with her that the opioid epidemic is an emergency, a public health emergency, and should be treated as one. Building on the strong commitment Congress made to funding addiction and recovery programs in the fiscal year 2016 omnibus, Senator SHAHEEN's bill would appropriate an additional \$600 million to the Department of Justice, to SAMHSA, and the CDC, much of it going to programs authorized in CARA, the Comprehensive Reduction Recovery Act, or complementary to CARA's goals.

This would not be the first time the Congress has authorized emergency spending in response to a public health emergency. When the swine flu epidemic hit, and I believe took 11,000 lives, Congress appropriated \$2 billion on an emergency basis with broad support on both sides of the aisle. Here, in the latest year for which we have the data, the body count is 47,000 deaths. We lost 11,000 lives to swine flu and 47,000 lives in 1 year to the opioid epidemic.

I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join me and Senator SHAHEEN and vote, not only to support the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act but to also provide added resources to make those principles a reality in the lives of the people who are counting on us to come to their aid. Addiction is a tough illness and recovery from it is a hard but noble path. Men and women who walk that path deserve our support, encouragement, and admiration.

I thank my fellow sponsors, Senator PORTMAN, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and Senator AYOTTE, for their partnership over the past 2 years as we prepared this legislation. I thank Chairman GRASSLEY and my ranking member Senator LEAHY for their commitment to tackling this epidemic and for bringing this bill out of the Judiciary Committee without opposition and now to the floor where we hope we can bring it across the finish line.

Let me say that I anticipate we are going to have a disagreement about the funding of this bill. I will fight as hard as I can to make sure this bill is adequately funded, but I do not intend, nor do I know anyone who intends, to block the passage of CARA or to interfere with it going into law over the question of funding.

People will have to check in with their own consciences, check in with

the desires of the addiction and recovery communities in their home States, and check in with their constituents as to the right way to vote on giving this adequate funding.

Finally, let me close by thanking the advocates, providers, police officers, rescue personnel, and of course the families who support and help the people in recovery through the tough nights and days. They do the hard work of saving lives every single day, and we would do well to honor them by passing this bill and seeing to it that it has adequate funding support.

I yield the floor to the Senator from Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I have an inquiry. I believe there will be a series of speakers coming to the floor to address the issue of digital security. I don't know if my colleague, the Senator from Ohio, has a long statement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask if my colleague would defer to me for just 2 minutes so I may address the CARA bill that Senator WHITEHOUSE has been talking about, and then I will yield to the Senator from Virginia.

First, I wish to thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his partnership. As he said, we have been working on this issue for the last few years to ensure that we have a comprehensive approach to this horrible issue of drug addiction and specifically the increasing threat of addiction to prescription drugs and heroin which we see in all of our communities. It is the No. 1 cause of death in my home State of Ohio, and we have been told it is the No. 1 cause of accidental death in the country. It is far worse than that. It is tearing apart families and communities, and we need to address it.

I will say two things. One, this is not just a bill about principles, this is a bill about policy, and Senator WHITEHOUSE and I are supporting new policies to approach this issue more effectively, as to prevention and education, as to treatment and recovery, as to dealing with the unfortunate situation of too many overdoses of naloxone, as to training, as to getting prescription drug monitoring programs in place, as to helping these addicted babies and mothers who are pregnant and have an addiction. There are very specific policy changes here that direct the increase in appropriations which is provided for in the current fiscal year, for the next 7, 8 months. That funding will be there for this legislation.

If we were to pass this bill tomorrow and get it enacted into law, that funding would be there not just in principle but in specific ways to spend that money more effectively. I wanted to make that point clear.

Second, I do support additional resources, as does Senator WHITEHOUSE. I

believe this is such a crisis that it requires resources over and above what we even provided in CARA. We have to get CARA done, and I agree with Senator WHITEHOUSE on that. This is priority No. 1 not just for us but for the 130 groups around the country that are the experts in prevention, education, treatment, and recovery. They have come together and given us their best counsel; that is, that this legislation will actually help to begin to reverse this terrible trend of addiction.

I am hopeful we can have a full debate on this legislation. I understand Senator SHAHEEN is going to offer an amendment. I have seen the revised version of her amendment, and I believe I will be able to support her amendment. I have just started to look it over, but I like it because it does provide additional funding. The funding is in addition to the funding we know will already be in there for CARA. It would be emergency funding. It is not usual for me to support funding that is not paid for through other offsets, but I believe we are in such a crisis in this country, including my State, that I will be able to support that. However, as Senator WHITEHOUSE said, we have to pass the underlying bill. I appreciate my colleague's commitment on that, and I appreciate the commitment of so many other great groups around the country that have supported us and said: Let's not get off track here. Let's get this legislation passed.

We have companion legislation in the House. It is bipartisan and identical to the legislation Senator WHITEHOUSE and I introduced. We worked together with the House on this legislation. This is bipartisan. They have over 88 cosponsors, Republicans and Democrats. We have very good signals from the White House that shows they are interested in working with us. Therefore, this can actually get done.

It is not just about funding for this year. Obviously, this would be a change in the way we spend money. It is an authorization to change it next year and the year after that and the year after that. In my experience that is what needs to be done.

I was the author of the Drug-Free Communities Act in the House for almost the past two decades. There has now been \$1.3 billion under the auspices of the Drug-Free Communities Act that directs and targets that funding to what we know is effective prevention. Our legislation takes that to the next step with regard to heroin and prescription drugs and will help those communities that are particularly impacted.

I thank my colleague from Rhode Island. I also thank my colleague from Virginia for his indulgence. I am sorry to interrupt his colloquy with our colleagues.

I yield my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, first of all, I thank both of my colleagues for their very important work on the issue before the Senate today. I, like them, have a State where both opioid and heroin abuse is taking too many lives and destroying too many families. I look forward to successfully moving forward on this legislation.

DIGITAL SECURITY

Mr. President, I rise to join several of my colleagues in a conversation on digital security. Since last year, I have been working with the chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, Texas Republican MICHAEL MCCAUL, to set up a Commission of experts to study digital security and issues around encryption. These issues have been somewhat in the news, and we have seen court cases in both California and New York.

I say to my colleagues that this is one component the Commission is trying to address. We are at the beginning of a debate that is even broader than the current cases being litigated in California and New York, which will encompass the whole world with digital security. If you think the issues we face now are challenging, as our country and the world move more toward the Internet, such as having your refrigerator respond to your voice, this issue around digital security is only going to grow.

I have a background with the technology community and Chairman MCCAUL has a background with the law enforcement community. Unfortunately, over the last few months, we have seen folks from the tech community, the law enforcement community, and the privacy community talk past each other too often. We have seen this issue addressed without a common set of facts. We have now seen situations arise that have basically pitted law enforcement against technology. We think the approach we are taking—bipartisan legislation that was introduced on Monday—is the appropriate way to go.

I am joined by my partner in the Senate, Senator GARDNER. We have Senator COLLINS, Senator BENNET, and my good friend Senator KING.

Mr. President, regardless of where people fall in this debate, digital security tools are terribly important. Encryption is essential to protecting our personal information, our financial information, our intellectual capital, and our national security, and this is one issue in which the heads of law enforcement and the heads of the intelligence community as recently as 2 weeks ago—Senator KING and Senator COLLINS, who are on the Intelligence Committee—have said that encryption is here to stay and is extraordinarily important.

We have seen challenges around this technological innovation come very

quickly. Think about this: Nearly 2,000 new applications are submitted to the App Store every day. That is how quickly this world is changing. The majority of these new applications that are added to that App Store are actually produced overseas. Two-thirds of these new apps use some level of encryption.

I follow this from a policy standpoint but also my personal background in the telecommunication industry for over 20 years. I can say that the networks we deal with today in terms of the Internet, the cloud, are infinitely more complicated than the distributed top-down network that existed in the 1990s when the Congress most recently addressed some of these issues. The Internet today is no longer top down. The fundamental architecture of the Internet is decentralized and resilient. We have seen on countless occasions in the past that telecom traffic shifts quickly from one area to another, and attempts by any government to channel that traffic in a certain way in fact often results in shifts that make it harder for government, law enforcement, and intelligence to stay abreast of the activity.

Obviously, Mr. President, many of these issues have been public since Edward Snowden's disclosure 3 years ago. I think that disclosure did great harm to our country. We have seen more recently, in the press, this debate crystallize after terrorist events and court activities in both California and New York.

What we are doing—these Members in the Senate and Members in the House—in a bipartisan way is saying: Let's sit down together and work through a common set of facts, a common collaborative approach, so that before more time elapses and positions harden any further, we bring something together now to sort through these complicated issues.

We all need to be working, as I said before, from the same set of facts. We need a framework for collaborative conversation. Too often I have heard from law enforcement and tech in recent months that we need to get into a room and try to sort these things through. Unfortunately, a static, American-only solution won't get us solving the problem. I believe it will simply drive the bad guys, the criminals and terrorists—at least the smart ones, anyway—off of American technology, away from American platforms, and move more and more criminals and terrorists to foreign-based hardware and software and at the end of the day actually make the safety and security of the United States far more out of reach.

I know at the outset some of my colleagues here questioned whether a commission is the right way, done too often. Congress has used commissions in the past to punt the solution. The

model we have taken, working with great assistance from Senator COLLINS, is the 9/11 Commission.

In the event of a national tragedy, a congressionally mandated Commission came together on a series of policy recommendations, the overwhelming majority of which were implemented by the Congress. That is why the 16-member Commission, modelled after the 9/11 Commission, has been endorsed by a wide range of stakeholders, from the tech sector, to respected academic and legal experts and distinguished national security figures. As a matter of fact—and this doesn't happen that often—our Commission proposal has even been endorsed by the editorial boards of both the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post. These validators agree with us: A bipartisan, bicameral Digital Security Commission is a productive path forward.

All these issues are not easy. What is great about America is that we are a country of innovators and of problem-solvers. I know that if we stop talking past each other and put the right people in a room, we can find the right solutions that protect us all, and then Congress can act.

Mr. President, I know we are going to hear from a number of my colleagues. I would like to now yield the floor to my friend and colleague on this issue, the Senator from Colorado, Mr. GARDNER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Thank you, Mr. President.

I thank my colleague from Virginia for his work on this and his history in the telecom business and his understanding of the complicated issues set before us. There are no simple answers. There is no black-and-white way to proceed here. There is no yes or no that we can reach because of the complicated set of factors before us when it comes to balancing our security needs and balancing our privacy needs at the same time.

In fact, I am reminded of when I was in the State legislature and legislation we worked on several years ago. We were trying to figure out what to do when it came to criminal acts over the Internet. At the time this bill passed, most people were using BlackBerrys. I don't know if the iPhone had been invented yet. They described in the statute that the legislature was working on—it was dealing with the issue of Internet luring of a child, and when they wrote the language, they used technical language. And when presented with a case under the statute trying to charge somebody with Internet luring of a child, a judge actually said: Well, since the defendant, the perpetrator, was using a BlackBerry—we don't define the BlackBerry as a computer; therefore, this offense of Internet luring of a child won't apply in this particular case. That was because at

the time, the legislature tried to describe in very definite terms a black-and-white answer to technology that had evolved or that everybody thought would be understood that this is a computer or this is the Internet. A judge said: No, that is not the case. So we had to address that issue in later years to try to overcome and understand the technology in ways that allow technology to evolve, that allow new technologies to emerge, but also make sure we are passing laws to provide protection to victims of crimes—in this case, an innocent child.

So when we are dealing with this issue of privacy and security and encryption, Congress ought to be the first body to admit there is no single person in here who can say: I have every answer. I have every solution. Choose me. Choose my bill. This is the way forward.

I applaud my colleague, Senator WARNER from Virginia, for the work he is doing, along with Senator COLLINS, myself, and Chairman MCCAUL in the House of Representatives, to try to find that solution to a very nuanced issue. This challenge with encryption that we face today is significant.

Encryption, as we know, is a technology designed to prevent unauthorized access to data and information. It is a code or series of codes put in place to put a lock on valuable things and trivial things alike, as the case may be when it comes to encryption. No matter how you describe what it is or what it is protecting, there is no doubt that it has been an enabler of global commerce in an increasingly interconnected age. It is that blanket that keeps our credit card numbers safe and our bank account numbers safe. It is the underpinning of financial success for businesses such as eBay, Amazon, iTunes, and more. But it can also be used, as we have seen, perhaps to cover bad actors, to cover their actions, creating a safe harbor sometimes for people who don't deserve to have a safe harbor. It can be an impenetrable cage around crimes, a powerful tool that is used to thwart law enforcement and lawful investigations, a blockade that is too difficult to penetrate for law enforcement.

So this bill that you have put forward, this Digital Commission that will be comprised of experts around the country on issues of privacy, on security, on encryption, to try to find the right balance between what is it that we need in this country to protect our national security, to find bad actors who are trying to hide bad things with innocent technologies—this is to craft policies in an open manner that we can then turn to and look at to make sure we are protecting privacy, protecting encryption, that we are not offshoring the problem, allowing others to hide by technology made offshore, but that we have a solution here in Congress that

takes into account evolving encryption techniques and technologies, respecting people's privacy rights as well. While there is a darker side to some users of innovations we have unleashed, we have great benefits from the innovations we have created that have enhanced our way of life and our quality of life.

So to Senator WARNER, my colleagues in the Senate, and the Chair, I would congratulate the Senator on his good work and the work so many of us have done to try to find this balance of security, privacy, and to make sure we are giving no quarter to people who wish to do this Nation harm.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, he stated that correctly. This is not an either/or circumstance. We have to protect Americans' privacy. We have to make sure we protect Americans' lives and liberty from criminals and terrorists. We also need to ensure that we continue to promote American innovation. And I believe there is a way through this, and I appreciate his good work as we move forward on this important piece of legislation.

Let me ask someone who has seen this process work before, a longtime member of the Senate Intelligence Committee and the Homeland Security Committee who helped shape this legislation, my friend and colleague from Maine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I rise today as a cosponsor of the Digital Security Commission Act, a bill that will establish a national bipartisan commission to examine digital security and privacy and the "going dark" problem that poses a real challenge for those responsible for our national security and for protecting the American public.

Let me commend the primary author of this bill, the Senator from Virginia, Mr. WARNER, for his expertise in putting together not only a well-balanced commission but also a broad array of cosponsors in support of this important legislation.

Senior administration officials—the FBI Director first among them—have been vocal in articulating the problem of terrorists and criminals going dark, with the result that our intelligence agencies and our law enforcement are going blind. Director Comey has testified repeatedly to the fact that there are terrorists who are using encrypted communications to plot attacks against our people, and we know that international criminal cartels are doing so as well.

There are many competing and difficult concerns that need to be worked out as we address this complex issue. Under our bill, a national and diverse

commission will perform its review and then make recommendations that will protect the privacy rights of law-abiding individuals in an era in which terrorists and criminals increasingly use encrypted devices. The Digital Security Commission will have the opportunity to make a valuable contribution to this debate, and that is the opportunity our legislation creates.

The laws of the United States, unfortunately, have not kept pace with technology, which has obviously rapidly evolved during the past three decades. As a result, the issues of going dark and preserving personal privacy are ones that we simply must grapple with today and for the future. To resolve what often are competing concerns will undoubtedly require a new law.

Let me be clear that I personally don't believe that the absence of a new law in any way exempts a company or an individual from complying with a court order issued by a Federal judge. In the San Bernardino terrorism case, Apple has been ordered by a Federal judge to provide technical assistance to help the FBI access data on a cell phone that was used by one of the terrorists involved in killing 14 people and injuring 22 others.

Here is an important fact that has been overlooked in many of the reports on this crime. Given that this phone was owned by the county, which has given its permission for the data to be retrieved—and I bet that is a critical point here—and that the court order is narrowly tailored, I believe Apple should reconsider its position as it relates to this particular case.

In the long run, however, it is clear that we need a new law and a dialogue among the administration, Congress, Federal and State law enforcement, and the tech community in order to deal with this issue.

It is appalling to me that there have been no legislative proposals submitted by the White House or any other Federal agency to guide us on this issue. At a time when the administration has been notably absent in the offering of a legislative proposal to address these important and complex issues, the practical solutions that I believe would come from the Digital Security Commission would be most welcome by the Congress and would help us and guide us as we draft a new law.

To be sure, these are difficult issues to resolve. And I believe that if you surveyed the cosponsors of this bill, you would find all sorts of different views on the cases that are before us. Indeed, the courts have reached different opinions. While I do not expect that the Commissioners will see eye to eye on every recommendation, we can have confidence that the final report will reflect the consensus judgment of a supermajority of the Commissioners who are selected in equal numbers by Republicans and Democrats. The final

report must be supported by at least three-quarters of the Commission to ensure that no recommendation represents the view of just a few stakeholders. When we had the 9/11 Commission's recommendations, one reason they were so powerful in enabling us to revamp the intelligence community was their unanimity.

Again, let me thank Senator WARNER for his leadership. I look forward to working with him and with my other colleagues, including the Senator from Maine, ANGUS KING, to make sure that we get this issue right for the challenges we face now and in the decades to come.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank Senator COLLINS from Maine for her comments today and for her good work on the Intelligence Committee and for her good work on the Homeland Security Committee and the fact that she has thought through these issues in a different framework—when our country was attacked—after 9/11. I would simply add that if some in Congress or elsewhere had come through with this kind of collaboration a few years back, we might not now be having two cases—one in New York and one in California—where, at least it appears at first blush, the courts are coming at it from very different directions.

Let me reemphasize that in America the only solution here could simply drive criminals and terrorists to foreign-based technology, hardware, and software. In many ways, to get this right, if we are going to prevent a balkanization of the Internet, which is not in America's interests and not in most countries' interests, we need to at least think through this from an international perspective.

Let us hear now from a former Governor, like myself, and a great member of the Intelligence Committee. I thank him for joining in this effort. As Senator COLLINS said, we have a broad breadth of ideological viewpoints from these eight bipartisan original sponsors here in the Senate, and I think more will be joining us.

I would simply add that on a day where a lot of the Nation's focus is on Super Tuesday and on some of the activities that are taking place in the Presidential debates, it is great to see such responsible Members from both parties step forward in a bipartisan way to address a very serious issue, both today and in the future, for our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, when I first entered this body in the winter of 2013, I was appointed to the Intelligence Committee. Every Tuesday and Thursday, we would meet for several hours

talking about very difficult, very complex, and sometimes very scary issues.

After sitting through those meetings for several months, it suddenly came to me what our mission in that committee is. It really comes down to balancing two provisions of the Constitution. The Preamble to the Constitution, which establishes the basic premise for why we have a government and why the Constitution was established, uses two important phrases in conjunction with each other. The first is "to ensure domestic Tranquility" and the second is "to provide for the common defence." There are other elements listed, but that is part of the essence of any government: to ensure domestic tranquility and provide for the common defense; in other words, to keep us safe. That is what government is all about.

But on the other hand, the Bill of Rights, and particularly the Fourth Amendment, makes it clear that there are limitations on government's power in whatever area. The Fourth Amendment says that "the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects shall not be violated" and also: no unreasonable searches and seizures. Those two provisions are intentional, and they have been since the founding of the Republic. The role of the Intelligence Committee and this body, it seems to me, is to constantly recalibrate the balance between those two provisions based upon the threats our country faces and the developments of technology. That is really what this discussion is about. It has been brought into sharp focus in the last two weeks by the case involving Apple and San Bernardino, as well as other cases around the country.

The Apple case points out the complexity and the difficulty of these issues. It is not simple. It is easy to say it was a terrorist's phone; open it up and get the information. But then we learn that, No. 1, Apple is not being asked to simply throw a switch or plug in a wire. It is being asked to write new software that would compromise its own software protections built into its iPhones all over the world. So it is being asked to create something, not simply open the doors. No. 2, although there has been some discussion about it as "just this phone," it is not just this phone. Apple is being asked to create a new piece of software that compromises its operating system in such a way that the phone can be hacked. Once that piece of software is created, there is no telling where it will go. It is referred to in the tech literature as the "golden key" or the "God key." Sure, Apple could keep it, but it might—who knows, a disgruntled employee could let it out. Apple itself could be hacked. It could fall into the hands of our intelligence community. It could then be made public. Once it is out there, we can't undo it.

What I mean by raising these issues is not that I know what the answers are, but that it is very complicated. And what if Apple creates the key for the San Bernardino phone but it ends up in the hands of China or Russia or Iran or a criminal enterprise, then we have compromised the security of millions of our citizens, and perhaps of our country itself.

The real point here is this is an issue of immense significance and public policy importance that should not be decided by a single court in California or Iowa or New Jersey or anywhere else based upon a 220-year-old law. This is an issue of policy that should be decided here. Indeed, in the district court opinion that was written yesterday in New York, that was released yesterday—I stayed up late last night reading it—the heart of that opinion was: This is a job for Congress. This is a policy question. The judge said the people who wrote the All Writs Act in 1789, the Judiciary Act of 1789, many of them were the same people who wrote the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. He said he could not believe they meant to import to the judiciary the power to make this kind of policy. That was the fundamental promise of the opinion. I commend that opinion to my colleagues. I have been reading judicial opinions for about 50 years. It is one of the best I have ever read in terms of the research and the footnoting. It is a very, very strong argument, and it makes the case I think very straightforwardly that this decision should not stay in the hands of the court. The real issue here is who shall decide this complex and portentous issue.

Now, generally, I don't like commission bills. Typically, they are often the politicians' way of putting the problem off to someone else in the future and we will deal with it later and we will appoint a blue-ribbon commission. But I have seen them work. The Senator from Maine mentioned the September 11 Commission that I think did excellent work and provided the basis for a great deal of good policy. In Maine we had a commission years ago on workers' comp, which was a very difficult issue in our State, but the commission helped us to get a political solution that ultimately helped to solve that problem. I have seen commissions work, and I think this is exactly the right answer in this particular situation, because the issue is so complicated and because it involves technology, it involves law, it involves the First Amendment, the Fourth Amendment, the Fifth Amendment, and it involves national security. These are important considerations, and we have to understand the ramifications of these issues before taking action.

Now, we may want to and need to address the specific issues raised in the current Apple case on an interim basis.

We may decide not to do that, but that is an option whereby we don't necessarily have to wait until the commission acts because the commission is talking about larger issues. Yes, it is talking about the encryption issue, or would talk about the encryption issue, but it is also dealing with broader issues of digital security. So we may want to make an interim decision while we wait for the work of the commission.

I think the important point is that the question before the Senate is, Where should this decision be made? I would join my colleague from Maine by saying that this problem—this so-called going dark—the encryption problem and its constraints upon law enforcement are not new this week. We have been hearing about it in the Intelligence Committee and in the Armed Services Committee and generally in the press for 1 year or 2 years, and I believe the law enforcement community or the administration should have come forward with a legislative proposal for us to act upon. Of course, I am not absolving myself. We could have brought forth our own proposal. But it was their continuing to raise this issue, and I think it was incumbent upon them to say: Here is how I think it should be solved.

Now, I know if Mr. Comey were here he would say: Well, we hoped we wouldn't have to bother you about this because we were trying to work this out with the technology companies. I understand that. But I wish, frankly, that we had put forth this bill 1 year ago or 2 years ago, and then we would be in the position of answering this question today instead of starting down the path of handing this question to a commission that we hope will provide some answers and guidance to us that will help us to make policy.

I am delighted to be a cosponsor of this bill. I commend the Senator from Virginia for spearheading this effort. I think it is one that deserves quick attention here, and it is something that we can move so we can get to work on trying to understand all the ramifications of this decision. We don't want to compromise national security, but we also don't want to compromise personal security. And we don't want to create something that could redound against national security if it fell into the hands of some of our adversaries.

So I am delighted to be able to help with this effort. I look forward to working with the sponsor and the other cosponsors. Hopefully, this is something we can move on with alacrity so that we can bring this issue back to this Congress sooner rather than later. We will never answer the questions finally because by the time we get some answers, there will be new developments in technology and new questions. But we at least need to bring this debate into the 21st century and

try to find a solution that will make sense, both in terms of national security and personal security for the citizens of this country.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I thank the Senator from Virginia as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, this is a great country. Regardless of what some people say, this is a great country, and the reason it is great is that people work. They get up and they produce for this country. They give their talents. They get paid. They help their families. Their kids get educated. We have that ethic of doing our job.

That is why it is so shocking to me that the Republicans who are in charge of this Senate refuse to do their job. They said that no matter who the President nominates, they are not even going to hold a hearing on that person. They say they want a Presidential election. Well, they had two, and their guys lost. I know it is not a happy experience. Believe me, I have lived through it. I have served with Republican Presidents and Democratic Presidents. But the world doesn't stop because you are not happy with who is President. The Constitution tells us what we have to do. Here is what article II, section 2, clause 2 says. And I know everyone here swears to uphold this Constitution. I would argue that when my Republican friends state that they are not going to do their job, they are not going to hold even a hearing on whomever the President nominates for the Supreme Court, which is now short one member, they are defying the Constitution. Maybe they will be sued by someone—an aggrieved party. The people of this country are aggrieved by this attitude.

Let's read article II, section 2, clause 2, for anyone who cares about the Constitution, and everybody says they do. It says the President "shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, [and] Judges of the supreme Court."

It doesn't say the President does it alone; it doesn't say the Senate does it alone; it says they do it together. That is article II, section 2, clause 2. This Senator advises her colleagues to read it, and if you don't follow it, you are not doing your job. We want them to do their job.

Now, who else says that it is important? I will tell you—some very incredibly respected people. This quote is from Ronald Reagan, one of the heroes of the Republican Party. I served when he was President, and he said: "Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body."

That is Ronald Reagan.

Let's look at Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court, a Republican who is very beloved. What a wonderful woman. She made history because Ronald Reagan appointed her and we confirmed her. She said, "I think we need somebody there"—meaning in the Court—"to do the job now, and let's get on with it." This is Sandra Day O'Connor.

So, my Republican friends, you have two extraordinary Republicans whom you love telling you to do your job.

It doesn't say in article II, section 2, clause 2: But you don't have to do your job if you don't like the President. It doesn't say that. It just lays it out pretty straightforwardly. This is article II, section 2, clause 2. It doesn't say: Don't do this if you don't like the President. It doesn't say: Don't do this in an election year.

As a matter of fact, we voted in an election year. Anthony Kennedy was nominated by Ronald Reagan with a Democratic Congress. And we voted in an election year. Do you think we wouldn't have been happier to wait and see if we were able to get that Presidency back as Democrats? No, we did what Ronald Reagan asked us to do. We acted responsibly, and we found Anthony Kennedy to be very qualified. He sits on the Court to this day, having been voted on in an election year.

It has happened 14 times in our history. The only time we had a problem was back in the Civil War, when our country was obviously under tremendous stress. Today, we are one Nation under God, and we should pull together on this.

There are some other things I wanted to read to you. This is what Michael Gerhardt, professor of law at the University of North Carolina, said about the Republican plan not to move on this vacancy:

Refusing to hold a hearing on a Supreme Court nomination or refusing to take any action on a nomination before it has been made is simply unprecedented in our history. The refusal is not grounded in the Constitution. It is a willful abdication of authority. The Constitution does not seek to have effect at certain times of the year or the session.

One never knows when something horrible is going to happen. When this happened to Justice Scalia, this was a shock to his family, to the country. Regardless of whether you agreed with him or not, it was a shock. Nothing in the Constitution says if you are shocked about something that happens, you don't have to work with the President. It doesn't say that. Don't make it up, especially because this is the party that keeps saying they want a strict construction of it. If you want to construe the Constitution in a strict way, you need to act.

There is Jamal Greene, professor of law at Columbia. He says: "The Senate has a constitutional duty to give due consideration to anyone nominated by

the President to fill a Supreme Court vacancy."

He goes on: "In the modern history of the Nation, there is no precedent for the Senate deliberately refusing to vote on a nominee to a vacant Supreme Court seat, whether during an election year or at any other time."

We have our differences here; we really do. People say: Senator, is that why you are not running again, because it is so hard to do things? No. I love it here. This is just my time to move on and do other things and have somebody else come in. I love it here. I love my colleagues. I have friends on both sides of the aisle and I get things done and so do they. You would think that we would agree on the meaning of the Constitution—it is simple—and that we wouldn't be arguing about it.

I am a little stunned at this failure to step up and do their job. I will tell you this. If you are an average American and you have a job and you call your boss and say: "Hi, Boss. It is Monday morning, and I just don't feel like coming to work."

"Are you sick?"

"No."

"Do you have a problem with your family?"

"No."

"Well, what should we do?"

"Well, I am not in the mood. I want to wait."

You would be fired. You would be fired.

I am going to be here for the remainder of this year. I want to do my job. I want to do my due diligence. I want to have a chance to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle here on this issue.

Today at the White House, Senator MCCONNELL and Senator GRASSLEY reportedly told President Obama that they don't want to do their job. They don't want to do it. They don't care who he sends up. It is unreal. It is unbelievable. They want an election.

We had an election. President Obama didn't get elected for 3 years; he got elected for 4 years. The next President, whatever party, is going to be there for 4 years until the next election. This person has to do their job for 4 years, and we have to do our job. They don't want to hold a vote, they don't want to hold a hearing, and many of them say they will not even meet with the nominee.

It is our job to be involved in this election. This election of the next Justice is such an important job. The Supreme Court has a job to do. This incredible attitude by my Republican colleagues means that the Supreme Court cannot really function the way it is meant to function. It is going to be divided 4 to 4. That is unfair to the people of this country. Whatever side they are on, this decision needs to be made. As Ronald Reagan said: "Every day that passes with the Supreme Court

below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body."

Here is one of the heroes of the Republicans saying that every day that passes with the Supreme Court below full strength, the people's business is, in fact, impaired.

Here is what that states. This isn't an argument that is happening in a vacuum in some fancy boardroom of some law firm, conservative or liberal. It is a serious argument that impacts the people. Every year the Court considers cases with profound consequences for our constituents. Again, it doesn't matter what your position is. We need a fully functioning Court.

I want to give an example, and I see my friend from the State of Washington. The Supreme Court is going to hear oral arguments in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*, the most important women's health case in a generation. The case is about the unprecedented attacks we are seeing on women's health in Texas—which is what this case is about—but also across the Nation. This case is about extreme politicians and extreme groups trying to overturn 43 years of settled law.

The settled law is very simple. Women have a right to have reproductive health care. It is as simple as that. When a series of clinics throughout the State are shut down and women have to travel hours and hours and hours and maybe even days to get health care, they effectively don't have it. That is what has been happening in Texas. That is why this case is so important. There is a Texas law, HB2, that was designed to close health clinics that provide a full range of reproductive health care services, including annual exams, pap smears, STD tests, birth control, and, yes, safe and legal abortions—the full panoply of services for a woman. This law in Texas singles out women's health providers with burdensome requirements that have already forced more than half of the clinics in Texas to close.

I don't know who gets happy about that, but I don't get happy about that, and nobody who cares about a woman should get happy about that. It is a total outrage. Women are taking matters into their own hands because they have no access to doctors. The goal of this law—and it is working—is to shut down these clinics and deny to women these rights that they have earned. It would reduce the number of providers in practice from 40 to 10. If you are just unfortunate enough to live in an area where your clinic is shut down, Lord knows what you do. You may be a single mother, you may be part of a couple where you both work, you may have children, and you may not be able to take days to find health care.

The law is forcing women to travel for hours and some even to other States. Women who live in remote or

rural areas may have to stay overnight or for multiple days to avoid making more than one trip. Think about the cost to families who may not be able to do it, who are just getting by. Many women simply can't afford to take off work, drive for hundreds of miles, or get on a plane every time they need health care.

They want to do their jobs. They want to be responsible. They step up to the plate every single day, but we can't do it here because politics is playing a part. People have decided they didn't like the fact that Barack Obama got elected twice. Well, too bad—he did, and it is your job to act.

I am sorry you don't like the President. Maybe you don't like the fact that he got us out of the worst recession since the Great Depression. Maybe you don't like the fact that he cut the deficit by two-thirds. Maybe you don't like the fact that he got us out of two wars. That is your choice, fine, but he has a right to nominate, and we have a responsibility to meet that nominee and to vote up or down on him or her.

These cases that are pending before the Court—and I am just highlighting this one, and I know Senator MURRAY will go into depth on it—these cases are critical. We need the full bench. I don't care how you feel about the issue. Maybe you support closing down clinics and going from 40 to 10, letting women suffer, taking matters into their own hands. If that is your position, I am sorry, it is not fair, but you have a right to your position—but the Court has a right to be at full strength.

I close with just a quote from a woman who has been hurt already by this Texas law which is going to be heard tomorrow in the Court.

Marni. Marni had to fly from Austin, TX, to Seattle when her appointment was cancelled the night before it was scheduled because the clinic was forced to immediately discontinue providing these services after the Texas law took effect. Marni said her first reaction was "to feel like my rights were being taken away from me, to feel very disappointed that elected officials had the ability to make decisions about my and my fiancée's life."

That is Marni. The stakes could not be higher. This is just one of the cases.

Finally, the highest Court in our land should be fully functioning. The American people deserve nothing less. I am going to put up the Sandra Day O'Connor quote for the last time in this talk. She is a Republican woman, first woman to serve, and appointed by Ronald Reagan. She is looking at this Court. She knows what it is like to serve on the Court. She knows how hard the issues are. She understands how important it is. She is more important to this debate than anyone in the Senate, including yours truly. She knows. She didn't say: Wait until the next election to see if my party wins,

no. She didn't say that. She said: "I think we need somebody there now to do the job, and let's get on with it."

I thank the Senator from Washington for her leadership on this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

WHOLE WOMAN'S HEALTH V. HELLERSTEDT

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, thank you to the Senator from California for her long advocacy on behalf of women across this country to be able to access the health care they choose.

Tomorrow the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in the case of Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt. At its core, this is a case about whether extreme rightwing politicians will be allowed to block women from exercising their constitutionally protected health care rights, rights that have been affirmed by the Supreme Court for more than four decades.

For women across the country, for our daughters, and for our granddaughters, there is truly a lot at stake. I have been so inspired to see women of all ages from across the country standing up now to share their stories and to make sure the Supreme Court knows why politicians should not be able to make women's health care decisions.

In fact, 113 lawyers submitted an amicus brief to the Supreme Court explaining the difference that constitutionally protected reproductive rights have made in their own lives. The stories they tell are incredibly powerful. One partner at a major law firm wrote that after three miscarriages, "my husband and I were delighted when I again became pregnant in December 1999 and safely made it past the 'danger zone' of the first trimester, passing an amnio with flying colors. [But] five weeks later, when I was heading into the sixth month of my pregnancy, I returned to the doctor for a routine ultrasound and the doctor immediately detected a problem."

Her baby had a rare heart defect, so severe that he was already in congestive heart failure and would be born only to suffer if he survived at all.

After talking with her doctors and her husband, they made the decision to terminate her pregnancy. She wrote:

As a woman, a mother and a lawyer, I know I did the right thing. I have shared my story with my children, and hope that should my daughter ever find herself in a position similar to mine, she will enjoy the same rights that were available to me.

It should go without saying, but politicians have absolutely no place in such a deeply personal, extraordinarily difficult decision. Unfortunately, the Texas clinic shutdown law being challenged in Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt—a law that has been driven by extreme rightwing politicians who want to undermine women's access to health care—would mean the exact opposite. This law and laws like the one that was allowed to stand in Louisiana

just last week places burdens that health experts, such as the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, say are medically unnecessary on clinics in order to shut them down and make it harder for women to exercise their constitutionally protected reproductive rights.

If the Supreme Court fails to block this law, three-quarters of the clinics that provide abortion services, as well as other health care in Texas, would be forced to close, leaving 5.4 million women in Texas with just 10 clinics statewide. Hundreds of thousands of Texas women would have to drive 300 miles round trip just to get care they need.

If that is not an undue burden, I don't know what is. A ruling upholding the Texas shutdown law wouldn't just impact women in Texas, it would make it easier nationwide for politicians to interfere with women's health care and block them from exercising their constitutional right. That would be the wrong direction for women. It would be the wrong direction for families and for our country as a whole.

That is why tomorrow women and men from all over the country will be outside the Supreme Court standing up for women's health, rights, and opportunity. I will be very proud to be right there with them because we are going to be sending a very clear message. A right means nothing without the ability to exercise that right.

I hope the Justices listen, realizing how much this ruling means to women's lives. Ultimately, I hope they will rule in favor of ensuring women's health and rights continue to progress, rather than going backward. I know our country will be stronger for it.

Mr. President, I express my appreciation to Senator WHITEHOUSE and all of our colleagues who have worked very hard to bring this bill before us on the floor, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. It lays out key steps toward addressing the crisis of prescription drug abuse and heroin addiction, which is ruining and costing lives nationwide, including in my home State of Washington.

I hear about this epidemic from Washington State families and communities far too often. Parents ask me what we are doing in Congress to help families like theirs who are trying desperately to help their children who are struggling to escape addiction. I am told about mothers and fathers who developed opioid addictions after being prescribed pain medication, with devastating consequences for their families.

When I go to speak with local sheriffs and police chiefs, they say they are most often the ones responding to these crises and that our country needs to do better than allowing those struggling with addiction to cycle in and out of the criminal justice system. They

tell me that heroin use is only becoming more widespread in our communities, especially amongst our young people.

Penny LeGate is a former news anchor from Seattle and she knows this all too well. Her daughter, Marah Williams, had a happy childhood, ballet lessons, softball, a close-knit family, but in middle school, as she began to struggle with ADHD, depression, and anxiety, she also started experimenting with drinking and drugs. For years her parents tried everything they could do. As Penny will tell you, Marah did too. She fought hard to break her addiction and to keep her life moving forward, but tragically, when Marah began using OxyContin and then heroin, the grip of addiction was just too much. Marah died of a heroin overdose in the basement of her family home when she was just 19 years old. This is a parent's worst nightmare. It is happening to parents across my State, across the country, and it has to stop.

I am pleased there is bipartisan momentum toward giving our communities the tools and resources they need to tackle this disease. The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA, includes efforts to strengthening education, prevention, and treatment efforts around prescription drug abuse and heroin use. It will cut down on inappropriate use of pain medication that gets so many people addicted to opioids in the first place and would make it easier for people to safely dispose of pain medication so it doesn't get in the wrong hands. This legislation will also help police departments get access to naloxone, a drug that counteracts the effect of an overdose, which is something police chiefs I have spoken to make clear they need—and more.

The bill we are debating right now would be a good step in the right direction, but it can be even better. As many of my Democratic colleagues have made clear, a problem as serious and urgent as this epidemic deserves a serious, urgent response. So we should enact the policies in this bill and at the same time we should also make sure families and communities will see additional tools and resources as quickly as possible. That is why I strongly support the emergency investments proposed by the senior Senators from New Hampshire, West Virginia, the junior Senator from Massachusetts, and others. Their proposal will actually help our States and local governments, as well as families who are on the frontlines of this battle, by providing the resources to prevent opioid abuse and expand access to the treatment that so many families are seeking.

I am hopeful Republicans will work with us to move this alongside this important bill so families don't have to wait for Federal resources that this crisis desperately needs.

As I have laid out, the legislation we are debating today would go a long way toward tackling the epidemic of prescription drug abuse and heroin addiction, especially if it includes an emergency funding that can offer relief and support quickly, but given the strong belief on both sides of the aisle that far too many people are falling through the cracks in our mental health and substance abuse systems, I believe we can and should do more to build on this CARA legislation in the coming months.

We should pass this bill, but then I hope all of our colleagues will not just get up and walk away. We should build on this rare moment of bipartisan agreement, stay at the table, and keep working beyond this bill to strengthen mental health care and substance abuse treatment in our country.

So even while we are debating this very first step, I wish to lay out just a few of the goals that should guide us as we look past this, goals I believe that can be met if we work together and take this crisis seriously.

First, mental health is every bit as important as physical health, and we should make sure we work together to make sure they are both treated equally in our health care system; secondly, we should do more to break down the barriers that make it difficult to address patients' mental and physical health care needs at the same time; third, at a time when half of all U.S. counties lack access to a social worker, a psychologist or a psychiatrist, we need to strengthen our mental health care workforce so patients and families can get care when and where they need it, whether that is at a hospital or in their own community; fourth, we need to recognize that mental health care is important at every stage of life and ensure our system can address every patient's needs, whether that patient is a child or an adult; and, finally, continue taking steps to address the opioid abuse epidemic, I believe we can do more to expand access to medication-assisted treatment and offer our States more resources to respond to crisis situations, including by strengthening prescription drug monitoring programs.

My colleagues on the Judiciary Committee have worked very hard to improve prevention and treatment of opioid addiction, especially among individuals who pass through the criminal justice system. I believe we need to ensure these tools and resources are available to all Americans struggling with addiction and ensure that our health care system is equipped to address addiction as a disease.

I have been proud to work with the junior Senator from Connecticut and other members of the HELP Committee on both sides of the aisle, led by Chairman ALEXANDER, the senior Senator from Tennessee, on a path toward

meeting those goals. I am very hopeful we will be able to reach agreement on some additional steps that would make a difference for the many families and communities who are struggling to support loved ones in need.

Mr. President, it goes without saying that in this divided government we don't agree on much, but there is some important bipartisan agreement on the need to close the gaps in our mental health care system and tackle the crisis of opioid addiction. So I hope we can pass the legislation we are debating today, along with improvements that ensure it helps patients and families as quickly as possible, but we shouldn't stop there. We should seize this opportunity, work together, and continue making progress for the families and communities we serve.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak in favor of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. Senator WHITEHOUSE and I have been working on this together for years, along with Senator PORTMAN and Senator AYOTTE, so this bill has been bipartisan from the beginning. I thank my colleagues, and I also thank Senator GRASSLEY and Senator LEAHY for their leadership in bringing this to the floor and all members of our committee, including the Presiding Officer, who have contributed to this bill.

Our Nation is facing a serious problem with drug addiction, and I am glad to join my colleagues today to talk about how we can tackle this problem and work toward a solution by passing this bipartisan bill. Just last week I was out in Montevideo, MN, and we gathered together some people from the town. It is a town of a couple thousand people. Our goal was to just talk about this problem. I was shocked that early in the morning on a Saturday we had 50 people there. We had every doctor in the town there, to my knowledge. We had the sheriff there, the police chief there.

At one point a regular citizen who was there, who had suffered from some diseases and had been in the hospital, actually emptied out her purse and tons of medications and opioids came rolling out onto the table that she hadn't used. It was an image I will not forget and an image I bring to the Senate floor to remind us there are too many of these drugs out in our communities.

I heard stories of young children who had dealers—people who were trying to get the opioids—actually saying to them: Hey, I will give you a beer if you will go to your parents' medical cabinets and look for these drugs, and they would write them down for them. The kids would then go, get the drugs, and bring them back.

There was a story of one doctor who was treating someone, thought he was

pretty normal. He had back pain, and the doctor had given him some painkillers for years. Then, all of a sudden, one day the Secret Service shows up because this man had actually made a threat on the life of the President. He had an entire nightlife that was different than his day life, and it was completely dictated by the fact he was addicted to prescription drugs.

Four out of five heroin users get their start these days from prescription drugs. I don't think anyone would have ever imagined that. When I was growing up, when we saw heroin addicts on the corner or when I was a prosecutor for years, we never had those kinds of statistics. People got hooked on heroin because they got hooked on heroin. They started with heroin and they, sadly, would end with heroin. In this case, we have 80 percent of people becoming addicted because they have a surgery because they have back pain. They then get too much of the drug or no one figures out that getting hooked on the drug is worse than the pain they had in the first place, and they get hooked on the drug.

We also have stories of overdoses of people who are not even taking the drugs for periods of time. So we have a crisis in this country, and when I met with those people in Montevideo, it hit home to me that it can happen at any time.

We didn't pick this town because they were having a big crisis or because they had a number of deaths. We just happened to be in that area of the State and decided we wanted to focus on the issue.

Before I was elected to the Senate, I spent 8 years serving as chief prosecutor in Hennepin County, which includes Minneapolis. Drug cases made up about one-third of our caseload, which meant we handled everything from trafficking and selling to production and manufacturing. From this position, I had an opportunity to see firsthand the devastating impact of drug addiction.

Mr. President, I see my colleague from Indiana has arrived. I am managing the bill for this hour, and if he wants to speak, I can go back and finish my remarks later. I will just finish up while he is getting back to his desk.

I was talking about my time as county attorney. Many of those people who were affected by addiction that we saw were hooked on opioids, including both heroin and we saw the start of this prescription painkiller epidemic.

We would be sadly mistaken if we think drug abuse only happens in our cities or the metropolitan areas of our States. As I saw this weekend—when I met with some of our people—Beltrami County, MN, received three emergency calls for heroin overdoses in 1 day. One of those individuals passed away. So this is happening every day.

Mr. President, I am going to turn it over now to Senator COATS of Indiana.

I see he is here to support this bipartisan bill, but I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague from Minnesota. I am here to talk about opioid abuse as well, although I am trying to combine two speeches. Since we are now talking about the opioids abuse and drug addiction, I am more than happy to listen to the Senator from Minnesota finish her speech. I thank her for the time, but I want to make sure I am not also unduly holding my colleague back as I flip through my weekly "Waste of the Week" because I can delay that, if necessary.

Mr. President, I am joining my colleagues here. I believe all of us are deeply concerned about the drug addiction epidemic that is sweeping through our Nation. It is an epidemic for people of all ages, but it is most tragically an epidemic for our young people who feel a sense of immortality when they are young and often fall prey to the "just try it, it is harmless, don't worry about the addiction." Obviously, that is not the case. We are talking about highly addictive drugs and heroin that is coming into our country, and we are talking about serious consequences of this.

In our States, as in every other State, it is a major crisis, and we are trying to do everything we can to address that. In one county alone, we have had an unprecedented rural HIV outbreak as a result of the sharing of needles to inject opioids. These needles that are providing the kind of drug addiction we read about every day.

It is clear the legislation before us is a comprehensive approach, and that is needed. As I have said, I think we have to have an all-hands-on-deck effort here, whether it is prevention, whether it is law enforcement to keep the drugs from coming in or whether it is treatment. It is all three, and it requires not only those three components but communities and community organizations, whether Federal, State, local, or volunteer organizations, such as the various charities that are operating and their volunteers who are stepping up. All of us need to get involved in all aspects of dealing with this.

I am pleased to cosponsor the bill Senators PORTMAN and WHITEHOUSE have worked on, CARA, which has been talked about on the Senate floor. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this bipartisan legislation. The legislation includes a provision Senator BLUMENTHAL and I, on a bipartisan basis, have offered, which authorizes individuals who are authorized by the State to write prescriptions for controlled substances, such as physician assistants and nurse practitioners, to access State prescription drug monitoring programs—so-called PDMPs—to reduce drug abuse. I will not go into

the details of that program, but it has been very successful in terms of providing the transparency and the information necessary so we can control prescriptions and the output of drugs that are perhaps prescribed for legitimate purposes but are used for illegitimate reasons.

For all of that, I look forward to our being able to work through this legislation and to successfully pass this legislation and move it on through the Congress and to the President.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. President, if I could also, ask for the indulgence of my colleague from Minnesota, to talk briefly about my waste of the week. I think this is the 35th or 36th week. I have almost lost track of the number of weeks I have been down here. Every week the Senate has been in session I have been down, with maybe one or two exceptions, talking about the waste of the week.

Waste of the weeks are simply issues documented, through a nonpartisan process, of waste, fraud, and abuse that occur through the irresponsible spending and oversight of our bureaucracies here in Washington. Today I am highlighting two policies that have occurred within the State Department and the Federal Aviation Administration.

Frankly, I could be talking about every agency in the Federal Government that has fallen prey to a lack of oversight. We have come to the point where we have identified over these "Waste of the Week" speeches well over \$150 billion of documented waste, fraud, and abuse.

These are issues that have been raised through inspections and analysis by the Government Accountability Office by the inspectors general of various agencies whose job it is to delve in and find out how the taxpayer money is being spent—is it being spent for the legitimate purpose of providing the service that is needed or is there a problem either in mismanagement or through waste or are criminals and others taking advantage of the program? I have now documented, as I said, 35 of those cases totaling well over \$150 billion.

Today we want to look at two agencies as examples of this. I can go through every agency, but we will take two today. One is the State Department. Let me note it is estimated that changing the policies here could save the taxpayers an estimated \$295.6 million. That is not small change. Just addressing these two agencies \$295-plus million it will save.

Let me go into a little bit of detail. State Department employees located overseas—those serving in embassies or consulates—have access to what is called a purchase card. The concept is OK. The idea is that rather than go through all the paperwork and processing and sending back to the United

States, employees can say: Look, we need some office supplies. We didn't order enough initially. We need to pick up 100 Scotch tape containers or pens or who knows what. A purchase card is given to those employees who are responsible for providing those supplies to make what is called simple transactions.

To prevent the wasteful use or fraudulent use of these purchase cards, Federal law and State Department guidelines require all transactions meet certain eligibility criteria and be continually monitored. We know from experience that mistakes are made. We know from experience that fraud is committed. One of those key eligibility criteria is that all of the purchase receipts have to be retained for a minimum of 3 years. That is so inspectors general can go back and look at what the purchase is, look at the receipt, make sure everything is up to speed and done within the law.

However, a recent report by the State Department inspector general has revealed that overseas employees have been told they do not have to send any purchase documentation to their supervisors in Washington for further review. All they need to do is keep the receipts of the purchases for a 3-year period of time so that if those assessments are evaluated, when someone comes back and says "We heard there is a problem here," they will have the receipts to verify whether the purchases were legitimate or not. That is the "trust but verify" that I think is important for dealing with these kind of situations.

When the State Department inspector general tried to access the documentation for purchase card transactions as required by the law and by State Department regulation, he found that many of the overseas offices didn't keep their transaction records. As an example, in fiscal year 2014, the inspector general found that more than half of overseas offices either didn't perform reviews of purchase card transactions as they are required to do or didn't even respond to the inspector general's request to produce the documentation. The report determined that during 2013 and 2014, there were \$53.6 million in unaccounted purchases. That is unacceptable.

If you take a job, you are told: Here is your card. If you need to buy something locally and don't want to go through all the rigmarole of purchasing and sending documentation overseas and so forth, you can use this purchase card. But you have to keep the documents if you do this because you are going to be reviewed. Someone is going to come over here and say: Prove it.

Yet the State Department has basically said: Don't worry about it. You don't have to keep those—probably thinking that they will never come

over and follow up on this. So that \$53.6 million in unaccounted-for purchases at this rate, over a 10-year period of time, amounts to about \$263 million in unknown and unverified purchases just within the State Department's overseas offices. Who knows what is going on here?

Secondly, I want to talk about the Federal Aviation Administration because they have a similar situation that was inspected by their inspector general. He found that many employees do not comply with the guidelines, and the employees are not consistently held responsible for safeguarding their assigned equipment and supplies, such as digital cameras, laptops, and any other number of items. As a result, the Federal Aviation Administration IG, the Inspector General, found that there are nearly 15,000 pieces of equipment and material that employees may not be able to locate. The combined value of that missing property is over \$32.5 million.

To make matters worse, the IG report states that the FAA division that essentially lost \$32.5 million worth of equipment doesn't even have the authority to hold employees accountable. Not a bad job, right? It is as if they are saying don't worry: If you mess up, if you do something illegal, fraudulent, or you are just sloppy you're not responsible, if you don't know where the equipment is, if you don't keep track of it, you will not have to be accountable for that lost equipment.

No American business could function this way and stay solvent. But walk back an employee there and say: "What happened to the new laptop that we gave you 6 months ago?"

They would say: "I don't know. I don't know where it is. I need another one."

"That's fine. Don't worry. This happens all the time. We will give you a new one."

On and on it goes. That division of the FAA essentially has lost \$32.5 million worth of equipment, and, again, it doesn't even hold its employees accountable.

We have racked up nearly \$19 trillion of debt in this country. No one can explain how large an amount of money that is. What we do know is that we are continuing to plunge into debt, and we are going to keep doing that. One of the ways we can be more accountable here is what I have just described.

I know my time is running out. With that, I am going to add this week to our accumulating waste \$295.6 million for these unknown, unverified purchases, bringing our total now to \$157.5 billion. It is time to put a stop to this. It is time to enforce these rules and regulations. It is time to be sensitive to the fact that we are wasting hard-earned taxpayers' dollars.

With that, keeping on schedule, I thank my colleague from Minnesota

for the time which she has yielded, and I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. AYOTTE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I come to the floor today to speak in favor of our bill, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator PORTMAN, and the Presiding Officer for their leadership. We have worked together on a bipartisanship basis on this bill from the beginning. Our Nation, as we know, is facing a serious problem with drug addiction, and I am glad to join my colleagues to talk about how we can handle this problem and how we can do something about it.

Earlier in my speech today I referred to a group that I met with in Montevideo, MN, with only a few days' notice. All the doctors in the town showed up. The sheriff, the police chief, and regular constituents poured a bunch of medications on the table to show how much we are seeing in terms of overprescription and how this can so easily get in the wrong hands or turn people into addicts.

I came to this issue first as a prosecutor. I spent 8 years serving as the chief prosecutor in Hennepin County, which includes Minneapolis. Drug cases made up about one-third of our caseload, which meant we handled everything from trafficking and selling to production and manufacturing. From this position, I had an opportunity to see firsthand the devastating impacts of drug addiction. Many of those affected were hooked on opiates, including both heroin and prescription pain medication. But even when I left that office in 1998, I didn't see anything near what we are seeing today. We were starting to see the beginnings of the addiction on prescription drugs, but nothing like we are seeing today. In fact, four out of five heroin users are getting their start by misusing prescription drugs.

We would be sadly mistaken if we thought this was only an urban problem. We know it is a huge problem in our rural areas. In Beltrami County, MN, just this past weekend there were three emergency calls for overdoses. One of those people passed away. That is a rural county in our State on one weekend.

Many of those who have been affected by this epidemic are young people. Over just 6 months in 2013, three people died of opiate overdoses and another three were hospitalized for overdosing on heroin in one 7,000-person town in

Minnesota. These statistics and stories are troubling, and they show why we must focus on both treatment and prevention.

Minnesota is home to Hazelden Betty Ford Addiction Treatment Center. We are proud of the work and the leadership our State shows when it comes to treatment—one of the reasons I got involved in this issue. Hazelden Betty Ford has had impressive success with its comprehensive opiate response program. Their program offers the best of both worlds: lifesaving medicine to help treat the medical causes of addiction, as well as counseling to help people get on the right path.

However, too many people have been unable to get the treatment they need. Almost 10 percent of Americans are estimated to need treatment for issues related to drug and alcohol, but only about 1 percent receives treatment at a specialty facility. That is why my colleagues and I have come together to introduce this bill.

Our bill covers strategies for prevention, evidence-based programs such as strengthening prescription drug monitoring programs—something I worked on with the Presiding Officer. These types of programs help States track data on controlled substances like opioids so that when they are dispensed, they can be a strong, effective tool in making sure that they are used for the right reasons.

This last week I was near the South Dakota border. There were doctors who knew patients were also going into South Dakota to get prescriptions. It was very difficult for them to trace what was going on—which pharmacy they would go to in rural areas. They could drive an hour and go to a different pharmacy, drive another hour and go to a different pharmacy—maybe see a different doctor in South Dakota and maybe check into an emergency room somewhere else. That is going on today in our country.

Another important provision in our bill will help make drugs less accessible by providing consumers with safe and responsible ways to dispose of unused prescription drugs. According to the DEA, more than 2,700 tons of expired, unwanted prescription medications have been collected through these programs since the drug take-back law that we passed in 2010 was put into place. That is a bill I worked on with Senator CORNYN, who is also on the Judiciary Committee with me. It is called the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act. It took a long time for the DEA to get their act together to get the rules up. The rules came up, and guess what. Literally, a few months later, Walgreens has now said they will offer kiosks and places for people to return drugs on a nationwide basis. Right now, we have law enforcement doing it. Minnesota is at the front of the curve. We have some of our libraries taking

these drugs into secure facilities. But the best would be that the places where people got the drugs would also be taking back the drugs. So we are glad that bill has finally helped in that way.

We believe this bill before us today will help even more. We also have in this bill increasing the availability of naloxone, which is used to save lives in emergency overdose situations and a number of things that are going to be helpful going forward. This bill is a framework, but it is an important step forward that the Federal Government is finally saying to the Congress and the Senate that we need to take steps here.

Our bill has the support of a broad range of stakeholders, including the National District Attorneys Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, Faces and Voices of Recovery, and the Major County Sheriffs' Association.

Finally, we must also recognize that combating this kind of drug abuse will require a serious investment of resources. It is for that reason that I have cosponsored Senator SHAHEEN's amendment to appropriate emergency funding to address the heroin and opioid drug abuse epidemic. I am hopeful that the Senate will come together to curb the problem of prescription drug abuse and save lives across our Nation. I am hopeful we will pass the amendment as well as our bill. I think there will be a number of other good amendments that are considered, including medical education and other things that need to be done here.

I see this bill as the beginning and not an end. I think more work is going to have to be done with funding. I think more work is going to have to be done with the prescription drug monitoring. We have a start here. But when people and addicts are crossing State lines, when we have a very difficult situation with trying to regulate where the drugs are and how many are going out—I figure that if a Target in my State can find a pair of shoes in Hawaii with a SKU number, we should be able to figure out if people are getting too many prescription drugs. We should be able to educate our doctors so they are not giving them out in quantities that are too big. These are some of the things I am going to continue working on.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, each of us has taken an oath to support and

defend the Constitution of the United States. President George Washington called the Constitution the guide that he would never abandon. The Constitution declares itself to be the supreme law of the land, and more than 90 percent of Americans say it is very important to them. Unfortunately, basic knowledge about the Constitution is dangerously inadequate. I say this is dangerous because, as James Madison put it, only a well-instructed people can be permanently a free people.

The current debate over when to fill the Supreme Court vacancy left by Justice Antonin Scalia's death only magnifies my concern. Ignorance of not only how the Constitution applies to this question but even what the Constitution says apparently extends far and wide.

Here is the text of the Constitution regarding the appointment of judges and other public officials: The President "shall have Power . . . [to] nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law."

I could hardly read that on the chart from this side here. I should have done it by memory.

The President "shall have Power . . . [to] nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law."

This is what the Constitution actually says, right here for everyone to read. The Constitution gives power to nominate to the President and gives the power of advice and consent to the Senate. It says nothing about how the President and the Senate should exercise their separate powers. In fact, the judicial confirmation process has been conducted in different ways, at different times, and under different circumstances.

Our job is to determine how, under current circumstances, best to exercise our power of advice and consent. Several factors convince me that the best way to do so is to defer the confirmation process for filling this vacancy until the next President takes office.

First, this is only the third Supreme Court vacancy in nearly a century to occur after the American people had already started voting for the next President. In the previous two instances, 1956 and 1968, the Senate did not confirm a nominee until the year after the Presidential election.

Second, the only time the Senate has ever confirmed a nominee to fill a Supreme Court vacancy created after Presidential election voting had begun

was 1916. That vacancy arose only because Justice Charles Evans Hughes resigned to run against President Woodrow Wilson, a completely different situation than we have before us today.

Third, the judicial confirmation process has become increasingly combative, especially for the Supreme Court. Attempting to conduct this process in the middle of an already divisive Presidential election campaign would be especially difficult.

Fourth, President Obama's judicial appointees and Justice Scalia represent two radically different kinds of judge. This offers the American people a unique opportunity to express, through the election, their view of the direction the judiciary should take by electing the President who will make judicial appointments in the next 4 years.

In June 1992, then-Judiciary Committee Chairman JOSEPH BIDEN, a friend of mine, made the very recommendation that we are following today based on some of the very same factors that I just mentioned. In particular, he noted that the appointment process would take place in divided Government during a Presidential election process that was already under way. He could have been describing 2016 instead of 1992.

The Constitution does not mandate a particular process to address this Supreme Court vacancy. We have to look all the way back to the 19th century to find a year in which the Senate confirmed a Supreme Court nominee of the other party in a Presidential election year. That, of course, was long before the courts became as powerful and the confirmation process as confrontational as they are today. Democrats can read the Constitution and understand the historical and political facts as well as anyone else. Why then are they making such bizarre claims?

Last week, for example, the minority whip said that the Constitution requires "a fair hearing and a timely vote." He claimed that this conclusion comes from the plain text of the Constitution. Well, I have the plain text up here, and it clearly says nothing whatsoever about hearings or votes. As I said, the Constitution gives the power to nominate to the President and the power of advise and consent to the Senate and leaves to each the judgment about how to exercise their respective powers.

Last week the Senator from California, Mrs. BOXER, said that deferring the confirmation process would be an abomination. She said that the Constitution's standard for the Senate's advice and consent role does not change with the party of the President making nominations. Yet she voted 25 times to filibuster Republican judicial nominees, including to the Supreme Court. She voted not simply to defer the confirmation process, as we are doing today, but to prevent a confirma-

tion vote from ever taking place. If the confirmation process should not change with the President's party, then she should have no problem with the decision we have made since it is less drastic than the blockade she promoted just a few years ago.

Also last week, an email solicitation signed by one of my Democratic colleagues asking for petition signatures claimed that the Senate has a "fundamental duty to confirm nominees to the Supreme Court." I would like to think this is simply an egregious typographical error because it goes beyond even the false claim that the Constitution requires hearings and a vote. If the Senate has no choice but to confirm a President's nominees, what is the point of giving the Senate a role in the process at all?

I will say it again in the hope of clearing up what should not have been confused in the first place: The Constitution gives to the President the power to nominate and to the Senate the power of advice and consent. These are separate and independent powers, and the Constitution does not mandate any particular way for the President and the Senate to fulfill their responsibilities.

Because this fact is evident on the face of the Constitution, I cannot understand my colleagues who say that the President has a 4-year term. That observation has nothing at all to do with anything before the Senate. The Senate is not doing a single thing and cannot do a single thing to interfere with the President's power to nominate. He can exercise that power in any way he chooses, including sending nominees to the Senate up to his very last day in office. He can do that. Nobody that I know of disputes that. My dispute would be as to whether it is wise to do it right up to the very last day in office, but nobody really disputes that he can exercise that power in any way he chooses, including sending nominees to the Senate up to his very last day in office. What the President cannot do is dictate to the Senate how we exercise our separate power of advice and consent regarding those nominees.

Liberal allies of Senate Democrats are similarly confused. I received a letter signed by liberal groups, for example, claiming that the Constitution requires "timely hearings and votes." It almost sounds like Democratic Senators and leftwing groups are sharing talking points—almost.

Let's look once more at the language of article II. I will refer to the chart. Tell me, where is the language about hearings and votes? I understand that Senate Democrats and their leftist allies want a timely hearing and confirmation vote this year to replace Justice Scalia, but wanting a particular confirmation process and saying the Constitution requires that process are two very different things.

Some of the groups signing that letter—in particular, I noticed the Leadership Conference, the Alliance for Justice, and People for the American Way—actively urged Senators to filibuster the Supreme Court nomination of Samuel Alito. In 2006 they opposed the very confirmation vote that today, just 10 years later, they say the Constitution requires. Democrats and their liberal allies must be reading the same made-up, shape-shifting Constitution that their favorite activist judges use because the real Constitution says no such thing.

Democrats' arguments contradict not only the plain words of the Constitution but also their own words and actions in considering nominees of a Republican President.

As to hearings, then-Chairman PAT LEAHY denied a hearing to nearly 60 judicial nominees in less than 4 years while George W. Bush was President.

As to confirmation votes, the minority leader said in May 2005 that claiming the Constitution requires a confirmation vote would be, in his words, rewriting the Constitution and reinventing reality. That was by the current minority leader. Here is what he said then:

The duties of the United States Senate are set forth in the Constitution of the United States. Nowhere in that document does it say that the Senate has a duty to give Presidential nominees a vote. It says that appointments shall be made with the advice and consent of the Senate. That's very different than saying that every nominee receives a vote.

That was the minority leader, who was then the majority leader. Well, think about that.

The duties of the United States Senate are set forth in the Constitution of the United States. Nowhere in that document does it say that the Senate has a duty to give Presidential nominees a vote. It says that appointments shall be made with the advice and consent of the Senate. That's very different than saying that every nominee receives a vote.

I mentioned one Democratic Senator who voted 25 times to prevent confirmation votes on judicial nominees, as did the minority leader, minority whip, Senator LEAHY, and Senator SCHUMER as well. In fact, Vice President BIDEN himself, when he served in this body, voted 29 times to filibuster Republican judicial nominees. While President Obama today says that the Constitution requires us to vote on a Supreme Court nominee, as a Senator, he, too, voted to prevent any confirmation vote for Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito. In other words, these Senate Democrats voted over and over to deny the very confirmation vote that today they say the Constitution itself requires. They cannot have it both ways. Do we have multiple Constitutions, one to use for a President of your own party and another for the President of another party? Democrats

today have no credibility whatsoever to dictate how the confirmation process should work for filling this Supreme Court vacancy.

The Constitution leaves to the President how to exercise his power to nominate and to the Senate how to exercise its power of advice and consent. Recent claims to the contrary are inconsistent with the plain text of the Constitution and with past words and actions of the very Senators and grassroots activists making those claims today.

The question is when, not whether, to fill the vacancy left by the untimely death of Justice Scalia. The best answer is to defer the confirmation process until after the next President takes office. Far from ignoring or shirking our responsibility, that conclusion tackles our responsibility head-on for the good of the judiciary, the Senate, and the country.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING DEPUTY DEREK GEER

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to honor the life and work of Mesa County Sheriff's Deputy Derek Geer. On Monday, February 8, Deputy Geer was dispatched to a call about an armed individual in a local neighborhood. As members of our law enforcement do every day, Deputy Geer, with courage and care, responded to that call and through the senseless act of another, this son, husband, father, and friend, lost his life.

Deputy Geer served with the Mesa County Sheriff's Office for nearly 15 years. As a veteran of the Navy, his service to others began long before his role as a law enforcement officer. Service and duty to his country and his community exemplified Deputy Geer's selfless concern for others.

As a member of the Sheriff's Department, Deputy Geer served as a victim's advocate, providing support to those enduring some of life's worst difficulties. In every role he held, he always found ways to give even more.

This loss has been felt deeply across Colorado's Western Slope, the communities of the Western Slope, and our State, as we remember a man who exemplified the best of the western spirit—courage and selfless leadership.

The Grand Junction community has come together to support the Geer family and our men and women who nobly protect us each and every day. Members of law enforcement from around the State and around our Nation came to honor the life of Deputy Geer, filling the streets to pay their last respects.

Integrity, service, and community, the values of the Mesa County Sheriff's Department—values carried out since the inception of the organization in 1883—were embodied in the work of Deputy Geer.

The thin blue line represents the men and women in law enforcement protecting the public from those who seek to harm and cause destruction. Our officers do not waiver at the dangerous calls and unknown situations. They face them in this line of duty, and they do so out of a love and loyalty for their neighbors and community.

I am grateful for the work of those at St. Mary's Medical Center who cared for Deputy Geer, as his last act was perhaps the most selfless of all—to give his organs to others in need.

As Mesa County deputies shrouded their badges, we too shared in mourning the loss of Deputy Geer, and we will continue to honor his life and legacy.

My deepest sympathies and prayers go to Derek Geer's family, his two children and his wife Kate.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I, too, would like to extend my condolences to the family in Colorado and to the Senators from Colorado for their loss.

RETURN FROM SPACE OF COMMANDER
SCOTT KELLY

Madam President, I wish to call to the attention of the Senate that tonight, around midnight, we are expecting the return from space of Commander Scott Kelly, who has been in space for almost a year. He has been on the International Space Station for 340 days. It is an experiment regarding not only all of the things he has done in doing experiments—all kinds of physical things—but we are specifically doing a test to compare the effects of zero gravity on the human body for an extended period of time and, of all things, comparing him to his twin brother, an astronaut commander who was in command of the next-to-the-last space shuttle mission in 2011. In that case, it was Commander, now Navy, Retired, Captain Mark Kelly. So we will have an identical twin so NASA can then see the effects of the physical, emotional, and psychological effects, because as we prepare to go all the way to Mars in the decade of the 2030s, there is going to be a lot we are going to have to learn in long-duration space flight, and long duration in zero gravity is going to be one of the things we have to be able to adapt to.

This Senator was only in space for 6 days. The human body readapts when you get back to Earth fairly quickly. For the long duration, and in this case a year, there is going to be a significant readaptation, as we have seen by some of our Americans who have been

up for months and months but nobody as long as a year.

In the old Soviet program, they put up cosmonauts for a year, and there are changes that occur, but in those intervening years we have become so much more aggressive in how we keep in a physical exercise activity on board the space station, which is what it would be on a Mars mission as well, trying to replicate through stress machines the fact that we don't have gravity, but replicating that, and trying to keep up the bone density and the muscle tone. We have to work at it, and the astronauts on board the space station do that.

Scott Kelly has been up there for a year, and we will compare that with his identical twin brother Mark Kelly, who has flown several times in the space shuttle.

I will report to the Senate tomorrow, since he is supposed to return in early morning to Kazakhstan. That is somewhere just before midnight here on eastern time, and I wanted to alert the Senate to this because we are right on the cusp of doing a whole number of things as we prepare to go to Mars. This is certainly one of the significant events, and we will see how Scott Kelly is doing.

In the meantime, we say Godspeed on his fiery reentry into the Earth's atmosphere. Our hopes and our prayers go with him as he and his crewmates return. I will be able to report to the Senate tomorrow.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here to deliver my climate remarks, but I wish to thank the Senator from Florida for his description of what is happening up in space and what our fellow Americans have achieved. One of the unforgettable moments of my time in the Senate has been to hear Senator NELSON's description of the events that led up to his space flight, the experience of his space flight, and, frankly, the spiritual nature of the events and the effects on his life. It has been impressive, and I am honored to serve with Senator NELSON.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. President, as the Presiding Officer knows, this is my 129th "Time to Wake Up" speech to my colleagues about the serious threat of carbon pollution and our responsibility as Senators to heed that threat and to take steps to soften the blow of climate change. With each passing week, the evidence of climate change continues to mount and public understanding of the stakes of the climate crisis continues to grow.

Worldwide, 2015 was the hottest year since we began keeping records back in 1880, according to both NOAA and NASA. The last 5 years have been the

warmest 5-year period on record since the World Meteorological Association. We know the amount of carbon in the Earth's atmosphere has risen to its highest level in at least 800,000 years—probably several millions of years but at least 800,000 years. Global sea levels are rising along our shores at their fastest rate in nearly 3,000 years. The current rate of change in ocean acidity is already faster than at any time in the past 50 million years. Our oceans are acidifying more rapidly than they have at any time in 50 million years. We measure that from the geologic record.

The American people get it. They understand that climate change is real. More than three out of every four Americans believe that climate change is occurring and that doing nothing to reduce future warming will cause a very or somewhat serious problem for the United States—three out of four. Even the majority of Republicans now acknowledge global warming, with 59 percent saying the climate is changing. When asked, do you think that the world's climate is undergoing a change that is causing more extreme weather patterns and the rise of sea levels, 70 percent said yes.

The American people have an extraordinarily diverse and qualified array of expertise supporting those convictions: virtually every major scientific society and agency, our American military and national security and intelligence officials, leading American companies, doctors, and faith leaders.

So the truth is winning out, right? The polluters' campaign of deception and misinformation has been thwarted, right? Well, wrong. They are still at it.

A network of fossil fuel-backed front organizations with innocent sounding names still propagates counterfeit science in an attempt to cast doubt on the actual American scientific consensus. This network of polluter-paid deceit and denial has been well documented by Dr. Robert Brulle at Drexel University, Dr. Justin Farrell at Yale University, Dr. Riley Dunlap at Oklahoma State University, and others. Dr. Brulle's follow-the-money analysis, for instance, diagrams the complex flow of cash to these front groups—a flow that the polluters persistently try to obscure. Dr. Farrell's quantitative analysis of words written by climate denial organizations revealed a complex climate denial apparatus that is "overtly producing and promoting skepticism and doubt about scientific consensus on climate change." "Doubt is their product" is the famous phrase.

Dr. Constantine Boussalis at Trinity College and Dr. Travis Coan at the University of Exeter released a new study in December examining more than 16,000 documents from 19 conservative think tanks over the period 1998 to 2013 and found "little support for the claim that the era of science denial is over—

instead, discussion of climate science has generally increased over the sample period."

Their study demonstrates that in spite of the broken global heat records over the last decade, rising sea levels, and accelerated melting of polar ice sheets, these conservative think tanks have, in recent years, actually increased their polluter-paid attacks on science.

The study explains these think tanks "provide a multitude of services to the cause of climate change skepticism." These include: offering material support and lending credibility to contrarian scientists sponsoring pseudoscientific climate change conferences, directly communicating contrarian viewpoints to politicians—which is how we get infected here—and disseminating skeptic viewpoints out through the media.

It follows a playbook of fraudulent deception that we have seen before from industrial powers fighting to obscure the harms their products cause, tobacco being a fine example.

In 2002, the conservative strategist Frank Luntz summed up the scheme in a memo to the Republican Party, since leaked, titled "Straight Talk." Here is what Mr. Luntz said:

Should the public come to believe that the scientific issues are settled, their views about global warming will change accordingly. Therefore, you need to continue to make the lack of scientific certainty a primary issue in the debate . . . The scientific debate is closing [against us]—

He said back in 2002—

but not yet closed. There is still a window of opportunity to challenge the science.

This is the climate science version of the infamous 1969 tobacco industry memo that declared that "Doubt is our product."

In her recent book "Dark Money," Jane Mayer describes in-depth the means by which fossil fuel interests put their wealth to use exerting outsized influence on our American political process. First, she describes, they invest in intellectuals who come up with ideas friendly to the industry. Then they invest in think tanks to transform these ideas into "marketable policies"—stuff they think they can sell. As one environmental lawyer explains, "You take corporate money and give it to a neutral-sounding think tank" which "hires people with pedigrees and academic degrees who put out credible-seeming studies. But they all coincide perfectly with the economic interests of their funders." Ms. Mayor describes this as the "think tank as disguised political weapon."

Not surprisingly, think tanks in the climate denial scheme tend to be funded by fossil fuel interests like ExxonMobil and the Koch brothers or their fronts. The Kochs and their ilk use dark money channels to funnel money through a labyrinth of non-

profit groups that make the full extent of their meddling difficult, if not impossible, to fully determine. The Boussalis and Coan study identifies the Heartland Institute as a particularly important cog in the polluter-funded climate denial apparatus. According to their study:

Heartland's shift towards science-related themes . . . dovetails with Luntz's famous "Straight Talk" memo. It is therefore not a surprise that for a decade it has organized the annual International Conference on Climate Change (also known as Denial-a-Palooza), which serves as a forum for climate science deniers, or that it [Heartland] made headlines in 2012 after launching a controversial ad campaign which equated climate scientists with Ted Kaczynski, the Unabomber.

Climate scientists, such as the ones who work at NASA and NOAA, are being equated with Ted Kaczynski, the Unabomber—very responsible behavior by Heartland, but Heartland gets big bucks from the fossil fuel industry and its front groups for this service.

Unfortunately, that is not all. Behind this well-paid conspiracy to fool the American public, which is failing, is a related political effort, which is not. The polluters are losing with the American public, but they still control Congress. Huge sums of dark money are spent on politics, particularly right here in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

As NYU law professor Burt Neuborne has written, "rivers of money flowing from secret sources have turned our elections into silent auctions."

How huge are these rivers of money? Each election sets new records. In the 2012 Presidential cycle, the nonpartisan Center for Responsible Politics reported that dark money groups spent over \$300 million, with over 80 percent of it coming from Republican-leaning outfits.

The torrent of dark money flooded the 2014 midterm elections, making them the most expensive midterm elections in American history. According to the Washington Post, at least 31 percent of all independent spending in that election came from groups not required to disclose their donors—dark money. That doesn't even count spending on so-called issue ads, which is also not reported.

In this 2016 election cycle, dark money spending has broken new records again. These dark money groups, according to the Center for Responsive Politics, "are more integrated into campaigns than we've seen in the past." The Koch brothers' political network alone has vowed to spend \$750 million this election cycle. They are through \$400 million already and climbing. And the \$750 million they have vowed to spend is more than the Bush and Kerry campaigns combined spent in 2004.

In our political debate, dark money dollars drown out the voices of average citizens with what has been aptly

called “a tsunami of slime.” All that money is not spent for nothing. As one secret corporate donor exulted, “We can fly under the radar screen. . . . There are no limits, no restrictions, and no disclosure.” The result stinks, and it is polluting our public discourse.

The sad part is that it is working. Not one Republican Senator will stand up and address climate change in a meaningful way. I have a bill modeled on what conservative economists and the out-of-office Republican officials who are willing to address climate change all recommend as their solution. I did it their way—not a single cosponsor.

In the Presidential primary, it is even worse. One leading candidate has actually declared that “the concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing noncompetitive.” Tell that to NOAA, NASA, the U.S. Navy, and every single American National Laboratory. It is a preposterous statement offered by a person who presents himself as qualified to be President of the United States.

Another candidate—this one, I am sad to say, a Senate colleague—simply shrugs and says, “Climate is always changing.” No, not like this. And if you don’t believe me, ask NOAA, NASA, the U.S. Navy, and every single American National Laboratory.

Yet another candidate who is also a Senator dismissed the solid American scientific consensus on climate change as “partisan dogma and ideology.” Tell that to the scientists at NOAA, NASA, the Navy, and every single one of our National Laboratories, that what they are doing is not legitimate science, but it is partisan dogma and ideology. Again, that is a preposterous remark, but they have to say those things because the big fossil fuel money is so powerful in that primary race that they don’t dare cross them.

The powerful fossil fuel interests have created a beautiful situation. They no longer care which candidate wins the primary because they have schooled them all to climate denial. That is the achievement of dark money, and it is an achievement that is disgracing our democracy and will darken our reputation for decades. Its effect is that we do nothing—exactly what the big polluters want, exactly what the big polluters paid for. It is just sickening what these secretive special interests and their dirty dark money are doing to our American democracy.

It is time to wake up, Mr. President. I thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WHOLE WOMAN’S HEALTH V. HELLERSTEDT

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, tomorrow the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in the case Whole Woman’s Health v. Hellerstedt. The central issue of this case is an attack by the State of Texas on women’s health and the clinics that provide abortion services.

I wish to begin by stating clearly that in our country women have a constitutionally protected right to make their own choices about their bodies. That is the law of the land, as guaranteed to women in Oregon and nationwide by the Supreme Court in *Roe v. Wade*.

The 2013 Texas law at the heart of this case, HB2, is a thinly veiled attempt to block women’s choice by setting unjustifiable and burdensome requirements on the doctors and clinics that offer abortion care. Despite what HB2 supporters say, it doesn’t have anything to do with protecting women’s health. And the reality is, complications from abortion procedures are exceedingly rare. In fact, the numbers show that abortion care is far safer than colonoscopies. Yet Texas law doesn’t go out of its way to impose comparable requirements on facilities providing colonoscopies. HB2 unfairly targets women’s health clinics.

To make this point directly, I wish to briefly quote from an amicus brief filed by the trusted experts on these matters at the American Medical Association and the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, among others. Their briefs said that the requirements imposed by the State of Texas “are contrary to accepted medical practice and are not based on scientific evidence.” The brief continued: “They fail to enhance the quality or safety of abortion-related medical care and, in fact, impede women’s access to such care by imposing unjustified and medically unnecessary burdens on abortion providers.”

HB2 tells clinics, “comply with these new requirements, or close.” So in the months since the law passed, the number of clinics that provides such services has, in fact, plummeted across the State. According to reports, if HB2 is upheld, the total will drop by more than three-quarters. Texas, obviously, is a big State, and under HB2 many women are going to have to travel for hours on end to exercise a right guaranteed to them by the U.S. Constitution. The fact is, a lot of working women don’t have the luxury of taking a day off or cannot afford a long and expensive trip to a faraway clinic. In effect, women are going to be denied care.

You are going to hear people on both sides of the aisle say again and again how vital it is that Americans have access to medical treatment and advice from doctors they know and trust. But

HB2 flatly denies many women that protection.

I personally find it very troubling that HB2 has become a blueprint for similar restrictive laws around the Nation, bills that masquerade as women’s health safety measures. For example, the State of Louisiana now has a nearly identical law on its books.

In January, 162 of my congressional colleagues and I wrote the following in an amicus brief filed with the Supreme Court: “A woman’s right to decide whether to carry a pregnancy to term or to seek critical medical services, including abortion, should be insulated from the shifting political rhetoric and interest groups whose sole purpose is to erode the right to choose to bring a pregnancy to term afforded to women under *Roe*.”

So here is my bottom line: A limit on the exercise of a woman’s right is a limit on the right itself. It is wrong and it is un-American to restrict a person’s right because it conflicts with your own views. Texas HB2 should be struck down. The rights guaranteed to women following *Roe v. Wade* ought to be protected, just as all the others that are guaranteed by the Constitution. My hope is that this ongoing crusade against women’s health care, which I have spoken about repeatedly on the floor of this Senate, ought to end here, and it ought to end now.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION, 2016—TAIWAN

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, on January 16, 2016, the people of Taiwan went to the polls and elected Dr. Tsai Ing-wen as the next President of Taiwan, with 56.2 percent of the vote. The 2016 Presidential election marked the sixth direct election of the President and Vice President of Taiwan, and the first time a woman has been elected as head of Taiwan’s Government. Dr. Tsai’s party, the Democratic Progressive Party, also won 68 seats of the 113-

member Legislative Yuan for an outright majority in that body. I congratulate Dr. Tsai and her party for their victories and new responsibilities.

This election represents a significant change in Taiwan's political landscape, with important implications for the U.S.-Taiwan relationship. I urge the administration to express its clear support for Taiwan and its vibrant democracy.

As part of the 2016 Taiwan Presidential and legislative elections, an international election observation mission made up of 18 observers from 10 countries visited Taiwan at the invitation of the Taiwan Nation Alliance and the International Committee for a Democratic Taiwan. After the elections, the mission submitted its final report on the elections, concluding that they were free and fair. I ask unanimous consent that the summary of that report be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

OBSERVATIONS BY THE INTERNATIONAL
ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION, 2016

1. INTRODUCTION

From January 12-17, 2016, a group of eighteen observers from 10 countries (see the attached list of members) visited Taiwan at the invitation of the Taiwan Nation Alliance (TNA) and the International Committee for a Democratic Taiwan (ICDT). They formed an International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) to observe the election campaign for the January 16th 2016 Presidential and Legislative elections in Taiwan.

At the completion of their mission on the day after the elections, the members of the IEOM expressed appreciation to the organizers of the visit, and encouraged them to continue in their efforts to strengthen Taiwan's democracy, so that it can be shared with other countries in the region and around the world. In addition, as the IEOM conducted their mission, it greatly appreciated the willingness of candidates, party representatives, and government representatives to meet with them.

During the IEOM, the group visited locations in Taipei, Kaohsiung, and Taichung, meeting with various representatives of the two main political parties: Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), as well as of two smaller parties—the People's First Party (PFP) and New Power Party (NPP). They also observed political rallies, street campaigns, and activities at several polling stations and the Central Election Commission counting center on Election Day.

2. THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE IEOM WERE AS
FOLLOWS:

It congratulated the people of Taiwan and its newly-elected president Dr. Tsai Ing-wen on the achievement of this major milestone in Taiwan's history, the consolidation of many decades of hard work and dedication by the Taiwanese people.

And it stated that:

a. The vibrancy of the sixth direct presidential election further confirms that Taiwan has left its authoritarian past behind it, and has grown into a fully democratic society featuring the institutionalization of fundamental freedoms, comprehensive electoral procedures, and sound democratic practices.

b. In our view, these elections were free and fair, though there were media reports of irregularities such as vote buying in locations such as Hsinchu, Chiayi and Taitung. However, these have not affected the overall outcome of the elections.

c. After such elections it is key that all sides of the political spectrum in the country respect the democratic choice of the people, and work together to make Taiwan a better place for all.

d. It is also essential that other nations respect the results of the elections as the free choice of the people of Taiwan, and work with the newly-elected leadership to establish a sustainable, long-term peace and stability in the region.

e. The impending third transfer of executive power, as well as the first parliamentary majority for the opposition, are opportunities for further deepening and consolidation of Taiwan's democracy.

MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ELECTION
OBSERVATION MISSION

Head of Mission: Frank Murkowski, former Senator and Governor of Alaska

UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Julian Baum, former correspondent for the Far Eastern Economic Review and the Christian Science Monitor

Stephen Bryen, former Deputy Undersecretary of Defense

June Teufel Dreyer, Professor of Political Science, University of Miami

William A. Stanton, former Director of the American Institute in Taiwan, Taipei

Stephen M. Young, former Director of the American Institute in Taiwan, Taipei

Charles Burton, Professor at Brock University, Canada

Michael Stainton, President, Taiwanese Human Rights Association of Canada

EUROPE

Stéphane Corcuff, Professor of Political Science, University of Lyon, France

Jens Damm, Professor of Political Science, University of Tübingen, Germany

Michael Danielsen, Chairman, Taiwan Corner, Denmark

Bruno Kauffman, President, Initiative and Referendum Institute, Europe

Vincent Rollet, French Centre for Research on Contemporary China, Taiwan

Gerrit van der Wees, editor, Taiwan Communiqué, the Netherlands

ASIA & AUSTRALIA

Bruce Jacobs, Retired Professor of Political Science, Monash University, Australia

Akihisa Nagashima, Member House of Representatives (Diet), Japan

Tadae Takubo, Vice President, Japan Institute for National Fundamentals, Japan

Sim Tze Tzin, Member of Parliament, Malaysia

NATIONAL EYE DONOR MONTH

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, today I wish to honor March 2016 as National Eye Donor Month, an event first celebrated by President Reagan in 1983 and one I am proud to commemorate now.

For over 50 years, corneal transplants have restored the vision of those with corneal diseases. Today these procedures are overwhelmingly safe and successful and help reduce the impact of eye disorders on our economy. As a result of higher medical expenses and reduced workforce productivity, eye

disorders are the fifth costliest disease type in the United States.

In total, over 70,000 people receive corneal transplants each year. The largest eye bank in the United States, Eversight, operates two locations in Illinois. These institutions, one in Chicago and one in Bloomington, facilitated over 3,000 transplants in 2015 and provided nearly 1,500 corneas for research and training purposes. Thanks to the 2,700 eye donors in Illinois in 2014 and the thousands of other donors across the country each year, scientists are closer to finding treatments and cures for corneal blindness and many patients no longer suffer from impairment or loss of vision.

On this special occasion, I commend the Eye Bank Association of America and the eye banks across this country for their great work, encourage my colleagues to promote eye donation, and urge all Americans to register to become eye donors.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:15 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1471. An act to reauthorize the programs and activities of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

H.R. 4084. An act to enable civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies by private and public institutions and to expand theoretical and practical knowledge of nuclear physics, chemistry, and materials science.

H.R. 4238. An act to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities.

H.R. 4401. An act to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide countering violent extremism training to Department of Homeland Security representatives at State and local fusion centers, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4444. An act to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices designed to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination from energy conservation standards for external power supplies, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4583. An act to promote a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, each with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S. 1172. An act to improve the process of presidential transition.

S. 1580. An act to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1471. An act to reauthorize the programs and activities of the Federal Emergency Management Agency; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2406. An act to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4401. An act to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide countering violent extremism training to Department of Homeland Security representatives at State and local fusion centers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4583. An act to promote a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, March 1, 2016, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 238. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to authorize the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to issue oleoresin capicum spray to officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4524. A communication from the Director of the Budget and Program Management Staff, Agricultural Research Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Changes to Fees and Payment Methods" (RIN0518-AA05) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4525. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Cotton and Tobacco Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Classification of Foreign-Growth Cotton" (Docket No. AMS-CN-15-0051) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4526. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Uniform Procurement Identification" ((RIN0750-AI54) (DFARS Case 2015-D011)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4527. A communication from the Secretary, Division of Trading and Markets, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Security-Based Swap Transactions Connected with a Non-U.S. Person's Dealing Activity That Are Arranged, Negotiated, or

Executed by Personnel Located in a U.S. Branch or Office or in a U.S. Branch or Office of an Agent; Security-Based Swap Dealer De Minimis Exception" (RIN3235-AL05) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4528. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Suspension of Community Eligibility" ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2015-0001)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4529. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Brazos Island Harbor, Texas navigation project; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4530. A communication from the Acting Unified Listing Team Manager, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Interagency Cooperation—Endangered Species Act of 1973, as Amended; Definition of Destruction or Adverse Modification of Critical Habitat" (RIN1018-AX88) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4531. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15-086); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4532. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21-315, "Tip's Way Designation Act of 2016"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4533. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21-316, "LGBTQ Cultural Competency Continuing Education Amendment Act of 2016"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4534. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21-317, "Emery Heights Community Center Designation Act of 2016"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4535. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21-318, "Private Security Camera Incentive Program Temporary Amendment Act of 2016"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4536. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21-319, "Marijuana Possession Decriminalization Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2016"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4537. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21-320, "Certificate of Good Standing Filing Requirement Temporary Amendment Act of 2016"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4538. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Colum-

bia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21-322, "Wage Theft Prevention Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2016"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4539. A communication from the Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Annual Performance Report for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4540. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4541. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21-321, "Presidential Primary Ballot Access Temporary Amendment Act of 2016"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4542. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) Quarterly Report to Congress; First Quarter of Fiscal Year 2016"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. COATS, from the Joint Economic Committee:

Special Report entitled "2016 Economic Report of the President" (Rept. No. 114-218).

By Mr. ROBERTS, from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, without amendment:

S. 2609. An original bill to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a national voluntary labeling standard for bioengineered foods, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2607. A bill to ensure appropriate spectrum planning and interagency coordination to support the Internet of Things; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. COONS):

S. 2608. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to place signage on Federal land along the trail known as the "American Discovery Trail", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. ROBERTS:

S. 2609. An original bill to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a national voluntary labeling standard for bioengineered foods, and for other purposes;

from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry; placed on the calendar.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2610. A bill to approve an agreement between the United States and the Republic of Palau; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. UDALL:

S. 2611. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to replace the Federal Election Commission with the Federal Election Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2612. A bill to ensure United States jurisdiction over offenses committed by United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HATCH, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 2613. A bill to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2614. A bill to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. 2615. A bill to increase competition in the pharmaceutical industry; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

S. Res. 381. A resolution honoring the memory and legacy of Michael James Riddering and condemning the terrorist attacks in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on January 15, 2016; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mrs. ERNST):

S. Res. 382. A resolution congratulating the community colleges of Iowa for 50 years of outstanding service to the State of Iowa, the United States, and the world; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. PERDUE (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. COONS):

S. Res. 383. A resolution recognizing the importance of the United States-Israel economic relationship and encouraging new areas of cooperation; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 297

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DON-

NELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 297, a bill to revive and expand the Intermediate Care Technician Pilot Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 497

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to allow Americans to earn paid sick time so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families.

S. 579

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 579, a bill to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 to strengthen the independence of the Inspectors General, and for other purposes.

S. 700

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 700, a bill to amend the Asbestos Information Act of 1988 to establish a public database of asbestos-containing products, to require public disclosure of information pertaining to the manufacture, processing, distribution, and use of asbestos-containing products in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 740

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 740, a bill to improve the coordination and use of geospatial data.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 1440

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1440, a bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to exclude a loan secured by a non-owner occupied 1- to 4-family dwelling from the definition of a member business loan, and for other purposes.

S. 1479

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 1479, a bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to modify provi-

sions relating to grants, and for other purposes.

S. 1865

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1865, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to eating disorders, and for other purposes.

S. 1911

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 1911, a bill to implement policies to end preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths globally.

S. 1915

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1915, a bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to make anthrax vaccines and antimicrobials available to emergency response providers, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, a bill to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance.

S. 2213

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2213, a bill to prohibit firearms dealers from selling a firearm prior to the completion of a background check.

S. 2216

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2216, a bill to provide immunity from suit for certain individuals who disclose potential examples of financial exploitation of senior citizens, and for other purposes.

S. 2291

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2291, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish procedures within the Department of Veterans Affairs for the processing of whistleblower complaints, and for other purposes.

S. 2361

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2361, a bill to enhance airport security, and for other purposes.

S. 2424

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S.

2424, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

S. 2426

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2426, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

S. 2452

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2452, a bill to prohibit the use of funds to make payments to Iran relating to the settlement of claims brought before the Iran-United States Claims Tribunal until Iran has paid certain compensatory damages awarded to United States persons by United States courts.

S. 2487

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2487, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

S. 2521

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2521, a bill to amend the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to improve the treatment at non-Department of Veterans Affairs facilities of veterans who are victims of military sexual assault, and for other purposes.

S. 2540

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2540, a bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations.

S. 2559

At the request of Mr. BURR, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the Senator from Col-

orado (Mr. GARDNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2559, a bill to prohibit the modification, termination, abandonment, or transfer of the lease by which the United States acquired the land and waters containing Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

S. 2566

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2566, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide sexual assault survivors with certain rights, and for other purposes.

S. 2576

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2576, a bill to permit the Attorney General to authorize a temporary transfer of funds from Department of Justice accounts in the amount necessary to restore Department of Justice Asset Forfeiture Program equitable sharing payments to participating law enforcement agencies.

S. 2579

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2579, a bill to provide additional support to ensure safe drinking water.

S. 2597

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2597, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for treatment of clinical psychologists as physicians for purposes of furnishing clinical psychologist services under the Medicare program.

S. CON. RES. 30

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 30, a concurrent resolution expressing concern over the disappearance of David Sneddon, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

S. RES. 368

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 368, a resolution supporting efforts by the Government of Colombia to pursue peace and the end of the country's enduring internal armed conflict and recognizing United States support for Colombia at the 15th anniversary of Plan Colombia.

S. RES. 378

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 378, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the courageous work and life of Russian opposition leader Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov and renewing the call for a full and transparent investigation into the tragic murder of Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov in Moscow on February 27, 2015.

AMENDMENT NO. 3166

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3166 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3323

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3323 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4470, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act with respect to the requirements related to lead in drinking water, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3345 intended to be proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2610. A bill to approve an agreement between the United States and the Republic of Palau; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I am pleased to join with Senator MARIA CANTWELL and Senator MAZIE HIRONO to introduce legislation to approve the 2010 Agreement between the Governments of the United States and the Republic of Palau following the Compact of Free Association Section 432 Review.

Palau's history with the United States dates back to the Battle of Peleliu, fought between United States

and Japanese forces for over two months with the highest casualty rate of any battle in the Pacific Theater. Following World War II, Palau became a district of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands under the auspices of the United Nations, but administered by the United States. Palau was the last district of the Trust Territory to choose its political future, when in 1994, it became a self-governing, sovereign state and entered into a fifty-year Compact of Free Association with the United States similar to that of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia.

Under the Compact, the United States, through the Department of the Interior, provides economic and financial assistance, defends Palau's territorial integrity, and allows Palauan citizens the opportunity to enter the United States as non-immigrants. In return, the United States receives exclusive and unlimited access to Palau's land and waterways for strategic purposes. U.S. assistance is intended to help Palau develop its infrastructure and economy so that it has a sustainable government and economy capable of functioning without the United States' support. Section 432 of the Compact provides that after the fifteenth, thirtieth, and fortieth anniversaries of the Compact, the United States and Palau shall formally review the terms of the Compact and shall consider the overall nature and development of their relationship, including Palau's operating requirements and its progress in meeting development objectives.

The United States can count on Palau to vote with us on a broad range of issues, including some that are controversial and where we need reliable allies. On a number of important resolutions that have come before the United Nations' General Assembly, Palau stood by us and provided critical votes. For example, in 2014, Palau voted with the United States on 97 percent of votes before the U.N. General Assembly, and Palau voted with the U.S. 90 percent of the time in important votes. From 2011–2013, Palau voted with the United States 100 percent of the time in important votes. Palau has been a steadfast ally of the United States in international forums and we should be mindful of and grateful for their support.

It is also important to recognize that Palau has consistently demonstrated a commitment to the U.S.–Palau partnership under the Compact. Palauan

nationals serve in U.S. coalition missions, participate in U.S.-led combat operations, and have given their lives for the safety of our nation. Approximately 500 Palauan men and women serve as volunteers in our military today, out of a population of about 21,000. Palau is indeed a strong partner who punches well above its weight. We are grateful for their sacrifices and dedication to promoting peace and fighting terrorism. After reviewing the progress achieved by Palau in the first 15 years of the Compact, and with the 13th anniversary coming upon us, the administration is recommending continued assistance, but at lower levels.

This agreement, reached in 2010, has been before Congress in prior years and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has held hearings on the matter. To the best of my knowledge, there is no objection within Congress on the policy of continuing to provide financial assistance to Palau under the Compact of Free Association. The hang-up has been finding a viable offset to pay for that assistance. I would note that since 2010 Congress has provided just over \$13 million in annual discretionary funding to the Government of Palau in lieu of the Agreement's enactment—a total of over \$90 million in that timeframe. At the same time, the administration has failed to identify an acceptable offset for a cost that is now just under \$150 million over 10 years.

For such a steadfast ally, partner, and friend, whose citizens serve in our Armed Forces for the protection of our nation, and whose government supports the United States' position on critical issues in international forums, we should be able to come up with a viable funding solution. I call upon the administration to work with Congress on this matter, find an offset, and enact the 2010 Agreement between the United States and Palau.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter of support be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

FEBRUARY 22, 2016.

Hon. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.,
President of the Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Enclosed is draft legislation to amend Title I of Public Law 99–658 (100 Stat 3672), regarding the Compact of Free Association between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Palau (Compact). This legislation would approve and implement the results of

the mandated 15-year review of the Compact, as well as the Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Palau (Compact Review Agreement), signed on September 3, 2010. We strongly urge this draft bill be introduced, referred appropriately, and passed in Congress at the earliest opportunity.

The relationship between the United States and Palau, as embodied in the Compact, is grounded in shared history, friendship, and a strong partnership in national security, especially with respect to the Asia-Pacific region. In the Battle of Peleliu, in Palau, more than 1,500 American servicemen lost their lives, and more than 8,000 were wounded, resulting in one of the costliest battles in the Pacific in World War II. After the war, the United States assumed administrative authority over Palau as part of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and in 1994 Palau became a sovereign nation in free association with the United States under the Compact of Free Association. The Compact provides U.S. military forces full authority and responsibility for security and defense matters in or relating to Palau. Conversely, the United States has the extraordinary advantage of being able to deny other nations' military forces access to Palau, an important element of our Pacific strategy for defense of the U.S. homeland.

In addition to the important historical and security relationship, Palau has consistently demonstrated a commitment to the U.S.–Palau partnership under the Compact. Palauan nationals have served in U.S. coalition missions and participated in U.S. led combat operations. Palauan citizens volunteer in large numbers in the U.S. military. Since September 11, 2001, seven Palauans have lost their lives in combat. At the United Nations, Palau has voted with the United States more than 95 percent of the time, including on key foreign policy issues.

The Compact has seen the goal of self-governance and democracy in Palau realized. However, to bolster this progress and maintain stability in the region, we must now help to ensure Palau's financial independence. By approving the Compact Review Agreement, the pending legislation would extend U.S. assistance through 2024, helping to meet and achieve this critical goal. Under the agreement, Palau has committed to undertake economic, legislative, financial, and management reforms. Additionally, this agreement assures the United States can withhold economic assistance in the absence of significant further progress in implementing meaningful reforms.

The Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 requires that the cumulative effects of revenue and direct spending legislation in a congressional session meet a pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) requirement. In total, such legislation should not increase the on-budget deficit; if it does, it would produce a sequestration if it is not fully offset by the end of the congressional session. This draft bill would increase mandatory outlays and the on-budget deficit as shown below:

	FISCAL YEARS								
	[Dollars in millions]								
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Deficit Impact	46	26	20	17	15	14	6	5	149

This proposal would increase direct spending, and it is therefore subject to the Statu-

tory PAYGO Act and should be considered in conjunction with all other proposals that are

subject to the Act. Approving the results of the Agreement is important to the national

security of the United States, stability in the Western Pacific region, our bilateral relationship with Palau, and to the United States' broader strategic interests in the Asia-Pacific region. We stand ready, as always, to provide you with any information and assistance necessary to help secure the passage of this legislation.

Sincerely,

SALLY JEWELL,
*Secretary, Department
of the Interior.*

HEATHER HIGGINBOTTOM,
*Deputy Secretary for
Management and
Resources, Depart-
ment of State.*

ROBERT O. WORK,
*Deputy Secretary, De-
partment of Defense.*

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2612. A bill to ensure United States jurisdiction over offenses committed by United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last year, I hailed the signing of a new agreement between the United States and Canada designed to improve cross-border travel, commerce and security between our two countries. Secretary Johnson of the Department of Homeland Security was joined in Washington by Canada's Minister of Public Safety, Steven Blaney, for the signing of that new preclearance agreement, which was negotiated under the Beyond the Border Action Plan.

Preclearance facilities allow travelers to pass through U.S. Customs and Border Protection, CBP, inspections in Canada, prior to traveling to the United States. Preclearance operations relieve congestion at U.S. destination airports, facilitate commerce, save money, and strengthen national security. The United States currently stations CBP officers in select locations in Canada to inspect passengers and cargo bound for the United States before departing Canada. The new agreement signed in March 2015 will lead to expanded U.S. preclearance facilities in Canada in the marine, land, air and rail sectors.

However, the Department of Homeland Security requires specific, narrowly tailored legislation to fully implement the new agreement. CBP Officers assigned to preclearance locations operate with law enforcement authorities and immunities as agreed upon by the United States and the host country's government. Under the new preclearance agreement with Canada, the United States secured the right to prosecute U.S. officials if they commit crimes on the job while stationed in Canada—and thereby preclude a prosecution by Canadian prosecutors. But in some cases, the United States may

lack the legal authority to prosecute U.S. officials because many federal crimes do not have extraterritorial reach. The Promoting Travel, Commerce and National Security Act of 2016, which I am proud to introduce today with Senator MURKOWSKI, would ensure that the United States has the legal authority to hold our own officials accountable if they engage in wrongdoing abroad in Canada. This legislation will allow for full implementation of the expanded Canada preclearance agreement.

Enacting this legislation will promote two key national goals: enhancing our national security, and creating a more efficient flow of travelers and goods. By placing CBP personnel at the point of departure, screening occurs before a person boards a flight, increasing our ability to prevent those who should not be flying to the United States from doing so. In 2014, preclearance stopped more than 10,000 inadmissible travelers worldwide before they left foreign soil. As Secretary Johnson has said, "We have to push our homeland security out beyond our borders so that we are not defending the homeland from the one-yard line." At the same time, preclearance facilitates travel and trade.

I am pleased that a bipartisan coalition in the House of Representatives, led by Representatives ELISE STEFANIK and ANN KUSTER, will also introduce companion legislation today as well. And I am grateful for the support of Senators SCHUMER, JOHNSON, HEITKAMP, SHAHEEN, CANTWELL, MURRAY and GILLIBRAND for this important legislation. I hope with this bipartisan, bicameral support, this simple, straightforward enabling legislation will be enacted this year.

In Vermont, we look to our Canadian neighbors as partners in trade and commerce, and as joint stewards of our shared communities. While both nations strive to ensure that the border is secure, the ties between Canada and Vermont run deep. We rely on each other for trade, commerce, and tourism. And many Vermont families have members on both sides of the border. This agreement has long been a dream for Vermonters who have fond memories of taking the train north to Montreal to enjoy all that this vibrant cultural hub offers. It is also a win for visitors from Canada's largest cities who love to come to Vermont to ski, shop and dine. I commend Secretary Johnson for his commitment to forging this agreement that will greatly benefit Vermont and the United States. I look forward to enacting this legislation into law so that these projects can move forward.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HATCH, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 2613. A bill to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam

Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, we have all heard accounts of innocent children being victimized and abused by predators. Today I will introduce legislation to extend two of the key programs that Congress established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006. With today's legislation, I hope to send a strong message to all Americans about Congress' continued commitment to keeping our Nation's children safe.

Many of us here in the Senate worked very hard on the original version of the Adam Walsh Act, which is named for a six year-old who was tragically murdered in 1981. President George W. Bush signed that legislation on the 25th anniversary of Adam Walsh's abduction from a Florida shopping mall. I am pleased that Senators HATCH, SCHUMER, and FEINSTEIN—who cosponsored the Senate version of that legislation when it was first introduced in the 109th Congress—have joined me as original cosponsors of today's legislation.

John Walsh, the father of Adam Walsh, worked closely with us on the development of the 2006 Adam Walsh Act, and we worked with him on the development of today's legislation as well. Reauthorization of the Adam Walsh Act is a priority for him and has the support of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

The Adam Walsh Act was enacted in response to multiple, notorious cases involving children who had been targeted by adult criminals, many of them repeat sex offenders. Its passage became a national priority after Congress discovered that criminals were taking advantage of gaps and loopholes in some States' laws to circumvent sex offender registration requirements—with tragic results for some of the nation's children.

Who can forget Jetseta Gage—a beautiful 10-year-old girl from Cedar Rapids, Iowa who was sexually assaulted and murdered by a registered sex offender in 2005? As a cosponsor of the Senate version of the Adam Walsh Act, I championed the inclusion in the 2006 law of language imposing mandatory minimum penalties for those who murder, kidnap, or inflict serious bodily harm to children like Jetseta.

Of course, the centerpiece of the Adam Walsh Act is the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act, or SORNA. SORNA divides sex offenders into three categories, or tiers, depending on the seriousness of their crimes. It encourages States to set minimum criteria for the registration of sex offenders in each tier, with the aim of discouraging "forum shopping" by offenders who prey on children.

The Adam Walsh Act also established several programs that are key to its

successful implementation. One such program, known as SOMA, or the Sex Offender Management Assistance Program, makes federal grant resources available to states to offset the costs of Walsh Act implementation. Today's legislation would extend the authorization for that program, which expired 8 years ago.

The federal government, through the U.S. Marshals Service, also supports States and localities in tracking down sex offenders who fail to register or re-register. Those fugitive apprehension activities were authorized under the 2006 Adam Walsh Act, and today's legislation would extend the authorization for those U.S. Marshals Service activities at \$60 million annually for each of the next 2 years.

Nothing can bring back Adam Walsh, Jetseta Gage, Dru Sjodin, Megan Kanka, or the other innocents for whom the Adam Walsh Act was passed. But it is important that we continue to not only honor their memories but also protect America's future children from harm by extending the key programs that were authorized under the original Adam Walsh Act. The authorization for these programs expired at least 7 years ago.

According to the Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics, there are about a hundred thousand people convicted of sexual violence offenses in state prisons, and hundreds of thousands more who currently reside in neighborhoods across the United States. As a father of five and the grandfather of 9, I believe we should continue to make sex offender registration and notification a priority.

Mr. President, July 27 of this year will mark the 35th anniversary of Adam Walsh's abduction. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the passage of this important legislation before that date elapses.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2614. A bill to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today Senators SCHUMER, TILLIS and I will introduce legislation to help America's families locate missing loved ones who have Alzheimer's disease, autism or related conditions that may cause them to wander. Our bill would extend existing programs designed to assist in locating Alzheimer's disease and dementia patients. It also adds new support for people with autism.

We have named the legislation in honor of two boys with autism who per-

ished because their condition caused them to wander. One of these children, nine-year-old Kevin Curtis Wills, slipped into Iowa's Raccoon River near a park and tragically drowned in 2008. The other, 14-year-old Avonte Oquendo, wandered away from his school and drowned in New York City's East River several years ago.

Theirs are not isolated cases. We have all read or heard the heart-breaking stories of families frantically trying to locate a missing loved one whose condition caused him or her to wander off.

We have also seen benefits of notification systems to locate missing children and bring relief to families through community assistance. Our bill will use similar concepts and other technology to help locate people with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia as well as children with autism spectrum disorders who may be prone to wander away from their families or caregivers.

My home State of Iowa has the fifth highest Alzheimer's death rate in America, according to the Alzheimer's Association. As further noted by the Alzheimer's Association, which we consulted on this bill's development, as many as one in three seniors will die with a form of dementia. About 63,000 Iowans are living with Alzheimer's disease.

In 2014, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released information on the incidence of autism in this country. The CDC identified 1 in 68 children as having autism spectrum disorders. Experts tell us that, in Iowa alone, about 8,000 individuals have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders, and we worked closely with the Autism Society of Iowa on the development of this bill.

Because police often are the first people to respond when a child goes missing, the bill also will make resources available to equip first responders and other community officials with the training necessary to better prevent and respond to these cases. With better information sharing, communities can play a central role in reuniting these children with their families.

Finally, the bill will ensure that grants from the U.S. Department of Justice also can be used by state and local law enforcement agencies and nonprofits for education and training programs to proactively prevent and locate missing individuals with these conditions. The grants will facilitate the development of training and emergency protocols for school personnel, supply first responders with additional information and resources, and make local tracking technology programs available for individuals who may wander from safety because of their condition. Grant funding may also be used to establish or enhance notification

and communications systems for the recovery of missing children with autism.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 381—HONORING THE MEMORY AND LEGACY OF MICHAEL JAMES RIDDERING AND CONDEMNING THE TERRORIST ATTACKS IN OUAGADOUGOU, BURKINA FASO ON JANUARY 15, 2016

Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. KIRK) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 381

Whereas, on January 15, 2016, terrorists perpetrated heinous attacks at the Splendid Hotel, the Cappuccino Café, and the Yibi Hotel in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, killing 30 innocent civilians from 18 countries, including Burkina Faso, Canada, France, Libya, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Ukraine, and the United States;

Whereas Michael James Riddering was the only citizen of the United States killed in the terrorist attacks on January 15, 2016;

Whereas first responders, including Burkinabe forces, and French and United States security personnel, including personnel of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and of the United States Armed Forces, valiantly and quickly assisted with evacuating civilians trapped in the Splendid Hotel, transporting civilians to safe locations, and supporting the military of Burkina Faso in securing the area around the Splendid Hotel;

Whereas Michael James Riddering resided in Yako, Burkina Faso, was born in Chicago, Illinois, and was raised in Fort Lauderdale, Florida;

Whereas Michael James Riddering was a graduate of Fort Lauderdale Christian High School;

Whereas Michael James Riddering was a businessman, a boat builder, and a missionary who led an orphanage, a school, and a women's crisis center in Burkina Faso, and was a father, son, husband, brother, and friend;

Whereas Michael James Riddering and his wife, Amy, worked as a part of a team that cared for over 400 orphaned children and provided direct assistance to disenfranchised widows in Burkina Faso;

Whereas Michael James Riddering was in the capital, Ouagadougou, of Burkina Faso on January 15, 2016, to meet a group of missionaries who had arrived from Florida to volunteer for 10 days at the compound that he and his wife, Amy, ran in the city of Yako; and

Whereas the people of the United States stand united with the family, friends, and colleagues of Michael James Riddering to support the individuals touched by his life or affected by his death and to pray for healing, understanding, and peace: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) strongly condemns the terrorist attacks in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on January 15, 2016;

(2) honors the memory of Michael James Riddering, the United States citizen who was

killed in the terrorist attack on the Capuccino Café on January 15, 2016, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso;

(3) recognizes and honors the dedication of Michael James Riddering, who moved halfway across the world to work with orphans and widows in order to help them improve their lives and to contribute to their communities;

(4) extends sincere condolences and prayers to—

(A) the family, friends, and colleagues of Michael James Riddering, particularly his wife, Amy, and their children, Haley, Delaney, Biba, and Moise; and

(B) the individuals touched by the life of Michael James Riddering, including the dedicated aid workers, missionaries, and volunteers that continue to selflessly engage in important humanitarian and development efforts; and

(5) pledges to continue to work to counter violent extremism, including through education and community development, in the United States and abroad.

SENATE RESOLUTION 382—CONGRATULATING THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF IOWA FOR 50 YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE STATE OF IOWA, THE UNITED STATES, AND THE WORLD

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mrs. ERNST) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 382

Whereas Senate File 550 in the Iowa State Senate, which provided for the establishment and operation of area community colleges in Iowa, was signed into law by Governor Harold Hughes on June 7, 1965, creating a new community college system in Iowa;

Whereas each of the community colleges of Iowa was officially designated by the State Board of Education in 1966, including—

(1) Northeast Iowa Community College, North Iowa Area Community College, Northwest Iowa Community College, Iowa Central Community College, Southwestern Community College, and Indian Hills Community College on February 18, 1966;

(2) Hawkeye Community College, the Eastern Iowa Community Colleges, Kirkwood Community College, Des Moines Area Community College, and Iowa Western Community College on March 18, 1966;

(3) the Iowa Valley Community College District on April 29, 1966;

(4) Southeastern Community College on June 2, 1966;

(5) Western Iowa Tech Community College on August 19, 1966; and

(6) Iowa Lakes Community College on October 28, 1966;

Whereas, 50 years later, the community colleges of Iowa have grown to be the largest postsecondary institutions in the State, providing accessible and affordable education to a diverse range of students in Iowa and around the world;

Whereas, 50 years later, the community colleges of Iowa are leaders in delivering college parallel courses and career technical education programs to high schools students in Iowa;

Whereas, 50 years later, the community colleges of Iowa provide opportunities in adult literacy and basic education to low-skilled workers, immigrants, and refugees;

Whereas, 50 years later, the workforce of Iowa has nearly 25,000,000 credit hours and more than 138,000,000 contact hours of past and present community college training;

Whereas, 50 years later, the community colleges of Iowa lead the response to the specific workforce needs of communities in Iowa, including the ability for Iowa businesses to compete in global markets; and

Whereas, 50 years later, the community colleges of Iowa are the leaders in providing skills training for high-demand, high-paying, high-skilled occupations and career enhancement opportunities for Iowa workers: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates and commends the community colleges of Iowa for 50 years of—

(A) developing and sustaining accessible and quality higher education opportunities for all Iowans; and

(B) service to Iowa and the United States; and

(2) requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to—

(A) the Board Chair of the Iowa Association of Community College Trustees; and

(B) the Chair of the Iowa Association of Community College Presidents.

SENATE RESOLUTION 383—RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES-ISRAEL ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP AND ENCOURAGING NEW AREAS OF COOPERATION

Mr. PERDUE (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. COONS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 383

Whereas the deep bond between the United States and Israel is exemplified by its many facets, including the robust economic and commercial relationship;

Whereas, on April 22, 2015, the United States celebrated the 30th anniversary of its free trade agreement with Israel, which was the first free trade agreement entered into by the United States;

Whereas the United States-Israel Free Trade Agreement established the Joint Committee to facilitate the agreement and collaborate on efforts to increase bilateral cooperation and investment;

Whereas, since the signing of this agreement, two-way trade has multiplied tenfold to over \$40,000,000,000 annually;

Whereas Israel is the third largest importer of United States goods in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region after Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, despite representing only 2 percent of the region's population;

Whereas nearly half of all investment in the United States from the MENA region comes from Israel;

Whereas Israel has more companies listed on the NASDAQ Stock Exchange than any other country except for the United States and China;

Whereas, in 1956, the United States-Israel Education Foundation was established to administer the Fulbright Program in Israel, and has facilitated the exchange of nearly 3,300 students between the United States and Israel since its inception;

Whereas, in 1972, the United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation (BSF) was established to promote scientific relations be-

tween the United States and Israel by supporting collaborative research projects in basic and applied scientific fields, and has generated investments of over \$480,000,000 to over 4,000 projects since its inception;

Whereas Binational Science Foundation grant recipients have included 43 Nobel Laureates, 19 winners of the Albert Lasker Medical Research Award, and 38 recipients of the Wolf Prize;

Whereas, in 1977, the United States-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation (BIRD) was established to stimulate, promote, and support non-defense industrial research and development of mutual benefit to both countries in agriculture, communications, life sciences, electronics, electro-optics, energy, healthcare information technology, homeland security, software, water, and other technologies, and has provided over \$300,000,000 to over 700 joint projects since its inception;

Whereas recent successful BIRD projects include the ReWalk system that helps paraplegics walk, a medical teaching simulator for Laparoscopic Hysterectomies, and a new drug to treat chronic gout;

Whereas, in 1978, the United States-Israel Binational Agricultural Research and Development Fund was established as a competitive funding program for mutually beneficial, mission-oriented, strategic and applied research of agricultural problems conducted jointly by United States and Israeli scientists, and has provided over \$250,000,000 to over 1,000 projects since its inception;

Whereas an independent review of the United States-Israel Binational Agricultural Research and Development Fund (BARD) estimated that the dollar benefits of just 10 of its projects through 2010 came to \$440,000,000 in the United States and \$300,000,000 in Israel, far exceeding total investment in the program;

Whereas, in 1984, the United States and Israel began convening the Joint Economic Development Group (JEDG) to regularly discuss economic conditions and identify new opportunities for collaboration;

Whereas, in 1994, the United States-Israel Science and Technology Foundation (USISTF) was established to promote the advancement of science and technology for mutual economic benefit and has developed joint research and development programs that reach 12 States;

Whereas the United States-Israel Innovation Index (USI3), which was developed by USISTF to track and benchmark innovation relationships, ranks the United States-Israel innovation relationship as top-tier;

Whereas, in 2007, the United States-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation (BIRD) Energy program was established to provide support for joint United States-Israel research and development of renewable energy and energy efficiency, and has provided \$18,000,000 to 20 joint projects since its founding;

Whereas, since 2011, the United States Department of Energy and the Israeli Ministry of National Infrastructures, Energy and Water Resources have led an annual United States-Israel Energy Meeting with participants across government agencies to facilitate bilateral cooperation in that sector;

Whereas, in 2012, Congress passed and President Barack Obama signed into law the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-150), which set United States policy to expand bilateral cooperation across the spectrum of civilian sectors, including high technology, agriculture, medicine, health, pharmaceuticals, and energy;

Whereas, in 2013, President Obama said in reference to Israel's contribution to the global economy, "That innovation is just as important to the relationship between the United States and Israel as our security cooperation.";

Whereas, in 2014, Secretary of the Treasury Jacob Lew said, "As one of the most technologically-advanced and innovative economies in the world, Israel is an important economic partner to the United States.";

Whereas the 2014 Global Venture Capital Confidence Survey ranked the United States and Israel as the two countries with the highest levels of investor confidence in the world;

Whereas, in 2014, Congress passed and President Obama signed into law the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-296), which deepened cooperation on energy, water, agriculture, trade, and defense, and expressed the sense of Congress that Israel is a major strategic partner of the United States; and

Whereas economic cooperation between the United States and Israel has also thrived at the State and local levels through both formal agreements and bilateral organizations in over 30 States that have encouraged new forms of cooperation in fields such as water conservation, cybersecurity, and alternative energy and farming technologies: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) affirms that the United States-Israel economic partnership has achieved great tangible and intangible benefits to both countries and is a foundational component of the strong alliance;

(2) recognizes that science and technology innovation present promising new frontiers for United States-Israel economic cooperation, particularly in light of widespread drought, cybersecurity attacks, and other major challenges impacting the United States;

(3) encourages the President to regularize and expand existing forums of economic dialogue with Israel and foster both public and private sector participation; and

(4) expresses support for the President to explore new agreements with Israel, including in the fields of energy, water, agriculture, medicine, neurotechnology, and cybersecurity.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3351. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3352. Mrs. CAPITO (for herself and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3353. Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3354. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3355. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3356. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the

bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3357. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3358. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3359. Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. SANDERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3360. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3361. Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3362. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3363. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3364. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3365. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3366. Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3367. Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. Kaine, and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3368. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3369. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3370. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3371. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3372. Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. ENZI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3373. Mrs. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3374. Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3375. Mr. REID (for Mrs. McCASKILL (for herself and Mr. BLUNT)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3376. Mr. Kaine (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3377. Mr. KING submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3378. Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3379. Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3380. Mr. TESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3381. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. PAUL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3382. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3383. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3384. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3385. Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. PETERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3351. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 48, line 19, insert after "community organizations" the following: ", and nonprofit organizations that demonstrate the capacity to provide recovery services to veterans,".

SA 3352. Mrs. CAPITO (for herself and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 705. MEDICAID PROVIDER PARTICIPATION CERTIFICATION FOR FACILITIES TREATING INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR OF AGE WITH NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME.

(a) GUIDELINES FOR CERTIFICATION FOR PARTICIPATION UNDER MEDICAID STATE PLANS OF CERTAIN FACILITIES TREATING INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR OF AGE WITH NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary of Health and Human

Services shall establish guidelines, in accordance with paragraph (2), for State agencies and recognized national listing or accrediting bodies to follow for purposes of certifying a residential pediatric recovery center as qualifying for a provider agreement for participation under a State plan under the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.). Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a residential pediatric recovery center may satisfy the requirements set forth in such guidelines, in lieu of any comparable requirements otherwise applicable to such a center for purposes of certification for participation under such a State plan.

(2) **GUIDELINES DESCRIBED.**—The guidelines established under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) provide for physical environment requirements and other necessary requirements specifically applicable to treating individuals who are under 1 year of age with the diagnosis of neonatal abstinence syndrome without any other significant medical risk factors; and

(B) take into account that certain physical environment requirements, and any other requirements, needed for centers or facilities treating adults may not be necessary for centers or facilities treating individuals described in subparagraph (A).

(3) **RESIDENTIAL PEDIATRIC RECOVERY CENTER.**—For purposes of this section, the term “residential pediatric recovery center” means a center or facility that furnishes items and services to infants who are under 1 year of age with the diagnosis of neonatal abstinence syndrome without any other significant medical risk factors and mothers of such infants.

(b) **STATE LAW LICENSURE OF CERTAIN FACILITIES SATISFIES CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in the case of a State that recognizes and licenses residential pediatric recovery centers (as defined in subsection (a)(3)), such a center that is licensed, in accordance with such State law, shall be treated as satisfying any comparable requirements otherwise applicable to such a center for purposes of certification for participation under the State plan under the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.).

(c) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that residential pediatric recovery centers (as defined in subsection (a)(3)) should offer counseling and other services to mothers (and other appropriate family members and caretakers) of infants receiving treatment at such centers. Such services may include the following:

- (1) Counseling or referrals for services.
- (2) Activities to encourage mother-infant bonding.
- (3) Training on caring for such infants.
- (4) Activities to encourage transparency of relevant State mandatory reporting requirements.

SA 3353. Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . PRESCRIPTIONS.

Section 309(a) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 829(a)) is amended—

(1) by inserting “(1) IN GENERAL.—” before “Except”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) **PARTIAL FILLING OF PRESCRIPTIONS.**—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A prescription for a controlled substance in schedule II may be partially filled if—

“(i) it is requested by—

“(I) the practitioner that wrote the prescription by making a notation on the face of the written prescription, in the written record of the emergency oral prescription, or in the electronic prescription record; or

“(II) the patient;

“(ii) the pharmacist partially filling the prescription makes a notation of the partial filling and records it in the same manner as a filling of the prescription, in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Attorney General;

“(iii) the pharmacist partially filling the prescription updates the record each time the prescription is partially filled;

“(iv) the total quantity dispensed in all partial fillings does not exceed the total quantity prescribed; and

“(v) the partial filling is not prohibited under the law of the State in which it occurs.

“(B) **REMAINING PORTIONS.**—Remaining portions of a partially filled prescription—

“(i) may be filled; and

“(ii) must be exhausted not later than 30 days after the date on which the prescription is issued, except in the case of a partially filled emergency prescription, the remaining portions of which must be exhausted not later than 72 hours after the prescription is issued.”.

SA 3354. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . OPIOID PRESCRIPTION GUIDELINES.

Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shall issue guidelines for the safe prescribing of opioids for the treatment of acute pain.

SA 3355. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 705. COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES STUDY ON VETERANS TREATMENT COURTS AND VETERANS JUSTICE OUTREACH PROGRAM.

(a) **STUDY AND REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) complete a study on the effectiveness of Veterans Treatment Courts and the Veterans Justice Outreach Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(2) submit to Congress a report on the findings of the Comptroller General with respect to the study completed under paragraph (1).

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—As part of the study required by subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall assess the following:

(1) The extent to which Veterans Treatment Courts—

(A) provide a benefit to veterans with a mental illness or substance abuse problem; and

(B) provide timely access to services furnished by the Veterans Health Administration.

(2) The number of Veterans Treatment Courts in operation.

(3) The number of Veterans Treatment Courts in the process of being established.

(4) Whether there are sufficient numbers of Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists assigned, under the Veterans Justice Outreach Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to Veterans Treatment Courts.

(5) The number of veterans assigned to each Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist that is assigned to a Veterans Treatment Court.

(6) Whether having additional Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists will allow veterans to better access services furnished by the Veterans Health Administration and will allow for the establishment of additional Veterans Treatment Courts.

SA 3356. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . STUDY ON DRUG TRAFFICKING.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study and submit a report to Congress on the impact that the trafficking of narcotics, specifically opioids and methamphetamine, through States that border Mexico has on substance abuse of narcotics by the residents of such States.

SA 3357. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE MONITORING PROGRAM.

(a) **AMENDMENT TO NATIONAL ALL SCHEDULE PRESCRIPTION REPORTING ACT OF 2005.**—Paragraph (1) of section 2 of the National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-60) is amended to read as follows:

“(1) foster the establishment of State-administered controlled substance monitoring systems in order to ensure that—

“(A) health care providers have access to the accurate, timely prescription history information that they may use as a tool for the early identification of patients at risk for addiction in order to initiate appropriate medical interventions and avert the tragic

personal, family, and community consequences of untreated addiction; and

“(B) appropriate law enforcement, regulatory, and State professional licensing authorities have access to prescription history information for the purposes of investigating drug diversion and prescribing and dispensing practices of errant prescribers or pharmacists; and”.

(b) AMENDMENTS TO PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ACT.—Section 3990 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g-3) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “or”;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) to maintain and operate an existing State-controlled substance monitoring program.”;

(2) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

“(b) MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall maintain and, as appropriate, supplement or revise (after publishing proposed additions and revisions in the Federal Register and receiving public comments thereon) minimum requirements for criteria to be used by States for purposes of clauses (ii), (v), (vi), and (vii) of subsection (c)(1)(A).”;

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(i) in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking “(a)(1)(B)” and inserting “(a)(1)(B) or (a)(1)(C)”;

(ii) in clause (i), by striking “program to be improved” and inserting “program to be improved or maintained”;

(iii) by redesignating clauses (iii) and (iv) as clauses (iv) and (v), respectively;

(iv) by inserting after clause (ii), the following:

“(iii) a plan to apply the latest advances in health information technology in order to incorporate prescription drug monitoring program data directly into the workflow of prescribers and dispensers to ensure timely access to patients’ controlled prescription drug history.”;

(v) in clause (iv) (as so redesignated), by inserting before the semicolon the following: “and at least one health information technology system such as electronic health records, health information exchanges, and e-prescribing systems”; and

(vi) in clause (v) (as so redesignated), by striking “public health” and inserting “public health or public safety”;

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking “If a State that submits” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If a State that submits”;

(ii) by inserting before the period at the end “and include timelines for full implementation of such interoperability. The State shall also describe the manner in which it will achieve interoperability between its monitoring program and health information technology systems, as allowable under State law, and include timelines for the implementation of such interoperability”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) MONITORING OF EFFORTS.—The Secretary shall monitor State efforts to achieve interoperability, as described in subparagraph (A).”;

(C) in paragraph (5)—

(i) by striking “implement or improve” and inserting “establish, improve, or maintain”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following: “The Secretary shall redistribute any funds

that are so returned among the remaining grantees under this section in accordance with the formula described in subsection (a)(2)(B).”;

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “In implementing or improving” and all that follows through “(a)(1)(B)” and inserting “In establishing, improving, or maintaining a controlled substance monitoring program under this section, a State shall comply, or with respect to a State that applies for a grant under subparagraph (B) or (C) of subsection (a)(1)”; and

(ii) by striking “public health” and inserting “public health or public safety”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) The State shall report on interoperability with the controlled substance monitoring program of Federal agencies, where appropriate, interoperability with health information technology systems such as electronic health records, health information exchanges, and e-prescribing, where appropriate, and whether or not the State provides automatic, real-time or daily information about a patient when a practitioner (or the designee of a practitioner, where permitted) requests information about such patient.”;

(5) in subsections (e), (f)(1), and (g), by striking “implementing or improving” each place it appears and inserting “establishing, improving, or maintaining”;

(6) in subsection (f)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B) by striking “misuse of a schedule II, III, or IV substance” and inserting “misuse of a controlled substance included in schedule II, III, or IV of section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) EVALUATION AND REPORTING.—Subject to subsection (g), a State receiving a grant under subsection (a) shall provide the Secretary with aggregate data and other information determined by the Secretary to be necessary to enable the Secretary—

“(A) to evaluate the success of the State’s program in achieving its purposes; or

“(B) to prepare and submit the report to Congress required by subsection (k)(2).

“(4) RESEARCH BY OTHER ENTITIES.—A department, program, or administration receiving nonidentifiable information under paragraph (1)(D) may make such information available to other entities for research purposes.”;

(7) by striking subsection (k);

(8) by redesignating subsections (h) through (j) as subsections (i) through (k), respectively;

(9) in subsections (c)(1)(A)(iv) and (d)(4), by striking “subsection (h)” each place it appears and inserting “subsection (i)”;

(10) by inserting after subsection (g) the following:

“(h) EDUCATION AND ACCESS TO THE MONITORING SYSTEM.—A State receiving a grant under subsection (a) shall take steps to—

“(1) facilitate prescriber and dispenser use of the State’s controlled substance monitoring system; and

“(2) educate prescribers and dispenser on the benefits of the system both to them and society.”;

(11) in subsection (k)(2)(A), as redesignated—

(A) in clause (ii), by striking “or affected” and inserting “, established or strengthened initiatives to ensure linkages to substance use disorder services, or affected”; and

(B) in clause (iii), by striking “including an assessment” and inserting “between controlled substance monitoring programs and

health information technology systems, and including an assessment”;

(12) in subsection (1)(1), by striking “establishment, implementation, or improvement” and inserting “establishment, improvement, or maintenance”;

(13) in subsection (m)(8), by striking “and the District of Columbia” and inserting “, the District of Columbia, and any commonwealth or territory of the United States”; and

(14) by amending subsection (n), to read as follows:

“(n) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To carry out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated \$7,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.”.

SA 3358. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 38, line 19, strike “other clinically appropriate services,” and insert “other clinically appropriate services and through the establishment of treatment centers that operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to provide access to behavioral health treatment.”.

SA 3359. Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. SANDERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. ____ GAO REPORT REGARDING NALOXONE.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on—

(1) the increase in the price of naloxone over the 5 years preceding the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) the impact of such price increase on the ability of States and local health departments to reduce the number of deaths due to opioid overdose.

SA 3360. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE ____—DEMOCRACY RESTORATION ACT

SEC. ____ 1. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Democracy Restoration Act of 2016”.

SEC. ____ 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The right to vote is the most basic constitutive act of citizenship. Regaining the right to vote reintegrates individuals with criminal convictions into free society, helping to enhance public safety.

(2) Article I, section 4, of the Constitution grants Congress ultimate supervisory power

over Federal elections, an authority which has repeatedly been upheld by the United States Supreme Court.

(3) Basic constitutional principles of fairness and equal protection require an equal opportunity for citizens of the United States to vote in Federal elections. The right to vote may not be abridged or denied by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, gender, or previous condition of servitude. The 13th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 24th, and 26th Amendments to the Constitution empower Congress to enact measures to protect the right to vote in Federal elections. The 8th Amendment to the Constitution provides for no excessive bail to be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

(4) There are 3 areas where discrepancies in State laws regarding criminal convictions lead to unfairness in Federal elections—

(A) the lack of a uniform standard for voting in Federal elections leads to an unfair disparity and unequal participation in Federal elections based solely on where a person lives;

(B) laws governing the restoration of voting rights after a criminal conviction vary throughout the country and persons in some States can easily regain their voting rights while in other States persons effectively lose their right to vote permanently; and

(C) State disenfranchisement laws disproportionately impact racial and ethnic minorities.

(5) Two States do not disenfranchise individuals with criminal convictions at all (Maine and Vermont), but 48 States and the District of Columbia have laws that deny convicted individuals the right to vote while they are in prison.

(6) In some States disenfranchisement results from varying State laws that restrict voting while individuals are under the supervision of the criminal justice system or after they have completed a criminal sentence. In 35 States, convicted individuals may not vote while they are on parole and 31 of those States disenfranchise individuals on felony probation as well. In 11 States, a conviction can result in lifetime disenfranchisement.

(7) Several States deny the right to vote to individuals convicted of certain misdemeanors.

(8) An estimated 5,850,000 citizens of the United States, or about 1 in 40 adults in the United States, currently cannot vote as a result of a felony conviction. Of the 5,850,000 citizens barred from voting, only 25 percent are in prison. By contrast, 75 percent of the disenfranchised reside in their communities while on probation or parole or after having completed their sentences. Approximately 2,600,000 citizens who have completed their sentences remain disenfranchised due to restrictive State laws. In 6 States—Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Virginia—more than 7 percent of the total population is disenfranchised.

(9) In those States that disenfranchise individuals post-sentence, the right to vote can be regained in theory, but in practice this possibility is often granted in a non-uniform and potentially discriminatory manner. Disenfranchised individuals must either obtain a pardon or an order from the Governor or an action by the parole or pardon board, depending on the offense and State. Individuals convicted of a Federal offense often have additional barriers to regaining voting rights.

(10) State disenfranchisement laws disproportionately impact racial and ethnic minorities. Eight percent of the African-Amer-

ican population, or 2,000,000 African-Americans, are disenfranchised. Given current rates of incarceration, approximately 1 in 3 of the next generation of African-American men will be disenfranchised at some point during their lifetime. Currently, 1 of every 13 African-Americans are rendered unable to vote because of felony disenfranchisement, which is a rate 4 times greater than non African-Americans. 7.7 percent of African-Americans are disenfranchised whereas only 1.8 percent of non African-Americans are. In 3 States—Florida (23 percent), Kentucky (22 percent), and Virginia (20 percent)—more than 1 in 5 African-Americans are unable to vote because of prior convictions.

(11) Latino citizens are disproportionately disenfranchised based upon their disproportionate representation in the criminal justice system. If current incarceration trends hold, 17 percent of Latino men will be incarcerated during their lifetimes, in contrast to less than 6 percent of non-Latino White men. When analyzing the data across 10 States, Latinos generally have disproportionately higher rates of disenfranchisement compared to their presence in the voting age population. In 6 out of 10 States studied in 2003, Latinos constitute more than 10 percent of the total number of persons disenfranchised by State felony laws. In 4 States (California, 37 percent; New York, 34 percent; Texas, 30 percent; and Arizona, 27 percent), Latinos were disenfranchised by a rate of more than 25 percent.

(12) Disenfranchising citizens who have been convicted of a criminal offense and who are living and working in the community serves no compelling State interest and hinders their rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

(13) State disenfranchisement laws can suppress electoral participation among eligible voters by discouraging voting among family and community members of disenfranchised persons. Future electoral participation by the children of disenfranchised parents may be impacted as well.

(14) The United States is the only Western democracy that permits the permanent denial of voting rights for individuals with felony convictions.

SEC. 3. RIGHTS OF CITIZENS.

The right of an individual who is a citizen of the United States to vote in any election for Federal office shall not be denied or abridged because that individual has been convicted of a criminal offense unless such individual is serving a felony sentence in a correctional institution or facility at the time of the election.

SEC. 4. ENFORCEMENT.

(a) ATTORNEY GENERAL.—The Attorney General may, in a civil action, obtain such declaratory or injunctive relief as is necessary to remedy a violation of this title.

(b) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A person who is aggrieved by a violation of this title may provide written notice of the violation to the chief election official of the State involved.

(2) RELIEF.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), if the violation is not corrected within 90 days after receipt of a notice under paragraph (1), or within 20 days after receipt of the notice if the violation occurred within 120 days before the date of an election for Federal office, the aggrieved person may, in a civil action, obtain declaratory or injunctive relief with respect to the violation.

(3) EXCEPTION.—If the violation occurred within 30 days before the date of an election for Federal office, the aggrieved person need not provide notice to the chief election offi-

cial of the State under paragraph (1) before bringing a civil action to obtain declaratory or injunctive relief with respect to the violation.

SEC. 5. NOTIFICATION OF RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS.

(a) STATE NOTIFICATION.—

(1) NOTIFICATION.—On the date determined under paragraph (2), each State shall notify in writing any individual who has been convicted of a criminal offense under the law of that State that such individual has the right to vote in an election for Federal office pursuant to the Democracy Restoration Act of 2016 and may register to vote in any such election.

(2) DATE OF NOTIFICATION.—

(A) FELONY CONVICTION.—In the case of such an individual who has been convicted of a felony, the notification required under paragraph (1) shall be given on the date on which the individual—

(i) is sentenced to serve only a term of probation; or

(ii) is released from the custody of that State (other than to the custody of another State or the Federal Government to serve a term of imprisonment for a felony conviction).

(B) MISDEMEANOR CONVICTION.—In the case of such an individual who has been convicted of a misdemeanor, the notification required under paragraph (1) shall be given on the date on which such individual is sentenced by a State court.

(b) FEDERAL NOTIFICATION.—

(1) NOTIFICATION.—Any individual who has been convicted of a criminal offense under Federal law shall be notified in accordance with paragraph (2) that such individual has the right to vote in an election for Federal office pursuant to the Democracy Restoration Act of 2016 and may register to vote in any such election.

(2) DATE OF NOTIFICATION.—

(A) FELONY CONVICTION.—In the case of such an individual who has been convicted of a felony, the notification required under paragraph (1) shall be given—

(i) in the case of an individual who is sentenced to serve only a term of probation, by the Assistant Director for the Office of Probation and Pretrial Services of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts on the date on which the individual is sentenced; or

(ii) in the case of any individual committed to the custody of the Bureau of Prisons, by the Director of the Bureau of Prisons, during the period beginning on the date that is 6 months before such individual is released and ending on the date such individual is released from the custody of the Bureau of Prisons.

(B) MISDEMEANOR CONVICTION.—In the case of such an individual who has been convicted of a misdemeanor, the notification required under paragraph (1) shall be given on the date on which such individual is sentenced by a court established by an Act of Congress.

SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this title:

(1) CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION OR FACILITY.—The term “correctional institution or facility” means any prison, penitentiary, jail, or other institution or facility for the confinement of individuals convicted of criminal offenses, whether publicly or privately operated, except that such term does not include any residential community treatment center (or similar public or private facility).

(2) ELECTION.—The term “election” means—

(A) a general, special, primary, or runoff election;

(B) a convention or caucus of a political party held to nominate a candidate;

(C) a primary election held for the selection of delegates to a national nominating convention of a political party; or

(D) a primary election held for the expression of a preference for the nomination of persons for election to the office of President.

(3) **FEDERAL OFFICE.**—The term “Federal office” means the office of President or Vice President of the United States, or of Senator or Representative in, or Delegate or Resident Commissioner to, the Congress of the United States.

(4) **PROBATION.**—The term “probation” means probation, imposed by a Federal, State, or local court, with or without a condition on the individual involved concerning—

(A) the individual’s freedom of movement;

(B) the payment of damages by the individual;

(C) periodic reporting by the individual to an officer of the court; or

(D) supervision of the individual by an officer of the court.

SEC. 7. RELATION TO OTHER LAWS.

(a) **STATE LAWS RELATING TO VOTING RIGHTS.**—Nothing in this title shall be construed to prohibit the States from enacting any State law which affords the right to vote in any election for Federal office on terms less restrictive than those established by this title.

(b) **CERTAIN FEDERAL ACTS.**—The rights and remedies established by this title are in addition to all other rights and remedies provided by law, and neither rights and remedies established by this title shall supersede, restrict, or limit the application of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 1973 et seq.) or the National Voter Registration Act (42 U.S.C. 1973–gg).

SEC. 8. FEDERAL PRISON FUNDS.

No State, unit of local government, or other person may receive or use, to construct or otherwise improve a prison, jail, or other place of incarceration, any Federal funds unless that person has in effect a program under which each individual incarcerated in that person’s jurisdiction who is a citizen of the United States is notified, upon release from such incarceration, of that individual’s rights under section 3.

SEC. 9. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This title shall apply to citizens of the United States voting in any election for Federal office held after the date of the enactment of this title.

SA 3361. Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ MEDICARE PAYMENT FOR THERAPY SERVICES.

(a) **REPEAL OF THERAPY CAP AND 1-YEAR EXTENSION OF THRESHOLD FOR MANUAL MEDICAL REVIEW.**—Section 1833(g) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395l(g)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking “This subsection” and inserting “Except as provided in paragraph (5)(C)(iii), this subsection”; and

(B) by inserting the following before the period at the end: “or with respect to services furnished on or after the date of enactment of subsection (aa)”;

(2) in paragraph (5)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), in the first sentence, by striking “December 31, 2017” and inserting “the date of enactment of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016”; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(iii) Beginning on the date of enactment of subsection (aa) and ending on the day before the date of the implementation of such subsection, the manual medical review process described in clause (i), subject to subparagraph (E), shall apply with respect to expenses incurred in a year for services described in paragraphs (1) and (3) (including services described in subsection (a)(8)(B)) that exceed the threshold described in clause (ii) for the year.”;

(3) in paragraph (6)(A)—

(A) by striking “December 31, 2017” and inserting “the date of enactment of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016”; and

(B) by striking “2012 through 2017” and inserting “the period beginning on January 1, 2012, and ending on such date of enactment”.

(b) **MEDICAL REVIEW OF OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.**—

(1) **MEDICAL REVIEW OF OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.**—Section 1833 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395l) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(aa) **MEDICAL REVIEW OF OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—

“(A) **PROCESS FOR MEDICAL REVIEW.**—The Secretary shall implement a process for the medical review (as described in paragraph (2)) of outpatient therapy services (as defined in paragraph (10)) and, subject to paragraph (12), apply such process to such services furnished on or after the date that is 12 months after the date of enactment of this subsection, focusing on services identified under subparagraph (B).

“(B) **IDENTIFICATION OF SERVICES FOR REVIEW.**—Under the process, the Secretary shall identify services for medical review, using such factors as the Secretary determines appropriate, which may include the following:

“(i) Services furnished by a therapy provider (as defined in paragraph (10)) who, in a prior period, has had a high claims denial percentage or is less compliant with other applicable requirements under this title.

“(ii) Services furnished by a therapy provider whose pattern of billing is aberrant compared to peers or otherwise has questionable billing practices, such as billing medically unlikely units of services in a day.

“(iii) Services furnished by a therapy provider that is newly enrolled under this title or has not previously furnished therapy services under this part.

“(iv) Services furnished to treat a type of medical condition.

“(v) Services identified by use of the standardized data elements required to be reported under section 1834(t).

“(vi) Services furnished by a therapy provider who is part of a group that includes a therapy provider identified by factors described in this subparagraph.

“(vii) Other services as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(2) **MEDICAL REVIEW.**—

“(A) **PRIOR AUTHORIZATION MEDICAL REVIEW.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to the succeeding provisions of this subparagraph, the Secretary shall use prior authorization medical review for outpatient therapy services furnished to an individual above one or more thresholds established by the Secretary, such as a dollar threshold or a threshold based on other factors.

“(ii) **ENDING APPLICATION OF PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FOR A THERAPY PROVIDER.**—The Secretary shall end the application of prior authorization medical review to outpatient therapy services furnished by a therapy provider if the Secretary determines that the provider has a low denial rate under such prior authorization. The Secretary may subsequently reapply prior authorization medical review to such therapy provider if the Secretary determines it to be appropriate.

“(iii) **PRIOR AUTHORIZATION OF MULTIPLE SERVICES.**—The Secretary shall, where practicable, provide for prior authorization medical review for multiple services at a single time, such as services in a therapy plan of care described in section 1861(p)(2).

“(B) **OTHER TYPES OF MEDICAL REVIEW.**—The Secretary may use pre-payment review or post-payment review for services identified under paragraph (1)(B) that are not subject to prior authorization medical review under subparagraph (A).

“(C) **RELATIONSHIP TO LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES.**—The Secretary may determine that medical review under this subsection does not apply in the case where potential fraud may be involved.

“(3) **REVIEW CONTRACTORS.**—The Secretary shall conduct prior authorization medical review of outpatient therapy services under this subsection using medicare administrative contractors (as described in section 1874A) or other review contractors (other than contractors under section 1893(h) or other contractors paid on a contingent basis).

“(4) **NO PAYMENT WITHOUT PRIOR AUTHORIZATION.**—With respect to an outpatient therapy service for which prior authorization medical review under this subsection applies, the following shall apply:

“(A) **PRIOR AUTHORIZATION DETERMINATION.**—The Secretary shall make a determination, prior to the service being furnished, of whether the service would or would not meet the applicable requirements of section 1862(a)(1)(A).

“(B) **DENIAL OF PAYMENT.**—Subject to paragraph (6), no payment shall be made under this part for the service unless the Secretary determines pursuant to subparagraph (A) that the service would meet the applicable requirements of such section.

“(5) **SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION.**—A therapy provider may submit the information necessary for medical review by fax, by mail, or by electronic means. The Secretary shall make available the electronic means described in the preceding sentence as soon as practicable, but not later than 24 months after the date of enactment of this subsection.

“(6) **TIMELINESS.**—If the Secretary does not make a prior authorization determination under paragraph (4)(A) within 10 business days of the date of the Secretary’s receipt of medical documentation needed to make such determination, paragraph (4)(B) shall not apply.

“(7) **CONSTRUCTION.**—With respect to an outpatient therapy service that has been affirmed by medical review under this subsection, nothing in this subsection shall be construed to preclude the subsequent denial of a claim for such service that does not

meet other applicable requirements under this Act or any other provision of law.

“(8) **BENEFICIARY PROTECTIONS.**—In the case where payment may not be made as a result of application of medical review under this subsection, section 1879 shall apply in the same manner as such section applies to a denial that is made by reason of section 1862(a)(1).

“(9) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—

“(A) **AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary may implement the provisions of this subsection by interim final rule with comment period.

“(B) **ADMINISTRATION.**—Chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, shall not apply to medical review under this subsection.

“(C) **LIMITATION.**—There shall be no administrative or judicial review under section 1869, section 1878, or otherwise of the identification of services for medical review or the process for medical review under this subsection.

“(10) **DEFINITIONS.**—For purposes of this subsection:

“(A) **OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.**—The term ‘outpatient therapy services’ means the following services for which payment is made under section 1848, 1834(g), or 1834(k):

“(i) Physical therapy services of the type described in section 1861(p).

“(ii) Speech-language pathology services of the type described in such section though the application of section 1861(l)(2).

“(iii) Occupational therapy services of the type described in section 1861(p) through the operation of section 1861(g).

“(B) **THERAPY PROVIDER.**—The term ‘therapy provider’ means a provider of services (as defined in section 1861(u)) or a supplier (as defined in section 1861(d)) who submits a claim for outpatient therapy services.

“(11) **FUNDING.**—For purposes of implementing this subsection, the Secretary shall provide for the transfer, from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund under section 1841, of \$35,000,000 to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Program Management Account for each fiscal year (beginning with fiscal year 2016). Amounts transferred under this paragraph shall remain available until expended.

“(12) **SCALING BACK.**—

“(A) **PERIODIC DETERMINATIONS.**—Beginning with 2020, and every two years thereafter, the Secretary shall—

“(i) make a determination of the improper payment rate for outpatient therapy services for a 12-month period; and

“(ii) make such determination publicly available.

“(B) **SCALING BACK.**—If the improper payment rate for outpatient therapy services determined for a 12-month period under subparagraph (A) is 50 percent or less of the Medicare fee-for-service improper payment rate for such period, the Secretary shall—

“(i) reduce the amount and extent of medical review conducted for a prospective year under the process established in this subsection; and

“(ii) return an appropriate portion of the funding provided for such year under paragraph (11).”

(2) **GAO STUDY AND REPORT.**—

(A) **STUDY.**—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on the effectiveness of medical review of outpatient therapy services under section 1833(aa) of the Social Security Act, as added by paragraph (1). Such study shall include an analysis of—

(i) aggregate data on—

(I) the number of individuals, therapy providers, and claims subject to such review; and

(II) the number of reviews conducted under such section; and

(ii) the outcomes of such reviews.

(B) **REPORT.**—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study under subparagraph (A), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines appropriate.

(c) **COLLECTION OF STANDARDIZED DATA ELEMENTS FOR OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.**—

(1) **COLLECTION OF STANDARDIZED DATA ELEMENTS FOR OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.**—Section 1834 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(t) **COLLECTION OF STANDARDIZED DATA ELEMENTS FOR OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.**—

“(1) **STANDARDIZED DATA ELEMENTS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall post on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services a draft list of standardized data elements for individuals receiving outpatient therapy services.

“(B) **CATEGORIES.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—Such standardized data elements shall include information with respect to the following categories, as determined appropriate by the Secretary:

“(I) Functional status.

“(II) Demographic information.

“(III) Diagnosis.

“(IV) Severity.

“(V) Affected body structures and functions.

“(VI) Limitations with activities of daily living and participation.

“(VII) Other categories determined to be appropriate by the Secretary.

“(ii) **ALIGNMENT WITH CATEGORIES FOR REPORTING OF ASSESSMENT DATA UNDER IMPACT.**—The Secretary shall, as appropriate, align the functional status category under subclause (I) of clause (i) and the other categories under subclauses (II) through (VII) of such clause with the categories described in clauses (i) through (vi) of section 1899B(b)(1)(B).

“(C) **SOLICITATION OF INPUT.**—The Secretary shall accept input from stakeholders through the date that is 60 days after the date the Secretary posts the draft list of standardized data elements pursuant to subparagraph (A). In seeking such input, the Secretary shall use one or more mechanisms to solicit input from stakeholders that may include use of open door forums, town hall meetings, requests for information, or other mechanisms determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(D) **OPERATIONAL LIST OF STANDARDIZED DATA ELEMENTS.**—Not later than 120 days after the end of the period for accepting input described in subparagraph (C), the Secretary, taking into account such input, shall post on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services an operational list of standardized data elements.

“(E) **SUBSEQUENT REVISIONS.**—Subsequent revisions to the operational list of standardized data elements shall be made through rulemaking. Such revisions may be based on experience and input from stakeholders.

“(2) **SYSTEM TO REPORT STANDARDIZED DATA ELEMENTS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 18 months after the date the Secretary posts the operational list of standardized data ele-

ments pursuant to paragraph (1)(D), the Secretary shall develop and implement an electronic system (which may be a web portal) for therapy providers to report the standardized data elements for individuals with respect to outpatient therapy services.

“(B) **STAKEHOLDER INPUT.**—The Secretary shall seek input from stakeholders regarding the best way to report the standardized data elements under this subsection.

“(3) **REPORTING.**—

“(A) **FREQUENCY OF REPORTING.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to clauses (ii) and (iii), the Secretary shall specify the frequency of reporting standardized data elements under this subsection.

“(ii) **STAKEHOLDER INPUT.**—The Secretary shall seek input from stakeholders regarding the frequency of the reporting of such data elements.

“(iii) **ALIGNMENT WITH FREQUENCY FOR REPORTING OF ASSESSMENT DATA UNDER IMPACT.**—The Secretary shall, as appropriate, align the frequency of the reporting of such data elements with respect to an individual under this subsection with the frequency in which data is required to be submitted with respect to an individual under the second sentence of section 1899B(b)(1)(A).

“(B) **REPORTING REQUIREMENT.**—Beginning on the date the system to report standardized data elements under this subsection is operational, no payment shall be made under this part for outpatient therapy services furnished to an individual unless a therapy provider reports the standardized data elements for such individual.

“(4) **REPORT ON NEW PAYMENT SYSTEM FOR OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 24 months after the date described in paragraph (3)(B), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the design of a new payment system for outpatient therapy services. The report shall include an analysis of the standardized data elements collected and other appropriate data and information.

“(B) **FEATURES.**—Such report shall consider—

“(i) appropriate adjustments to payment (such as case mix and outliers);

“(ii) payments on an episode of care basis; and

“(iii) reduced payment for multiple episodes.

“(C) **CONSULTATION.**—The Secretary shall consult with stakeholders regarding the design of such a new payment system.

“(5) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—

“(A) **FUNDING.**—For purposes of implementing this subsection, the Secretary shall provide for the transfer, from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund under section 1841, of \$7,000,000 to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Program Management Account for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020. Amounts transferred under this subparagraph shall remain available until expended.

“(B) **ADMINISTRATION.**—Chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, shall not apply to specification of the standardized data elements and implementation of the system to report such standardized data elements under this subsection.

“(C) **LIMITATION.**—There shall be no administrative or judicial review under section 1869, section 1878, or otherwise of the specification of standardized data elements required under this subsection or the system to report such standardized data elements.

“(D) **DEFINITION OF OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES AND THERAPY PROVIDER.**—In this subsection, the terms ‘outpatient therapy

services' and 'therapy provider' have the meaning given those terms in section 1833(aa).''.

(2) SUNSET OF CURRENT CLAIMS-BASED COLLECTION OF THERAPY DATA.—Section 3005(g)(1) of the Middle Class Tax Extension and Job Creation Act of 2012 (42 U.S.C. 1395l note) is amended, in the first sentence, by inserting “and ending on the date the system to report standardized data elements under section 1834(t) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(t)) is implemented,” after “January 1, 2013.”.

(d) REPORTING OF CERTAIN INFORMATION.—Section 1842(t) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395u(t)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) Each request for payment, or bill submitted, by a therapy provider (as defined in section 1833(aa)(10)) for an outpatient therapy service (as defined in such section) furnished by a therapy assistant on or after January 1, 2018, shall include (in a form and manner specified by the Secretary) an indication that the service was furnished by a therapy assistant.”.

SA 3362. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE —TRANSNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFICKING ACT

SEC. 01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Transnational Drug Trafficking Act of 2015”.

SEC. 02. POSSESSION, MANUFACTURE OR DISTRIBUTION FOR PURPOSES OF UNLAWFUL IMPORTATIONS.

Section 1009 of the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21 U.S.C. 959) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively; and

(2) in subsection (a), by striking “It shall” and all that follows and inserting the following: “It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture or distribute a controlled substance in schedule I or II or flunitrazepam or a listed chemical intending, knowing, or having reasonable cause to believe that such substance or chemical will be unlawfully imported into the United States or into waters within a distance of 12 miles of the coast of the United States.

“(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture or distribute a listed chemical—

“(1) intending or knowing that the listed chemical will be used to manufacture a controlled substance; and

“(2) intending, knowing, or having reasonable cause to believe that the controlled substance will be unlawfully imported into the United States.”.

SEC. 03. TRAFFICKING IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS OR SERVICES.

Chapter 113 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 2318(b)(2), by striking “section 2320(e)” and inserting “section 2320(f)”;

and

(2) in section 2320—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

“(4) traffics in a drug and knowingly uses a counterfeit mark on or in connection with such drug.”;

(B) in subsection (b)(3), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “counterfeit drug” and inserting “drug that uses a counterfeit mark on or in connection with the drug”; and

(C) in subsection (f), by striking paragraph (6) and inserting the following:

“(6) the term ‘drug’ means a drug, as defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).”.

SA 3363. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. —. GUIDANCE REGARDING GENERIC DRUGS WITH ABUSE-DETERRENT PROPERTIES.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, shall issue guidance regarding the development and testing of drugs that have abuse-deterrent properties and may be submitted for approval under section 505(j) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355(j)).

SA 3364. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I, insert the following:

SEC. —. SAFE STORAGE OF PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES.

(a) GUIDELINES.—The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shall issue guidelines for health care providers regarding the safe storage of prescription medications in the home.

(b) STUDY AND REPORT.—

(1) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on how individuals who seek treatment, through Federal programs, for opioid abuse or overdose obtain prescription medications.

(2) REPORT.—The Comptroller General shall submit a report containing the results of the study to Congress.

SA 3365. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 101, strike subsection (c)(5) and all that follows through the end of the section, and insert the following:

(5) representatives of hospitals;

(6) representatives of—

(A) pain management professional organizations;

(B) the mental health treatment community;

(C) the addiction treatment community;

(D) pain advocacy groups;

(E) groups with expertise around overdose reversal;

(F) State agencies that manage State prescription drug monitoring programs; and

(G) State agencies that administer grants under subpart II of part B of title XIX of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x–21 et seq.); and

(7) other stakeholders, as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(d) DUTIES.—The task force shall—

(1) not later than 180 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), review, modify, and update, as appropriate, best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, taking into consideration—

(A) existing pain management research;

(B) recommendations from relevant conferences and existing relevant evidence-based guidelines;

(C) ongoing efforts at the State and local levels and by medical professional organizations to develop improved pain management strategies, including consideration of alternatives to opioids to reduce opioid monotherapy in appropriate cases;

(D) the management of high-risk populations, other than populations who suffer pain, who—

(i) may use or be prescribed benzodiazepines, alcohol, and diverted opioids; or

(ii) receive opioids in the course of medical care;

(E) whether the State prescription drug monitoring programs are sufficiently available, functional, and useful to be integrated into the process for prescribing pain medication; and

(F) the Proposed 2016 Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (80 Fed. Reg. 77351 (December 14, 2015)) and any final guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(2) solicit and take into consideration public comment on the practices developed under paragraph (1), amending such best practices if appropriate; and

(3) develop a strategy for disseminating information about the best practices to stakeholders, as appropriate.

(e) LIMITATION.—The task force shall not have rulemaking authority.

(f) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), the task force shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) the strategy for disseminating best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, as reviewed, modified, or updated under subsection (d);

(2) the results of a feasibility study on linking the best practices described in paragraph (1) to receiving and renewing registrations under section 303(f) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(f)); and

(3) recommendations for effectively applying the best practices described in paragraph (1) to improve prescribing practices at medical facilities, including medical facilities of the Veterans Health Administration.

(g) GAO REPORT ON STATE PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAMS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall prepare and submit to Congress a report examining the variations that exist across State prescription drug

monitoring programs. In preparing the report, the Comptroller General shall determine best practices among State prescription drug monitoring programs, and examine State strategies to increase queries to such programs by health care providers. The Comptroller General shall include in the report recommendations about how the best practices may be replicated in other State prescription drug monitoring programs and whether there should be Federal minimum standards in place to facilitate access to, requests for data to, data transmission from, and information exchange among the programs.

SA 3366. Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 4, line 20, after the period insert the following: "As such, in order to stem the tide of heroin coming into the United States, interdiction at the Mexican border must be a priority."

SA 3367. Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . PROGRAMS TO PREVENT PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE UNDER THE MEDICARE PROGRAM.

(a) DRUG MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK BENEFICIARIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1860D-4(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-104(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(5) DRUG MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK BENEFICIARIES.—

"(A) AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH.—A PDP sponsor may establish a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under which, subject to subparagraph (B), the PDP sponsor may, in the case of an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse who is an enrollee in a prescription drug plan of such PDP sponsor, limit such beneficiary's access to coverage for frequently abused drugs under such plan to frequently abused drugs that are prescribed for such beneficiary by a prescriber (or prescribers) selected under subparagraph (D), and dispensed for such beneficiary by a pharmacy (or pharmacies) selected under such subparagraph.

"(B) REQUIREMENT FOR NOTICES.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—A PDP sponsor may not limit the access of an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse to coverage for frequently abused drugs under a prescription drug plan until such sponsor—

"(I) provides to the beneficiary an initial notice described in clause (ii) and a second notice described in clause (iii); and

"(II) verifies with the providers of the beneficiary that the beneficiary is an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse, as described in subparagraph (C)(iv).

"(ii) INITIAL NOTICE.—An initial written notice described in this clause is a notice that provides to the beneficiary—

"(I) notice that the PDP sponsor has identified the beneficiary as potentially being an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse;

"(II) information, when possible, describing State and Federal public health resources that are designed to address prescription drug abuse to which the beneficiary may have access, including substance use disorder treatment services, addiction treatment services, mental health services, and other counseling services;

"(III) a request for the beneficiary to submit to the PDP sponsor preferences for which prescribers and pharmacies the beneficiary would prefer the PDP sponsor to select under subparagraph (D) in the case that the beneficiary is identified as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse as described in clause (iii)(I);

"(IV) an explanation of the meaning and consequences of the identification of the beneficiary as potentially being an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse, including an explanation of the drug management program established by the PDP sponsor pursuant to subparagraph (A);

"(V) clear instructions that explain how the beneficiary can contact the PDP sponsor in order to submit to the PDP sponsor the preferences described in subclause (IV) and any other communications relating to the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries established by the PDP sponsor;

"(VI) contact information for other organizations that can provide the beneficiary with information regarding drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries (similar to the information provided by the Secretary in other standardized notices to part D eligible individuals enrolled in prescription drug plans under this part); and

"(VII) notice that the beneficiary has a right to an appeal pursuant to subparagraph (E).

"(iii) SECOND NOTICE.—A second written notice described in this clause is a notice that provides to the beneficiary notice—

"(I) that the PDP sponsor has identified the beneficiary as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse;

"(II) that such beneficiary has been sent, or informed of, such identification in the initial notice and is now subject to the requirements of the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries established by such PDP sponsor for such plan;

"(III) of the prescriber and pharmacy selected for such individual under subparagraph (D);

"(IV) of, and information about, the right of the beneficiary to a reconsideration and an appeal under subsection (h) of such identification and the prescribers and pharmacies selected;

"(V) that the beneficiary can, in the case that the beneficiary has not previously submitted to the PDP sponsor preferences for which prescribers and pharmacies the beneficiary would prefer the PDP sponsor select under subparagraph (D), submit such preferences to the PDP sponsor; and

"(VI) that includes clear instructions that explain how the beneficiary can contact the PDP sponsor in order to submit to the PDP sponsor the preferences described in subclause (V).

"(iv) TIMING OF NOTICES.—

"(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subclause (II), a second written notice described in clause (iii) shall be provided to the beneficiary on a date that is not less than 30 days after an initial notice described in clause (ii) is provided to the beneficiary.

"(II) EXCEPTION.—In the case that the PDP sponsor, in conjunction with the Secretary, determines that concerns identified through rulemaking by the Secretary regarding the health or safety of the beneficiary or regarding significant drug diversion activities require the PDP sponsor to provide a second notice described in clause (iii) to the beneficiary on a date that is earlier than the date described in subclause (II), the PDP sponsor may provide such second notice on such earlier date.

"(III) FORM OF NOTICE.—The written notices under clauses (ii) and (iii) shall be in a format determined appropriate by the Secretary, taking into account beneficiary preferences.

"(C) AT-RISK BENEFICIARY FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse' means a part D eligible individual who is not an exempted individual described in clause (ii) and—

"(I) who is identified through criteria developed by the Secretary in consultation with PDP sponsors and other stakeholders described in subsection section ____ (g)(2)(A) of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 based on clinical factors indicating misuse or abuse of prescription drugs described in subparagraph (G), including dosage, quantity, duration of use, number of and reasonable access to prescribers, and number of and reasonable access to pharmacies used to obtain such drug; or

"(II) with respect to whom the PDP sponsor of a prescription drug plan, upon enrolling such individual in such plan, received notice from the Secretary that such individual was identified under this paragraph to be an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under a prescription drug plan in which such individual was previously enrolled and such identification has not been terminated under subparagraph (F).

"(ii) EXEMPTED INDIVIDUAL DESCRIBED.—An exempted individual described in this clause is an individual who—

"(I) receives hospice care under this title;

"(II) resides in a long-term care facility, a facility described in section 1905(d), or other facility under contract with a single pharmacy; or

"(III) the Secretary elects to treat as an exempted individual for purposes of clause (i).

"(iii) PROGRAM SIZE.—The Secretary shall establish policies, including the criteria developed under clause (i)(I) and the exemptions under clause (ii)(III), to ensure that the population of enrollees in a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries operated by a prescription drug plan can be effectively managed by such plans.

"(iv) CLINICAL CONTACT.—With respect to each at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse enrolled in a prescription drug plan offered by a PDP sponsor, the PDP sponsor shall contact the beneficiary's providers who have prescribed frequently abused drugs regarding whether prescribed medications are appropriate for such beneficiary's medical conditions.

"(D) SELECTION OF PRESCRIBERS.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—With respect to each at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse enrolled in a prescription drug plan offered by such sponsor, a PDP sponsor shall, based on the preferences submitted to the PDP sponsor by the beneficiary pursuant to clauses (ii)(III) and (iii)(V) of subparagraph (B) if applicable, select—

“(I) one, or, if the PDP sponsor reasonably determines it necessary to provide the beneficiary with reasonable access under clause (ii), more than one, individual who is authorized to prescribe frequently abused drugs (referred to in this paragraph as a ‘prescriber’) who may write prescriptions for such drugs for such beneficiary; and

“(II) one, or, if the PDP sponsor reasonably determines it necessary to provide the beneficiary with reasonable access under clause (ii), more than one, pharmacy that may dispense such drugs to such beneficiary.

“(ii) REASONABLE ACCESS.—In making the selection under this subparagraph, a PDP sponsor shall ensure, taking into account geographic location, beneficiary preference, impact on cost-sharing, and reasonable travel time, that the beneficiary continues to have reasonable access to drugs described in subparagraph (G), including—

“(I) for individuals with multiple residences; and

“(II) in the case of natural disasters and similar emergency situations.

“(iii) BENEFICIARY PREFERENCES.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—If an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse submits preferences for which in-network prescribers and pharmacies the beneficiary would prefer the PDP sponsor select in response to a notice under subparagraph (B), the PDP sponsor shall—

“(aa) review such preferences;

“(bb) select or change the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy for the beneficiary based on such preferences; and

“(cc) inform the beneficiary of such selection or change of selection.

“(II) EXCEPTION.—In the case that the PDP sponsor determines that a change to the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy under item (bb) by the PDP sponsor is contributing or would contribute to prescription drug abuse or drug diversion by the beneficiary, the PDP sponsor may change the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy for the beneficiary. If the PDP sponsor changes the selection pursuant to the preceding sentence, the PDP sponsor shall provide the beneficiary with—

“(aa) at least 30 days written notice of the change of selection; and

“(bb) a rationale for the change.

“(III) TIMING.—An at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse may choose to express their prescriber and pharmacy preference and communicate such preference to their PDP sponsor at any date while enrolled in the program, including after a second notice under subparagraph (B)(iii) has been provided.

“(iv) CONFIRMATION.—Before selecting a prescriber or pharmacy under this subparagraph, a PDP sponsor must notify the prescriber and pharmacy that the beneficiary involved has been identified for inclusion in the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries and that the prescriber and pharmacy has been selected as the beneficiary’s designated prescriber and pharmacy.

“(E) APPEALS.—The identification of an individual as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under this paragraph, a coverage determination made under a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries, and the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy under subparagraph (D) with respect to such individual shall be subject to an expedited reconsideration and appeal pursuant to subsection (h).

“(F) TERMINATION OF IDENTIFICATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop standards for the termination of identification of an individual as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under this paragraph. Under such standards such identification shall terminate as of the earlier of—

“(I) the date the individual demonstrates that the individual is no longer likely, in the absence of the restrictions under this paragraph, to be an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse described in subparagraph (C)(i); or

“(II) the end of such maximum period of identification as the Secretary may specify.

“(ii) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in clause (i) shall be construed as preventing a plan from identifying an individual as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under subparagraph (C)(i) after such termination on the basis of additional information on drug use occurring after the date of notice of such termination.

“(G) FREQUENTLY ABUSED DRUG.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘frequently abused drug’ means a drug that is determined by the Secretary to be frequently abused or diverted and that is—

“(i) a Controlled Drug Substance in Schedule CII; or

“(ii) within the same class or category of drugs as a Controlled Drug Substance in Schedule CII, as determined through notice and comment rulemaking.

“(H) DATA DISCLOSURE.—

“(i) DATA ON DECISION TO IMPOSE LIMITATION.—In the case of an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse (or an individual who is a potentially at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse) whose access to coverage for frequently abused drugs under a prescription drug plan has been limited by a PDP sponsor under this paragraph, the Secretary shall establish rules and procedures to require such PDP sponsor to disclose data, including necessary individually identifiable health information, about the decision to impose such limitations and the limitations imposed by the PDP sponsor under this part.

“(ii) DATA TO REDUCE FRAUD, ABUSE, AND WASTE.—The Secretary shall establish rules and procedures to require PDP sponsors operating a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under this paragraph to provide the Secretary with such data as the Secretary determines appropriate for purposes of identifying patterns of prescription drug utilization for plan enrollees that are outside normal patterns and that may indicate fraudulent, medically unnecessary, or unsafe use.

“(I) SHARING OF INFORMATION FOR SUBSEQUENT PLAN ENROLLMENTS.—The Secretary shall establish procedures under which PDP sponsors who offer prescription drug plans shall share information with respect to individuals who are at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse (or individuals who are potentially at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse) and enrolled in a prescription drug plan and who subsequently disenroll from such plan and enroll in another prescription drug plan offered by another PDP sponsor.

“(J) PRIVACY ISSUES.—Prior to the implementation of the rules and procedures under this paragraph, the Secretary shall clarify privacy requirements, including requirements under the regulations promulgated pursuant to section 264(c) of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (42 U.S.C. 1320d–2 note), related to the sharing of data under subparagraphs (H) and (I) by PDP sponsors. Such clarification shall provide that the sharing of such data shall be considered to be protected health information in accordance with the requirements

of the regulations promulgated pursuant to such section 264(c).

“(K) EDUCATION.—The Secretary shall provide education to enrollees in prescription drug plans of PDP sponsors and providers regarding the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries described in this paragraph, including education—

“(i) provided through the improper payment outreach and education program described in section 1874(a)(h); and

“(ii) through current education efforts (such as State health insurance assistance programs described in subsection (a)(1)(A) of section 119 of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. 1395b–3 note)) and materials directed toward such enrollees.

“(L) CMS COMPLIANCE REVIEW.—The Secretary shall ensure that existing plan sponsor compliance reviews and audit processes include the drug management programs for at-risk beneficiaries under this paragraph, including appeals processes under such programs.”.

(2) INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS.—Section 1860D–4(a)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–104(a)(1)(B)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(v) The drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under subsection (c)(5).”.

(3) DUAL ELIGIBLES.—Section 1860D–1(b)(3)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–101(b)(3)(D)) is amended by inserting “, subject to such limits as the Secretary may establish for individuals identified pursuant to section 1860D–4(c)(5)” after “the Secretary”.

(b) UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS.—Section 1860D–4(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–104(c)), as amended by subsection (a)(1), is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following new subparagraph:

“(E) A utilization management tool to prevent drug abuse (as described in paragraph (5)(A)).”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT TOOL TO PREVENT DRUG ABUSE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A tool described in this paragraph is any of the following:

“(i) A utilization tool designed to prevent the abuse of frequently abused drugs by individuals and to prevent the diversion of such drugs at pharmacies.

“(ii) Retrospective utilization review to identify—

“(I) individuals that receive frequently abused drugs at a frequency or in amounts that are not clinically appropriate; and

“(II) providers of services or suppliers that may facilitate the abuse or diversion of frequently abused drugs by beneficiaries.

“(iii) Consultation with the contractor described in subparagraph (B) to verify if an individual enrolling in a prescription drug plan offered by a PDP sponsor has been previously identified by another PDP sponsor as an individual described in clause (ii)(I).

“(B) REPORTING.—A PDP sponsor offering a prescription drug plan in a State shall submit to the Secretary and the Medicare drug integrity contractor with which the Secretary has entered into a contract under section 1893 with respect to such State a report, on a monthly basis, containing information on—

“(i) any provider of services or supplier described in subparagraph (A)(ii)(II) that is identified by such plan sponsor during the 30-day period before such report is submitted; and

“(ii) the name and prescription records of individuals described in paragraph (5)(C).

“(C) CMS COMPLIANCE REVIEW.—The Secretary shall ensure that plan sponsor annual compliance reviews and program audits include a certification that utilization management tools under this paragraph are in compliance with the requirements for such tools.”.

(C) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN COMPLAINTS FOR PURPOSES OF QUALITY OR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT.—Section 1860D-42 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-152) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN COMPLAINTS FOR PURPOSES OF QUALITY OR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT.—In conducting a quality or performance assessment of a PDP sponsor, the Secretary shall develop or utilize existing screening methods for reviewing and considering complaints that are received from enrollees in a prescription drug plan offered by such PDP sponsor and that are complaints regarding the lack of access by the individual to prescription drugs due to a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries.”.

(d) SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING USE OF TECHNOLOGY TOOLS TO COMBAT FRAUD.—It is the sense of Congress that MA organizations and PDP sponsors should consider using e-prescribing and other health information technology tools to support combating fraud under MA-PD plans and prescription drug plans under parts C and D of the Medicare Program.

(e) GAO STUDY AND REPORT.—

(1) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on the implementation of the amendments made by this section, including the effectiveness of the at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse drug management programs authorized by section 1860D-4(c)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-10(c)(5)), as added by subsection (a)(1). Such study shall include an analysis of—

(A) the impediments, if any, that impair the ability of individuals described in subparagraph (C) of such section 1860D-4(c)(5) to access clinically appropriate levels of prescription drugs;

(B) the effectiveness of the reasonable access protections under subparagraph (D)(ii) of such section 1860D-4(c)(5), including the impact on beneficiary access and health;

(C) how best to define the term “designated pharmacy”, including whether the definition of such term should include an entity that is comprised of a number of locations that are under common ownership and that electronically share a real-time, online database and whether such a definition would help to protect and improve beneficiary access;

(D) the types of—

(i) individuals who, in the implementation of such section, are determined to be individuals described in such subparagraph; and

(ii) prescribers and pharmacies that are selected under subparagraph (D) of such section;

(E) the extent of prescription drug abuse beyond Controlled Drug Substances in Schedule CII in parts C and D of the Medicare program; and

(F) other areas determined appropriate by the Comptroller General.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than July 1, 2019, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate committees of jurisdiction of Congress a report on the study conducted under paragraph (1), to-

gether with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines to be appropriate.

(f) REPORT BY SECRETARY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the appropriate committees of jurisdiction of Congress a report on ways to improve upon the appeals process for Medicare beneficiaries with respect to prescription drug coverage under part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act. Such report shall include an analysis comparing appeals processes under parts C and D of such title XVIII.

(2) FEEDBACK.—In development of the report described in paragraph (1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall solicit feedback on the current appeals process from stakeholders, such as beneficiaries, consumer advocates, plan sponsors, pharmacy benefit managers, pharmacists, providers, independent review entity evaluators, and pharmaceutical manufacturers.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (d)(2), the amendments made by this section shall apply to prescription drug plans for plan years beginning on or after January 1, 2018.

(2) STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS PRIOR TO EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 1, 2017, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall convene stakeholders, including individuals entitled to benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act or enrolled under part B of such title of such Act, advocacy groups representing such individuals, clinicians, plan sponsors, pharmacists, retail pharmacies, entities delegated by plan sponsors, and biopharmaceutical manufacturers for input regarding the topics described in subparagraph (B). The input described in the preceding sentence shall be provided to the Secretary in sufficient time in order for the Secretary to take such input into account in promulgating the regulations pursuant to subparagraph (C).

(B) TOPICS DESCRIBED.—The topics described in this subparagraph are the topics of—

(i) the impact on cost-sharing and ensuring accessibility to prescription drugs for enrollees in prescription drug plans of PDP sponsors who are at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse (as defined in paragraph (5)(C) of section 1860D-4(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-10(c)));

(ii) the use of an expedited appeals process under which such an enrollee may appeal an identification of such enrollee as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under such paragraph (similar to the processes established under the Medicare Advantage program under part C of title XVIII of the Social Security Act);

(iii) the types of enrollees that should be treated as exempted individuals, as described in clause (ii) of such paragraph;

(iv) the manner in which terms and definitions in paragraph (5) of such section 1860D-4(c) should be applied, such as the use of clinical appropriateness in determining whether an enrollee is an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse as defined in subparagraph (C) of such paragraph (5);

(v) the information to be included in the notices described in subparagraph (B) of such section and the standardization of such notices;

(vi) with respect to a PDP sponsor that establishes a drug management program for

at-risk beneficiaries under such paragraph (5), the responsibilities of such PDP sponsor with respect to the implementation of such program;

(vii) notices for plan enrollees at the point of sale that would explain why an at-risk beneficiary has been prohibited from receiving a prescription at a location outside of the designated pharmacy;

(viii) evidence-based prescribing guidelines for opiates; and

(ix) the sharing of claims data under parts A and B with PDP sponsors.

(C) RULEMAKING.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, taking into account the input gathered pursuant to subparagraph (A) and after providing notice and an opportunity to comment, promulgate regulations to carry out the provisions of, and amendments made by subsections (a) and (b).

SA 3368. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 705. RELATIVE DRUG INTERDICTION NEEDS AS PRIMARY FACTOR IN ALLOCATION TO STATES OF FUNDS FOR NATIONAL GUARD DRUG INTERDICTION AND COUNTER-DRUG ACTIVITIES.

Section 112 of title 32, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (f), (g), and (h) as subsections (g), (h), and (i), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (e) the following new subsection (f):

“(f) PROVISION OF FUNDS TO STATES BASED ON RELATIVE DRUG INTERDICTION NEEDS.—In providing funds to States under this section, the Secretary shall use as a primary factor in allocating such funds the relative drug interdiction needs of the States (as reflected in the State drug interdiction and counter-drug activities plans of the States under subsection (c)).”.

SA 3369. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VIII—MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE REFORM ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Mental Health and Substance Abuse Reform Act of 2016”.

SEC. 802. ASSISTANCE FOR INDIVIDUALS TRANSITIONING OUT OF SYSTEMS.

Section 2976(f) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797w(f)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (6), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) provide mental health treatment and transitional services for those with mental illnesses or with co-occurring disorders, including housing placement or assistance.”.

SEC. 803. CO-OCCURRING SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES IN DRUG COURTS.

Part EE of title I of Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797u et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 2951(a)(1) (42 U.S.C. 3797u(a)(1)), by inserting “, including co-occurring substance abuse and mental health problems,” after “problems”; and

(2) in section 2959(a) (42 U.S.C. 3797u-8(a)), by inserting “, including training for drug court personnel and officials on identifying and addressing co-occurring substance abuse and mental health problems” after “part”.

SEC. 804. CO-OCCURRING SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES IN RESIDENTIAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAMS.

Section 1901(a) of title I of Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796ff(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) developing and implementing specialized residential substance abuse treatment programs that identify and provide appropriate treatment to inmates with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders or challenges.”.

SA 3370. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 205. REQUIREMENT FOR 3-YEAR PLAN TO ACHIEVE 90-PERCENT RATE OF EFFECTIVE DRUG INTERDICTION.

(a) **DEFINITION OF TRANSIT ZONE.**—In this section, the term “Transit Zone” means the sea corridors of the western Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea, and the eastern Pacific Ocean through which illicit drugs transit, either directly or indirectly, to the United States.

(b) **PLAN REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the relevant congressional committees a report setting forth a comprehensive interagency plan for achieving within 3 years a 90-percent rate of effective interdiction of all illegal drugs that would otherwise—

(1) pass through the Transit Zone en route to the United States; or

(2) enter the United States across the Southwest border.

(c) **INTERAGENCY INTEGRATION AND COORDINATION.**—The plan required under subsection (b) shall describe the integration and coordination of efforts by all relevant Federal agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Defense, necessary to achieve the objective stated in subsection (b).

(d) **ELEMENTS.**—The plan required under subsection (b) shall include—

(1) a detailed description of the manner in which the stated objective will be accomplished;

(2) a determination of which official will lead the effort and be accountable for its results;

(3) the specific roles and functions that will be carried out by each agency;

(4) the means that will be required, in terms of personnel, equipment, and other resources;

(5) a detailed budget plan describing the funding that will be needed, broken down by agency;

(6) an explanation of any new or different legal authorities that will be required; and

(7) a specific target date on which the stated objective will be achieved.

SA 3371. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 104. ENHANCING BASIC AND APPLIED RESEARCH ON PAIN TO DISCOVER THERAPIES TO REDUCE THE CURRENT OVER-PRESCRIBING OF OPIOIDS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Out of any money appropriated to the National Institutes of Health not otherwise obligated, the Director of the National Institutes of Health may intensify and coordinate fundamental, translational, and clinical research of the National Institutes of Health (referred to in this section as the “NIH”) with respect to the understanding of pain and the discovery and development of therapies for chronic pain.

(b) **PRIORITY AND DIRECTION.**—The prioritization and direction of the Federally funded portfolio of pain research studies shall consider recommendations made by the Interagency Pain Research Coordinating Committee in concert with the Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force, and in accordance with the National Pain Strategy, the Federal Pain Research Strategy, and the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2016-2020, the latter which calls for the relative burdens of individual diseases and medical disorders to be regarded as crucial considerations in balancing the priorities of the Federal research portfolio.

SA 3372. Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. ENZI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 11, line 9, strike “and”.

On page 11, between lines 9 and 10, insert the following:

(6) rural community health professionals; and

On page 11, line 10, strike “(6)” and insert “(7)”.

SA 3373. Mrs. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 203, add the following:

(c) **GAO REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the

Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) review the prescription drug take back program authorized under subsection (b), including participation rates and stakeholder concerns, in order to catalogue the most significant regulatory barriers for voluntary participation by retail pharmacies; and

(2) submit to Congress a report that includes recommendations on how the Drug Enforcement Administration and Congress can address existing regulatory barriers in order to expand voluntary participation by retail pharmacies in the program.

SA 3374. Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 33, line 5, strike the period and insert “, which may include an outreach coordinator or team to connect individuals receiving opioid overdose reversal drugs to follow-up services.”.

SA 3375. Mr. REID (for Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself and Mr. BLUNT)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 601(b), add at the end the following:

(6) **STATES WITHOUT PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAMS.**—In the case of a State that does not have a prescription drug monitoring program, a county or other unit of local government within the State that has a prescription drug monitoring program shall be treated as a State for purposes of this section, including for purposes of eligibility for grants under paragraph (1).

SA 3376. Mr. Kaine (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 67, line 24, insert “including best practices on the co-prescribing of naloxone” after “guidelines”.

On page 77, between lines 5 and 6, insert the following:

SEC. ____ NALOXONE CO-PRESCRIBING IN FEDERAL HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL FACILITIES.

(a) **NALOXONE CO-PRESCRIBING GUIDELINES.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act:

(1) The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, as appropriate, provide information to prescribers within Federally qualified health centers (as defined in paragraph (4) of section 1861(aa) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(aa))), and the health care facilities of the Indian Health Service, on best practices for co-prescribing naloxone for patients receiving chronic opioid therapy and patients being treated for opioid use disorders.

(2) The Secretary of Defense shall, as appropriate, provide information to prescribers within Department of Defense medical facilities on best practices for co-prescribing naloxone for patients receiving chronic opioid therapy and patients being treated for opioid use disorders.

(3) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, as appropriate, provide information to prescribers within Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities on best practices for co-prescribing naloxone for patients receiving chronic opioid therapy and patients being treated for opioid use disorders.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CO-PRESCRIBING.—The term “co-prescribing” means, with respect to an opioid overdose reversal drug, the practice of prescribing such drug in conjunction with an opioid prescription for patients at an elevated risk of overdose, or in conjunction with an opioid agonist approved under section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355) for the treatment of opioid use disorders, or in other circumstances in which a provider identifies a patient at an elevated risk for an intentional or unintentional drug overdose from heroin or prescription opioid therapies.

(2) ELEVATED RISK OF OVERDOSE.—The term “elevated risk of overdose” has the meaning given such term by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, which—

(A) may be based on the criteria provided in the Opioid Overdose Toolkit published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; and

(B) may include patients on a first course opioid treatment, patients using extended-release and long-acting opioid analgesic, and patients with a respiratory disease or other co-morbidities.

SA 3377. Mr. KING submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VIII—PHARMACEUTICAL STEWARDSHIP ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Pharmaceutical Stewardship Act of 2016”.

SEC. 802. NATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “board of directors” means the board of directors of the organization.

(2) The term “producer”, with respect to a covered drug, means the holder of an approved application for the covered drug under subsection (b) or (j) of section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355).

(3) The term “certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program” means a national pharmaceutical stewardship program with a certification in effect under subsection (g) or (h).

(4) The term “controlled substance” means a controlled substance (as such term is defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802)) in schedule II, III, IV, or V under section 202 of such Act (21 U.S.C. 812).

(5) The term “covered drug” means a drug (as such term is defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321)) that is marketed in the United States other than—

(A) a drug for which a take-back program is in effect pursuant to a risk evaluation and mitigation strategy under section 505-1 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355-1);

(B) a vitamin or dietary supplement (as such term is defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321));

(C) an herbal-based remedy or homeopathic drug, product, or remedy;

(D) a soap (with or without germicidal agents), laundry detergent, bleach, household cleaning product, shampoo, sunscreen, toothpaste, lip balm, antiperspirant, or other product that is regulated under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.) exclusively as a cosmetic;

(E) a biological product (as defined in section 351 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 262)); or

(F) a pesticide (as defined in section 2 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136)) that is contained in a collar, powder, shampoo, topical application, or other system for delivery or application to a pet.

(6) The term “organization” means the National Pharmaceutical Stewardship Organization established in accordance with subsection (c).

(7) The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(8) The term “ultimate user” has the meaning given to such term in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802).

(b) REQUIRED PARTICIPATION.—Each producer of a covered drug shall participate in—

(1) the certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program of the National Pharmaceutical Stewardship Organization; or

(2) another certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program.

(c) NATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL STEWARDSHIP ORGANIZATION.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There shall be established in accordance with this section a nonprofit private corporation to be known as the National Pharmaceutical Stewardship Organization. The organization shall not be an agency or instrumentality of the Federal Government, and officers, employees, and members of the board of the organization shall not, by virtue of such service, be considered officers or employees of the Federal Government.

(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the organization shall be to establish and, beginning not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this title, implement a certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program.

(3) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—

(A) REPRESENTATION.—The organization shall have a board of directors with balanced representation of each of the following:

(i) Producers of covered drugs.

(ii) Public health, pharmacy, law enforcement, and substance use disorder treatment professionals.

(iii) Water quality and waste management stakeholders.

(B) INITIAL MEMBERS.—The Secretary shall appoint the initial members of the board of directors.

(4) POWERS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The organization may—

(i) adopt and amend a constitution and bylaws for the management of its property and the regulation of its affairs;

(ii) adopt and alter a corporate seal;

(iii) choose officers, managers, agents, and employees as the activities of the organization require;

(iv) make contracts;

(v) acquire, own, lease, encumber, and transfer property as necessary to carry out the purposes of the organization;

(vi) borrow money, issue instruments of indebtedness, and secure its obligations by granting security interests in its property;

(vii) sue and be sued; and

(viii) do any other act necessary and proper to carry out the purpose of the organization.

(B) BYLAWS.—The board of directors shall establish the general policies of the organization for carrying out the purpose described in paragraph (2), including the establishment of the bylaws of the organization, which shall include bylaws for the following:

(i) Entering into contracts and agreements with service providers and entities as necessary, useful, or convenient to provide all or portions of the national pharmaceutical stewardship program of the organization.

(ii) Taking any legal action necessary or proper for the recovery of an assessment for, on behalf of, or against producers of a covered drug participating in such program.

(iii) Performing other such functions as may be necessary or proper to carry out the purpose described in paragraph (2).

(iv) Ensuring that the members of the board of directors serve without compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement (solely from the funds of the organization) for expenses incurred in the discharge of their duties as members of the board of directors.

(v) Ensuring that the organization does not use any Federal, State, or local government funds to carry out the purpose described in paragraph (2).

(vi) Allowing the Secretary—

(I) to audit the activities of the organization as the Secretary deems necessary; and

(II) to access any facilities or property of the organization as the Secretary deems necessary to conduct inspections or investigate complaints.

(5) NONPROFIT STATUS.—In carrying out the purpose described in paragraph (2), the board of directors shall establish such policies and bylaws under paragraph (4)(B) as may be necessary to ensure that the organization maintains its status as an organization that—

(A) is described in subsection (c)(3) of section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

(B) is, under subsection (a) of such section, exempt from taxation.

(6) CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL STEWARDSHIP ORGANIZATION NOT TREATED AS CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS.—A contribution (including any payment or fee) by a producer of a covered drug to the organization or the organization’s national pharmaceutical stewardship program shall not be treated as a charitable contribution for purposes of section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(7) ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that the initial articles of incorporation of the organization are properly filed not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this title.

(d) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—To be certified (and maintain certification) under subsection (g) or (h), a national pharmaceutical stewardship program (referred to in this section as a “program”) shall meet each of the following requirements:

(1) The program is operated pursuant to an agreement among the producers of covered drugs participating in the program.

(2) Subject to subsection (e), the costs of the program are fully paid by such producers.

(3) The program shall not impose any fee on individuals, wholesalers, or retailers for transport and disposal of a covered drug through the program, except to the extent an individual, wholesaler, or retailer is acting as a producer of a covered drug.

(4) The program is developed with input from the public, including an opportunity for public comment and public hearings.

(5) The program provides a system to facilitate the collection and disposal of any covered drug that—

(A) is delivered to the program by the ultimate user of the covered drug in the United States; and

(B) is household waste as defined under the implementing regulations of subtitle C of title II of the Solid Waste Disposal Act (42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.; commonly referred to as the “Resource Conservation and Recovery Act”).

(6) Collection and disposal of a covered drug through the program’s system (described in paragraph (5)) occurs only in a manner that—

(A) is safe and secure;

(B) results in the covered drug being rendered unrecoverable in accordance with the requirements for nonretrievable disposal of controlled substances under part 1300 of title 21, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulations);

(C) protects patient information;

(D) is accessible in every State, county, and city or town, by including—

(i) at least one collection site that is accessible on an ongoing, year-round basis in every county of every State and at least one additional such collection site for every 30,000 county residents, giving preference to retail pharmacies that—

(I) operate secure collection receptacles in accordance with applicable regulations of the Drug Enforcement Administration; and

(II) are geographically distributed to provide reasonably convenient and equitable access;

(ii) if ongoing, year-round collection is not feasible in a specific county or city (as determined by the Secretary)—

(I) periodic collection events; or

(II) the provision of prepaid mailing envelopes or deactivation technologies to individuals in such county or city; and

(iii) prepaid mailing envelopes or deactivation technologies made available to individuals with disabilities and home-bound residents upon request through the program’s toll-free telephone number and website under paragraph (8); and

(E) in the case of a controlled substance, is consistent with section 302(g) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 822(g)).

(7) The program—

(A) promotes the collection and disposal of covered drugs through the program; and

(B) to the extent feasible, works with local recycling facilities and officials to collect and recycle covered drug packaging at collection locations.

(8) The program ensures that options for collection and disposal of covered drugs through the program are widely understood by customers, pharmacists, retailers, and health care practitioners including doctors and other prescribers, including by—

(A) maintaining a toll-free telephone number, a website optimized for mobile platforms, and a free mobile application that—

(i) publicize all currently available collection and disposal options, updated within 30 days of any change; and

(ii) provide substance use disorder treatment and referral information;

(B) preparing educational and outreach materials that—

(i) clearly explain what “covered drugs” are collected at each collection site;

(ii) describe where and how to dispose of covered drugs through the program;

(iii) address the risks of diversion of covered drugs, including accidental overdose, accidental poisoning, and environmental contamination;

(iv) raise awareness about the importance of safe storage and disposal; and

(v) utilize plain language and explanatory images readily understandable by all residents, including individuals with limited English proficiency; and

(C) providing such materials to pharmacies, health care facilities, and other interested parties for dissemination.

(9) Every 4 years, the program, using an independent evaluator at the expense of the program, evaluates the effectiveness of its educational and outreach activities under paragraph (8), including with respect to—

(A) the percentage of residents of the United States who are aware of the program;

(B) the percentage of residents of the United States who report having access to a collection site, prepaid mail-back envelope, or deactivation system; and

(C) the extent to which residents of the United States find the program to be convenient.

(10) Annually, the program, using an independent auditor at the expense of the program, audits relevant information provided in the program’s report to the Secretary, including—

(A) the amount, by weight, of covered drugs collected and disposed of in each State by drop-off site and, if applicable, the total amount by weight collected by mail-back method and disposed of; and

(B) the income and expenditures of the program.

(e) MECHANISM FOR TRANSFER OF COSTS AMONG PRODUCERS.—To be certified (and maintain certification) under subsection (g) or (h), a program shall include a mechanism that—

(1) provides for receiving and transferring of funds among all national pharmaceutical stewardship programs that are so certified in such amounts as may be necessary, to be adjusted on at least an annual basis, to ensure that the producers of covered drugs participating in such programs bear the costs of such programs in a manner that provides for a fair and reasonable allocation of such costs across such participants; and

(2) is specified in a written agreement among all producers of covered drugs.

(f) PROGRAM REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To be certified (and maintain certification) under subsection (g) or (h), a program shall agree to submit a report to the Secretary within one year following such certification, and annually thereafter.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted by a program under paragraph (1) shall describe the program’s activities during the preceding calendar year, including at a minimum—

(A) a list of producers participating in the program;

(B) a specification of the amount, by weight, of covered drugs collected and disposed of in each State—

(i) by drop-off site; and

(ii) if applicable, by mail-back method;

(C) a description of the collection system in each State, including the location of each collection site and, if applicable, locations where envelopes for mail-back or deactivation technologies are provided;

(D) an identification of any safety or security problems which occurred during collection, transportation, or disposal of covered drugs during the preceding calendar year and, with respect to any such problems, a description of the changes which have or will be made to policies, procedures, or tracking mechanisms to alleviate any such problems and to improve safety and security in the future;

(E) a description of the educational and outreach activities under subsection (d)(8) and the methodology used to evaluate such activities under subsection (d)(9);

(F) a description of how collected packaging was recycled to the extent feasible, including the recycling facility or facilities used; and

(G) the total expenditures of the program.

(3) PROCEDURES.—The Secretary shall establish procedures for reporting under this subsection not later than the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this title.

(4) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary shall make each report submitted under this subsection available to the public.

(g) CERTIFICATION OF NATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL STEWARDSHIP ORGANIZATION’S PROGRAM.—

(1) PROGRAM PLAN.—To seek certification of its program, the organization shall submit a plan to the Secretary containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(2) CONSIDERATION BY SECRETARY.—Upon receipt of a plan under paragraph (1), the Secretary—

(A) shall consult with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration on the adequacy of the proposed program’s security measures for collection, transportation, and disposal of covered drugs, disposal systems, and mechanisms for secure tracking and handling;

(B) shall consult with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency on the adequacy of the program’s disposal methods and compliance with environmental requirements;

(C) shall consult with the Secretary of Transportation on the adequacy of the program’s compliance with respect to requirements for transport of covered drugs; and

(D) within 90 days after receipt of the plan, shall—

(i) certify the program if the Secretary determines it meets the requirements of this section; or

(ii) reject the proposed program and provide a written explanation of the reasons for such rejection.

(3) RESPONSE TO REJECTION OF PROPOSED PROGRAM.—If the Secretary rejects the organization’s proposed program under paragraph (2)(D)(ii), the rejection shall be treated as final agency action, and the organization may—

(A) revise its proposed program and submit a new plan under paragraph (1); or

(B) seek judicial review of the rejection not later than 60 days after receiving notice of the rejection.

(4) TERM OF CERTIFICATION; RECERTIFICATION.—The term of a certification (including a recertification) under paragraph (2)(D)(i) shall be not more than 2 years. To have its program recertified, the organization shall submit a new plan under paragraph (1), including any relevant updates, for approval under paragraph (2)(D)(i).

(5) CHANGES TO CERTIFIED PROGRAM.—Before making any significant change to its certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program, the organization shall seek

and obtain approval for the change from the Secretary. Not later than 15 days after submission of a request for a change under the preceding sentence, the Secretary shall approve the change or reject the change and provide a written explanation of the reasons for the rejection.

(6) SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) PUBLICATION.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this title, the Secretary shall publish requirements for the submission of program plans under paragraph (1) and requests for changes under paragraph (5), including requirements for the contents of such submissions.

(B) FAILURE TO PUBLISH.—If the Secretary fails to publish such requirements by the deadline specified in subparagraph (A), the requirements of this section applicable to producers of covered drugs shall nonetheless apply.

(h) CERTIFICATION OF OTHER PROGRAMS.—

(1) APPLICATION.—In lieu of participating in the certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program of the organization, one or more producers of a covered drug may submit a stewardship plan to the Secretary seeking certification of a separate national pharmaceutical stewardship program.

(2) GOVERNING PROVISIONS.—The provisions of subsection (g) shall apply with respect to a stewardship plan for certification of a program under paragraph (1) to the same extent and in the same manner as such provisions apply to a program plan for certification of a program by the organization under subsection (g), except as follows:

(A) The reference to 90 days in subsection (g)(2)(D) (relating to the period of the Secretary's review of a program plan) shall be treated as a reference to 120 days.

(B) If the Secretary rejects the proposed stewardship plan, in lieu of submitting a new stewardship plan under paragraph (1) or seeking judicial review of the rejection, the producers may choose to participate in the certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program of the organization.

(C) The reference to 2 years in subsection (g)(4) (relating to the term of certification) shall be treated as references to 1 year.

(i) SOLICITATION OF PUBLIC COMMENT TO INFORM PROGRAM UPDATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A certified national product stewardship program shall—

(A) annually invite comments from stakeholders on their satisfaction with the services provided by the program, including representatives of health care facilities, prescribers, pharmacies and pharmacists, State and local government officials, law enforcement personnel, public health organizations, substance use disorder professionals, waste management stakeholders, environmental organizations, and consumers;

(B) compile and submit the information received through such comments to the Secretary; and

(C) use such information in developing updates and changes to the program.

(2) USE BY SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall use information submitted under paragraph (1)(B) in reviewing proposed updates and revisions to certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program plans.

(3) GUIDANCE.—The Secretary shall issue guidance on the process for complying with this subsection.

(j) SUSPENSION OF PROGRAM.—

(1) IMMINENT DANGER.—The Secretary may suspend, in whole or in part, the certification of any national pharmaceutical stewardship program under this section if the Secretary determines that such action is

necessary to protect the public from imminent danger.

(2) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—If the Secretary determines that a national pharmaceutical stewardship is in violation of the requirements of this section, the Secretary—

(A) within 30 days of learning of the violation, may issue a written warning to the program stating that the program is in violation of this section; and

(B) if the program has not rectified each violation identified in such warning within 30 days of receipt of such warning, may suspend, in whole or in part, the certification of the program.

(k) CIVIL PENALTIES.—Beginning on the date that is 2 years after the date of enactment of this title, a producer of a covered drug shall be liable for a civil penalty of not more than \$50,000 for each calendar day on which, as determined by the Secretary, the producer—

(1) is not participating in a certified national pharmaceutical program; or

(2) is in violation of its obligation to contribute to the costs of such a program under subsection (d)(2).

(l) REGULATORY POWER.—The Secretary may adopt rules or guidance necessary to implement, administer, and enforce this section. The Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Director of National Drug Control Policy, the Secretary of Transportation, and the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, may include in such regulations or guidance any performance standards determined appropriate for implementing the program requirements specified in this section.

(m) STATE, TRIBAL, AND LOCAL REGULATION.—Nothing in this title prohibits a State, tribal, or local government from imposing any requirements relating to the safe and secure disposal of covered drugs that are more stringent than the requirements of this title.

(n) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary shall report to the appropriate committees of the Congress concerning the status of the national pharmaceutical stewardship programs under this section, including any recommendations for changes to this section.

(o) SEVERABILITY.—If any provision of this section or the application of such provision to any person or circumstance is held to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this section, and the application of the provisions of such remainder to any person or circumstance, shall not be affected thereby.

(p) EVALUATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this title, and annually thereafter, the Director of the Office of the National Drug Control Policy, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Attorney General, and the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, shall—

(A) conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of the national pharmaceutical stewardship programs under this section; and

(B) submit a report to the Congress on the results of each such evaluation, including recommendations for improving the programs.

(2) METRICS.—The evaluation under paragraph (1) shall address each of the following:

(A) Public access to national pharmaceutical stewardship programs under this section.

(B) Public awareness of such programs, including awareness of the risks of diversion of drugs and awareness of the importance of safe storage and safe disposal of pharmaceuticals.

(C) Impact of the programs on prescription drug abuse, including analysis of hospital admissions for prescription drug overdoses, per capita deaths due to prescription drug overdoses, and arrests for illegal possession of controlled substances in schedule II, III, IV, or V.

(q) ANNUAL FEES.—The Secretary may assess, collect, and use, without further appropriation, annual fees from producers of covered drugs to pay the administrative costs of carrying out this section and section 803.

(r) DELAYED APPLICABILITY.—In the case of producer that first offers a covered drug for sale in interstate commerce (including by importing the covered drug) after the date of enactment of this title, the requirements of this title apply with respect to such producer beginning on the date that is 180 days after the date on which the producer first offers the covered drug for sale in interstate commerce.

SEC. 803. COORDINATED EDUCATION CAMPAIGN ON DRUG DISPOSAL.

Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this title, the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall establish and begin implementation of a coordinated education and outreach campaign—

(1) to increase awareness among members of the public regarding how drugs may be safely and securely disposed consistent with public safety, public health, and environmental protection through national pharmaceutical stewardship programs established under section 802 and by other appropriate means; and

(2) to link members of the public to the national and local educational and outreach activities conducted by such programs.

SA 3378. Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Findings.
- Sec. 3. Definitions.

TITLE I—PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

- Sec. 101. Development of best practices for the prescribing of prescription opioids.
- Sec. 102. Awareness campaigns.
- Sec. 103. Community-based coalition enhancement grants to address local drug crises.

TITLE II—LAW ENFORCEMENT AND TREATMENT

- Sec. 201. Treatment alternative to incarceration programs.
- Sec. 202. First responder training for the use of drugs and devices that rapidly reverse the effects of opioids.
- Sec. 203. Prescription drug take back expansion.
- Sec. 204. Heroin and methamphetamine task forces.

TITLE III—TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

- Sec. 301. Evidence-based prescription opioid and heroin treatment and interventions demonstration.
- Sec. 302. Criminal justice medication assisted treatment and interventions demonstration.
- Sec. 303. National youth recovery initiative.
- Sec. 304. Building communities of recovery.

TITLE IV—ADDRESSING COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES

- Sec. 401. Correctional education demonstration grant program.
- Sec. 402. National Task Force on Recovery and Collateral Consequences.

TITLE V—ADDICTION AND TREATMENT SERVICES FOR WOMEN, FAMILIES, AND VETERANS

- Sec. 501. Improving treatment for pregnant and postpartum women.
- Sec. 502. Report on grants for family-based substance abuse treatment.
- Sec. 503. Veterans' treatment courts.

TITLE VI—INCENTIVIZING STATE COMPREHENSIVE INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS PRESCRIPTION OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE

- Sec. 601. State demonstration grants for comprehensive opioid abuse response.

TITLE VII—MISCELLANEOUS

- Sec. 701. GAO report on IMD exclusion.
- Sec. 702. Funding.
- Sec. 703. Conforming amendments.
- Sec. 704. Grant accountability.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The abuse of heroin and prescription opioid painkillers is having a devastating effect on public health and safety in communities across the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug overdose deaths now surpass traffic accidents in the number of deaths caused by injury in the United States. In 2014, an average of more than 120 people in the United States died from drug overdoses every day.

(2) According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (commonly known as "NIDA"), the number of prescriptions for opioids increased from approximately 76,000,000 in 1991 to nearly 207,000,000 in 2013, and the United States is the biggest consumer of opioids globally, accounting for almost 100 percent of the world total for hydrocodone and 81 percent for oxycodone.

(3) Opioid pain relievers are the most widely misused or abused controlled prescription drugs (commonly referred to as "CPDs") and are involved in most CPD-related overdose incidents. According to the Drug Abuse Warning Network (commonly known as "DAWN"), the estimated number of emergency department visits involving nonmedical use of prescription opiates or opioids increased by 112 percent between 2006 and 2010, from 84,671 to 179,787.

(4) The use of heroin in the United States has also spiked sharply in recent years. Ac-

cording to the most recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health, more than 900,000 people in the United States reported using heroin in 2014, nearly a 35 percent increase from the previous year. Heroin overdose deaths more than tripled from 2010 to 2014.

(5) The supply of cheap heroin available in the United States has increased dramatically as well, largely due to the activity of Mexican drug trafficking organizations. The Drug Enforcement Administration (commonly known as the "DEA") estimates that heroin seizures at the Mexican border have more than doubled since 2010, and heroin production in Mexico increased 62 percent from 2013 to 2014. While only 8 percent of State and local law enforcement officials across the United States identified heroin as the greatest drug threat in their area in 2008, that number rose to 38 percent in 2015.

(6) Law enforcement officials and treatment experts throughout the country report that many people who have misused prescription opioids have turned to heroin as a cheaper or more easily obtained alternative to prescription opiates.

(7) According to a report by the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (commonly referred to as "NASADAD"), 37 States reported an increase in admissions to treatment for heroin use during the past 2 years, while admissions to treatment for prescription opiates increased 500 percent from 2000 to 2012.

(8) Research indicates that combating the opioid crisis, including abuse of prescription painkillers and, increasingly, heroin, requires a multipronged approach that involves prevention, education, monitoring, law enforcement initiatives, reducing drug diversion and the supply of illicit drugs, expanding delivery of existing treatments (including medication assisted treatments), expanding access to overdose medications and interventions, and the development of new medications for pain that can augment the existing treatment arsenal.

(9) Substance use disorders are a treatable disease. Discoveries in the science of addiction have led to advances in the treatment of substance use disorders that help people stop abusing drugs and prescription medications and resume their productive lives.

(10) According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, approximately 22,700,000 people in the United States needed substance use disorder treatment in 2013, but only 2,500,000 people received it. Furthermore, current treatment services are not adequate to meet demand. According to a report commissioned by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (commonly known as "SAMHSA"), there are approximately 32 providers for every 1,000 individuals needing substance use disorder treatment. In some States, the ratio is much lower.

(11) The overall cost of drug abuse, from health care- and criminal justice-related costs to lost productivity, is steep, totaling more than \$700,000,000 a year, according to NIDA. Effective substance abuse prevention can yield major economic dividends.

(12) According to NIDA, when schools and communities properly implement science-validated substance abuse prevention programs, abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs is reduced. Such programs help teachers, parents, and healthcare professionals shape the perceptions of youths about the risks of drug abuse.

(13) Diverting certain individuals with substance use disorders from criminal justice systems into community-based treatment

can save billions of dollars and prevent sizeable numbers of crimes, arrests, and re-incarcerations over the course of those individuals' lives.

(14) According to the DEA, more than 2,700 tons of expired, unwanted prescription medications have been collected since the enactment of the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-273; 124 Stat. 2858).

(15) Faith-based, holistic, or drug-free models can provide a critical path to successful recovery for a number of people in the United States. The 2015 membership survey conducted by Alcoholics Anonymous (commonly known as "AA") found that 73 percent of AA members were sober longer than 1 year and attended 2.5 meetings per week.

(16) Research shows that combining treatment medications with behavioral therapy is an effective way to facilitate success for some patients. Treatment approaches must be tailored to address the drug abuse patterns and drug-related medical, psychiatric, and social problems of each individual. Different types of medications may be useful at different stages of treatment or recovery to help a patient stop using drugs, stay in treatment, and avoid relapse. Patients have a range of options regarding their path to recovery and many have also successfully addressed drug abuse through the use of faith-based, holistic, or drug-free models.

(17) Individuals with mental illness, especially severe mental illness, are at considerably higher risk for substance abuse than the general population, and the presence of a mental illness complicates recovery from substance abuse.

(18) Rural communities are especially susceptible to heroin and opioid abuse. Individuals in rural counties have higher rates of drug poisoning deaths, including deaths from opioids. According to the American Journal of Public Health, "[O]pioid poisonings in nonmetropolitan counties have increased at a rate greater than threefold the increase in metropolitan counties." According to a February 19, 2016, report from the Maine Rural Health Research Center, "[M]ultiple studies document a higher prevalence [of abuse] among specific vulnerable rural populations, particularly among youth, women who are pregnant or experiencing partner violence, and persons with co-occurring disorders."

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term "first responder" includes a firefighter, law enforcement officer, paramedic, emergency medical technician, or other individual (including an employee of a legally organized and recognized volunteer organization, whether compensated or not), who, in the course of professional duties, responds to fire, medical, hazardous material, or other similar emergencies;

(2) the term "medication assisted treatment" means the use, for problems relating to heroin and other opioids, of medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies;

(3) the term "opioid" means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability; and

(4) the term "State" means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any territory or possession of the United States.

TITLE I—PREVENTION AND EDUCATION**SEC. 101. DEVELOPMENT OF BEST PRACTICES FOR THE PRESCRIBING OF PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS.**

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

(1) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and

(2) the term “task force” means the Pain Management Best Practices Interagency Task Force convened under subsection (b).

(b) **INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE.**—Not later than December 14, 2018, the Secretary, in cooperation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Defense, and the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, shall convene a Pain Management Best Practices Interagency Task Force to review, modify, and update, as appropriate, best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication.

(c) **MEMBERSHIP.**—The task force shall be comprised of—

(1) representatives of—

(A) the Department of Health and Human Services;

(B) the Department of Veterans Affairs;

(C) the Food and Drug Administration;

(D) the Department of Defense;

(E) the Drug Enforcement Administration;

(F) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(G) the National Academy of Medicine;

(H) the National Institutes of Health;

(I) the Office of National Drug Control Policy; and

(J) the Office of Rural Health Policy of the Department of Health and Human Services;

(2) physicians, dentists, and nonphysician prescribers;

(3) pharmacists;

(4) experts in the fields of pain research and addiction research;

(5) representatives of—

(A) pain management professional organizations;

(B) the mental health treatment community;

(C) the addiction treatment community;

(D) pain advocacy groups; and

(E) groups with expertise around overdose reversal; and

(6) other stakeholders, as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(d) **DUTIES.**—The task force shall—

(1) not later than 180 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), review, modify, and update, as appropriate, best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, taking into consideration—

(A) existing pain management research;

(B) recommendations from relevant conferences and existing relevant evidence-based guidelines;

(C) ongoing efforts at the State and local levels and by medical professional organizations to develop improved pain management strategies, including consideration of alternatives to opioids to reduce opioid monotherapy in appropriate cases;

(D) the management of high-risk populations, other than populations who suffer pain, who—

(i) may use or be prescribed benzodiazepines, alcohol, and diverted opioids; or

(ii) receive opioids in the course of medical care; and

(E) the Proposed 2016 Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (80 Fed. Reg. 77351 (December 14, 2015)) and any final guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(2) solicit and take into consideration public comment on the practices developed under paragraph (1), amending such best practices if appropriate; and

(3) develop a strategy for disseminating information about the best practices to stakeholders, as appropriate.

(e) **LIMITATION.**—The task force shall not have rulemaking authority.

(f) **REPORT.**—Not later than 270 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), the task force shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) the strategy for disseminating best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, as reviewed, modified, or updated under subsection (d); and

(2) recommendations for effectively applying the best practices described in paragraph (1) to improve prescribing practices at medical facilities, including medical facilities of the Veterans Health Administration.

SEC. 102. AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall advance the education and awareness of the public, providers, patients, and other appropriate entities regarding the risk of abuse of prescription opioid drugs if such products are not taken as prescribed.

(b) **DRUG-FREE MEDIA CAMPAIGN.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Office of National Drug Control Policy, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General, shall establish a national drug awareness campaign.

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—The national drug awareness campaign required under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) take into account the association between prescription opioid abuse and heroin use;

(B) emphasize the similarities between heroin and prescription opioids and the effects of heroin and prescription opioids on the human body; and

(C) bring greater public awareness to the dangerous effects of fentanyl when mixed with heroin or abused in a similar manner.

SEC. 103. COMMUNITY-BASED COALITION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS TO ADDRESS LOCAL DRUG CRISES.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) is amended by striking section 2997 and inserting the following:

“SEC. 2997. COMMUNITY-BASED COALITION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS TO ADDRESS LOCAL DRUG CRISES.

“(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997’ means chapter 2 of the National Narcotics Leadership Act of 1988 (21 U.S.C. 1521 et seq.);

“(2) the term ‘eligible entity’ means an organization that—

“(A) on or before the date of submitting an application for a grant under this section, receives or has received a grant under the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997; and

“(B) has documented, using local data, rates of abuse of opioids or methamphetamines at levels that are—

“(i) significantly higher than the national average as determined by the Secretary (including appropriate consideration of the results of the Monitoring the Future Survey published by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Survey on Drug Use and Health published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration); or

“(ii) higher than the national average, as determined by the Secretary (including appropriate consideration of the results of the surveys described in clause (i)), over a sustained period of time;

“(3) the term ‘local drug crisis’ means, with respect to the area served by an eligible entity—

“(A) a sudden increase in the abuse of opioids or methamphetamines, as documented by local data; or

“(B) the abuse of prescription medications, specifically opioids or methamphetamines, that is significantly higher than the national average, over a sustained period of time, as documented by local data;

“(4) the term ‘opioid’ means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability; and

“(5) the term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

“(b) **PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary, in coordination with the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, may make grants to eligible entities to implement comprehensive community-wide strategies that address local drug crises within the area served by the eligible entity.

“(c) **APPLICATION.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

“(2) **CRITERIA.**—As part of an application for a grant under this section, the Secretary shall require an eligible entity to submit a detailed, comprehensive, multisector plan for addressing the local drug crisis within the area served by the eligible entity.

“(d) **USE OF FUNDS.**—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section—

“(1) for programs designed to implement comprehensive community-wide prevention strategies to address the local drug crisis in the area served by the eligible entity, in accordance with the plan submitted under subsection (c)(2); and

“(2) to obtain specialized training and technical assistance from the organization funded under section 4 of Public Law 107-82 (21 U.S.C. 1521 note).

“(e) **SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.**—An eligible entity shall use Federal funds received under this section only to supplement the funds that would, in the absence of those Federal funds, be made available from other Federal and non-Federal sources for the activities described in this section, and not to supplant those funds.

“(f) **EVALUATION.**—A grant under this section shall be subject to the same evaluation requirements and procedures as the evaluation requirements and procedures imposed on the recipient of a grant under the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997.

“(g) **LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.**—Not more than 8 percent of the amounts made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year may be used by the Secretary to pay for administrative expenses.”.

TITLE II—LAW ENFORCEMENT AND TREATMENT**SEC. 201. TREATMENT ALTERNATIVE TO INCARCERATION PROGRAMS.**

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—The term “eligible entity” means a State, unit of local government, Indian tribe, or nonprofit organization.

(2) **ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANT.**—The term “eligible participant” means an individual who—

(A) comes into contact with the juvenile justice system or criminal justice system or is arrested or charged with an offense that is not—

(i) a crime of violence, as defined under applicable State law or section 3156 of title 18, United States Code; or

(ii) a serious drug offense, as defined under section 924(e)(2)(A) of title 18, United States Code;

(B) has been screened by a qualified mental health professional and determined to suffer from a substance use disorder, or co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder, that there is a reasonable basis to believe is related to the commission of the offense; and

(C) has been, after consideration of any potential risk of violence to any person in the program or the public if the individual were selected to participate in the program, unanimously approved for participation in a program funded under this section by, as applicable depending on the stage of the criminal justice process—

(i) the relevant law enforcement agency;

(ii) the prosecuting attorney;

(iii) the defense attorney;

(iv) the pretrial, probation, or correctional officer;

(v) the judge; and

(vi) a representative from the relevant mental health or substance abuse agency.

(b) **PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Attorney General, may make grants to eligible entities to—

(1) develop, implement, or expand a treatment alternative to incarceration program for eligible participants, including—

(A) pre-booking, including pre-arrest, treatment alternative to incarceration programs, including—

(i) law enforcement training on substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders;

(ii) receiving centers as alternatives to incarceration of eligible participants;

(iii) specialized response units for calls related to substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders; and

(iv) other pre-arrest or pre-booking treatment alternative to incarceration models; and

(B) post-booking treatment alternative to incarceration programs, including—

(i) specialized clinical case management;

(ii) pretrial services related to substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders;

(iii) prosecutor and defender based programs;

(iv) specialized probation;

(v) programs utilizing the American Society of Addiction Medicine patient placement criteria;

(vi) treatment and rehabilitation programs and recovery support services; and

(vii) drug courts, DWI courts, and veterans treatment courts; and

(2) facilitate or enhance planning and collaboration between State criminal justice systems and State substance abuse systems in order to more efficiently and effectively carry out programs described in paragraph (1) that address problems related to the use of heroin and misuse of prescription drugs among eligible participants.

(c) **APPLICATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an

application to the Secretary of Health and Human Services—

(A) that meets the criteria under paragraph (2); and

(B) at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary of Health and Human Services may require.

(2) **CRITERIA.**—An eligible entity, in submitting an application under paragraph (1), shall—

(A) provide extensive evidence of collaboration with State and local government agencies overseeing health, community corrections, courts, prosecution, substance abuse, mental health, victims services, and employment services, and with local law enforcement agencies;

(B) demonstrate consultation with the Single State Authority for Substance Abuse (as defined in section 201(e) of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17521(e)));

(C) demonstrate consultation with the Single State criminal justice planning agency;

(D) demonstrate that evidence-based treatment practices, including if applicable the use of medication assisted treatment, will be utilized; and

(E) demonstrate that evidenced-based screening and assessment tools will be utilized to place participants in the treatment alternative to incarceration program.

(d) **REQUIREMENTS.**—Each eligible entity awarded a grant for a treatment alternative to incarceration program under this section shall—

(1) determine the terms and conditions of participation in the program by eligible participants, taking into consideration the collateral consequences of an arrest, prosecution, or criminal conviction;

(2) ensure that each substance abuse and mental health treatment component is licensed and qualified by the relevant jurisdiction;

(3) for programs described in subsection (b)(2), organize an enforcement unit comprised of appropriately trained law enforcement professionals under the supervision of the State, tribal, or local criminal justice agency involved, the duties of which shall include—

(A) the verification of addresses and other contacts of each eligible participant who participates or desires to participate in the program; and

(B) if necessary, the location, apprehension, arrest, and return to court of an eligible participant in the program who has absconded from the facility of a treatment provider or has otherwise violated the terms and conditions of the program, consistent with Federal and State confidentiality requirements;

(4) notify the relevant criminal justice entity if any eligible participant in the program absconds from the facility of the treatment provider or otherwise violates the terms and conditions of the program, consistent with Federal and State confidentiality requirements;

(5) submit periodic reports on the progress of treatment or other measured outcomes from participation in the program of each eligible participant in the program to the relevant State, tribal, or local criminal justice agency;

(6) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used to evaluate the program, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program; and

(7) describe how the program could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective.

(e) **USE OF FUNDS.**—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section for expenses of a treatment alternative to incarceration program, including—

(1) salaries, personnel costs, equipment costs, and other costs directly related to the operation of the program, including the enforcement unit;

(2) payments for treatment providers that are approved by the relevant State or tribal jurisdiction and licensed, if necessary, to provide needed treatment to eligible participants in the program, including medication assisted treatment, aftercare supervision, vocational training, education, and job placement;

(3) payments to public and nonprofit private entities that are approved by the State or tribal jurisdiction and licensed, if necessary, to provide alcohol and drug addiction treatment and mental health treatment to eligible participants in the program; and

(4) salaries, personnel costs, and other costs related to strategic planning among State and local government agencies.

(f) **SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.**—An eligible entity shall use Federal funds received under this section only to supplement the funds that would, in the absence of those Federal funds, be made available from other Federal and non-Federal sources for the activities described in this section, and not to supplant those funds.

(g) **GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall ensure that, to the extent practicable, the geographical distribution of grants under this section is equitable and includes a grant to an eligible entity in—

(1) each State;

(2) rural, suburban, and urban areas; and

(3) tribal jurisdictions.

(h) **PRIORITY CONSIDERATION WITH RESPECT TO STATES.**—In awarding grants to States under this section, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall give priority to—

(1) a State that submits a joint application from the substance abuse agencies and criminal justice agencies of the State that proposes to use grant funds to facilitate or enhance planning and collaboration between the agencies, including coordination to better address the needs of incarcerated populations; and

(2) a State that—

(A) provides civil liability protection for first responders, health professionals, and family members who have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone in administering naloxone to counteract opioid overdoses; and

(B) submits to the Secretary a certification by the attorney general of the State that the attorney general has—

(i) reviewed any applicable civil liability protection law to determine the applicability of the law with respect to first responders, health care professionals, family members, and other individuals who—

(I) have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone; and

(II) may administer naloxone to individuals reasonably believed to be suffering from opioid overdose; and

(ii) concluded that the law described in subparagraph (A) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons.

(i) **REPORTS AND EVALUATIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Each fiscal year, each recipient of a grant under this section during

that fiscal year shall submit to the Secretary of Health and Human Services a report on the outcomes of activities carried out using that grant in such form, containing such information, and on such dates as the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall specify.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—A report submitted under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) describe best practices for treatment alternatives; and

(B) identify training requirements for law enforcement officers who participate in treatment alternative to incarceration programs.

(j) **FUNDING.**—During the 5-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services may carry out this section using not more than \$5,000,000 each fiscal year of amounts appropriated to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for Criminal Justice Activities. No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

SEC. 202. FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING FOR THE USE OF DRUGS AND DEVICES THAT RAPIDLY REVERSE THE EFFECTS OF OPIOIDS.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 103, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2998. FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING FOR THE USE OF DRUGS AND DEVICES THAT RAPIDLY REVERSE THE EFFECTS OF OPIOIDS.

“(a) **DEFINITION.**—In this section—

“(1) the terms ‘drug’ and ‘device’ have the meanings given those terms in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321);

“(2) the term ‘eligible entity’ means a State, a unit of local government, or an Indian tribal government;

“(3) the term ‘first responder’ includes a firefighter, law enforcement officer, paramedic, emergency medical technician, or other individual (including an employee of a legally organized and recognized volunteer organization, whether compensated or not), who, in the course of professional duties, responds to fire, medical, hazardous material, or other similar emergencies;

“(4) the term ‘opioid’ means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability; and

“(5) the term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

“(b) **PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary, in coordination with the Attorney General, may make grants to eligible entities to allow appropriately trained first responders to administer an opioid overdose reversal drug to an individual who has—

“(1) experienced a prescription opioid or heroin overdose; or

“(2) been determined to have likely experienced a prescription opioid or heroin overdose.

“(c) **APPLICATION.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary—

“(A) that meets the criteria under paragraph (2); and

“(B) at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

“(2) **CRITERIA.**—An eligible entity, in submitting an application under paragraph (1), shall—

“(A) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used to evaluate the program funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program;

“(B) describe how the program could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective;

“(C) identify the governmental and community agencies that the program will coordinate; and

“(D) describe how law enforcement agencies will coordinate with their corresponding State substance abuse and mental health agencies to identify protocols and resources that are available to overdose victims and families, including information on treatment and recovery resources.

“(d) **USE OF FUNDS.**—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section to—

“(1) make such opioid overdose reversal drugs or devices that are approved by the Food and Drug Administration, such as naloxone, available to be carried and administered by first responders;

“(2) train and provide resources for first responders on carrying an opioid overdose reversal drug or device approved by the Food and Drug Administration, such as naloxone, and administering the drug or device to an individual who has experienced, or has been determined to have likely experienced, a prescription opioid or heroin overdose; and

“(3) establish processes, protocols, and mechanisms for referral to appropriate treatment.

“(e) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS.**—The Secretary shall make a grant for the purpose of providing technical assistance and training on the use of an opioid overdose reversal drug, such as naloxone, to respond to an individual who has experienced, or has been determined to have likely experienced, a prescription opioid or heroin overdose, and mechanisms for referral to appropriate treatment for an eligible entity receiving a grant under this section.

“(f) **EVALUATION.**—The Secretary shall conduct an evaluation of grants made under this section to determine—

“(1) the number of first responders equipped with naloxone, or another opioid overdose reversal drug, for the prevention of fatal opioid and heroin overdose;

“(2) the number of opioid and heroin overdoses reversed by first responders receiving training and supplies of naloxone, or another opioid overdose reversal drug, through a grant received under this section;

“(3) the number of calls for service related to opioid and heroin overdose;

“(4) the extent to which overdose victims and families receive information about treatment services and available data describing treatment admissions; and

“(5) the research, training, and naloxone, or another opioid overdose reversal drug, supply needs of first responder agencies, including those agencies that are not receiving grants under this section.

“(g) **RURAL AREAS WITH LIMITED ACCESS TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES.**—In making grants under this section, the Secretary shall ensure that not less than 25 percent of grant funds are awarded to eligible entities that are not located in metropolitan statistical areas, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget.”.

SEC. 203. PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK EXPANSION.

(a) **DEFINITION OF COVERED ENTITY.**—In this section, the term “covered entity” means—

(1) a State, local, or tribal law enforcement agency;

(2) a manufacturer, distributor, or reverse distributor of prescription medications;

(3) a retail pharmacy;

(4) a registered narcotic treatment program;

(5) a hospital or clinic with an onsite pharmacy;

(6) an eligible long-term care facility; or

(7) any other entity authorized by the Drug Enforcement Administration to dispose of prescription medications.

(b) **PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**—The Attorney General, in coordination with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, shall coordinate with covered entities in expanding or making available disposal sites for unwanted prescription medications.

SEC. 204. HEROIN AND METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCES.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 202, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999. HEROIN AND METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCES.

“(a) **DEFINITION OF OPIOID.**—In this section, the term ‘opioid’ means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability.

“(b) **AUTHORITY.**—The Attorney General may make grants to State law enforcement agencies for investigative purposes—

“(1) to locate or investigate illicit activities through statewide collaboration, including activities related to—

“(A) the distribution of heroin or fentanyl, or the unlawful distribution of prescription opioids; or

“(B) unlawful heroin, fentanyl, and prescription opioid traffickers; and

“(2) to locate or investigate illicit activities, including precursor diversion, laboratories, or methamphetamine traffickers.”.

TITLE III—TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

SEC. 301. EVIDENCE-BASED PRESCRIPTION OPIOID AND HEROIN TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS DEMONSTRATION.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 204, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999A. EVIDENCE-BASED PRESCRIPTION OPIOID AND HEROIN TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS DEMONSTRATION.

“(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

“(1) the terms ‘Indian tribe’ and ‘tribal organization’ have the meaning given those terms in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603));

“(2) the term ‘medication assisted treatment’ means the use, for problems relating to heroin and other opioids, of medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies;

“(3) the term ‘opioid’ means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability;

“(4) the term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and

“(5) the term ‘State substance abuse agency’ means the agency of a State responsible for the State prevention, treatment, and recovery system, including management of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant under subpart II of part B of title XIX of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x–21 et seq.).

“(b) GRANTS.—

“(1) AUTHORITY TO MAKE GRANTS.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and in coordination with the Attorney General and other departments or agencies, as appropriate, may award grants to State substance abuse agencies, units of local government, nonprofit organizations, and Indian tribes or tribal organizations that have a high rate, or have had a rapid increase, in the use of heroin or other opioids, in order to permit such entities to expand activities, including an expansion in the availability of medication assisted treatment and other clinically appropriate services, with respect to the treatment of addiction in the specific geographical areas of such entities where there is a high rate or rapid increase in the use of heroin or other opioids.

“(2) NATURE OF ACTIVITIES.—The grant funds awarded under paragraph (1) shall be used for activities that are based on reliable scientific evidence of efficacy in the treatment of problems related to heroin or other opioids.

“(c) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary shall ensure that grants awarded under subsection (b) are distributed equitably among the various regions of the United States and among rural, urban, and suburban areas that are affected by the use of heroin or other opioids.

“(d) ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES.—In administering grants under subsection (b), the Secretary shall—

“(1) evaluate the activities supported by grants awarded under subsection (b);

“(2) disseminate information, as appropriate, derived from the evaluation as the Secretary considers appropriate;

“(3) provide States, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and providers with technical assistance in connection with the provision of treatment of problems related to heroin and other opioids; and

“(4) fund only those applications that specifically support recovery services as a critical component of the grant program.”.

SEC. 302. CRIMINAL JUSTICE MEDICATION ASSISTED TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS DEMONSTRATION.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “criminal justice agency” means a State, local, or tribal—

(A) court;

(B) prison;

(C) jail; or

(D) other agency that performs the administration of criminal justice, including prosecution, pretrial services, and community supervision;

(2) the term “eligible entity” means a State, unit of local government, or Indian tribe; and

(3) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Attorney General, may make grants to eligible entities to implement medication assisted treatment programs through criminal justice agencies.

(c) APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary—

(A) that meets the criteria under paragraph (2); and

(B) at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

(2) CRITERIA.—An eligible entity, in submitting an application under paragraph (1), shall—

(A) certify that each medication assisted treatment program funded with a grant under this section has been developed in consultation with the Single State Authority for Substance Abuse (as defined in section 201(e) of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17521(e))); and

(B) describe how data will be collected and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the program described in subparagraph (A).

(d) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section for expenses of—

(1) a medication assisted treatment program, including the expenses of prescribing medications recognized by the Food and Drug Administration for opioid treatment in conjunction with psychological and behavioral therapy;

(2) training criminal justice agency personnel and treatment providers on medication assisted treatment;

(3) cross-training personnel providing behavioral health and health services, administration of medicines, and other administrative expenses, including required reports; and

(4) the provision of recovery coaches who are responsible for providing mentorship and transition plans to individuals reentering society following incarceration or alternatives to incarceration.

(e) PRIORITY CONSIDERATION WITH RESPECT TO STATES.—In awarding grants to States under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to a State that—

(1) provides civil liability protection for first responders, health professionals, and family members who have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone in administering naloxone to counteract opioid overdoses; and

(2) submits to the Secretary a certification by the attorney general of the State that the attorney general has—

(A) reviewed any applicable civil liability protection law to determine the applicability of the law with respect to first responders, health care professionals, family members, and other individuals who—

(i) have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone; and

(ii) may administer naloxone to individuals reasonably believed to be suffering from opioid overdose; and

(B) concluded that the law described in subparagraph (A) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons.

(f) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Attorney General, shall provide technical assistance and training for an eligible entity receiving a grant under this section.

(g) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity receiving a grant under this section shall submit a report to the Secretary on the outcomes of each grant received under this section for individuals receiving medication assisted treatment, based on—

(A) the recidivism of the individuals;

(B) the treatment outcomes of the individuals, including maintaining abstinence from

illegal, unauthorized, and unprescribed or undispensed opioids and heroin;

(C) a comparison of the cost of providing medication assisted treatment to the cost of incarceration or other participation in the criminal justice system;

(D) the housing status of the individuals; and

(E) the employment status of the individuals.

(2) CONTENTS AND TIMING.—Each report described in paragraph (1) shall be submitted annually in such form, containing such information, and on such dates as the Secretary shall specify.

(h) FUNDING.—During the 5-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary may carry out this section using not more than \$5,000,000 each fiscal year of amounts appropriated to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for Criminal Justice Activities. No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

SEC. 303. NATIONAL YOUTH RECOVERY INITIATIVE.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 301, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999b. NATIONAL YOUTH RECOVERY INITIATIVE.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible entity’ means—

“(A) a high school that has been accredited as a recovery high school by the Association of Recovery Schools;

“(B) an accredited high school that is seeking to establish or expand recovery support services;

“(C) an institution of higher education;

“(D) a recovery program at a nonprofit collegiate institution; or

“(E) a nonprofit organization.

“(2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term ‘institution of higher education’ has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

“(3) RECOVERY PROGRAM.—The term ‘recovery program’—

“(A) means a program to help individuals who are recovering from substance use disorders to initiate, stabilize, and maintain healthy and productive lives in the community; and

“(B) includes peer-to-peer support and communal activities to build recovery skills and supportive social networks.

“(b) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Secretary of Education, may award grants to eligible entities to enable the entities to—

“(1) provide substance use disorder recovery support services to young people in high school and enrolled in institutions of higher education;

“(2) help build communities of support for young people in recovery through a spectrum of activities such as counseling and health- and wellness-oriented social activities; and

“(3) encourage initiatives designed to help young people achieve and sustain recovery from substance use disorders.

“(c) USE OF FUNDS.—Grants awarded under subsection (b) may be used for activities to develop, support, and maintain youth recovery support services, including—

“(1) the development and maintenance of a dedicated physical space for recovery programs;

“(2) dedicated staff for the provision of recovery programs;

“(3) health- and wellness-oriented social activities and community engagement;

“(4) establishment of recovery high schools;

“(5) coordination of recovery programs with—

“(A) substance use disorder treatment programs and systems;

“(B) providers of mental health services;

“(C) primary care providers and physicians;

“(D) the criminal justice system, including the juvenile justice system;

“(E) employers;

“(F) housing services;

“(G) child welfare services;

“(H) high schools and institutions of higher education; and

“(I) other programs or services related to the welfare of an individual in recovery from a substance use disorder;

“(6) the development of peer-to-peer support programs or services; and

“(7) additional activities that help youths and young adults to achieve recovery from substance use disorders.”.

SEC. 304. BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF RECOVERY.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 303, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999C. BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF RECOVERY.

“(a) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term ‘recovery community organization’ means an independent nonprofit organization that—

“(1) mobilizes resources within and outside of the recovery community to increase the prevalence and quality of long-term recovery from substance use disorders; and

“(2) is wholly or principally governed by people in recovery for substance use disorders who reflect the community served.

“(b) **GRANTS AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services may award grants to recovery community organizations to enable such organizations to develop, expand, and enhance recovery services.

“(c) **FEDERAL SHARE.**—The Federal share of the costs of a program funded by a grant under this section may not exceed 50 percent.

“(d) **USE OF FUNDS.**—Grants awarded under subsection (b)—

“(1) shall be used to develop, expand, and enhance community and statewide recovery support services; and

“(2) may be used to—

“(A) advocate for individuals in recovery from substance use disorders;

“(B) build connections between recovery networks, between recovery community organizations, and with other recovery support services, including—

“(i) substance use disorder treatment programs and systems;

“(ii) providers of mental health services;

“(iii) primary care providers and physicians;

“(iv) the criminal justice system;

“(v) employers;

“(vi) housing services;

“(vii) child welfare agencies; and

“(viii) other recovery support services that facilitate recovery from substance use disorders;

“(C) reduce the stigma associated with substance use disorders;

“(D) conduct public education and outreach on issues relating to substance use disorders and recovery, including—

“(i) how to identify the signs of addiction;

“(ii) the resources that are available to individuals struggling with addiction and families who have a family member struggling with or being treated for addiction, including programs that mentor and provide support services to children;

“(iii) the resources that are available to help support individuals in recovery; and

“(iv) information on the medical consequences of substance use disorders, including neonatal abstinence syndrome and potential infection with human immunodeficiency virus and viral hepatitis; and

“(E) carry out other activities that strengthen the network of community support for individuals in recovery.”.

TITLE IV—ADDRESSING COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES

SEC. 401. CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION GRANT PROGRAM.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 304, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999D. CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION GRANT PROGRAM.

“(a) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term ‘eligible entity’ means a State, unit of local government, nonprofit organization, or Indian tribe.

“(b) **GRANT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**—The Attorney General may make grants to eligible entities to design, implement, and expand educational programs for offenders in prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities, including to pay for—

“(1) basic education, secondary level academic education, high school equivalency examination preparation, career technical education, and English language learner instruction at the basic, secondary, or post-secondary levels, for adult and juvenile populations;

“(2) screening and assessment of inmates to assess education level and needs, occupational interest or aptitude, risk level, and other needs, and case management services;

“(3) hiring and training of instructors and aides, reimbursement of non-corrections staff and experts, reimbursement of stipends paid to inmate tutors or aides, and the costs of training inmate tutors and aides;

“(4) instructional supplies and equipment, including occupational program supplies and equipment to the extent that the supplies and equipment are used for instructional purposes;

“(5) partnerships and agreements with community colleges, universities, and career technology education program providers;

“(6) certification programs providing recognized high school equivalency certificates and industry recognized credentials; and

“(7) technology solutions to—

“(A) meet the instructional, assessment, and information needs of correctional populations; and

“(B) facilitate the continued participation of incarcerated students in community-based education programs after the students are released from incarceration.

“(c) **APPLICATION.**—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit to the Attorney General an application in such form and manner, at such time, and accompanied by such information as the Attorney General specifies.

“(d) **PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS.**—In awarding grants under this section, the Attorney General shall give priority to applicants that—

“(1) assess the level of risk and need of inmates, including by—

“(A) assessing the need for English language learner instruction;

“(B) conducting educational assessments; and

“(C) assessing occupational interests and aptitudes;

“(2) target educational services to assessed needs, including academic and occupational at the basic, secondary, or post-secondary level;

“(3) target career and technology education programs to—

“(A) areas of identified occupational demand; and

“(B) employment opportunities in the communities in which students are reasonably expected to reside post-release;

“(4) include a range of appropriate educational opportunities at the basic, secondary, and post-secondary levels;

“(5) include opportunities for students to attain industry recognized credentials;

“(6) include partnership or articulation agreements linking institutional education programs with community sited programs provided by adult education program providers and accredited institutions of higher education, community colleges, and vocational training institutions; and

“(7) explicitly include career pathways models offering opportunities for incarcerated students to develop academic skills, in-demand occupational skills and credentials, occupational experience in institutional work programs or work release programs, and linkages with employers in the community, so that incarcerated students have opportunities to embark on careers with strong prospects for both post-release employment and advancement in a career ladder over time.

“(e) **REQUIREMENTS.**—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall—

“(1) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used to evaluate each program funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program; and

“(2) describe how each program described in paragraph (1) could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective.

“(f) **CONTROL OF INTERNET ACCESS.**—An entity that receives a grant under this section may restrict access to the Internet by prisoners, as appropriate and in accordance with Federal and State law, to ensure public safety.”.

SEC. 402. NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON RECOVERY AND COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES.

(a) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term “collateral consequence” means a penalty, disability, or disadvantage imposed on an individual who is in recovery for a substance use disorder (including by an administrative agency, official, or civil court) as a result of a Federal or State conviction for a drug-related offense but not as part of the judgment of the court that imposes the conviction.

(b) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall establish a bipartisan task force to be known as the Task Force on Recovery and Collateral Consequences (in this section referred to as the “Task Force”).

(2) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

(A) **TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS.**—The Task Force shall include 10 members, who shall be appointed by the Attorney General in accordance with subparagraphs (B) and (C).

(B) **MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE.**—The Task Force shall include—

(i) members who have national recognition and significant expertise in areas such as health care, housing, employment, substance use disorders, mental health, law enforcement, and law;

(ii) not fewer than 2 members—

(I) who have personally experienced a substance abuse disorder or addiction and are in recovery; and

(II) not fewer than 1 of whom has benefited from medication assisted treatment; and

(iii) to the extent practicable, members who formerly served as elected officials at the State and Federal levels.

(C) **TIMING.**—The Attorney General shall appoint the members of the Task Force not later than 60 days after the date on which the Task Force is established under paragraph (1).

(3) **CHAIRPERSON.**—The Task Force shall select a chairperson or co-chairpersons from among the members of the Task Force.

(c) **DUTIES OF THE TASK FORCE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Task Force shall—

(A) identify collateral consequences for individuals with Federal or State convictions for drug-related offenses who are in recovery for substance use disorder; and

(B) examine any policy basis for the imposition of collateral consequences identified under subparagraph (A) and the effect of the collateral consequences on individuals in recovery in resuming their personal and professional activities.

(2) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the first meeting of the Task Force, the Task Force shall develop recommendations, as it considers appropriate, for proposed legislative and regulatory changes related to the collateral consequences identified under paragraph (1).

(3) **COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.**—The Task Force shall hold hearings, require the testimony and attendance of witnesses, and secure information from any department or agency of the United States in performing the duties under paragraphs (1) and (2).

(4) **REPORT.**—

(A) **SUBMISSION TO EXECUTIVE BRANCH.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the first meeting of the Task Force, the Task Force shall submit a report detailing the findings and recommendations of the Task Force to—

(i) the head of each relevant department or agency of the United States;

(ii) the President; and

(iii) the Vice President.

(B) **SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.**—The individuals who receive the report under subparagraph (A) shall submit to Congress such legislative recommendations, if any, as those individuals consider appropriate based on the report.

TITLE V—ADDICTION AND TREATMENT SERVICES FOR WOMEN, FAMILIES, AND VETERANS

SEC. 501. IMPROVING TREATMENT FOR PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM WOMEN.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 508 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb-1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting “(referred to in this section as the ‘Director’)” after “Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment”; and

(2) in subsection (p), in the first sentence—

(A) by striking “Committee on Labor and Human Resources” and inserting “Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions”; and

(B) by inserting “(other than subsection (r))” after “this section”.

(b) **PILOT PROGRAM GRANTS FOR STATE SUBSTANCE ABUSE AGENCIES.**—Section 508 of the

Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb-1) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (r); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (q) the following:

“(r) **PILOT PROGRAM FOR STATE SUBSTANCE ABUSE AGENCIES.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Director shall carry out a pilot program under which the Director makes competitive grants to State substance abuse agencies to—

“(A) enhance flexibility in the use of funds designed to support family-based services for pregnant and postpartum women with a primary diagnosis of a substance use disorder, including opioid use disorders;

“(B) help State substance abuse agencies address identified gaps in services furnished to such women along the continuum of care, including services provided to women in non-residential based settings; and

“(C) promote a coordinated, effective, and efficient State system managed by State substance abuse agencies by encouraging new approaches and models of service delivery that are evidence-based, including effective family-based programs for women involved with the criminal justice system.

“(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—In carrying out the pilot program under this subsection, the Director—

“(A) shall require State substance abuse agencies to submit to the Director applications, in such form and manner and containing such information as specified by the Director, to be eligible to receive a grant under the program;

“(B) shall identify, based on such submitted applications, State substance abuse agencies that are eligible for such grants;

“(C) shall require services proposed to be furnished through such a grant to support family-based treatment and other services for pregnant and postpartum women with a primary diagnosis of a substance use disorder, including opioid use disorders;

“(D) notwithstanding subsection (a)(1), shall not require that services furnished through such a grant be provided solely to women that reside in facilities; and

“(E) shall not require that grant recipients under the program make available all services described in subsection (d).

“(3) **REQUIRED SERVICES.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Director shall specify minimum services required to be made available to eligible women through a grant awarded under the pilot program under this subsection. Such minimum services—

“(i) shall include the requirements described in subsection (c);

“(ii) may include any of the services described in subsection (d);

“(iii) may include other services, as appropriate; and

“(iv) shall be based on the recommendations submitted under subparagraph (B)

“(B) **STAKEHOLDER INPUT.**—The Director shall convene and solicit recommendations from stakeholders, including State substance abuse agencies, health care providers, persons in recovery from a substance use disorder, and other appropriate individuals, for the minimum services described in subparagraph (A).

“(4) **DURATION.**—The pilot program under this subsection shall not exceed 5 years.

“(5) **EVALUATION AND REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Out of amounts made available to the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, the Director of the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, in cooperation with the re-

cipients of grants under this subsection, shall conduct an evaluation of the pilot program under this subsection, beginning 1 year after the date on which a grant is first awarded under this subsection. The Director of the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, in coordination with the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, not later than 120 days after completion of such evaluation, shall submit to the relevant Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on such evaluation.

“(B) **CONTENTS.**—The report to Congress under subparagraph (A) shall include, at a minimum, outcomes information from the pilot program, including any resulting reductions in the use of alcohol and other drugs, engagement in treatment services, retention in the appropriate level and duration of services, increased access to the use of drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of substance use disorders in combination with counseling, and other appropriate measures.

“(6) **DEFINITION OF STATE SUBSTANCE ABUSE AGENCY.**—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘State substance abuse agency’ means, with respect to a State, the agency in such State that manages the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant program under part B of title XIX.

“(s) **FUNDING.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For the purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated \$15,900,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.

“(2) **LIMITATION.**—Of the amounts made available under paragraph (1) to carry out this section, not more than 25 percent may be used each fiscal year to carry out subsection (r).”.

SEC. 502. REPORT ON GRANTS FOR FAMILY-BASED SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT.

Section 2925 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797s-4) is amended—

(1) by striking “An entity” and inserting “(a) **ENTITY REPORTS.**—An entity”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) **ATTORNEY GENERAL REPORT ON FAMILY-BASED SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT.**—The Attorney General shall submit to Congress an annual report that describes the number of grants awarded under section 2921(1) and how such grants are used by the recipients for family-based substance abuse treatment programs that serve as alternatives to incarceration for custodial parents to receive treatment and services as a family.”.

SEC. 503. VETERANS' TREATMENT COURTS.

Section 2991(j)(1)(B)(ii) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa(j)(1)(B)(ii)), as amended by the Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act of 2015 (S. 993, 114th Congress), is amended—

(1) by inserting “(I)” after “(ii)”;

(2) in subclause (I), as so designated, by striking the period and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(II) was discharged or released from such service under dishonorable conditions, if the reason for that discharge or release, if known, is attributable to a substance use disorder.”.

TITLE VI—INCENTIVIZING STATE COMPREHENSIVE INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS PRESCRIPTION OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE

SEC. 601. STATE DEMONSTRATION GRANTS FOR COMPREHENSIVE OPIOID ABUSE RESPONSE.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—
 (1) the term “dispenser” has the meaning given the term in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802);

(2) the term “prescriber” means a dispenser who prescribes a controlled substance, or the agent of such a dispenser;

(3) the term “prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance” does not include a prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance that dispenses the substance—

(A) for use on the premises on which the substance is dispensed;

(B) in a hospital emergency room, when the substance is in short supply;

(C) for a certified opioid treatment program; or

(D) in other situations as the Attorney General may reasonably determine; and

(4) the term “schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance” means a controlled substance that is listed on schedule II, schedule III, or schedule IV of section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812(c)).

(b) **PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Attorney General, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and in consultation with the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, may award grants to States, and combinations thereof, to prepare a comprehensive plan for and implement an integrated opioid abuse response initiative.

(2) **PURPOSES.**—A State receiving a grant under this section shall establish a comprehensive response to opioid abuse, which shall include—

(A) prevention and education efforts around heroin and opioid use, treatment, and recovery, including education of residents, medical students, and physicians and other prescribers of schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances on relevant prescribing guidelines and the prescription drug monitoring program of the State;

(B) a comprehensive prescription drug monitoring program to track dispensing of schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances, which shall—

(i) provide for data sharing with other States by statute, regulation, or interstate agreement; and

(ii) allow for access to all individuals authorized by the State to write prescriptions for schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances on the prescription drug monitoring program of the State;

(C) developing, implementing, or expanding prescription drug and opioid addiction treatment programs by—

(i) expanding programs for medication assisted treatment of prescription drug and opioid addiction, including training for treatment and recovery support providers;

(ii) developing, implementing, or expanding programs for behavioral health therapy for individuals who are in treatment for prescription drug and opioid addiction;

(iii) developing, implementing, or expanding programs to screen individuals who are in treatment for prescription drug and opioid addiction for hepatitis C and HIV, and provide treatment for those individuals if clinically appropriate; or

(iv) developing, implementing, or expanding programs that provide screening, early

intervention, and referral to treatment (commonly known as “SBIRT”) to teenagers and young adults in primary care, middle schools, high schools, universities, school-based health centers, and other community-based health care settings frequently accessed by teenagers or young adults; and

(D) developing, implementing, and expanding programs to prevent overdose death from prescription medications and opioids.

(3) **PLANNING GRANT APPLICATIONS.**—

(A) **APPLICATION.**—

(i) **IN GENERAL.**—A State seeking a planning grant under this section to prepare a comprehensive plan for an integrated opioid abuse response initiative shall submit to the Attorney General an application in such form, and containing such information, as the Attorney General may require.

(ii) **REQUIREMENTS.**—An application for a planning grant under this section shall, at a minimum, include—

(I) a budget and a budget justification for the activities to be carried out using the grant;

(II) a description of the activities proposed to be carried out using the grant, including a schedule for completion of such activities;

(III) outcome measures that will be used to measure the effectiveness of the programs and initiatives to address opioids; and

(IV) a description of the personnel necessary to complete such activities.

(B) **PERIOD; NONRENEWABILITY.**—A planning grant under this section shall be for a period of 1 year. A State may not receive more than 1 planning grant under this section.

(C) **STRATEGIC PLAN AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.**—A State receiving a planning grant under this section shall develop a strategic plan and a program implementation plan.

(4) **IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.**—

(A) **APPLICATION.**—A State seeking an implementation grant under this section to implement a comprehensive strategy for addressing opioid abuse shall submit to the Attorney General an application in such form, and containing such information, as the Attorney General may require.

(B) **USE OF FUNDS.**—A State that receives an implementation grant under this section shall use the grant for the cost of carrying out an integrated opioid abuse response program in accordance with this section, including for technical assistance, training, and administrative expenses.

(C) **REQUIREMENTS.**—An integrated opioid abuse response program carried out using an implementation grant under this section shall—

(i) require that each prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance in the State—

(I) registers with the prescription drug monitoring program of the State; and

(II) consults the prescription drug monitoring program database of the State before prescribing a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance;

(ii) require that each dispenser of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance in the State—

(I) registers with the prescription drug monitoring program of the State;

(II) consults the prescription drug monitoring program database of the State before dispensing a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance; and

(III) reports to the prescription drug monitoring program of the State, at a minimum, each instance in which a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance is dispensed, with limited exceptions, as defined by the State,

which shall indicate the prescriber by name and National Provider Identifier;

(iii) require that, not fewer than 4 times each year, the State agency or agencies that administer the prescription drug monitoring program of the State prepare and provide to each prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance an informational report that shows how the prescribing patterns of the prescriber compare to prescribing practices of the peers of the prescriber and expected norms;

(iv) if informational reports provided to a prescriber under clause (iii) indicate that the prescriber is repeatedly falling outside of expected norms or standard practices for the prescriber's field, direct the prescriber to educational resources on appropriate prescribing of controlled substances;

(v) ensure that the prescriber licensing board of the State receives a report describing any prescribers that repeatedly fall outside of expected norms or standard practices for the prescriber's field, as described in clause (iii);

(vi) require consultation with the Single State Authority for Substance Abuse (as defined in section 201(e) of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17521(e))); and

(vii) establish requirements for how data will be collected and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the program.

(D) **PERIOD.**—An implementation grant under this section shall be for a period of 2 years.

(5) **PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS.**—In awarding planning and implementation grants under this section, the Attorney General shall give priority to a State that—

(A)(i) provides civil liability protection for first responders, health professionals, and family members who have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone in administering naloxone to counteract opioid overdoses; and

(ii) submits to the Attorney General a certification by the attorney general of the State that the attorney general has—

(I) reviewed any applicable civil liability protection law to determine the applicability of the law with respect to first responders, health care professionals, family members, and other individuals who—

(aa) have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone; and

(bb) may administer naloxone to individuals reasonably believed to be suffering from opioid overdose; and

(II) concluded that the law described in subclause (I) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons;

(B) has in effect legislation or implements a policy under which the State shall not terminate, but may suspend, enrollment under the State plan for medical assistance under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) for an individual who is incarcerated for a period of fewer than 2 years;

(C) has a process for enrollment in services and benefits necessary by criminal justice agencies to initiate or continue treatment in the community, under which an individual who is incarcerated may, while incarcerated, enroll in services and benefits that are necessary for the individual to continue treatment upon release from incarceration;

(D) ensures the capability of data sharing with other States, such as by making data available to a prescription monitoring hub;

(E) ensures that data recorded in the prescription drug monitoring program database of the State is available within 24 hours, to the extent possible; and

(F) ensures that the prescription drug monitoring program of the State notifies prescribers and dispensers of schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances when overuse or misuse of such controlled substances by patients is suspected.

(C) **AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDING.**—For each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020, the Attorney General may use, from any unobligated balances made available under the heading “GENERAL ADMINISTRATION” to the Department of Justice in an appropriation Act, such amounts as are necessary to carry out this section, not to exceed \$5,000,000 per fiscal year.

TITLE VII—MISCELLANEOUS

SEC. 701. GAO REPORT ON IMD EXCLUSION.

(A) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term “Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease exclusion” means the prohibition on Federal matching payments under Medicaid for patients who have attained age 22, but have not attained age 65, in an institution for mental diseases under subparagraph (B) of the matter following subsection (a) of section 1905 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d) and subsection (i) of such section.

(B) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the impact that the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease exclusion has on access to treatment for individuals with a substance use disorder.

(C) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required under subsection (b) shall include a review of what is known regarding—

(1) Medicaid beneficiary access to substance use disorder treatments in institutions for mental disease; and

(2) the quality of care provided to Medicaid beneficiaries treated in and outside of institutions for mental disease for substance use disorders.

SEC. 702. FUNDING.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 401, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999E. FUNDING.

“There are authorized to be appropriated to the Attorney General and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out this part \$62,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.”

SEC. 703. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) is amended—

(1) in the part heading, by striking “CONFRONTING USE OF METHAMPHETAMINE” and inserting “COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY”; and

(2) in section 2996(a)(1), by striking “this part” and inserting “this section”.

SEC. 704. GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY.

(A) **GRANTS UNDER PART II OF TITLE I OF THE OMNIBUS CRIME CONTROL AND SAFE STREETS ACT OF 1968.**—Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 702, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999F. GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY.

“(A) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘applicable committees’—

“(A) with respect to the Attorney General and any other official of the Department of Justice, means—

“(i) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

“(ii) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

“(B) with respect to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and any other official of the Department of Health and Human Services, means—

“(i) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

“(ii) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives;

“(2) the term ‘covered agency’ means—

“(A) the Department of Justice; and

“(B) the Department of Health and Human Services; and

“(3) the term ‘covered official’ means—

“(A) the Attorney General; and

“(B) the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

“(b) **ACCOUNTABILITY.**—All grants awarded by a covered official under this part shall be subject to the following accountability provisions:

“(1) **AUDIT REQUIREMENT.**—

“(A) **DEFINITION.**—In this paragraph, the term ‘unresolved audit finding’ means a finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of a covered agency that the audited grantee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within 12 months after the date on which the final audit report is issued.

“(B) **AUDIT.**—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this section, and in each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of a covered agency shall conduct audits of recipients of grants awarded by the applicable covered official under this part to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

“(C) **MANDATORY EXCLUSION.**—A recipient of grant funds under this part that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive grant funds under this part during the first 2 fiscal years beginning after the end of the 12-month period described in subparagraph (A).

“(D) **PRIORITY.**—In awarding grants under this part, a covered official shall give priority to eligible applicants that did not have an unresolved audit finding during the 3 fiscal years before submitting an application for a grant under this part.

“(E) **REIMBURSEMENT.**—If an entity is awarded grant funds under this part during the 2-fiscal-year period during which the entity is barred from receiving grants under subparagraph (C), the covered official that awarded the grant funds shall—

“(i) deposit an amount equal to the amount of the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

“(ii) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

“(2) **NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS.**—

“(A) **DEFINITION.**—For purposes of this paragraph and the grant programs under this part, the term ‘nonprofit organization’ means an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

“(B) **PROHIBITION.**—A covered official may not award a grant under this part to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

“(C) **DISCLOSURE.**—Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a grant under this

part and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees, and key employees, shall disclose to the applicable covered official, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, a covered official shall make the information disclosed under this subparagraph available for public inspection.

“(3) **CONFERENCE EXPENDITURES.**—

“(A) **LIMITATION.**—No amounts made available to a covered official under this part may be used by the covered official, or by any individual or entity awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under this part, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than \$20,000 in funds made available by the covered official, unless the covered official provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host the conference.

“(B) **WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION.**—Written authorization under subparagraph (A) shall include a written estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food, beverages, audio-visual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and entertainment.

“(C) **REPORT.**—

“(i) **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.**—The Deputy Attorney General shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Attorney General under this paragraph.

“(ii) **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.**—The Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under this paragraph.

“(4) **ANNUAL CERTIFICATION.**—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this section, each covered official shall submit to the applicable committees an annual certification—

“(A) indicating whether—

“(i) all audits issued by the Office of the Inspector General of the applicable agency under paragraph (1) have been completed and reviewed by the appropriate Assistant Attorney General or Director, or the appropriate official of the Department of Health and Human Services, as applicable;

“(ii) all mandatory exclusions required under paragraph (1)(C) have been issued; and

“(iii) all reimbursements required under paragraph (1)(E) have been made; and

“(B) that includes a list of any grant recipients excluded under paragraph (1) from the previous year.

“(c) **PREVENTING DUPLICATIVE GRANTS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Before a covered official awards a grant to an applicant under this part, the covered official shall compare potential grant awards with other grants awarded under this part by the covered official to determine if duplicate grant awards are awarded for the same purpose.

“(2) **REPORT.**—If a covered official awards duplicate grants to the same applicant for the same purpose, the covered official shall submit to the applicable committees a report that includes—

“(A) a list of all duplicate grants awarded, including the total dollar amount of any duplicate grants awarded; and

“(B) the reason the covered official awarded the duplicate grants.”.

(b) OTHER GRANTS.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

(A) the term “applicable committees”—

(i) with respect to the Attorney General and any other official of the Department of Justice, means—

(I) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(II) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

(ii) with respect to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and any other official of the Department of Health and Human Services, means—

(I) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

(II) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives;

(B) the term “covered agency” means—

(i) the Department of Justice; and

(ii) the Department of Health and Human Services;

(C) the term “covered grant” means a grant under section 201, 302, or 601 of this Act or section 508 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb-1) (as amended by section 501 of this Act); and

(D) the term “covered official” means—

(i) the Attorney General; and

(ii) the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(2) ACCOUNTABILITY.—All covered grants awarded by a covered official shall be subject to the following accountability provisions:

(A) AUDIT REQUIREMENT.—

(i) DEFINITION.—In this subparagraph, the term “unresolved audit finding” means a finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of a covered agency that the audited grantee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within 12 months after the date on which the final audit report is issued.

(ii) AUDIT.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act, and in each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of a covered agency shall conduct audits of recipients of covered grants awarded by the applicable covered official to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

(iii) MANDATORY EXCLUSION.—A recipient of covered grant funds that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive covered grant funds during the first 2 fiscal years beginning after the end of the 12-month period described in clause (i).

(iv) PRIORITY.—In awarding covered grants, a covered official shall give priority to eligible applicants that did not have an unresolved audit finding during the 3 fiscal years before submitting an application for a covered grant.

(v) REIMBURSEMENT.—If an entity is awarded covered grant funds during the 2-fiscal-year period during which the entity is barred from receiving grants under clause (iii), the covered official that awarded the funds shall—

(I) deposit an amount equal to the amount of the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

(II) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

(B) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS.—

(i) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this subparagraph and the covered grant programs,

the term “nonprofit organization” means an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

(ii) PROHIBITION.—A covered official may not award a covered grant to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(iii) DISCLOSURE.—Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a covered grant and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees, and key employees, shall disclose to the applicable covered official, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, a covered official shall make the information disclosed under this clause available for public inspection.

(C) CONFERENCE EXPENDITURES.—

(i) LIMITATION.—No amounts made available to a covered official under a covered grant program may be used by the covered official, or by any individual or entity awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under a covered grant program, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than \$20,000 in funds made available by the covered official, unless the covered official provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host the conference.

(ii) WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION.—Written authorization under clause (i) shall include a written estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food, beverages, audio-visual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and entertainment.

(iii) REPORT.—

(I) DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—The Deputy Attorney General shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Attorney General under this subparagraph.

(II) DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.—The Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under this subparagraph.

(D) ANNUAL CERTIFICATION.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act, each covered official shall submit to the applicable committees an annual certification—

(i) indicating whether—

(I) all audits issued by the Office of the Inspector General of the applicable agency under subparagraph (A) have been completed and reviewed by the appropriate Assistant Attorney General or Director, or the appropriate official of the Department of Health and Human Services, as applicable;

(II) all mandatory exclusions required under subparagraph (A)(iii) have been issued; and

(III) all reimbursements required under subparagraph (A)(v) have been made; and

(ii) that includes a list of any grant recipients excluded under subparagraph (A) from the previous year.

(3) PREVENTING DUPLICATIVE GRANTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Before a covered official awards a covered grant to an applicant, the covered official shall compare potential

grant awards with other covered grants awarded by the covered official to determine if duplicate grant awards are awarded for the same purpose.

(B) REPORT.—If a covered official awards duplicate grants to the same applicant for the same purpose, the covered official shall submit to the applicable committees a report that includes—

(i) a list of all duplicate grants awarded, including the total dollar amount of any duplicate grants awarded; and

(ii) the reason the covered official awarded the duplicate grants.

SA 3379. Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ FUNDING FOR OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act”.

(b) FUNDING.—There are authorized to be appropriated, and are appropriated, out of monies in the Treasury not otherwise obligated, \$1,164,600,000 for the period of fiscal years 2017 and 2018, to improve opioid prescribing practices to reduce opioid use disorders and overdose, to be made available in accordance with this section.

(c) STATE TARGETED RESPONSE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—Subpart 1 of part B of title V of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 509 the following:

“SEC. 510. STATE TARGETED RESPONSE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into additional targeted response cooperative agreements with States under this title to expand opioid treatment capacity and make services more affordable to those who cannot afford such services.

“(b) AWARDING OF FUNDING.—The Secretary shall allocate funding to States under this section based on—

“(1) the severity of the opioid epidemic in the State; and

“(2) the strength of the strategy of the State to respond to such epidemic.

“(c) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts received by a State under this section shall be used to expand treatment capacity and make services more affordable to those who cannot afford such services and to help individuals seek treatment, successfully complete treatment, and sustain recovery.

“(d) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this section, \$460,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 and 2018.”.

(d) TREATMENT FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE AND HEROIN USE.—Section 331(b) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254d(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(3)(A) The Secretary shall use amounts made available under subparagraph (B) to support enhanced loan repayment awards to increase the number of clinicians in the Corps with medication assisted treatment

training to treat individuals with opioid use disorders through loan repayments to clinicians.

“(B) From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this paragraph, \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 and 2018.”.

(e) EVALUATION OF MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT.—Subpart 1 of part B of title V of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 510, as added by subsection (c)) the following:

“SEC. 511. EVALUATION OF MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to assess the treatment outcomes of patients with opioid addiction receiving medication-assisted treatment, the Secretary shall evaluate the short, medium, and long-term outcomes of such substance abuse treatment programs in order to increase effectiveness in reducing opioid use disorders, overdose, and death.

“(b) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this section, \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 and 2018.”.

(f) MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND OPIOID ADDICTION.—Section 509 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb-2) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (e), the following:

“(f) MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND OPIOID ADDICTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall use amounts made available under paragraph (3) to award grants to States to expand or enhance medication assisted treatment utilizing medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration in combination with psychosocial services, recovery support services, and coordination with HIV or hepatitis C direct services.

“(2) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, \$50,100,000 for fiscal year 2017.”.

(g) BUPRENORPHINE-PRESCRIBING AUTHORITY DEMONSTRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To increase the availability of medication-assisted treatment services for prescription drug and opioid addiction, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall use amounts made available under paragraph (3) to establish a demonstration project to test the safety and effectiveness of allowing the prescribing of buprenorphine by non-physician advance practice providers in accordance with the providers’ prescribing authority under applicable State law.

(2) TARGETING.—In carrying out the demonstration project under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall target populations and geographic areas that are most affected by both high-need and limited access to physicians authorized to prescribe buprenorphine.

(3) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.

(4) DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (B)(i) of section 303(g)(2) of the

Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)(B)(i)), the Secretary of Health and Human Services may, using amounts made available in this Act to carry out title V of the Public Health Service Act, establish and carry out a demonstration project through fiscal year 2021 in which, for purposes of prescribing buprenorphine under such section 303(g)(2), the term “practitioner” shall be deemed to include non-physician providers authorized to prescribe buprenorphine by the jurisdiction in which the provider is licensed and who meet such criteria as determined appropriate by the Secretary, in consultation with the Attorney General, for participation in the project.

(B) LIMITATION.—In implementing the demonstration project under subparagraph (A), the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General shall not be subject to the requirements of section 553 of title 5, United States Code.

(C) GRANTS.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services may enter into grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements with one or more research institutions, and public and nonprofit entities to assist in carrying out the demonstration project under subparagraph (A). Amounts available for fiscal year 2016 to the Attorney General for carrying out such section 303 of the Controlled Substances Act shall also be available to the Attorney General to facilitate and support the efficient operation of the demonstration project under this paragraph.

(D) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—Any authority provided under this paragraph for a provider to prescribe buprenorphine shall end not later than the date on which such provider ceases to participate in the demonstration project under this paragraph.

(h) DISSEMINATION OF GUIDELINES FOR PREVENTING PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSE.—Section 317 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247b) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(n) DISSEMINATION OF GUIDELINES FOR PREVENTING PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shall disseminate guidelines to improve opioid prescribing practices to reduce opioid use disorders and overdose.

“(2) USE OF FUNDS.—In carrying out this subsection, the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shall use amounts made available under paragraph (3) to—

“(A) pilot test, evaluate, and adapt comprehensive tools and dissemination strategies to convey opioid prescribing guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in succinct, usable formats accessible to health care providers;

“(B) develop, evaluate, and publicly disseminate clinical decision support tools derived from the opioid prescribing guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

“(C) establish training modules in partnership with professional societies and health systems, including online modules available for continuing medical education credits and maintenance of certification; and

“(D) coordinate with Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology to ensure that guidelines developed under this subsection are effectively disseminated and translated into clinical support tools for integration into clinical workflow.

“(3) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.”.

(i) RURAL OPIOID OVERDOSE REVERSAL GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 330A of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254c) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (j) as subsection (k); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (i), the following:

“(j) RURAL OPIOID OVERDOSE REVERSAL GRANT PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director may award grants to eligible entities to implement activities for the prevention, intervention, and treatment of opioid misuse and overdose.

“(2) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection, an entity—

“(A) shall be a rural public or rural nonprofit private entity; and

“(B) shall represent a network composed of participants—

“(i) that include 3 or more health care providers; and

“(ii) that may be nonprofit or for-profit entities.

“(3) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts awarded under a grant under this subsection shall be used—

“(A) to provide opioid misuse education and prevention services;

“(B) to provide training to licensed health care professionals and first responders in the recognition of the signs of opioid overdose and learn the appropriate way to administer naloxone;

“(C) to provide appropriate transportation services to a hospital or clinic for continued care after administration;

“(D) to refer those individuals with a drug dependency to an appropriate substance use disorder treatment centers where care coordination is provided by a team of providers; and

“(E) to purchase naloxone and opioid overdose reversal devices.

“(4) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.”.

(j) PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSE INITIATIVE.—Section 3001(c) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300jj-11(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(9) PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSE INITIATIVE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the National Coordinator, shall use amounts made available under subparagraph (B) to expand efforts to harmonize technical standards to support prescription drug monitoring programs and health information technology interoperability.

“(B) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.”.

(k) BUREAU OF PRISONS TREATMENT PROGRAMS.—Section 4042 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) TREATMENT PROGRAMS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Bureau of Prisons shall use amounts made available under paragraph (2) to support drug treatment programs within the Bureau of Prisons, including expanding the medication-assisted treatment pilot.

“(2) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, \$3,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.”.

(1) SECOND CHANCE ACT OF 2007.—Section 201 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17521) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (e), the following:

“(f) COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall use amounts made available under paragraph (2) to carry out activities to reduce recidivism and increase public safety by helping justice-involved individuals successfully reintegrate into the community, including by carrying out activities including providing treatment for co-occurring disorders and providing family-based substance abuse treatment.

“(2) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.”.

(m) RESIDENTIAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT.—Section 503 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 873) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e)(1) In carrying out this section, the Attorney General may use amounts made available under paragraph (2) to provide support for State, local, and tribal governments in the development of residential and aftercare services for substance-involved inmates.

“(2) From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, \$14,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.”.

(n) HEROIN ENFORCEMENT GROUPS.—Part E of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 871 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 521. HEROIN ENFORCEMENT GROUPS.

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall use amounts made available under subsection (b) to establish new heroin enforcement groups with the Drug Enforcement Administration to target, disrupt, and dismantle heroin trafficking organizations.

“(b) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this section, \$12,500,000 for fiscal year 2017.”.

(o) EMERGENCY DESIGNATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—This section is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4(g) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 933(g)).

(2) DESIGNATION IN SENATE.—In the Senate, this section is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 403(a) of S. Con. Res. 13 (111th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010.

SA 3380. Mr. TESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. ____. GRANTS FOR DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVES TO OPIOID DRUGS.

Section 409J of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 284q) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) GRANTS FOR DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVES TO OPIOID DRUGS.—The Director of NIH may award grants in collaboration with

the Pain Consortium for increasing research and development opportunities to accelerate the development of drugs that are alternatives to opioids for effective pain treatments.”.

SA 3381. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. PAUL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VIII—TREAT ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Recovery Enhancement for Addiction Treatment Act” or the “TREAT Act”.

SEC. 802. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Overdoses from opioids have increased dramatically in the United States.

(2) Deaths from drug overdose, largely from prescription pain relievers, have tripled among men and increased five-fold among women over the past decade.

(3) Nationwide, drug overdoses now claim more lives than car accidents.

(4) Opioid addiction is a chronic disease that, untreated, places a large burden on the healthcare system. Roughly 475,000 emergency room visits each year are attributable to the misuse and abuse of opioid pain medication.

(5) Effective medication-assisted treatment for opioid addiction, in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies, can decrease overdose deaths, be cost-effective, reduce transmissions of HIV and viral hepatitis, and reduce other social harms such as criminal activity.

(6) Effective medication-assisted treatment programs for opioid addiction should include multiple components, including medications, cognitive and behavioral supports and interventions, and drug testing.

(7) Effective medication-assisted treatment programs for opioid addiction may use a team of staff members, in addition to a prescribing provider, to deliver comprehensive care.

(8) Access to medication-assisted treatments, including office-based buprenorphine opioid treatment, remains limited in part due to current practice regulations and an insufficient number of providers.

(9) More than 10 years of experience in the United States with office-based buprenorphine opioid treatment has informed best practices for delivering successful, high quality care.

SEC. 803. EXPANSION OF PATIENT LIMITS UNDER WAIVER.

Section 303(g)(2)(B) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)(B)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking “physician” and inserting “practitioner”;

(2) in clause (iii)—

(A) by striking “30” and inserting “100”; and

(B) by striking “, unless, not sooner” and all that follows through the end and inserting a period; and

(3) by inserting at the end the following new clause:

“(iv) Not earlier than 1 year after the date on which a qualifying practitioner obtained an initial waiver pursuant to clause (iii), the

qualifying practitioner may submit a second notification to the Secretary of the need and intent of the qualifying practitioner to treat an unlimited number of patients, if the qualifying practitioner—

“(I)(aa) satisfies the requirements of item (aa), (bb), (cc), or (dd) of subparagraph (G)(ii)(I); and

“(bb) agrees to fully participate in the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program of the State in which the qualifying practitioner is licensed, pursuant to applicable State guidelines; or

“(II)(aa) satisfies the requirements of item (ee), (ff), or (gg) of subparagraph (G)(ii)(I);

“(bb) agrees to fully participate in the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program of the State in which the qualifying practitioner is licensed, pursuant to applicable State guidelines;

“(cc) practices in a qualified practice setting; and

“(dd) has completed not less than 24 hours of training (through classroom situations, seminars at professional society meetings, electronic communications, or otherwise) with respect to the treatment and management of opiate-dependent patients for substance use disorders provided by the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, the American Medical Association, the American Osteopathic Association, the American Psychiatric Association, or any other organization that the Secretary determines is appropriate for purposes of this subclause.”.

SEC. 804. DEFINITIONS.

Section 303(g)(2)(G) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)(G)) is amended—

(1) by striking clause (ii) and inserting the following:

“(ii) The term ‘qualifying practitioner’ means the following:

“(I) A physician who is licensed under State law and who meets 1 or more of the following conditions:

“(aa) The physician holds a board certification in addiction psychiatry from the American Board of Medical Specialties.

“(bb) The physician holds an addiction certification from the American Society of Addiction Medicine.

“(cc) The physician holds a board certification in addiction medicine from the American Osteopathic Association.

“(dd) The physician holds a board certification from the American Board of Addiction Medicine.

“(ee) The physician has completed not less than 8 hours of training (through classroom situations, seminars at professional society meetings, electronic communications, or otherwise) with respect to the treatment and management of opiate-dependent patients for substance use disorders provided by the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, the American Medical Association, the American Osteopathic Association, the American Psychiatric Association, or any other organization that the Secretary determines is appropriate for purposes of this subclause.

“(ff) The physician has participated as an investigator in 1 or more clinical trials leading to the approval of a narcotic drug in schedule III, IV, or V for maintenance or detoxification treatment, as demonstrated by a statement submitted to the Secretary by this sponsor of such approved drug.

“(gg) The physician has such other training or experience as the Secretary determines will demonstrate the ability of the

physician to treat and manage opiate-dependent patients.

“(II) A nurse practitioner or physician assistant who is licensed under State law and meets all of the following conditions:

“(aa) The nurse practitioner or physician assistant is licensed under State law to prescribe schedule III, IV, or V medications for pain.

“(bb) The nurse practitioner or physician assistant satisfies 1 or more of the following:

“(AA) Has completed not fewer than 24 hours of training (through classroom situations, seminars at professional society meetings, electronic communications, or otherwise) with respect to the treatment and management of opiate-dependent patients for substance use disorders provided by the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, the American Medical Association, the American Osteopathic Association, the American Psychiatric Association, or any other organization that the Secretary determines is appropriate for purposes of this subclause.

“(BB) Has such other training or experience as the Secretary determines will demonstrate the ability of the nurse practitioner or physician assistant to treat and manage opiate-dependent patients.

“(cc) The nurse practitioner or physician assistant practices under the supervision of a licensed physician who holds an active waiver to prescribe schedule III, IV, or V narcotic medications for opioid addiction therapy, and—

“(AA) the supervising physician satisfies the conditions of item (aa), (bb), (cc), or (dd) of subclause (I); or

“(BB) both the supervising physician and the nurse practitioner or physician assistant practice in a qualified practice setting.

“(III) A nurse practitioner who is licensed under State law and meets all of the following conditions:

“(aa) The nurse practitioner is licensed under State law to prescribe schedule III, IV, or V medications for pain.

“(bb) The nurse practitioner has training or experience that the Secretary determines demonstrates specialization in the ability to treat opiate-dependent patients, such as a certification in addiction specialty accredited by the American Board of Nursing Specialties or the National Commission for Certifying Agencies, or a certification in addiction nursing as a Certified Addiction Registered Nurse—Advanced Practice.

“(cc) In accordance with State law, the nurse practitioner prescribes opioid addiction therapy in collaboration with a physician who holds an active waiver to prescribe schedule III, IV, or V narcotic medications for opioid addiction therapy.

“(dd) The nurse practitioner practices in a qualified practice setting.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(iii) The term ‘qualified practice setting’ means 1 or more of the following treatment settings:

“(I) A National Committee for Quality Assurance-recognized Patient-Centered Medical Home or Patient-Centered Specialty Practice.

“(II) A Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services-recognized Accountable Care Organization.

“(III) A clinical facility administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Defense, or Indian Health Service.

“(IV) A Behavioral Health Home accredited by the Joint Commission.

“(V) A Federally-qualified health center (as defined in section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the So-

cial Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(1)(2)(B))) or a Federally-qualified health center look-alike.

“(VI) A Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services-certified Opioid Treatment Program.

“(VII) A clinical program of a State or Federal jail, prison, or other facility where individuals are incarcerated.

“(VIII) A clinic that demonstrates compliance with the Model Policy on DATA 2000 and Treatment of Opioid Addiction in the Medical Office issued by the Federation of State Medical Boards.

“(IX) A treatment setting that is part of an Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, or American Osteopathic Association-accredited residency or fellowship training program.

“(X) Any other practice setting approved by a State regulatory board or State Medicaid Plan to provide addiction treatment services.

“(XI) Any other practice setting approved by the Secretary.”.

SEC. 805. GAO EVALUATION.

Two years after the date on which the first notification under clause (iv) of section 303(g)(2)(B) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)(B)), as added by this title, is received by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Comptroller General of the United States shall initiate an evaluation of the effectiveness of the amendments made by this title, which shall include an evaluation of—

(1) any changes in the availability and use of medication-assisted treatment for opioid addiction;

(2) the quality of medication-assisted treatment programs;

(3) the integration of medication-assisted treatment with routine healthcare services;

(4) diversion of opioid addiction treatment medication;

(5) changes in State or local policies and legislation relating to opioid addiction treatment;

(6) the use of nurse practitioners and physician assistants who prescribe opioid addiction medication;

(7) the use of Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs by waived practitioners to maximize safety of patient care and prevent diversion of opioid addiction medication;

(8) the findings of Drug Enforcement Administration inspections of waived practitioners, including the frequency with which the Drug Enforcement Administration finds no documentation of access to behavioral health services; and

(9) the effectiveness of cross-agency collaboration between Department of Health and Human Services and the Drug Enforcement Administration for expanding effective opioid addiction treatment.

SA 3382. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN PRACTITIONERS PRESCRIBING CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES.

Section 303 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823) is amended—

(1) in subsection (f), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “The Attorney General shall register” and inserting “Subject to subsection (j), the Attorney General shall register”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(j)(1) In this subsection, the term ‘covered practitioner’ means a practitioner that is not a hospital, pharmacy, or veterinarian.

“(2)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), as a condition of granting or renewing the registration of a covered practitioner under this part to dispense, or conduct research with, controlled substances in schedule II, III, IV, or V, the Attorney General shall require, before each such grant or renewal of registration, that the covered practitioner complete training (through classroom situations, seminars at professional society meetings, electronic communications, or otherwise) that the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines meets the requirements under paragraph (3).

“(B) Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to the granting or renewal of a registration described in subparagraph (A) if the registration is solely for dispensing non-narcotic controlled substances or substances on schedule IV or V.

“(3) The training provided for purposes of paragraph (2) shall, at a minimum, expose covered practitioners to—

“(A) best practices for pain management, including alternatives to prescribing controlled substances and other alternative therapies to decrease the use of opioids;

“(B) responsible prescribing of pain medications, as described in Federal prescriber guidelines for nonmalignant pain;

“(C) methods for diagnosing, treating, and managing a substance use disorder, including the use of medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration and evidence-based nonpharmacological therapies;

“(D) linking patients to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders; and

“(E) tools to manage adherence and diversion of controlled substances, including prescription drug monitoring programs, drug screening, informed consent, overdose education, and the use of opioid overdose antagonists.

“(4) The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration shall establish or support the establishment of not less than 1 training module that meets the requirements under paragraph (3) that is provided—

“(A) to any covered practitioner registered or applying for a registration under this part to dispense, or conduct research with, controlled substances in schedule II, III, IV, or V;

“(B) online; and

“(C) free of charge.

“(5) The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall establish, maintain, and periodically update a publicly available database providing information relating to training modules that meet the requirements under paragraph (3).

“(6) Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall evaluate and make publicly available a report describing how exposure to the training required under this subsection has changed prescribing patterns of controlled substances.”.

SA 3383. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:
SEC. ____. **SUSPENSION OF MEDICAID BENEFITS FOR INMATES OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1902(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)) is amended by inserting after paragraph (77) the following new paragraph:

“(78) provide that the State shall not terminate (but may suspend) enrollment under a State plan for medical assistance for an individual who is an inmate of a public institution and was enrolled for medical assistance under the State plan immediately before becoming an inmate of such a public institution or who becomes eligible to enroll for such medical assistance while an inmate of a public institution;”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to the eligibility and enrollment of individuals who become inmates of public institutions on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) RULE FOR CHANGES REQUIRING STATE LEGISLATION.—In the case of a State plan for medical assistance under title XIX of the Social Security Act which the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines requires State legislation (other than legislation appropriating funds) in order for the plan to meet the additional requirements imposed by the amendment made by subsection (a), the State plan shall not be regarded as failing to comply with the requirements of such title solely on the basis of its failure to meet these additional requirements before the first day of the first calendar quarter beginning after the close of the first regular session of the State legislature that begins after the date of the enactment of this Act. For purposes of the previous sentence, in the case of a State that has a 2-year legislative session, each year of such session shall be deemed to be a separate regular session of the State legislature.

SA 3384. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 705. **ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR APPROVAL OF NEW OPIOID DRUGS.**

Section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(y) **ADVISORY COMMITTEE REGARDING OPIOID DRUGS.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the Secretary shall convene a panel of experts, which shall expressly consider the issues of addiction, abuse, and dependence—

“(1) to review an application submitted under subsection (b) or (j) for a new drug that is an opioid before the Secretary may approve such application; and

“(2) to review a supplement to an application approved under this section for a drug

that is an opioid before the Secretary may approve such supplement.”.

SA 3385. Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. PETERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 65, strike line 23 and insert the following:

disorder, service-connected post-traumatic stress disorder, military sexual trauma, or a service-connected traumatic brain injury, as determined on a case-by-case basis.”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 1, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room 328A of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Business Meeting: To consider the Chairman’s Mark on Biotechnology Labeling Solutions.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 1, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 1, 2016, at 10:30 a.m., in room SD-215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “The Multiemployer Pension Plan System: Recent Reforms and Current Challenges.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 1, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SH-219 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Airland of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 1, 2016, at 3 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE DEPARTMENT AND USAID MANAGEMENT, INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS, AND BILATERAL INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 1, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “A Review of the FY 2017 State and USAID Budget Request.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 524

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks on Wednesday, March 2, the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 369, S. 524, be agreed to, that the committee-reported substitute amendment be withdrawn, that Senator GRASSLEY or his designee be recognized to offer a substitute amendment, No. 3378, and that the first three first-degree amendments in order be the following: 3362, which is a Feinstein-Grassley amendment; 3345, Shaheen; 3367, Toomey; and that Senator GRASSLEY or his designee be permitted to offer a side-by-side amendment to the Shaheen amendment and that Senator LEAHY or his designee be permitted to offer a side-by-side amendment to the Toomey amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

RARE DISEASE DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 380.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 380) designating February 29, 2016 as “Rare Disease Day.”

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 380) was agreed to.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I finally ask unanimous consent that the preamble be agreed to and the motions

to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of February 29, 2016, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

CONGRATULATING THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF IOWA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 382, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 382) congratulating the community colleges of Iowa for 50 years of outstanding service to the State of Iowa, the United States, and the world.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be

agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 382) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, pursuant to Public Law 94-201, as amended by Public Law 105-275, appoints the following individual as a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress: Jean M. Dorton of Kentucky.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2016

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the

Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, March 2; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate begin consideration of S. 524, as under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:28 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, March 2, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, March 1, 2016

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DONOVAN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 1, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL M. DONOVAN, Jr. to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, in a few moments this morning, I will be introducing a House resolution, a bipartisan House resolution, with Congressman DON YOUNG from the State of Alaska calling on the Senate to, once and for all, ratify the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea Treaty.

Mr. Speaker, this is a treaty which was negotiated by the Reagan administration back in the late 1980s. It is a treaty which has been endorsed by Democratic Presidents, Republican Presidents, Condoleezza Rice, and military leadership of all stripes, to create a system of rules of the road in terms of maritime disputes.

As I said, the military leadership of this country has been adamant and consistent year in and year out about the need for our country to join 166 other countries in the world in terms of ratifying this treaty. As Marine General Joe Dunford said a short time ago, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs

of Staff: “We undermine our leverage by not signing up to the same rule book by which we are asking other countries to accept.”

Today, as this map shows, all the purple countries are those that have ratified the treaty, and the blue countries are those that have not. The United States joins the following company in terms of refusing to ratify this treaty: North Korea, Iran, Syria, Libya, and Venezuela.

Now, again, this is a measure which has been debated over the years, and it has been, I would argue, sort of a Washington, D.C., parlor game in terms of the theoretical impact that it may or may not have; but in recent months, the need to do this has become much sharper and clearer.

This past week at the House Committee on Armed Services, which I serve on, and I am the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, Admiral Harry Harris testified. He is our commander of PACOM. He has all of Asia-Pacific, the region of the world where China today is blatantly violating maritime law by creating islands out of nothing, creating landing strips and militarizing those new land masses in a clear attempt to, again, violate the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea Treaty by creating an economic zone that is going to interfere with the free passage of commercial traffic. Ninety-five percent of the world’s commodities go by sea. Their intentions are crystal clear.

Admiral Harris, when he testified the other day, made it also very clear that “acceding to the convention”—the Law of the Sea Treaty—“gives us the moral high ground to criticize those countries that would seek to inhibit freedom of maneuver in the oceans and airspace around the world, including the Asia-Pacific region.”

Interestingly, the following day, General Philip Breedlove, the commander of NATO, European Command for the U.S., came in and without any prompting testified to exactly the same policy position because what he is seeing in his region of the world is that a resurgent Russia is militarizing the Arctic Circle, that they are using this, again, melting of the ice cap as an opportunity to militarize that region of the world and try and control what is going to be a maritime passage, where both military assets and commercial traffic are going to move back and forth.

General Breedlove, again, made exactly the same point: we need to get into the game. This was made crystal

clear just a few months ago. The Government of the Philippines, to its credit, has challenged China. They filed an application before The Hague, citing the Law of the Sea Treaty, that what they are doing in the South China Sea blatantly violates international law.

The United States asked not to participate directly as a party, because we haven’t ratified the treaty, but simply to be an observer, to be a friend of the court to be able to contribute ideas and data—which our Navy has more than any other Navy in the world—and we were denied observer status because we have not ratified this treaty.

So right now people are hard at work in The Hague writing the rules of the road in terms of maritime issues that are going to determine budgets. And, again, I am the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, so this is driving a lot of decisions about building submarines and surface ships and stronger munitions because of what is happening in the South China Sea.

It is also going to be driving the outcomes of what is happening with resurgent Russia. Putin is not kidding around in terms of what he is doing in the Arctic Circle or in the North Atlantic. General Breedlove made that very clear. We are playing, right now, zone defense in terms of what is happening in that region of the world.

It is time for the Congress to listen, if nothing else, to our military leadership and recognize the international Law of the Sea Treaty, which 166 nations in the world have ratified. It is time for the U.S. to get in the game, get off the bleachers, and be able to set those rules because it is going to determine, for decades to come, decisions that this body is going to be stuck with if we are not part of that process.

Again, our military leadership, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, our CNO of the Navy, the head of the Coast Guard, they have all been very clear and public about the fact that it is time for this Nation to get into the game and endorse the international Law of the Sea Treaty.

I am very pleased that Congressman YOUNG is joining me in this effort. I urge all Members to support this resolution which will be filed this morning.

RESTORING AMERICA’S GIANTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to talk about a blight that nearly rendered the American chestnut extinct and recognize a teacher in Alexander County, North Carolina, who is helping to lead in the rebirth of these great trees.

The American chestnut was once the dominant hardwood species in the Eastern United States. Prior to the European colonization of North America, American chestnut trees were found in vast stands from Maine to Florida, with the largest trees occurring in the southern Appalachians.

When early European settlers arrived, the species was used in many different ways, including providing timber and tools. The edible nut was also a significant contributor to the rural economy. Families would collect the nuts to sell and eat, and they were also used as feed for livestock. Domesticated hogs and cattle were often fattened for market by allowing the animals to gorge themselves on these highly nutritious nuts.

Chestnut ripening coincided with the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, and turn-of-the-century newspaper clippings show traincars rolling into major cities that were overflowing with chestnuts to be sold fresh or roasted. The American chestnut was truly a heritage tree.

However, the booming trade industry introduced fungal diseases that would change the species composition of eastern North American forests. A root rot disease, thought to have caused mortality of chestnuts in low, moist areas infested southern populations of the American chestnut and constricted its natural range. This fungal disease was followed by the more commonly known chestnut blight, which spread throughout eastern hardwood forests at a rate of up to 50 miles per year.

By the 1950s, virtually all mature American chestnut trees had succumbed to the disease, and this catastrophe became known as one of the worst ecological disasters in the United States. The American chestnut has been relegated to a minor understory component, existing as sprouts from old stumps and root systems.

Today modern techniques are being used to bring the species back from near extinction, but the success of these efforts will be the result of decades of genetic hybridization. The American Chestnut Foundation has embarked on an elaborate and time-consuming breeding program to develop a tree that can withstand blight and exhibit virtually every characteristic of the American chestnut of the past. By backcrossing the American chestnut with the blight-resistant Chinese chestnut, the foundation has produced the Restoration chestnut.

Last December The American Chestnut Foundation planted four Restoration chestnuts on the campus of Alex-

ander Central High School in Taylorsville. Becky Dupuis, a biotech and biology teacher with Alexander County Schools, has partnered with the foundation to gather information about the health, diversity, and blight resistance of these trees. Her students will actively participate in collecting data, documenting growth rates, and transplanting American chestnut sprouts in Alexander County.

Ms. Dupuis should be commended for raising awareness about the American chestnut and for her work to reintroduce these giants to their rightful place in Alexander County and America's ecosystem.

SUPREME COURT VACANCIES IN ELECTION YEARS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. HIMES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, as you know, it has been the custom of the last couple of Congresses to open the Congress with a reading of the entire United States Constitution. I have generally not participated in that because I am not all that comfortable with public displays of piety, and I am a big believer in the notion that what really matters is what you do, not what you say.

Never has the spread between what we say and what we do been quite as wide as it is when we consider the approach that my friends on the Republican side have taken with respect to the absolutely essential constitutional duty of appointing a Supreme Court Justice.

So I am going to break with my past pattern and read briefly from the Constitution, Article II, section 2, which reads:

"He shall have power"—that is referring to the President—"by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, Judges of the Supreme Court."

And there it ends. He shall appoint Justices of the Supreme Court. There it ends.

There is nothing there about he won't do that in an election year. There is nothing there saying that if there is not enough time, he won't exercise his constitutional authority. There is nothing there that, maybe because then-Senator BIDEN said something 25 years ago, he won't appoint a Supreme Court Justice.

And yet my colleagues on the other side of the Capitol have said they won't even offer the President's nomination the courtesy of a meeting. And let's be very clear. That is a profound abrogation of the constitutional duty that is

set out in black and white in the Constitution of the United States.

So let's just spend a minute on the three objections that we are hearing from the Republicans on why the President shouldn't appoint and why they shouldn't even extend the courtesy of a meeting to the President's proposed appointment to the Supreme Court.

First and foremost, they say that it is an election year. The precedent would dictate that the President not nominate in an election year. Well, that is exactly wrong, and you can look it up. These are historical facts. I will just read quickly from SCOTUSblog, which a lot of people look at, in which Amy Howe, the editor, says: "The historical record does not reveal any instances since at least 1900 of the President failing to nominate and/or the Senate failing to confirm a nominee in a Presidential election year because of the impending election."

The historical record does not reveal any instances. And then it goes on to list those that have occurred:

President William Taft nominated Mahlon Pitney. Woodrow Wilson made two nominations in 1916—Louis Brandeis and John Clarke. President Herbert Hoover nominated Benjamin Cardozo. President Franklin Roosevelt nominated Frank Murphy. President Ronald Reagan, patron saint of my friends on the other side of the aisle, nominated Justice Anthony Kennedy.

So the idea that there is no precedent is exactly wrong.

This brings us to the other argument, the second argument, which is that there is not time. I brought this graphic here to show that, for the last several Presidents, the average approval time was something like 2 months. The current President has some 300 days left in his term.

Take a look at this one: approval time for Justices Alito, Roberts, Breyer, Ginsburg, and Thomas. If you add all of those individual periods of time together, you still don't get the amount of time that the current President has left in his term.

This, of course, brings us to the arguably most laughable argument that we hear lately, which is that some 20-plus years ago, then-Senate Committee on the Judiciary Chairman JOE BIDEN said something along the lines of perhaps then the President shouldn't make an appointment because it was an election year.

□ 1015

I don't need to point out that, as much as I like and respect the Vice President, his words of 25 years ago do not carry constitutional force or the force of law. We shouldn't spend a lot of time on that argument.

So what is really going on here? If those are the best arguments against even extending the courtesy of a senatorial meeting to the President's

nominee, an unprecedented action, what is really going on?

Here is what is really going on. It is a government shutdown. We have seen this before. When the rules we read at the opening of every Congress result in an outcome my friends on the other side of the aisle don't like, they simply shut it down. They did that in October 2013.

Between the days of October 1 and October 16, they shut down the Federal Government, an action that Standard & Poor's estimated cost the U.S. economy \$24 billion, or fully 0.6 percent of our economic growth is gone because the Republicans wouldn't accept the Affordable Care Act.

Look, I get that. They don't like it. But it has been passed in due course in this House, shown to be constitutional by the Supreme Court, and the answer was: No. We don't like it. We are shutting down the government.

Let's not shut down the government over the Supreme Court.

COLOMBIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of this body the current negotiations taking place in Cuba between the Colombian Government and the FARC, which is a U.S.-designated terrorist organization. That deal is dangerous for Colombia and for our U.S. national security.

Let me explain. As a friend of the Colombian people, I have been a proponent of widening and strengthening our bilateral ties with Colombia by supporting the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement. This agreement has helped many companies in my congressional district of south Florida strengthen their trade capabilities with Colombia.

I have also supported Plan Colombia, a collaborative effort alongside the Colombian Armed Forces and security forces aimed at improving the security environment. Plan Colombia enjoys wide bipartisan support, resulting in a significant reduction in the cultivation of coca in years past, record dismantling of labs, and drastically reducing kidnappings, which are an important source of revenue for the FARC.

Despite great advances in the conflict during the Uribe administration prior to President Santos, I have expressed serious misgivings about the negotiation initiated by the Colombian Government with the murderous Castro regime as a supposedly impartial mediator.

Mr. Speaker, the Castro brothers run an impressive communist state, with complete disregard for human rights, due process, and a notorious history of supporting nefarious actors throughout the region.

Using Cuba as a mediator in the negotiation is misguided, at best. It is widely known that the Castro brothers have been great supporters of the terrorist group FARC, have allowed the FARC to use Cuba as a safe haven, and have even trained some FARC terrorists in guerilla warfare tactics.

Yet, despite knowing that the Castro regime has internationally voiced strong support for the FARC, even lending materiel and monetary aid to the rebels, we expect the Castros now to be acting as impartial mediators? Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker.

With the Colombian Government negotiating with the FARC and with Cuba as a mediator that is supposedly impartial, the pending agreement includes no jail time for any of the FARC criminals. These criminals have kidnapped and tortured scores of Colombian citizens and have even held American citizens hostage. No jail time.

According to the agreement, if the FARC members admit to their crimes, they would be put in what is the equivalent of house arrest from 2 to 8 years—8 years is the maximum—and they would not serve any jail time and they will not be extradited to the United States to face any charges they have pending here.

You heard that right, Mr. Speaker. This agreement could include a request to drop any arrest warrant and drop any extradition process from the United States that we have filed to prosecute members of the FARC. This is completely unacceptable, Mr. Speaker.

I am also concerned about provisions in the agreement that would allow members of the FARC to run for political office, as they would likely use the massive funds that they have from their illegal narcotics trade to finance their campaigns and further undermine what the Colombian people are trying to achieve by having a safe, secure Colombia again.

Evidence has shown that, since the negotiations began with the FARC in Havana, coca cultivation numbers in Colombia have increased. From 2014 and 2015, we have seen an increase of drugs flowing from Colombia. Who do we think is responsible for that? The FARC. Who is making more money from narcotrafficking? The FARC.

What I find most disturbing, Mr. Speaker, was the call by the Colombian Government to remove the FARC, an organization with American blood on its hands, from the U.S. State Department's Foreign Terrorist Organizations List.

Lastly, there are several unanswered questions about the implementation of this misguided deal. How will the FARC disarm? How will they surrender their weapons? What role will the United Nations play as it oversees the implementation of the process? Will the Obama administration continue its

pattern of granting concessions and end up releasing FARC leader Simon Trinidad, who is serving time in our prison?

Mr. Speaker, the United States must reexamine this agreement and urge the Colombian Government to address some of these grave concerns. We have a responsibility to our taxpayers to be good stewards of their funds as well as a moral imperative to support and seek justice for the victims of the FARC, not their perpetrators.

AIRCRAFT NOISE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Phoenix, I rise to demand an end to business as usual at the Federal Aviation Administration.

In 2014, the FAA decided, without any input from civic leaders or members of our community, to implement new flight paths for aircraft from Sky Harbor International Airport. The impact of this decision on local residents was swift and severe. Without warning, our communities were suddenly exposed to constant, deafening aircraft noise.

As they run businesses, raise families, and struggle to sleep at night, Phoenix residents must now contend with the incessant roar of planes passing overhead. Simply put, the new flight paths have deprived the Arizonans I represent of the peace and quiet they enjoyed before the FAA intervened.

Unfortunately, the agency has only exacerbated this difficult situation by overlooking the objections of local residents and ignoring clear direction from Congress to reconsider these routes.

When urged by the House in the 2015 omnibus to "identify appropriate mitigation measures" to address the problem of aircraft noise in Phoenix, the agency disregarded the will of this body and took no meaningful action. That is simply unacceptable. The American people deserve a government that is responsive to their needs and accountable to their elected officials.

We have seen the same pattern of indifference repeated in cities across the country. But now, finally, leaders from both parties are demanding real reform at the FAA.

Democrats and Republicans came together to include the language in the fiscal year 2016 spending bill that will require the FAA to develop a plan to proactively address the concerns of Americans, including Phoenix residents, exposed to high levels of aviation noise.

In addition, legislation introduced earlier this month to reauthorize the FAA contains several key provisions that could help provide relief to Phoenix residents plagued by noise from

passing aircraft. The bill will require the agency to review flight path changes if the FAA administrator determines that they have harmed communities in the vicinity of the airport.

The measure will also compel the FAA to consider steps to mitigate aircraft noise-related concerns if requested to do so by a local community or airport operator.

Finally, the FAA will be required to submit a report to Congress on how the agency intends to improve its woeful community outreach and engagement efforts.

Collectively, these provisions represent an important step forward, but they aren't enough. Together with other members of the Quiet Skies Caucus, I am committed to strengthening this legislation as the process moves forward.

Mr. Speaker, civic leaders, business-owners, and families in Phoenix have been ignored for too long. The flight paths over our city must change and so must the course of an agency that for too long has disrespected Congress and disregarded the needs of my constituents.

Now is the time to pass legislation to ensure that local communities have a seat at the table when new flight paths are plotted. Let's give local residents the ability to appeal routes that are undermining their quality of life.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of aircraft noise, the people of Phoenix are speaking loudly. They deserve to be heard.

HONORING CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH ON ITS 150TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. JOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an institution that has served the people of Pinellas County, the people of Florida, and people in all corners of the world for 150 years. It is an institution that continues each day to serve our loving God.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Calvary Baptist Church in Clearwater, Florida, as it celebrates its 150th anniversary.

In 1866, Reverend C.S. Reynolds and his wife Judith, along with a handful of Christ followers, founded the Midway Baptist Church in Clearwater Harbor, Florida. The church is considered to be the first organized church of any kind in what later became the city of Clearwater, and it was the very first Baptist Church in Pinellas County.

During the 1920s, under the leadership of Pastor A.J. Kroelinger, the church undertook a major building project in the heart of Clearwater.

The ornate rotunda was completed in 1926 and became known as one of the most magnificent buildings in the Southland. It stood as the home for

Calvary Baptist Church and was recognized as a Clearwater landmark for nearly 80 years.

Calvary's history is a story of God's grace and providence. It endured the effects of both World Wars and the Great Depression. It continued to experience eras of significant growth under the leadership of Pastor O.E. Burton throughout the 1950s and 1960s and Pastor Bill Anderson, who led the church from 1975 to 2002. Since 2004, Pastor Willie Rice has led this vibrant church and its expanding outreach.

The church is distinguished by its faithful adherence to the message of God's love and the redemptive purposes in and through Jesus Christ. The church has served its local community and partnered with others through its historic affiliation with the Southern Baptist Convention, extending its influence of compassion-based ministries around the world.

Throughout its history, the body of believers who make up the church have been instrumental in founding and supporting many local ministries in the Tampa Bay area. These ministries reach into every facet of human experience.

Through partnerships with several community-based pregnancy centers, members of the church provide resources and support to struggling pregnant mothers and their unborn children, honoring the sanctity of life. They provide clothing, food, and shelter to the homeless. The church is faithful each day to honoring our veterans.

Calvary expresses the redemptive grace of our loving God by directly supporting individuals transitioning out of prison as well as recovering addicts. The support they provide to these individuals helps restore dignity and purpose of life.

The church ministers in many ways to the young people of the community through a vibrant in-house youth program as well as numerous community outreach programs.

Calvary Christian High School opened its doors in the fall of 2000 with the goal of challenging all students to achieve academically to the highest level of their God-given abilities.

Another community outreach program provides school materials to disadvantaged elementary students through the Adopt a Classroom project. Supporting children and families is a central element of a Christian lifestyle. It is central to the mission of Calvary Baptist Church.

Internationally, Calvary provides financial and material resources and hundreds of volunteers to support disaster relief and recovery efforts worldwide.

Through medical mission trips, the church provides much-needed care to communities in far reaches of the globe. With direct support and through

global partnerships, Calvary assists in community development efforts throughout the world.

In short, Mr. Speaker, Calvary Baptist Church in Clearwater, Florida, has become a part of the fabric of our Pinellas County community, enriching the lives of its members and neighborhoods.

But far more important, Calvary continues each day to share the message of the saving grace of the Christ in whom we put our faith and in whom we put our trust.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Calvary Baptist Church of Clearwater, Florida, as it celebrates 150 magnificent years of ministry and service.

□ 1030

RECOGNIZING GRACE PRESTON, AWARD-WINNING BROCKWAY VOLUNTEER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Grace Preston, a sixth-grader from the Brockway Area Elementary School, which I am proud to say is located in the Pennsylvania Fifth Congressional District.

Grace was recently among two students in Pennsylvania to be honored with a Prudential Spirit of Community Award. This award is given to young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism.

Grace has raised more than \$4,000 in the past 3 years to improve the lives of animals in her community. She has done this through the sale of homemade dog treats, cat toys, and flea and tick repellent.

She became interested in helping animals after her family adopted a dog from a local shelter. Now, through her efforts, Grace has raised enough money to enable the local Humane Society to purchase a storage shed, as well as other supplies such as rabies gloves.

She has also provided animal oxygen mask kits to a local fire department for pets that are caught in fires, helped pay for a shelter dog's recent surgery, and collected animal food for the pets of needy families.

Mr. Speaker, it is wonderful to see such dedication to community from someone so young.

Great work, Grace.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 31 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Merciful God of the universe, we give You thanks for giving us another day. We hunger for Your wisdom and pray that there might be an end to all hunger in our world.

You know the Members of this assembly through and through. You know each personally. You know how they all relate with one another. You know them, as the American people do, as the 114th Congress of the United States.

Lord, help them to know You. Allow them to come to know You, even as they are known by You. As ultimate truth, enter in and make them suitable for Your dwelling within so that their constituents might place trust in them as their Representatives.

May their service continue faithfully, for they were elected by their voters back home and called by You to selfless service.

Bless them and us all this day, and may all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. CAPPS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HONORING THE CAREER OF THE HONORABLE THOMAS J. MCAVOY

(Mr. KATKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the career of an

esteemed public servant, the Honorable Thomas J. McAvoy.

Judge McAvoy has now served as a Federal District Court judge in the Northern District of New York for the past 30 years. During my time as a Federal prosecutor from the Northern District of New York, I had the high honor of regularly appearing before Judge McAvoy.

A native of New York's southern tier, Judge McAvoy completed his undergraduate education at Villanova University and continued on to graduate third in his class from Albany Law School.

He continues to be a very valuable member of the local legal community, mentoring young lawyers through continuing education programs and meeting regularly with young people through the Open Doors to Justice and Court Outreach programs.

Throughout his 30 years on the bench, Judge McAvoy has tried over 900 cases and recently received the longevity award for 50 years of service to the bar by the Broome County Bar Association. Judge McAvoy has dedicated his life and career to making our community a better place to live.

Thank you, Judge McAvoy, for your outstanding public service to our community and to our Nation. I look forward to your next 30 years on the bench.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. FRANKEL of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Women's History Month, I want to recognize a remarkable woman from south Florida, my friend, Rosemary Barkett.

Rosemary is an inspiring, humble woman with a joyous spirit and passion for justice who has devoted her life to service. Her story reflects the greatness of diversity in our country.

She was born in Mexico to Syrian immigrants. At age 6, her family moved to Miami, where she started school knowing no English. As a teen, Rosemary joined the Sisters of St. Joseph, becoming a nun and teacher.

Eight years later she left the convent to pursue her own education and eventually went on to law school, private practice, and a brilliant judicial career as a trial court judge, appellate judge, first woman on the Florida Supreme Court, and first woman to be Chief Justice of that court.

Today Justice Barkett sits on the prestigious Iran-United States Claims Tribunal in The Hague.

My friend has broken down many barriers to achieve big dreams. This March we honor women like Rosemary Barkett, women of our past, present, and future who are making history.

KEEP TERRORISTS AT GUANTANAMO

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday The Post and Courier, under the leadership of publisher Pamela Browning and editorial page editor Charles Rowe, editorialized:

President Barack Obama has asked Congress to agree to close the prison at Guantanamo . . . Governor Nikki Haley, Senator Tim Scott, and Republicans on the South Carolina delegation are right to reject his call . . . Even the President has to follow the law.

In a world that has given rise to the Islamic State, it is hard to credit the argument that the existence of Guantanamo incites terror. In a recent op-ed column for the Washington Post, Gordon England, a former Deputy Secretary of Defense, observed that some of the terrorists who have been released from Guantanamo have returned to the same nefarious activities for which they have been jailed. Those who remain had a record of participating in terrorism, financing terrorism, or outright leadership of terrorism activity, Mr. England wrote.

In a little over 4 weeks, Mr. Obama is headed to Cuba for a state visit with the Castro brothers, who may be considered experts in the use of political prisons.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

TIGER GRANTS

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation has announced its eighth round of grants will be awarded under the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER, program.

TIGER grants are awarded on a competitive basis to surface transportation capital projects. Weight is given to proposals that will have a significant local or national impact, generate economic development, and increase access to affordable transportation.

Western New York has received TIGER grants totaling more than \$39 million to restore access to Main Street in Buffalo and construct a new international train station in Niagara Falls. As a result, businesses are returning to the theater district and tourism is growing in Niagara Falls, New York.

The TIGER program sends the message during this period of tragic underinvestment in our infrastructure that America can still tackle the big projects that historically have grown our economy.

I urge support of the TIGER program.

RETIREMENT OF TITUSVILLE POLICE CHIEF GARY THOMAS

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I have the deepest respect for the law enforcement men and women who are tasked with protecting the communities of Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District. It is with deep respect that I congratulate Titusville Police Chief Gary Thomas on his upcoming retirement.

Chief Thomas has served his community for nearly 26 years, after being hired as a patrolman in 1990. He is credited with helping fight back against a rise in methamphetamine production in Titusville, which spread through northeastern Pennsylvania, starting in the late 1990s. He worked together with State police and the State Attorney General's Office to crack down on this plague. More importantly, he enlisted the help of the Titusville community to fight back.

After being promoted to police chief in 2009, he continued the battle against drugs—this time, against bath salts and synthetic marijuana—educating the public on what to look for. The effort got results in the form of tips from the community, which helped cut down on abuse.

Chief Thomas' last day on the job is March 4. I wish him the best of luck in retirement, and I commend him for a job well done.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: SALLY RIDE

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to celebrate the beginning of Women's History Month by recognizing a woman from my home State of California, Sally Ride.

Sally Ride personifies the Californian and American spirit of exploration and discovery. In 1983, she became both the first woman and the youngest astronaut NASA has ever sent into space.

Over the course of her distinguished career, Ride logged a total of nearly 350 hours in space, and she went on to serve on the committees that investigated the *Challenger* and the *Columbia* shuttle disasters.

After leaving NASA, she cofounded Sally Ride Science at UC San Diego, which develops educational programs to inspire middle and high school students, especially girls, about science.

Sally Ride had a passion for science and space exploration that inspired generations of girls to pursue STEM. I had a chance to meet her and see how everyone reacted to her. She is exactly the kind of woman we should honor this month, one who achieved her own

dreams and paved the way for others to do the same.

TERESA HAYWOOD'S STORY

(Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the war on coal hurts every family in West Virginia.

A local small-business owner affected by the war on coal is Teresa Haywood, who owns a floral shop in McDowell County. She is a true West Virginia coal voice.

She writes to me:

Our business has dropped majorly, and I am struggling day to day to just try to decide to pay the bills or to restock. People keep asking if I am going to keep my business open.

It has gotten hard to survive, much less stay in business, when we have to cut on groceries just to make the bills so we can have a home to live in. And then us losing our only Walmart in the county has just been another kick in the teeth.

I have a teenage son who worries about finding a job every day because he doesn't want to move from home and a college senior who won't come back here because he knows there is nothing for him here.

Mr. Speaker, these are the true West Virginia coal voices. The war on coal must stop.

ABORTION ACCESS AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, as has been mentioned, today, March 1, marks the beginning of Women's History Month.

While there is much to celebrate, we must use this time to continue the fight toward full equality. That is why I rise today to reaffirm my support for a woman's right to make her own decisions about her health and her family.

This week the Supreme Court will hear arguments on yet another effort to undercut this freedom. By imposing unnecessary requirements whose sole purpose is to close reproductive health clinics, lawmakers continue to play politics with women's health.

Some of us remember the time before women had safe access to abortion care. Countless women made desperate decisions that put their health at risk. We cannot go back to that day. No one can fully know the circumstances that a woman who faces a decision to end a pregnancy is challenged by.

We need to trust women and let them make their own decisions along with their healthcare providers, family, and faith, not politicians.

HONORING ISAAC OLEMBERG

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, this weekend I had the pleasure of being at Temple Menorah in Miami Beach at the Hadassah Inter-American Chapter Gala in honor of an old and close friend, Isaac Olemberg.

Isaac is a pillar of the Jewish and south Florida communities and has greatly enriched our area as well as helped to strengthen the unbreakable bond between the U.S. and Israel.

But I know that the work that Isaac was most proud of was working side by side with his wife, Nieves. Sadly, she passed away in 2014, but Sunday's luncheon was an opportunity to honor her memory as well.

Together with Isaac, Nieves helped found the Hadassah Inter-American Chapter in Miami. This couple truly embodied grace, kindness, and humility. Nieves is missed, but her memory and legacy are carried on by Isaac; their children, Roberto, Lilly, Hannah, and Lisette; and their many grandchildren.

I am proud and humbled to call the Olembergs my friends.

□ 1215

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. MATSUI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, today we mark the beginning of Women's History Month.

For centuries, women have broken through barriers to move our country forward. The progress that women have made has taken the courage of countless trailblazers.

In Sacramento, Eleanor McClatchy took over the family newspaper business at a young age. Eleanor had a background in theatre, but a lack of experience in the publishing business did not stop her from stepping up to the plate in 1936 to become president of the McClatchy newspapers. She led the company for 42 years, and under her leadership, the business grew significantly through the acquisition of additional newspapers, radio, and television platforms.

Eleanor's story may be unique, yet it embodies the spirit of all women. In the face of challenges, we find a path forward.

Let us honor women like Eleanor by opening up opportunity to future generations of women because we all know when women succeed, America succeeds.

RARE DISEASE DAY

(Mr. DOLD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was Rare Disease Day, Leap Year, and researchers around the world have identified more than 6,000 rare diseases, half of which impact children.

Last year, the House took a major step toward advancing rare disease research. I was proud not only to cosponsor, but to help pass 21st Century Cures. 21st Century Cures is a bill designed to help the world's best scientists find cures for the most deadly diseases that we face.

But it is not just the researchers, it is folks like Pat Livney, who is a friend and an advocate working to help cure Charcot-Marie-Tooth disorder, and folks like Jeff Aronin and his team working to solve Duchenne's disease.

Mr. Speaker, every day, scientists across the country are using NIH grants to discover the causes, the symptoms, the treatments, and ultimately search for the cures for rare diseases.

In honor of Rare Disease Day, I encourage my colleagues to join me in calling for more funding for the NIH this year and every year so that NIH can cure many of these diseases and ultimately save lives.

And that is just the way it is.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. HAHN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Women's History Month and the bold women pioneers who shattered glass ceilings and paved the way for women across this country to succeed.

From the courageous women at the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention who came up with the audacious new idea of women's rights, to the suffragettes who won the right to vote in 1920, we stand on the shoulders of the giants that came before us.

But women's history does not end there. From the first woman Speaker of the House, NANCY PELOSI, to the three women on the Supreme Court, to women candidates for President, bold women continue to break barriers.

But there is work to be done. Women are still paid less for the same work as their male counterparts. We are more than half the population, but just 20 percent of Congress. The United States continues to be one of just three nations in the world with no paid maternity leave law.

I know my daughter and my granddaughters deserve the same opportunities as my sons and grandsons. I am going to fight on behalf of the women across this country until that is a reality.

HONORING OUR FALLEN POLICE OFFICERS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Ashley Guindon was 28 years old when she reported for duty after being sworn in to the Prince William County Police Department the day before.

On her first call, she responded to a domestic violence disturbance. She and her fellow officers rushed to the scene and, upon arrival, multiple gunshots came from the house.

Officer Guindon was shot and murdered. Yet another one of America's finest killed in the line of duty. Here she is, a photograph of her, taken the day she was sworn in. The next day, she was murdered.

Officers David McKeown, 33, and Jesse Hempen, 31, were also shot, but did survive.

Inside the house, the shooter's wife had also been murdered by the outlaw.

Before having her life coldly ripped from her, Guindon served in the United States Marine Corps for 6 years.

Officers who answer and respond to domestic violence calls respond to some of the most dangerous situations in America. Those who wear the badge protect the rest of us from the evil that lives among us.

In the first 2 months of 2016, 14 police officers have been killed in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, as her body was transported, over a hundred of Guindon's fellow officers somberly lined the streets to pay tribute to one of their own. Death is the harsh reality that these remarkable men and women face every day.

Officer Guindon risked her life responding to a domestic violence call. Her life was stolen from her while on duty, her 1 day of service and career as a police officer.

Officers like her are a cut above the rest of us, Mr. Speaker. They are a rare and remarkable breed of Americans.

And that is just the way it is.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. CASTOR of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join the millions of Americans who will mark the annual celebration of March as Women's History Month.

During Women's History Month, we celebrate the successes of America's women throughout our history and the sacrifice of the bold women who broke down so many barriers.

This year I would like to devote Women's History Month to saluting our female veterans and military members who work to keep us safe.

And even though the Department of Defense 3 months ago announced that females will now be able to serve in military combat roles, women actually have been serving in combat since the

Civil War; like Army Specialist Brit-tany Gordon of St. Petersburg, Florida, who was the first woman from the Tampa Bay area killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2012 at the young age of 24.

And like the many women who serve at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, whether it is at Air Mobility Command, Special Operations Command or Central Command, you women are making history, and you are doing so while you are working to keep us safe.

We are grateful for your service to this country during Women's History Month and every year.

CLIMATE CHANGE

(Mr. BENISHEK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, as a lifelong resident of Northern Michigan, I know how important it is to protect and conserve our precious natural resources. Northern Michigan's economy depends on our Great Lakes and outdoor spaces for tourism, agriculture, and sporting activities.

Generations of people in my district have grown up experiencing the outdoors, from the shores of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, to Isle Royale National Park.

However, we need to make sure that there is a balance and that we do not undertake rash and unproven regulatory policies that are almost guaranteed to negatively impact our economy in the hope of some potential, and often unquantifiable, environmental gain.

All too often, the consequence of overly burdensome regulations here in America is the flight of manufacturing and industry to nations such as China and India. Mr. Speaker, these nations simply do not have the same level of protections or respect for the environment that we have here in America.

I fail to see how this benefits our planet's environment. I know that far too often the result is American citizens losing their jobs.

I hope we can join together to find commonsense and bipartisan ways to continue to protect our environment.

DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., established January 13, 1913, by 22 collegiate women at Howard University.

From those humble beginnings 103 years ago, to today, there are more than 200,000 Deltas and 1,000 college and alumni chapters worldwide.

Mr. Speaker, today is the first day of Women's History Month. Thousands of Deltas flood Capitol Hill to meet with Members of Congress to discuss some of our most pressing issues.

I thank you, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, for standing up for Attorney General Loretta Lynch of the United States and for coming today with a national agenda: equal pay for equal work, sustaining the Affordable Care Act, educational reform for college school funding, and yes, opposing the Voting Rights Act.

Mr. Speaker, please join me and the three other Members of Congress of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, for saluting them for being on the Hill today, and to my Columbus Alumni Chapter, and Delta Kappa, where I was made.

THE TRAGIC SHOOTING IN HESSTON, KANSAS

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay my respects to the victims of the tragic shooting last week in Hesston, Kansas. Renee Benjamin, Joshua Higbee, and Brian Sadowsky each saw their lives lost too early at the hands of a cold-blooded killer.

Another 14 people were wounded, and some critically, before authorities arrived on the scene at Excel Industries and brought the violence to an end.

As someone who grew up just a few short miles away from there, near Yoder, Kansas, and whose father went to school in Hesston, Thursday's shooting, sadly, hit close to home for me.

My wife, Brooke, and I want to send our condolences to the victims of this terrible tragedy and their families.

We also want to thank the first responders, police officers, EMTs, doctors, and nurses, who are all serving the Hesston community with skill and effectiveness in this time of need.

Mr. Speaker, nothing that we do or say will ever be able to bring back the lives lost, but our prayers and support will hopefully be able to help the Hesston community recover and heal from this horrible tragedy.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Mr. THOMPSON of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of National Women's History Month, the roots of which are in my district.

It was in Santa Rosa, California, that the National Women's History Project was founded, and I am proud to continue the legacy of recognizing the many contributions women have made to our country by introducing the National Women's History Month Resolution.

The theme of this year's bipartisan Women's History Month is honoring women in public service and government. And this year I am recognizing five extraordinary women in my district: Josephine Orozco, Maria Guevara, Evelyn Cheatham, Linda Parks, and Monica Rosenthal.

Honoring women should not be limited to 1 month out of the year. We need to work every day to make sure women have the same opportunities as men have to succeed because when women succeed, America succeeds.

RECOGNIZING VINNIE VAN GO GO'S

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Vinnie Van Go Go's. For over 25 years, Vinnie's has served quality food at affordable prices in Savannah's downtown City Market area.

Since its founding on February 16, 1991, Vinnie's has continued to serve excellent "thin hearty crust Neapolitan pizza" to Savannahians and tourists from all over the world.

Just like other Savannah mysteries, its founder and owner notoriously remains nameless as numerous Savannah myths revolve around his or her true identity and eccentricities.

As a cash-only establishment, Vinnie's has won multiple awards for its food, including best pizza in the State of Georgia by the Food Network in 2012. It also delivers by professional bicyclists to customers in Savannah's downtown area.

I am proud to recognize Vinnie Van Go Go's achievement for 25 years as a successful, local and nationally recognized business.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Women's History Month. This month is our chance to recommit ourselves to the principle that, when women succeed, America succeeds.

Women make up almost half of all workers in America, and working mothers are the primary breadwinners in 40 percent of families. More than ever, women's success is essential to our Nation's economy.

As we begin Women's History Month in 2016, I encourage this body to meaningfully address the challenges that still exist for women and our families.

I am pleased that the National Women's History Month Project is highlighting two incredible Floridians as

they honor women in public service and government: Nadine Smith, an LGBT civil rights activist and the executive director of Equality Florida; and my good friend, Betty Mae Tiger Jumper, the first woman to chair of the Seminole Tribe of Florida and a Presidential adviser.

I am so grateful for the contributions these extraordinary women have made to our country, and I am thrilled that they are being recognized in this year's celebration.

EXPRESSING GRATITUDE FOR CAPITOL POLICE OFFICERS

(Mr. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, 62 years ago today, in 1954, four gunmen entered the House Chamber and they opened fire. They wounded five Members of our body. As you know, you can still see a bullet hole in the desk on the floor and where they hit the ceiling of our Chamber.

And on this day in 1971, a bomb exploded in the Capitol in a Senate bathroom. No one was hurt, but it was a shock that another act of such violence could happen here.

In both instances and every day since, our Capitol Police sacrifice and put their lives on the line to protect our visitors, Members, and staff here in the people's House.

It can be easy to forget the importance and the quiet vigilance from those who keep us safe. Our Capitol Police officers go unappreciated too often.

Every day, but especially today, we should take some time and thank them for protecting the safety of everyone who visits and works in the Capitol.

RECOGNIZING CHARLOTTE CITY COUNCILMAN MALACHI GREENE

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to recognize former Charlotte City Councilman Malachi Greene, who departed this life on February 25.

Although he was born in South Carolina, North Carolina was indeed his home. A graduate of Livingstone College, an HBCU in Salisbury, North Carolina, Malachi was a businessman, a teacher, public servant, and overall model citizen.

I had known Malachi for many decades and had the pleasure of working with him on numerous occasions. I admired his steadfast dedication to improving the lives of others throughout his work at Bennett College and in the community.

In later years, Malachi served two terms on the Charlotte City Council.

Throughout his political endeavors, he maintained the ability to appeal to diverse audiences and work with both parties to ensure that good policies rose above politics.

Malachi Greene put his all into public service and was a voice for the voiceless. He truly loved his community and his people, and we loved him. North Carolinians across our State will remember his life and his legacy for years to come and are grateful for his service.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the start of Women's History Month and to honor all of the women who have shaped our country's history. So many women have shattered glass ceilings along the way, like my friend Dolores Watkins Ennis, one of the first African American secondary schoolteachers in my hometown of Flint, Michigan.

While this month we celebrate all of the great achievements of women like Dolores, let us not lose sight of the barriers that women still face in this country.

Women make up almost half of all workers. Working mothers are the primary breadwinners for many American families, yet the fight for justice, for equal rights and greater opportunity is far, far from over.

We need to promote policies that mean greater opportunity for women and their families, like commonsense sick leave and making child care more affordable. As a Nation, we have to make sure that women who are doing the same work as men get equal pay for that work.

This country is a place where we should be building an economy that works for everyone, meaning all families. We owe it to our mothers, to our daughters, and to our granddaughters.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Women's History Month by highlighting the exemplary life of Frances E. Willard.

Frances Willard earned her place in history by pioneering the temperance movement, breaking barriers in the field of education and leading the movement to obtain women's right to vote. Her suffrage arguments hinged on her feminist interpretation of Scripture. She said: "God sets male and female side by side throughout His realm."

Although Frances was born in Churchville, New York, in 1839, she

quickly made her way to my hometown of Evanston, Illinois, where, among other things, she was the first woman college president in the country to confer degrees, the second president of the national Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and a founder of the National Council of Women.

In 1905, the great State of Illinois chose to honor her memory by making her the first woman whose statue appears in the National Statuary Hall Collection. That statue still stands today—just a few feet from us—where she is now a constant reminder of the powerful role of women in American history.

This Women's History Month, let us honor the lives of women like Frances Willard who came before us to create equality for women by helping to give us the right to vote, and let's do it by expanding that role.

When women succeed, America succeeds.

LYDIA MARIA CHILD

(Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, the district I serve, the Fifth District of Massachusetts, is home to women who have shaped our Nation's history. I would like to celebrate one of those extraordinary women in celebration of Women's History Month.

When you hear the song, "Over the River and Through the Woods," you are hearing the words of Medford native Lydia Maria Child, a 19th century novelist, poet, abolitionist, Native American rights activist, and women's rights advocate who pioneered early progressive activism with her groundbreaking work.

In her fight for justice and equality, she wrote one of the earliest American historical novels, the first comprehensive history of American slavery, and the first comparative history of women.

As we celebrate Women's History Month and continue to strive for equality and justice for all women, we take great pride in celebrating the contributions of Lydia Maria Child and the other women leaders who have shaped our great country.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCLINTOCK). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

DANNIE A. CARR VETERANS OUTPATIENT CLINIC

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2814) to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Sevierville, Tennessee, the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2814

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The State of Tennessee, the Volunteer State, holds a proud tradition of selfless volunteerism to the United States Armed Forces.

(2) Specialist Four Dannie A. Carr, of Sevier County, Tennessee, served with distinction in B Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division during the Vietnam War in defense of the United States.

(3) Specialist Four Dannie A. Carr, twice wounded in battle and later killed in action by artillery fire on July 3, 1969, has been duly recognized by the Army, having been awarded the Bronze Star for Valor and the Purple Heart.

(4) The heroism of Dannie A. Carr is well known and held in high regard within the community of Sevier County, Tennessee.

(5) The municipalities of Pittman Center, Sevierville, Pigeon Forge, Gatlinburg, and Sevier County have agreed to and passed resolutions supporting the renaming of the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Sevier County, Tennessee, in honor of Specialist Four Dannie Arthur Carr.

SEC. 2. NAME OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC, SEVIERVILLE, TENNESSEE.

The Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic located at 1124 Blanton Drive, Sevierville, Tennessee, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic". Any reference to such community-based outpatient clinic in any law, regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the United States shall be considered to be a reference to the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentleman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I do rise today in proud support of H.R. 2814, to name the Department of Veterans Affairs CBOC in Sevierville, Tennessee, the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic.

I thank the bill's sponsor, my colleague and friend, Congressman PHIL ROE from Tennessee, for recognizing an American hero through this legislation today.

Specialist Fourth Class Dannie Arthur Carr was born in June of 1947 in Sevierville, Tennessee. During the Vietnam war, Specialist Carr served with distinction in the United States Army.

It is only appropriate that his service and his life also be recognized by designating the VA community-based outpatient clinic in Sevierville, his hometown, the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic.

H.R. 2814 satisfies the committee's naming criteria and is supported by the entire Tennessee congressional delegation, veterans service organizations, including The American Legion, AMVETS, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Blinded Veterans Association.

I understand that the resolutions in support of this action and in honor of Specialist Carr have also passed the municipalities of Pittman Center, Sevierville, Pigeon Forge, Gatlinburg, and Sevier County in Tennessee.

Once again, this bill is sponsored by my good friend from Tennessee, Dr. ROE. He himself is an Army veteran and a senior member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. I am grateful to him for his hard work and advocacy on behalf of our Nation's veterans through his bill and through his valuable participation on our committee.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 2814.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation to name the community-based outpatient clinic in Sevierville, Tennessee, after Mr. Dannie A. Carr.

Specialist Four Dannie Arthur Carr was born on June 30, 1947, and was originally from Tennessee. He served his country in the Vietnam war as a member of the U.S. Army and as an infantryman in B Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division.

Dannie was a 1-year veteran of the Army when his tour began on November 5, 1968. On July 3, 1969, he was killed from artillery fire under hostile conditions in Tay Ninh Province, South Vietnam. He was only 22 years old. He was awarded the Bronze Star for Valor and the Purple Heart.

SP-4 Carr is buried at Zion Grove Cemetery in Tennessee, and each year

he is memorialized on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on panel 21W, line 50.

Dannie was just one of the many young men who fought and died for the freedom we hold most dear. Naming this facility is just one small way we can honor his memory and make sure that his sacrifice for our Nation will never be forgotten.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the Vietnam veterans. When they came home from Vietnam 40 years ago, we as a Nation did not properly recognize them, and we should have. Today we are finding that the largest portion of our veterans who are committing suicide are our Vietnam veterans.

Many of those men and women were not integrated into the VA health system; yet if they could get the treatment that they need, we could reduce the incidences of suicide, which number about 22 a day. Of this number, only three of these veterans are in the VA health system.

It is our time for all of us to soldier up. We need to ensure that all of our veterans are enrolled in the VA system. So if you know a veteran, make sure to encourage him or her to register and actively seek help at the VA. If you know a veteran who served during the Vietnam conflict, make sure you let that veteran know that our country loves them and we really appreciate their service.

Saying "God bless America" means that God has blessed America with the service of the Vietnam veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE), a very important person to our committee. Dr. ROE is an Army veteran himself from the First District of Tennessee, Johnson City.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I thank both Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member BROWN for their kind remarks.

It is a great honor to be here today, Mr. Speaker, as I rise to support H.R. 2814, which honors the sacrifice of a Vietnam war hero and names the VA clinic in Sevierville, Tennessee, after Specialist Four Dannie Arthur Carr.

Four Specialist Carr was an unmarried soldier who was killed in action and left no children to carry his name. I can think of no higher honor than to lend his name forever to the Veterans Affairs facility in his hometown.

The son of a Baptist minister and World War II veteran, Carr was born in June of 1947 in Sevier County, Tennessee. He attended Gatlinburg-Pittman High School, where he was a star basketball player.

□ 1245

Carr entered the United States Army at the age of 20 in 1967 and proudly

served B Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Division. In combat, Carr displayed valor, having been awarded two Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star. He was killed in action by artillery fire on the day before Independence Day, July 3, 1969, at age 22.

The heroism of Specialist Carr is well known and held in high regard throughout Sevier County. All the local municipalities have approved resolutions supporting the naming of this Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic after Carr.

In Tennessee, aptly nicknamed the Volunteer State, we hold a proud history of volunteerism in military service and ensure that the legacy of those who fought and died for this country is preserved.

Naming this facility after Dannie Carr will do exactly that, preserve the legacy of an American patriot who bravely gave his life at such a young age.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to note that this bill does not remove anyone's name from the VA clinic in Sevier County. The facility I propose naming after Carr is a vacant medical facility that, through the leadership of Sevier County Mayor Larry Waters and Sevierville Mayor Bryan Atchley, we were able to secure a lease to the Department of Veterans Affairs for a whopping \$1 per year. It is not currently named after another soldier. Specialist Carr is an obvious top choice when considering this honor.

I urge my colleagues to preserve the legacy of this brave American soldier, Specialist Dannie A. Carr, taken from this Earth at such a young age, and pass this legislation.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to acknowledge that there are 1,000 Delta Sigma Theta visiting with us on the Hill today during Women's History Month.

I want to thank the families and thank the leadership for bringing this bill naming to us today, Mr. Dannie A. Carr.

I want to once again thank the Vietnam veterans for their service to this country. God has blessed America with their service.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, again I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2814.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CAMP PENDLETON MEDAL OF HONOR POST OFFICE

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 136) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1103 USPS Building 1103 in Camp Pendleton, California, as the "Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 136

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CAMP PENDLETON MEDAL OF HONOR POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1103 USPS Building 1103 in Camp Pendleton, California, shall be known and designated as the "Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), a fellow Army veteran.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, of the several postal namings that we will be voting on today, in my humble opinion, none can recognize a more significant contribution than this one. Many will pay honor to those who have served their country, particularly those in the military.

But this post office, located at the Mainside of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, is being named not on behalf of one or two or five, but for the many, many, many marines who have deployed from Camp Pendleton since 1942.

With over 42,000 marines and sailors currently stationed there and with its history in World War II, the Medal of Honor recipients whose names will appear on the plaque at what is now a numbered Mainside post office will remind all of those who come to that base and come to that facility that people like Colonel William Barber,

who received the Medal of Honor for actions at the Chosin Reservoir in Korea, and over 250 Medal of Honor recipients, more than any other base I know of in the world—it will represent those who gave their last measure, those who did for their colleagues and their comrades far more than any of us could imagine ever finding the courage to do.

I hope the naming of this will finally allow us to name what we do not have enough roads for, we do not have enough signs for, we do not have enough post offices for, and that is to recognize that the base at Camp Pendleton and its post office, as a result of the authority of this committee, has put out corpsmen and marines for decades who have served our country in a way that no other base could take such pride in.

I hope that all who hear this will recognize that we have named many post offices after an individual, but never after an act. And the act of heroism that earns the Medal of Honor is unparalleled to any American.

I thank the chairman for his assistance, and I thank the ranking member for bringing this bill in a timely fashion.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I, too, am pleased to join my colleagues—in particular, my friend from California (Mr. ISSA)—in the consideration of H.R. 136.

Camp Pendleton, located in southern California, is the West Coast's largest expeditionary training facility for the U.S. Marine Corps. In the over 230 years of Camp Pendleton's existence, hundreds of thousands of brave men and women have made great sacrifices there to protect our country.

Many of these courageous marines and Navy corpsmen have posthumously received the Medal of Honor, our Nation's highest award for valor, in recognition of their extreme heroism and selflessness.

Mr. Speaker, we should pass this bill to commemorate the heroic actions members of our military take every day to defend our freedom. The Medal of Honor recipients who have passed through Camp Pendleton have earned our eternal gratitude. By naming this post office in their honor, we show them the respect they deserve.

I urge passage of H.R. 136.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of this measure introduced by Congressman ISSA of California.

Mr. Speaker, Camp Pendleton, in addition to being a United States Marine Corps base in southern California that is home to 42,000 active marines and sailors, also has a distinguished history. Many of our Nation's servicemen and -women have been based out of

Camp Pendleton since it was first opened during World War II.

H.R. 136 designates the main post office on base in honor of all of the brave warriors from Camp Pendleton units that have received the Medal of Honor. I urge Members to support this bill to name a post office for these distinguished warriors.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 136.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT AMENDMENTS OF 2016

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2347) to amend the Federal Advisory Committee Act to increase the transparency of Federal advisory committees, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2347

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Federal Advisory Committee Act Amendments of 2016".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Ensuring independent advice and expertise.
- Sec. 3. Preventing efforts to circumvent the Federal Advisory Committee Act and public disclosure.
- Sec. 4. Increasing transparency of advisory committees.
- Sec. 5. Managing Federal advisory committees.
- Sec. 6. Comptroller General review and reports.
- Sec. 7. Application of Federal Advisory Committee Act to Trade Advisory Committees.
- Sec. 8. Definitions.
- Sec. 9. Technical and conforming amendments.
- Sec. 10. Effective date.
- Sec. 11. No additional funds authorized.

SEC. 2. ENSURING INDEPENDENT ADVICE AND EXPERTISE.

(a) BAR ON POLITICAL LITMUS TESTS.—Section 9 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting "MEMBERSHIP;" after "ADVISORY COMMITTEES;"

(2) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

“(b) **APPOINTMENTS MADE WITHOUT REGARD TO POLITICAL AFFILIATION OR ACTIVITY.**—All appointments to advisory committees shall be made without regard to political affiliation or political activity, unless required by Federal statute.”.

(b) **MINIMIZING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.**—Section 9 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), as amended by subsection (a) of this section, is further amended by inserting after subsection (b) (as added by such subsection (a)) the following:

“(c) **PUBLIC NOMINATIONS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS.**—Prior to appointing members to an advisory committee, the head of an agency shall give interested persons an opportunity to suggest potential committee members. The agency shall include a request for comments in the Federal Register notice required under subsection (a) and provide a mechanism for interested persons to comment through the official website of the agency. The agency shall consider any comments submitted under this subsection in selecting the members of an advisory committee.

“(d) **DESIGNATION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS.**—

“(1) An individual appointed to an advisory committee who is not a full-time or permanent part-time officer or employee of the Federal Government shall be designated as—

“(A) a special Government employee, if the individual is providing advice based on the individual's expertise or experience; or

“(B) a representative, if the individual is representing the views of an entity or entities outside of the Federal Government.

“(2) An agency may not designate committee members as representatives to avoid subjecting them to Federal ethics rules and requirements.

“(3) The designated agency ethics official for each agency shall review the members of each advisory committee that reports to the agency to determine whether each member's designation is appropriate, and to redesignate members if appropriate. The designated agency ethics official shall certify to the head of the agency that such review has been made—

“(A) following the initial appointment of members; and

“(B) at the time a committee's charter is renewed, or, in the case of a committee with an indefinite charter, every 2 years.

“(4) The head of each agency shall inform each individual appointed to an advisory committee that reports to the agency whether the individual is appointed as a special Government employee or as a representative. The agency head shall provide each committee member with an explanation of the differences between special Government employees and representatives and a summary of applicable ethics requirements. The agency head, acting through the designated agency ethics official, shall obtain signed and dated written confirmation from each committee member that the member received and reviewed the information required by this paragraph.

“(5) The Director of the Office of Government Ethics shall provide guidance to agencies on what to include in the summary of ethics requirements required by paragraph (4).

“(6) The head of each agency shall, to the extent practicable, develop and implement strategies to minimize the need for written determinations under section 208(b)(3) of title 18, United States Code. Strategies may

include such efforts as improving outreach efforts to potential committee members and seeking public input on potential committee members.”.

(c) **REGULATIONS IMPLEMENTING FACA.**—Section 7(c) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by inserting “promulgate regulations and” after “The Administrator shall”.

(d) **ENSURING INDEPENDENT ADVICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in section 8—

(A) in the section heading, by inserting “INDEPENDENT ADVICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS;” after “RESPONSIBILITIES OF AGENCY HEADS;”;

(B) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c); and

(C) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

“(b) The head of each agency shall ensure that the agency does not interfere with the free and independent participation, expression of views, and deliberation by committee members. Each advisory committee shall include a statement describing the process used by the advisory committee in formulating the advice and recommendations when they are transmitted to the agency.”; and

(2) in section 10—

(A) in the section heading, by inserting “; CHAIR” after “ATTENDANCE”; and

(B) by inserting after subsection (f) the following new subsection:

“(g) The Chair shall not be an employee of the agency to which the advisory committee reports, unless—

“(1) a statute specifically authorizes selection of such an employee as the Chair; or

“(2) the head of the agency directs an employee to serve as the Chair.”.

SEC. 3. PREVENTING EFFORTS TO CIRCUMVENT THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE.

(a) **DE FACTO MEMBERS.**—Section 4 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d) **TREATMENT OF INDIVIDUAL AS MEMBER.**—An individual who is not a full-time or permanent part-time officer or employee of the Federal Government shall be regarded as a member of a committee if the individual regularly attends and participates in committee meetings as if the individual were a member, even if the individual does not have the right to vote or veto the advice or recommendations of the advisory committee.”.

(b) **SUBCOMMITTEES.**—Section 4 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), as amended by subsection (a) of this section, is further amended by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

“(a) **APPLICATION.**—The provisions of this Act or of any rule, order, or regulation promulgated under this Act shall apply to each advisory committee, including any subcommittee or subgroup thereof, except to the extent that any Act of Congress establishing any such advisory committee specifically provides otherwise. Any subcommittee or subgroup that reports to a parent committee established under section 9(a) is not required to comply with section 9(f).”.

(c) **COMMITTEES CREATED UNDER CONTRACT.**—Section 3(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended in the matter following subparagraph (C) by adding at the end the following: “An advisory committee is considered to be established by an agency, agencies, or the President if it is formed, created, or organized under contract, other transactional author-

ity, cooperative agreement, grant, or otherwise at the request or direction of an agency, agencies, or the President.”.

(d) **ADVISORY COMMITTEES CONTAINING SPECIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.**—Section 4 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), as amended by subsections (a) and (b) of this section, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e) **SPECIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.**—Committee members appointed as special Government employees shall not be considered full-time or permanent part-time officers or employees of the Federal Government for purposes of determining the applicability of this Act under section 3(2).”.

SEC. 4. INCREASING TRANSPARENCY OF ADVISORY COMMITTEES.

(a) **INFORMATION REQUIREMENT.**—Section 11 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 11. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—With respect to each advisory committee, the head of the agency to which the advisory committee reports shall make publicly available in accordance with subsection (b) the following information:

“(1) The charter of the advisory committee.

“(2) A description of the process used to establish and appoint the members of the advisory committee, including the following:

“(A) The process for identifying prospective members.

“(B) The process of selecting members for balance of viewpoints or expertise.

“(C) The reason each member was appointed to the committee.

“(D) A justification of the need for representative members, if any.

“(3) A list of all current members, including, for each member, the following:

“(A) The name of any person or entity that nominated the member.

“(B) Whether the member is designated as a special Government employee or a representative.

“(C) In the case of a representative, the individuals or entity whose viewpoint the member represents.

“(4) A list of all members designated as special Government employees for whom written certifications were made under section 208(b) of title 18, United States Code, a copy of each such certification, a summary description of the conflict necessitating the certification, and the reason for granting the certification.

“(5) Any recusal agreement made by a member or any recusal known to the agency that occurs during the course of a meeting or other work of the committee.

“(6) A summary of the process used by the advisory committee for making decisions.

“(7) Detailed minutes of all meetings of the committee and a description of committee efforts to make meetings accessible to the public using online technologies (such as video recordings) or other techniques (such as audio recordings).

“(8) Any written determination by the President or the head of the agency to which the advisory committee reports, pursuant to section 10(d), to close a meeting or any portion of a meeting and the reasons for such determination.

“(9) Notices of future meetings of the committee.

“(10) Any additional information considered relevant by the head of the agency to which the advisory committee reports.

“(b) **MANNER OF DISCLOSURE.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the head of an agency shall

make the information required to be disclosed under this section available electronically on the official public website of the agency and to the Administrator at least 15 calendar days before each meeting of an advisory committee. If the head of the agency determines that such timing is not practicable for any required information, such head shall make the information available as soon as practicable but no later than 48 hours before the next meeting of the committee. An agency may withhold from disclosure any information that would be exempt from disclosure under section 552 of title 5, United States Code.

“(2) **WEBSITE AVAILABILITY.**—The head of an agency shall make available electronically, on the official public website of the agency, detailed minutes and, to the extent available, a transcript or audio or video recording of each advisory committee meeting not later than 30 calendar days after such meeting.

“(3) **GRANT REVIEWS.**—In the case of grant reviews, disclosure of information required by subsection (a)(3) may be provided in the aggregate rather than by individual grant.

“(c) **PROVISION OF INFORMATION BY ADMINISTRATOR OF GENERAL SERVICES.**—The Administrator of General Services shall provide, on the official public website of the General Services Administration, electronic access to the information made available by each agency under this section.

“(d) **AVAILABILITY OF MEETING MATERIALS.**—Except where prohibited by contractual agreements entered into prior to the effective date of this Act, agencies and advisory committees shall make available to any person, at actual cost of duplication, copies of advisory committee meeting materials.”

(b) **CHARTER FILING.**—Subsection (f) of section 9 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), as redesignated by section 2(a) of this Act, is amended to read as follows:

“(f) No advisory committee shall meet or take any action until an advisory committee charter has been filed with the Administrator, the head of the agency to whom any advisory committee reports, and the standing committees of the Senate and of the House of Representatives having legislative jurisdiction of such agency. Such charter shall contain the following information in the following order:

“(1) The committee's official designation.

“(2) The authority under which the committee is established.

“(3) The committee's objectives and the scope of its activity.

“(4) A description of the duties for which the committee is responsible, and, if such duties are not solely advisory, a specification of the authority for such functions.

“(5) The agency or official to whom the committee reports.

“(6) The agency responsible for providing the necessary support for the committee.

“(7) The responsibilities of the officer or employee of the Federal Government designated under section 10(e).

“(8) The estimated number and frequency of committee meetings.

“(9) The period of time necessary for the committee to carry out its purposes.

“(10) The committee's termination date, if less than two years from the date of the committee's establishment.

“(11) The estimated number of members and a description of the expertise needed to carry out the objectives of the committee.

“(12) A description of whether the committee will be composed of special Govern-

ment employees, representatives, or members from both categories.

“(13) Whether the agency intends to create subcommittees and if so, the agency official authorized to exercise such authority.

“(14) The estimated annual operating costs in dollars and full-time equivalent positions for such committee.

“(15) The recordkeeping requirements of the committee.

“(16) The date the charter is filed.

A copy of any such charter shall also be furnished to the Library of Congress.”

SEC. 5. MANAGING FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES.

(a) **COMMITTEE MANAGEMENT OFFICERS.**—Subsection (c) of section 8 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), as redesignated by section 2(d) of this Act, is amended to read as follows:

“(c) The head of each agency that has an advisory committee shall designate an Advisory Committee Management Officer who shall—

“(1) be a senior official who is—

“(A) an expert in implementing the requirements of this Act and regulations promulgated pursuant to this Act; and

“(B) the primary point of contact for the General Services Administration;

“(2) be responsible for the establishment, management, and supervision of the advisory committees of the agency, including establishing procedures, performance measures, and outcomes for such committees;

“(3) assemble and maintain the reports, records, and other papers (including advisory committee meeting materials) of any such committee during its existence;

“(4) ensure any such committee and corresponding agency staff adhere to the provisions of this Act and any regulations promulgated pursuant to this Act;

“(5) maintain records on each employee of any such committee and completion of training required for any such employee;

“(6) be responsible for providing the information required in section 7(b) of this Act to the Administrator; and

“(7) carry out, on behalf of that agency, the provisions of section 552 of title 5, United States Code, with respect to the reports, records, and other papers described in paragraph (3).”

SEC. 6. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW AND REPORTS.

(a) **REVIEW.**—The Comptroller General of the United States shall review compliance by agencies with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended by this Act, including whether agencies are appropriately appointing advisory committee members as either special Government employees or representatives.

(b) **REPORT.**—The Comptroller General shall submit to the committees described in subsection (c) two reports on the results of the review, as follows:

(1) The first report shall be submitted not later than one year after the date of promulgation of regulations under section 7(c) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), as amended by section 2(c).

(2) The second report shall be submitted not later than five years after such date of promulgation of regulations.

(c) **COMMITTEES.**—The committees described in this subsection are the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

SEC. 7. APPLICATION OF FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT TO TRADE ADVISORY COMMITTEES.

Section 135(f)(2)(A) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2155(f)(2)(A)) is amended by striking “subsections (a) and (b) of sections 10 and 11 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act” and inserting “subsections (a) and (b) of section 10 and subsections (a)(7), (a)(8), (a)(9), (b)(2), and (d) of section 11 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act”.

SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.

Section 3 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) The term ‘special Government employee’ has the meaning given that term in section 202(a) of title 18, United States Code.”

SEC. 9. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

Section 7(d)(1) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “the rate specified for GS-18 of the General Schedule under section 5332” and inserting “the rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315”; and

(2) in subparagraph (C)(i), by striking “handicapped individuals (within the meaning of section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794))” and inserting “individuals with disabilities (as defined in section 7(20) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 705(20)))”.

SEC. 10. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 11. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act and the amendments made by this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2347, introduced by Congressman WILLIAM “LACY” CLAY. H.R. 2347 was introduced by Representative CLAY to help improve the governance and transparency of the Federal advisory committees.

Congress acknowledged the merits of using advisory committees to acquire viewpoints from business, academic, and other interests when it passed the Federal Advisory Committee Act in 1972.

While not necessarily well known, Federal advisory committees are small

bodies of people who provide advice, guidance, or recommendations to Federal policymakers on a wide range of topics. All told, in fiscal year 2014, 825 Federal advisory committees held 7,173 meetings at a cost to the American taxpayer of more than \$334 million.

While these committees undoubtedly provided a number of valuable insights, it is important that we continue to work to ensure that these committees produce the best value for the taxpayer.

Unfortunately, some agencies note that the FACA requirements are cumbersome and resource intensive, thus reducing the ability of the committees to focus on substantive issues in a timely fashion.

Both governmental agencies and private groups say that the 1972 act does not do enough to require agencies to promote openness and transparency.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2347 works to address these problems and bring transparency to Federal advisory committees and the Federal agency decision-making process.

It also clarifies transparency of committee membership by requiring members to be selected without political affiliation, giving agency heads authorization to require members to fully disclose conflicts of interest and treating those individuals who regularly attend and participate in committee meetings to be considered as a member, even if they are not allowed to vote.

H.R. 2347 classifies transparency of committee activities further by ensuring the committee's advice, information, and recommendations are judgments of the committee and not the agency and, also, by requiring each agency to make available on their Web site the committee and its activities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,

Washington, DC, December 10, 2015.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On October 9, 2015, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform ordered reported without amendment H.R. 2347, the Federal Advisory Committee Act Amendments of 2015, by unanimous consent. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, with an additional referral to the Committee on Ways and Means.

I ask that you allow the Ways and Means Committee to be discharged from further consideration of the bill so that it may be scheduled by the Majority Leader. This discharge in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill, and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on Ways and Means represented on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to in-

clude this letter and any response in the bill report filed by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, as well as in the Congressional Record during floor consideration, to memorialize our understanding.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, December 10, 2015.

Hon. JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding the Committee on Ways and Means' jurisdictional interest in H.R. 2347, the "Federal Advisory Committee Act Amendments of 2015." I wanted to notify you that the Committee on Ways and Means will forgo action on H.R. 2347 so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

This is conditional on our mutual understanding and agreement that doing so will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means. In addition, the Committee reserves that right to seek conferees and requests your support when such a request is made.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 2347, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H.R. 2347.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me first thank my colleague, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL), as well as the majority party for working with us to get this bill to this forum and to get it ready for passage.

I rise in strong support of the Federal Advisory Committee Act Amendments. I have introduced this bill in each of the last four Congresses, and I am hopeful that this time the bill will make it to enactment.

□ 1300

The Federal Advisory Committee Act is one of our core open government laws. FACA is intended to ensure that advisory committees provide objective advice and operate with transparency. Over time, however, agencies have implemented FACA inconsistently and judges have created loopholes in the law.

This bill closes the loopholes that allow agencies to get around the Act. Currently, agencies can avoid FACA's requirements by conducting committee business through subcommittees. This bill makes it clear that FACA applies to subcommittees as well as to the parent committees.

The bill also clarifies that a committee that is set up by a contractor is subject to FACA if it is formed under the direction of the President or an agency. Under FACA, agencies would be required to disclose how advisory

members are chosen, whether they have financial conflicts of interest if they are appointed to provide their own expertise, and who they work for if they are representing a specific interest.

This bill includes changes to lower the cost of implementation based on discussions with the Congressional Budget Office. Specifically, the bill would include a more streamlined definition of what would be considered a committee under the bill.

This bill will make the government more accountable by shedding light on who is advising the government and on how one is advising the government.

I thank my colleagues for their cooperation in this effort. This is a good government bill, and I urge its passage.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge the adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. ROSELEHTINEN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2347, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MAYA ANGELOU MEMORIAL POST OFFICE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3735) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston Salem, North Carolina, as the "Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3735

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. MAYA ANGELOU MEMORIAL POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston Salem, North Carolina, shall be known and designated as the "Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 3735, which was introduced by Congresswoman ALMA ADAMS of North Carolina and is supported by the entire North Carolina delegation. The bill designates the post office located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, as the Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office.

Madam Speaker, Dr. Maya Angelou held a distinguished career that earned her over 80 honorary degrees. She was an American author, poet, and civil rights activist.

Dr. Angelou was born on April 4, 1928, in St. Louis, Missouri. In 1981, she moved to Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where she accepted the Lifetime William Neal Reynolds Professorship of American Studies at Wake Forest University. For over 30 years, she served as a professor at Wake Forest University and became a community leader.

Dr. Angelou made literary history with her 1969 acclaimed memoir, "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," when she became the first African American woman to make the nonfiction bestseller list.

She served on two Presidential committees: the American Revolution Bicentennial Council, under President Ford, and the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year, under President Carter.

In 1993, upon the request of President Clinton, Dr. Angelou composed a poem to read at his inauguration. That poem, entitled "On the Pulse of Morning," was broadcast live around the world. In 2000, President Clinton awarded Dr. Angelou the National Medal of Arts.

She received recognition from the White House under the following Presidents as well. In 2005, Dr. Angelou penned and delivered the poem entitled "Amazing Peace" for President George W. Bush at the Christmas tree lighting ceremony. In 2010, President Barack Obama presented her with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the country's highest civilian honor.

Dr. Angelou called Winston-Salem home, which became her final resting place on May 28, 2014. Madam Speaker, H.R. 3735 would name a post office in her honor, a post office located in the community she called home.

I urge Members to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased to join my colleagues in the consideration of H.R. 3735, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, as the Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office.

Born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1928, Maya Angelou is best known for her literary talents as an author and poet. While the 1970 autobiography that recounts her life, "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," remains her most notable work, Maya Angelou authored dozens of other award-winning novels, essays, and poems, many of which reflect on her own life and experiences as well as on broader social and political issues.

Prior to her prolific literary career, Angelou also experienced success as a singer, actress, civil rights activist, and educator. Her many accolades include the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which was bestowed upon her by President Barack Obama in 2010. Dr. Angelou passed away in May 2014.

Madam Speaker, we should pass this bill to honor the legacy of Maya Angelou and the countless contributions her life and work made to the many facets of American society. I urge the passage of H.R. 3735.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS), my fellow freshman colleague.

Ms. ADAMS. I thank my colleague for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise during a special month, Women's History Month, to urge the passage of H.R. 3735, which is legislation to honor the life of Dr. Maya Angelou, an African American woman who broke barriers and served as an inspiration for so many young and old throughout this Nation. My legislation, H.R. 3735, designates the Center City postal facility at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, as the Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office.

Dr. Angelou was a distinguished author, writer, poet, and activist, which earned her renowned success and over 80 honorary degrees. She became the first nonfiction bestselling African American female author for her 1969 memoir, "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings." She was also the first African American woman to have a script filmed for the 1972 movie "Georgia," which was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

In addition to her literary successes, Dr. Angelou became a prolific academician. In 1981, she moved to Winston-Salem, North Carolina, which I am proud to represent. She accepted the Lifetime William Neal Reynolds Professorship of American Studies at Wake Forest University, and she went

on to serve there for more than 30 years.

Dr. Angelou received many accolades throughout her lifetime, including three Grammys for spoken word albums and two NAACP Image Awards.

Her work has become the crown of American literature and has been recognized by Presidents Carter, Clinton, and George W. Bush. In 2010, President Barack Obama presented her with our Nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Winston-Salem was Dr. Maya Angelou's home and is her final resting place; so renaming this postal facility in her honor is a small, yet thoughtful, way to recognize her influence and to celebrate her life in the community she deeply loved.

Dr. Angelou understood the importance of history. She was historic in her own right. She understood who she was, what her history was, and she understood her struggles. In her own words, she said, "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be un-lived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again."

Madam Speaker, it is my hope that my colleagues will join me in voting favorably for H.R. 3735 so as to rename the Center City postal facility in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, after Dr. Maya Angelou, one of our country's greatest writers, inspirational thought leaders, and an overall phenomenal woman.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, it is always a big decision when you name a local post office after somebody. I think people should investigate Maya Angelou a little bit and perhaps Google "Maya Angelou" and look at other articles in places like the "American Thinker" or "The American Spectator."

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge the adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3735, a bill to name a post office in Winston-Salem, North Carolina as the Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office.

Dr. Maya Angelou's illustrious legacy is befitting this well-deserved recognition.

Multi-talented barely covers the depth and breadth of Maya Angelou's accomplishments.

She was an author, actress, screenwriter, dancer, civil rights activist, professor, and poet.

Born Marguerite Annie Johnson on April 4, 1928, in St. Louis, Missouri, Maya Angelou is perhaps best known for her 1969 memoir, "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings."

In 1971, Maya Angelou published the Pulitzer Prize-nominated poetry collection *Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'Fore I Die*.

Maya Angelou received several honors throughout her career, including two NAACP

Image Awards in the outstanding literary work (nonfiction) category, in 2005 and 2009 and the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2010.

During World War II, Maya Angelou moved to San Francisco, California, where she won a scholarship to study dance and acting at the California Labor School.

Also during this time, Maya Angelou became the first black female cable car conductor in San Francisco, California.

In the mid-1950s, Maya Angelou's career as a performer began to take off, when she landed a role in a touring production of *Porgy and Bess*, later appearing in the off-Broadway production *Calypso Heat Wave* (1957) and releasing her first album, *Miss Calypso* (1957).

As a member of the Harlem Writers Guild and a civil rights activist, Maya Angelou organized and starred in the musical revue *Cabaret for Freedom* as a benefit to raise funds for Dr. King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Maya Angelou also served as the SCLC's northern coordinator.

In 1961, Maya Angelou appeared in an off-Broadway production of Jean Genet's *The Blacks* with James Earl Jones, Lou Gossett Jr. and Cicely Tyson.

While the play earned strong reviews, Maya Angelou moved on to other pursuits, spending much of the 1960s abroad, first living in Egypt and then in Ghana, working as an editor and a freelance writer at the University of Ghana.

After returning to the United States, Angelou was urged by friend and fellow writer James Baldwin to write about her life experiences.

Maya Angelou's efforts resulted in the enormously successful 1969 memoir about her childhood and young adult years, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, which made literary history as the first nonfiction best-seller by an African-American woman, making Maya an international superstar.

Since publishing *Caged Bird*, Maya Angelou continued to break new ground not just artistically, but educationally and socially.

She wrote the screenplay for the film drama *Georgia, Georgia* in 1972—and made history as the first African-American woman to have her screenplay produced.

Maya Angelou went on to earn a Tony Award nomination for her role in the 1973 play *Look Away* and an Emmy Award nomination for her work on the television miniseries *Roots* (1977).

Maya Angelou also published several collections of poetry, including *Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'Fore I Die* (1971), which was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize.

One of Maya Angelou's most famous works is the poem "On the Pulse of Morning," which she wrote especially for and recited at President Bill Clinton's inaugural ceremony in January 1993, the first inaugural recitation since 1961, when Robert Frost delivered his poem "The Gift Outright" at President John F. Kennedy's inauguration.

Maya Angelou went on to win a Grammy Award (best spoken word album) for the audio version of the poem.

In 1995, Maya Angelou again made history, this time for remaining on *The New York Times'* paperback nonfiction best-seller list for two years—the longest-running record in the chart's history.

Seeking new creative challenges, Maya Angelou made her directorial debut in 1998 with *Down in the Delta*, starring Alfre Woodard.

She also wrote a number of inspirational works, from the essay collection *Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now*, to her advice for young women in *Letter to My Daughter*.

Interested in health, Angelou has even published cookbooks, including *Hallelujah! The Welcome Table: A Lifetime of Memories With Recipes and Great Food, All Day Long*.

Among her numerous accolades are the Chicago International Film Festival's 1998 Audience Choice Award, *Acapulco Black Film Festival* in 1999 for *Down in the Delta*; and two NAACP Image Awards for Outstanding Literary Work.

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a close friend, was assassinated on Maya Angelou's 40th birthday, April 4, 1968, and from that year forward Maya Angelou refused to celebrate her birthday; instead, she would send flowers to Dr. King's widow, Coretta Scott King, for more than 30 years, until her death in 2006.

President Barack Obama has called Maya Angelou "a brilliant writer, a fierce friend, and a truly phenomenal woman," who "had the ability to remind us that we are all God's children; that we all have something to offer."

Madam Speaker, I can think of so many other reasons why Dr. Maya Angelou's illustrious legacy deserves this profound recognition, but I leave you with these words from Dr. Angelou's poem, *Still I Rise*:

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear. I rise.

Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear. I rise.

Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave. I am the dream and the hope of the slave. I rise. I rise. I rise!

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3735.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

W. RONALD COALE MEMORIAL POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1132) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1048 West Robinhood Drive in Stockton, California, as the "W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1132

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. W. RONALD COALE MEMORIAL POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1048 West Robinhood Drive in Stockton, California, shall be known and designated as the "W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

□ 1315

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 1132, introduced by Congressman JERRY MCNERNEY of California. The bill designates the post office located at 1048 West Robinhood Drive in Stockton, California, as the W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Coale spent much of his life in public service and was incredibly involved in his community in Stockton, California. Born in Stockton, he attended the local schools there and graduated from Stockton College. He also earned his teaching certificate in the field of transportation and distribution from the University of California at Berkeley.

A veteran of the Korean war, he served in the United States Army from 1952 to 1954 and was honorably discharged. Mr. Coale went on to serve in numerous capacities, supporting local government and public transportation. In fact, he served as a member of the Stockton Port Commission for 22 years.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Coale was elected to the Stockton City Council in 1983 and was subsequently elected to the office of vice mayor in 1985, where he served for the next 5 years until 1990.

He also served as chair of the San Joaquin County Council of Governments in 1958, while representing the Stockton City Council as vice mayor.

Mr. Coale was then appointed by the Stockton City Council to the Stockton Port District board of port commissioners in 1981 and served in that position until March of 2013.

He also served in the San Joaquin County Council of Governments, representing the Stockton Metropolitan Transit District board of directors, the Stockton City Council, and the Stockton Port District board of port commissioners.

Mr. Coale was a former member and past chairman of the Stockton Salvation Army advisory board and a former gubernatorial appointee to the Atascadero State Hospital advisory board, serving for 8 years as the Governor's appointee.

A Thirty-third Degree Scottish Rite Mason, Mr. Coale was appointed to the Office of Personal Representative of the Sovereign Grand Inspector General of California for the Stockton Scottish Rite in April of 1992. He served in that position until May of 2003. He also served as a trustee of the California Scottish Rite Foundation during that time period.

As a veteran, Ron also belonged to the Karl Ross Post of the American Legion in Stockton.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Coale passed away in April of 2014 at the age of 81. He left a legacy of many years of service to both his Nation in wartime and to his community and set a strong example of the importance of community involvement.

I urge Members to support this measure.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased to join my colleagues in the consideration of H.R. 1132, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1048 West Robinhood Drive in Stockton, California, as the W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building.

Ronald Coale was born in 1932 and led a life of dedicated public service, beginning with service to his country during the Korean war.

A member of the Stockton Metropolitan Transit District board of directors beginning in 1973, Mr. Coale rather quickly took on a leadership role, chairing the board from 1975 until 1983.

He later served local government and the transit sector through his positions as a council member and vice mayor for the city of Stockton, chairman of the Stockton Port Commission, a member of the San Joaquin Council of Governments board of directors, and worked on behalf of the California Public Utilities Commission and California Trucking Association.

Mr. Coale passed away at the age of 81 in April 2014.

Madam Speaker, we should pass this bill to recognize W. Ronald Coale's in-

spiring life of public service and to honor his accomplishments and his memory. I urge passage of H.R. 1132.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I would like to make my colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) aware that I have no further speakers and am prepared to close.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY).

Mr. MCNERNEY. Madam Speaker, all the things I wanted to say about Mr. Coale have already been said, so it is going to be personal.

I met Mr. Coale when I first got elected. He approached me and asked me if he could be on my service academy advisory board. Of course, I didn't know much about that at the time. I was glad to appoint him. He did a wonderful job. He always was there with a smile and a warm handshake. He did his best for the community. He did his best for our United States Army and the service academies. I really appreciated the opportunity to get to know him.

He is missed. His family has always been very fond of their father and their husband and so on. I share that fondness, and I miss him.

Mr. Coale has a great legacy, and I am proud that we are able to get a post office named after him. I urge my colleagues to vote "aye" on this measure.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1132.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LIONEL R. COLLINS, SR. POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2458) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5351 Lapalco Boulevard in Marrero, Louisiana, as the "Lionel R. Collins, Sr. Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2458

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. LIONEL R. COLLINS, SR. POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5351

Lapalco Boulevard in Marrero, Louisiana, shall be known and designated as the "Lionel R. Collins, Sr. Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Lionel R. Collins, Sr. Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2458, introduced by Congressman RICHMOND of Louisiana. The bill designates the post office located at 5351 Lapalco Boulevard in Marrero, Louisiana, as the Lionel R. Collins, Sr. Post Office Building.

Madam Speaker, Judge Collins made history by being the first African American to win an elected office position in the Jefferson Parish of Louisiana. He dedicated his life to making New Orleans a more just and equal community.

Judge Collins was born in Harvey, Louisiana, and not only maintained his roots in the New Orleans area, but also contributed tremendously to the city.

After serving in the United States Army and graduating from Howard University School of Law, Judge Collins returned to New Orleans and initiated his career as a pioneering civil rights attorney. He led groundbreaking cases that overturned discriminatory practices. He also integrated West Jefferson Hospital and Jefferson Parish Public Schools.

In 1977, Judge Collins received an interim appointment from the Louisiana Supreme Court to serve as a judge. He was the first African American to do so. He was then reelected to serve a second term, during which his fellow judges elected to name him chief judge. He was the first African American to hold this position. Judge Collins broke further barriers, both in his courtroom decisions and in his personal accomplishments.

In 1988, Judge Collins passed away at the age of 60. Naming this postal facility for the Honorable Lionel Collins will memorialize his groundbreaking achievements in civil rights and his

lifelong dedication to the New Orleans community.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am happy to echo and second the eloquent words that were just said by my colleague on the other side of the aisle.

Rather than repeat them or preempt the next speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND).

Mr. RICHMOND. Madam Speaker, I am honored to stand here today in support of a bill to designate the Marrero, Louisiana, post office for Lionel Collins, Sr.

We will name a number of post offices today, and I just want to state why it is important to me and why it makes a difference: because as a kid, when you pass buildings and you pass things that have names on them, it makes you go back and research who was that person and what did they do so great to get a building or a facility named after them.

I hope that today when we pass this bill to name this post office after Judge Lionel Collins, that kids will get a chance to pass by and say: "What made Lionel Collins deserving of a post office?" and "When I grow up, will I be deserving of a post office?" and "What is it I need do in my life to make a difference?"

When they go back and they do the research, they will see that Judge Lionel Collins was a pioneering civil rights lawyer. He dedicated his life to making Louisiana a more just and equal State for them. He was the first African American to win elected office in Jefferson Parish where he served as the judge in the 24th Judicial District in Gretna.

Lionel had long roots in the metropolitan area. He was born in Harvey in 1927 and attended Gilbert Academy before serving in the United States Army. After that, he went on to the esteemed Xavier University, and then went on to receive his juris doctorate from Howard University in 1954.

Throughout his career as a lawyer, Judge Collins played a major role in the civil rights struggle in the South. Beginning in 1957, Lionel led groundbreaking cases that helped to overturn practices of White-only jobs and higher pay for White employees at the Celotex Corporation.

Lionel continued to successfully steer desegregation cases with the NAACP across Louisiana. His work integrated West Jefferson Hospital and the Jefferson Parish Public Schools.

His courtroom successes and courage in the civil rights initiatives earned him the role of Jefferson Parish's first African American assistant parish attorney in 1968. As already mentioned,

in 1977, Lionel made history by receiving an interim appointment from the Louisiana Supreme Court to serve as judge to the newly created Division L of the 24th Judicial District. He was re-elected to a second term and named chief judge by his fellow judges.

In addition to his civil rights work, Judge Collins served the New Orleans area community throughout his career. He served as a board member for the Urban League and Selective Service. As a testament to his life legacy, the Jefferson Parish School Board voted to rename Ames Montessori School in Marrero as Judge Lionel R. Collins Elementary in 2011.

I thank Chairman CHAFFETZ and Ranking Member CUMMINGS for bringing this bill to the floor and congratulate Lionel's family for this wonderful recognition. I hope that this postal facility will serve as a reminder of Lionel's courage, his intellect, and his passion for generations to come.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, again, I urge passage of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2458 and thank my colleague and friend Congressman CEDRIC RICHMOND for his leadership in bringing this important bill to the House floor. The Honorable Lionel R. Collins Sr. is a true Louisiana and American hero, and this bill honors his life and achievements with a fitting tribute.

Judge Collins served on the bench in the 24th Judicial District Court in Gretna, Louisiana and was the first African-American elected to public office in my home parish of Jefferson, Louisiana. He also led the efforts to integrate Jefferson Medical Center and helped integrate Jefferson Parish public schools.

Judge Collins had an innate sense of justice. His colleagues described him as a 'hard-working, fair and honest judge . . . tough when he had to be tough, but he had a sense of fairness.'

While we can never fully repay Lionel Collins for his distinguished public service, we can honor his life and legacy as a pioneering civil rights attorney and an education champion in southeast Louisiana by passing this legislation. Judge Collins made meaningful impacts that advanced equality, justice, health care, and access to quality education. In fact, the Ames Montessori elementary school in Marrero was renamed Judge Lionel R. Collins Elementary in 2011.

Our community is better for the life and service of Judge Collins.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this measure to memorialize a respected defender of civil liberties, and I urge passage of this legislation by Congressman RICHMOND.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2458.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DARYLE HOLLOWAY POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3082) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5919 Chef Menteur Highway in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the "Daryle Holloway Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3082

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DARYLE HOLLOWAY POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5919 Chef Menteur Highway in New Orleans, Louisiana, shall be known and designated as the "Daryle Holloway Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Daryle Holloway Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

□ 1330

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3082, introduced by Congressman CEDRIC RICHMOND of Louisiana. The bill designates the post office located at 5919 Chef Menteur Highway in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the Daryle Holloway Post Office Building.

Madam Speaker, Officer Daryle Holloway was a 22-year veteran of the New Orleans Police Department and the father of three children. On June 20, 2015, Officer Holloway lost his life in the line of duty while transporting a suspect to the police station.

Prior to his tragic death, Officer Holloway served his community for more than two decades. He attended Corpus Christi Elementary and graduated from St. Augustine High School,

both located in New Orleans, the community in which he served.

Madam Speaker, Officer Holloway had deep roots in the community he served. Throughout his life, he continued to attend the Friday night football games in support of the St. Augustine High School Purple Knights.

His connection to the community was reflected in the way he approached his work. He became a police officer during the early days of community-oriented policing, an initiative where officers and residents worked together in order to combat crime and ensure safety.

During his 22 years at the New Orleans Police Department, he not only protected the streets of New Orleans, but worked with children in the Cops for Kids summer camps. There, he again emphasized and maintained a healthy relationship among the police, youth, and their families.

Madam Speaker, New Orleans will remember Officer Holloway as a dedicated law enforcement officer and, more importantly, as a friend. Naming this post office after Officer Daryle Holloway will memorialize both his unforgettable sense of humor and his lifelong dedication to the city of New Orleans. I urge Members to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, it is clearly a busy day in New Orleans. Much like the previous bill, rather than speaking and simply repeating the eloquent words that were previously spoken, I would rather yield such time as he may consume again to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND), my colleague, who proudly represents his State.

Mr. RICHMOND. Madam Speaker, again, I will say that naming this post office in honor of a true public servant and a young man who grew up in the area, a young man who ultimately sacrificed his life to make sure that other people would be safe, who dedicated his life to protecting and serving the residents of New Orleans, will inspire other young kids in that same area, other young kids who grow up in that area, like I did, to look at police work as a life of service and with the possibility of going into law enforcement. That post office bearing the name for Officer Daryle Holloway, I think, will do just that.

But Daryle was special. He was a big guy. He was the life of the party, but he knew at a young age that he wanted to be a police officer. Unfortunately, he was killed at the young age of 46 in the line of duty on June 20, 2015, while transporting a suspect to the police station. He was the father of three children.

As mentioned earlier, he had very deep roots in the community. He at-

tended Corpus Christi and was a graduate of St. Augustine High School. He joined the police force not too long after finishing high school and remained a passionate supporter of his alma mater.

It was mentioned that he would be at the football games cheering on the Purple Knights, but what wasn't mentioned was that he was always the life of the party.

Daryle did become a police officer in the early days of community policing in an effort to focus on officers' engagement with residents in the communities they serve. He was a natural fit for the police department because he was friends with just about everyone in the city.

He was drawn to police work because he genuinely wanted to help people and make New Orleans a safer place for all of us to live. Daryle served with the New Orleans Police Department for 22 years. In addition to protecting our streets, he spent 10 years working with children in the Cops for Kids summer camps, which help develop relationships between police, youth, and their families. Daryle also brought community policing into the Florida and Desire housing developments.

After his passing, many of those former residents and summer campers organized a vigil to honor the man they considered not only a police officer but a friend.

I would like to personally add that in my eighth grade year at St. Aug. Daryle Holloway, big Daryle Holloway, made sure that little CEDRIC RICHMOND was protected from everyone in the school. He started his life of serving and protecting probably with me.

What he did to mentor kids in the neighborhood and live his life so that he could be an example, especially for young men of color growing up in rough neighborhoods, to show how you carry yourself, responsibility, and commitment, and how to be a family man, how to be a great father, and how to be a great son was truly a testament to Daryle Holloway.

I know his mother, Olander Belfield Holloway, is probably watching us today. When I talked to her, she said: CEDRIC, I just feel so special that people remember my son and remember the fact that he died in the line of duty doing what he wanted to do the most, and that was protect the citizens of New Orleans.

Again, I would like to thank Chairman CHAFFETZ and Ranking Member CUMMINGS for bringing this bill to the floor and to once again offer the Holloway family my sincerest condolences. I hope that this postal facility will serve as a reminder of Officer Holloway's courage and compassion for generations to come.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, clearly, as we just heard, Officer Holloway is exactly

the kind of person that we should recognize as a country. It is also a reminder—and I say this representing hundreds, if not thousands, of Philadelphia police officers in my district. It is a reminder of just how dangerous the job of being a police officer is in our society.

It is quite clear that Officer Holloway paid the ultimate sacrifice to Louisiana and also to our country. He is worthy of this honor. I urge all those in this House to adopt this bill.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3082.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FRANCIS MANUEL ORTEGA POST OFFICE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3274) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4567 Rockbridge Road in Pine Lake, Georgia, as the "Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3274

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FRANCIS MANUEL ORTEGA POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4567 Rockbridge Road in Pine Lake, Georgia, shall be known and designated as the "Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3274, introduced by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON). The bill designates the post office located at 4567 Rockbridge Road in Pine Lake, Georgia, as the Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office.

Madam Speaker, Officer Ortega was a dedicated public servant who was tragically killed in the line of duty. He was born in New York City on February 27, 1980. He later attended Lawrence High School in Lawrence, Massachusetts. At the time of his death, he was pursuing an associate of science degree in criminal justice from Griffin Technical College in Griffin, Georgia.

Officer Ortega had two children, Frankey and Kaylie. He worked as a part-time officer at Pine Lake Police Department and as a full-time officer at Georgia Regional Hospital. His dedication to peace and safety compelled Officer Ortega to regularly work 80-hour weeks.

Tragically, on August 11, 2005, a suspect fatally shot Officer Ortega in front of the Pine Lake Post Office during a routine traffic stop. It is only fitting that this post office be named in honor of this dedicated public servant.

Madam Speaker, Officer Ortega will be remembered for his commitment to justice and courage in the face of danger. He desired to stand up for what was right and not what was easy, having made the ultimate sacrifice in giving his life for the protection of his community.

Naming this post office after Officer Francis Ortega will memorialize his passion for justice and tremendous dedication to the community of Pine Lake, Georgia. I urge Members to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) in order to speak and elaborate a little more on Officer Ortega's life and his sacrifice and service.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank the ranking member, and I also thank the chair for bringing this bill forward. I also want to thank the members of the DeKalb County, Georgia, chapter of the Fraternal Order of Police, as well as the Georgia chapter of the Fraternal Order of Police, for helping us with this legislation.

Madam Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 3274, a bill to rename the Pine Lake, Georgia, Post Office in honor of a fallen police officer, Officer Francis Manuel Ortega.

On August 11, 2005, Officer Ortega was tragically killed in front of the Pine Lake Post Office while conducting a

routine traffic stop. Officer Ortega was shot and killed after stopping a vehicle for a minor traffic violation.

As Officer Ortega communicated with dispatch, the perpetrator exited his vehicle and approached the police cruiser. The perpetrator ignored Officer Ortega's order to get back into his vehicle, and a struggle ensued. The perpetrator pulled a gun, shot, and killed Officer Ortega. The killer then ran into the post office and committed suicide.

Officer Ortega was a part-time officer of the Pine Lake Police Department, and he was a full-time officer at the Georgia Regional Hospital. Officer Ortega, like many men and women who choose law enforcement as a career, was not driven by the mere pursuit of wealth. Officer Ortega was motivated by the desire to serve others and to keep our communities safe.

Unfortunately, because society doesn't pay police officers the full value of their service, Officer Ortega was forced to work a number of part-time jobs. His dedication to peace and safety within the community compelled him to work, regularly, 80-hour workweeks. As the chair just mentioned, he was a student pursuing a degree in criminal justice.

Officer Ortega is survived by his parents, Francisco and Luz; his sister, Joann; and his children, Frankey and Kaylie.

Officer Ortega made the ultimate sacrifice and gave his life to protect his community. I can think of no better way to preserve his memory and to honor his legacy than to dedicate this facility as the Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office Building.

□ 1345

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, like we heard previously about Officer Holloway, Officer Francis Manuel Ortega is clearly worthy of this honor.

My heartfelt sympathies go to his family. I hope today it might bring them some small measure of comfort.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3274.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MELVOID J. BENSON POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3601) to designate the facility

of the United States Postal Service located at 7715 Post Road, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, as the "Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3601

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. MELVOID J. BENSON POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7715 Post Road, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, shall be known and designated as the "Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 3601, introduced by my colleague from Rhode Island, Congressman JAMES LANGEVIN. The bill designates the post office located at 7715 Post Road, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, as the Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building.

Madam Speaker, Ms. Benson was born on February 13, 1930, in Jackson, Tennessee, and moved to North Kingstown, Rhode Island, in the 1960s. Once there, Ms. Benson dedicated her life to public service and to the people of the State of Rhode Island.

In 1965, she began what would become a 25-year teaching career in the North Kingstown School Department. Ms. Benson then served in the Rhode Island State House of Representatives for 14 years and spent the subsequent 8 years serving on the North Kingstown School Committee.

She served on the School Committee until 2014, when, at the age of 84, Ms. Benson made the decision not to seek reelection. Madam Speaker, all told, Ms. Benson spent nearly 50 years in public service.

In February 2015, Ms. Benson was honored with a lifetime achievement

award from the North Kingstown Democratic Town Committee.

In continued appreciation to Ms. Benson, Representative LANGEVIN introduced H.R. 3601, which names a post office in her honor.

The Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building would be an important fixture showing the gratitude of many for Ms. Benson's years of dedication to her community and her service to the State of Rhode Island.

I urge Members to support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), my friend.

Mr. LANGEVIN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I am truly honored and pleased to rise today in support of H.R. 3601, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7715 Post Road, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, as the Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building.

As my colleague stated, for more than 50 years Mel Benson has been a consummate public servant, dedicating her time to educating our youth, fighting for social justice, building up our communities, and giving back to her friends and neighbors.

Born Melvoid Estes on February 13, 1930, in Jackson, Tennessee, Mel grew up in the segregated South, but that did not stop her from pursuing an education and becoming active in politics.

Her father worked for the railroad, and her mother was a teacher. According to Mel, they both instilled in her the importance of education. "Every generation," they said, "must do better than the last."

Mel took their advice to heart and made education a priority. She graduated from high school in 1947 and went on to receive her bachelor's degree from Lane College in social science with a minor in education. Two years later she married her high school sweetheart, Arnathia "Ben" Benson, who joined the Navy after college.

Mel taught her first class at an all-Black school in Madison County. However, as a Navy wife, she wouldn't stay in Tennessee for long. She and her husband were eventually stationed at Quonset Naval Base in North Kingstown, Rhode Island, which would become Mel's new home and a community she would forever change for the better.

After moving to Rhode Island in the 1960s, Mel taught in the North Kingstown school system for 25 years. She educated students at Hamilton Elementary, the former Quonset Elementary; Davisville Middle School; and Wickford Middle School.

Every student she taught was touched by her wisdom and guidance.

According to Matthew Leonard, chairman of the North Kingstown Democratic Town Committee, who had Mel as a teacher in the eighth grade, she possessed a wonderful gift.

Her whole focus was education and children," Matthew recounted. "She believed the future is in children, and our greatest goal is to continue on to the next generation."

She carried that belief all the way to the State house of representatives, where she became the first Black woman elected to the Rhode Island Legislature from the Second Congressional District and the second Black woman elected to the legislature from the entire State.

According to Mel, she never thought of herself as a Black woman in the statehouse. She was there to do the work of the people. That is exactly what she did, proudly representing the town of North Kingstown for 14 years.

I was fortunate enough to serve with Mel in the statehouse and she made a wonderful teammate and friend. She always spoke her mind and knew how to get things done.

As State Senator James Sheehan put it, "Mel could be tough as bricks. When she was after something, she'd let you know it."

It was that passion that led to some of her proudest accomplishments as a member of the Rhode Island General Assembly, including her early involvement with the planning and development of Quonset Business Park and particularly the rehabilitation of the old Kiefer Park into modern housing.

After a distinguished career in the statehouse, Mel was elected to the North Kingstown School Committee, where she served for 8 years, until 2014. At the age of 84, Mel decided not to seek reelection. But 2 years later, she still hasn't lost her spark.

Well known for her perseverance, wit, and unmistakable candor, Mel has touched the lives of countless Rhode Islanders—my own included—and people still love to regale in stories of the great Mama Mel.

State Representative Robert Craven, who has known Mel since 1974, described her as someone who just relished the opportunity to be involved in people's lives and make a difference in every capacity, as a wife, a mother, a schoolteacher, a State representative, and a School Committee member.

Beth Cullen, who considers Mel like a mother, characterized Mel's impact upon our community perfectly:

"She really taught North Kingstown a lesson that it doesn't matter what you look like. It's what you do; and she lived it every day."

Madam Speaker, I couldn't agree more. Mel has truly dedicated her life to public service. Whether it was at the statehouse, in the School Committee chambers, or in the classroom, she has always put the best interests of Rhode Island and its young people first.

I would like to thank Chairman CHAFFETZ and Ranking Member CUMMINGS of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee for their work in bringing this legislation to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Mel Benson for a lifetime of distinguished service and achievement by supporting H.R. 3601, designating the North Kingstown Post Office as the Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I urge passage of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I also urge adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3601.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SECOND LT. ELLEN AINSWORTH MEMORIAL POST OFFICE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4046) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 220 East Oak Street, Glenwood City, Wisconsin, as the Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4046

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SECOND LT. ELLEN AINSWORTH MEMORIAL POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 220 East Oak Street, Glenwood City, Wisconsin, shall be known and designated as the "Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY), my friend and colleague.

Mr. DUFFY. I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for yielding.

Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize Second Lieutenant Ellen Ainsworth of the Seventh District of Wisconsin for her bravery, sacrifice, and service to her country during World War II.

Second Lieutenant Ainsworth grew up in the Wisconsin farming community of Glenwood City, where she is still recognized for her service and her sacrifice.

Ellen was well known around town as a caring young woman who loved to sing. She had a beautiful voice. Folks in town saw her as a leader and a go-getter. When duty called, she selflessly answered that call of duty.

In 1942, she entered the United States Army Nurse Corps after graduating from nursing school at the Minneapolis Eitel Hospital. She was first deployed to Tunisia and then, shortly after, to Italy, where she was assigned to the 56th Evacuation Hospital. Although the risk was high, it did not stop Lieutenant Ainsworth from honorably serving her country.

On February 10, 1944, Lieutenant Ainsworth's hospital tent came under heavy artillery attack in an area many described as hell's half acre. Under heavy enemy fire, Lieutenant Ainsworth disregarded her own well-being, evacuating 42 patients to safety, only stopping when she was hit by shrapnel from an exploding ordnance.

Lieutenant Ainsworth succumbed to her wounds 6 days later. At just 24 years old, she was the only Wisconsin servicewoman to make the ultimate sacrifice during World War II. Ainsworth was buried in the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery and Memorial in Italy.

Lieutenant Ainsworth was posthumously awarded a Silver Star, a Purple Heart, and a Red Cross Bronze Medal. A portrait of her currently hangs in the Pentagon as a testament to her bravery in the face of chaos and destruction.

The courageous actions of Lieutenant Ainsworth are witnessed today by the children of the soldiers who she saved, who would not be here if not for her heroism. She personified the honor and dignity through sacrifice that so many of her fellow Wisconsinites displayed during World War II.

Her death was a tragedy for the small town of Glenwood City. Over 72 years later, Lieutenant Ainsworth still has a large presence in that community. A health clinic, a veterans home as well as the American Legion post in her hometown have all been named in her honor.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to sponsor H.R. 4046, a bill that names the Glenwood City Post Office after Lieutenant Ellen Ainsworth. It will stand as a reminder of the bravery of one American from Wisconsin's Seventh Congressional District.

Please join me to recognize this most deserving hero and Wisconsinite as we

name the post office at 220 East Oak Street, Glenwood City, Wisconsin, the Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office.

□ 1400

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I also support this important piece of legislation introduced by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY), my colleague and friend. Rare is the individual, such as Second Lieutenant Ellen Ainsworth, who served in the Army Nurse Corps.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, but I will be brief.

One of the nice things about doing this is getting to hear the stories of ordinary Americans who make tremendous sacrifices. And clearly, Second Lieutenant Ainsworth was an extraordinary American who made such a sacrifice.

I am proud to support this resolution, and I urge its adoption.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge the adoption of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4046.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 136, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 3735, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

CAMP PENDLETON MEDAL OF HONOR POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the mo-

tion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 136) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1103 USPS Building 1103 in Camp Pendleton, California, as the "Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office", on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 381, nays 0, not voting 52, as follows:

[Roll No. 103]

YEAS—381

Abraham	Costa	Gutiérrez
Adams	Costello (PA)	Hahn
Aguilar	Courtney	Hanna
Allen	Cramer	Hardy
Amash	Crawford	Harris
Amodei	Crenshaw	Hartzler
Ashford	Crowley	Hastings
Barletta	Cuellar	Heck (NV)
Barr	Cummings	Heck (WA)
Bass	Curbelo (FL)	Hice, Jody B.
Beatty	Davis (CA)	Higgins
Becerra	Davis, Danny	Himes
Benishek	Davis, Rodney	Holding
Bera	DeFazio	Honda
Beyer	DeGette	Hoyer
Bilirakis	Delaney	Hudson
Bishop (GA)	DeLauro	Huelskamp
Bishop (MI)	DelBene	Huizenga (MI)
Bishop (UT)	Denham	Hultgren
Black	Dent	Hunter
Blackburn	DeSantis	Hurd (TX)
Blum	DeSaulnier	Hurt (VA)
Blumenauer	DesJarlais	Israel
Bonamici	Deutch	Issa
Bost	Diaz-Balart	Jeffries
Boustany	Dingell	Jenkins (KS)
Boyle, Brendan	Dold	Jenkins (WV)
F.	Donovan	Johnson (GA)
Brady (PA)	Doyle, Michael	Johnson (OH)
Brat	F.	Jolly
Bridenstine	Duckworth	Jones
Brooks (AL)	Duffy	Jordan
Brooks (IN)	Duncan (SC)	Joyce
Brown (FL)	Duncan (TN)	Kaptur
Brownley (CA)	Edwards	Katko
Buchanan	Ellison	Keating
Buck	Ellmers (NC)	Kelly (IL)
Bucshon	Engel	Kelly (MS)
Burgess	Eshoo	Kelly (PA)
Bustos	Esty	Kennedy
Butterfield	Farr	Kildee
Calvert	Fattah	Kilmer
Capps	Fitzpatrick	Kind
Capuano	Fleischmann	King (IA)
Cárdenas	Forbes	King (NY)
Carney	Fortenberry	Kinzinger (IL)
Carson (IN)	Foster	Kirkpatrick
Carter (GA)	Fox	Knight
Carter (TX)	Frankel (FL)	Kuster
Cartwright	Franks (AZ)	Labrador
Castor (FL)	Frelinghuysen	LaHood
Chabot	Fudge	LaMalfa
Chaffetz	Gabbard	Lamborn
Chu, Judy	Gallego	Lance
Ciçilline	Garamendi	Langevin
Clark (MA)	Garrett	Larsen (WA)
Clarke (NY)	Gibbs	Larson (CT)
Clawson (FL)	Gibson	Latta
Clay	Goodlatte	Lawrence
Cleaver	Gosar	Lee
Clyburn	Gowdy	Levin
Coffman	Graham	Lieu, Ted
Cohen	Graves (GA)	Lipinski
Cole	Graves (LA)	LoBiondo
Collins (GA)	Graves (MO)	Loehsack
Collins (NY)	Grayson	Lofgren
Conaway	Griffith	Long
Conyers	Grothman	Loudermilk
Cook	Guinta	Love
Cooper	Guthrie	Lowenthal

Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perry
Peters

Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roe (TN)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)

Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—52

Aderholt
Babin
Barton
Brady (TX)
Byrne
Castro (TX)
Comstock
Connolly
Culberson
Doggett
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fleming
Flores
Gohmert
Granger
Green, Al

Green, Gene
Grijalva
Harper
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hill
Hinojosa
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Kline
Lewis
Maloney
Carolyn
Marchant
Moore
Mulaney

Napolitano
Pascrell
Perlmutter
Ratcliffe
Roby
Rogers (AL)
Rohrabacher
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Loretta
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Veasey
Vela
Westmoreland
Whitfield

□ 1422

Mr. NUGENT changed his vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. HILL. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 103, H.R. 136, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1103 USPS Building 1103 in Camp Pendleton, California as the “Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office,” had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 103, had I been present, I would have voted “yea.”

MOMENT OF SILENCE TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE “HESSTON STRONG” OF HESSTON, KANSAS

(Mr. POMPEO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Speaker, last week, a gunman shot his way across south central Kansas, and then inside of Excel Industries in Hesston, Kansas, killed three people and injured over a dozen.

It is impossible to make sense of such violence and suffering. Renee Benjamin, known by her friends for her “infectious personality”; Joshua Higbee, a loving father who family and friends said “would give the shirt off his back for you”; and Brian Sadowsky, a passionate Kansas City Royals fan who coworkers said stayed behind to help the wounded escape were simply doing their jobs taking care of themselves and families. The loss of these three innocent people is something that no one in Hesston or our larger community will ever forget. The lives of those who loved them are changed forever.

I was not surprised to see so many people working side by side the day after the attack trying to mend what happened less than 24 hours before. Everywhere I went, there were helping hands. This is so typical of the people of Hesston and Harvey County that I know so well. Their actions amidst this tragedy are a true reflection of what the Scriptures tells us: “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

There was remarkable power in the work of law enforcement officials and city leaders, including Harvey County Sheriff T. Walton and Hesston Mayor David Kauffman. Excel Industries, where the shootings took place, is blessed by the steady leadership of President Paul Mullet, who, along with his team, will lead the Excel Industries family through this tragedy.

We remember, too, all the first responders, the Hesston Police Department, Harvey County Sheriff's Office, the FBI, and the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, all of whom acted heroically to save lives and secure the scene, and the leaders at Newton Medical Center, Wesley Medical Center, and Via Christi in Wichita, who cared for the injured. We can never thank them enough.

The community has rallied around the words “Hesston Strong.” They

have been, they are, and I know they will continue to be strong.

May God bless the entire Hesston community.

Madam Speaker, I ask that the House pause for a moment of silence in honor of those impacted by the tragic events in Hesston, Kansas.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would ask all in the Chamber to rise in a moment of silence.

MAYA ANGELOU MEMORIAL POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3735) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston Salem, North Carolina, as the “Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office” on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 371, nays 9, answered “present” 1, not voting 52, as follows:

[Roll No. 104]

YEAS—371

Abraham	Carson (IN)	Denham
Adams	Carter (GA)	Dent
Aguilar	Carter (TX)	DeSantis
Allen	Cartwright	DeSaulnier
Amash	Castor (FL)	DesJarlais
Amodeli	Chabot	Deutch
Ashford	Chaffetz	Diaz-Balart
Barletta	Chu, Judy	Dingell
Barr	Cicilline	Dold
Bass	Clark (MA)	Donovan
Beatty	Clarke (NY)	Doyle, Michael
Becerra	Clawson (FL)	F.
Benishek	Clay	Duckworth
Bera	Cleaver	Duffy
Beyer	Clyburn	Duncan (TN)
Bilirakis	Coffman	Edwards
Bishop (GA)	Cohen	Ellison
Bishop (MI)	Cole	Ellmers (NC)
Bishop (UT)	Collins (GA)	Engel
Black	Collins (NY)	Eshoo
Blackburn	Conaway	Esty
Blum	Conyers	Farr
Blumenauer	Cook	Fattah
Bonamici	Cooper	Fitzpatrick
Bost	Costa	Fleischmann
Boustany	Costello (PA)	Fleming
Boyle, Brendan	Courtney	Forbes
F.	Cramer	Fortenberry
Brady (PA)	Crawford	Foster
Brat	Crenshaw	Fox
Bridenstine	Crowley	Frankel (FL)
Brooks (IN)	Cuellar	Franks (AZ)
Brown (FL)	Cummings	Frelinghuysen
Brownley (CA)	Curbelo (FL)	Fudge
Buchanan	Davis (CA)	Gabbard
Bucshon	Davis, Danny	Gallego
Bustos	Davis, Rodney	Garamendi
Butterfield	DeFazio	Garrett
Calvert	DeGette	Gibbs
Capps	Delaney	Gibson
Capuano	DeLauro	Goodlatte
Carney	DeBene	Gosar

Gowdy	Luján, Ben Ray	Ruppersberger
Graham	(NM)	Rush
Graves (GA)	Lummis	Russell
Graves (LA)	Lynch	Salmon
Graves (MO)	MacArthur	Sánchez, Linda
Grayson	Maloney, Sean	T.
Griffith	Marino	Sanford
Guinta	Matsui	Sarbanes
Guthrie	McCarthy	Scalise
Gutiérrez	McCaul	Schakowsky
Hahn	McClintock	Schiff
Hanna	McCollum	Schrader
Hardy	McDermott	Schweikert
Hartzler	McGovern	Scott (VA)
Hastings	McHenry	Scott, Austin
Heck (NV)	McKinley	Scott, David
Heck (WA)	McMorris	Sensenbrenner
Hice, Jody B.	Rodgers	Serrano
Higgins	McSally	Sherman
Himes	Meadows	Shimkus
Holding	Meehan	Shuster
Honda	Meeks	Simpson
Hoyer	Meng	Sinema
Hudson	Messer	Sires
Huelskamp	Mica	Slaughter
Huffman	Miller (FL)	Smith (MO)
Huizenga (MI)	Miller (MI)	Smith (NE)
Hultgren	Moolenaar	Smith (NJ)
Hunter	Moore	Speier
Hurd (TX)	Moulton	Stefanik
Hurt (VA)	Mullin	Stewart
Israel	Murphy (FL)	Stivers
Issa	Nadler	Stutzman
Jeffries	Neal	Swalwell (CA)
Jenkins (KS)	Neugebauer	Takai
Jenkins (WV)	Newhouse	Takano
Johnson (GA)	Noem	Thompson (CA)
Johnson (OH)	Nolan	Thompson (MS)
Jolly	Norcross	Thompson (PA)
Jones	Nugent	Thornberry
Jordan	Nunes	Tiberi
Joyce	O'Rourke	Tipton
Kaptur	Olson	Titus
Katko	Pallone	Tonko
Keating	Palmer	Torres
Kelly (IL)	Paulsen	Trott
Kelly (MS)	Payne	Tsongas
Kelly (PA)	Pearce	Turner
Kennedy	Pelosi	Upton
Kildee	Peters	Valadao
Kilmer	Peterson	Van Hollen
Kind	Pingree	Vargas
King (IA)	Pittenger	Velázquez
King (NY)	Pitts	Visclosky
Kinzinger (IL)	Pocan	Wagner
Kirkpatrick	Poe (TX)	Walberg
Knight	Poliquin	Walden
Kuster	Polis	Walker
Labrador	Pompeo	Walorski
LaHood	Posey	Walters, Mimi
LaMalfa	Price (NC)	Walz
Lamborn	Price, Tom	Wasserman
Lance	Quigley	Schultz
Langevin	Rangel	Waters, Maxine
Larsen (WA)	Reed	Watson Coleman
Larson (CT)	Reichert	Weber (TX)
Latta	Renacci	Webster (FL)
Lawrence	Ribble	Welch
Lee	Rice (NY)	Wenstrup
Levin	Rice (SC)	Westerman
Lieu, Ted	Richmond	Whitfield
Lipinski	Rigell	Williams
LoBiondo	Roe (TN)	Wilson (FL)
Loeb sack	Rogers (KY)	Wilson (SC)
Lofgren	Rokita	Wittman
Long	Rooney (FL)	Womack
Loudermilk	Ros-Lehtinen	Woodall
Love	Roskam	Yarmuth
Lowenthal	Ross	Yoder
Lowey	Rothfus	Yoho
Lucas	Rouzer	Young (IA)
Luetkemeyer	Roybal-Allard	Young (IN)
Lujan Grisham	Royce	Zeldin
(NM)	Ruiz	Zinke

NAYS—9

Brooks (AL)	Duncan (SC)	Massie
Buck	Grothman	Mooney (WV)
Burgess	Harris	Palazzo

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—52

Aderholt	Green, Gene	Napolitano
Babin	Grijalva	Pascarell
Barton	Harper	Perlmutter
Brady (TX)	Hensarling	Perry
Byrne	Herrera Beutler	Ratcliffe
Cárdenas	Hill	Roby
Castro (TX)	Hinojosa	Rogers (AL)
Comstock	Jackson Lee	Rohrabacher
Connolly	Johnson, E. B.	Ryan (OH)
Culberson	Johnson, Sam	Sanchez, Loretta
Doggett	Kline	Sessions
Emmer (MN)	Lewis	Sewell (AL)
Farenthold	Maloney,	Smith (TX)
Fincher	Carolyn	Smith (WA)
Flores	Marchant	Veasey
Gohmert	McNerney	Vela
Granger	Mulvaney	Westmoreland
Green, Al	Murphy (PA)	

□ 1432

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 104, H.R. 3735, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston Salem, North Carolina, as the "Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office," had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 104, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. PASCARELL. Mr. Speaker, on March 1, 2016, I was detained in my district and missed the two rollcall votes of the day. Had I been present, I would have voted:

"Aye"—rollcall No. 103—H.R. 136—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1103 USPS Building 1103 in Camp Pendleton, California, as the "Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office."

"Aye"—rollcall No. 104—H.R. 3735—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston Salem, North Carolina, as the "Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded today. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: rollcall No. 103: "aye"; and rollcall No. 104: "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on Tuesday, March 1, 2016, due to important events being held today in our district in Houston and Harris County, Texas.

If I had been able to vote, I would have voted as follows:

On H.R. 136, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1103 USPS Building 1103 in Camp Pendleton, California as the "Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office," I would have voted "yea."

On H.R. 3735, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston Salem, North Carolina, as the "Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office," I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 102, 103, and 104, I missed votes due

to district business. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ZELDIN). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the additional motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on the postponed questions will be taken later.

SPECIALIST JOSEPH W. RILEY
POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1596) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, as the "Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1596

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SPECIALIST JOSEPH W. RILEY POST
OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, shall be known and designated as the "Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of S. 1596, introduced by Senator ROB PORTMAN of Ohio. The bill designates a post office that is located at 2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, as the Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building.

Mr. Speaker, on November 24, 2014, United States Army Specialist Joey Riley gave his life serving his country

as part of Operation Enduring Freedom in Kabul Province, Afghanistan.

Specialist Riley was just 27 years of age. A native of Grove City, Ohio, he graduated from Grove City High School in 2005.

Specialist Riley made the honorable and brave decision to enlist in the United States Army in June of 2012.

In March 2013, Specialist Riley was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

He became a decorated soldier with awards and decorations, including the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with a Campaign Star, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the NATO Medal, the Combat Infantryman Badge, and the Parachutist Badge.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that we will name the post office in his hometown to memorialize the courage and sacrifice of the United States Army and this fine paratrooper, Specialist Joey Riley.

I urge Members to support this bill to name a post office in honor of this soldier.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased to join my colleagues in consideration of S. 1596.

Joseph Riley, a native of Grove City, Ohio, excelled in football at Grove City High School. Following his graduation in 2005, he went on to play football at Capital University.

In 2012, as was mentioned, Joseph joined the Army and was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division, stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Specialist Riley showed a special concern for the people of Afghanistan, believing that the fight was worthwhile in order to improve the lives of others.

Specialist Riley's life was tragically cut short when a suicide bomber attacked his vehicle in Kabul, Afghanistan, killing him and seven others.

Remembered by friends and colleagues as a superb paratrooper and the kind of friend everyone hopes for in their lives, Specialist Riley's honors, as mentioned, included the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Combat Infantryman Badge, and Basic Parachutist Badge.

Mr. Speaker, we should pass this bill to honor the courage and selflessness exhibited by Specialist Joseph Riley and to memorialize the sacrifices he made for our country.

I urge the passage of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1596.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAMES "MAGGIE" MEGELLAS POST OFFICE

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1826) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James "Maggie" Megellas Post Office.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1826

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAMES "MAGGIE" MEGELLAS POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, shall be known and designated as the "Lieutenant Colonel James 'Maggie' Megellas Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Lieutenant Colonel James 'Maggie' Megellas Post Office".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of S. 1826, introduced by Senator RON JOHNSON of Wisconsin.

The bill designates the post office at 99 West Second Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James "Maggie" Megellas Post Office.

Our colleague and fellow member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Representative GLENN GROTHMAN, introduced a House companion bill, but we are pleased today to be taking up the Senate version, as it will get to the President's desk faster.

Retired United States Army Lieutenant Colonel Megellas is a highly decorated veteran of World War II and an individual whose story is one of remarkable bravery.

He graduated from college in 1942, accepting a commission as a second lieutenant in the United States Army, where he served—courageously, I might add—as an elite paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division.

One of the most remarkable stories about Lieutenant Colonel Megellas comes during service in the Battle of the Bulge, where he single-handedly destroyed a German Panther tank and saved the lives of many of his men.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support this bill and name a post office after this true American hero.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Megellas was born and raised in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army following his graduation from Ripon College in 1942.

As was mentioned, serving as a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division during World War II, then-1st Lieutenant Megellas courageously led his platoon in the Battle of the Bulge.

Mr. Speaker, we should pass this bill to commemorate the strong leadership Lieutenant Colonel James Megellas exhibited in his courageous defense of our country during World War II.

I urge the passage of S. 1826.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1445

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN), my friend and colleague.

Mr. GROTHMAN. First, I thank my colleague from Oklahoma and my colleague from Missouri for saying such nice things about Lieutenant Colonel Megellas. I also thank Senator JOHNSON, who did a good job of getting this through the U.S. Senate.

Mr. Speaker, as has been said, Lieutenant Colonel Megellas was born in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and went to school in Ripon, Wisconsin, before he joined the military. He was truly a hero of the Greatest Generation. His most notable battle experiences included action in the Italian mountains near the Anzio beachhead, his combat jump into Holland as part of the Operation Market Garden, his crossing of the Waal River under heavy German fire in broad daylight, and the Battle of the Bulge in January of 1945, when he single-handedly destroyed a German Mark V Panther Tank and led his platoon on one of the most distinctive actions of the war without there being a single American casualty.

We have also offered a private bill that tries to get Mr. Megellas the Medal of Honor for his actions during the Battle of the Bulge.

Today, Mr. Megellas lives in Colleyville, Texas, with his wife, Carole. I have met him and it was just tremendous. Currently he is 98 years old. In a couple of weeks he will be 99. He is as sharp as a tack and is agile. I am very honored to be able to introduce this bill, and I just can't look forward enough to the day in Fond du Lac when I will see Lieutenant Colonel Megellas' name up there at the post office on 2nd Street.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, that was quite a description of Mr. Megellas at the young age of—about to be—99. He should be an inspiration to us all. I urge the passage of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.
Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.
Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call for the immediate passage of S. 1826, a bill to rename the post office located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James "Maggie" Megellas Post Office.

It is my great honor to recognize Lieutenant Colonel James Megellas (Ret), and to call Maggie a constituent of the 24th District of Texas.

In 1942, Maggie accepted an ROTC commission as a second lieutenant in the infantry and shortly thereafter faced combat in Italy. Notably, in January 1945, Maggie and his platoon advanced toward Herresbach, Belgium, and came upon 200 German troops who were advancing out of town. In an act of selflessness and bravery, Lt. Col. Megellas sprinted toward a German tank as it took aim at his fellow soldiers. He disabled the tank with a grenade, then dropped another into the tank eliminating the threat his men faced from the combat vehicle.

Lt. Col. Megellas has been honored with many awards, including the Silver Star and the Distinguished Service Cross. Lt. Col. Megellas is beyond deserved of having this post office location named in his honor. I continue to commend Maggie on serving his country with honor and bravery, as a shining example of courage and as a member of the greatest generation America has known.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing the sacrifice and bravery of Lt. Col. Megellas and urge for the swift passage of S. 1826.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1826.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, Connecticut's leading force for women's equality.

Formed under State statute in 1973 to study and improve the economic security, health, and safety of Connecticut women, the Commission undertakes vital work to eliminate gender discrimination in its many forms. They have helped to shape the debate around issues that impact the lives of Connecticut women and their families, and it has created public policy that makes a difference. Notably, it had a leadership role in creating the first family and medical leave protections in the country and, in Connecticut, in becoming the first State in the Nation to pass paid sick days.

I have focused much of my time in Congress on these issues and I have often turned to the Commission for guidance and for support. It is with great pride and with my deepest thanks that I rise today to celebrate their work.

OPERATION RESPECT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, today is a different subject than I usually discuss in the course of these Special Order hours. Normally we come down here and we talk about how we are going to create jobs, how we are going to make better opportunities for people through education. We talk about making it in America, rebuilding our infrastructure, manufacturing, and the like. Yet, today, there is something else on my mind, and it happens to be an issue that I first came across in elementary school.

On the school grounds at Mokelumne Hill Elementary School—a three-room school that was built in the late 1800s—there were not many kids, but there was always one kid who seemed to be picked on. I am not exactly sure why that young boy was the one to be picked on, but he was bullied.

As the years go by, I suspect we forget about those things, but we know that the children are always listening. They are listening to each other on the school grounds and they are likely to join in this bullying and in picking on some kid on the grounds. That happened at Mokelumne Hill Elementary School many, many years ago.

As our own kids were growing up, my wife would always say, "Remember the children are listening. They are listening to what you have to say and they are going to copy what you say."

In the year 2000, I was with my wife at a concert here in the Washington area, and Peter, Paul and Mary were performing that night. Towards the end of the performance, Peter Yarrow said, "I have a new song, and I would like you to pay careful attention to this song. This song is really important to me."

I suppose his other songs dealing with wars and peace were equally important, but he highlighted this particular song. The song was "Don't Laugh At Me." Don't call me names. Don't make fun of me because I am short or tall or wear glasses.

After the performance was over, we were invited to go out to dinner with Peter that night.

He asked, "What did you think of the song?"

I said, "It reminded me of my school," because people were laughing at that kid.

He said, "I want you to do something." He said, "I want you to take this song and make it into a national movement against bullying so as to try to teach our young children to stop bullying."

I told him I didn't have time for that, as we were returning to California after the 2000 election. He said that doesn't make any sense because California has the same problem.

I learned right away you don't say no to Peter Yarrow, so I began to work with him on a program that became known as Operation Respect. I worked with him for about 3 to 4 years, and then I moved on and Operation Respect moved on.

It is now found in 22,000 schools across the United States. It is a simple program. You can find it online. It is Operation Respect. You can download the song. You can download the text. It is there. There are 22,000 schools across the United States that are trying to help our young children understand what bullying means.

Bullying means that 160,000 American children do not go to school each day because they are afraid. They are afraid to endure another day of bullying—verbal, sometimes physical—from their peers. Twenty-two percent of teenagers in a National Study of Adolescents reported that they had been bullied or victimized. The reasons for bullying are many. Usually it is about looks, as 55 percent say it is about looks; it is about body shape—too big, too tall, too fat, too slender—at 37 percent; and race at 16 percent.

Students who experience bullying are at an increased risk of experiencing poor adjustment at school, sleep difficulties, anxiety, depression. Also, students who engage in the bullying behavior are at risk of having academic

problems, substance abuse, and violent behavior later in their adolescence and adulthood.

In surveys, approximately 30 percent of young people admit to bullying others, and 70 percent of young people say that they have seen bullying in their schools. I did when I was growing up. Seventy percent of schools' staffs say that they see it. Eighty-one percent of students who identify as LGBT were bullied last year based on their sexual orientation.

What does it mean?

It means that certain lives are seriously disrupted and that there is unhappiness and depression in those lives, but it also means violence.

Do you remember Columbine?

The perpetrators were frequently harassed by athletes and other students before coming to school, and then they came to school with firearms and explosives, killing 13 and injuring 21.

Do you remember Virginia Tech?

Seung-Hui Cho was picked on and bullied by his peers before he killed 32 people in 2007.

In Santa Barbara, California, the shooter wrote a 130-page manifesto about how he had been severely bullied in high school, and he killed six and injured 14.

There are those who are violent to others and who are equally violent to themselves. 12-year-old Rebecca Sedwick suffered from cyberbullying. She received messages over social media, and she killed herself. In Montana, an 18-year-old with learning disabilities committed suicide. Another shot himself in the chest after enduring bullying and hazing from the high school football team. He was pushed into lockers, punched in the head. He quit the football team after the first week, telling his dad, "I am being picked on at school," in the suicide note he left that night. He shot himself. He blamed bullying.

The children are listening. They listen to each other. They learn bullying and they carry it on. Operation Respect attempts to deal with this, as does Peter Dinklage's song from Peter, Paul and Mary, "Don't Laugh At Me." Don't laugh at me because I am tall, short, Black, White, young, old, or because I wear glasses. Don't laugh at me. The children are listening.

Across America, what are the children listening to today? What are they listening to today by our leaders, by the people who purport to lead the strongest nation in the world?

□ 1500

What are they hearing?

My daughter is a kindergarten teacher. Her kids come to class and are repeating what they hear on television. They are calling each other a desperate person. They are saying to each other: "He's a desperate person," "He's a sad person," "He's a pathetic person."

Kids come to class and are repeating what they heard on television: "He doesn't even use his last name in his ads," "He's a sad person," "He's absolutely crazy," "I mean, this guy is a nervous wreck."

I have never seen anything like it. They repeat what they have heard on television. So what are our kids learning? What are they learning from people who want to be our national leader?

Well, they are probably learning that you can say things like: "He's the least talented. . . .", "He's done poorly," "He goes away like a little sheep."

Maybe our kids are talking to each other and they are repeating what they have heard on television: "You could see the blood coming out of her eyes," "She's a bimbo," "Look at that face," "Would anyone vote for that?", "Can you imagine that face on the next president?", "I mean, she's a woman and I'm not supposed to say bad things, but really, folks, come on. Are we serious?"

The kids are listening, folks. The kids are listening to the national debate. For years, we have known bullying is a problem. We know it. We see it in the classrooms.

We see the result of violence. We see the fact of disrespect. We know it leads to shootings. We know it leads to school shootings. We know it leads to suicides.

Yet, on our national television every night people that want to lead this Nation are bullying each other. They are saying disrespectful things that are personal that don't have a thing to do with policy, just as though it was a kindergarten school ground: "Now, I've watched a part of his little act and he's a desperate guy," "He's not presidential material, I can tell you," "He doesn't have the demeanor," "He's a nervous Nellie," "Putting on makeup with a trowel," "He was so scared like a little puppy."

That is bullying. That is bullying. And if you were in kindergarten, you would be at the principal's office.

Our kids are listening. So what is the message? That it is okay to bully? It is okay to demean people? What is the message? 16,000 kids stay home from school each day because of bullying. And on national television? They purport to lead this Nation.

So what are we to do? I guess we are going to have to take programs like Operation Respect, Operation Trevor, and other programs that try to help our children understand the result of bullying, what actually happens, not just to the children that are being bullied, but also to those who engage in bullying.

So what are we teaching? What are we teaching our children? What Pandora's box are we opening across this Nation when demeaning each other is the national discourse in how we select the next President of the United

States? That it is okay to call your rival names?

It is not about their policies, not about what we are going to do with our national security, but, rather, what makeup you might be wearing or the nature of one's face. Calling each other unhinged, unstable, a liar, is this what we have come to?

That night Peter Dinklage sang that song for the first time in concert: "Don't laugh at me. Don't call me names. Don't make fun of me."

There are consequences. There are consequences. You tear a person down far enough and maybe you will win an election, but every child across this Nation is listening. They are listening.

What are they going to do when they go to school the next day? Well, it is okay. We could call each other names. I can make fun at you. I could laugh at you. After all, it is on television: "Had one of those sweet little mustaches," "Maybe to make sure his pants weren't wet," "Maybe he should sue whoever did that to his face."

Operation Respect. 22,000 schools across this Nation are trying to impart to our children that we all have value, that whether you are tall or short or fat, whether you are Black or White or whatever color, whatever you want to be in life, it is okay.

It is okay. You are important. You have value. We are not going to demean each other. We are not going to bully each other. You are important. Whatever you are, whatever you may be, you are important. That is Operation Respect.

Trying to teach the young children in 22,000 schools to respect each other, to respect the differences, to understand and to learn that we all share space on this planet and that each one of us, whatever we may be, whatever we may think about the solution to the world's problems, we have value.

So tonight I will go from this Chamber. I will go back to my home and will turn the TV on. I will guarantee you that I will find a Presidential candidate bullying another candidate just as though it was a school ground.

I know that the children are watching. I know that all that Operation Respect is trying to do and all of the other programs around this Nation that are trying to teach our children to respect each other, to not engage in bullying—I know that their work will be erased from the blackboard by tonight's television.

After all, it is Super Tuesday. And leading up to Super Tuesday, you and I know what we have heard.

Is our Nation better for it? I don't think so. Because I know that the children are watching, and I know somehow an awful message is going out across this Nation that it is okay to demean another person, it is okay to pick on somebody because of their makeup, because of the nature of their

face, because they happen to be a woman.

I fear the result of all of this. I don't fear the policies. The policies come and go. We debate here on the floor more military, less military; more education, less education; the environment is good, climate change is real, climate change is not. That is legitimate. That is the way America ought to be.

But to call a woman a bimbo or to say you peed your pants, what in the world is this all about? It is about our children. It is about our future and about telling us what it is okay to do.

Well, it is not okay because the children are listening. Thank God we have organizations—Operation Respect and others—that are somehow trying to push back. They are not going to stop every violent act. At least some kid isn't going to pick up a gun and walk into the school and start blasting away because he has been bullied.

I yield back the balance of my time.

NATIONAL DEBT AND SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I was trained as an engineer. In my engineering training, we were taught that, before you can solve a problem, you have to identify and define the problem. If you solve the wrong problem, you accomplish very little.

I serve on the Budget Committee. On the Budget Committee, we take an in-depth look at all of government. As we examine the programs and as we examine revenues and expenditures of the Federal Government, we see many issues that are of great concern to the future of our country. We see threats to our safety and our security. We see overreach and hassles created by the very government that is here to serve.

Mr. Speaker, there is a gargantuan issue facing our country that threatens all our futures. Our gross national debt, fueled by out-of-control spending, continues to grow and is past \$19 trillion, which exceeds our gross domestic product.

Today, while much of the country focuses on primary elections, several of my colleagues from the Budget Committee, including Chairman PRICE, wish to have an open and honest con-

versation about this issue of debt and spending that you are probably not going to hear much about anywhere else.

We not only hope to bring attention to this issue by defining the problem. We will propose real solutions to restore fiscal order so that Americans can thrive and Americans—not the government or any one person, but Americans—can make America all that she can be.

If we delve into the major fiscal issues facing our country, it becomes obvious that we have an enormous spending problem. I have a chart here.

This chart shows us where we have been, where we were in 1965. It shows where we are today with the numbers through 2015. It also predicts where we will be in the future in 2026.

The spending represented by the red on these pie charts is what is called mandatory spending. If you want to think of it this way, this spending is on cruise control. This spending is on programs that were put in place by previous Congresses. Really, if we didn't even meet anymore, this spending in the red will continue to go on.

The spending in the blue is the discretionary spending. That is the money that is spent by appropriations that are done in Congress every year.

The 12 appropriation bills that we hope to get back to regular order this year and pass each of those 12 bills out of the House and out of the Senate and put them on the President's desk relate to the spending that is highlighted in blue on these pie charts.

□ 1515

The omnibus bill from last year, that affected what is in the blue. It didn't affect what is in the red.

As you look at these charts, you can see that in 50 years we have had a little bit of a flip-flop. In 1965, two-thirds of our spending was discretionary, which was controlled by the appropriations process, and right around one-third of our spending was mandatory.

But over that 50-year period, we have seen tremendous growth in spending. We have seen that now over two-thirds of our spending is mandatory and less than one-third of our spending is discretionary. So, when Congress meets and we debate these appropriations bills, we are only debating about one-third of the spending that takes place by the Federal Government.

The real story is what is projected to happen in 2026, just 10 years from now. Over 50 years, we saw \$17.8 trillion of increased spending in our gross debt. That is \$356 billion a year. But in just 10 short years from today, the Congressional Budget Office projects that our gross debt will be \$29.3 trillion. That will be a growth of over \$11.2 trillion in a 10-year period. That is over \$1 trillion per year that we will see in spending growth between now and 2026 if we stay on the path that we are currently on.

Mr. Speaker, I hope to explain today why we can't stay on this path. There are a lot of issues to look at. My colleagues on the Committee on the Budget will look at the path that we are on, and they will look at different areas of this spending. We will provide solutions to how to avoid the future financial crisis that is only getting worse. We are already in a financial crisis.

When we look at what contributes to our national debt, to our gross debt, \$645 billion this year will go to debt all because of mandatory spending. Our national debt, our gross debt, will increase \$1.1 trillion. It is at about \$19.3 trillion this fiscal year. Only part of that can be controlled through discretionary spending. We have to start addressing the issues with mandatory spending if we truly want to address the fiscal condition of our country.

This next slide breaks it down in a little bit more detail. Remember, red is mandatory spending and blue is discretionary spending. We see that under the discretionary spending, the part that we debate so vigorously in this Chamber, the part that makes all the headlines, most of that, or about half of that, is in defense, and then the rest of it is nondefense discretionary spending.

There are five areas—just five areas—that over two-thirds of everything spent in this country go to. As we saw on the previous chart, by 2026 those five areas will make up over three-fourths, will make up 78 percent of every dollar spent by the Federal Government. Those five areas are: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, interest on the debt, and kind of a lump category of other mandatory spending.

Right now Social Security is the largest expenditure of the Federal Government at \$882 billion per year. If we look at Social Security and Medicare, these are programs that working Americans have invested in that are very important but are headed to insolvency. We have to fix them to preserve them for all of us who have contributed to them.

The people who project the numbers show that by 2030, on the course we are on, Medicare will be insolvent. By 2034, Social Security will be insolvent. Mr. Speaker, the young people in our country should be alarmed at this. By 2034 and 2030, these programs that we have all contributed to are projected to be insolvent if we don't change course.

If we look at Medicaid, it grew by double-digit percentage points last year, a lot of that because of the Affordable Care Act. If we look at other mandatory spending, these are our social welfare programs. These were programs that were put in place with good intentions but are getting poor results.

Finally, the one that probably should concern us all the most is our interest on the debt. The Congressional Budget Office tells us that by 2025, if we don't

change course, interest on the debt will be a larger expenditure than Social Security.

As our debt continues to balloon and grow, the interest that we must pay on that debt will also balloon and grow, and that is why mandatory spending will become such a large part of all the spending and really make our discretionary spending somewhat minuscule compared to the gargantuan size of mandatory spending.

I want to talk about just a couple of these areas. Some of my colleagues will talk about other areas as we move forward. If we look at some of our social welfare programs and our Medicaid program, again, these programs were put in place for people who were truly in need. They were put in place for a hand up instead of a handout, but oftentimes they have become just the opposite of that. Some of these programs, instead of helping people out of poverty, they trap people in poverty.

Now, Medicaid is a unique issue because it was put in place for aged people, for disabled people, for blind people, people that we would all agree we need to help out and lend a helping hand, but now there are a lot of able-bodied, working-age adults—these are people 18–65 years old who are not disabled—who are receiving Medicaid benefits. We are seeing a lot of increase in cost there.

We are seeing a lot of increase in cost in social welfare programs, such as SNAP. One area where we can address our budget, where we can address this looming fiscal crisis, is in our social welfare programs. Let's look at what has happened just in the SNAP program.

Since 2000, increased enrollment in SNAP programs has grown 171 percent. To say that another way, for every new job added since 2000—and that is 4.3 million of them—30.4 million people have been added to food stamps. That is seven people being added to the Food Stamp program for every new job that has been created in this country since 2000.

Again, instead of lifting people out of poverty, many of our welfare programs are actually trapping people in poverty. If we look at some of the numbers on SNAP, 57 percent of able-bodied adult households have no earned income. These are people receiving the food stamp benefits. What is even maybe more alarming is 75 percent of the people receiving SNAP benefits, 75 percent of childless adult households have no earned income. That is 17.3 million people. That is a 252 percent increase since 2000 in this one demographic of childless adult households who have zero income who are receiving SNAP benefits. Only 50 percent of parent households have earned income.

So what happens? What happens if we change the scenario? What happens when you move people from welfare to work?

Well, Kansas tried a program. They tried a program to restore work requirements for able-bodied, childless adults in 2013, and they saw fantastic results from that. They saw a 50 percent immediate decline in enrollment when they enacted work requirements for able-bodied, working-age adults on this program. They saw a 68 percent long-term decline in enrollment, and they saw a 168 percent increase in work participation rates among the enrollees. They saw a 133 percent increase in average income of able-bodied, childless adult enrollees. They saw a 55 percent increase in average income of able-bodied, childless adult enrollees.

Mr. Speaker, a number that we can't ever forget is that only 2.9 percent of full-time workers live in poverty. If we want to pull people out of poverty, we need to create an environment where people can work, where they can pull themselves out of poverty.

We have also found that in these social welfare programs like the SNAP program and like Medicaid, where you have got able-bodied, working-age adults on those programs, that the populations overlap. So if you are able to get people back into the workforce and help the SNAP program, you are also going to cut costs out of the Medicaid program. You get a double bang for your buck when you get people back in the workforce. We need to train people. We need to assist people to get back to work. That is what these programs were originally put in place for. We have got to get back to that.

It has been said many times before, but I think it is worth reminding, that the best social program is still a job. Again, only 2.9 percent of full-time workers live in poverty in this country. If we implement work requirements for programs like SNAP, for people who are receiving Medicaid benefits, it will be on those who are able-bodied, working-age adults. We are not going to put this requirement on disabled people. We are not going to put this requirement on elderly people in nursing homes who are dependent on Medicaid. We are not going to put it on children or blind people. This is for able-bodied, working-age adults. We could save billions of dollars in the Medicaid program by doing this.

We can start to address these fiscal issues with one solution of requiring work for people who are receiving benefits that were put in place to help them get back to work. It worked in Kansas. It has worked in Maine. It has worked in other States. It can work all across our country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BRAT), a very capable and well-meaning and well-serving individual.

Mr. BRAT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) for yielding to me and for setting up this special session.

It is the most important economic issue of our times. I have taught economics for 20 years or so, and I went to seminary before that. I ran on bringing economics and ethics to Congress, and that was usually kind of a joke in the stump speech, but most people catch it. It matters, linking economics and ethics together. There is no better issue from which to view this challenge as the issue before us today dealing with the monumental increase in mandatory spending.

Congress has been monumentally irresponsible. Promises were made that can't be kept. Politicians sold out the future in favor of immediate gratification, and that future is now.

We see headlines every day in the newspapers about promising more and making promises and not keeping them, but today the evidence is overwhelming. The major promise that has been made that has not been kept is balancing our budget. We promise program after program after program that we cannot pay for, and we have not kept our word. As we will show, the folks who will pay for this are the only folks who don't have a lobbyist in this city, and that is our kids and the next generation.

The U.S. Government has \$19 trillion right now in total public debt outstanding. Debt per citizen currently stands at \$60,000. That is separate from the chart here. We will get to that in a minute.

The gap between Federal revenue and Federal spending over the next 75 years is about \$118 trillion, according to Harvard economics professor Jeffrey Miron. That number, \$118 trillion, is roughly \$368,000 per person in America today—\$400,000, if you round up, per person in America today.

□ 1530

The deficit is increasing as far as the eye can see. Today is Super Tuesday, and many people from across the Nation are going to the polls. They are, rightly, upset with the fiscal mismanagement in this city over the last couple of decades.

What are they upset about? Here are a few numbers. The deficit is increasing as far as the eye can see. It was \$439 billion in 2015, and it is up—by a \$105 billion increase—to \$544 billion in 2016. That is just the deficit. That is the amount we add to the debt each and every year.

By 2022, CBO, who are the folks who forecast the economic figures for the country—the deficit, the amount we add to the debt in 1 year, will be \$1 trillion. By 2026, it will be \$1.3 trillion.

In total, by 2026—not that far off—10 years away and high school graduates this year will be 28 years old—the debt will reach nearly \$30 trillion.

That is what we are handing to the next generation. We are having the pizza party and we are going to give the next generation the tab.

More important than the debt—or at least a bigger economic number—autopilot spending is exploding. This is complex. Not many folks know about this issue. Many terms are linked: autopilot spending, entitlement spending, mandatory spending.

Sometimes these terms can be used interchangeably. Sometimes they can. You have got to get down in the weeds. And we will do that today.

But, in general, autopilot spending is, as the gentleman before me just referred, net interest payments, Social Security payments, Federal health programs, Medicare, Medicaid, Obama-Care, Federal civilian military pensions, and welfare programs.

In 1966, these made up 33 percent of Federal spending and 5.6 percent of GDP, the economy. In 2027, these programs will make up 78 percent of Federal spending and 18 percent of GDP, as Congressman WESTERMAN's graph showed. That is assuming that we will be able to borrow in the future.

Another way to look at autopilot spending, on the graph right here, it shows that, in 1966, autopilot spending made up 33.9 percent of Federal revenue. But, by 2027, it will eat up 100 percent of Federal revenue.

So you see the Pac-Man here is getting hungrier by the minute. The autopilot spending is 34 percent in 1966, 68 percent in 2006. Autopilots will consume all Federal revenues in 2027. Again, it is not that far out.

Again, you can go to CBO—the Congressional Budget Office—and this is one of the primary graphs you will see in the first few pages at the Congressional Budget Office.

So, in restatement, in just 11 years—2027—1 year beyond the 10-year budget window—autopilot programs will consume all Federal revenue incoming.

If you are paying attention, what does that mean? That means there will be zero revenue left for law enforcement, medical research, national defense, education, transportation, or even intelligence. The government will have to borrow 100 percent to finance itself, starting in 2027. More and more autopilot spending will be debt that is financed as well.

Is this sustainable? Our friends on the other side are always talking about environmental sustainability. That is a great thing. But what about financial sustainability? What about the sustainability of our Nation? What about the sustainability of Western civilization?

For an answer to that, you may look at the cradle of Western civilization. You can look to Greece. How is Greece doing when it comes to fiscal responsibilities? What happens to your country when your debt load becomes too heavy? Significant problems emerge and it is very hard to return to a normal, functioning economy.

This is absolutely crucial to the sustainability of American civilization. It

is critical that we address this problem for our children's sake. We cannot do this without reforming Federal programs and boosting growth by creating opportunities for people to support themselves.

We need to restore civil society. After all, we are not just physically bankrupt. The government also has a moral, ethical, and spiritual deficit.

Why is that? How can you see the ethical deficit? Many government policies weaken families, as Congressman WESTERMAN just showed you on a graph. We weaken communities, churches, and other faith organizations, clubs, associations, and even businesses. Small startups are not starting up. This is a tragedy.

The only hope for the young kids is to enter business. There is no other way to make money. And we are capping their futures. These critical institutions just don't provide resources and help our communities. They also foster responsibility, mutual accountability, fellowship, and a sense of purpose in our society.

How do you see the ethical deficit in other ways? It is pretty easy to see. The two major mandatory spending programs, Medicare and Social Security, will both be insolvent in 2034. That is about 18 years out. So our 18-year-olds will be 36 years old.

The major programs that seniors rely on today will be insolvent in 2024, and by the time our kids retire, nothing is certain. That is a deficit in ethics.

It is interesting that President Johnson's war on poverty hasn't really eliminated poverty, at least as the government measures it. It is striking that the massive increase in government spending tracks more closely with family breakdown and other concerning trends.

Before the war on poverty—and this is fairly well known—began in the 1960s, self-sufficiency was going up, up, up. The percentage of those in poverty was going down, down, down, down, down.

After the war on poverty begins and all the Federal programs go, that line flattens out and our progress on self-sufficiency comes to an end.

We need to expand opportunities for productive work and fix welfare so earning income always makes people better off.

We now spend half a trillion dollars on welfare programs. And what do we get? We get a flat line with no measurable progress toward self-sufficiency where people can be proud of their work product and the incomes they bring home and the progress of their kids.

Congress is managing too many programs. States need the flexibility so that they can take on these responsibilities. That is the way our Founders intended things to be set up.

All of human history was ruled from the top down until about 1800. All of

human history was also marked by subsistence living. For all of human history, the average person made \$500 per year to live on.

We need to break away from this top-down approach before it is too late. The free market system has lifted us up from \$500 a year closer to \$50,000 per person per year.

More recently, the Chinese and the Indians have moved their way out of top-down government toward free markets. Chinese incomes in the past 20 years have gone from \$1,000 a year to \$9,000 a year.

If you add up the Chinese population and the Indian population, we have 2.5 billion people on this planet that have seen the most massive increase in human welfare imaginable. That came about because they got rid of top-down, central government planning and they moved toward the free market system.

The free market system is not perfect because human beings are not perfect, but there is no debate in the economic textbooks about all of human history versus the move toward human freedom. We all know that human freedom is a great future and something we need to aim for.

Even more important in politics these days is to ask yourself this question: Does this city, Washington, D.C., serve the powerful or does Washington, D.C., truly serve the poor?

Look at the towers going up. Look at the consulting class. Look at the special interests. Look at the millions and millions of dollars that pour into this city. Does this city serve the powerful or the poor?

Tonight, in elections across the Nation, I think you are going to see a resounding answer to some of these questions.

Let's move government back to the people so that we can solve our significant debt problems, our mandatory spending problems, and give our kids hope for their own futures.

Mr. WESTERMAN. I thank the gentleman from Virginia for his thoughtful input, his training, and his expertise. This is the kind of expertise that we need to rely on here in this body.

Next, as Congressman BRAT talked about the laboratories of democracy being the States, I am pleased to yield to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER), who spent a career working with States all across this country and may possibly have a better understanding of more State policies in more regions of the country than anybody else, certainly, that I know.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Arkansas for putting together this Special Order and for those excessively kind compliments.

The budget should present a vision to the American people and should reflect how the American people approach their own finances. As of late, we simply have not governed according to the

standards that the average American governs by.

While we have reduced deficit spending over the last few years, the fact is that we continue to spend more than we take in, adding billions more to our burgeoning debt.

This budget provides us with an opportunity not to repeat the mistakes of the past. Democrats and Republicans can find common ground to get our fiscal house in order.

I want to point out three commonsense solutions to the financial crisis that we face.

First, we can reform the Medicare payment system. Medicare currently uses more than a dozen different payment systems to set payment rates for medical items and services that the program covers for beneficiaries.

The location where someone receives a service determines which payment system applies. Republicans and the President believes this should be corrected. According to the President's own budget, a site-neutral system would save \$10 billion over 10 years.

Second, the General Accountability Office has identified \$125 billion in improper payments made in 2014. This is where the government sends a check to someone not entitled to it.

The GAO attributes about 65 percent of this to just three programs: Health and Human Services' Medicare fee-for-service, Medicaid, and the Treasury's earned income tax credit. Just three programs account for almost \$81 billion per year in improper payments.

Combined, if we are averaging about \$100 billion a year in improper payments over this 10-year window that we always talk about with the budget, that is \$1 trillion.

Some of these payments are being sent to dead people. Certainly, no one should be opposed to correcting this problem. The GAO points out that interagency communication is not at its finest, but also that there are major errors within the Social Security Administration's death data. Some files show a person's death preceding their recorded birth date. Others show age of death between 115 and 195.

According to the "Guinness World Records" book, in the modern age, the oldest person ever lived to the age of 122. If Social Security's records are correct, they need to inform the Guinness World Records that someone outlived Ms. Jeanne Louise Calment by 73 years.

If we could eliminate these erroneous payments just based on what was paid out in 2014, as I pointed out, that is over \$1 trillion in 10 years. I think we can all agree that that would be a great start toward getting our fiscal house in order.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I am not an advocate of more taxes, but we could do a better job of collecting those that are actually due. As of September 30, 2014,

the Internal Revenue Service's total tax debt inventory was \$380 billion, which is a 23 percent increase since 2009. This is \$380 billion in uncollected taxes.

I think it is safe to assume that we would prefer not to have our hard-earned dollars taken from us, but I also think it is safe to assume that the average person would be disgusted to hear that, while they are paying taxes, others are failing to pay theirs.

One other thing that we could do in the area of tax reform, since I brought that up, is corporate income tax. It is estimated that there are more than \$2 trillion in revenues that are being held offshore that could be repatriated to this country if we lowered our corporate income tax rate, which could, again, provide a substantial flow of revenue to help us address our deficits and pay down our budget.

□ 1545

All this is to say that we need to be more efficient in collecting what we owe and spending what we collect. The budget process is where we can begin to get our fiscal house in order.

Just in these examples, there are over \$1 trillion in savings from eliminating waste, fraud and abuse, and making some sensible reforms. Not only can we balance the budget without increasing spending, we can have a surplus. Let's work together and use these commonsense solutions to restore our fiscal house.

Mr. WESTERMAN. I would again like to thank the gentleman from Alabama for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, you have heard from three freshmen Members today. Next I would like to yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL), a more seasoned member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his leadership on this issue.

Say what you want to about freshmen in this institution. I was elected with the vice chairman of the Budget Committee back in 2010, the largest freshman class in history, and it changed this place; changed this place. Largest freshmen class of Republicans and Democrats in history. You need new faces and new ideas. And what you all have done in terms of a Budget Committee at work has just been amazing.

What I have here to contribute is a chart of CBO's projections of GDP growth. And we have some of our Democratic colleagues here on the floor. I just want to say, and I hope folks hold me accountable to it, we can't cut our way into prosperity. We just can't do it. Cutting our way into prosperity isn't going to happen.

You cut budgets because there is bad spending in budgets. You don't cut budgets because cutting is an end in

and of itself. You cut things that are bad. You plus up things that are good.

So much of the challenge that we have balancing this budget—we have done amazing things in terms of reducing wasteful spending in the 5 years that I have been in this body. But the economy keeps declining, the regulation nation that is the new United States of America, draining productivity.

When I arrived, the CBO projected we would be growing at about 3 percent a year as a nation. The next year they revised it down to 2.9; the next year, 2.5; the next year, 2.3; this year, 2.1 percent growth; 2.1 percent growth. That looks like a downward trend. But every 0.1 percent of economic growth that is lost translates into about \$300 billion of economic activity.

If people don't have jobs, they don't pay taxes. If people don't have jobs, they can't contribute to the system. If people can't contribute to the system, revenues go down. If revenues go down, budgets don't balance.

We have to grow our way out of this. We have to grow our way out of this, and that is a bipartisan challenge.

There is not a man or woman in this room who doesn't want to see more American jobs in this country, not one. There is not a man or woman in this room who doesn't want to see our entrepreneurs be the most competitive on the planet, not one.

There is not a man or woman in this room who does not believe that America's best days are still going to be tomorrow.

We cannot balance budgets by cutting discretionary spending. In fact, if we zeroed out discretionary spending, zeroed out the courts, zeroed out the parks, zeroed out the military, zeroed out everything, environment, everything people think of as government, and we only paid our Medicare bills, our Medicaid bills, our interest on the national debt, our mandatory spending programs, Social Security programs, that would consume virtually the entire revenue stream of the United States of America.

We have to grow our way out of this, and that is a partnership issue that we can do together.

What Mr. WESTERMAN is doing with his leadership on the budget provides that foundation. If you don't know where you are going, you are not going to get there. We have to have folks who are providing that vision of where we are going. That is what our budget is.

It is our one opportunity as a Congress to come together and talk about our collective vision, not the Republican vision, not the Democratic vision, our vision, America's vision. Unless we are looking at unemployment slides, a downward slope is not our vision. Our vision is more growth, more jobs, more economic activity.

The kind of disciplined budget that Mr. WESTERMAN is talking about today

will make all the difference in the world. I thank him for his leadership. I thank him for the time. It is a real honor to serve.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his comments.

This is an American problem. It is not a Republican problem or a Democratic problem. It is a bipartisan debt that we all created, and it is going to take bipartisan solutions to fix this debt.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA), the vice chair of the Budget Committee.

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, let me just say on the Record that I greatly appreciate the leadership of our newer members of the Budget Committee, especially the member from Arkansas. I think the people of Arkansas were right to send him to Congress. Not only does he come ready to identify the spending problems that this country has, but he comes ready with solutions, too. And I think that is, in essence, Mr. Speaker, the definition of leadership. I thank the gentleman.

I also thank the gentleman from Georgia who just spoke. He speaks so eloquently on so many subjects, a member of the Rules Committee. I am also very appreciative of his contribution to the Budget Committee. He, of course, as we all are today, and almost every day, unfortunately, was talking about the debt.

And let me just put it in a pictorial form. This is the new red menace, Mr. Speaker. Look at that trajectory. It goes nearly vertical.

So the question is: How do you turn that big ship, that *Titanic*, if you will, so, number one, it doesn't sink this entire country and, number two, it gets on a more meaningful, more productive course so that we can continue to be the world's best hope in a 21st century world?

Now, some, especially those on the other side of the aisle, will immediately turn to the fact that there are two ways to, in fact, solve this problem. One is to control spending. The other is to grow revenue.

Let me talk about the latter for just a second. The latter is a false choice because at 10,000 people a day retiring into unreformed social programs, that trajectory will not turn around, it will not plateau.

No matter how much property you confiscate from the American people, Mr. Speaker, no matter how much you take in the form of taxes, with 10,000 people a day retiring in unreformed programs, can you get that to go down.

So let's look at that more closely. This is what the Federal Government confiscates from the American people to run itself. In fiscal year 2015, it was \$3.25 trillion, revenue we took in to run the operations of just the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, the American people know we don't have a revenue problem, we have a spending problem.

The question should be what can't you do? What can't you do, Mr. Speaker, with \$3.25 trillion of property confiscated?

More revenue is not the answer. Thankfully, the majority here in the House of Representatives doesn't think it is the answer either. We know we can do better. We know we have to do better for the American people. We know we have to control the spending.

That is why I am very proud to be part of a committee, the Budget Committee, and part of a new crew that came, starting in 2011, that for every year we have put in a budget, a narrative, something that we don't legally have to do as part of the budget process, but we took the extra step to put a narrative in our budget to give the solutions that are needed to correct this debt problem, reforming Medicare, reforming Medicaid, putting us on a track that will reduce that red menace, that will plateau it, and start pointing it downward over the next generation.

We took the political risk to have that conversation with the American people, and we have done it every year since 2011. Some people called it the third rail of politics. Touch it and you will be politically electrocuted.

Well, we touched it, Mr. Speaker. And we touched the next year, and the next year, and the year after that. And my hope and my pledge is, on this House floor, that we will continue to have that conversation with the American people, backed up with votes that show, really, how to solve this problem.

Mr. Speaker, I will refer us to the spending that I am talking about. This chart was used before by the gentleman from Arkansas. I will refer to it again.

Here is what is on autopilot. Here is what needs to be reformed. And if you look at one piece of that pie there, Medicaid, a solution for that has been in our budget for the last 5 years.

In the remaining time I have, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about that solution, a State flexibility grant, block grant, if you will. We have had that idea in our budget for the last 5 years.

It is the idea that we in the Federal Government, we are going to get out of the business of Medicaid. We are going to get out of the business of deciding who is poor in terms of health care, what the poor need in terms of health care, or how the poor get it, that health care service.

We are going to give it to the States, to individuals, to locally elected officials, people who know their communities better, in fact, than any Federal bureaucrat does; people who can determine, given a finite amount of money from us, their money back, in fact, what the poor need, who the poor really are, who the disabled really are,

what they should get in terms of healthcare services, and how they should get it.

Maybe, like the gentleman from Arkansas alluded to earlier, maybe there ought to be a work requirement for the able-bodied ones of them. Maybe there ought to be other conditions, but let the States decide what that would be, pressured, in a good way, by the fact that there would only be a finite amount of money coming from our budget.

That would allow us to know exactly what we are in for, as a Federal Government, exactly what we are giving out, and not a cent more, and would naturally incentivize the States to innovate, to come up with better ways of service, to serve those who really need health care who can't get it any other way. And those who, in fact, are gaming the system will be naturally forced off.

The States are in the best position to provide that when they are properly incentivized with a finite amount of money that doesn't grow over time.

The Republican budget for the last 5 years, the one that has passed this House of Representatives, has done that very thing. We are on the right track. We need to continue these votes. We need to continue to have a budget. We need to continue to have stand-alone votes on these reforms to take this issue to the American people, especially in a Presidential election year when, frankly, the candidates, I haven't seen them talk enough about what is really on people's minds, and that is how they are going to leave their children and grandchildren with a better life than they have, when we are knowingly saddled with \$19 trillion in debt, a very hard thing to do.

In fact, I think this is the first generation in American history, Mr. Speaker, that is poised to leave the next generation worse off. I refuse to let that happen on this Budget Committee's watch, and that is why we are here today, that is why we are providing the leadership.

I thank the gentleman very much for his leadership.

Mr. WESTERMAN. I thank the gentleman from Indiana for his remarks. I thank him also for his leadership on the Budget Committee. I thank him for his passion to see a better future for our kids and for our grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, having served in a State legislature before coming to Congress, I served in one where we had to balance our budget. And in our State legislature, our single largest expenditure was, by far, Medicaid.

Medicaid exceeded all the money that we spent on public education, higher education, and the Department of Corrections combined. We spent more money on this one Federal State program than we spent on all of education, and that we spent on our prison program.

Mr. Speaker, there is an inverse incentive for States to be good stewards of Medicaid money. In my State, we received \$2.37 of Federal money for every \$1 of State money that we spent.

What my colleague from Indiana is talking about is giving States incentives to manage these programs. If the States had incentives to manage the programs in a better way right now, their hands would be tied by CMS.

The Federal Government won't allow the States to create programs and manage their Medicaid population the way that the States could if they had the opportunity to do that.

□ 1600

If we give these laboratories of democracy across the country the ability to innovate and the ability to meet the needs of the people that they serve, then they will do that. Government has always been most effective when it is closest to the people. I served on a school board. I know that I had a lot more interaction with my constituents on the school board because I lived in the same community with them than I did as a State legislator or even as I do as a Member of Congress.

We have to be able to give States more flexibility. We have to let them innovate and let them learn from one another across the country to use ideas that work one place and adapt them for another place. That is how we bring fiscal stability back to our Federal budget, by allowing States to manage their State budgets better.

As we look at these mandatory spending programs, as the gentleman from Indiana mentioned, the large part of this mandatory spending—nearly half of it—is all associated with health care. That is Medicare, which is \$634 billion in 2015; Medicaid, \$350 billion in 2015; and then other programs that make up about \$47 billion. Those, combined, are greater than the one single largest expenditure, which is Social Security, which we obviously need to reform, not to punish people but to make it sustainable, to make it last for those who really need the program, and to make it last for all Americans who have invested in that program. The same thing for Medicare.

If we refuse to make changes, if we continue to let the status quo be the current reality, then we will see all of these programs shrink and become insolvent over time, and at the same time we will see our Federal debt continue to bloom, and we will see the amount of interest we pay on the debt continue to grow.

Now is the time for us to take action. Now is the time for us to not only produce a budget that balances, but to enact that budget and to follow that budget.

Again, I would like to thank all the members of the Budget Committee who spoke on the issues today. We will be

speaking on them more as we move forward.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3716, ENSURING REMOVAL OF TERMINATED PROVIDERS FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

Mr. BURGESS (during the Special Order of Mr. WESTERMAN), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-440) on the resolution (H. Res. 632) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

HUNGER IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ABRAHAM). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight our important Federal nutrition programs, and I rise today to remind my colleagues that we have a hunger problem in the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, there is not a single congressional district in this country that is hunger free. Every community—whether urban, suburban, or rural—faces hunger. One in seven Americans experience hunger, including 16 million children. We are the richest, most powerful country in the history of the world. It is shameful that even one child goes to bed hungry.

In every community across the country, there are dedicated, passionate local antihunger organizations that do incredible work to provide food assistance and support those struggling with hunger, from food banks to food pantries, to faith-based organizations, to community centers, to hospitals, and on and on and on. Charities do important, wonderful work, but they cannot do it alone. The demand is simply too high. Charities need a strong partner in the Federal Government if we are ever going to end hunger.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, which used to be known as food stamps, is our Nation's premier antihunger program. It is effective and it is efficient, with an error rate of less than 4 percent, which includes both overpayments and underpayments.

By the way, underpayments are when a recipient receives less than they are eligible for, and that happens often.

Find me a Pentagon spending program with such a low error rate. The fact of the matter is SNAP is one of the most successful—if not the most successful—Federal programs that we have.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, or WIC, provides nutritious foods, counseling on healthy eating, and breastfeeding support to more than 8 million low-income women and children at nutritional risk. WIC gives infants and young children the healthy, nutritious start that they need for critical early development and lifelong learning. It is an incredibly vital program.

The National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs and the Summer Food Service Program provide nutritious foods for millions of children and teens in educational and community settings. These important programs ensure that our young people are ready to learn and that they can succeed.

The Meals on Wheels program provides home-delivered meals to millions of homebound seniors. Not only does Meals on Wheels improve senior nutrition, it also enables seniors to live independently longer while receiving daily check-in visits from volunteers.

These are just a few of the vital Federal antihunger programs that are the backbone of our fight to end hunger once and for all in this country. But, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons why I am coming to this floor today is I am deeply worried that they are coming under attack by the Republican majority in this House.

Unfortunately, it is fashionable right now to demonize Americans living in poverty and to belittle their struggles. We hear that all too often on this House floor. We hear that all too often in this Presidential campaign that is going on. The fact of the matter is it is hard work to be poor in America. It is not easy. Yet millions of families are struggling, trying to raise their kids and living on a paycheck that doesn't provide enough to put food on the table.

Mr. Speaker, a couple of weeks ago, I spent a night at a homeless shelter in Worcester, Massachusetts, called the Interfaith Hospitality Network. It is a family homeless shelter. As you know, there are not enough shelters that accommodate entire families. Usually families get split up. But what I wasn't prepared for when I spent the night at this shelter was that every one of these families had at least one adult that was working. They were working in a job. They all had unique situations that put them in a very difficult situation. But the fact of the matter is they were working. They were earning just enough that a lot of their benefits were reduced, but they were not earning enough to be able to put a down payment on an apartment and afford rent.

These are parents that love their kids every bit as much as I love my kids and my colleagues love their kids. They want to be good parents, but they are struggling. They are looking for a hand up, not a handout. They are looking for a little bit of assistance so they can get back on their feet.

The bottom line is that their plight is not unique. I will tell my colleagues that their plight does not fall into a neat stereotype. Too often when people here in this Chamber talk about the homeless or the hungry, they talk about people who are addicted to drugs, or they talk about people who don't work or who don't want to work. That is not the reality. That is not the face of poverty in this country. It is much more complicated than that. And yet, to justify deep cuts in programs to actually help people get back on their feet, we hear the false narrative repeated over and over and over again, the demonization of these people who are struggling in poverty.

The rhetoric that we hear on the floor all too often is hurtful, and it is sometimes hateful. It is seeping into the discourse in this Congress, and it is seeping into some of the decision-making that is going on by the current leadership in this Congress.

It seems like just now Republican leaders are finally coming around to the idea that they need to talk about poverty. We heard the Speaker say that he wants a national conversation about poverty. But I have got to tell you I am a little worried, because while we need this conversation and while we need to come up with solutions, I have this sinking feeling that something else is going on, that this so-called conversation on poverty is really kind of a masquerade for cutting deeply into programs that will help put food and nutrition on people's tables and provide people the shelter that they need when they are struggling. I worry that this congressional task force that the Speaker announced, when I look at it, is made up of Members, all of whom have supported block-granting SNAP.

What block-granting means is that States can do almost whatever the heck they want to do with the SNAP benefit. They don't necessarily have to use it to provide people food. They can use it for other things; and, therefore, it puts that benefit at risk, especially during difficult economic times.

But every one of the people who is on this task force has voted for Republican budgets that support block-granting. Every one of the people on this so-called poverty task force voted to cut SNAP by \$40 billion during the last farm bill—\$40 billion.

Now, they would say: Oh, we are just trying to trim the program and make it more efficient. I would just say to my colleagues that the average SNAP benefit is \$1.40 per person per meal per day—\$1.40.

I bet most of my colleagues who are calling for deep cuts in SNAP have no idea what the benefit is. They have no idea how inadequate the benefit is. In fact, it is so inadequate that most families who are on SNAP end up having to rely on food banks, having to rely on churches, synagogues, and mosques at the end of the month to be able to put food on their table. It is \$1.40 per person per meal per day. That is the average benefit. Yet my colleagues, those who are on this so-called poverty task force, almost unanimously, on the other side of the aisle, voted to cut the program by \$40 billion.

I would ask my colleagues, what are you thinking? What are you thinking? We have an obligation to be there for the most vulnerable in this country. That is what government is supposed to be for. Donald Trump doesn't need government. He is a zillionaire. He doesn't have to worry about where his next meal is going to come from. Yet there are millions of people, millions of families in this country who do. They are looking for a little compassion. They are not looking for a handout. They are looking for a hand up so they can get their lives in order and they can progress.

Mr. Speaker, we need to do better.

I will just say one other thing, and then I am going to yield to my colleague from Virginia.

There is another kind of nasty discussion going on by my Republican colleagues. They have a new proposal to drug-test SNAP recipients. The fact of the matter is this proposal has no basis in reality. It is nothing more than a mean-spirited attack on poor people to fire up their rightwing base. It is insulting. It is insulting.

We have seen drug test laws in Florida and Georgia struck down as unconstitutional and end up wasting taxpayer dollars to identify very few drug users. In fact, those receiving public assistance test positive for illicit drugs at a lower rate than the general population—at a lower rate than the general population. It doesn't fit into the rightwing narrative of who comprises those who live in poverty in America, but it is the fact. It is the fact.

Why aren't Republicans in this bill calling for drug testing for wealthy CEOs and oil company executives who receive taxpayer subsidies? Why aren't they calling for Members of Congress to undergo drug tests? After all, our salaries are paid by the taxpayers in this country. Why don't you call for all Members of Congress to undergo drug tests? Maybe that might explain why we do some of the things we do here in this Congress.

But, instead, again, they only pick on one sector of the population—poor people. They are the ones who are being blamed for the economy. They are the ones who are being demonized, and they are the ones who are being be-

littled. It is beneath this Chamber and this House to engage in that kind of discussion.

We need to be making real, meaningful progress to end hunger and poverty in this country. First and foremost, we need to protect and strengthen our important Federal nutrition and antihunger programs. We need bold action that will help people rather than make hunger and poverty worse. That is why I continue to call for a White House conference on food, nutrition, and hunger to develop a holistic plan to end hunger in America, because I think we can do better. I think we need to get all of our Federal agencies and our State agencies to work better together and to connect the dots so that we can deal with this so-called cliff that so many people struggling to get out of poverty hit when they start to make a little bit of money.

□ 1615

We need to figure out a holistic plan with benchmarks that will actually end hunger. We have a lot of programs, quite frankly, that deal with different aspects of hunger, but I am not sure we have a plan that will actually end it.

Here is the deal. Hunger is a political condition. It is solvable. We have everything to solve it except the political will. One of the things we should be doing is developing that political will and not going down the road of demonizing some of the most vulnerable people in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), the ranking member of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts not only for yielding, but also for his years of work fighting hunger. He is one of the strongest advocates we have in Congress in fighting the scourge of hunger. I want to thank him for all of those years of good work.

It is my privilege to be the ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. In that perspective, we played an integral role in the reduction of food insecurity and lowering the prevalence of debilitating health conditions, including obesity, diabetes, and others.

Our committee is tasked with making sure all children have an equal shot at success. One important way is to ensure that by providing healthy, nutritious meals.

There is a Federal role in ensuring that every child has access to a quality education, regardless of where they live or their family's income, and nutrition is a part of making sure they can get that education.

More than 60 years ago, when Congress enacted the first Federal child nutrition program—the National School Lunch Program—Congress acknowledged that feeding hungry children was not only a moral imperative,

but also an imperative for the health and security of our Nation.

The National School Lunch Program was actually a response from the military community who were complaining that so many of our young military age youth were unprepared for military service because they were malnourished.

Regrettably today, we are faced with the same crisis that impacts our Nation's national security. Too many of our children are now obese, too obese to enlist in our Nation's military. One-third of the children in this country are overweight, and childhood obesity has tripled in the last 30 years.

While all segments of the population are affected, low-income families are especially vulnerable to obesity and other chronic diseases because they end up eating unhealthy food.

Unfortunately, the poorest among us have the least access to healthy foods, many times without a full-service grocery store or farmer's market in their community.

We still have a long way to go, but there have been positive signs of progress through the implementation of our child nutrition programs.

Thanks to the introduction of stronger standards brought about by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, enacted just a few years ago, students across the country are experiencing healthy school environments with more nutritious meal options.

One area in dire need of increased access to child nutrition programs and nutritious meals they provide is Flint, Michigan. As everybody knows, the residents of Flint are struggling with the consequences of exposure to high levels of lead as a result of the city's contaminated municipal water supply.

Lead exposure is especially damaging to infants, toddlers, and expectant mothers and can cause behavioral and cognitive problems that last a lifetime.

Although there is no cure for lead poisoning, research shows that a healthy diet, including zinc, vitamin C, iron, and calcium, can mitigate some of the harmful effects.

Federal supplemental funding for nutrition programs, especially the WIC program, would allow access to healthier diets.

Funding for a nutrient-rich third meal, an extension of WIC benefits, to 10 years of age for all eligible children would go a long way to help the residents of Flint, Michigan, deal with lead poisoning.

Mr. Speaker, our committee is now working on a child nutrition reauthorization bill. With this reauthorization, we have a great opportunity to continue to improve the way that children eat, to expand access to nutritious meals, and to end the crisis of childhood hunger in this country.

These efforts do not end with the school year or even the school day.

Whether in schools, childcare settings, or summer programs, our goal should be to provide high-quality and nutritious food to all of America's children.

We have a choice to make. We can put money into these important programs now and support healthy eating in our schools and other settings or we can cut corners and spend more money down the road on chronic diseases and other social services, putting the well-being of our children and our Nation's security at risk. Make no mistake. Either way, we will spend the money.

A few years ago medical expenditures to treat obesity in the United States were estimated to be \$147 billion, 16.5 percent of all U.S. medical expenditures.

Investing in the front end, by maintaining strong nutrition standards and increasing access to healthy meals, is obviously a better choice for our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my fellow Members of Congress to continue to invest in our Nation's future by moving forward, not backward, on issues of food insecurity and child nutrition.

I want to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts again for his longtime advocacy, for his efforts to reduce hunger and to provide better nutrition for our Nation's children.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I thank the gentleman for his comments and for his leadership, and I thank him for pointing out the links between good nutrition and good health.

We actually will save money in the long run if we provide our people, our young people in particular, nutritious food. We can prevent diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure.

If people aren't moved by the human aspect of feeding the hungry and all they care about is the bottom line, they ought to join with us to make sure that these nutrition programs are adequately funded.

In addition, you can't learn in school if you are hungry. A breakfast and a lunch to a young child who is hungry is every bit as essential to that child's ability to learn as is a textbook.

We need to understand that. We need to stop nickel-and-diming these nutrition programs and understand that every dollar we invest, every penny we invest, pays us back in ways that can't even be quantified, quite frankly.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), a leader on this issue, a woman who is on the Appropriations Committee, who, again, has been a champion for many, many years on this issue of combating hunger in America.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman, and I thank my colleagues. I am so proud to join with you tonight

And to Congressman MCGOVERN, your unrelenting efforts to address the issue of ending hunger and doing it now, you

have been singularly an individual who has never missed a beat in trying to address this issue and bring it to the floor and the public.

And to my colleague from Virginia, who has taken his platform of the Education and the Workforce Committee and have had a focus on how, in fact, we improve the opportunities for our children and whether it is their health or their education, he is at the forefront.

I see we have been joined by Congresswoman GWEN MOORE of Wisconsin, someone who can talk about her own deep personal experiences with hunger and with the food stamp program and what it means to be able to work your way out of these efforts. She has done it to a fare-thee-well.

Mr. Speaker, over 50 million people—nearly one in four—live in hunger in the United States. Don't ever let anybody use the terminology "food security." It is plain and simple hunger.

Kids are hungry in the United States of America. Hunger exists in virtually every community in this country. Social safety net programs are vital tools for reducing the prevalence of poverty and hunger.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP—food stamps, yes—is one of the most powerful programs that we have for ending childhood hunger in the United States. It helps millions of hardworking American families every year.

SNAP works for those who need it most. It has been incredibly successful in alleviating hunger, lifting people out of poverty, and supporting our economy.

SNAP continues to do more than any other government assistance program to lift Americans out of poverty. The numbers speak for themselves.

In 2014 alone, the program lifted 4.7 million people out of poverty, including 2.1 million children. SNAP also lifted more than 1.3 million children out of deep poverty. What is deep poverty? It is 50 percent of what the poverty line is in this Nation.

The program impacts children well beyond their childhood years. Research shows that, among children who grow up in disadvantaged households with access to SNAP, there is an 18 percentage point increase in the likelihood of completing high school.

There has also been evidence of significant improvements in overall health and economic self-sufficiency among women.

SNAP is an extremely efficient program. More than half of all of the benefits go to households in deepest poverty, and over 70 percent of all benefits go to households with children.

Despite what some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would say about fraud, waste, and abuse, the food stamp program has the lowest error rate of any Federal Government program, the lowest error rate.

Based on this anecdote that it is rife with fraud, waste, and abuse, they would deny children food. The data speaks loud and clear about the lowest error rate of any Federal program.

Of course, it is not just children. SNAP helps millions of seniors, people with disabilities, veterans, low-wage workers, and others.

However, Speaker RYAN and other Republican House Members say that we spend trillions of dollars on these programs and, yet, the poverty rate does not change. This is simply not true.

I talked about the statistics earlier on in my comments. Without these critical safety net programs, more Americans would go hungry. As we have said, SNAP kept about 4.8 million people out of poverty, including 2.1 million children.

The data belies what their conversation is and the stories they want to tell and, quite frankly, fabricate around the food stamp program.

The Republican proposals for SNAP include a push to enact block grants, which my colleague, Mr. MCGOVERN, mentioned before, an idea that Jared Bernstein, former chief economist to Vice President BIDEN called “one of the most destructive ideas in poverty policy.”

Let me mention some of the statistics that have been compiled by Children’s Health Watch in Boston, Massachusetts.

If the SNAP benefits were reduced either through block granting or some other mechanism to reduce food stamp benefits so as to create instability in these households, this is what they say would be likely to occur: 23 percent would be more likely to have households that are food insecure; 70 percent more likely children would be food insecure; 36 percent more likely to be in poor health if this happens; 70 percent more likely to be at risk for developmental delays—this is about our kids, about our children—12 percent more likely to be hospitalized; children in kindergarten through third grade would be more likely to have measurably lower reading and math test scores; and reduced SNAP benefits would decrease the likelihood of mothers having a baby with a healthy weight and of a low-birth-weight baby surviving.

This is not JIM MCGOVERN or GWEN MOORE or BOBBY SCOTT or ROSA DELAURA making up these statistics. They come from an organization which tracks all of these measures.

□ 1630

My colleagues, it would include drug testing policies for SNAP recipients and prohibitions for certain food purchases.

What kind of priorities are these?

We can’t continue to wage a war against food stamp recipients. Nobody is asking for any other recipients who

get Federal subsidies to be drug tested. Let’s start with the Crop Insurance people. Let’s start with that. Let’s take all of the programs at the U.S. Department of Agriculture where there is a subsidy and a recipient to that subsidy. Let’s get them all drug tested.

We are going to continue to stand up against unconscionable attacks on America’s poor working families. I urge my colleagues to stand with us in ensuring that the Federal budget does not harm working families and children by decimating the hunger programs in this Nation.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I thank the gentlewoman for her eloquent statement.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE. I thank the gentleman so much for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in praising Mr. MCGOVERN for his leadership on this issue.

Of the many people who are hungry, none of them have the money to lobby folks—the kids, the disabled people, the seniors, the elderly—but we have a champion in this House, JIM MCGOVERN.

With the few seconds remaining, I want to talk a little bit about our economy. We have a capitalist economy, and it is countercyclical. The SNAP program works to provide a safety net so that when we have a Hurricane Katrina or when we have a Hurricane Sandy, the food stamp rolls go up, and when there are jobs, the food stamp rolls go down. It ain’t broke, you all, so let’s not try to fix it.

I am very, very disturbed that when the Budget Committee meets next week, it will try to make structural changes to the SNAP program, to throw it into a reconciliation process where only 51 Members of the Senate have to vote for it, out of this body, in order to change the structure of it so that it is not responsive to people during economic distress.

I am concerned about the numbers of people who are going to ask for a waiver to limit the number of benefits, in a 36-month period, that those who are unemployed can receive. People who are unemployed don’t have any control over our economy. When unemployment is up, the SNAP program, as it is currently structured, is responsive to unemployment, and we ought to stick to that.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

END HUNGER NOW

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their eloquent statements here today. I think that they have reinforced the point that these nutrition programs work. SNAP

works. It has one of the lowest error rates of any Federal program—less than a 4 percent error rate. That includes underpayments, which means that beneficiaries don’t get what they are entitled to. It is a program that allows families to put food on the table.

We need to be supporting these programs. We need to be coming up with a holistic plan to end hunger. We need to raise the minimum wage so that people who work, like the majority of able-bodied people do who are on SNAP, don’t have to live in poverty. We can do so much better.

I would just say to my Republican colleagues that, rather than doubling down on the cruelty with some of the proposals that have been brought forth before this House, you ought to work in a bipartisan way to actually lift people out of poverty so as to give people the hope and the ability to lead better lives.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to come together and find a way to end hunger now.

STOP ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. JOLLY) for 30 minutes.

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon to talk about an issue that I started bringing up about 5 or 6 weeks ago and that I intend to talk about every week until we finally force action in this Chamber.

For over 20 years, I have had the opportunity to study this institution, an institution I believe very deeply in—in its ability to rise to some of our greatest national challenges and to solve some of the greatest problems we face. It was not until as a first-time candidate then elected to office that I had the opportunity to experience a few moments that are very unique to actually being in the Member’s chair.

We have had a great debate over the decades about campaign finance reform, about the role of money in politics. It is a legitimate debate. It is a legitimate conversation with strongly felt views on both sides of the aisle, with solutions as diverse as the ideologies of our country—from greater transparency to greater limits, to fewer limits.

Yet, as we have talked about the campaign finance construct in this country and as we have talked about proposed solutions, we have actually ignored one of the greatest blights on this body, itself. It comes not in the form of our campaign finance laws, but it comes in the form of the amount of time that Members of this body are expected or are, in some cases, directed to spend in raising money.

You see, the first way we begin to address campaign finance reform is by addressing a needed congressional reform,

a reform that touches not on the current laws of how campaigns are resourced, but on the current rules by which this body governs.

As they were directed a few years back by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—by their leadership—the expectation as a new Member of Congress for a day in D.C. is to spend 4 hours a day on the phone, raising money. The number-one activity, as was suggested to new incoming Members, was to fundraise, not to legislate.

It is a very uncomfortable truth. As I said last week, it is very uncomfortable for me to talk about this amongst my colleagues, but we represent, each of us, 700,000 people back home who trust us. They trust us to serve, and in serving, we are to give voice to their priorities.

Dear folks, the priorities of our constituents is not fundraising. You see, there is a broad diversity of priorities—from border security, to immigration reform, to transportation, to tax reform. I listened to colleagues in the last hour talk about balancing the budget. Others talked about programs that are critical to ending hunger here in the United States, but we will never solve these problems on behalf of the people who sent us here if we spend more time on the phone, raising money, than we do in legislating, in tackling these very problems that we have tried to give voice to.

Last week I did share with this body the orientation card that was provided to some incoming Members a few years back. Today I have with me some quotes from retiring Members of Congress, from those on the way out the door or who have already left.

The first one, you will notice, is a confession from a colleague on my side of the aisle, upon his retirement, who said that fundraising is the main business of Congress.

The other one is from the retired Senate majority leader who said that a Senator has to raise \$10,000 a day every day he is in office, every day for 6 years, simply to finance his reelection.

The last is from a colleague who, shortly after announcing his intention to retire, wrote a piece called “Confessions of a Congressman,” confessing to spending 4,200 hours on the phone, raising money—4,200 hours that could have been spent doing his job.

What do all of these quotes have in common? What do all of these individuals have in common?

They are either retired or they are retiring.

The cynic in me would suggest: Why do you wait until you have left this institution to publicly lament the failings of having served while you were here?

In fact, the cynic in me would suggest, in some cases, it is simply to sell a book—to ask the American people for more money, but this time for your own pocket, not for your campaign.

What do we do about it? Why don't we do something as sitting Members of Congress that has never been done before?

Let's address this issue that creates such a quiet anger amongst Members of Congress—this obligation to fundraise—but that resonates as a very loud anger with the American people. You see, no Member on this side of the aisle or the other needs a poll to know that the American people are frustrated with the amount of time Members of Congress spend in raising money instead of in doing their jobs.

Together, with six or eight colleagues here in this body—and I am grateful for their support of the legislation I have introduced—we have introduced something I call the STOP Act. It is very simple. It is merely three or four pages. Every Member of this body can read it before he votes on it.

The STOP Act, H.R. 4443, prohibits any Member of Congress from directly soliciting a contribution to his own campaign, to a PAC, or to his party. It leaves in place the campaign finance construct that has been approved by the Supreme Court. Whether you agree with it or not, it doesn't touch the current campaign finance system.

If an individual wishes to participate in an election, I believe that is political speech, and he is still able to participate by making phone calls, by waving signs, or by contributing. Campaign committees can still exist. It is simply the job of staff to ensure that campaigns have the resources necessary to run the campaign.

This law would only apply to sitting Members of Congress. It would not apply to challengers. It would not apply to first-time candidates. It would only apply to sitting Members of Congress. It would be a direct prohibition on any Member of Congress who is directly soliciting a contribution.

Why?

Because the message is very simple to Congress. You see, the STOP Act says: Get back to work. Do your job. It is why we were elected, to actually try to solve problems.

In State legislatures, including in the State legislature in the State of Florida, members are prohibited from directly soliciting contributions while they are in session. In Florida, where we elect judges, we have a prohibition on the direct solicitation of contributions, and 29 or 30 States across the country have that same prohibition.

The message is very simple: you are elected to do a job. Spend your hours working, not asking people for money.

I have heard a lot of responses since I introduced this bill. The contrast between comments from the American people is stark compared to comments from many elected officials, many in this town. See, the American people get it and they say “thank you.”

Of course, Congress should be spending time doing its job, not spending

time across the street, raising money. The American people get it. Folks in this town say, “You are crazy.” Some say, “I like fundraising.” One of the better comments—more intriguing—was that old habits are hard to break.

Let's break those habits. Let's have a Congress that gets to work because, you see, this is not the best we can do.

Do you want to know why we have not solved border security, gotten operational control of the border, why we have not solved immigration reform, why we have not reached consensus, finally, once and for all, on how to balance the budget and put us on a pathway to prosperity, why we have not had a healthy debate on issues like an authorization to use military force?

Where are we in terms of agreement or disagreement with the President's foreign policy? Why have we not been able to consider a national right to carry reciprocity, protecting the Second Amendment rights of any individual who travels between States? Why have we not solved the VA healthcare problem in giving every veteran the complete choice of where he receives his health care? Why have we not moved legislation on behalf of law enforcement officers to enhance penalties for those who do harm to law enforcement officers?

It is because we have a part-time Congress and a full-time world. There is no way to suggest to voters that it is somehow okay to have a political culture that prioritizes fundraising over legislating.

Tone is very important here. While this is a hard issue to talk about, this is not intended to judge or to criticize my colleagues.

□ 1645

In fact, colleagues in this body are operating lawfully under the system that has been set before us. But I am simply trying to change the system because the American people will never understand, as they work 40, 50, 60 hours a week, why, according to some estimations, we have a legislature that spends 15 hours a week legislating and 25 hours a week raising money. It does not make a bit of sense.

Now, I mentioned some of the comments that I have heard from others after I introduced this. There are two things you will hear from people who don't want to talk about this—actually, there are three.

The first response is silence and the hope that you don't make eye contact so you can avoid the question because there is no way to oppose the STOP Act.

The second is this issue of, well, it is First Amendment. I should be able to ask somebody for money. The United States Supreme Court recently considered that question in a case that dealt with a prohibition on judges directly soliciting contributions, and the Supreme Court of the United States ruled

that it was a reasonable restriction on elected officials to protect the integrity of the bench.

Now, there was discussion about whether or not that could apply also to legislators, and there were questions about that. I would point you back to the fact that legislatures at the State level currently prohibit direct solicitation while they are in session.

So my STOP Act, I believe, meets constitutional muster based on Supreme Court rulings. But should there be any question, then we can simply make it apply to days that we are in session, hours that we are in session. Frankly, we could solve it most easily by simply passing a House rule, because, you see, a rule that this body imposes upon itself survives any constitutional scrutiny.

So I start by asking my colleagues to cosponsor the STOP Act, H.R. 4443. If we fail to move the STOP Act, let's have an honest conversation within this body about the current blight that fundraising imposes on our ability to do work, because this is not the best we can do.

Where are our solutions to the issues I mentioned of border security, of national security, of balanced budget, of tax reforms, of VA health care, of protecting law enforcement? Where are our solutions? They are not found at fundraisers. They are not found on the other end of a cold call that you make to ask for a contribution.

The answers are found among the community of stakeholders that sent us here, those on the front lines every day of these issues, communities like mine in Pinellas County who gave me the public trust. Every day my first responsibility and the responsibility of every Member of this Congress is to honor that public trust.

You see, the answers are not in fundraisers or on the other end of a fundraising phone call. The answers are in our community and in the voices of our community as represented by elected officials here in this well. But we are not here. It is 4:45, and we are done for the day but for fundraising and but for making phone calls.

Let's get off the phone with donors. Let's leave that to campaign organizations, and let's get on the phone with the constituents who have asked us to give voice to their concerns. Let's find the answers where they lie, not across the street in call suites, not at fundraisers. We can do so much better, and we are fooling ourselves if we don't realize that.

If we take anything from the political landscape this year, it is that the American people are calling the bluff of folks who continue to mislead and misrepresent. It is misleading and it is misrepresenting when we promise that we are working on critical issues of the country when, in fact, we are not even in the office but we are across the street raising money.

I would love to take on broader campaign finance reform. We all have strong opinions. Mine start first with protecting the First Amendment rights of anyone to participate in an election.

We will never get to the bigger reforms if we ignore this very basic truth that many in this body, as a result of the pressure of campaigns, spend more time asking you for money than asking you for solutions, more time fundraising than legislating.

I didn't run to become a professional fundraiser. I ran to hopefully contribute to solutions that are desperately wanted by the American people, solutions that require consensus across the aisle, but solutions that first and foremost require a commitment to serve, a commitment to tackle the hardest issues among us.

I started by saying I believe deeply in this institution, and I do. This is the greatest legislative body the world has ever seen, but let's honor that history. Just as when we took the oath of office to well and faithfully execute the duties of this office, let's honor that, because we are not faithfully executing the duties of this office when the Chamber is empty at 4:45 but the call suites across the street are full.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

MARCH 1, 2016.

HON. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: Pursuant to section 4703(b) of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Act (20 U.S.C. 4703), I am pleased to appoint the following Member to the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation.

Rep. John B. Larson of Connecticut.

Best regards,

NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 52 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 2, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4507. A letter from the Director, Transparency and Accountability Reporting Division, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (RIN: 0505-AA15) received February 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4508. A letter from the Director, Engineering and Environmental Staff, Water and Environmental Programs, Rural Utilities Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Environmental Policies and Procedures (RIN: 0575-AC56) received February 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4509. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Prevailing Rate Systems; Definition of Hancock County, Mississippi, to a Nonappropriated Fund Federal Wage System Wage Area (RIN: 3206-AN20) received February 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4510. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final and temporary regulations — PATH Act Changes to Section 1445 [TD 9751] (RIN: 1545-BN22) received February 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4511. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Applicable Federal Rates — March 2016 (Rev. Rul. 2016-07) received February 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4512. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Update for Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates [Notice 2016-18] received February 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4513. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Mid-Year Changes to Safe Harbor Plans and Safe Harbor Notices [Notice 2016-16] received February 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4514. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final regulations — Reporting of Specified Foreign Financial Assets [TD 9752] (RIN: 1545-BM54) received February 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4515. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final and

temporary regulations — Amendments to the Low-Income Housing Credit Compliance-Monitoring Regulations [TD 9753] (RIN: 1545-BL84) received February 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4516. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Qualified Zone Academy Bond Allocations for 2015 and 2016 [Notice 2016-20] received February 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4517. A letter from the Deputy Chief Counsel for Regulations and Security Standards, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Passenger Screening Using Advanced Imaging Technology [Docket No.: TSA-2013-0004] (RIN: 1652-AA67) received February 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Homeland Security.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BURGESS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 632. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes (Rept. 114-440). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York (for himself and Mr. HANNA):

H.R. 4654. A bill to direct the Attorney General to carry out a pilot program to provide grants to eligible entities for diversion programs to divert individuals with low-level drug offenses to drug treatment programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PALAZZO (for himself, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BOST, Mr. OLSON, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. COLE, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. KIND, Mr. BARR, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, and Mr. MACARTHUR):

H.R. 4655. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a minimum automatic extension of certain Federal tax deadlines in the case of Federally declared disasters; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia):

H.R. 4656. A bill to place a moratorium on the United States Postal Service's mail processing facility closure and consolidation and to maintain Postal Service delivery standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. KUSTER (for herself, Ms. STEFANIK, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. COLLINS of New York, and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 4657. A bill to ensure United States jurisdiction over offenses committed by United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 4658. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to decrease the distance away from home required for a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces to be eligible for the above-the-line deduction for travel expenses; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. PITTS, and Mr. ENGEL):

H. Con. Res. 121. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. PAYNE (for himself, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. LANCE, and Mr. DENT):

H. Res. 630. A resolution supporting the designation of March 2016, as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. COURTNEY (for himself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. KILMER, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, and Mr. SMITH of Washington):

H. Res. 631. A resolution calling upon the United States Senate to give its advice and consent to the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LOEBSACK (for himself, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PETERS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. ESTY, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. TAKAI, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. BOST, and Mr. DEUTCH):

H. Res. 633. A resolution recognizing the important work of Meals on Wheels America and senior nutrition programs throughout the Nation in addressing hunger and isolation and improving the health and quality of life for millions of our Nation's seniors each year; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Ms. BORDALLO introduced A bill (H.R. 4659) for the relief of Myung Mok Bae and Kei Za Ryu Bae; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 4654.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Art. 1, Section 8

By Mr. PALAZZO:

H.R. 4655.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
U.S. Const. Art. 1, Section 8:

"The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States . . ."

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 4656.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 7, of Section 8, Article I of the U.S. Constitution:

"To establish Post Offices and post Roads;"

By Ms. KUSTER:

H.R. 4657.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, the Taxing and Spending Clause: "The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . . To regulate Commerce within foreign nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes. . . ."

By Mr. POLIQUIN:
H.R. 4658.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution which grants Congress the "power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises . . ."

By Ms. BORDALLO:
H.R. 4659.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 295: Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 379: Mr. HUDSON and Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 381: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 465: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 542: Mr. ROHRBACHER.
H.R. 563: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 590: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 664: Mr. GARAMENDI and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 676: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
 H.R. 729: Mr. GRAYSON and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 748: Mr. GALLEG0.
 H.R. 815: Mr. WOODALL, Mr. ASHFORD, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
 H.R. 915: Mr. NORCROSS.
 H.R. 939: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
 H.R. 953: Ms. MATSUI.
 H.R. 969: Mr. WALDEN.
 H.R. 997: Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.
 H.R. 1148: Mr. JONES.
 H.R. 1151: Mr. PAULSEN and Mr. TAKAI.
 H.R. 1170: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. FORTENBERRY, and Mr. HONDA.
 H.R. 1523: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
 H.R. 1550: Mr. CRENSHAW.
 H.R. 1586: Mr. GRAYSON.
 H.R. 1660: Mr. LATTA.
 H.R. 1706: Mr. GRAYSON.
 H.R. 1733: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
 H.R. 2053: Mr. COFFMAN.
 H.R. 2087: Mr. COHEN and Mr. ENGEL.
 H.R. 2096: Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 2121: Mr. POSEY and Mr. BARR.
 H.R. 2144: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
 H.R. 2257: Mr. TONKO.
 H.R. 2404: Mr. ZINKE.
 H.R. 2460: Mr. ENGEL and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
 H.R. 2641: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
 H.R. 2766: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
 H.R. 2802: Mr. RENACCI.
 H.R. 2827: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
 H.R. 2896: Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. BOST, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. LATTA.
 H.R. 2901: Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. HULTGREN.
 H.R. 2939: Mr. HONDA.
 H.R. 2972: Mr. MOULTON.
 H.R. 2992: Mr. GOODLATTE.
 H.R. 3048: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. CRAWFORD, and Mr. OLSON.
 H.R. 3099: Mr. PETERS.
 H.R. 3117: Ms. CLARKE of New York.
 H.R. 3180: Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
 H.R. 3226: Mr. ELLISON.
 H.R. 3308: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
 H.R. 3326: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa and Mr. HUNTER.
 H.R. 3365: Mr. DESAULNIER.
 H.R. 3366: Ms. ADAMS and Mr. GRAYSON.
 H.R. 3381: Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. KATKO, and Mr. TAKAI.

H.R. 3406: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
 H.R. 3484: Mr. DESAULNIER.
 H.R. 3515: Mr. HILL, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
 H.R. 3516: Mr. HUELSKAMP.
 H.R. 3684: Mr. POE of Texas.
 H.R. 3713: Mr. QUIGLEY.
 H.R. 3742: Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. GALLEG0, Mr. WHITFIELD, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
 H.R. 3834: Mr. HONDA and Mr. PAYNE.
 H.R. 3841: Ms. SPEIER.
 H.R. 3870: Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 3880: Mr. GUTHRIE and Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.
 H.R. 3988: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
 H.R. 4019: Ms. TSONGAS and Mr. MCGOVERN.
 H.R. 4057: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.
 H.R. 4073: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. BENISHEK, and Mr. FORTENBERRY.
 H.R. 4076: Ms. KUSTER.
 H.R. 4087: Mr. YOHO.
 H.R. 4160: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 4184: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
 H.R. 4229: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.
 H.R. 4230: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
 H.R. 4262: Mr. RIBBLE and Mr. FARENTHOLD.
 H.R. 4336: Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 4352: Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. COLE, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Mr. GOODLATTE.
 H.R. 4385: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
 H.R. 4415: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. TAKANO.
 H.R. 4430: Mr. DENT, Mr. KILMER, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.
 H.R. 4433: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
 H.R. 4471: Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 4483: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina and Mr. ZINKE.
 H.R. 4486: Mr. GUINTA.
 H.R. 4490: Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 4534: Mrs. BLACKBURN.
 H.R. 4540: Mr. ROUZER.
 H.R. 4549: Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. HUELSKAMP.
 H.R. 4554: Mr. RUSH.
 H.R. 4562: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
 H.R. 4570: Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 4585: Miss RICE of New York.
 H.R. 4592: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PAYNE, and Mr. KEATING.
 H.R. 4595: Mr. VISCLOSKEY.
 H.R. 4599: Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
 H.R. 4612: Mr. BRAT, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. CRAMER.
 H.R. 4619: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 4622: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama.
 H.R. 4633: Mr. LAMBORN and Mr. WEBER of Texas.

H.R. 4639: Mr. CUMMINGS.
 H.R. 4652: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. TAKANO.
 H.J. Res. 74: Mr. MCCAUL.
 H. Con. Res. 51: Mr. PERRY.
 H. Con. Res. 75: Mr. BYRNE, Mr. KIND, Mr. LOUDERMILK, and Mr. SHUSTER.
 H. Con. Res. 89: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. YODER, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. BOUSTANY.
 H. Res. 32: Ms. DUCKWORTH and Ms. SINEMA.
 H. Res. 120: Ms. LEE, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
 H. Res. 207: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. CUELLAR.
 H. Res. 227: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
 H. Res. 551: Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. BABIN, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
 H. Res. 561: Mr. WELCH.
 H. Res. 608: Mr. BECERRA.
 H. Res. 613: Mr. FORBES and Mrs. LOVE.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. BUCSHON

The Manager's amendment to be offered to H.R. 3716, Ensuring Terminated Providers are Removed from Medicaid and CHIP Act, by Representative LARRY BUCSHON of Indiana, or a designee, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

46. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Board of County Commissioners of Miami-Dade County, Florida, relative to Resolution No. R-70-16, urging the U.S. Congress and U.S. Department of Agriculture, as well as the Florida Legislature and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, to provide financial relief to farmers impacted by historic rainfalls in South Florida during December 2015; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY AND CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, March 4, 2016, marks the 155th anniversary of the Government Publishing Office (GPO), the legislative-branch agency that Congress depends upon every day to produce the documents we need to discharge our constitutional responsibilities. Opening its doors for business as the Government Printing Office the same day that Abraham Lincoln was first inaugurated as President, the GPO since that time has worked around the clock in support of Congress, Federal agencies, and the right of the American people for access to information by and about our Government.

Where once GPO produced this Government information solely through the printing process, in the past generation GPO has transformed itself into a digital publisher, reducing dramatically the cost of producing Government information while exponentially expanding its reach to the public. More than 8,000 staff labored at GPO when it provided print only, while today there are about 1,700. Yet because of technology changes embraced by GPO the productivity of the 1,700 vastly exceeds their predecessors'. That productivity has yielded huge savings for the taxpayers and vastly modernized the way we work on behalf of the citizens we represent.

The technological changes the GPO has undergone have not gone unnoticed. In 2014, legislation was introduced in the Senate to recognize that the GPO is, by virtue of its digital progress, not just for printing anymore, and Congress and the President agreed that the time had come to change the GPO's name. Today, the GPO is the Government Publishing Office, a lean, technologically proficient, and thoroughly modern agency under the leadership of Director Davita Vance-Cooks, a talented manager who understands how to lead and sustain the benefits of change.

For the third year in a row Director Vance-Cooks has sent Congress a flat budget request. With her at the helm the GPO's employees have rated it one of the best places to work—a big change from how they felt ten years ago—and in their work they now turn out one success after another. Last year they installed high-efficiency equipment that has yielded a significant price reduction in the cost of producing our hearings. Last month, they unveiled a new, easy-to-use website that is drawing universal praise, including from you, Mr. Speaker.

Moreover, together with the Library of Congress, GPO employees last week launched public access to bulk-data files of bill-status in-

formation, a move that is further expanding openness and transparency to the legislative process. For the future they are poised to support the State Department's introduction of the next generation e-Passport and in 2017 they will move to a new composition system to speed and further reduce the cost of producing documents for Congress and Federal agencies.

Mr. Speaker, in remarks five years ago observing the GPO's sesquicentennial, I noted that Benjamin Franklin—America's patron saint of printing and Philadelphia's greatest citizen—would be surprised and pleased by what the GPO is and does. I can confidently say that he would feel the same today. On behalf of all of us in this House, congratulations and best wishes to GPO Director Davita Vance-Cooks and the men and women of the Government Publishing Office. Many thanks for all their good work.

CELEBRATING THE INDIANA BOROUGH BICENTENNIAL

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Indiana Borough in Pennsylvania's 9th Congressional District for reaching a huge milestone: its Bicentennial.

Officially incorporated on March 11, 1816, countless citizens of the Indiana Borough have contributed to and witnessed the impressive development of a uniquely welcoming and enterprising community over the past 200 years. As a proud American city, Indiana can claim as one of its many notable contributions to our country to have had citizens participate in the Civil War, World Wars I and II, the Korean conflict, the Vietnam War, and our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. What's more, the borough has helped develop citizens who have contributed meaningfully to just about every aspect of our society, including: business, education, medicine, the arts, and politics. As many of my constituents know, Indiana Borough is also the hometown of famous Hollywood actor Jimmy Stewart. Additionally, it is home to the Indiana University of Pennsylvania, which attracts thousands of bright students to the area each year.

As the product of a region that has experienced the benefits of a strong coal industry, I am also proud to highlight Indiana Borough's contributions to the rich heritage associated with coal mining. There can be no doubt that over the past 200 years, the Indiana Borough has contributed an invaluable spirit as well as list of accomplishments and successful residents to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and I am certainly proud to represent this borough and its citizens.

As such, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate the Indiana Borough and its remarkable citizens on this Bicentennial milestone, and wish them an even brighter future.

RECOGNITION OF GUY PRESTON RICHARDSON

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the life of Guy Preston Richardson Sr. of Danville, Kentucky, who passed away on Friday, December 11, 2015.

Guy was a World War II veteran, serving in the U.S. Army from 1944–1946. He earned his paratrooper wings, and served in the 11th Airborne that fought in the Battle of Mount Macolod and liberated the Philippines. Guy was awarded the Bronze Star and was part of the honor guard to witness the return of General Douglas MacArthur.

After serving with the occupation forces in Japan for a year, he returned to Danville, Kentucky, in 1946 to attend Centre College on the G.I. Bill. It was there that he met the love of his life, Sue Swan. Following graduation, Guy went into his family's grocery business, which he successfully managed for more than 50 years.

Mr. Richardson was an active member of the First Presbyterian Church of Danville for more than 60 years, serving as a Stephen Minister, Sunday school superintendent, deacon, elder, and trustee. He was a former president of the Rotary Club of Danville when, as a survivor of polio, he led the effort to raise local money to eradicate polio. He was also a former president of the Boyle County Chamber of Commerce, and served on the boards of the Boyle County Library, Ephraim McDowell Hospital and Central Kentucky Federal Savings Bank.

A lifelong, passionate student of politics and policy, Guy was the model of an engaged citizen. He managed numerous campaigns for State Representative Joe Clarke over the course of 20 years. He was a leader in the local civil rights movement to integrate the Danville schools, and was part of Dr. Martin Luther King's 1964 march in Frankfort, KY. He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Sue, their four children, and many grandchildren.

True to his abiding faith, Guy Richardson sought justice and was dedicated to his community in Boyle County and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

HONORING MRS. LORI PAULSON
OF LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO

HON. STEVAN PEARCE

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor an outstanding citizen in the great State of New Mexico, Mrs. Lori Paulson. Lori, despite being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2013, has dedicated the last two years to the betterment of her community, and beloved New Mexico State University. She is undoubtedly an inspiration and role model to all she meets. In the last two years, Lori has become more than a friend or mentor to the NMSU football team, she has become family.

During both the 2014 and 2015 football season, Lori served as the Aggies' honorary captain—attending practices and events with the team, even participating in the opening coin tosses during every home game.

Throughout her time with the team, Lori has helped players through injury and personal tragedy. Recently, Lori took another step to help the school and team she loves—she gifted \$100,000 to the football program in the creation of the Lori Paulson Football Excellence Fund. When asked about the donation, Lori simply stated—“It's just me confirming what I have always said, which is that I believe in them.”

Lori is an exemplary Aggie. We can all learn from her selfless dedication and courage. As a fellow Aggie and New Mexican, it is an honor to rise and recognize Lori's commitment to her community and alma mater.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, during the votes today, March 1, 2016, I was inescapably detained and away handling important matters related to my district and the State of Alabama.

If I had been present, I would have voted:
Yes on H.R. 136.

Yes on H.R. 3735.

HONORING THE WOMEN WHO
SERVED DURING WORLD WAR II
FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I along with Representative DINGELL would like to recognize an incredible group of women today. On May 29, 1943, in the midst of war, a new image appeared on the cover of the

Saturday Evening Post. Created by Norman Rockwell, it was an image of a woman who was strong and brave. The image acted as an introduction to heroes the American people had already come to know. These heroes, known as Rosie the Riveters, have been solidified in our national memory as champions. Initially, there was uncertainty as to whether or not women should be allowed to work in industries and fill positions that were previously only occupied by men. However, as the war moved on, women began to fill positions in the workplace and keep American industry, and the war effort, afloat. Slogans such as “The More Women at Work the Sooner We Win” were sprawled across newspapers and magazines and appealed to women's patriotism and willingness to serve.

As a part of Women's History Month, on March 22nd, we will welcome a group of “Original Rosies” to the United States Capitol to celebrate their tremendous contributions to our nation.

To these women we say: through your service during the Second World War, you played an invaluable role in the war effort and victory as a part of the Greatest American Generation. Your rigorous work and passionate love of our great country are arguably what sustained the American people, at home and abroad, during a volatile time of war and uncertainty. You made great personal sacrifices and served with such infectious zeal that you were able to reinvigorate the war effort and inspire, encourage, and support your communities. Since your time serving during the War, the number of working women in the United States has never fallen to pre-war levels; this is one of countless examples of your legacy. Your generation paved a path for the generations of women to follow.

We are grateful for the work you have done. We honor you and recognize your work as a symbol of American strength and ingenuity. Rosie's story inspires us. You inspire us, and we will continue to tell your stories to our children and grandchildren to ensure the American spirit, which you embody, never leaves our hearts. Your spirit is a reminder to the American people that we, too, can do something more for our country.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 87, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted yes.

HONORING IRVING LADIMER

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a man commonly referred to as the

“Mayor of Riverdale,” Mr. Irving Ladimer, a staple of the northwest Bronx community and a dear friend. Irving turned 100 years old on February 16, 2016, and I am so grateful to be able to help celebrate his reaching that remarkable milestone by honoring him in the hallowed halls of Congress.

Irving has contributed a great deal to the Riverdale neighborhood, both professionally and through his work in various community groups. As an attorney specializing in health care issues, Irving's compassion for his fellow man was always evident. Incredibly, Irving maintains his distinguished law career to this day, and still travels into his law firm's office in Manhattan every week to work. Irving's legal expertise has also been put to work as a law professor at institutions such as Yale, Columbia, and New York University, where he taught on a wide array of topics from patient safety, rights for the elderly, ethics, and nutrition.

Irving has also dedicated a great deal of time to the community. As a trustee at his synagogue, he has volunteered to help the aging and still offers his legal expertise to those in need. Irving also generously gives his time to the Catholic Health Services Center and has teamed up with local officials to reach out to schools and community centers to offer civics lessons about the constitution and government. It has always been important to Irving for his fellow community members to be more civic-minded, and as a member of the Ben Franklin Reform Democratic Club he has made huge strides in advocating for that type of civic engagement.

Without question, Irving has been an influential member of the community. He is the most spry 100 year old I've ever met, and I wish him nothing but the best and thank him for all he's done for the Bronx.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, due to an unforeseen conflict, I unavoidably missed the following votes on February 24, 2016 and February 29, 2016.

Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

1. On roll call No. 85, I would have voted “nay” (Feb 24) (On Ordering the Previous Question for Providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3624) to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder).

2. On roll call No. 86, I would have voted “nay” (Feb 24) (On Agreeing to the Resolution for Providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3624) to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder).

3. On roll call No. 102, I would have voted “yea” (Feb 29) (On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 4238, “To amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities”).

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$19,080,123,823,020.74. We've added \$8,453,246,774,207.66 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

WELCOME ABIGAIL WESSON
SYDNOR AND ANNA LOUISE
SYDNOR

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate Chad Sydnor, Military Legislative Assistant for Senator RICHARD BURR, and his wife, Alli Sydnor, on the birth of their twin girls. Abigail Wesson Sydnor and Anna Louise Sydnor were born at 8:10 a.m. on Friday, February 19, 2016, at Inova Fairfax Hospital in Falls Church, Virginia. Abigail weighed six pounds and measured 19 inches long and Anna weighed five pounds and three ounces and measured 18 and ½ inches long. They are the first children for the happy couple and I have no doubt their talented parents will be dedicated to their well-being and bright future.

I would also like to congratulate Abigail and Anna's grandparents, Robert and Christal Blakely of Great Falls, Virginia, and Charles and Cindy Sydnor of Snow Camp, North Carolina. Congratulations to both the Blakely and Sydnor families as they welcome their newest additions of pure pride and joys.

A BILL FOR THE RELIEF OF MYONG MOK BAE AND KEI ZA RYU BAE

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce a bill to provide relief for Mr. Myong Mok Bae and Mrs. Kei Za Ryu Bae. Mr. and Mrs. Bae are eighteen-year residents of Guam, who currently face removal by the Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

The Baes came to the United States in June 1997 as immigrant entrepreneurs. Although unforeseen natural disasters and economic hardships hampered the success of their in-

vestment, the Baes remained active members of the Guam community. They continue to serve as goodstanding members of the community who have no criminal history and pose no risk to public safety or national security.

Removal of the Baes would cause them to suffer extreme hardship. The Baes arrived in Guam from Korea, a country which they have now not seen in 15 years. They are an elderly couple with no family or community in Korea, and with no means of gainful employment at this stage in their lives.

This bill would provide the Baes relief from this extreme hardship by establishing their eligibility, under the Immigration and Naturalization Act, for either an immigrant visa, or an adjustment of status to that of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence, or an adjustment of status to that of a lawful permanent resident. The bill provides a timeline of two years to allow the Baes to file, and pay the applicable fees, for the appropriate status. Finally, the bill reduces by two, the total number of immigrant visas that are made available to those whose country of origin is Korea.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance this legislation to relieve the Baes from the extreme hardship that would result from their removal, and to allow them to remain in the United States—the place they have lived for nearly two decades and the place they call their home.

HONORING WESTCHESTER JEWISH COUNCIL 40TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, organizations which strive to instill and promote core values and traditions play an indispensable role in any community. The Westchester Jewish Council continues to play prominent roles in assisting the Jewish community of Westchester, through social action, education, youth, dialogue with elected officials, and instilling Jewish values to promote interfaith dialogue within the Westchester community. Their value to our local communities is of the utmost importance and of great value to us all.

Since 1975, the Westchester Jewish Council has served as a prominent organization in the Westchester Jewish community and plays a key role in fostering relationships with organizations, law enforcement, and community leaders, both inside the Jewish community and the community at large. Additionally, their work involves interfaith initiatives and events aimed at communicating and coordinating services and programs for the Jewish community. Furthermore, the Westchester Jewish Council provides meaningful opportunities to engage in volunteer work throughout the community.

The Westchester Jewish Council also sponsors various educational roundtables which foster Israel advocacy and Jewish education, initiatives that are paramount to the organiza-

tion's mission. The Westchester Jewish Council works together with 150 other organizations to help facilitate Westchester Jewish traditions and culture by supporting and hosts various community-wide events aimed at celebrating Jewish history and heritage. The wide variety of services they offer are meaningful, indispensable, and cultivate the important traditions of the community.

On February 6th, 2016 the Westchester Jewish Council will be celebrating their 40th Anniversary Gala. I want to congratulate the entire organization on the occasion, and thank them for the invaluable work they have done for the entire Westchester community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. J. FRENCH HILL

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 102, H.R. 4238, to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities, had I been present, I would have voted yes.

HONORING THE 90TH BIRTHDAY OF MRS. ROSE BAENKE

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Rose Baenke was born on February 24, 1926, in Chicago, Illinois. At an early age, she developed a passion for politics. When she turned 18, she voted in her first election and has taken pride in the honor and privilege of voting ever since.

In 1992, Mrs. Baenke and her husband moved to the community of Nesbit, Mississippi. She became involved in the local political scene and was a charter member of the DeSoto County Republican Women, a group in which she remains an active member. At age 90, she participates in the club's events and dedicates her time and effort to the group's mission.

Mrs. Baenke has been politically involved at the state level as well. She says that her crowning achievement was assisting Governor Phil Bryant's successful campaign to be Mississippi's 64th Governor. She has served in leadership positions with the DeSoto County Republican Women, which has enabled her to become an effective voice in the Republican Party. As an active citizen, she also served two terms on the Mississippi River Commission.

Currently, Mrs. Baenke resides at Wesley Meadows Retirement Community in Hernando, Mississippi, where she works tirelessly to urge other residents to remain engaged and informed on political issues. Specifically, she

asks other residents to exercise their right, which was earned at a very high price, to vote.

I would like to wish Mrs. Baenke a Happy 90th Birthday and extend my deepest appreciation for her passion and dedication to her country and state.

**CAPTAIN WIELENGA ASSUMES
COMMAND OF HESPERIA SHERIFF'S STATION**

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Captain Gregg Wielenga, who was recently promoted to the position of Captain for the Hesperia, California Sheriff's station. Captain Wielenga is a twenty-five year veteran of law enforcement and has served with the department since 1990.

Over the course of his distinguished career, Captain Wielenga has served the citizens of San Bernardino County in a variety of ways. His assignments have included Patrol Deputy in Needles, Detective in the Victor Valley, and Sergeant at the county's jail facilities. Prior to Captain Wielenga's recent promotion he served as the Lieutenant at the Hesperia station.

I would like to congratulate Captain Wielenga on his new position. He exemplifies the professionalism of the men and women of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. I am honored to have him serving the people of Hesperia and wish him the best of luck.

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION WEEK

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, March 6th marks the beginning of Women in Construction Week. The National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) takes this week to highlight women in the construction industry. Chapter 11 of NAWIC is located in San Antonio, which I represent. This week allows thousands of NAWIC members across the country to raise awareness of the opportunities available to women in the construction industry and emphasize the growing role of women in the industry.

In sincere appreciation, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this week as Women in Construction Week.

HONORING DAVID FORD

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a good friend and trusted employee, David Ford, who today is being honored by the Black Dems of Westchester for 50 years of incredible service to the community.

David has been a resident of Mt. Vernon for 53 years and an active member in the community his entire adult life. He has pursued his two great passions—community service and politics—with great vigor and has accomplished a great deal in both fields over a long and impressive career.

First elected Chairman of the Mt. Vernon Democratic Party in 1969, David inherited a club in a rock bed of Republican politics. For the next 27 years he served as Chairman and oversaw a complete political switch in the area. When he left the position in 1996, every elected official in Mt. Vernon was a Democrat, whereas none were in 1969.

David has also made his mark in the community through engagement with various civic organizations and as Commissioner of the Mt. Vernon Water Department, a role he served in for 33 years until his retirement in 2009. He has been President of the Mt. Vernon Lions Club, the Mt. Vernon YMCA, and the Citizens Veterans Association. As Board Chairman of the Mt. Vernon Neighborhood Health Center for 30 years, David was instrumental in turning a small program with 19 employees into one of the largest Health Care Centers in the region, employing over 400 people serving 40,000 patients annually. It is no wonder then why David has received countless honors in the community, including the Torch Liberty Award from the Anti-Defamation League and the "Citizen of the Year" Award from the YMCA.

But for all of his accomplishments in the community, I will always value David's incredible hard work as one of my most trusted and talented special assistants, a role he still serves in to this day. I congratulate David on this well-deserved and wonderful recognition from the Black Dems of Westchester, and thank him personally for all he has done to better the Mt. Vernon community. I am proud of David for all of his hard work, but I am even more proud to call him a friend.

**HONORING STEVEN AND KATHERINE
DIEBERT AS THEY CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF MARRIAGE**

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Steven and Katherine Diebert on the celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary.

Steven and Katherine Diebert were married on February 26, 1966 in Fresno, California.

They met as young students at Roosevelt High School by the drinking fountain; however, their paths unknowingly had crossed as children in 1953 when Steven was one of Hopalong Cassidy's cowboy sidekicks at a Fresno department store called Coopers. Katherine's mother brought her to meet Hopalong Cassidy on that day, and little did she know that the boy by Hoppy's side would one day be her husband and that they would raise two beautiful daughters together.

In December of 1965, Steven proposed to Katherine and they were joined in marriage on February 26, 1966 at the First Baptist Church in Fresno. Despite many opportunities to leave the Central Valley over the last 50 years, they chose to remain in Fresno and raised their family here. The highlight of their marriage have been their two daughters, Stephanie (along with her husband, Kenneth) and Melissa (along with her husband, Layne), who have blessed them with five grandchildren, Leo Stephen, Ari Benjamin, Kaitlin Jade, Ella Rose, and Harrison Steven.

Steven Diebert was born on July 10, 1943 in Fresno, California to parents of Volga German descent, who were also born and raised in the San Joaquin Valley. Steven was a highly regarded football player at Roosevelt High School, where he proudly graduated from in 1961. Following high school, Steven attended Fresno State University where he graduated with a degree in Political Economy in 1966. Upon receiving his bachelor's degree, Steven went on to work for the Xerox Corporation where he worked for two years. In 1968, he returned to Fresno State to continue his education and received a graduate degree to become a Certified Public Accountant. Following graduate school, he worked for the national accounting firm Touche Ross and in 1975, he was appointed by then California Controller, Ken Cory, to serve as a California Probate Referee. Steven is regarded as one of the finest probate referees in California and has carefully developed a reputation as a straight shooter and as a man of great integrity.

Katherine Diebert was born on November 6, 1944 in Fresno, California. Her parents were of Armenian, English and Irish descent and lived the majority of their lives in Fresno. Katherine graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1962 and went on to attend Fresno City College. In 1964, she began working in the medical administration and billing department at Fresno Medical Group. Katherine continued to work at Fresno Medical Group until she and Steven were blessed with their first daughter, Stephanie in 1971. Upon the birth of their second daughter, Melissa in 1975, Katherine decided to take some time off of work to raise her children. In 1977 Katherine returned to work for Internal Medicine and Associates where she worked until her retirement in 2008. While, building a beautiful family and successful career, Katherine has maintained a beautiful home and has continued to keep a meticulous and stunning garden.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Steven and Katherine Diebert on their fifty years of marriage and may they be blessed with many more. They serve as a prime example to us all of what it means to be committed to strong family values.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I want to state that yesterday, February 29, 2016, I was detained in my district and missed the one roll call vote of the day. Had I been present I would have voted:

AYE—Roll Call No. 102—H.R. 4238—to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 102 I was inadvertently detained and missed the vote on H.R. 4238.

Had I been present, I would have voted Yea.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, March 2, 2016

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 2, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JODY B. HICE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

HONORING COACH MIKE BAEB

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize New Trier High School wrestling coach Mike Baeb, who is leaving New Trier after helping lead the wrestling program for over 30 years.

When he arrived at New Trier, he truly injected new life into the program, and I should know because I was a senior on the wrestling team when he came in as a coach. As a senior and the captain of the team, I often had to wrestle Coach Baeb; and I have to tell you, wrestling Coach Baeb was like wrestling a bear.

Unfortunately, I only had 1 year of coaching from Mike, and I certainly could have benefited from many more. During his time as coach, Mike won 8 Central Suburban League Conference championships, 13 IHSA Regional championships, and 7 State place winners.

Coach Baeb has also been a leader, a friend, and a mentor to many students over the past 30 years, all of whom are better off having been under his leadership, and that includes myself.

I offer my sincere thanks to Coach Baeb for his friendship and for his leadership. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

DIVERSITY ON NETWORK TELEVISION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, when we got our first color TV, it was a big deal in my family. We were working class, Puerto Rican, and not used to such luxury; so when we got a color TV, we had really arrived in America.

Every Sunday night, my sister and I would watch “The Wonderful World of Disney” that always started with the same announcement: “The following program is brought to you in living color on NBC.” Then you would hear the NBC chimes.

Well, that was a long time ago. Now you turn on NBC, and the furthest thing from your mind is color. What is going on at NBC? Last week Wake Forest University professor and MSNBC television host Melissa Harris-Perry was abruptly pulled from the airwaves without even a chance to say good-bye.

NBC said they wanted a show that was more about politics, but I have to say, when I watched her show, Melissa Harris-Perry was talking about politics in a unique way, like few others on the airwaves. She brought diverse voices to the table to talk directly and unapologetically about the politics of race in America, a major theme among candidates and a critical conversation to include on the airwaves.

I am sad to see her go, just like Alex Wagner before her, but I am even sadder because I don't think these are isolated cases.

Anchorman Jose Diaz-Balart is another voice that seems to be disappearing from English language airwaves. You remember Jose. He is the Telemundo anchorman NBC would bring out to ask a question—only one question—about immigration during the Republican Presidential debates in 2012.

You may have met his brother Lincoln. He used to sit over there, and his other brother MARIO still does. Jose had a 2-hour show on MSNBC and did a very good job, but Jose is a lot harder to find these days. They cut him back, and now it seems that they are cutting him out.

For example, MSNBC announced that they were sending a team of reporters

to Florida to report on the primary next Tuesday, but not Jose, one of the most respected and recognized journalists in America, who happens to be from Miami and a Florida political dynasty. Apparently he is not the right guy to report on politics in Florida.

Let's not forget the great NBC racism flip-flop last year when NBC severed its ties to Donald Trump because of his racist remarks about Latinos, only to have him host their flagship comedy show “Saturday Night Live” a few months later.

That was right about the same time last fall when NBC's executives met with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and NBC News President Deborah Turness told us, “We love the Hispanic community,” as she updated us on strides they were making on diversity in hiring. She made it very clear that she had our community's interests at heart when she said, “Yo hablo Español” in her beautiful British accent.

Most of the news coverage of this meeting was about when she used the term “illegals” to describe immigrants, which, in case you need a reminder, is not a good idea when you are meeting with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

Well, forgive me for not noticing just how much progress NBC was making on diversity when some of the most visible people of color at NBC, like Alex Wagner, Melissa Harris-Perry, and Jose Diaz-Balart, are disappearing.

But let's be clear: this is not about quotas, window dressing, or checking the diversity box. Journalists of color bring a different texture and a different perspective on what issues matter and what should be discussed and debated on television.

The reality is that our Nation has become more diverse, and our television and our news media and our political institutions, including the Democratic and Republican Parties, have not kept up.

When NBC has a bad year when it comes to race, or when the Oscars have a couple of bad years when it comes to people of color, these are moments to talk about and confront the emotions and ideas we all have—we all have—about race and ethnicity.

It is a good time to think about what the phrase “e pluribus unum” really means in America today. This is a discussion we should all be having all of the time here in this body, on news programs, and in entertainment. It is a discussion I hope every family is having at their dinner table.

TAMMY BATEMAN'S STORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, every West Virginian knows about the consequences of the war on coal. We see it everywhere we go: mines are closing; school districts are laying off employees; county commissions are forced to lay off deputy sheriffs; retailers are going out of business; mom-and-pop stores are struggling, barely able to hang on.

A pink slip doesn't mean just a loss of a job. It means a loss of a way of life; it means hard choices; and for some it means having to leave West Virginia entirely to find work elsewhere. The war on coal is killing West Virginia jobs.

Tammy Bateman and her family had to make a difficult decision. It changed the life of every member of her family, in particular that of her daughter. Tammy is a West Virginia coal voice. This is her family.

Here is what Tammy wrote to me:

"My husband worked for Cecil Walker Machinery for over 20 years at the Logan branch in West Virginia. We have lived here for all of our lives.

"Due to the declining coal industry, we had to move to another State and move our daughter from the school that she loves.

"We have a lot of friends and family that have either had to pack up and move away also and some that have stayed and have been laid off and are suffering.

"This is all due to Obama's war on coal. You see, when coal is affected, so are small businesses, schools, and much more, especially people's livelihoods."

Mr. Speaker, the people of my district want to work. They want a paycheck to provide for their families. They want a better future for their children.

Thanks to the war on coal, thanks to the EPA's regulations putting coal mines out of business, West Virginians are suffering. This administration needs to put West Virginians back to work, not put West Virginians out of work.

SPECIAL IMMIGRANT VISA PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today a bipartisan group of several dozen Members from both sides of the aisle led by ADAM KINZINGER and me were going to be sending a letter to Secretary Kerry, and I am pleased to say we don't have to send it.

The origin of the request dealt with our military operations in the Middle

East, the brave Iraqi and Afghan men and women who provided sensitive and trusted services to United States military personnel. For over a decade, I have been working to try and protect them.

These Iraqis and Afghans who worked with Americans, whether as drivers or interpreters, were shoulder to shoulder with our troops, often in dangerous circumstances. In some instances, we have heard how their services literally made the difference as to whether our soldiers lived or died.

Now, thousands of our allies who helped us, face kidnapping, torture, and murder as a direct result of their assistance provided to the United States because members of the Taliban and the self-proclaimed Islamic State and other hostile elements on the ground see these individuals' service as an act of betrayal—and they have long memories.

To reward their faithful service and to fulfill our moral obligation, I have worked with colleagues on both sides of the aisle and with Senators, starting with Senator MCCAIN and the late Senator Kennedy in 2007, to create a special immigrant visa program. Known as the SIV program, enables the safe relocation of these Afghans and Iraqis to the United States.

Since 2007, our bipartisan team in Congress, including a number of Members who have recently joined us who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and know these circumstances firsthand, has been working to reform and revise the program, sometimes fighting just to keep it alive.

In November of last year, the National Defense Authorization Act extended and expanded the Afghan SIV program to ensure the continued protection of these souls. However, the final version of the bill also lengthened the period of service from 1 to 2 years required for individuals "submitting a petition after September 30, 2015."

The State Department's initial announcement on the interpretation of the law would have made more than 3,000 of our Afghan allies who had already begun the cumbersome application process start over to demonstrate the 2 years of qualifying employment. That is why Representative KINZINGER and I prepared this bipartisan letter to call on the State Department to revisit the interpretation.

Thankfully, after review and consideration of the concerns from Members of Congress, the State Department agreed to apply the 2-year requirement only to new applicants. This is welcome news.

Every hour that is delayed to relocate these vital partners to safety, puts their lives at risk and lives of their families. I am glad we have put this behind us perhaps, but we cannot keep operating in this inefficient manner while our allies and their families face consistent threats.

□ 1015

They deserve better. And we can do better.

It is shameful that we cannot better serve those who have put their lives on the line to help us. It seems that there is always another roadblock that occurs.

This should be a bipartisan issue that Members of Congress and the administration can work together on to save lives. It is not just saving the lives of the people who helped us.

It ensures the safety of our troops and other American personnel currently serving in harm's way. It will ensure the success of our future missions. No one in their right mind will cooperate with American forces under dire circumstances if we abandon them after their vital assistance.

I applaud the State Department's reinterpretation of this work requirement and look forward to working with my colleagues on the SIV program improvements this year. I hope we can do a better job to meet our responsibility to these souls who risked so much to help Americans.

REFORMING OUR MENTAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of reforming our Nation's broken mental health care system.

Too often we are reminded that the country's mental health care system is not working nearly as well as should be the case. Many Americans hide behind the curtain of shame and insecurity while many others lack access, assistance, or even information on how they may receive treatment.

It is a vicious cycle, where the vulnerable who need the most care are instead left out of society, unemployable, and, in some cases, a danger to themselves and others.

Recent data suggests that fewer than one-third of Americans with diagnosable mental illness actually get treatment. Experts also estimate that more than half of those who suffer from severe mental disorders do not receive treatment in any given year.

At least 25 percent of returning troops from Iraq and Afghanistan will experience some type of mental health condition. We owe our servicemen and -women and veterans this effort to get them the care they need and deserve.

I am proud to partner with Democratic Congresswoman DORIS MATSUI of California, with whom I serve on the Energy and Commerce Committee, in recently introducing a bill to significantly expand access and strengthen community mental health and behavioral health services across the country.

The Expand Excellence in Mental Health Care Act aims to expand mental health care planning grants in two dozen States, including New Jersey, through an initiative based on our 2014 Excellence in Mental Health Act that was signed into law by President Obama in 2014.

This measure is directly tackling one of the most significant mental health care challenges: access. The Expand Excellence in Mental Health Act will enable more States to experiment with the tools and practices to fix this broken system.

By expanding the law to include more States, we encourage greater collaboration and testing to find out what solutions work, how best to care for those who need treatment, and what we can do to keep the people of the United States safe.

The Excellence in Mental Health Care Act is one of the most significant works Congress has already passed into law on mental health care. We should expand it and keep the momentum going.

I am also proud to be working with Republican Congressman TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania on this issue. Dr. MURPHY, who has a Ph.D. in psychology, has been using his expertise to lead a serious discussion in the House Energy and Commerce Committee on this critical issue.

His Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, which I am proud to cosponsor, takes a clinical approach to supporting families and individuals undergoing sudden or long-term mental health crises. The bill views those who need care through the mental health lens, not just through the criminal justice system.

Our work on these bills is part of a larger conversation on improving mental health care in this country. These bills will help struggling families who seek the best care for their loved ones. It will help those who fear stigma to get the care they need and will give our servicemen and -women and veterans the care they deserve.

I urge support for these measures, and I welcome all good ideas to the table for reforming our mental health care system.

CELEBRATING GEORGE ZANDER'S LEGACY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and celebrate the life of a magnificent human being, remarkable leader, and close personal friend, Mr. George Zander of Palm Springs, California.

Many in our community knew George as a strident advocate for equality. George was a gentle man with a burning passion to make our Nation

a more perfect Union, particularly for our LGBT brothers and sisters.

In my years working in the Coachella Valley, I, like so many others in our community, knew George as a colleague, adviser, and, above all, a dear friend.

George left this world on December 10, 2015. Nonetheless, his vision, passion, and vigorous strength to fight for a more just Coachella Valley, a more just Nation, and, ultimately, a more just world, are what remain.

George's legacy is one of social justice. For over three decades, he was actively engaged in the communities that make up the desert of the Coachella Valley. He was a leader among us and steadfastly guided our community toward a more inclusive and welcoming place.

So today I would like to take a moment to memorialize the life of George Zander, whose legacy will live on for future generations, not just in the Coachella Valley, but in the history of our Nation.

As a young man, George heeded President Kennedy's call to service and joined the Peace Corps, where it became clear that he was a natural leader.

His leadership and advocacy for the LGBT community spanned decades and began in a time where it was far less politically or socially acceptable to do so, but that didn't stop him.

In Seattle, Washington, George was a member of the first openly gay and lesbian association, called the Dorian Group. This vanguard organization advocated for the advancement of the rights of LGBT individuals at a difficult time in our Nation's history.

It took great courage, but George was never one to shy away from taking a stand. George had a passion for public service and a sincere faith that our representative government plays a role in improving lives.

He worked alongside his good friend, Seattle's mayor Ed Murray, was chair of the King County Democratic Party, and worked for the 1996 Clinton-Gore campaign. Later, moving to San Francisco, he worked side by side with Cleve Jones, another prominent LGBT rights activist.

From Washington to San Francisco, to our beautiful desert in the Coachella Valley, George made an enormous impact. After moving to the Valley, he worked in the office of the great Senator BOXER.

He was a member of the Palm Springs Police Advisory Board, the Palm Springs Police Department LGBT Outreach Committee, and vice chair of the Warm Sands Neighborhood Organization.

George was a contributor for the LGBT publication, *The Bottom Line*, cofounded the Desert-Stonewall Democrats, and later became the Palm Springs field officer manager for Equality California.

George played a key role in advocating for laws that protect the LGBT community locally and statewide, working tirelessly to defeat proposition 8. He also collaborated with other local LGBT groups, such as the Palm Springs Human Rights Campaign, the LGBT Center, Desert AIDS Project, and Trans Palm Springs.

Mr. Speaker, George was a true leader who was the victim of a hate crime weeks before his death. I condemn these acts. There should be no space for these types of actions toward any human being, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

For more than three decades, George spearheaded efforts advocating for human rights and equality for all in my district and across the Nation.

George was not only an extraordinary leader, activist, friend, and husband, but, overall, a gentle, loving, and caring human being.

In honor of George Zander, let us pay our respects and never forget his legacy. Let us continue fighting for a more just and tolerant world.

THE NEED TO STAND UP AGAINST ASSAD AND RUSSIAN WAR CRIMES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, last week a U.N. panel released a deeply troubling report on the grave and horrific atrocities taking place across Syria. The report was mandated by the U.N. Human Rights Commission to investigate and record all violations of international law since March 2011.

The report outlines in painstaking detail the mass human rights abuses that innocent civilians must endure from both the Russian-backed Syrian offensive and terrorist groups like ISIS.

Hospitals are deliberately targeted—33 in Aleppo alone—resulting in mass civilian casualties. In blatant disregard of core human rights law, starvation has systematically been used as a weapon of war.

Over 450,000 people are currently trapped in besieged towns and villages in Syria, and thousands are at risk of starving to death.

Schools and playgrounds and other public spaces are routinely shelled to inflict the maximum amount of terror on innocent civilians. The report tells of attacks on a girls school in Duma, where 19 civilians were killed. Even though there were no military objectives, government forces attacked the school twice, the second attack taking place during first aid evacuation efforts.

Last month Secretary Kerry helped negotiate a temporary, 2-week ceasefire with Russia that was supposed to end the fighting and allow for the delivery of aid to besieged towns.

Unfortunately, like the deal we struck with Russia on Assad's use of chemical weapons, this cease-fire merely locks in the gains achieved by the Assad regime and gives Russia outsized influence in shaping the future of the Middle East. Regardless, the terms of the agreement were almost immediately violated.

Any hope of a sustained peace was dashed this week with the almost-immediate and predictable breach of the cease-fire agreement.

On Sunday, the Syrian opposition released a letter documenting violations of the cease-fire agreement by the Assad regime, Russia, and Iranian-backed militia, which I will include in the RECORD.

FEBRUARY 28, 2016.

H.E. Mr. BAN KI-MOON,
Secretary-General,
United Nations, New York.

EXCELLENCY SECRETARY-GENERAL: I regret to inform you that hostilities committed by Russian, Iranian, the Syrian regime, and foreign militias and mercenaries allied to them have continued against the Syrian people despite the truce taking effect on the 27th February 2016.

Right from the onset of the truce, a large number of violations have been committed by the regime and its allies in several parts of Syria. The regime has continued to target populated areas using helicopter raids to deploy explosive barrels, resulting in a large number of fatalities and causing significant injuries, most of whom were innocent women and children. There were seven recorded incidents of such breach. Furthermore, there have been twenty-four recorded breaches involving artillery shelling and five incidents recording offensive ground operations. Recorded breaches of the truce were registered in twenty-six different areas held by the moderate opposition.

Moreover, today, Sunday 28th February, Russian fighter jets launched twenty-six air strikes against territory held by opposition groups which have announced and entered into the truce. Disturbingly significant is the fact that cluster bombs as well as thermobaric weapons were deployed, adding to the number of innocent civilian fatalities and horrifying injuries.

In light of repeated breaches by the regime and its allies since the commencement of the truce, the growing number of fatalities, which currently stands at twenty-nine documented deaths, in addition to the dozens who have been injured as indiscriminate targeting of populated areas continues, we wish to clarify the following:

It is most unfortunate that the Russian Ministry of Defense presented an erroneous map riddled with false military information (<http://youtu.be/MaYvdEidSzsSent>) and attributed this map to the United Nations for calculated political and military purposes, as purported areas of political influence and distribution of forces on Syrian territory. The sole purpose of that exercise was to exclude certain areas from the truce and to continue their systematic bombardment and forced displacement. Given the serious consequences of these violations on the Syrian people and on the unity and territorial integrity of Syria, we urge that you take the necessary measures to respond and counter false Russian allegations and put a stop to such practices.

We call on the United Nations and the Friends of Syria Group to be mandated to

specify the territory covered by the truce to prevent hostilities in the designated inclusion zones, such a task must be assumed by an impartial and transparent party. We also note that the absence of clear separation lines will result in the targeting of civilian populated areas by the regime and its allies, and henceforth constitute yet another flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions jeopardizing the truce.

Although the Syrian opposition groups have demonstrated maximum levels of self-restraint and have thus far continued to adhere to their obligations to the truce, it seems likely that the regime and its allies' persistent crimes against the Syrian people will inevitably undermine international efforts for the continuation of the truce.

We have agreed to the temporary truce as a response to sincere international efforts aiming to ease the suffering of the Syrian people and to assist in the implementation of the humanitarian provisions of UNSCR 2254, in particular: articles 12, 13 and 14. Failure to achieve any significant progress in this regard will leave us no option but to examine alternative measures to ensure the protection of the Syrian people and bring an end to the crimes committed against them. It is therefore of critical importance for the Security Council to stand firm and unwavering in its resolve.

The persistent violations of the regime and the forces allied to it will undermine Security Council efforts for a political process, including the most recent, UNSCR 2268. It is abhorrent to pursue a political process through which the suffering of the Syrian people is used as a means to achieve political and military gains; under such circumstances, negotiations will be unfeasible.

Excellency Secretary-General, the gravity of the situation, and the consequent clear and direct threat to peace and security at a regional and international level, require the United Nations to intervene immediately, to stop the crimes committed against the Syrian people and to preserve the unity and integrity of Syria.

Yours respectfully,

DR. RIAD HIJAB,
Coordinator General, The High
Negotiations Committee.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. These violations discussed in this letter are comprised of barrel and cluster bomb attacks and a number of ground incursions against opposition groups who had entered into the truce.

In the first 2 days alone, there were more than 29 documented deaths, mostly of women and children, and dozens of injuries. This is during the alleged cease-fire.

Some believe that this far-off conflict isn't affecting communities across America. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say they are wrong.

I routinely meet with Syrian Americans in Indiana who share stories of the devastation their loved ones are experiencing back in their homeland. Listening to them recount the struggles of their families reminds me that, if we are to adhere to our values as a Nation, we must defend the vulnerable and expand basic human liberty.

Standing idly by as bombs rain down on hospitals or as Assad uses starvation as a method of warfare is an abdication of what we stand for as a Na-

tion, but that is exactly what we have done.

This President's insistence on diminishing American power abroad has empowered Putin to step into the leadership vacuum, has bolstered Assad in Syria, and has prolonged the conflict.

We must not succumb to difficulty. We must take a stand and start meaningfully engaging our allies and strengthen the moderate Syrian forces, like the Kurds on the ground, to fight to replace the Assad regime.

Both my constituents and the Nation's top military advisers know that doing so is the only way to bring any long-term stability to Syria.

□ 1030

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY'S ACCESS TO WATER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about one of the most important issues facing the San Joaquin Valley, and that is the access to water.

California has received well-above-average rainfall during the months of December and January. But for the past several weeks, we have seen dry conditions, once again, come back.

For the last several weeks I have tried to speak on behalf of the need to make changes so that we can urge the Federal agencies to pump water at maximum levels that are allowed under the biological opinions, so that we could bring more water to the San Joaquin Valley and the farms located south of the delta.

It is welcome news that they are pumping at more robust levels, and it is my hope that we will continue to pump at maximum levels when allowable, especially because these El Nino conditions that we have had in December and January are now fading, sadly.

With the possibility of California's rainy and snow seasons coming to an end, and with much less precipitation than we had hoped for, we must take advantage of every drop of precious water that is in the system.

We need a comprehensive plan to fix California's broken water system that provides short-term operational flexibility and, at the same time, increases the State's long-term drought resiliency that will provide real water reliability and actually recovers species that have been listed in the Sacramento, San Joaquin Delta.

It is time to address these issues that are impacting these species in the delta and implement a plan to recover them so that we can stop operating the water system primarily with the blunt tools of the Endangered Species Act that clearly aren't working. They are not working because the species are not recovering.

Studies have indicated that on some rivers feeding into the delta, over 98 percent of the juvenile salmon are eaten by invasive species like the striped bass that aren't even native to California.

Despite this knowledge and the clear protections provided listed species by the Endangered Species Act, the administration has established a goal to double the amount of striped bass in California.

It should not be the policy of the United States to increase the populations of invasive species that prey on native salmon in California. I don't get it. This makes absolutely no sense and needs to be corrected.

We should be implementing a predator control program which, I might add, is supported by the Salmon Fisheries Institute. As a matter of fact, they have got over 31 programs on predator control that they would like to implement. They can't implement one of them.

We should be focusing on trying to make a difference, and that is why I am proud to be a cosponsor of Representative JEFF DENHAM's legislation, the Save Our Salmon Act.

The Save Our Salmon Act, by Congressman DENHAM, would eliminate the policy of doubling striped bass populations in the delta, a policy which has very serious negative impacts to our native salmon species and causes tremendous harm to the farm communities in the San Joaquin Valley.

We have to determine if California is going to operate with a broken system or if Congress, the administration, and the State can come together with Federal and State legislation to provide meaningful solutions to fix our broken water system for the future, for the 21st century.

Will we allow communities to dry up and blow away, as some of my colleagues, I believe, sometimes infer?

Or will we come together and craft a solution that can improve conditions for everyone across the State, while focusing on drought recovery for those who have been most affected in areas that I represent?

I am talking about farm workers. I am talking about farmers. I am talking about farm communities that put food every night on America's dinner table. I will continue to believe that we still can come together if we focus on achievable solutions.

After years of moving more and more water through the delta in an attempt to halt species decline, we haven't actually recovered any of these species. It is high time, I believe, to try something new.

I remain committed to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to craft solutions that increase California's drought resiliency and provide water to the communities who have been most impacted by the recent

drought because, after all, this is about security. It is about job security, it is about economic security, it is about the future security of our valley and the State of California.

We must fix California's broken water system for the short term and the long term. Time is of the essence, and every day of delay only results in losses of these vital water supplies.

SEVENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MILLER-RAFFAELE VFW POST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 70th anniversary of the Miller-Raffaele VFW Post 6221 in Emporium, Cameron County, located in the Pennsylvania Fifth Congressional District.

The post is named after two sets of brothers who answered the call to defend the United States of America in World War II, Jack and Harry Miller, along with Sam and Frank Raffaele.

Jack and Harry were killed within 1 month of each other in 1944. Sadly, Sam and Frank also made the ultimate sacrifice on the same day, yet miles apart from one another, also in 1944.

After the war ended, the community welcomed back the surviving men and women who formed the Miller-Raffaele Post 6221, which was officially opened on March 5, 1946.

Mr. Speaker, we owe so much to the members of our Nation's Armed Forces, and especially to those members of the Greatest Generation who traveled to places such as Europe and Asia to fight tyranny.

I am proud to salute the members of the Emporium VFW on this important anniversary, and I wish them the best of success in the future.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 404TH MANEUVER ENHANCEMENT BRIGADE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAMALFA). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to formally congratulate the 404th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade from Normal, Illinois, for receiving the Reserve Family Readiness Award from the Department of Defense at the Pentagon last Friday.

This award is bestowed on the top unit in each Reserve component for their outstanding programs that support unit missions and family readiness.

The 404th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, under Unit Commander, Captain Jera Muder, has more than 2,000

soldiers in various functional units, from engineering to military police, to support units.

These family readiness support programs allow our soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, and guardsmen to serve throughout the world with peace of mind, knowing that their home front is safe.

This is a prestigious title, and it makes me proud and Illinois proud that these remarkable men and women call central Illinois home.

Today we applaud their families for the sacrifices they make so their soldiers can defend our country abroad, and we congratulate them on this well-deserved award.

To those in our Armed Forces keeping our homes and families safe, thank you. And to the fathers, mothers, wives, husbands, and children behind our troops, you also deserve our gratitude for your ongoing sacrifice and bravery.

KLAMATH RIVER DAM REMOVAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the Natural Resources Committee, I requested and demanded that the Interior Department explain its involvement in creating what appears to be a shell corporation, which it calls a non-Federal entity, which would work to remove dams on the Klamath River in northern California and southern Oregon, this without any authorization from Congress.

Interior officials refused to answer in committee whether they will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act or even explain why stakeholders are required at these meetings to sign non-disclosure agreements before learning how they will be affected by the actions at these secret meetings.

They don't like having them called secret meetings. They have other euphemisms, such as a private conversation, what have you. They are even organizing bylaws for an incoming board at these meetings.

Mr. Speaker, the very idea that Federal and State government employees are involved in a project designed explicitly to avoid open government, open government laws, and public disclosure should give us all pause, especially since tax dollars are being used to pay for the salaries of those folks involved, their travel, the meeting spaces, et cetera. They are not doing this pro bono.

While this is billed as a California-Oregon project, the Interior Secretary's signature is on a pact to create this entity that suggests that the administration is, again, trying to end run Congress to achieve a political goal.

I will continue working to get answers on this Klamath issue on the removal of the dams and the effect it will have on the Klamath Basin water users.

But in the meantime, the administration needs to end its focus on dam removal and work towards a solution that doesn't ignore the water supply issues that affect so much of the West, affect many thousands in northern California, and especially those directly in the line of fire in the Klamath Basin that have been clamoring for so long for a long-term solution to keep the waters flowing to their farms.

At a time of extreme drought in California and the Western States, and even more burdens such as the electricity renewable mandate that is going to affect California to 50 percent of required renewables, the concept of removing hydroelectric dams that also make a little water storage and have some positive effects on river temperature is absurd.

Why is the priority something that is going to hurt the people of the region, hurt their goals?

Instead, we should be pursuing water storage in California and putting this issue aside.

On top of that insult to injury is that it is being done in secret, without congressional approval, without the chance for all the stakeholders that really have an affect in the area to be involved.

This is the wrongheaded way to do things. It is offensive to me, it is offensive to my constituents.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 41 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MOOLENAAR) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Dear Lord of mercy, we give You thanks for giving us another day. Hear our prayers and those of people around the world that there might be an end to hunger.

We use this moment to be reminded of Your presence and to tap the resources needed by the Members of this people's House to do their work as well as it can be done.

As the Nation digests the results of a most significant voting day, may the

Members remain focused on the tasks at hand.

All this day and through the week, may they do their best to find solutions to pressing issues facing our Nation. Please hasten the day when justice and love shall dwell in the hearts of all peoples and rule the affairs of the nations of Earth.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

U.S.-CANADA PRECLEARANCE AGREEMENT

(Ms. STEFANIK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, in my district in northern New York, Canada is more than just a bordering nation. They are our neighbors and our friends.

Canadians and upstate New Yorkers enjoy their summers together fishing along the St. Lawrence River, golfing on Wellesley Island, visiting the Thousand Islands National Park, and exploring Boldt Castle.

Plattsburgh, a city in my district, has even branded itself as Montreal's U.S. suburb, hosting more than 100 U.S. subsidiaries of Canadian companies, with 15 percent of its area workforce working for a Canadian or border-related employer.

That is why I helped lead the efforts and support the Promoting Travel, Commerce, and National Security Act, a necessary step to solidify the preclearance agreement between the U.S. and Canada, which was reached nearly a year ago.

This significant, bipartisan legislation is great news for U.S.-Canadian relations, and I strongly encourage my colleagues to cosponsor this vital piece of legislation to maintain a secure northern border and facilitate travel and commerce between the U.S. and Canada and benefit our upstate New York economy.

BELFAIR SHOOTING

(Mr. KILMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, in the region I represent, tragedy struck the close-knit community of Belfair. A shooting took the lives of a family and a neighbor. All the victims were taken too soon from this world. Right now, in their place, is heartbreak.

Since this happened, we have been thinking of the friends and family impacted by this shooting. Pastors from North Mason have gathered mourners together to offer support and prayers.

I want to make sure we note the courage of local law enforcement and other first responders who came to the scene. The Mason County Sheriff's Office, among others, deserves praise for putting their lives on the line in confronting the person responsible for this violence and responding to an awful situation.

As a dad of two little girls, it pains me that so many communities like ours are faced with tragedies like this. I am hopeful we can come together to find ways to stop them.

The words of Jamie McCallum, a pastor at Belfair Community Baptist Church, ring true as we pick up the pieces from this incident. Pastor McCallum said:

Violence and pain may have the strongest voice for the moment, but love and life have the final say.

REMEMBERING BORIS NEMTSOV

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday, February 27, marked the first anniversary of the assassination of Russian pro-democracy and opposition leader Boris Nemtsov, who was tragically gunned down in Moscow.

Killed just days before he was due to publish evidence of Russian military involvement in Ukraine, Boris led the effort in exposing the regime's corruption at every turn as he fought for a more open and democratic Russia.

Mr. Speaker, this poster was actually used in Russia by Boris' supporters protesting in the aftermath of his murder.

I had the honor of working with Boris for many years, and he would want us

to do our part to hold Putin accountable. But we cannot forget the questionable circumstances surrounding his murder.

I call on the administration to sanction any Russian official involved in Boris' murder, and I urge that their names be added now to the Magnitsky list of human rights violators. Let's honor Boris in this way.

GUN MYTH

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, today I want to bring attention to another myth about gun violence: the suggestion that more guns are the key to reducing gun violence.

On December 4, just days after San Bernardino, Senator TED CRUZ said, "You stop bad guys by using our guns."

We hear similar comments from gun advocates and allies all the time, but the facts tell a much different story. Not one of the 62 mass shootings from 1982 to 2012 was stopped by an armed citizen.

A 1998 study in the *Journal of Trauma, Injury, Infection, and Critical Care* found that a gun in the home is 22 times more likely to be used against a friend or family member than used in self-defense.

A 2003 study found women in homes with a gun were 2.7 times more likely to be murdered. A 2013 study found, for each percentage point increase in a State's gun ownership rate, firearm homicide rates increased by 0.9 percent.

Facts are stubborn things. But the facts are clear. More guns will not end our country's epidemic of gun violence.

HONORING CARL NORDSTROM ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

(Ms. JENKINS of Kansas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 100th birthday of Carl Nordstrom of Topeka on March 5.

Carl has devoted his life to public service. He was the executive director of the Kansas Association of Commerce and Industry from 1970 until 1982. He was cofounder of Leadership Kansas, inspiring leaders to maintain and strengthen the social, business, and political fabric of our State. In 1983, Carl was named Kansan of the Year by the Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas.

A graduate of Topeka High School and Washburn University, he participated in many amphibious landings in the Pacific during World War II. He is a past president of the Washburn Alumni Association and is in the Washburn Athletic Hall of Fame. He

remains to this day a leader and teacher in the University United Methodist Church in Topeka.

Happy 100th birthday, Carl Nordstrom, and thank you for your service to Kansas.

PROMOTING TRAVEL, COMMERCE, AND NATIONAL SECURITY ACT

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Promoting Travel, Commerce, and National Security Act introduced in the House and Senate.

This legislation sets rules by which American border agents will operate in Canada, thereby allowing a land port of entry to move the inspection of all inbound cargo to the Canadian side of the border.

Last year U.S. Customs and Border Protection conducted a pilot program at the Peace Bridge in Buffalo. It concluded that preinspection of cargo would double the capacity of the bridge and slash wait times during peak season from 22 minutes to 5 minutes.

The Peace Bridge is an economic lifeline between western New York and southern Ontario, and its efficiency and safety is a top priority. I thank Congresswoman KUSTER for her leadership and partnership. I urge the House to approve this important legislation.

AMERICAN PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday Economics Professor Peter Morici of the University of Maryland in *The Washington Times* cited facts the American people need to know:

"President Obama would like us to believe things are getting better every day, but average median incomes are down about \$1,650 on his watch. Elderly women are working in record numbers because pensions and retirement incomes are being decimated." "Young folks, bogged down by student loans, can't buy homes and face rocketing apartment rents."

"Should the economy tumble, Hillary Clinton will try to buy off voters with more Obama-vintage free stuff that makes creating jobs in the private sector so tough."

"Expanding ObamaCare-mandated benefits will push up prices for drugs, medical services, and insurance premiums even more and cause employers to hire even fewer workers."

"Instead of more jobs, America will have more debt and more employers fleeing."

"America did not become a superpower by being timid, and it's time for a President who understands this."

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

WHOLE WOMAN'S HEALTH V. HELLERSTEDT

(Ms. JUDY CHU of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, this morning I stood in front of the Supreme Court with hundreds of passionate voices rallying to defend our right to choice.

Before the Court today is one of the most significant abortion cases to be heard in years. For over 40 years now, *Roe v. Wade* has been the law of the land, recognizing a woman's right to a safe abortion when she needs it and where she needs it.

But State laws, like the Texas law in question, chip away at that right so that women must drive hundreds of miles and face serious delays before exercising their right to choice.

What is worse is that preventing women from accessing safe medical care has led to a sharp increase in self-induced abortions. We cannot accept putting women at risk by returning to the horrors of the back alley that harmed so many.

Today I call on the Supreme Court to keep women safe and recognize that our constitutional rights should not depend on our ZIP Code.

BLEEDING DISORDERS AWARENESS MONTH

(Mr. BENISHEK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today wearing my red tie because this March marks the first national Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month.

Bleeding disorders, such as hemophilia or Von Willebrand disease, are currently estimated to affect more than 3 million people nationwide.

These disorders are frequently underdiagnosed, and many victims of these disorders often struggle to get proper medical care. As a doctor who treated patients in northern Michigan, I have firsthand experience with patients tackling these difficulties.

While the medical community has made great strides over the years in improving the quality of care available for those impacted by bleeding disorders, we can do more.

I met recently with constituents in my district who are impacted by bleeding disorders, and they shared with me the great work being done in northern Michigan by Munson Healthcare's Bleeding Disorder Center to provide better care for patients throughout northern Michigan.

I hope that my colleagues and I can all join together with the medical research community to build on these gains and find commonsense and bipartisan ways to develop new treatment options for those suffering from bleeding disorders.

□ 1215

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

(Mr. PETERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, Roy, Utah, June 21, 2015: Shawna Smith, 26 years old; Tylee Smith, 6; Blake Smith, 2.

Bristol, Tennessee, August 29, 2015: Lena Rose, 57 years old; Toshya Millhorn, 39; James Millhorn, 36.

Columbus, Ohio, November 23, 2015: John Anderson, 31; Christina Anderson, 30 years old; Landon Anderson, 7.

Montgomery, Alabama, December 28, 2013: Glenn Thomas, 22 years old; Kimberle Johnson, 21; Timnorious Hamilton, 20.

Tucson, Arizona, May 12, 2015: Raul Carrillo, 58 years old; Karen Saari, 53; Erik Carrillo, 32; Isela Rodriguez, 17.

Cleveland, Ohio, November 21, 2014: Lemon Bryant, 60 years old; Sherita Johnson, 41; Ja'Rio Taylor, 19 years old; Shaylona Williams, 17 years old.

Mountain, Alabama, November 16, 2015: Sylvia Duffe, 71 years old; Clara Edwards, 68.

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF KEY WEST

(Mr. CURBELO of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Military Affairs Committee of Key West on their 50th anniversary celebration. Since its inception, MAC's mission has been to strengthen the bonds between military members and civilians in the Florida Keys. Members of MAC are devoted citizens of their community, participating or volunteering in local events to ensure that Keys life continues to thrive.

Today I am proud to recognize two original charter members of MAC, Mr. Edward B. Knight and Mr. Frank Toppino. Mr. Knight is a former Naval aviator in World War II, while Mr. Toppino was in the U.S. Army in the Pacific Theatre, also in World War II.

Both men have gone on to become successful entrepreneurs, businessmen, and philanthropists in Key West. They are highly respected pillars of the Florida Keys community, bringing together military members and civilians. They lead by example, inspiring us to uphold

the values and the visions of MAC and their charter members.

I applaud Mr. Toppino, Mr. Knight, and the members of the Military Affairs Committee of Key West on a very successful and unifying 50 years. May MAC and its mission continue to flourish.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE HONORABLE PATSY MINK DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, after graduating from Maui High in 1944 as class president and valedictorian, and attempting college with dreams of becoming a doctor, Patsy Mink had over a dozen medical schools slam the door shut simply because she was a woman.

Rather than quit, she took action. She went to law school, becoming the first Japanese American female attorney in Hawaii, and was elected as the first Asian American woman ever to Congress in 1965.

Through her 12 terms in the House of Representatives serving Hawaii's Second District, which I am honored to represent today, she was a true champion for equal rights and opportunity.

In 1972, her landmark bill, Title IX, was signed into law, legislation that has since allowed young women all across the country the very same opportunities to jump high, run fast, hit hard, and go the extra mile, the same as their male counterparts.

As we kick off Women's History Month, let us recognize and celebrate Patsy Mink and the countless other women throughout our Nation's history who have blazed trails before us and broken down barriers for a better future for our next generation.

SHOOTING IN CENTRAL KANSAS

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, yet another city, this time in central Kansas, was added to the list of communities across the country affected by gun violence.

Three lives were taken, 14 injured, and many others changed forever. Sadly, many of us know all too well the pain that comes from acts of violence caused by the trigger of a gun.

Ninety minutes before this shooter opened fire, he was served with a restraining order in response to a domestic violence report. Often these protection orders serve as the first notification to an abuser that the relationship is ending and, as in this case, that can lead to more violence.

That is why I offered the Protecting Domestic Violence and Stalking Vic-

tims Act, a bill that would prevent individuals subject to judicial protection orders from temporarily purchasing or possessing a firearm.

The hours right after an abuser is first served with a restraining order are the most volatile and dangerous, and it is only responsible to remove firearms from this situation temporarily.

I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this commonsense bill.

TEXAS HAS NO CHOICE

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, this morning I joined hundreds of women on the steps of the Supreme Court to protest the Texas law that is under consideration by the Court today.

The Texas law has already shut down over half of the abortion clinics in the State of Texas, and if the law is upheld today, it will effectively end the constitutional right of women in Texas to obtain a legal abortion.

If that happens, the extreme Texas law will likely be used as a blueprint by anti-choice extremists across this country.

Now, they claim that this law's restrictive provisions are necessary to protect a woman's health. But doctors across this Nation will tell you that that is a lie. The harsh restrictions were designed with the single purpose of closing and blocking access to choice.

I proudly joined over 162 of my colleagues on an amicus brief urging the Court to strike down this law. The right to choose is meaningless without the access to choice.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Mr. TED LIEU of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge and celebrate the month of March as Women's History Month. During this month, we recognize the many successes of women all across America and our Nation's history.

I am proud to represent California's 33rd Congressional District, home to many female trailblazers such as Barbra Streisand who, in addition to her many accomplishments in the entertainment industry and her philanthropic contributions, is the first female director to receive Kennedy Center Honors and recently received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian honor.

We also have Sherry Lansing, who was the first woman to head a major Hollywood studio, the first female studio chief to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, and the first

woman to be named Pioneer of the Year by the Foundation of Motion Picture Pioneers.

Then we have Michelle Kwan, who was born in my hometown of Torrance, an alumnus of UCLA, who is not only a 5-time world championship ice skater with two Olympic medals, but also serves as senior adviser to the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, among many other roles.

As we celebrate Women's History Month, let us continue to work to create equal opportunities for future generations of women.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3716, ENSURING REMOVAL OF TERMINATED PROVIDERS FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 632 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 632

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114-45. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amend-

ments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 632 provides for a rule to consider a commonsense, bipartisan piece of legislation that will address waste, fraud, and abuse within the Medicaid program.

The rule provides for 1 hour of debate, equally divided between the majority and the minority of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. The Committee on Rules made in order four amendments that were submitted to the committee, three Democratic amendments and one bipartisan offering.

Finally, the rule affords the minority the customary motion to recommit, a final opportunity to amend the legislation should the minority choose to exercise that option.

H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act, combines two bipartisan bills that were unanimously reported out of the Energy and Commerce Committee: H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Terminated Providers Are Removed from Medicaid and CHIP Act that was introduced by Dr. LARRY BUCSHON, a member of the committee; and H.R. 3821, the Medicaid DOC Act authored by Representative CHRIS COLLINS, also on the committee.

Not only is this bill bipartisan, it has received support of the administration, and it is an important illustration of the work we are doing in the House right now to improve health care for all Americans.

The Medicaid program continues to suffer from fraud, waste, and abuse. These issues cause direct harm to the beneficiaries and waste billions of taxpayer dollars.

Medicaid beneficiaries frequently end up in the emergency room, not because

they need emergency care, but because they cannot find a physician participating in their Medicaid program. This is an inefficient and ineffective way to access health care.

H.R. 3716 is commonsense legislation that resolves both of these problems and improves beneficiary access to quality providers. Not only is this bill good for patients, it is fiscally responsible.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, this package would reduce Federal outlays by \$15 million over the budget window because the Medicaid program would no longer be paying providers who had been terminated for reasons of fraud, integrity, or quality.

Although the Congressional Budget Office does not estimate State-specific savings, this bill would also save State Medicaid programs from several million dollars over the same timeframe.

The Office of Inspector General at the Department of Health and Human Services has previously found that 12 percent of terminated providers were participating in a State Medicaid program as of January 1, 2012, after the same provider was terminated for reasons of integrity or quality from another State Medicaid program.

□ 1230

The base bill, H.R. 3716, will ensure that we put an end to this problem.

State Medicaid and State CHIP programs will be required to report terminated providers to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services within 21 business days. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will then be required to include that data and Medicare provider terminations in its Termination Notification database within 21 business days. In addition, State Medicaid and State CHIP managed care contracts will be required to include a provision that providers terminated for reasons of integrity or quality from Medicare, Medicaid, or SCHIP be terminated from participation in their provider networks. Where Medicaid or CHIP payments are made to providers for services performed more than 60 days after the provider's termination, those States will be required to pay back the Federal portion of the Medicaid match of those payments.

The bill will also ensure that State Medicaid agencies have a current and complete list of providers serving Medicaid patients by requiring providers to enroll with the State agency. To streamline reporting requirements and eliminate duplication, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will be required to develop uniform terminology for terminations related to fraud, integrity, or quality.

These simple reforms will ensure that we stop paying millions of Federal taxpayer dollars for fraudulent and wasteful care and that beneficiaries are not receiving care from providers who

have failed to adhere to basic standards of quality or integrity.

The second key issue this bill tackles is one of access to care. Beneficiaries in the Medicaid program have historically struggled to find a physician who will accept Medicaid and can provide treatment. H.R. 3716 includes H.R. 3821, introduced by Representative CHRIS COLLINS of New York, to empower beneficiaries with better information that will arm them with the information that they need to access care without first going to an emergency room.

While Medicaid beneficiaries enrolled in managed care plans have a defined network of providers, about half of States use delivery systems other than risk-based managed care, and those served under a fee-for-service or primary care case management program include some of the most vulnerable Medicaid enrollees, such as the elderly and disabled children. Unfortunately, these enrollees may have limited assistance in identifying physicians who participate in the Medicaid program.

Specifically, the policy would require State Medicaid programs to publish an electronic directory of physicians who have billed Medicaid in the prior year—an indication that the physician has or likely still accepts Medicaid patients. That directory would include the physician's name, specialty, address, telephone number, and, where relevant, information on whether the physician is accepting new patients and linguistic capabilities.

Medicaid is estimated to cover 83 million people this year, and it is growing. H.R. 3716 makes two targeted but important reforms to strengthen the integrity of the Medicaid program and to improve access to quality care. This legislation is another example of the Energy and Commerce Committee's record of success on bipartisan reform to improve the state of health care in America. I encourage my colleagues to vote for this package.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me the customary 30 minutes for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to debate the rule for H.R. 3716, Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act. Among other things, this bill requires State Medicaid and CHIP programs to report providers terminated for reasons of fraud, integrity, or quality to CMS within 21 business days.

The requirements in this legislation are straightforward and have achieved broad bipartisan support. I find myself strangely in the position of agreeing with all of what my colleague from Texas had to say. I listened to him intently. So it only leaves the question:

Why is this bill being presented here today instead of under the suspension calendar?

Rather than taking the time to debate a rule for a bill that could be passed without the need for a special rule, would it not be a better use of this body's valuable legislative time to debate and pass a budget resolution and get the appropriations process started?

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Speaker RYAN's promises to end Republican obstruction and dysfunction and return to regular order, but I cannot see how what is unfolding now is a step in that direction.

Last fall, Republicans and Democrats came together to pass a bipartisan budget agreement. Now Republicans, appeasing the most extreme fringe of their party, are considering breaking that agreement. Breaking this agreement will not be without consequences for this Nation, including deeper cuts to seniors and working families.

Mr. Speaker, the majority's fumble on the budget has ushered in a new level of dysfunction for this institution. My Republican friends' inability to govern has gotten so bad that they can't even agree to follow through on an agreement they have already agreed to and has been signed into law.

As we debate today, it is still not clear how the majority plans to move forward on one of this body's most basic constitutional obligations: appropriating funds to run the country.

I told the young people working with me that I thought of a metaphor last night about when I first learned to swim. I grew up in an area where there were a lot of lakes, so it was automatic that all of us would learn how to swim, and we did. In learning to swim, among the things that the young boys taught me was there were times when you just tread water, where you don't move forward or backward. If you are backstroking, just tread water. Some learned to float. I didn't. But apparently my Republican friends have learned to float and have learned to tread water because we are not going anywhere fast in this institution of dysfunction.

The inability to fulfill this obligation is truly astounding and reveals a Republican majority that may wish upon every star in the sky to return to regular order but has no earthly idea of how to do so. Indeed, the only regularity we see coming out of today's Republican leadership is one dedicated to disorder.

The inability to even begin a fruitful discussion of a budget process is but one among many pieces of evidence that prove that the Republican hopes of regular order are as elusive as is their ability to put forth a plan that will benefit working class Americans, strengthen our infrastructure, and provide for the least among us. It would be comical if it were not so dire.

Let's recap how we have arrived at this point of Republican inability to govern. For the first time in 40 years, Republicans refuse to even invite a representative from the administration to testify on the President's budget proposal. Then, Republican leaders failed to hold a committee markup on a budget resolution last week and fumbled their plans to present their conference with a promised budget blueprint. Now, in order to appease the insatiable radical fringe of his party, Speaker RYAN is threatening to break the terms of the bipartisan budget agreement passed into law last year—totally unbelievable.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve better. They want us to work together to fund their government and solve the problems of this country. This whole Republican budget process has shown that the majority and the radical fringe rightwing of their party are simply not up to that task.

I might add that I read last night that the majority leader in the other body has made it very clear that he is not going to play along with House Republican functionaries who would send stuff to the Senate that is not going to pass. I predict that we will one day have the usual omnibus at the end of this process, and that is tragic.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so pending Mr. HASTINGS' conclusion, I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers as well, and I am prepared to close.

I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule to bring up a resolution that would require the Republican majority to stop its partisan games and finally hold hearings on the President's budget proposal.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and defeat the previous question.

Mr. Speaker, the bill underlying this rule institutes a number of proposals that have broad bipartisan support. So again I ask: Why are we here debating a rule for such a bill? Quite obviously, it is because Republicans have no choice but to tread water. In doing so, they have called a time-out on helping the American people; they have called a time-out on doing their job.

They have done so, so that they may make haste in putting Humpty Dumpty back together again.

Good luck, my friends. Truly, truly, I wish you good luck.

In the meantime, rest assured that those of us on this side of the aisle stand ready in getting to the people's business once you can pull yourselves together and put forth a budget plan. I am, of course, suspect of whether our friends on the other side of the aisle will be able to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to point out today is March 2, significant for many of us in Texas because that is Texas Independence Day, a date that is recognized across the Nation as one that brought independence to the State of Texas.

I would point out it seems like oftentimes, in my role here presenting the Republican case for the rule from the Rules Committee, it also becomes my duty to provide some historical perspective for the House of Representatives, and today is no exception.

March 2, today, the first year that the Democrats had the majority in recent memory was calendar year 2007. When was a budget passed in calendar year 2007? It was passed on March 29. I would point out that the only thing bipartisan about that budget resolution was the opposition.

Calendar 2008, a bit better, the budget passed on March 13, the middle of the month, about 2 weeks from where we are today. Once again, on that budget, 212 yeas and 207 nays. But the nays were bipartisan. The yeas, of course, were of a single party.

Calendar year 2009, the budget didn't pass until the month of April, and, once again, the only thing bipartisan about the budget that year was its opposition.

Then, finally, I would point out that the following calendar year, 2010, there was no budget submitted.

So, Mr. Speaker, my understanding from the chairman of the Budget Committee is they are actively working on the budget. I wish them Godspeed. I am thankful that I don't have to be in the room while it is being done, but I have every confidence that they will produce a budget document that the House will then consider. But today—today—Mr. Speaker, today's rule provides for consideration of an important fix to the Nation's Medicaid program.

I certainly want to thank Dr. LARRY BUCSHON and Mr. COLLINS of New York—both, of the Energy and Commerce Committee, two important members of the Committee on Energy and Commerce—for their work on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule and "yes" on the underlying bill.

The material previously referred to by Mr. HASTINGS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 632 OFFERED BY
MR. HASTINGS OF FLORIDA

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Immediately upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 624) Directing the Committee on the Budget to hold a public hearing on the President's fiscal year 2017 budget request with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget as a witness. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H. Res. 624.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT
IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's *Precedents of the House of Representatives* (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution. . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives*, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1245

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BENISHEK). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1301

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DOLD) at 1 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.

ENSURING REMOVAL OF TERMINATED PROVIDERS FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3716.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 632 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3716.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1302

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes, with Mr. HOLDING in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The bipartisan bill before us today improves access to quality healthcare providers for vulnerable Medicaid patients.

Today, State Medicaid programs too often suffer from waste, fraud, and abuse, which can harm beneficiaries and waste taxpayer dollars. At the same time, too many Medicaid patients may have a hard time finding a doctor. Our bill takes an important step forward in addressing both of these issues.

First, H.R. 3716 would ensure healthcare providers that are terminated from Medicaid or from one State's Medicaid program for reasons of fraud, integrity, or quality are also terminated from other State Medicaid programs. The Office of Inspector General at HHS has previously found that 12 percent of terminated providers were participating in a State Medicaid program after the same provider was terminated from another State Medicaid program.

It is critical that fraudulent providers are not allowed to defraud taxpayers or to harm patients across the board. Medicaid beneficiaries are some of the most vulnerable patients, so our bipartisan bill will ensure that they are better protected. This commonsense bill was reported favorably from our Health Subcommittee and from the full Energy and Commerce Committee last year.

The other important aspect of this legislation was authored by CHRIS COLLINS of New York. This provision of the bill requires State Medicaid programs to provide beneficiaries who are served under fee-for-service or primary care case management programs an electronic directory of physicians who are participating in the program.

Research shows that too often Medicaid patients today have a hard time finding a doctor. The Government Accountability Office has previously found that Medicaid patients face particular challenges in accessing certain

types of care, such as obtaining specialty care or dental care. Additionally, the GAO has previously reported that 38 States experienced challenges in ensuring enough participating providers.

To help empower Medicaid patients and equip them with better information, this policy would apply requirements similar to those in place for Medicaid managed care plans to fee-for-service and/or primary care case management programs.

Under the bill, States would be required to list on their Web sites a directory of physicians that would include the physician's name, specialty, address, and telephone number. Additionally, for physicians serving as case managers through the PCCM programs, States would be required to include information on whether a physician is accepting new patients as well as to list the physician's cultural and linguistic capabilities.

In a day and age when Medicaid patients can use their phones to search for the nearest gas station or grocery store, it makes good sense to ensure that States are giving patients better information so that they can readily find a doctor near them who accepts Medicaid patients.

Finally, according to the Congressional Budget Office, H.R. 3716 would reduce Federal outlays by \$15 million over a 10-year budget window because the Medicaid program would no longer be paying providers that were terminated for reasons of fraud, integrity, or quality. The CBO does not estimate State-specific savings, but this bill would also save State Medicaid programs several million dollars over the same timeframe.

Mr. Chairman, this legislation provides commonsense reforms that help protect Medicaid beneficiaries, that improve access to care, and that save Federal and State dollars in the Medicaid program. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3716.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am here to express my strong support for the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act.

In particular, I am pleased that this legislation incorporates the Medicaid Directory of Caregivers Act, also known as the Medicaid DOC Act. This is legislation in which I joined with my colleague and friend from New York, Representative COLLINS, in introducing.

I thank Representative COLLINS for his initiative in this area and for working together on this issue in a collaborative and bipartisan way. I also thank the Energy and Commerce Committee staffs on both sides for providing constructive feedback and for expeditiously moving this bill out of committee.

The impetus behind this bill is simple and straightforward: to make it easier for Medicaid beneficiaries to find and access a doctor.

The underlying legislation would require States that operate a fee-for-service Medicaid program to publish an online provider directory, just like managed care plans and private insurance are already required to do. By creating a one-stop-shop for Medicaid beneficiaries to find information on participating providers, this commonsense legislation will make it easier for individuals and families to access quality health care.

The legislation details the minimum items that must be included in a provider directory, but it also allows States to go beyond those given standards. All consumers deserve to have access to a basic electronic provider directory to find the best physicians for their use.

The second component of the legislation under consideration would provide the CMS with critical tools to keep patients safe, to protect taxpayer dollars, and to protect the integrity of our Medicaid program.

This bipartisan bill, introduced by Representatives BUCSHON, WELCH, and BUTTERFIELD, implements previous OIG recommendations and builds on authorities originally authorized under the ACA. The ACA included a provision that prohibited disqualified providers from Medicare or a one State Medicaid program from simply crossing State lines and receiving payments in another State Medicaid program.

The ACA provision has been hard to implement, however, because States don't have a consistent or a standardized way of knowing when a specific provider has been terminated by Medicare or by another State. All States are not currently required to report this information, and if it is reported, it is in many differing formats, limiting the data's usability.

This legislation would require all States to report information on fraudulent providers to the Secretary for inclusion in a currently existing termination database that is accessible to all States. The legislation also requires the Secretary to develop uniform criteria for States to use when submitting information.

The language would also require all providers in managed care to enroll with State Medicaid agencies so that States know all providers that are participating in the program. This legislation preserves all existing provider appeals processes, and it changes nothing regarding the underlying standard for fraud in this part of the program.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I urge all Members to support this bipartisan legislation, which makes Medicaid more consumer-friendly and strengthens program integrity.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is the type of legislation that we should be passing on the House floor, and I will urge the Senate to pass this legislation later. This is just good government. It corrects some obvious flaws in the Medicaid program that will protect patients and save taxpayers money. I am very pleased that we are able to address this today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. As I earlier mentioned in my comments, one of the key participants in putting this effort together was Representative WELCH from the State of Vermont.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH), a good friend and a fellow Energy and Commerce Committee member.

Mr. WELCH. I thank the gentleman from New York.

Mr. Chairman, we are lucky we have Dr. BUCSHON, a good Member, a good friend, and a great Energy and Commerce Committee person, who, with his experience as a physician, is able to give us the benefit of this bill. I thank the gentleman from Indiana for that.

The Medicaid program is an incredibly important program to get health care to poor Americans who need it. The vast majority of our providers use the Medicaid program to provide those services, but some fraudulent providers use that program to rip off taxpayers. It has got to stop.

One of the things that Dr. BUCSHON observed and brought to our attention was that when States are aggressively monitoring for fraud and when they identify a fraudulent provider, they write that person off the rolls so that that provider can't keep ripping off the taxpayers. But that information doesn't get disseminated to other States, so that fraudulent provider simply steps across the State line, sets up another operation, and starts ripping off taxpayers all over again.

This legislation addresses that rip-off. I am glad it does because we can debate about lots of things, but there is unity here about wanting to make certain that any taxpayer dollar is well spent and that it is not ripped off by a fraudulent provider. This sets up practical mechanisms for States that have identified a fraudulent provider so they may share that information with other States so they don't find themselves digging the same hole.

We have bipartisan support for this. It is a money-saving bill. The CBO estimates that it would save approximately \$28 million over 10 years.

That may sound like small money; but do you want to know something?

That is real money. It is about the money, but it is also about constant vigilance so as to make sure that the programs we design for good intentions work.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. TONKO. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. WELCH. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, it is just what we should be doing here so we can look at things that have good intentions, like the Medicaid program, and find where there are holes in it and try to close them so that the program runs better so that taxpayer money is saved and so that the efficiency of government is enhanced.

□ 1315

And that is a mutual responsibility that we have so that people can have confidence that the taxpayer dollars that they are spending, whether it is for Medicaid or the Pentagon or any other program, are spent for the intended purposes and are not wasted.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentleman for his comments. It is true that when you find common ground and work together, good things happen, and this is one of those instances.

I think there are a lot of areas in health care. I was a healthcare provider before I was a heart surgeon. I took care of Medicaid and Medicare patients, private insurance patients, and patients that did not have the ability to pay. I think that we need to continue to look for ways to improve our safety net healthcare programs, mainly continue to look for ways to make sure that people have access to health care in the United States regardless of their ability to pay, regardless of their ZIP Code.

That said, we need to make sure that people have access to quality health care, and that is why bills like this are so important. It weeds out providers that are fraudulent and have other quality-related problems.

As a physician—and I will speak for some of my physician friends—this is the type of thing that we all want in our specialties. We want to make sure that the patients that we serve have access to physicians who are providing quality health care and are not defrauding the system.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I will continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Chair, I thank both Congressman BUCSHON and Congressman TONKO for their help on this very important bill that we are debating today. Included in Congressman BUCSHON's bill, H.R. 3716, is a bill that Mr. TONKO and I put together, H.R. 3821, the Medicare Directory of Caregivers, or DOC, Act.

Our thought behind this bill came from the GAO report that identified access to care as one of the key issues

facing Medicaid beneficiaries. There is nothing worse than someone saying: "The good news is you have got medical insurance coverage through Medicaid. The bad news is they can't find a physician."

So as a very good, commonsense government idea, what Representative TONKO and I came up with was the thought that we should be publishing on each State's Web site a list of the providers who have seen a Medicaid patient in the last 12 months, the name of the physician, the address, the telephone number, and their specialty, so at least these folks navigating the system to find a doctor have somewhere to go as a starting point: "Here is a doctor that has seen a Medicaid patient in the last 12 months. Let me give them a call." So they are not just lost going through the phonebook, so to speak, or Google.

What our bill would do, it would require that States that operate a fee-for-service or primary care case management program set up an online directory of physicians who have seen these Medicaid patients. We believe that this kind of access to caregivers will keep people out of the emergency rooms. They will have coordinated care by a physician, which is the best and most inexpensive way to treat them.

Representative BUCSHON's bill combined with our bill, H.R. 3821, does save \$15 million over the 10-year period, as scored. The bill went through regular order and passed out of the Energy and Commerce subcommittee and full committee by voice vote with no objections.

We are also encouraged to know the White House has signaled that they do support passage of this important access to care legislation.

Again, I thank Chairmen UPTON and PITTS, and Ranking Members PALLONE and GREEN for their support. I encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), the ranking member of the standing Committee on Energy and Commerce, who has shown great leadership for the Democrats at the Energy and Commerce table. He is very much supportive of this effort here, and we thank him for that.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chair, I am pleased to support H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act. This legislation is the compilation of two bills, H.R. 3821 and H.R. 3716, which are true efforts to improve program integrity in Medicaid in ways that will strengthen the Medicaid program. Both bipartisan bills passed out of the Energy and Commerce Committee through regular order and were favorably reported by voice vote.

Part of the new compiled bill reflects H.R. 3821, the Medicaid DOC Act. This bipartisan initiative, introduced by

Representatives COLLINS of New York and TONKO, would require States that participate in fee-for-service Medicaid to publish electronic provider directories. This is critical information for patients so they can more easily find doctors in their area.

Currently, managed care plans in Medicaid are already required to maintain these directories, but there is no such requirement for fee-for-service Medicaid programs. While some States are already providing these directories, not every State does so. This commonsense and consumer-friendly legislation will require that all States provide their Medicaid patients with this information, and it does so quickly, requiring directories to be up and running in less than 1 year.

Now, while the bill includes minimum items that must be included in a provider directory, it also encourages States to go beyond these standards. While I am hopeful that States will take the initiative to provide other information, like whether doctors are taking new patients, the timeline set forth in this legislation is so accelerated, it is important that we build this foundation first before adding additional requirements to States. I look forward to continuing to work on this important issue with my colleagues.

The second part of the bill would provide CMS with critical tools to keep patients safe, protect taxpayer dollars, and protect the integrity of the Medicaid program.

This bipartisan bill, introduced by Representatives BUCSHON, WELCH, and BUTTERFIELD, implements previous OIG recommendations and builds on authorities originally authorized under the Affordable Care Act, which prohibited disqualified providers from Medicare or one State Medicaid program from simply crossing State lines and receiving payments in another State Medicaid program.

But the current law has been hard to implement because States don't have a consistent or standardized way of knowing when a specific provider has been terminated by Medicare or another State. Since States are not currently required to report this information or, if it is reported, it is in many differing formats, it limits the data's usability.

This legislation being considered would require all States to report information on fraudulent providers to the Secretary for inclusion in an existing termination database that is accessible to all States. It also requires the Secretary to develop uniform criteria for States to use when submitting information and ensures those providers in managed care plans are enrolled with the State and also captured in the database.

Finally, the bill preserves and protects all existing provider appeal processes and changes nothing regarding

the underlying standard for fraud in this part of the program, an important protection. This is smart policy that stakeholders and the administration agree will improve Federal and State efforts.

I urge Members to support the bill.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE).

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Chair, this is the way Congress should work, in a bipartisan capacity on an issue of importance to better the health of the American Nation.

As is so often true of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, we work in a bipartisan fashion. It is the committee of jurisdiction for so many of the issues that reach this floor, with the support in committee and in subcommittee of both Republicans and Democrats. Legislation coming out of our committee, the Energy and Commerce Committee, is legislation that passes here on the floor, goes over to the other House, and is eventually signed into law by the President of the United States. I am pleased that we are working closely with the other elected branch of government in this area.

I commend Congressman BUCSHON, Dr. BUCSHON, for his legislation that will so improve the issue we are discussing, and I think that Medicaid providers is an important matter for the entire Nation. I also compliment Congressman COLLINS of New York for his involvement on this issue.

With a program as large as Medicaid, it will always be a target for those who engage in fraud, but we can work to limit the impact of those who engage in fraud. The Congressman's bill is a positive step in that direction. It will save millions of dollars and send a message loud and clear that bad actors in one State should not be allowed to participate anywhere.

Medicaid-managed care plans already provide a network of doctors and nurses to care for patients. The requirement in this bill ensures that patients in fee-for-service Medicaid programs do not have to fend for themselves.

Research has shown that access to doctors can be a problem for Medicaid beneficiaries, so this commonsense step will help ensure beneficiaries are empowered with better information and that this happens across the board.

I thank Dr. BUCSHON and Mr. COLLINS, as well as the Health Subcommittee and its chairman, Chairman PITTS, and the full committee, including, of course, Chairman UPTON and Ranking Member PALLONE. Let's work together to ensure passage of this legislation on the floor of the House today.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act.

A recent report by the HHS inspector general found that more than 1 in every 10 Medicaid providers who were terminated for fraud, integrity, or quality in one State were still participating in another State's Medicaid program.

To ensure that Medicaid patients are receiving their care from a qualified, licensed doctor, H.R. 3716 provides that disqualified providers be reported within 21 days to CMS, and each Medicaid provider must be enrolled with the State Medicaid agency.

H.R. 3716 also provides that State Medicaid programs include an electronic directory of physicians who serve Medicaid patients. Today, many Medicaid patients have a hard time finding a doctor and instead rely on the emergency room. With an established directory, Medicaid patients will be able to know which doctors are available to them and will ultimately get better care.

I encourage my colleagues to support the reforms in H.R. 3716 so we can make sure that Medicaid patients are receiving the care and attention they deserve.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, again, I just would thank all who have been involved with the effort here—from my perspective, particularly Representative COLLINS, Dr. BUCSHON, Representative WELCH, and others who put together, I think, a good effort here to have a bipartisan, collaborative effort that speaks to sensitivity, speaks to compassion toward the patients, those requiring the access to health care, and certainly has great respect for the taxpayer and the ensuing outcomes.

With that, I would encourage my colleagues to support the legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I would just like to echo the words of Mr. TONKO. This is good legislation. It improves the Medicaid program. It ensures access to quality providers for our Medicaid recipients in all of our States. Also, it helps our States to determine when people have been kicked off the program as a provider in another State and, therefore, helps them protect the patients in their own States.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Chair, today we are making a difference for the nation's most vulnerable. Republicans and Democrats working to strengthen Medicaid, and the White House has officially given its seal of approval to these commonsense reforms.

Today is an important day and underscores what we can accomplish when we work together.

Medicaid is an important lifeline for so many in Michigan and across the country. It is estimated the program will expand to cover 83

million people this year—to put that into perspective, that's one in four Americans. Given its rapidly growing size, it is imperative the program is working as it is intended—providing care for folks who need it most.

The Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act we are considering is the product of two bills authored by committee members Dr. LARRY BUCSHON and Rep. CHRIS COLLINS that unanimously cleared both the Health Subcommittee and full committee last fall.

Dr. BUCSHON led the effort to help cut down on fraud by eliminating bad actors. The bipartisan legislation ensures that providers terminated from Medicare or a state Medicaid program for reasons of fraud, integrity, or quality are terminated across the board from all other state Medicaid programs.

With a program as large as Medicaid, it will always be a target for fraudsters, but we can work to limit their impact, and this bill is an positive step that will save millions of dollars and send the message loud and clear that bad actors in one state should not be allowed to participate anywhere, period.

In addition to reducing fraud, we are helping increase access for those most in need. Finding a doctor is often a difficult task, and Mr. COLLINS led this effort to increase access to care beyond the emergency room. If a state is using a fee-for-service or primary case management system to deliver care to Medicaid patients, this bill requires they provide those patients with a directory of physicians.

Medicaid managed care plans already provide a network of doctors and nurses to care for patients. This requirement ensures that patients in fee-for-service Medicaid programs don't have to fend for themselves.

Research has shown that access to doctors can be a problem for Medicaid beneficiaries, so this commonsense step will help ensure beneficiaries are empowered with better information that is more readily available. And that's a good thing.

This bill doesn't solve all our problems, but it is a significant bipartisan step forward. And yesterday, the Office of Management and Budget announced the administration "supports House passage of H.R. 3716 because it improves program integrity for Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program."

We've got Republicans, Democrats, and the White House all in lockstep supporting meaningful, 21st century reforms for Medicaid. This bill shows that it's possible to work together on Medicaid.

I'd like to once again thank Dr. BUCSHON and Mr. COLLINS, as well as Health Subcommittee Chairman PITTS and full committee Ranking Member PALLONE. Together, we are building upon the committee's proud bipartisan record of success. Let's keep the momentum going to help our most vulnerable folks.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce, printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for

the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114-45. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 3716

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act".

SEC. 2. INCREASING OVERSIGHT OF TERMINATION OF MEDICAID PROVIDERS.

(a) INCREASED OVERSIGHT AND REPORTING.—

(1) STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Section 1902(kk) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)) is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (8) as paragraph (9); and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following new paragraph:

“(8) PROVIDER TERMINATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on January 1, 2017, in the case of a notification under subsection (a)(41) with respect to a termination for a reason specified in section 455.101 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on November 1, 2015) or for any other reason specified by the Secretary, of the participation of a provider of services or any other person under the State plan, the State, not later than 21 business days after the effective date of such termination, submits to the Secretary with respect to any such provider or person, as appropriate—

“(i) the name of such provider or person;

“(ii) the provider type of such provider or person;

“(iii) the specialty of such provider's or person's practice;

“(iv) the date of birth, Social Security number, national provider identifier, Federal taxpayer identification number, and the State license or certification number of such provider or person;

“(v) the reason for the termination;

“(vi) a copy of the notice of termination sent to the provider or person;

“(vii) the effective date of such termination specified in such notice; and

“(viii) any other information required by the Secretary.

“(B) EFFECTIVE DATE DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘effective date’ means, with respect to a termination described in subparagraph (A), the later of—

“(i) the date on which such termination is effective, as specified in the notice of such termination; or

“(ii) the date on which all appeal rights applicable to such termination have been exhausted or the timeline for any such appeal has expired.”.

(2) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES.—Section 1932(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396u–2(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—With respect to any contract with a managed care entity under section 1903(m) or 1905(b)(3) (as applicable), beginning on the later of the first day of the first plan year for such managed care entity that begins after the date of the enactment of this paragraph or January 1, 2017, the State shall require that such contract include a provision that providers of services or persons terminated (as described in section 1902(kk)(8)) from participation

under this title, title XVIII, or title XXI be terminated from participating under this title as a provider in any network of such entity that serves individuals eligible to receive medical assistance under this title.

“(B) NOTIFICATION OF TERMINATION.—For the period beginning on January 1, 2017, and ending on the date on which the enrollment of providers under paragraph (6) is complete for a State, the State shall provide for a system for notifying managed care entities (as defined in subsection (a)(1)) of the termination (as described in section 1902(kk)(8)) of providers of services or persons from participation under this title, title XVIII, or title XXI.”.

(3) TERMINATION NOTIFICATION DATABASE.—Section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(1) TERMINATION NOTIFICATION DATABASE.—In the case of a provider of services or any other person whose participation under this title, title XVIII, or title XXI is terminated (as described in subsection (kk)(8)), the Secretary shall, not later than 21 business days after the date on which the Secretary terminates such participation under title XVIII or is notified of such termination under subsection (a)(41) (as applicable), review such termination and, if the Secretary determines appropriate, include such termination in any database or similar system developed pursuant to section 6401(b)(2) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 1395cc note; Public Law 111–148).”.

(4) NO FEDERAL FUNDS FOR ITEMS AND SERVICES FURNISHED BY TERMINATED PROVIDERS.—Section 1903 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396b) is amended—

(A) in subsection (i)(2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking the comma at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking “or” at the end; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) beginning not later than January 1, 2018, under the plan by any provider of services or person whose participation in the State plan is terminated (as described in section 1902(kk)(8)) after the date that is 60 days after the date on which such termination is included in the database or other system under section 1902(11); or”; and

(B) in subsection (m), by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph:

“(3) No payment shall be made under this title to a State with respect to expenditures incurred by the State for payment for services provided by a managed care entity (as defined under section 1932(a)(1)) under the State plan under this title (or under a waiver of the plan) unless the State—

“(A) beginning on the applicable date specified in subparagraph (A) of section 1932(d)(5), has a contract with such entity that complies with the requirement specified in such subparagraph; and

“(B)(i) for the period specified in subparagraph (B) of such section, has a system in effect that meets the requirement specified in such subparagraph; and

“(ii) after such period, complies with section 1932(d)(6).”.

(5) DEVELOPMENT OF UNIFORM TERMINOLOGY FOR REASONS FOR PROVIDER TERMINATION.—Not later than January 1, 2017, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, in consultation with the heads of State agencies administering State Medicaid plans (or waivers of such plans), issue regulations establishing uniform terminology to be used with respect to specifying reasons under subparagraph (A)(v) of paragraph (8) of section 1902(kk) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)), as amended

by paragraph (1), for the termination (as described in such paragraph) of the participation of certain providers in the Medicaid program under title XIX of such Act or the Children's Health Insurance Program under title XXI of such Act.

(6) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 1902(a)(41) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(41)) is amended by striking “provide that whenever” and inserting “provide, in accordance with subsection (kk)(8) (as applicable), that whenever”.

(b) **INCREASING AVAILABILITY OF MEDICAID PROVIDER INFORMATION.**—

(1) **FFS PROVIDER ENROLLMENT.**—Section 1902(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)) is amended by inserting after paragraph (77) the following new paragraph:

“(78) provide that, not later than January 1, 2017, in the case of a State plan that provides medical assistance on a fee-for-service basis, the State shall require each provider furnishing items and services to individuals eligible to receive medical assistance under such plan to enroll with the State agency and provide to the State agency the provider's identifying information, including the name, specialty, date of birth, Social Security number, national provider identifier, Federal taxpayer identification number, and the State license or certification number of the provider;”.

(2) **MANAGED CARE PROVIDER ENROLLMENT.**—Section 1932(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396u–2(d)), as amended by subsection (a)(2), is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) **ENROLLMENT OF PARTICIPATING PROVIDERS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Beginning not later than January 1, 2018, a State shall require that, in order to participate as a provider in the network of a managed care entity that provides services to, or orders, prescribes, refers, or certifies eligibility for services for, individuals who are eligible for medical assistance under the State plan under this title and who are enrolled with the entity, the provider is enrolled with the State agency administering the State plan under this title. Such enrollment shall include providing to the State agency the provider's identifying information, including the name, specialty, date of birth, Social Security number, national provider identifier, Federal taxpayer identification number, and the State license or certification number of the provider.

“(B) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in subparagraph (A) shall be construed as requiring a provider described in such subparagraph to provide services to individuals who are not enrolled with a managed care entity under this title.”.

(c) **COORDINATION WITH CHIP.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 2107(e)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)) is amended—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), (E), (F), (G), (H), (I), (J), (K), (L), (M), (N), and (O) as subparagraphs (D), (E), (F), (G), (H), (I), (J), (K), (M), (N), (O), (P), (Q), and (R), respectively;

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraphs:

“(B) Section 1902(a)(39) (relating to termination of participation of certain providers).

“(C) Section 1902(a)(78) (relating to enrollment of providers participating in State plans providing medical assistance on a fee-for-service basis).”;

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (K) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)) the following new subparagraph:

“(L) Section 1903(m)(3) (relating to limitation on payment with respect to managed care).”;

and

(D) in subparagraph (P) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)), by striking “(a)(2)(C) and (h)” and inserting “(a)(2)(C) (relating to Indian enrollment), (d)(5) (relating to reporting requirements for managed care entities), (d)(6) (relating to enrollment of providers participating with a managed care entity), and (h) (relating to special rules with respect to Indian enrollees, Indian health care providers, and Indian managed care entities)”.

(2) **EXCLUDING FROM MEDICAID PROVIDERS EXCLUDED FROM CHIP.**—Section 1902(a)(39) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(39)) is amended by striking “title XVIII or any other State plan under this title” and inserting “title XVIII, any other State plan under this title, or any State child health plan under title XXI”.

(d) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed as changing or limiting the appeal rights of providers or the process for appeals of States under the Social Security Act.

SEC. 3. REQUIRING PUBLICATION OF FEE-FOR-SERVICE PROVIDER DIRECTORY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1902(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (80), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (81), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (81) the following new paragraph:

“(82) provide that, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, in the case of a State plan that provides medical assistance on a fee-for-service basis or through a primary care case-management system described in section 1915(b)(1) (other than a primary care case management entity (as defined by the Secretary)), the State shall publish (and update on at least an annual basis) on the public Website of the State agency administering the State plan, a directory of the providers (including, at a minimum, primary and specialty care physicians) described in subsection (mm) that includes—

“(A) with respect to each such provider—

“(i) the name of the provider;

“(ii) the specialty of the provider;

“(iii) the address of the provider; and

“(iv) the telephone number of the provider; and

“(B) with respect to any such provider participating in such a primary care case-management system, information regarding—

“(i) whether the provider is accepting as new patients individuals who receive medical assistance under this title; and

“(ii) the provider's cultural and linguistic capabilities, including the languages spoken by the provider or by the skilled medical interpreter providing interpretation services at the provider's office.”.

(b) **DIRECTORY PROVIDERS DESCRIBED.**—Section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a), as amended by section 2(a)(3), is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(mm) **DIRECTORY PROVIDERS DESCRIBED.**—A provider described in this subsection is—

“(1) in the case of a provider of a provider type for which the State agency, as a condition on receiving payment for items and services furnished by the provider to individuals eligible to receive medical assistance under the State plan, requires the enrollment of the provider with the State agency, a provider that—

“(A) is enrolled with the agency as of the date on which the directory is published or updated (as applicable) under subsection (a)(82); and

“(B) received payment under the State plan in the 12-month period preceding such date; and

“(2) in the case of a provider of a provider type for which the State agency does not require

such enrollment, a provider that received payment under the State plan in the 12-month period preceding the date on which the directory is published or updated (as applicable) under subsection (a)(82).”.

(c) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall not be construed to apply in the case of a State in which all the individuals enrolled in the State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act (or under a waiver of such plan), other than individuals described in paragraph (2), are enrolled with a Medicaid managed care organization (as defined in section 1903(m)(1)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396b(m)(1)(A))), including prepaid inpatient health plans and prepaid ambulatory health plans (as defined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services).

(2) **INDIVIDUALS DESCRIBED.**—An individual described in this paragraph is an individual who is an Indian (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)) or an Alaska Native.

(d) **EXCEPTION FOR STATE LEGISLATION.**—In the case of a State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.), which the Secretary determines requires State legislation in order for the respective plan to meet one or more additional requirements imposed by amendments made by this section, the respective plan shall not be regarded as failing to comply with the requirements of such title solely on the basis of its failure to meet such an additional requirement before the first day of the first calendar quarter beginning after the close of the first regular session of the State legislature that begins after the date of enactment of this section. For purposes of the previous sentence, in the case of a State that has a 2-year legislative session, each year of the session shall be considered to be a separate regular session of the State legislature.

The CHAIR. No amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in House Report 114-440. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

□ 1330

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. BUCSHON

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 114-440.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 1, lines 2 and 3, strike “Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act” and insert “Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act”.

Page 1, lines 15 and 16, strike “January 1, 2017” and insert “July 1, 2018”.

Page 3, lines 1 and 2, strike “the effective date of such termination specified in such notice” and insert “the date on which such termination is effective, as specified in the notice”.

Page 3, line 16, strike “REPORTING REQUIREMENTS” and insert “CONTRACT REQUIREMENT”.

Page 3, line 20, strike "STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES" and insert "CONTRACT REQUIREMENT FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES".

Page 3, line 22, strike "(A)" and all that follows through "With respect" and insert "With respect".

Page 3, beginning on line 24, strike "applicable), beginning on the later of the first day of the first plan year for such managed care entity that begins after the date of the enactment of this paragraph or January 1, 2017, the State shall require that such contract" and insert "applicable), no later than July 1, 2018, such contract shall".

Page 4, strike lines 12 through 21.

Page 6, line 1, strike "January 1, 2018" and insert "July 1, 2018".

Page 6, line 17, strike "the applicable date specified in subparagraph (A) of section 1932(d)(5)" and insert "July 1, 2018".

Page 6, line 21, strike "(i)".

Page 6, line 21, strike "for the period specified in subparagraph (B) of such section, has a system in effect that meets" and insert "beginning on January 1, 2018, complies with".

Page 6, line 23, strike "such subparagraph; and" and all that follows through page 7, line 2 and insert "section 1932(d)(6)(A)".

Page 7, line 5, strike "January 1, 2017" and insert "July 1, 2017".

Page 10, line 15, strike "paragraph (1)" and insert "subparagraph (A)".

Page 10, line 21, strike "paragraph (1)" and insert "subparagraph (A)".

Page 10, lines 23 and 24, strike "reporting requirements" and insert "contract requirement".

Page 11, after line 15, insert the following:

(e) **OIG REPORT.**—Not later than March 31, 2020, the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of the amendments made by this section. Such report shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the extent to which providers who are included under subsection (l) of section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a) (as added by subsection (a)(3)) in the database or similar system referred to in such subsection are terminated (as described in subsection (kk)(8) of such section, as added by subsection (a)(1)) from participation in all State plans under title XIX of such Act.

(2) Information on the amount of Federal financial participation paid to States under section 1903 of such Act in violation of the limitation on such payment specified in subsections (i)(2)(D) and subsection (m)(3) of such section, as added by subsection (a)(4).

(3) An assessment of the extent to which contracts with managed care entities under title XIX of such Act comply with the requirement specified in section 1932(d)(5) of such Act, as added by subsection (a)(2).

(4) An assessment of the extent to which providers have been enrolled under section 1902(a)(78) or 1932(d)(6)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(78), 1396u-2(d)(6)(A)) with State agencies administering State plans under title XIX of such Act.

Page 12, lines 1 and 2, strike "180 days after the date of the enactment of this paragraph" and insert "January 1, 2017".

Page 12, line 10, strike "a directory" and all that follows through line 13 and insert the following: "a directory of the physicians described in subsection (mm) and, at State option, other providers described in such subsection that—"

Page 12, after line 13, insert the following:

"(A) includes—".

Page 12, line 14, strike "(A)" and insert "(i)".

Page 12, line 14, insert "physician or" before "provider".

Page 12, line 15, strike "(i)" and insert "(I)".

Page 12, line 15, insert "physician or" before "provider".

Page 12, line 16, strike "(ii)" and insert "(II)".

Page 12, line 16, insert "physician or" before "provider".

Page 12, line 17, strike "(iii)" and insert "(III)".

Page 12, line 17, strike "of the provider" and insert "at which the physician or provider provides services".

Page 12, line 18, strike "(iv)" and insert "(IV)".

Page 12, line 18, insert "physician or" before "provider".

Page 12, line 20, strike "(B)" and insert "(ii)".

Page 12, line 20, insert "physician or" before "provider".

Page 12, line 23, strike "(i)" and insert "(I)".

Page 12, line 23, insert "physician or" before "provider".

Page 13, line 1, strike "(ii)" and insert "(II)".

Page 13, line 1, insert "the physician's" before "provider's".

Page 13, line 3, insert "physician or" before "provider".

Page 13, line 5, strike "provider's office." and insert "physician's or provider's office; and".

Page 13, after line 5, insert the following:

"(B) may include, at State option, with respect to each such physician or provider—

"(i) the Internet website of such physician or provider; or

"(ii) whether the physician or provider is accepting as new patients individuals who receive medical assistance under this title.".

Page 13, line 6, strike "PROVIDERS" and insert "PHYSICIAN OR PROVIDER".

Page 13, line 10, strike "PROVIDERS" and insert "PHYSICIAN OR PROVIDER".

Page 13, line 10, strike "A" and insert "A physician or".

Page 13, line 12, insert "physician or" before "provider of".

Page 13, line 15, insert "physician or" before "provider".

Page 13, line 17, strike "provider with the State agency, a" and insert "physician or provider with the State agency, a physician or".

Page 14, line 1, insert "physician or" before "provider of".

Page 14, line 3, insert "physician or" before "provider".

Page 14, beginning on line 10, strike "in which all the individuals enrolled in the State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act" and insert "(as defined for purposes of title XIX of the Social Security Act) in which all the individuals enrolled in the State plan under such title".

Page 15, line 3, insert "of Health and Human Services" after "Secretary".

Page 15, line 12, strike "section" and insert "Act".

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 632, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bipartisan amendment makes a few technical changes to the bill.

First, this amendment modifies the short title to better reflect the policies of both sections of the bill.

Second, this amendment updates the effective dates throughout the bill to ensure that States and HHS have the time necessary to correctly implement the provisions.

Next, it includes a requirement that the Office of the Inspector General at HHS review the implementation of the requirements in this bill regarding terminated providers and report back to Congress on what they find. This is an important feedback loop to ensure appropriate oversight.

Finally, the amendment clarifies that the fee-for-service provider directory is required to include physicians and, at a State's option, other providers. The amendment also clarifies the information that could be included in the directory.

MODIFICATION TO AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED
BY MR. BUCSHON

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent to modify the second instruction relating to page 13, line 1, as provided at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the modification.

The Clerk read as follows:

Modification to amendment No. 1 offered by Mr. BUCSHON:

Page 13, line 1, insert "physician's or" before "provider's".

The CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana? There was no objection.

The CHAIR. The amendment is modified.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan amendment to H.R. 3716.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. Does any Member seek time in opposition to the amendment?

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to reclaim my time.

The CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana? There was no objection.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the manager's amendment.

This amendment provides a new bill name that incorporates the underlying policies from each of its component bills and reflects additional technical changes that have been outlined by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON), made in consultation with CMS.

This is a very targeted policy that went through extensive review through regular order in the committee. The manager's amendment reflects the final iteration of that hard work.

I would urge all my colleagues to support this simple refining amendment.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment, as modified, offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON).

The amendment, as modified, was agreed to.

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 114-440.

It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 114-440.

It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 114-440.

The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska) having assumed the chair, Mr. HOLDING, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 632, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 38 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1715

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee) at 5 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4557, BLOCKING REGULATORY INTERFERENCE FROM CLOSING KILNS ACT OF 2016, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 4, 2016, THROUGH MARCH 11, 2016

Mr. BYRNE, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-443) on the resolution (H. Res. 635) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4557) to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule, and providing for proceedings during the period from March 4, 2016, through March 11, 2016, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

ENSURING REMOVAL OF TERMINATED PROVIDERS FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on passage of the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 406, nays 0, not voting 27, as follows:

[Roll No. 105]

YEAS—406

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar

Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford

Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton

Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cardenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Clever
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duncan (SC)

Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Fox
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallo
Gallagher
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline

Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebach
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCauley
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris-Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

Price, Tom	Scott (VA)	Valadao
Quigley	Scott, Austin	Van Hollen
Rangel	Sensenbrenner	Vargas
Ratcliffe	Serrano	Veasey
Reed	Sessions	Vela
Reichert	Sewell (AL)	Velázquez
Renacci	Sherman	Viscosky
Ribble	Shinkus	Wagner
Rice (SC)	Shuster	Walberg
Rigell	Simpson	Walden
Roby	Sinema	Walker
Roe (TN)	Sires	Walorski
Rogers (AL)	Slaughter	Walters, Mimi
Rohrabacher	Smith (MO)	Walz
Rokita	Smith (NE)	Wasserman
Rooney (FL)	Smith (NJ)	Schultz
Ros-Lehtinen	Smith (TX)	Waters, Maxine
Roskam	Speier	Watson Coleman
Ross	Stefanik	Weber (TX)
Rothfus	Stewart	Webster (FL)
Rouzer	Stivers	Welch
Roybal-Allard	Stutzman	Wenstrup
Royce	Swalwell (CA)	Westerman
Ruiz	Takai	Whitfield
Ruppersberger	Takano	Williams
Rush	Thompson (CA)	Wilson (FL)
Russell	Thompson (MS)	Wilson (SC)
Ryan (OH)	Thompson (PA)	Wittman
Salmon	Thornberry	Womack
Sánchez, Linda	Tiberi	Woodall
T.	Tipton	Yarmuth
Sanford	Titus	Yoder
Sarbanes	Tonko	Yoho
Scalise	Torres	Young (AK)
Schakowsky	Trott	Young (IA)
Schiff	Tsongas	Young (IN)
Schrader	Turner	Zeldin
Schweikert	Upton	Zinke

NOT VOTING—27

Benishek	Gutiérrez	Pascarell
Black	Herrera Beutler	Pelosi
Brady (PA)	Hinojosa	Rice (NY)
DeLauro	Johnson (GA)	Richmond
Duffy	Larson (CT)	Rogers (KY)
Ellmers (NC)	Lewis	Sanchez, Loretta
Franks (AZ)	Loftgren	Scott, David
Frelinghuysen	Mulvaney	Smith (WA)
Green, Gene	Napolitano	Westmoreland

□ 1733

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 105, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 105 on March 2, 2016 (H.R. 3716), I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 105 on March 2, 2016 (H.R. 3716), I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, March 2, 2016, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 105. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on final passage of H.R. 3716—Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on Wednesday, March 2, 2016, due to important events being held today in our district in Houston and Harris County, Texas. If I had been able to vote, I would have voted as follows: On H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act, I would have voted "yea."

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114-112)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016.

The actions and policies of persons that undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets, as well as the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation, including its purported annexation of Crimea and its use of force in Ukraine, continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 with respect to Ukraine.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, March 2, 2016.

NOTICE

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE

On March 6, 2014, by Executive Order 13660, I declared a national emergency pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701-1706) to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of persons that undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets.

On March 16, 2014, I issued Executive Order 13661, which expanded the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660, and found that the actions and policies of the Govern-

ment of the Russian Federation with respect to Ukraine undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets.

On March 20, 2014, I issued Executive Order 13662, which further expanded the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660, as expanded in scope in Executive Order 13661, and found that the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation, including its purported annexation of Crimea and its use of force in Ukraine, continue to undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets.

On December 19, 2014, I issued Executive Order 13685, to take additional steps to address the Russian occupation of the Crimea region of Ukraine.

The actions and policies addressed in these Executive Orders continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, the national emergency declared on March 6, 2014, and the measures adopted on that date, on March 16, 2014, on March 20, 2014, and December 19, 2014, to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, March 2, 2016.

—

HOOR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

—

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO ZIMBABWE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114-113)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, and renewed every year since then, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016.

The threat constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions, contributing to the deliberate breakdown in the rule of law, to politically motivated violence and intimidation, and to political and economic instability in the southern African region, has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 2, 2016.

NOTICE

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO ZIMBABWE

On March 6, 2003, by Executive Order 13288, the President declared a national emergency and blocked the property of certain persons, pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706), to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions. These actions and policies had contributed to the deliberate breakdown in the rule of law in Zimbabwe, to politically motivated violence and intimidation in that country, and to political and economic instability in the southern African region.

On November 22, 2005, the President issued Executive Order 13391 to take additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13288, including the blocking of the property of additional persons engaged in undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe.

On July 25, 2008, the President issued Executive Order 13469, which expanded

the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13288 and authorized the blocking of the property of additional persons who were engaged in undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe, facilitating public corruption by senior officials, or were responsible for committing human rights abuses related to political repression.

The actions and policies of these persons continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, the national emergency declared on March 6, 2003, and the measures adopted on that date, on November 22, 2005, and on July 25, 2008, to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13288.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 2, 2016.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF OFFICER ASHLEY GUINDON

(Mr. WITTMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Officer Ashley Guindon.

Officer Guindon was killed in the line of duty Saturday while responding to a call for help from a domestic violence victim.

She was 28 years old, and during her short life, Officer Guindon had done more for others than most of us will ever do. She spent 6 years in the Marine Corps Reserves before interning and ultimately working with the Prince William County Police Department.

At funeral services Tuesday, Officer Guindon was remembered as a police-woman and as a peace officer.

In Prince William County, the Police Department's stated mission is to "enhance the quality of life by providing police services through shared responsibility with the public."

As members of the public, it is incumbent upon us to respect the work that police officers do, the sacrifices that they make, and the lives that they touch across the Commonwealth and the United States of America.

God rest you and keep your family, Officer Guindon. Thank you for your service.

CONGRATULATING NAVY SEAL EDWARD BYERS

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I want to add the congratulations and commendations from the people of Ohio's Ninth District to Navy SEAL Edward Byers for his incredible valor, and I thank the President of the United States for awarding him this week the Medal of Honor.

Born in Toledo, Ohio, and raised in Grand Rapids, Ohio, SEAL Team Member Byers is a credit, not only to his service, but to the patriotic people who raised him, and for his enlistment in the U.S. military.

The bravery that he exhibited and the training and readiness that he exemplified through his valorous service in Afghanistan will go down in the annals of American history.

He is only one of a handful of SEALs who have been awarded the Medal of Honor. He handled the ceremony with great dignity, and we send our love and congratulations to his wife, to his family, and to all those who have the pleasure of knowing this really great American.

Congratulations, SEAL Team Member Edward Byers. You distinguished yourself on behalf of the people of your country and for freedom-loving people around our world.

Mr. Speaker, I will include in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD two articles about this Toledo native.

[From The Plain Dealer, Feb. 26, 2016]
TOLEDO NATIVE EDWARD BYERS WILL BE
AWARDED MEDAL OF HONOR
(By Brian Albrecht)

CLEVELAND, OHIO.—The rescue of an American hostage in Afghanistan in 2012 will result in Toledo native and Navy SEAL Edward C. Byers Jr. being awarded the Medal of Honor by President Barack Obama in a ceremony at the White House on February 29.

The Senior Chief Special Warfare Operator is only the 11th living service member to be awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery displayed in Afghanistan.

According to Navy information, Byers was born in Toledo in 1979 and grew up in Grand Rapids, Ohio. After graduating from Otsego High School, where he played varsity soccer, he joined the Navy in 1998.

Byers attended hospital corpsman school and also completed a basic underwater demolition/SEAL course and special operations combat medic course in 2003.

He went on 11 overseas deployments, including nine combat tours.

The Medal of Honor is awarded to members of the armed forces who distinguish themselves conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their own lives above and beyond the call of duty.

The mission that led to his Medal of Honor award involved the rescue of Dr. Dilip Joseph, an American who was abducted with his driver and Afghan interpreter in December of 2012.

U.S. intelligence located Joseph in a remote mountainous area in a small, single-room building, and Byers was part of the team assigned to the recovery mission.

In a subsequent Navy interview, Byers detailed his role in that mission:

"So that night was December 8 in Eastern Afghanistan, it was a cool night, we got off

the helicopters, did a four- or five-hour pretty arduous hike through the mountains, and upon getting to our target building where we assumed the American hostage was at, our point man Nick Cheque, he was right in front of me, he saw a guard come out of the door, he engaged that guard and we started sprinting towards the door.

"Nick made his way in, and I made my way in right behind him, and I went down by the wall, and I engaged an enemy by the backside of the wall. And then I saw another person moving across the floor, so by the time I got to him he was on his back and I was able to get down on top of him and straddle him with my knees, and I had to adjust my night vision to try to get some facial recognition.

"At the same time this is happening I'm calling out trying to find the location of the American hostage. And finally he spoke up and it was at that time I engaged the person I was on top of and jumped off, and jumped off of the guy I was on and jumped onto the doctor who was about three or four, maybe five feet to my right.

"The reason I did that is because I was wearing body armor, so I wanted to protect him from any other potential threats in the room.

"Anyone who's been in combat knows that in those moments you either react, or you get killed.

"When I did that there was a guy that was right behind him within arm's reach, who was armed, and I was able to pin that guy to the wall by his throat, kind-of holding the doctor, and waiting for my teammates to come in and take care of the threat that was right next to us. When I was done, I still laid on top of him, and kept asking him 'hey can you walk,' you know, and 'is there anything medically wrong with you,' because our goal is to bring this guy back alive.

So, he said he was fine, and once we got outside, I noticed that our medics were working on Nick, and you know, being a medic myself I passed off the American hostage off to our other teammates and I went over to work on Nick, and did resuscitative efforts on him all the way to the hospital, where he was announced dead there."

The official citation noted: "Chief Petty Officer Byers displayed superior gallantry, extraordinary heroism at grave personal risk, dedication to his teammates, and calm tactical leadership while liberating Dr. Dilip Joseph from captivity."

Byers said that when he found out he was being awarded the Medal of Honor, "I felt very honored and very humbled because I'm gonna be a representative for the Navy and the naval special warfare community, and there's a weight that's carried with that.

"And that weight is the sacrifices that everybody has made within this community. Guys like Nick Cheque and all of our other brothers that have fallen, it's an affirmation of the job that we do, and an appreciation of the job we do."

In the interview, Byers also credited the support of his family, and noted that when he told his mother about the award ceremony, "the first question out of her mouth is 'Do you think I can come to it?' And I said of course, mom, I think you'll be able to come to it."

He also noted that his daughter "knows that I'm daddy, and she loves me just for that. If you talk to her one-on-one, she'll tell you all the five nicknames she has for me, and none of them includes 'hero.'"

He concluded, "I'm gonna continue to be a SEAL. And I'm gonna take whatever job or

mission is next for me, and just continue doing that. I don't have any plans on changing my job at this time. I still love what I do, and as long as I love what I do I'll continue doing it."

Byers' personal decorations include the Bronze Star with Valor (five awards), the Purple Heart (two awards), the Joint Service Commendation Medal with Valor, the Navy Commendation Medal (three awards, one with Valor), the Combat Action ribbon (two awards), and the Good Conduct Medal (five awards).

He is one of only eight living Navy Medal of Honor recipients. There are 78 living recipients total.

Ohio has had 319 other Medal of Honor recipients with a connection to this state, dating back to the Civil War.

SUMMARY OF ACTION

SENIOR CHIEF SPECIAL WARFARE OPERATOR (SEAL) EDWARD C. BYERS JR.: FOR ACTIONS DURING OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM ON DEC. 8, 2012

Chief Special Warfare Operator (SEAL) Edward C. Byers Jr., United States Navy, distinguished himself by heroic gallantry as an Assault Team Member attached to a Joint Task Force in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM on 8 December 2012.

SPECIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENT

Dr. Dilip Joseph is an American citizen, who was abducted with his driver and Afghan interpreter on 5 December 2012. Intelligence reports indicated that Dr. Joseph might be transported to another location as early as 9 December 2012. Dr. Joseph was being held in a small, single-room building.

The target compound was located in a remote area beside a mountain in the Qarghah'i District of Laghman Province, Afghanistan. Chief Byers was part of the rescue team that planned to make entry into the room of guards where the hostage was believed to be located. Success of the rescue operation relied upon surprise, speed, and aggressive action. Trading personal security for speed of action was inherent to the success of this rescue mission. Each assaulter in the rescue force volunteered for this operation with full appreciation for the risks they were to undertake.

With the approval of the Commander of all International Security Assistance Forces in Afghanistan, the rescue force launched from its forward operating base. The infiltration was an exhaustive patrol across unimproved trails and mountainous terrain. After nearly four hours of patrolling, the rescue force was positioned to make its assault on the target compound.

As the patrol closed to within 25 meters of the target building, a guard became aware of the rescue force. The forward-most assaulter shot at the guard and ran towards the door to make entry as the guard disappeared inside. Chief Byers was the second assaulter in a sprint towards the door. Six layers of blankets securely fastened to the ceiling and walls served as the Afghan door. While Chief Byers tried to rip down the blankets, the first assaulter pushed his way through the doorway and was immediately shot by enemy AK-47 fire. Chief Byers, fully aware of the hostile threat inside the room, boldly entered and immediately engaged a guard pointing an AK-47 towards him. As he was engaging that guard, another adult male darted towards the corner of the room. Chief Byers could not distinguish if the person may have been the hostage scrambling away or a guard attempting to arm himself with an AK-47 that lay in the corner. Chief Byers

tackled the unknown male and seized control of him. While in hand-to-hand combat, Chief Byers maintained control of the unknown male with one hand, while adjusting the focus of his night vision goggles (NVGs) with his other. Once his NVGs were focused, he recognized that the male was not the hostage and engaged the struggling armed guard.

By now other team members had entered the room and were calling to Dr. Joseph to identify himself. Chief Byers heard an unknown voice speak English from his right side. He immediately leaped across the room and selflessly flung his body on top of the American hostage, shielding him from the continued rounds being fired across the room. Almost simultaneously, Chief Byers identified an additional enemy fighter directly behind Dr. Joseph. While covering the hostage with his body, Chief Byers was able to pin the enemy combatant to the wall with his hand around the enemy's throat. Unable to fire any effective rounds into the enemy, Chief Byers was able to restrain the combatant enough to enable his teammate to fire precision shots, eliminating the final threat within the room.

Chief Byers quickly talked to Dr. Joseph, confirming that he was able to move. He and his Team Leader stood Dr. Joseph up, calmed him, and let him know he was safe with American Forces. Once Dr. Joseph was moved to the helicopter-landing zone, Chief Byers, a certified paramedic and 18D medic, assisted with the rendering of medical aid to the urgent surgical assaulter. Chief Byers and others performed CPR during the 40-minute flight to Bagram Airfield where his teammate was declared deceased.

Chief Petty Officer Byers displayed superior gallantry, extraordinary heroism at grave personal risk, dedication to his teammates, and calm tactical leadership while liberating Dr. Dilip Joseph from captivity. He is unquestionably deserving of the Medal of Honor.

OFFICIAL CITATION

CHIEF SPECIAL WARFARE OPERATOR (SEA, AIR, AND LAND) EDWARD C. BYERS, JR. UNITED STATES NAVY

For service as set forth in the following citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as a Hostage Rescue Force Team Member in Afghanistan in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM from 8 to 9 December 2012. As the rescue force approached the target building, an enemy sentry detected them and darted inside to alert his fellow captors. The sentry quickly re-emerged, and the lead assaulter attempted to neutralize him. Chief Byers with his team sprinted to the door of the target building. As the primary breacher, Chief Byers stood in the doorway fully exposed to enemy fire while ripping down six layers of heavy blankets fastened to the inside ceiling and walls to clear a path for the rescue force. The first assaulter pushed his way through the blankets, and was mortally wounded by enemy small arms fire from within. Chief Byers, completely aware of the imminent threat, fearlessly rushed into the room and engaged an enemy guard aiming an AK-47 at him. He then tackled another adult male who had darted towards the corner of the room. During the ensuing hand-to-hand struggle, Chief Byers confirmed the man was not the hostage and engaged him. As other rescue team members called out to the hostage, Chief Byers heard a voice respond in English and raced toward it. He jumped atop the American hostage and shielded him from the high

volume of fire within the small room. While covering the hostage with his body, Chief Byers immobilized another guard with his bare hands, and restrained the guard until a teammate could eliminate him. His bold and decisive actions under fire saved the lives of the hostage and several of his teammates. By his undaunted courage, intrepid fighting spirit, and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of near certain death, Chief Petty Officer Byers reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

BIOGRAPHY

SENIOR CHIEF SPECIAL WARFARE OPERATOR
(SEAL) EDWARD C. BYERS JR.

Senior Chief Edward C. Byers Jr. was born in Toledo, Ohio in 1979. He grew up in Grand Rapids, Ohio. In 1997, he graduated from Otsego High School where he played varsity soccer. Byers joined the Navy in September 1998, and subsequently attended Recruit Training and Corpsman "A" School in Great Lakes, Illinois.

Byers started his naval career as a Hospital Corpsman. In 1998, he was assigned to Great Lakes Naval Hospital. In 1999, he served with 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marines in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, where he deployed with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit aboard USS AUSTIN (LPD 4). During deployment he earned his Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS) badge and Fleet Marine Force (FMF) warfare device.

In 2002, Byers attended Basic Underwater Demolition SEAL (BUD/S) training and graduated with Class 242. After graduation, he attended the Special Operations Combat Medic (SOCM) course. SOCS Byers has been assigned to East Coast SEAL Teams. He was promoted to the rank of Senior Chief Petty Officer in January of 2016.

Byers has deployed overseas 11 times with nine combat tours. His personal decorations include the Bronze Star with Valor (five awards), the Purple Heart (two awards), the Joint Service Commendation Medal with Valor, the Navy Commendation Medal (three awards, one with Valor), the Combat Action ribbon (two awards), and the Good Conduct Medal (five awards).

Byers holds a National Paramedics License, and has studied Strategic Studies and Defense Analysis at Norwich University. Byers is married and has a daughter.

NAVY MEDAL OF HONOR FACTS

Senior Chief Byers is the 6th Navy SEAL in history to receive the Medal of Honor.

Senior Chief Byers is one of only eight living Navy Medal of Honor recipients. There are 78 living recipients total.

There have been 745 Medals of Honor awarded to Navy personnel. (308 of those were for actions during the Civil War)

Only two Navy service members have received the Medal of Honor for actions subsequent to the Vietnam War, and both of those awards were posthumous. (Lieutenant Michael Murphy and Petty Officer Michael Monsoor, both SEALs)

The most recent Navy recipient of the Medal of Honor was Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael Monsoor, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor by President George W. Bush on Apr. 8, 2008.

The most recent living Navy recipient of the Medal of Honor was Robert Ingram, who left the Navy in 1968, and was later awarded the Medal of Honor by President Bill Clinton on Jul. 10, 1998 for actions during the Vietnam War.

Senior Chief Byers is the first living active duty member of the U.S. Navy to receive the

Medal of Honor since Apr. 6, 1976, the late Rear Admiral James Stockdale and Lieutenant Thomas Norris (also a SEAL) each received the decoration from President Gerald Ford.

Senior Chief Byers is the first living active duty enlisted member of the U.S. Navy to receive the Medal of Honor since Petty Officer Michael Thornton (also a SEAL) was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Richard Nixon on Oct. 15, 1973.

This is the 14th Medal of Honor awarded for actions in Afghanistan. Including Senior Chief Byers, 11 of those 14 awards were to living recipients. Four Medals of Honor were awarded posthumously for actions in Iraq.

CLOSING GUANTANAMO BAY

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the cold-blooded, calculating terrorists sitting in Guantanamo murdered and plan to continue killing Americans.

Since President Obama took office, he has released 150 terrorists back to their home countries. In fact, Spanish and Moroccan police just arrested four suspected members of a jihadi cell who recruited fighters for the Islamic State. One is described as a former Gitmo detainee who formerly fought with militants against Americans in Afghanistan.

The 91 high-security prisoners remaining at Guantanamo committed some of the most repulsive crimes known to all of us.

Severely lacking in detail, the plan to close Gitmo fails to describe where, under what authority, and at what cost the relocation of these terrorists will be.

Mr. Speaker, it is against the law to transfer terrorist detainees to American soil without congressional approval.

The United States should do everything it can to keep terrorists out of our country, not purposely bring them here.

Closing Gitmo endangers our U.S. national security, and it is a bad idea.

And that is just the way it is.

□ 1745

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES NOMINATION PROCESS

(Mr. ROTHFUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, when our Founders wrote the Constitution, they had the wisdom to create a system of checks and balances among the three branches of government. They knew this would limit power, protect against abuses, and promote liberty.

Under our Constitution, the President has the right to nominate Justices to the Supreme Court, but one

House of the Congress, the Senate, has the coequal right to consent to such an appointment. One branch has a power, another has a check.

Today, with a vacancy on the Supreme Court, we have a chance to see this system of checks and balances in action. In deciding whether to consent to an appointment to the Supreme Court, the Senate should assess whether the President has been acting consistent with the Constitution.

The chart to my left highlights just a few of President Obama's unconstitutional actions since he was reelected in 2012. These actions have been frequent, repeated, and grave. These actions have poisoned the well of deliberation for any appointment by this President.

In that light, why wouldn't the Senate withhold consent? It is a game the President chose to play, and withholding consent to his appointment is an appropriate consequence.

GUANTANAMO BAY

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, once again, Congress acted to stop the transfer of GTMO detainees to the United States. Guantanamo Bay is a much better venue to hold these known terrorists than to have them on American soil. Yet the President wants to defy Congress and the American people, who desire not to have this happen, and bring them onto American soil.

It endangers our courts, our system of government, and our people by bringing them here or even ultimately releasing them. We need to have the President, if he tries this and loses in court, once again, take a lesson in the final 10 months of his term that he needs to uphold the law that we passed and that he signed.

THE TEXAS WAR OF INDEPENDENCE AGAINST MEXICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ALLEN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today is March 2, 2016. 180 years ago, on March 2, 1836, in a little place called Washington-on-the-Brazos down in Texas, people of what is now Texas declared their independence from the nation of Mexico—March 2, 1836. Tonight I am here to talk a little bit about those folks 180 years ago and the cause and the result of the Texas War of Independence against Mexico.

We have to back up a little bit. For a long time, almost 300 years, what is now Texas was controlled by the Spanish. They claimed the land in Texas. It

was sparsely populated: some Indian tribes, but not very many folks. At some point, Spain also controlled what is now Mexico.

Mexico, the nation of Mexico, chose to declare independence from that European country of Spain and went to war with Spain to secure their independence back in 1820. That revolution—they called it the War of Independence—was successful. Mexico set up an independent nation, a democracy. They formed a government and a constitution very similar to the United States. Texas was a part of Mexico at that time and was part of a state called Coahuila. It was the Coahuila de Texas, two areas of northern Mexico that were one state in Mexico.

Things were fine until Mexico elected a President by the name of Santa Anna. When he became President of Mexico, this particular President abolished the democracy, abolished the constitution of 1824 that set up the Government of Mexico, and declared himself the dictator of Mexico. In fact, he destroyed the Republic of Mexico, the democracy of Mexico, and put himself as dictator-in-charge.

Throughout the history of the world, we know of a lot of dictators, but they all seem to have one thing in common: they take away the rights—the civil rights—of the people.

Some people in Mexico didn't like this, and therefore they started their own secession movement, their own revolution, their own independence. Now, most Americans know that Texas was one of those areas in Mexico that declared its independence from Mexico, and that independence, that revolution, was successful. But there were other areas of northern Mexico—and here on this map I have some of those areas—that also declared their independence for the reason they wanted to be free. They wanted independence from the dictatorship.

There was the Republic of the Yucatan, there was the Republic Coahuila, and there were three or four other republics, and the Republic of the Rio Grande. Several areas of population in Mexico declared their independence.

So what happened? Santa Anna not only was the dictator, but he was the commander in chief, and he was the general. He was the guy. He moved his army from Mexico City into these areas of revolution, areas where people were fighting against the government, the republic, or the dictatorship of Santa Anna. He had squelched, really, all of these revolutionary movements; although, portions of these areas did declare independence and appeared to have independence for a period of time.

So that brings us to 1835, several months before Texas declared independence. Here is what started the Texas War of Independence:

While all of these other movements—some were going on, some would go on

a few months later. But during this period, there was insurrection in northern Mexico because people were trying to seek independence. It started on October 2, 1835, at Gonzales, Texas, a small little community in Gonzales, Texas.

Remember, Texas is a part of Mexico at this time. The Mexican Government, when it was a free government, had encouraged immigration into this part of Texas—not just from the United States, but from Mexico and from European countries.

But this town of Gonzales, Texas, was in possession of a cannon. The cannon was to protect themselves from the people who lived in the area that were hostiles, as they were called in those days. Native Americans are who they were. And that cannon was for that purpose.

The Mexican Government said: We want the cannon back. You cannot have the cannon in Gonzales, Texas. We don't want you having it.

The Mexican Government made the demand on October 2 to the folks in Gonzales, Texas: Return the cannon to the Mexican military.

The people, the settlers of Gonzales, said: No. We are not going to do it. We are not giving you back the cannon. We need it.

So they resisted. They even made a flag. They called it the Come and Take It flag. You may have seen that recently. It is still popular with a lot of folks. It was a flag that said, "Come and take it," with a cannon on it. They hoisted this, and they had a skirmish with the Mexican Army, who came to take the cannon. Shots were fired on both sides, multiple shots. Apparently, most of the people shooting weren't great marksmen. A couple of Mexican soldiers were wounded, and they retreated without the cannon. But that event started the actual shooting war in the War of Independence.

Months before that, there had been complaints. There had been letters written to the Mexican Government. Stephen F. Austin, the Father of Texas, had been imprisoned in Mexico City trying to get some civil rights for people who lived in what is now Texas. But it all came to a head at this event in October of 1835.

It is interesting what started the Texas War of Independence, the shooting war, is very similar to what started the shooting war between the colonists and Great Britain. You remember the British were in Boston. We have all heard about the march through Lexington and Concord.

The purpose the British Army marched through Lexington and Concord in the 1770s was to take the firearms, the weapons, away from the colonists, out of the armories in Lexington and Concord. Of course, the colonists refused. They fired back, and it started the shooting war with the British Em-

pire, later a successful War of Independence.

It is interesting that both of them started when government showed up to take the weapons, the firearms, of the people who lived in that area.

The shooting war started, and, quite frankly, it was successful up until about this time in 1836. An army of Texans had entered a place called the Alamo in February of 1836—February 23, 1836—because of the approaching army of Santa Anna that was coming north into Texas—Tejas, as it was called.

The men that assembled at the Alamo to try to stop the invading army coming in were an interesting bunch. There were 100 to 187 of them. They came from almost all of the then-States of the United States. They came from several foreign countries, including Great Britain, Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, and Austria. Many of them were from what we call Mexico, and they had come into the Alamo.

An interesting name that is unique to Texas history is that Texans of Spanish Mexican descent were called Tejanos, a unique name for Texans, Tejanos of Spanish Mexican or Hispanic descent. There were eleven of them at the Alamo.

The 180 to 187 were from all walks of life. I told you they were from all different countries. They were not only Anglos and Tejanos, but there were two African Americans, two Blacks, at the Alamo, we understand. They were lawyers; they were frontiersmen; they were shopkeepers; they were young, and they were old.

There was even a United States Congressman at the Alamo. His name was David Crockett. He was a former Congressman from the State of Tennessee. He had gone to Texas to help in the revolution and also to see the fortunes that he could make as an individual.

There were a lot of reasons why people came to Texas, but 180 to 187 of them were in the Alamo to defend and to protect that concept of freedom.

This is a painting of what the Alamo looked like at the time those men were in the Alamo.

So they entered the Alamo—let's get the sequence of events correct—February 23. They are in the Alamo on March 2 when Texas declared independence. They were in the Alamo for 13 days. The final battle at the Alamo was on March 6, 1836.

While they were in the Alamo, they were led by the commander of the Alamo, who is really my most favorite person in all of history. He was a 27-year-old lawyer from South Carolina by way of Alabama. He had come to Texas to settle in the 1830s, and his name was William Barret Travis. He was placed in command of the Alamo, of all 180, 187 of the folks that were there. While he was in the Alamo—he entered on February 23—he realized

that the enemy was going to be a superior force.

□ 1800

In the cold, damp Alamo, a blue norther, as we called it in those days, had come. It was cold. The Alamo is near San Antonio, Texas. He wrote a letter asking for help. I have a copy of his letter on my wall in my office.

Here is what it said. To me, it is one of the most passionate letters ever written about freedom. It is dated February 24, 1836, in Bexar.

To the People of Texas and All Patriots and Fellow Citizens. I am besieged by a thousand or more of the enemy under Santa Anna. The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to 3,000 or 4,000 in 4 or 5 days. The enemy has demanded surrender at its discretion. Otherwise, the fort will be put to the sword. I have answered that demand with a cannon shot, and the flag still waves proudly over the wall. I ask that you come to my aid with all dispatch. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due his own honor and his country—victory or death. William Barret Travis, Commander.

That is a portion of the letter that he wrote that he sent out throughout the area of Texas asking for help. The courier was Jim Bonham, another South Carolinian that had come to Texas. He was William Barret Travis' boyhood friend. He would take this letter to different areas of Texas asking for help.

Only one group of folks answered that letter, and it was the men in Gonzales, Texas, where this all started. They decided that they would leave Gonzales, which is near San Antonio, march to the Alamo and help defend the Alamo. There were 32 of them.

When they arrived at the Alamo—some historians have said as they walked into the Alamo—Travis said they came here to die. That brought the total up to about 180 to 187.

If you will, Mr. Speaker, think about what those 32 men left behind. This is a rough area of the world in Texas, just the weather. But the people they left behind were their wives and their kids because the men had gone to defend the Alamo.

After the Alamo fell and all of those men were killed, it was then left up to those wives and children to make an existence in frontier Texas. They, in their own right, were amazing people that went ahead and forged an existence after Texas independence was declared.

So they are in the Alamo. On March 2, Texas declares independence. Probably the men in the Alamo never knew that Texas declared independence.

Finally, on March 6, after 13 days, Santa Anna and his superior army stormed the Alamo. All 187 Texans were killed. If any surrendered, they were executed.

The Mexican casualties, according to Santa Anna, were about 1,000 casual-

ties on the Mexican side. The Tejanos that were in the Alamo, all 11, were also killed in the attack.

Travis made the comment in a later letter that was sent out of the Alamo before this March 6 attack that defeat will cost the enemy more than victory. It turns out he was right.

Anyway, the Alamo fell. The flag that flew over the Alamo—I don't know if you can see it, Mr. Speaker—was not the Lone Star flag. A lot of people think it was the Lone Star flag, which is our Texas State flag.

It is the flag of Mexico with the Mexican eagle removed from the flag. And the date of 1824 was placed on that flag. Most historians think that was the flag that flew over the Alamo.

What is the significance of this? 1824 was the year that the constitution was written for the Republic of Mexico. The defenders of the Alamo wanted a constitutional government.

That is why they flew this flag, the 1824 constitution flag, to let the world know that is why they were defending the concept of liberty, freedom, and a constitutional government as opposed to a dictatorship.

But the Alamo fell. Santa Anna then started moving northeast through Texas. The Alamo is in San Antonio, Bexar County. It was just called Bexar in those days.

Meanwhile, an individual by the name of Sam Houston, who was the commander of all Texas armies, the few that there were, had been preparing an army while the men in the Alamo were at the Alamo.

He was assembling more volunteers—everybody was a volunteer—not only from Texas, but other Tejanos. Other folks from other States formed an army to defeat or to take on Santa Anna.

Santa Anna had actually split his army into three different columns. He was moving his three columns up through northeast Texas from Mexico.

Sam Houston and his army weren't ready; so, he didn't attack Santa Anna. In fact, he moved east. It is called the Runaway Scrape.

Not only was the army moving east away from Santa Anna's invaders, but the people who lived there were leaving, too, because they were afraid of the Mexican Army.

They were afraid of Santa Anna, is who they were afraid of. So you have the army, you have the settlers, and you have everybody moving northeast, called the Runaway Scrape.

Sam Houston continued to move. He would not engage the Mexican Army. In fact, some Texas folks—politicians—were irritated with Sam Houston because he wouldn't go to battle.

They kept moving east. They went through San Antonio, what is now Interstate 10 between San Antonio and Houston. They went right through that area, right through what is now Hous-

ton. The Mexican Army is following him. Santa Anna is following him.

They go to a place called Harrisburg, which is just east of Houston, on the marshes of the San Jacinto River, a marshy area, to a peninsula, and Sam Houston stopped on April 20, 1836.

Santa Anna continued to march and came on the peninsula. Both armies are on the peninsula. On April 21, here is what happened.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, most battles throughout history, no matter where they are, no matter who they are—the Greeks, the Romans, everybody—start at sunup or right before sunup. But that didn't happen on April 21, 1836.

The Texans went to battle in the middle of the afternoon. They weren't going to wait until the next day. The soldiers were ready to do battle. Sam Houston really had no choice but to lead them into battle. And so he did.

In the middle of the afternoon, just one column—there were only a handful of them, more than at the Alamo—a single column, single file, was led by an individual playing a flute, another person carrying the flag, and a third individual beating the drums.

The flutist didn't know any songs. So he played an old—we would call it a house of ill repute song, "Come to the Bower." I don't know the lyrics of it, Mr. Speaker, but you can look it up.

He played on his flute "Come to the Bower," which was the song they marched into battle with, carrying a flag of Lady Liberty, a semi-clothed individual on the flag. Then you had the drummer.

Then you had all of these really scary-looking folks going into battle, the Texas Army. Most of them didn't have any kind of uniforms. They dressed like frontiersmen. They had a shotgun, a long rifle, a tomahawk, knives, well-armed individuals.

Also with them was Juan Seguin. Juan Seguin was a captain in the Texas Army. He was a Tejano. He led this cavalry of Tejanos to protect one of the flanks when the Texans were marching down. He, like the rest of the Texas Army, did not have uniforms. They wore their normal clothes.

Sam Houston wanted to make sure that the Texans and the foot soldiers didn't mix up the Mexican Army with the Tejanos that were in the cavalry.

So he had all of the Tejanos put a playing card in their sombrero. In those days, apparently, the cards weren't small like they are today. They were big.

They stuck this 4x6 card—or something like that—in their hats, their sombreros, so that everybody would know that they were on the side of liberty, not part of the Mexican Army, a unique part of Texas history.

So, in the middle of the day, what had happened was Santa Anna was taking a nap. It was siesta time. Now,

some say historically—modern revisionists—that this isn't exactly true, but I believe it because I want to believe it.

Santa Anna was preoccupied with an individual that was loyal to the Republic of Texas, an individual that we fondly call the Yellow Rose of Texas now. Therefore, he wasn't prepared to go into battle when the Texans were coming down this small hill.

In any event, they were caught by surprise. This battle lasted 18 minutes. Eleven Texans were killed, 600 of the enemy were killed, and the rest were captured. In fact, more were captured later than in the Texas Army.

The battle lasted 18 minutes. Military historians studied this battle because of its decisiveness. So General Houston led one battle. It was successful. Santa Anna was captured.

Texas claims independence from Mexico—that was April 21, 1836—and goes ahead and forms a government, forms a republic and, in September of the same year, elects a president and a vice president.

From October of 1835 to September of 1836 was the War of Independence. Declaration of independence was on March 2. April 21 the battle was successful. Texas is a free and independent country and remains so for 9 years.

The battle cry at the Battle of San Jacinto, as you have heard in history, was "Remember the Alamo." "Remember Goliad." That was another place where Texans were massacred that fought Santa Anna's army.

This is what Texas looked like when Texas declared independence from Mexico. Maybe you can see it, Mr. Speaker. I don't know.

You see what is now Texas over here, but you see a lot of other land. You see Oklahoma, part of Kansas, part of New Mexico, part of Colorado. It even goes up to part of Idaho, almost to the Canadian border. All of this area here, Texas claimed all of—that is the Republic of Texas—and claimed it for 9 years.

Texas periodically would try to join the United States as the 28th State. Two times Texas tried to join the Union, and two times Congress rejected Texas' approval into the Union.

On the third time, rather than have a treaty with Texas—because Texas was an independent country—a joint resolution was filed.

It passed the House of Representatives and it passed the Senate, because you didn't need two-thirds vote then. We still have those discussions today, don't we? A joint resolution.

By one vote, Texas was admitted to the Union in 1845 and, in 1846, actually came into the United States as the 28th State.

It was a republic once. A lot of people in Texas still think we are a republic, and we seem to act like it sometimes. But we have a unique history.

The history of Texas, why I like it so much, is because everybody wanted to live in Texas, wanted to come to Texas, of all races, of all nationalities, from all States.

They fought in a war against another nation, a dictator, for the same reason that the 13 colonies fought for independence against Great Britain: for freedom and for liberty.

□ 1815

There is an independent streak that runs through all Texans. It is a state of mind for Texas.

Mr. Speaker, how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 34 minutes remaining.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we are of an independent mind, of an independent philosophy. March 2 is an important day for us because our ancestors and people we don't even know about decided that it was worth their lives to fight against tyranny—against a totalitarian government run by a dictator. They were volunteers. They were normal people who just had that flame of liberty in their souls, and they refused to have it taken away from them.

So we remember those folks who created Texas, who fought for independence for Texas, those men at the Alamo—William Barret Travis, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, Jim Bonham, and 187 more individuals. The youngest was 15, Tapley Holland from Ohio. The oldest was 68—who fought and died for that liberty.

When Texas became part of the United States, it had great depth because of the War of Independence. Part of the deal for Texas to be admitted to the Union, even by one vote, was this land that I mentioned to you that was all sold to the Federal Government, to the Union, to pay off the debts of the Republic of Texas. Thus, as we know now, Texas looks like this. All of these other areas became other States that were later admitted to the United States.

When there was the agreement between Texas and the United States to join the Union, it was agreed—and it is still possible—that Texas may divide now the State of Texas into five different States. Now, that is not going to happen, because nobody is going to be able to agree on what should be called "Texas"; but we can divide into five States, and that is the decision of the people who live in Texas.

One of the other provisions of the joint resolution was that Texas may fly its flag, the Lone Star Flag—the flag of the one star, the Lone Star, the Lone Republic—even with the American flag. When you go to Texas, you will see a lot of American flags, and you will see a lot of Texas flags, but most of the Texas flags are flying level with the American flag. They can do that by law. Texas does that because of

its agreement and admission into the Union.

Our country has a great history, Mr. Speaker, with 50 States, with all of our territories. Our history is unique. No place on Earth is like the United States. It is because of our history, because of the diversity of the peoples and cultures in this country. The diversity of Texas, the diversity of the United States is what gives it strength. It is not a weakness. It is a strength.

It is, I think, quite important that we as Members of the House of Representatives, who represent the 50 States of the United States, make sure that we talk about our history—how we are a unique Nation among peoples, how we have always been a unique Nation among peoples—and preserve what those folks at the Alamo fought for and what our folks fought for in the Colonies in wars since then, which are freedom and liberty. Those are not trite words. They are core words. The concept of liberty lives in every person ever born in history. Most people never see it. Most people in the world today aren't free, but there are a few, and those few—some of those few—are in what we call the United States of America.

I thank all of those Texans back in Texas for honoring Texas Independence Day, March 2, 1836. Especially, we should always honor those people who lived in our history who gave their lives for the rest of us, because they were good folk.

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DONOVAN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, this week, we open Women's History Month—an opportunity for us to celebrate the progress women have made and the amazing contributions that we are responsible for.

We have more women in Congress now than ever before. Women are now the leading breadwinners or are the only breadwinners in 40 percent of households. We have more women who lead major companies and who are in

prominent positions, like on the Supreme Court. Women today are more likely to earn college degrees and to attend graduate school than are their male counterparts, and more women are entering traditionally male-dominated fields. That progress has been incredibly swift. We are talking about gains that have really only happened in the past 60 years. Still, there are many, many milestones that women have yet to reach.

Even with the most women Congress has ever seen, this body, supposedly elected to both represent and reflect the United States, is still overwhelmingly 80 percent male, in fact. Women still make 78 cents for every dollar a man earns, particularly troubling when you think about the 40 percent of women I just mentioned who are supporting their families. Black women make even less at 64 cents on the dollar while Latina women make just 66 cents on the dollar. If this week is any indicator, there are still great numbers of people, primarily men, who feel we are incapable of making our own decisions about our health care.

We have got a long way to go, Mr. Speaker. Part of the reason we can't get all the way there is that we have not passed the Equal Rights Amendment. We have been avoiding ensuring protection for women in the Constitution for almost 100 years. Quite frankly, there is only so much we can do until we offer that basic level of protection.

Mr. Speaker, the ERA was first drafted and introduced in the 1920s. It finally passed in 1972 and was sent to the States for ratification, where it received 35 of the 38 approvals that it needed. Unfortunately, time ran out. One of the reasons we have yet to solve some of the greatest challenges facing our Nation's women is the lack of true protection in the Constitution.

What better way to ensure the right to fair pay for women? What better way to ensure equal treatment in the workplace? What better way to protect against laws that inherently limit women? What better way to protect all of the progress we have made and to ensure that women can continue to excel?

The Equal Rights Amendment would provide the foundation for legislation that protects women from discrimination at every level—legislation that is more necessary now than it has ever been with more and more women leading at home and in the workplace.

We will spend a lot of time in the coming weeks talking about what we need to do for women—from the passage of the Fair Pay Act to ensuring paid leave for women and men. Yet there is one thing that we should have done long ago, and my colleagues are here tonight, on the floor with me, to call for action where we have failed before.

It is now my pleasure to yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), the primary sponsor of the ERA bill.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Representative BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN, and the Congressional Progressive Caucus for dedicating this time to talk about passing the Equal Rights Amendment—a cause I have fought for my entire time in Congress.

March is Women's History Month, and we have many accomplishments to celebrate and to be proud of, but we must remain focused on the continued struggle for full equality for women. Without the ERA, this goal will not be fully realized, and half of Americans will not realize their full potential. All of us, men and women, stand to benefit from true gender equality.

Consider, for instance, some laws that are being proposed across the Nation that have disparate negative impacts on women:

In Illinois, a bill sponsored by men is pending that would deny a birth certificate to a newborn of a single mother unless a father is listed on the birth certificate. This would make it impossible for a single mother to enroll her child in a public school, for her child to obtain a driver's license, or for her to collect child support and other benefits for the child. The law is silent on single fathers.

In Kentucky, the State senate has passed a bill sponsored by a man that would force all women who are seeking to terminate pregnancies to undergo ultrasounds, whether they want to or not, and to have doctors describe the images to them. While we cannot know for sure how an ERA would affect the outcome of future Supreme Court cases, we have seen that its absence leaves women vulnerable to discrimination without their having legal recourse.

These legislative efforts to roll back hard-won progress and to curtail rights are directed squarely at women. You will not find equivalent examples of bills that roll back or constrain the rights of men—and men only. Unfortunately, that noble and empowering declaration in our founding document that “all men are created equal” left some of us out. In fact, it leaves about half the population of America out.

Many people are actually surprised when they realize that the United States Constitution does not mention women. That omission has, unfortunately, become a glaring problem when it comes to achieving full equality—and not just a problem for women but for families as well—for everyone. For instance, when women make less than men just because they are women, it is an issue that affects their entire families.

We saw that in the case of Lilly Ledbetter. The Supreme Court found that she had been paid less for doing the very same job as her male counterparts. This not only meant that, for years, she made less money than her male colleagues in order to support her family and to provide for her children throughout her working life, but it meant that she would also spend her entire retirement being less financially secure.

Such unfair and unequal treatment should certainly be prohibited under our Constitution. Yet the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia famously told an interviewer for the California Lawyer Magazine that he believed that the Constitution does not outlaw this kind of discrimination because, in his view, the 14th Amendment does not apply to women.

The 14th Amendment reads that no State shall “deny to any person . . . the equal protection of the laws.”

To most people, that would seem to be pretty simple and straightforward; but Justice Scalia argued that the word “person” should not apply to women. In his view, when it was written, it was only meant to apply to the recently emancipated slaves.

The problem here is that there is ambiguity about whether or not gender discrimination is explicitly prohibited by the Constitution. The only solution to this challenge is to plainly include women in the Constitution. So between the State and congressional legislators who believe it is permissible to roll back hard-won rights and to pass legislation that unfairly and unequally burdens women—and the idiosyncratic views of Supreme Court Justices who declare women are not people—it is essential to pass the Equal Rights Amendment in a brief amendment that simply reads:

“Women shall have equal rights in the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.”

□ 1830

Let's put women in the Constitution at long last.

Research shows that 75 to 90 percent of Americans mistakenly believe that the ERA has already passed and that men and women are equal under the law. In 2012, a poll asked: Do you think the Constitution should guarantee equal rights for men and women? And 91 percent said yes, including 86 percent of Republicans.

The way things stand now, the Supreme Court has ruled that the Constitution provides strict guidelines against discrimination based on race and national origin, but it is silent on issues of gender discrimination.

When it comes to gender discrimination, the Court has applied a lesser

standard that makes it easier to get away with discriminating against women. Plain old common sense and your basic sense of fairness should tell you that the same strict scrutiny, protection against discrimination based on race and national origin, should also apply to discrimination based on sex.

So the ERA would establish unequivocally, once and for all, that women are entitled to equal treatment under the law. Equal treatment means equal treatment. Equal means equal for all, women included. The ERA would, once and for all, provide clear, constitutional guidance on gender equity issues. The ERA would lend the force of the Constitution to existing prohibitions against sex discrimination in the workplace or schools. The ERA would stop bias in wages, benefits, hiring practices, and other conditions of employment.

If America wants to be a world leader in the promotion of human rights, it needs to lead by example on women's rights. Sadly, in this area, America is exceptional only in a bad way.

The U.S. stands out as one of the few nations that does not even address gender equality in its Constitution. As the world's leading democracy, we are falling behind on women's equality. At a time when we seek to champion democracy around the world, we must guarantee equality here at home. It is time for the United States to secure equal rights for women across our Nation by ratifying the ERA.

Progress can all too easily be rolled back. Laws can be repealed, and judicial attitudes can shift, turning women into second class citizens. It seems like I spend a majority of my time here in Congress just fighting to hold on to what we already have, trying to keep it from being rolled back. An ERA would protect the progress made on women's rights from any shifting political trends.

Women are still not receiving equal pay for equal work. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women still earn 78 cents for every dollar earned by a man, and this has contributed to older women being the largest segment of poverty in our great Nation. Because when you are paid less, your pension is less, your 401(k) is less, your Social Security is less, and that happens to have profound effects on women.

Just this past week there was an article in *The Wall Street Journal* that talked about the largest group of people that are growing in the workforce are older women, and this is because they cannot afford to retire. They have to continue working because of the discrimination in pay and because of having taken times when they weren't in the workforce to take care of a sick parent or to nurse and raise a child.

Sex and pregnancy discrimination persists in the workforce. Governmental programs, such as Social Secu-

rity, still unequally provide benefits to men and women.

An ERA would be a woman's best defense against harmful practices that punish her simply because she is a woman. We cannot keep fighting discrimination against women one battle at a time, constantly playing defense. Passing the ERA will put women on equal footing in the legal system of all 50 States, particularly in areas where women have historically been treated as second class citizens.

We have 186 bipartisan cosponsors of H.J. Res. 52 in the House, which I proudly introduced with Representative CYNTHIA LUMMIS of Wyoming—just 32 shy of a majority. It reflects the strength of the belief that women should be included in the Constitution and guaranteed equal treatment under the law.

It is time to stop making excuses. Women and like-minded men have to demand that Congress and State governments get this done. Equal means equal.

I thank the gentlewoman for yielding, and I thank her from the bottom of my heart for really organizing this important Special Order.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for being with us this evening.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GRAHAM).

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, first I want to thank Congresswoman WATSON COLEMAN for holding this special session and bringing attention to the Equal Rights Amendment.

When I was born in 1963, we lived in a different world. It was legal to openly discriminate against hiring women; it was legal to discriminate against women in lending and credit; it was legal to pay women substantially less than men; and it was legal to fire a woman just for becoming pregnant.

Fortunately, when I was born, things were beginning to change. Women were fighting for and gaining greater equality.

Today, women are better protected from those forms of discrimination. We have made great strides, but we haven't yet been able to recognize our equality in the Constitution. There is nothing more sacred, nothing more important to America than our Constitution.

I support the Equal Rights Amendment because I grew up in a changing world, but I want my daughter and the next generation to grow up in a changed world. I want my daughter to live in a country where her and every woman's equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

To illustrate why I believe we should and still can ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, I want to specifically speak about the history of the ERA in my home State of Florida.

Our House of Representatives voted for ratification of the ERA three separate times—in 1972, 1975, and 1979—but our Senate remained more divided on the issue.

Bill Cotterell, a columnist for the *Tallahassee Democrat*, recently opined:

It was still a very different world, where a Member of the legislature walked around with a toy pig under his arm, proudly proclaiming himself a male chauvinist.

It was a different world, one still changing, but I am proud to say there were men who stood up for the women of our State in the State senate. One of them was my father, Bob Graham, who bucked his own Democratic Party leadership to support the ERA, a move that helped earn him the title of a doghouse Democrat.

After repeated failures in the Senate, some thought the ERA was dead, but it resurfaced in Florida in 1982. That summer, just a few weeks remaining before the ratification deadline, more than 10,000 men and women marched on our State capitol in support of the amendment.

Hearing their call and supporting their cause, my father, who had moved out of the doghouse into the Governor's mansion, called our legislature into special session. For the fourth time, the House voted in favor of the amendment, but unfortunately the senate blocked ratification. That was 34 years ago.

And today I believe our State is better than that. I believe, given another chance to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, Democrats and Republicans in Florida could be united to support equality for women.

I am proud to have grown up in a changing world, but it is time for our daughters and the next generation of women to grow up in a changed world. It is time to recognize their equality in our Constitution.

I thank the Congresswoman for bringing attention to this issue and for all that you do on behalf of women.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER), the sponsor of legislation that would retroactively lift the deadline for the ratification of the ERA.

Ms. SPEIER. I thank the gentlewoman from New Jersey for bringing us together tonight to talk about one of the most fundamental issues facing women in this country. I would hope that we would do these Special Orders on a monthly basis or maybe even more frequently to kind of beat the drum about how important it is for us to address this issue.

Today we see everything we need to see to convince us of the need to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment and put women's equality into the Constitution. We have a pay gap that has not closed where women are making 79 cents for every dollar that men make.

For African American women that is 63 cents, and for Latina women it is 54 cents for every dollar earned by a man.

In fact, women in this country have to work until April 15 of the following year—tax day, ironically—to make as much money as their male counterparts. We can't afford that. We can't afford that in a country that speaks of equality.

Meanwhile, we have a Congress and State legislators who are focused like a laser beam on attacking women's health. We just spent 5 hours today in a hearing of a special committee designed specifically to attack women's health. Since the start of 2016—merely 2 months ago, and for the last 2 months—there have been more than 201 anti-choice bills introduced in State legislatures across this country, efforts to undermine a woman's right to choose.

We have a Supreme Court seat at stake and issues of gender equality hanging in the balance. It is important to quote what the late Justice Scalia said about discrimination against women. He was a constitutional expert, an originalist, and he said the following:

"Certainly the Constitution does not require discrimination on the basis of sex. The only issue is whether it prohibits it. It doesn't."

When I read that quotation by Justice Scalia—may he rest in peace—I had shivers up and down my spine because it was so direct. It was so clear. It makes the point that the Constitution of this country does not prohibit discrimination based on sex, even though the vast majority of Americans believe it is already in the Constitution.

Ninety-six percent of U.S. adults believe that male and female citizens should have equal rights, and 72 percent mistakenly believe it is already in the Constitution. As Justice Scalia pointed out, it is not.

So what does that mean?

That means that every single woman in this country can be subject to discrimination and not have a legal foot to stand on.

Probably one of the most obvious cases is the case of Peggy Young. Peggy Young worked for United Parcel Service for 10 years. She was a good worker, a hard worker. And then, lo and behold, she gets pregnant. She gets pregnant. She goes to her supervisor and she says: I am pregnant.

He says: Okay. Go to your doctor and find out what accommodations you will require.

□ 1845

She went to her doctor, and her doctor said: Well, you can do anything except you can't lift more than 10 pounds.

So she came back to her supervisor and said: I can do anything except I can't lift more than 10 pounds.

He said: Oh, my gosh, that is a terrible liability.

For all intents and purposes, she was fired from her job. She was told she will have to take a leave of absence, that she will not be paid, and that she would not be eligible for health benefits. So her entire pregnancy she had no prenatal care and no health insurance.

Now, what makes this story particularly insidious is that during that same timeframe, men at the United Parcel Service who had heart disease, heart attacks, had had a DUI, or had diabetes were asked to go to their doctors and find out what accommodations they should propose. Some of them came back with the exact same accommodation: that they could not lift more than 10 pounds.

What did United Parcel Service do? United Parcel Service accommodated them. That is profound discrimination.

But guess what. Peggy Young filed a lawsuit. It went all the way to the Supreme Court, and it got remanded. It got remanded in part because not only did she have to prove that there was discrimination, which clearly there was; she had to prove that it was intentional discrimination by United Parcel Service, and she couldn't prove that.

Now, in all the other forms of discrimination, whether it is based on race or religion, you only have to prove that there was discrimination, not that there was intentional acts of discrimination. So that is why it is so important that we get this in the Constitution.

We have a new generation of women who are more independent, more able to support themselves, and more politically empowered than ever. I just read an article that shows single women are now our most potent political force in this country. Single women—whether they are single never been married, single divorced, single separated, single—are our most potent electoral force. They deserve the right to full legal equality under our Constitution. How can this body, of all bodies, not recognize the importance of equality among men and women?

So I have introduced H.J. Res. 51. It is very simple.

The ERA was introduced first in 1923 by Alice Paul, and introduced every Congress since then, and then it was introduced and actually passed the House and passed the Senate. It then had to be ratified by three-quarters of the States. Unfortunately, when that was drafted, in the preamble they put a timeline. It was ratified by 35 States, but not 38. So it came back to Congress, and they amended the preamble and extended the length of time in which the ERA could be passed by other States. And then nothing happened.

What this resolution does—and it would only require a majority of the

Members of this body to pass it—is basically use the precedent and take the preamble and the time deadline and just strike it.

There is no need for a deadline in a constitutional amendment. Most constitutional amendments have not been subject to a deadline. There is precedent that they were willing to change it as it relates to the ERA, and I say let's make it yet another precedent and just take the timeline out of it. That would give us the opportunity to get three more States to pass the ERA, to ratify it.

We already know in Virginia it has been passed by the senate, and we are waiting for action in the house. As my good friend from Florida said, in Florida they could pass it, conceivably, now.

So why not do what is fundamentally right? Why not do what is so simple? Twenty-four simple words, that is all the ERA is. It is on one page, and it is simply: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

The time has come, Members, and I applaud my good colleague from New Jersey for bringing us together. We should do it again. I enjoy working with you on any number of issues.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman, and I want to say tonight that we definitely will be coming back here again on a Special Order hour and addressing this issue. We will just continue to do it until we can see some movement. I thank you for that.

Mr. Speaker, the women tonight, the Members of the House, have spoken so eloquently and so compellingly on this issue and the urgency with which we need to take this issue up. But the women of this Nation, they are very strong and intelligent and capable citizens as well.

As our laws in our society have given women a turn at bat, we have stepped up to the plate, and we have proven time and again that we can do what men do just as well as they do it, and often even better.

Although expectations and stereotypes are changing, women are still lacking in equal footing. Last year the United States fell to 28th place in the annual world equality rankings, behind even Rwanda and the Philippines. We are one of only a few nations that fails to specifically affirm the legal equality of men and women in our governing documents, a failure we would hold any other nation accountable for.

The ERA is the biggest and most basic step we can take to ensure equality for every woman. We need it, and we need it now. So let us work together to give women equal rights once and for all.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call upon the people of our nation to re-double the effort to pass the Equal Rights Amendment—an amendment to make real the promise of equal rights, equal justice and equal opportunity for women. Given the continuous assaults on women's health care and reproductive rights and the persistent wage gap, there is no better time for this Amendment to become enshrined in our constitution. This is long overdue and it is shameful that we continue to be three states short of ratification. The Constitution must guarantee and protect women's rights.

In recognition of Women's History Month, I encourage my colleagues to take up this issue and fight for the Equal Rights Amendment.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on February 12, 2016, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 757. To improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

H.R. 907. To improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

H.R. 1428. To extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 52 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 3, 2016, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4518. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Bennet S. Sacolick, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4519. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility; Massachusetts: Boston, City of, Suffolk County; [Docket ID: FEMA-2015-0001] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8421] received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4520. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's intent to sign a Project Agree-

ment Concerning Small Intelligent Unmanned Aerial Systems with the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of India, Transmittal No.: 03-16, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 27(f) (as amended by Public Law 113-276, Sec. 208(a)(4)); (128 Stat. 2993); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4521. A letter from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary, Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Cooperative Threat Reduction Program Annual Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2016, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 3715; 50 U.S.C. 3741 — 3743; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4522. A letter from the Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, United States Agency for International Development, transmitting the Agency's formal response to the GAO report entitled, "Foreign Aid: USAID Has Taken Steps to Safeguard Government-to-Government Funding but Could Further Strengthen Accountability" (GAO-15-377), pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 720; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4523. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting the Commission's Annual Report to Congress on EEO Complaint Activity for Fiscal Year 2015, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4524. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program Reports for Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 7201(e); Public Law 89-554 (as amended by Public Law 95-454, Sec. 310); (92 Stat. 1153); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4525. A letter from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Management, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (RIN: 1505-AC48) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4526. A letter from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Amtrak, National Railroad Passenger Corporation, transmitting Amtrak's Fiscal Year 2017 General and Legislative Annual Report, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 24315(b); Public Law 103-272, Sec. 1(e); (108 Stat. 918); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4527. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Acushnet River, New Bedford and Fairhaven, MA [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0058] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4528. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Lake Pontchartrain, Slidell, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0814] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4529. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland

Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Closure of Morro Bay Harbor Bar Entrance; Morro Bay, CA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1083] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4530. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; New Years Eve Firework Displays, Chicago River, Chicago, IL [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1074] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4531. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Regulated Navigation Area; Reporting Requirements for Barges Loaded with Certain Dangerous Cargoes, Illinois Waterway System located within the Ninth Coast Guard District; Expiration of Stay (Suspension) and Administrative Changes [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0849] (RIN: 1625-AA11) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4532. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Security Zone; Kailua Bay, Oahu, HI [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1030] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4533. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Missouri River, Atchison, KS [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0358] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4534. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Duwamish Waterway, Seattle, WA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0285] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4535. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Moving Security Zone; Escorted Vessels; MM 90.0 — 106.0, Lower Mississippi River; New Orleans, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0995] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4536. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Moving Security Zone; Escorted Vessels; MM 90.0 — 106.0, Lower Mississippi River; New Orleans, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0995] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received

February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4537. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Intracoastal Waterway; Lake Charles, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1086] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4538. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Richland, Apra Harbor/Philippine Sea, GU [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1101] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4539. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Bayou Chene beginning at mile 130.0 on the Atchafalaya River extending through the Bayou Chene ending at Mile 85.0 on the Intercoastal Waterway Morgan City, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0016] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4540. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Transit Restrictions, Lower Mississippi River Mile Marker 311.0 — 319.0 [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0023] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4541. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Transit Restrictions, Lower Mississippi River Mile Marker 365.0 — 361.0 [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0014] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4542. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Bayou Petite Caillou, Boudreaux Canal Floodgate; Chauvin, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1125] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4543. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; James River, Newport News, VA [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0044] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4544. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's

temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Hudson River, Anchorage Ground 19-W [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0028] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4545. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Edisto Beach interim final integrated feasibility report and environmental assessment for March 2014 (H. Doc. No. 114-109); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

4546. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Bogue Banks final integrated report and environmental impact statement for August 2014 (H. Doc. No. 114-110); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

4547. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Flagler County hurricane and storm damage reduction final integrated feasibility study and environmental assessment for September 2014 (rev. October 2014) (rev. April 2015) (H. Doc. No. 114-111); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

4548. A letter from the Secretary and the Attorney General, Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice, transmitting the Departments' Annual Report to Congress on Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program for FY 2015, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1395i(k)(5); Aug. 14, 1935, ch. 531, title XVIII, Sec. 1817(k)(5) (as added by Public Law 104-191, Sec. 201(b)); (110 Stat. 1996); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

4549. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's First Quarterly Report for FY 2016 on the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994, pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 4332(b)(1); Public Law 103-353, Sec. 2(a) (as added by Public Law 110-389, Sec. 312(c)); (122 Stat. 4165); jointly to the Committees on the Judiciary and Veterans' Affairs.

4550. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's determinations and the associated report, pursuant to Public Law 112-239, Secs. 1244(c)(1), 1246(a), and 1247(a); jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, and Financial Services.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 4119. A bill to authorize the exchange of certain land located in Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jackson County, Mississippi, between the National Park Service and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114-441). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 482. A bill to redesignate Ocmulgee National Monument in the

State of Georgia and revise its boundary, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114-442). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BYRNE: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 635. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4557) to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule, and providing for proceedings during the period from March 4, 2016, through March 11, 2016 (Rept. 114-443). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. OLSON, Mr. BLUM, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. VALADAO):

H.R. 4660. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow an increased work opportunity credit with respect to recent veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. FUDGE (for herself, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. PLASKETT, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 4661. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to include Parent PLUS loans in income-contingent and income-based repayment plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee (for himself and Mr. HOYER):

H.R. 4662. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the preference given, in awarding certain asthma-related grants, to States that allow trained school personnel to administer asthma-related rescue medications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4663. A bill to forbid Federal agencies from buying Apple products until Apple provides the Federal Government with technical support necessary to access encrypted information sought by a warrant that may be materially relevant to the commission of terrorism; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. NADLER (for himself, Ms. ROSELEHTINEN, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. POE of Texas, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. MENG, Mr. O'Rourke, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. DONOVAN):

H.R. 4664. A bill to direct the President to submit to Congress a report on actions the Department of State and other relevant Federal departments and agencies have taken

regarding steps to ensure that a just, comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace accord also finds resolution of the issue of Jewish refugees from Arab countries and Iran; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. BEYER (for himself, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. WELCH, and Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS):

H.R. 4665. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to conduct an assessment and analysis of the outdoor recreation economy of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 4666. A bill to require State educational agencies that receive funding under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to have in effect policies and procedures on background checks for school employees; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida (for himself, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Mr. HASTINGS):

H.R. 4667. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Army to expedite the completion of repairs to the Herbert Hoover Dike, Florida, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. HANNA, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. NORTON, Mr. NADLER, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN):

H.R. 4668. A bill to affirm that Federal employees are protected from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and to repudiate any assertion to the contrary; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. FOSTER:

H.R. 4669. A bill to support the establishment of a Standards Coordinating Body in Regenerative Medicine and Advanced Therapies; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HECK of Nevada (for himself, Mr. HARDY, and Mr. AMODEI):

H.R. 4670. A bill to adjust the boundary of the Mojave National Preserve; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan (for himself and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York):

H.R. 4671. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to eliminate Federal Prison Industries' advantages over the private sector and small business in the procurement of commercially available goods and services; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 4672. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the exception for marginal production from the taxable income limit on percentage depletion for oil and natural gas wells; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LOEBSACK (for himself, Mr. WALZ, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. POCAN, and Mrs. BUSTOS):

H.R. 4673. A bill to amend the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 to establish a competitive grant program for renewable fuel infrastructure, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MENG (for herself, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SALMON, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CROWLEY, and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 4674. A bill to support the sustainable recovery and rebuilding of Nepal following the recent, devastating earthquakes near Kathmandu; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4675. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to prohibit the use of leaded fuel by aircraft operating within United States airspace; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. ROONEY of Florida (for himself and Mr. DEUTCH):

H.R. 4676. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ASHFORD (for himself, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. COOPER):

H.J. Res. 83. A joint resolution proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PERRY (for himself and Mr. SALMON):

H.J. Res. 84. A joint resolution to authorize the use of United States Armed Forces against organizations that support Islamist extremism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. PEARCE (for himself, Mr. COLE, and Ms. MCCOLLUM):

H. Con. Res. 122. Concurrent resolution supporting efforts to stop the theft, illegal possession or sale, transfer, and export of tribal cultural items of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians in the United States and internationally; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SALMON (for himself, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. BERA, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. ROHRBACHER):

H. Res. 634. A resolution recognizing the importance of the United States-Republic of Korea-Japan trilateral relationship to counter North Korean threats and nuclear proliferation, and to ensure regional security and human rights; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. KING of New York:

H.R. 4660.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common

Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Ms. FUDGE:

H.R. 4661.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, otherwise known as the Commerce Clause.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4662.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4663.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 4664.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clauses 1, 3, and 18.

By Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 4665.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 4666.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Commerce Clause: Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution gives Congress the power "to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes."

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida:

H.R. 4667.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. DUCKWORTH:

H.R. 4668.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18, Section 8, Article 1 of The Constitution of the United States

By Mr. FOSTER:

H.R. 4669.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HECK of Nevada:

H.R. 4670.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2:

"The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitutions shall be construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State."

By Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan:

H.R. 4671.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3—To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

Amendment X—Nothing in the Constitution authorizes the Federal government to do anything other than those things enumerated (coin money, enter into treaties, conduct a Census—which are inherently governmental). Thus, under Amendment X, the

right to carry out commercial activities is reserved to the States, respectively, or to the people.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 4672.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8:

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States.

By Mr. LOEBSACK:

H.R. 4673.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 4674.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4675.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. ROONEY of Florida:

H.R. 4676.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8—to make rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and Naval Forces.

By Mr. ASHFORD:

H.J. Res. 83.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V of the Constitution, that grants Congress the authority, whenever two thirds of both chambers deem is necessary, to propose amendments to the Constitution.

By Mr. PERRY:

H.J. Res. 84.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 140: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 228: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. BARR.
H.R. 239: Mr. GRAYSON and Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 244: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 292: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 333: Mr. PETERSON.
H.R. 359: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 448: Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 563: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 605: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey and Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 616: Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 624: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 654: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, and Mr. POMPEO.
H.R. 699: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
H.R. 775: Mr. BLUM.
H.R. 793: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 802: Mr. SCHRADER.
H.R. 845: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 863: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 923: Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 932: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 953: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.

H.R. 986: Mr. ROSS and Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 989: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 999: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 1093: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 1333: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 1431: Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 1432: Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 1486: Mr. BABIN.
H.R. 1550: Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 1598: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 1625: Mrs. DAVIS of California.
H.R. 1655: Mr. CARNEY.
H.R. 1769: Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 1811: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1923: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 1941: Mr. MCKINLEY and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 2016: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 2054: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 2058: Mr. WOMACK.
H.R. 2090: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 2121: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H.R. 2170: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
H.R. 2215: Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 2355: Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 2399: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 2430: Mr. PERLMUTTER.
H.R. 2461: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 2536: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 2646: Mr. DONOVAN.
H.R. 2747: Mr. NOLAN and Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.
H.R. 2799: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. POLIS, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 2802: Mr. RIGELL.
H.R. 2844: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 2846: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 2894: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.
H.R. 2896: Mr. ROTHFUS and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 2901: Mr. ROTHFUS.
H.R. 2911: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 3099: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. DENHAM.
H.R. 3137: Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia.
H.R. 3183: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 3222: Mrs. LUMMIS and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
H.R. 3326: Mr. ROONEY of Florida and Mr. GUINTA.
H.R. 3351: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 3377: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 3381: Mr. GUINTA and Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 3406: Mr. POLIS and Ms. LEE.
H.R. 3446: Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 3516: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 3520: Ms. TSONGAS and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 3637: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 3660: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 3687: Mr. WESTERMAN.
H.R. 3706: Ms. ADAMS, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. WELCH, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 3713: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 3779: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3808: Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. TROTT, and Mr. HARDY.
H.R. 3817: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 3880: Mr. TROTT.
H.R. 3886: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 3913: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 3952: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 3977: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4055: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4062: Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 4063: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4073: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 4096: Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 4126: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois and Mr. JOYCE.
H.R. 4137: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 4167: Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, and Mr. VELA.
H.R. 4262: Mr. BOST, Mr. OLSON, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 4264: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4277: Mr. ZINKE and Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 4305: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4336: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 4380: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SINEMA, and Ms. EDWARDS.
H.R. 4381: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 4396: Mr. TAKANO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 4399: Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 4447: Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 4448: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 4451: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 4456: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 4472: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 4479: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 4480: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4488: Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 4499: Mr. TONKO and Mr. DOLD.
H.R. 4505: Mr. FINCHER, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 4535: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. KEATING, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 4544: Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 4552: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4555: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. BABIN, Mr. HARPER, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 4570: Ms. ESHOO, Ms. STEFANIK, and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 4584: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. BABIN, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 4592: Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. WELCH, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. TONKO, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. KING of New York, and Ms. PLASKETT.
H.R. 4603: Mr. RICHMOND and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4612: Mr. PALAZZO and Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 4617: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 4625: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. ESTY, Ms. KUSTER, and Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 4636: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
H.R. 4640: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 4642: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 4651: Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. KING of New York, and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H.R. 4653: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. RUSH, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. NORTON, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. LEE, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, and Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 4655: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 4657: Mr. WELCH.
H.J. Res. 22: Mr. NADLER.
H.J. Res. 55: Mr. GARRETT, Mr. GUINTA, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H. Con. Res. 36: Mr. NORCROSS.
H. Con. Res. 40: Mr. KING of New York.
H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H. Con. Res. 121: Mr. PAULSEN.
H. Res. 245: Ms. MENG.
H. Res. 377: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.
H. Res. 436: Ms. MENG.

H. Res. 518: Ms. MENG.
H. Res. 551: Mr. SERRANO, Mr. McCAUL, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. KING of New York, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H. Res. 613: Mr. RENACCI.
H. Res. 616: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H. Res. 617: Mr. PEARCE, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. YOHO, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. BRAT, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. ABRAHAM, and Mr. BYRNE.

H. Res. 626: Ms. MENG.
H. Res. 629: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. McNERNEY.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,
47. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Jackson County Board of Supervisors,

relative to a resolution to join with coast cities and counties in requesting the legislature to appropriate at least 80% of the \$750 million in economic damages from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill to the local governments of the three coastal counties to be used for strategic, economic development to create new jobs, and expand the state's tax base from sales and income taxes generated from Mississippi coast businesses; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services.

SENATE—Wednesday, March 2, 2016

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our Father in Heaven, shower our Senators with Your marvelous grace this day and always. Make them sufficient for these grand and challenging times. Teach them to make the most of their time, for the night comes when no one can work.

Lord, refresh them with Your might so that they will face vicissitudes with an equanimity of temperament and an absolute trust in the power of Your providence. Keep a protective eye on them so that they may dwell in safety.

Today, shine the light of Your presence upon us all, filling us with Your joy.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY AND COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the current Senate Democratic leader once stated that “nowhere in [the Constitution] does it say the Senate has a duty to give presidential nominees a vote.” The incoming Senate Democratic leader, the one we will have next year, did not even wait until the final year of the last President’s term to declare that the Senate should “not confirm a Supreme Court nominee except in extraordinary circumstances.” And we all know what Vice President BIDEN said when he chaired the Judiciary Committee. Here is what he said: “It would be our pragmatic conclusion that once the political season is underway, and it is, action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over.”

That is the essence of the Biden rule. Yesterday, the chairman of the Judici-

ary Committee and I personally reiterated to President Obama that we will observe the Biden rule.

The American people deserve to be heard on this matter. That is the fairest and most reasonable approach today. Voters have already begun to choose the next President, who in turn will nominate the next Supreme Court Justice. It is an important decision.

Justice Scalia himself reminded us that setting aside one’s personal views is “one of the primary qualifications for a judge.” His aim was to follow the Constitution wherever it took him, even if he disagreed politically with the outcome. We saw that when he sided with the constitutional right of protestors to burn the American flag. “If you’re going to be a good and faithful judge,” he said, “you have to resign yourself to the fact that you’re not always going to like the conclusions you reach.”

I think Americans agree that judges should be fair, impartial arbiters who apply the law and the Constitution equally to all and as actually written, not as they wish it were. I think most Americans agree a judge should be committed to an evenhanded interpretation of the law and the Constitution so that everyone who walks into a courtroom knows he or she will have a fair shake.

But there is another view of the role of a judge. Under the view promoted by the current President, the so-called “empathy standard,” judges prioritize their political ideology above the law. The problem with that approach to judging is that empathy is only good in the courtroom if you are lucky enough to be the person the judge actually has empathy for. It is not so good if you are the other guy.

This is something the American people should decide. President Obama still has every right to nominate someone on his way out the door. The Senate also has every right to withhold its consent. That is what the Biden rule reminds us of this election year. We will appropriately revisit the matter after Americans elect their new President.

Now, this is not the only issue we discussed down at the White House yesterday. We also had a constructive discussion about other legislative issues, such as the prescription opioid and heroin epidemic sweeping our country and the important bill we will continue to consider today to help address it.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA, is bipartisan legislation that targets this crisis at every level. The bill has a host of sup-

porters, including 42 bipartisan cosponsors and more than 130 groups dedicated to combating the epidemic.

And while this is an important authorization bill, I would also note that Congress has already appropriated \$400 million to opioid-specific programs. All \$400 million of those funds still remain available to be spent today. That is right. These funds are still available, and we will have more opportunities to address funding through the appropriations process later this spring.

Michael Botticelli, the Obama administration’s Director of National Drug Control Policy, testified at a hearing just a few months ago and thanked Congress for including funding in the fiscal 2016 spending bill, saying: “We appreciate that Congress provided more than \$400 million in funding in the fiscal 2016 appropriations act, specifically to address the opioid epidemic, an increase of more than \$100 million from the previous year.”

Botticelli went on to say there is “clear evidence that a comprehensive response,” such as that of CARA, is “tremendously important.” He said that the provisions in CARA are “critically important to make headway in terms of this epidemic.”

Let’s not allow this issue to get tangled up in politics. It is really too important to each of our States. Let’s do our part today to help those in recovery take their lives back. Let’s help keep families together and kids safer and help prevent more Americans from suffering at the hands of addiction.

Let’s put politics aside and continue to work to pass the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which would be an important step forward in the fight against our national opioid and heroin crisis.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The Democratic leader is recognized.

RELATIONSHIPS IN THE SENATE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, people who watch us on television should understand that everything we do is not dour and kind of frowny. There are times, when we are away from the cameras, that we get along well and have a good time.

There is no better example of that than this morning. Every week at 8 o’clock in the morning on Wednesday we meet downstairs for the Senate Prayer Breakfast. I go there as often as

I can. It is really very stimulating, and I am always glad I go every time I do go. But today was especially good because AL FRANKEN, the junior Senator from Minnesota, was making the presentation. Even though there is an opening prayer and a closing prayer, there is some talk in between that, and his presentation was terrific. And of course we all know AL FRANKEN, and so a lot of it was funny.

But I just want everyone watching us this morning to know we are not always—I used the word—dour. There are times when we smile and have a good time.

Everyone knows the Presiding Officer and I have total disagreement on policy, but I so admire the Presiding Officer. Without reservation, I can say we are friends—not just political friends, but we are friends. A year ago, when I was injured, because he is an ophthalmologist, he reached out to me and gave me his advice and mostly his concern, for which I am grateful.

I think if we stopped and looked around at each other, we would find many such relationships such as the one with the Presiding Officer and the senior Senator from Nevada, and I appreciate that.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we now have a new rule called the Biden rule, which I guess was invented this morning. What happens when my friend the Republican leader, as he did yesterday, talks about what Senator BIDEN has said is that he never completes the little presentation Senator BIDEN made. Senator BIDEN did not say there wouldn't be any nominations. Here is what he said in ending his presentation. At the end of his speech in 1992, Senator BIDEN said:

Compromise is the responsible course both for the White House and for the Senate. If the President consults and cooperates with the Senate or moderates his selections absent consultation, then his nominees may enjoy my support as did Justices Kennedy and Souter.

That is what this is all about. Senator BIDEN never said there wouldn't be any nominations approved, and that was evident in the oval office yesterday. Vice President BIDEN told the story of a Republican President calling him down—he was chairman of the Judiciary Committee—and said: OK, we are having some problems here. I have 10 names on a piece of paper. I want you to look at it and give me your rough estimate. I will not bind you to this, but which of these do you think would work?

These were people that a Republican President presented to the Democratic chair of the Judiciary Committee saying: Give me your impression of these people. So they went over them—yes, yes, yes, no. They had 10 names.

That is the same thing that happened yesterday in the White House. President Obama said: Do you have any names for me? Give them to me. I will be happy to take a look at them.

So there is no Biden rule, unless the Biden rule is that we will continue doing what we have always done here in the Senate. And what is that? We approve in any Presidential election year—in a Presidential election year we always take care of a nomination. We have never in the history of the country not done that, until now.

Now, the other thing is we keep talking about a lot of political things, but we have an obligation based on the Constitution of the United States to do something about these nominations we get from the President. We have a constitutional duty to do our jobs, and that duty is to give advice and consent to the President when he sends a nomination up here, which we will have in a matter of a week or so.

And we do it quickly. We don't spend months and months doing this. The Republicans' unprecedented call to block any nominee is more of the obstruction that we have had here too often. This has never ever been done before.

As for my friend the Republican leader to talk about statements I made and the senior Senator from New York made, of course we made statements. It didn't affect what we did around here. I hoped people listened. I hoped it slowed down what President Bush was going to do. But the fact is President Bush did what he wanted, and he, in the process, was able to present nominations to us and we looked them over.

Now we have a new standard. We are not going to meet with whomever this person is. We don't know who it is, but we are not going to meet with him. We are not going to hold hearings, and we are not going to vote. That is wrong.

REPUBLICAN PARTY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, here is a headline of an article that appeared in the Washington Post: "Trump is the GOP's Frankenstein monster." This was the headline in the Washington Post article authored by Robert Kagan, a former official in the Reagan State Department who is now a senior fellow at the Brookings Institute.

It is true, Donald Trump is the Republican Party's Frankenstein monster. Republicans have spent the last 8 years stoking the fires of resentment and hatred, building Trump piece by piece. Today the Republican establishment acts like it is surprised by Donald Trump's victories around the country. They feign outrage that a demagogue spewing vile xenophobia is somehow winning in a party which spent years telling immigrants they are not welcome in America. They act surprised that Republican voters are flocking to a birther candidate, even as Republican

congressional leaders continue to support a man who refuses to distance himself from the Ku Klux Klan.

They express shock and outrage that Republican voters cheer Trump's schoolyard taunts, even as they trounce the most common courtesies extended to every President, even as they deny a fair hearing to a President's Supreme Court nominee for the first time ever—the first time in history. Republicans shouldn't be surprised. They spent 8 years laying the groundwork for the rise of Donald Trump.

The reality is that Republican leaders are reaping what they have sown. As Mr. Kagan said in his Washington Post opinion piece yesterday, "The party's own political crimes are being punished in a bit of cosmic justice fit for a Greek tragedy."

Seven years ago the Republican leader and his party decided that President Obama was an illegitimate President. They decided his Presidency was unworthy of their basic respect and good-faith efforts. Congressional Republicans decided that whatever policies this President proposed, they would reflexively oppose them—regardless of the merits. Instead, congressional Republicans had only one objective—to keep President Obama from being re-elected.

In order to do that, the Republican leader and his party refused to engage the President or Democrats on policy. No matter how dire the crisis for the American people, Republican leaders decided it was more important to deny President Obama an achievement than help people in need. Think about that. No matter how dire the crisis for the American people, Republican leaders decided—I repeat—it was more important to deny President Obama an achievement than to help people in need.

Think about the monumental legislation Republicans refused to even engage in, let alone work on:

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, known as the stimulus, when our economy was in a nosedive—in a nosedive. Remember, when Obama was elected, that month he was elected the country lost 800,000 jobs in 1 month. We were in the throes of the great recession, and yet it took an effort to get a mere three Republicans to work with us on that legislation. Very important. They were strong, they were courageous—Specter, COLLINS, and Snowe. Republican leadership made it clear they didn't want their Senators working with President Obama on the stimulus, but we got it done.

Health care. Before ObamaCare, there were nearly 50 million Americans with no health insurance. Since then, almost 20 million more Americans have health coverage. Today, if you have a preexisting disability, you are covered

with insurance. Today the rate of no insurance is below 10 percent. This is all in spite of congressional Republicans who would not work with Democrats despite our best efforts. They refused to do anything to engage in any way. When the debate over health care started, three Republicans—Senators Snowe, GRASSLEY, and ENZI, very important Members of the Finance Committee—acted interested in fixing our Nation's health care system, but Republican leadership twisted their arms to convince them—whatever words we want to use—to get them in line with the Republican leader's wishes and abandoned any hope of bipartisanship on the issue. So there was none. Senator Snowe brought up a bill in the Finance Committee, but the Republican leadership turned it into a “no” vote on the Senator floor, and the senior Senator from Iowa went back to Iowa and started talking about death panels. Doesn't that sound like something Donald Trump would do?

Wall Street and Dodd-Frank legislation, when Wall Street crashed. I can remember being in the White House with the Republican Secretary of the Treasury, a wonderful man. Secretary Paulson was on his knees begging NANCY PELOSI to work with him. The country was in deep trouble. Democrats controlled the body. We had a Republican President, and we worked with a Republican President.

In the shadow of economic ruin created by Wall Street's unhinged greed, Republicans would not work with us to rein in the big banks and financial institutions. They had been warned by Republican leadership. In the end, only one Republican voted for that bill—only one.

Time and time again, congressional Republicans went to the extreme to block any positive legislation to improve our Nation. The tactics Republicans used to obstruct this President were unprecedented. In effect, the Republican leader told the President that none of his policies would get a fair hearing from Republicans, and that is basically true. Republicans denied the Office of the President the respect it deserves, and their shoddy and disrespectful treatment became the norm.

In 6 years, the Republican leader launched more than 500 filibusters. During the same 6-year period, Lyndon Johnson, in 6 years, had overcome 2 filibusters—500 to 2. This is far more than anyone ever imagined could happen in this great body.

Actions speak louder than words. Automatically filibustering the President's policies for years on end sends a clear and simple message: Republicans think this President's proposals are illegitimate. Instead of working for the American people, Republicans decided that making the extreme rightwing happy was more important. Republicans blocked legislation to prevent

criminals and suspected terrorists from buying guns, even background checks. Republicans blocked commonsense campaign finance reform. We had 59 votes to allow some disclosure of all these huge amounts of money; not a single Republican voted with us—not a single Republican. Republicans voted to deport DREAMers. Republicans blocked an increase in the minimum wage. Republicans blocked equal pay for women. Republicans blocked efforts to do something about student loan debt. Now Republicans are blocking the nominee of the Supreme Court before that person has even been nominated. This is just a short list of what they have blocked.

From this rhetoric to their actions, the Republicans have set the Trump standards. The Republican Party has long used Islam to fearmonger. Now Donald Trump is doing the same thing. The Republican Party has spent years railing against Latinos and immigrants, trying to incite fear and panic. Congressman STEVE KING called immigrants drug dealers and described their bodies in a very negative, ugly way. Now Donald Trump is saying the same thing. Donald Trump is the ultimate fulfillment of the Republicans' legacy of obstruction and resentment, but to be frank, it is not only Trump. Senator CRUZ, Senator RUBIO, and Ben Carson are saying basically the same thing—maybe a little more subtle, but they are saying the same thing. After all, this is the same party—the Republican Party—that just yesterday saw nine of its Members vote against naming a post office after world-famous poet and civil rights activist Maya Angelou. It is hard to believe.

Even as the establishment condemns what Donald Trump says and does, the Republican leadership is still supporting him. The Speaker of the House yesterday affirmed that he will vote for Donald Trump if he is the Republican nominee for President. The Senate Republican leader has not said he will not vote for Donald Trump if he is the nominee. Publicly, at least, Republicans are supporting a man who refused to denounce the KKK—a man who continues to denigrate immigrants, Muslims, and the disabled.

Donald Trump is the standard bearer for the Republican Party. Republicans created him by spending 7 years appealing to some of the darkest forces in America. It is up to Republicans to try and undo what they have done by denouncing Donald Trump. It is time for Republicans to stop the Frankenstein they created. Trump is the GOP's Frankenstein monster. If Republicans fail to stop Donald Trump, it will tear the party apart even more than it is now.

Will the Chair announce the business of the day?

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to proceed to S. 524 is agreed to.

The clerk will report the bill.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 524) to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

S. 524

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the “Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016”.

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Findings.

Sec. 3. Definitions.

TITLE I—PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

Sec. 101. Development of best practices for the use of prescription opioids.

Sec. 102. Awareness campaigns.

Sec. 103. Community-based coalition enhancement grants to address local drug crises.

TITLE II—LAW ENFORCEMENT AND TREATMENT

Sec. 201. Treatment alternative to incarceration programs.

Sec. 202. First responder training for the use of drugs and devices that rapidly reverse the effects of opioids.

Sec. 203. Prescription drug take back expansion.

Sec. 204. Heroin and methamphetamine task forces.

TITLE III—TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

Sec. 301. Evidence-based opioid and heroin treatment and interventions demonstration.

Sec. 302. Criminal justice medication assisted treatment and interventions demonstration.

Sec. 303. National youth recovery initiative.

Sec. 304. Building communities of recovery.

TITLE IV—ADDRESSING COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES

Sec. 401. Correctional education demonstration grant program.

Sec. 402. National Task Force on Recovery and Collateral Consequences.

TITLE V—ADDICTION AND TREATMENT SERVICES FOR WOMEN, FAMILIES, AND VETERANS

Sec. 501. Improving treatment for pregnant and postpartum women.

Sec. 502. Report on grants for family-based substance abuse treatment.

Sec. 503. Veterans' treatment courts.

TITLE VI—INCENTIVIZING STATE COMPREHENSIVE INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE

Sec. 601. State demonstration grants for comprehensive opioid abuse response.

TITLE VII—MISCELLANEOUS

Sec. 701. GAO report on IMD exclusion.

Sec. 702. Funding.

Sec. 703. Conforming amendments.

Sec. 704. Grant accountability.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The abuse of heroin and prescription opioid painkillers is having a devastating effect on public health and safety in communities across the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug overdose deaths now surpass traffic crashes in the number of deaths caused by injury in the United States. In 2014, an average of more than 120 people in the United States died from drug overdoses every day.

(2) According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (commonly known as “NIDA”), the number of prescriptions for opioids increased from approximately 76,000,000 in 1991 to nearly 207,000,000 in 2013, and the United States is the biggest consumer of opioids globally, accounting for almost 100 percent of the world total for hydrocodone and 81 percent for oxycodone.

(3) Opioid pain relievers are the most widely misused or abused controlled prescription drugs (commonly referred to as “CPDs”) and are involved in most CPD-related overdose incidents. According to the Drug Abuse Warning Network (commonly known as “DAWN”), the estimated number of emergency department visits involving nonmedical use of prescription opiates or opioids increased by 112 percent between 2006 and 2010, from 84,671 to 179,787.

(4) The use of heroin in the United States has also spiked sharply in recent years. According to the most recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health, more than 900,000 people in the United States reported using heroin in 2014, nearly a 35 percent increase from the previous year. Heroin overdose deaths more than tripled from 2010 to 2014.

(5) The supply of cheap heroin available in the United States has increased dramatically as well, largely due to the activity of Mexican drug trafficking organizations. The Drug Enforcement Administration (commonly known as the “DEA”) estimates that heroin seizures at the Mexican border have more than doubled since 2010, and heroin production in Mexico increased 62 percent from 2013 to 2014. While only 8 percent of State and local law enforcement officials across the United States identified heroin as the greatest drug threat in their area in 2008, that number rose to 38 percent in 2015.

(6) Law enforcement officials and treatment experts throughout the country report that many prescription opioid users have turned to heroin as a cheaper or more easily obtained alternative to prescription drugs.

(7) According to a report by the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (commonly referred to as “NASADAD”), 37 States reported an increase in admissions to treatment for heroin use during the past 2 years, while admissions to treatment for prescription opiates increased 500 percent from 2000 to 2012.

(8) Research indicates that combating the opioid crisis, including abuse of prescription painkillers and, increasingly, heroin, requires a multi-pronged approach that involves prevention, education, monitoring, law enforcement initiatives, reducing drug diversion and the supply of illicit drugs, expanding delivery of existing treatments (including medication assisted treatments), expanding access to overdose medications and interventions, and the development of new medications for pain that can augment the existing treatment arsenal.

(9) Substance use disorders are a treatable disease. Discoveries in the science of addiction have led to advances in the treatment of substance use disorders that help people stop abus-

ing drugs and prescription medications and resume their productive lives.

(10) According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, approximately 22,700,000 people in the United States needed substance use disorder treatment in 2013, but only 2,500,000 people received it. Furthermore, current treatment services are not adequate to meet demand. According to a report commissioned by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (commonly known as “SAMHSA”), there are approximately 32 providers for every 1,000 individuals needing substance use disorder treatment. In some States, the ratio is much lower.

(11) The overall cost of drug abuse, from health care- and criminal justice-related costs to lost productivity, is steep, totaling more than \$700,000,000,000 a year, according to NIDA. Effective substance abuse prevention can yield major economic dividends.

(12) According to NIDA, when schools and communities properly implement science-validated substance abuse prevention programs, abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs is reduced. Such programs help teachers, parents, and healthcare professionals shape the perceptions of youths about the risks of drug abuse.

(13) Diverting certain individuals with substance use disorders from criminal justice systems into community-based treatment can save billions of dollars and prevent sizeable numbers of crimes, arrests, and re-incarcerations over the course of those individuals’ lives.

(14) According to the DEA, more than 2,700 tons of expired, unwanted prescription medications have been collected since the enactment of the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-273; 124 Stat. 2858).

(15) Faith-based, holistic, or drug-free models can provide a critical path to successful recovery for a great number of people in the United States. The 2015 membership survey conducted by Alcoholics Anonymous (commonly known as “AA”) found that 73 percent of AA members were sober longer than 1 year and attended 2.5 meetings per week.

(16) Research shows that combining treatment medications with behavioral therapy is an effective way to facilitate success for some patients. Treatment approaches must be tailored to address drug abuse patterns and drug-related medical, psychiatric, and social problems of each individual. Different types of medications may be useful at different stages of treatment or recovery to help a patient stop using drugs, stay in treatment, and avoid relapse. Patients have a range of options regarding their path to recovery and many have also successfully addressed drug abuse through the use of faith-based, holistic, or drug-free models.

(17) Individuals with mental illness, especially severe mental illness, are at considerably higher risk for substance abuse than the general population, and the presence of a mental illness complicates recovery from substance abuse.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term “medication assisted treatment” means the use, for problems relating to heroin and other opioids, of medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies;

(2) the term “opioid” means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability; and

(3) the term “State” means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any territory or possession of the United States.

TITLE I—PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

SEC. 101. DEVELOPMENT OF BEST PRACTICES FOR THE USE OF PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and

(2) the term “task force” means the Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force convened under subsection (b).

(b) INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE.—Not later than December 14, 2018, the Secretary, in cooperation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Defense, and the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, shall convene a Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force to review, modify, and update, as appropriate, best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The task force shall be comprised of—

(1) representatives of—

(A) the Department of Health and Human Services;

(B) the Department of Veterans Affairs;

(C) the Food and Drug Administration;

(D) the Department of Defense;

(E) the Drug Enforcement Administration;

(F) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(G) the National Academy of Medicine;

(H) the National Institutes of Health; and

(I) the Office of National Drug Control Policy;

(2) physicians, dentists, and non-physician prescribers;

(3) pharmacists;

(4) experts in the fields of pain research and addiction research;

(5) representatives of—

(A) pain management professional organizations;

(B) the mental health treatment community;

(C) the addiction treatment community;

(D) pain advocacy groups; and

(E) groups with expertise around overdose reversal; and

(6) other stakeholders, as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(d) DUTIES.—The task force shall—

(1) not later than 180 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), review, modify, and update, as appropriate, best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, taking into consideration—

(A) existing pain management research;

(B) recommendations from relevant conferences;

(C) ongoing efforts at the State and local levels and by medical professional organizations to develop improved pain management strategies, including consideration of alternatives to opioids to reduce opioid monotherapy in appropriate cases;

(D) the management of high-risk populations, other than populations who suffer pain, who—

(i) may use or be prescribed benzodiazepines, alcohol, and diverted opioids; or

(ii) receive opioids in the course of medical care; and

(E) the Proposed 2016 Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (80 Fed. Reg. 77351 (December 14, 2015)) and any final guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(2) solicit and take into consideration public comment on the practices developed under paragraph (1), amending such best practices if appropriate; and

(3) develop a strategy for disseminating information about the best practices to stakeholders, as appropriate.

(e) **LIMITATION.**—The task force shall not have rulemaking authority.

(f) **REPORT.**—Not later than 270 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), the task force shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) the strategy for disseminating best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, as reviewed, modified, or updated under subsection (d);

(2) the results of a feasibility study on linking the best practices described in paragraph (1) to receiving and renewing registrations under section 303(f) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(f)); and

(3) recommendations for effectively applying the best practices described in paragraph (1) to improve prescribing practices at medical facilities, including medical facilities of the Veterans Health Administration.

SEC. 102. AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall advance the education and awareness of the public, providers, patients, and other appropriate entities regarding the risk of abuse of prescription opioid drugs if such products are not taken as prescribed.

(b) **DRUG-FREE MEDIA CAMPAIGN.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Office of National Drug Control Policy, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General, shall establish a national drug awareness campaign.

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—The national drug awareness campaign required under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) take into account the association between prescription opioid abuse and heroin use;

(B) emphasize the similarities between heroin and prescription opioids and the effects of heroin and prescription opioids on the human body; and

(C) bring greater public awareness to the dangerous effects of fentanyl when mixed with heroin or abused in a similar manner.

SEC. 103. COMMUNITY-BASED COALITION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS TO ADDRESS LOCAL DRUG CRISES.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) is amended by striking section 2997 and inserting the following:

“SEC. 2997. COMMUNITY-BASED COALITION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS TO ADDRESS LOCAL DRUG CRISES.

“(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997’ means chapter 2 of the National Narcotics Leadership Act of 1988 (21 U.S.C. 1521 et seq.);

“(2) the term ‘eligible entity’ means an organization that—

“(A) on or before the date of submitting an application for a grant under this section, receives or has received a grant under the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997; and

“(B) has documented, using local data, rates of abuse of opioids or methamphetamines at levels that are—

“(i) significantly higher than the national average as determined by the Attorney General (including appropriate consideration of the results of the Monitoring the Future Survey published by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Survey on Drug Use and Health published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration); or

“(ii) higher than the national average, as determined by the Attorney General (including appropriate consideration of the results of the surveys described in clause (i)), over a sustained period of time; and

“(3) the term ‘local drug crisis’ means, with respect to the area served by an eligible entity—

“(A) a sudden increase in the abuse of opioids or methamphetamines, as documented by local data; or

“(B) the abuse of prescription medications, specifically opioids or methamphetamines, that is significantly higher than the national average, over a sustained period of time, as documented by local data.

“(b) **PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**—The Attorney General, in coordination with the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, may make grants to eligible entities to implement comprehensive community-wide strategies that address local drug crises within the area served by the eligible entity.

“(c) **APPLICATION.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Attorney General at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Attorney General may require.

“(2) **CRITERIA.**—As part of an application for a grant under this section, the Attorney General shall require an eligible entity to submit a detailed, comprehensive, multi-sector plan for addressing the local drug crisis within the area served by the eligible entity.

“(d) **USE OF FUNDS.**—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section—

“(1) for programs designed to implement comprehensive community-wide prevention strategies to address the local drug crisis in the area served by the eligible entity, in accordance with the plan submitted under subsection (c)(2); and

“(2) to obtain specialized training and technical assistance from the organization funded under section 4 of Public Law 107–82 (21 U.S.C. 1521 note).

“(e) **SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.**—An eligible entity shall use Federal funds received under this section only to supplement the funds that would, in the absence of those Federal funds, be made available from other Federal and non-Federal sources for the activities described in this section, and not to supplant those funds.

“(f) **EVALUATION.**—A grant under this section shall be subject to the same evaluation requirements and procedures as the evaluation requirements and procedures imposed on the recipient of a grant under the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997.

“(g) **LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.**—Not more than 8 percent of the amounts made available pursuant to subsection (i) for a fiscal year may be used by the Attorney General to pay for administrative expenses.”.

TITLE II—LAW ENFORCEMENT AND TREATMENT

SEC. 201. TREATMENT ALTERNATIVE TO INCARCERATION PROGRAMS.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—The term “eligible entity” means a State, unit of local government, Indian tribe, or nonprofit organization.

(2) **ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANT.**—The term “eligible participant” means an individual who—

(A) comes into contact with the juvenile justice system or criminal justice system or is arrested or charged with an offense that is not—

(i) a crime of violence, as defined under applicable State law or section 16 of title 18, United States Code; or

(ii) a serious drug offense, as defined under section 924(e)(2)(A) of title 18, United States Code;

(B) has a current—

(i) substance use disorder; or

(ii) co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder; and

(C) has been approved for participation in a program funded under this section by, as applicable depending on the stage of the criminal justice process, the relevant law enforcement agency or prosecuting attorney, defense attorney,

probation or corrections official, judge, or representative from the relevant mental health or substance abuse agency.

(b) **PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Attorney General, may make grants to eligible entities to—

(1) develop, implement, or expand a treatment alternative to incarceration program for eligible participants, including—

(A) pre-arrest, including pre-arrest, treatment alternative to incarceration programs, including—

(i) law enforcement training on substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders;

(ii) receiving centers as alternatives to incarceration of eligible participants;

(iii) specialized response units for calls related to substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders; and

(iv) other pre-arrest or pre-arrest treatment alternative to incarceration models; and

(B) post-arrest treatment alternative to incarceration programs, including—

(i) specialized clinical case management;

(ii) pre-trial services related to substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders;

(iii) prosecutor and defender based programs;

(iv) specialized probation;

(v) programs utilizing the American Society of Addiction Medicine patient placement criteria;

(vi) treatment and rehabilitation programs and recovery support services; and

(vii) drug courts, DWI courts, and veterans treatment courts; and

(2) facilitate or enhance planning and collaboration between State criminal justice systems and State substance abuse systems in order to more efficiently and effectively carry out programs described in paragraph (1) that address problems related to the use of heroin and misuse of prescription drugs among eligible participants.

(c) **APPLICATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—An eligible entity desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary of Health and Human Services—

(A) that meets the criteria under paragraph (2); and

(B) at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary of Health and Human Services may require.

(2) **CRITERIA.**—An eligible entity, in submitting an application under paragraph (1), shall—

(A) provide extensive evidence of collaboration with State and local government agencies overseeing health, community corrections, courts, prosecution, substance abuse, mental health, victims services, and employment services, and with local law enforcement agencies;

(B) demonstrate consultation with the Single State Authority for Substance Abuse;

(C) demonstrate consultation with the Single State criminal justice planning agency;

(D) demonstrate that evidence-based treatment practices, including if applicable the use of medication assisted treatment, will be utilized; and

(E) demonstrate that evidenced-based screening and assessment tools will be utilized to place participants in the treatment alternative to incarceration program.

(d) **REQUIREMENTS.**—Each eligible entity awarded a grant for a treatment alternative to incarceration program under this section shall—

(1) determine the terms and conditions of participation in the program by eligible participants, taking into consideration the collateral consequences of an arrest, prosecution, or criminal conviction;

(2) ensure that each substance abuse and mental health treatment component is licensed and qualified by the relevant jurisdiction;

(3) for programs described in subsection (b)(2), organize an enforcement unit comprised of appropriately trained law enforcement professionals under the supervision of the State, tribal, or local criminal justice agency involved, the duties of which shall include—

(A) the verification of addresses and other contacts of each eligible participant who participates or desires to participate in the program; and

(B) if necessary, the location, apprehension, arrest, and return to court of an eligible participant in the program who has absconded from the facility of a treatment provider or has otherwise violated the terms and conditions of the program, consistent with Federal and State confidentiality requirements;

(4) notify the relevant criminal justice entity if any eligible participant in the program absconds from the facility of the treatment provider or otherwise violates the terms and conditions of the program, consistent with Federal and State confidentiality requirements;

(5) submit periodic reports on the progress of treatment or other measured outcomes from participation in the program of each eligible participant in the program to the relevant State, tribal, or local criminal justice agency;

(6) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used to evaluate the program, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program; and

(7) describe how the program could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective.

(e) **USE OF FUNDS.**—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section for expenses of a treatment alternative to incarceration program, including—

(1) salaries, personnel costs, equipment costs, and other costs directly related to the operation of the program, including the enforcement unit;

(2) payments for treatment providers that are approved by the relevant State or tribal jurisdiction and licensed, if necessary, to provide needed treatment to eligible participants in the program, including medication assisted treatment, aftercare supervision, vocational training, education, and job placement;

(3) payments to public and nonprofit private entities that are approved by the State or tribal jurisdiction and licensed, if necessary, to provide alcohol and drug addiction treatment and mental health treatment to eligible participants in the program; and

(4) salaries, personnel costs, and other costs related to strategic planning among State and local government agencies.

(f) **SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.**—An eligible entity shall use Federal funds received under this section only to supplement the funds that would, in the absence of those Federal funds, be made available from other Federal and non-Federal sources for the activities described in this section, and not to supplant those funds.

(g) **GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall ensure that, to the extent practicable, the geographical distribution of grants under this section is equitable and includes a grant to an eligible entity in—

(1) each State;

(2) rural, suburban, and urban areas; and

(3) tribal jurisdictions.

(h) **PRIORITY CONSIDERATION WITH RESPECT TO STATES.**—In awarding grants to States under this section, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall give priority to—

(1) a State that submits a joint application from the substance abuse agencies and criminal justice agencies of the State that proposes to use grant funds to facilitate or enhance planning and collaboration between the agencies, including coordination to better address the needs of incarcerated populations; and

(2) a State that—

(A) provides civil liability protection for first responders, health professionals, and family members who have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone in administering naloxone to counteract opioid overdoses; and

(B) submits to the Secretary a certification by the attorney general of the State that the attorney general has—

(i) reviewed any applicable civil liability protection law to determine the applicability of the law with respect to first responders, health care professionals, family members, and other individuals who—

(I) have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone; and

(II) may administer naloxone to individuals reasonably believed to be suffering from opioid overdose; and

(ii) concluded that the law described in subparagraph (A) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons.

(i) **REPORTS AND EVALUATIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Each fiscal year, each recipient of a grant under this section during that fiscal year shall submit to the Secretary of Health and Human Services a report on the outcomes of activities carried out using that grant in such form, containing such information, and on such dates as the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall specify.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—A report submitted under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) describe best practices for treatment alternatives; and

(B) identify training requirements for law enforcement officers who participate in treatment alternative to incarceration programs.

(j) **FUNDING.**—During the 5-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall carry out this section using funds made available to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for Criminal Justice Activities.

SEC. 202. FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING FOR THE USE OF DRUGS AND DEVICES THAT RAPIDLY REVERSE THE EFFECTS OF OPIOIDS.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 103, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2998. FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING FOR THE USE OF DRUGS AND DEVICES THAT RAPIDLY REVERSE THE EFFECTS OF OPIOIDS.

“(a) **DEFINITION.**—In this section—

“(1) the terms ‘drug’ and ‘device’ have the meanings given those terms in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321);

“(2) the term ‘eligible entity’ means a State, a unit of local government, or an Indian tribal government;

“(3) the term ‘first responder’ includes a firefighter, law enforcement officer, paramedic, emergency medical technician, or other individual (including an employee of a legally organized and recognized volunteer organization, whether compensated or not), who, in the course of professional duties, responds to fire, medical, hazardous material, or other similar emergencies; and

“(4) the term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

“(b) **PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary, in coordination with the Attorney General, may make grants to eligible entities to allow appropriately trained first responders to administer an opioid overdose reversal drug to an individual who has—

“(1) experienced a prescription opioid or heroin overdose; or

“(2) been determined to have likely experienced a prescription opioid or heroin overdose.

“(c) **APPLICATION.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary—

“(A) that meets the criteria under paragraph (2); and

“(B) at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

“(2) **CRITERIA.**—An eligible entity, in submitting an application under paragraph (1), shall—

“(A) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used to evaluate the program funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program;

“(B) describe how the program could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective;

“(C) identify the governmental and community agencies that the program will coordinate; and

“(D) describe how law enforcement agencies will coordinate with their corresponding State substance abuse and mental health agencies to identify protocols and resources that are available to victims and families, including information on treatment and recovery resources.

“(d) **USE OF FUNDS.**—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section to—

“(1) make such opioid overdose reversal drugs or devices that are approved by the Food and Drug Administration, such as naloxone, available to be carried and administered by first responders;

“(2) train and provide resources for first responders on carrying an opioid overdose reversal drug or device approved by the Food and Drug Administration, such as naloxone, and administering the drug or device to an individual who has experienced, or has been determined to have likely experienced, a prescription opioid or heroin overdose; and

“(3) establish processes, protocols, and mechanisms for referral to appropriate treatment.

“(e) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS.**—The Secretary shall make a grant for the purpose of providing technical assistance and training on the use of an opioid overdose reversal drug, such as naloxone, to respond to an individual who has experienced, or has been determined to have likely experienced, a prescription opioid or heroin overdose, and mechanisms for referral to appropriate treatment for an eligible entity receiving a grant under this section.

“(f) **EVALUATION.**—The Secretary shall conduct an evaluation of grants made under this section to determine—

“(1) the number of first responders equipped with naloxone, or another opioid overdose reversal drug, for the prevention of fatal opioid and heroin overdose;

“(2) the number of opioid and heroin overdoses reversed by first responders receiving training and supplies of naloxone, or another opioid overdose reversal drug, through a grant received under this section;

“(3) the number of calls for service related to opioid and heroin overdose;

“(4) the extent to which overdose victims and families receive information about treatment services and available data describing treatment admissions; and

“(5) the research, training, and naloxone, or another opioid overdose reversal drug, supply needs of first responder agencies, including those agencies that are not receiving grants under this section.

“(g) **RURAL AREAS WITH LIMITED ACCESS TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES.**—In making grants under this section, the Secretary shall

ensure that not less than 25 percent of grant funds are awarded to eligible entities that are not located in metropolitan statistical areas, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget.”.

SEC. 203. PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK EXPANSION.

(a) **DEFINITION OF COVERED ENTITY.**—In this section, the term “covered entity” means—

- (1) a State, local, or tribal law enforcement agency;
- (2) a manufacturer, distributor, or reverse distributor of prescription medications;
- (3) a retail pharmacy;
- (4) a registered narcotic treatment program;
- (5) a hospital or clinic with an on-site pharmacy;
- (6) an eligible long-term care facility; or
- (7) any other entity authorized by the Drug Enforcement Administration to dispose of prescription medications.

(b) **PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**—The Attorney General, in coordination with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, shall coordinate with covered entities in expanding or making available disposal sites for unwanted prescription medications.

SEC. 204. HEROIN AND METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCES.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 202, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999. HEROIN AND METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCES.

“The Attorney General may make grants to State law enforcement agencies for investigative purposes—

“(1) to locate or investigate illicit activities through statewide collaboration, including activities related to—

“(A) the distribution of heroin or fentanyl, or the unlawful distribution of prescription opioids; or

“(B) unlawful heroin, fentanyl, and prescription opioid traffickers; and

“(2) to locate or investigate illicit activities, including precursor diversion, laboratories, or methamphetamine traffickers.”.

TITLE III—TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

SEC. 301. EVIDENCE-BASED OPIOID AND HEROIN TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS DEMONSTRATION.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 204, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999A. EVIDENCE-BASED OPIOID AND HEROIN TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS DEMONSTRATION.

“(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

“(1) the terms ‘Indian tribe’ and ‘tribal organization’ have the meaning given those terms in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603);

“(2) the term ‘medication assisted treatment’ means the use, for problems relating to heroin and other opioids, of medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies;

“(3) the term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and

“(4) the term ‘State substance abuse agency’ means the agency of a State responsible for the State prevention, treatment, and recovery system, including management of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant under subpart II of part B of title XIX of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x–21 et seq.).

“(b) **GRANTS.**—

“(1) **AUTHORITY TO MAKE GRANTS.**—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Cen-

ter for Substance Abuse Treatment of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and in coordination with the Attorney General and other departments or agencies, as appropriate, may award grants to State substance abuse agencies, units of local government, nonprofit organizations, and Indian tribes or tribal organizations that have a high rate, or have had a rapid increase, in the use of heroin or other opioids, in order to permit such entities to expand activities, including an expansion in the availability of medication assisted treatment and other clinically appropriate services, with respect to the treatment of addiction in the specific geographical areas of such entities where there is a high rate or rapid increase in the use of heroin or other opioids.

“(2) **NATURE OF ACTIVITIES.**—The grant funds awarded under paragraph (1) shall be used for activities that are based on reliable scientific evidence of efficacy in the treatment of problems related to heroin or other opioids.

“(c) **GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.**—The Secretary shall ensure that grants awarded under subsection (b) are distributed equitably among the various regions of the United States and among rural, urban, and suburban areas that are affected by the use of heroin or other opioids.

“(d) **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES.**—In administering grants under subsection (b), the Secretary shall—

“(1) evaluate the activities supported by grants awarded under subsection (b);

“(2) disseminate information, as appropriate, derived from the evaluation as the Secretary considers appropriate;

“(3) provide States, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and providers with technical assistance in connection with the provision of treatment of problems related to heroin and other opioids; and

“(4) fund only those applications that specifically support recovery services as a critical component of the grant program.”.

SEC. 302. CRIMINAL JUSTICE MEDICATION ASSISTED TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS DEMONSTRATION.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

(1) the term “criminal justice agency” means a State, local, or tribal—

(A) court;

(B) prison;

(C) jail; or

(D) other agency that performs the administration of criminal justice, including prosecution, pretrial services, and community supervision;

(2) the term “eligible entity” means a State, unit of local government, or Indian tribe; and

(3) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(b) **PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary, in coordination with the Attorney General, may make grants to eligible entities to implement medication assisted treatment programs through criminal justice agencies.

(c) **APPLICATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary—

(A) that meets the criteria under paragraph (2); and

(B) at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

(2) **CRITERIA.**—An eligible entity, in submitting an application under paragraph (1), shall—

(A) certify that each medication assisted treatment program funded with a grant under this section has been developed in consultation with the Single State Authority for Substance Abuse; and

(B) describe how data will be collected and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the program described in subparagraph (A).

(d) **USE OF FUNDS.**—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section for expenses of—

(1) a medication assisted treatment program, including the expenses of prescribing medications recognized by the Food and Drug Administration for opioid treatment in conjunction with psychological and behavioral therapy;

(2) training criminal justice agency personnel and treatment providers on medication assisted treatment;

(3) cross-training personnel providing behavioral health and health services, administration of medicines, and other administrative expenses, including required reports; and

(4) the provision of recovery coaches who are responsible for providing mentorship and transition plans to individuals reentering society following incarceration or alternatives to incarceration.

(e) **PRIORITY CONSIDERATION WITH RESPECT TO STATES.**—In awarding grants to States under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to a State that—

(1) provides civil liability protection for first responders, health professionals, and family members who have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone in administering naloxone to counteract opioid overdoses; and

(2) submits to the Secretary a certification by the attorney general of the State that the attorney general has—

(A) reviewed any applicable civil liability protection law to determine the applicability of the law with respect to first responders, health care professionals, family members, and other individuals who—

(i) have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone; and

(ii) may administer naloxone to individuals reasonably believed to be suffering from opioid overdose; and

(B) concluded that the law described in subparagraph (A) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons.

(f) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary, in coordination with the Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Attorney General, shall provide technical assistance and training for an eligible entity receiving a grant under this section.

(g) **REPORTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—An eligible entity receiving a grant under this section shall submit a report to the Secretary on the outcomes of each grant received under this section for individuals receiving medication assisted treatment, based on—

(A) the recidivism of the individuals;

(B) the treatment outcomes of the individuals, including maintaining abstinence from illegal, unauthorized, and unprescribed or undispensed opioids and heroin;

(C) a comparison of the cost of providing medication assisted treatment to the cost of incarceration or other participation in the criminal justice system;

(D) the housing status of the individuals; and

(E) the employment status of the individuals.

(2) **CONTENTS AND TIMING.**—Each report described in paragraph (1) shall be submitted annually in such form, containing such information, and on such dates as the Secretary shall specify.

(h) **FUNDING.**—During the 5-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall carry out this section using funds made available to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for Criminal Justice Activities.

SEC. 303. NATIONAL YOUTH RECOVERY INITIATIVE.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et

seq.), as amended by section 301, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999B. NATIONAL YOUTH RECOVERY INITIATIVE.

“(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

“(1) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—The term ‘eligible entity’ means—

“(A) a high school that has been accredited as a recovery high school by the Association of Recovery Schools;

“(B) an accredited high school that is seeking to establish or expand recovery support services;

“(C) an institution of higher education;

“(D) a recovery program at a nonprofit collegiate institution; or

“(E) a nonprofit organization.

“(2) **INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**—The term ‘institution of higher education’ has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

“(3) **RECOVERY PROGRAM.**—The term ‘recovery program’—

“(A) means a program to help individuals who are recovering from substance use disorders to initiate, stabilize, and maintain healthy and productive lives in the community; and

“(B) includes peer-to-peer support and communal activities to build recovery skills and supportive social networks.

“(b) **GRANTS AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Secretary of Education, may award grants to eligible entities to enable the entities to—

“(1) provide substance use recovery support services to young people in high school and enrolled in institutions of higher education;

“(2) help build communities of support for young people in recovery through a spectrum of activities such as counseling and health- and wellness-oriented social activities; and

“(3) encourage initiatives designed to help young people achieve and sustain recovery from substance use disorders.

“(c) **USE OF FUNDS.**—Grants awarded under subsection (b) may be used for activities to develop, support, and maintain youth recovery support services, including—

“(1) the development and maintenance of a dedicated physical space for recovery programs;

“(2) dedicated staff for the provision of recovery programs;

“(3) health- and wellness-oriented social activities and community engagement;

“(4) establishment of recovery high schools;

“(5) coordination of recovery programs with—

“(A) substance use disorder treatment programs and systems;

“(B) providers of mental health services;

“(C) primary care providers and physicians;

“(D) the criminal justice system, including the juvenile justice system;

“(E) employers;

“(F) housing services;

“(G) child welfare services;

“(H) high schools and institutions of higher education; and

“(I) other programs or services related to the welfare of an individual in recovery from a substance use disorder;

“(6) the development of peer-to-peer support programs or services; and

“(7) additional activities that help youths and young adults to achieve recovery from substance use disorders.”.

SEC. 304. BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF RECOVERY.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 303, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999C. BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF RECOVERY.

“(a) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term ‘recovery community organization’ means an independent nonprofit organization that—

“(1) mobilizes resources within and outside of the recovery community to increase the prevalence and quality of long-term recovery from substance use disorders; and

“(2) is wholly or principally governed by people in recovery for substance use disorders who reflect the community served.

“(b) **GRANTS AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services may award grants to recovery community organizations to enable such organizations to develop, expand, and enhance recovery services.

“(c) **FEDERAL SHARE.**—The Federal share of the costs of a program funded by a grant under this section may not exceed 50 percent.

“(d) **USE OF FUNDS.**—Grants awarded under subsection (b)—

“(1) shall be used to develop, expand, and enhance community and statewide recovery support services; and

“(2) may be used to—

“(A) advocate for individuals in recovery from substance use disorders;

“(B) build connections between recovery networks, between recovery community organizations, and with other recovery support services, including—

“(i) substance use disorder treatment programs and systems;

“(ii) providers of mental health services;

“(iii) primary care providers and physicians;

“(iv) the criminal justice system;

“(v) employers;

“(vi) housing services;

“(vii) child welfare agencies; and

“(viii) other recovery support services that facilitate recovery from substance use disorders;

“(C) reduce the stigma associated with substance use disorders;

“(D) conduct public education and outreach on issues relating to substance use disorders and recovery, including—

“(i) how to identify the signs of addiction;

“(ii) the resources that are available to individuals struggling with addiction and families who have a family member struggling with or being treated for addiction, including programs that mentor and provide support services to children;

“(iii) the resources that are available to help support individuals in recovery; and

“(iv) information on the medical consequences of substance use disorders, including neonatal abstinence syndrome and potential infection with human immunodeficiency virus and viral hepatitis; and

“(E) carry out other activities that strengthen the network of community support for individuals in recovery.”.

TITLE IV—ADDRESSING COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES

SEC. 401. CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION GRANT PROGRAM.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 304, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999D. CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION GRANT PROGRAM.

“(a) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term ‘eligible entity’ means a State, unit of local government, nonprofit organization, or Indian tribe.

“(b) **GRANT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**—The Attorney General may make grants to eligible entities to design, implement, and expand educational programs for offenders in prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities, including to pay for—

“(1) basic education, secondary level academic education, high school equivalency examination preparation, career technical education, and English as a second language instruction at the basic, secondary, or post-secondary levels, for adult and juvenile populations;

“(2) screening and assessment of inmates to assess education level, needs, occupational interest or aptitude, risk level, and other needs, and case management services;

“(3) hiring and training of instructors and aides, reimbursement of non-corrections staff and experts, reimbursement of stipends paid to inmate tutors or aides, and the costs of training inmate tutors and aides;

“(4) instructional supplies and equipment, including occupational program supplies and equipment to the extent that the supplies and equipment are used for instructional purposes;

“(5) partnerships and agreements with community colleges, universities, and career technology education program providers;

“(6) certification programs providing recognized high school equivalency certificates and industry recognized credentials; and

“(7) technology solutions to—

“(A) meet the instructional, assessment, and information needs of correctional populations; and

“(B) facilitate the continued participation of incarcerated students in community-based education programs after the students are released from incarceration.

“(c) **APPLICATION.**—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit to the Attorney General an application in such form and manner, at such time, and accompanied by such information as the Attorney General specifies.

“(d) **PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS.**—In awarding grants under this section, the Attorney General shall give priority to applicants that—

“(1) assess the level of risk and need of inmates, including by—

“(A) assessing the need for English as a second language instruction;

“(B) conducting educational assessments; and

“(C) assessing occupational interests and aptitudes;

“(2) target educational services to assessed needs, including academic and occupational at the basic, secondary, or post-secondary level;

“(3) target career technology education programs to—

“(A) areas of identified occupational demand; and

“(B) employment opportunities in the communities in which students are reasonably expected to reside post-release;

“(4) include a range of appropriate educational opportunities at the basic, secondary, and post-secondary levels;

“(5) include opportunities for students to attain industry recognized credentials;

“(6) include partnership or articulation agreements linking institutional education programs with community sited programs provided by adult education program providers and accredited institutions of higher education, community colleges, and vocational training institutions; and

“(7) explicitly include career pathways models offering opportunities for incarcerated students to develop academic skills, in-demand occupational skills and credentials, occupational experience in institutional work programs or work release programs, and linkages with employers in the community, so that incarcerated students have opportunities to embark on careers with strong prospects for both post-release employment and advancement in a career ladder over time.

“(e) **REQUIREMENTS.**—An eligible entity desiring a grant under this section shall—

“(1) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used to evaluate each program funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program; and

“(2) describe how the program described in paragraph (1) could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective.

“(f) **CONTROL OF INTERNET ACCESS.**—An entity that receives a grant under this section may restrict access to the Internet by prisoners, as appropriate and in accordance with Federal and State law, to ensure public safety.”.

SEC. 402. NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON RECOVERY AND COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES.

(a) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term “collateral consequence” means a penalty, disability, or disadvantage imposed on an individual who is in recovery for a substance use disorder (including by an administrative agency, official, or civil court) as a result of a Federal or State conviction for a drug-related offense but not as part of the judgment of the court that imposes the conviction.

(b) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall establish a bipartisan task force to be known as the Task Force on Recovery and Collateral Consequences (in this section referred to as the “Task Force”).

(2) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

(A) **TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS.**—The Task Force shall include 10 members, who shall be appointed by the Attorney General in accordance with subparagraphs (B) and (C).

(B) **MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE.**—The Task Force shall include—

(i) members who have national recognition and significant expertise in areas such as health care, housing, employment, substance use disorders, mental health, law enforcement, and law;

(ii) not fewer than 2 members—

(I) who have personally experienced substance abuse or addiction and are in recovery; and

(II) not fewer than 1 one of whom has benefited from medication assisted treatment; and

(iii) to the extent practicable, members who formerly served as elected officials at the State and Federal levels.

(C) **TIMING.**—The Attorney General shall appoint the members of the Task Force not later than 60 days after the date on which the Task Force is established under paragraph (1).

(3) **CHAIRPERSON.**—The Task Force shall select a chairperson or co-chairpersons from among the members of the Task Force.

(c) **DUTIES OF THE TASK FORCE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Task Force shall—

(A) identify collateral consequences for individuals with Federal or State convictions for drug-related offenses who are in recovery for substance use disorder; and

(B) examine any policy basis for the imposition of collateral consequences identified under subparagraph (A) and the effect of the collateral consequences on individuals in recovery from resuming their personal and professional activities.

(2) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the first meeting of the Task Force, the Task Force shall develop recommendations, as it considers appropriate, for proposed legislative and regulatory changes related to the collateral consequences identified under paragraph (1).

(3) **COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.**—The Task Force shall hold hearings, require the testimony and attendance of witnesses, and secure information from any department or agency of the United States in performing the duties under paragraphs (1) and (2).

(4) **REPORT.**—

(A) **SUBMISSION TO EXECUTIVE BRANCH.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the first meeting of the Task Force, the Task Force shall submit a report detailing the findings and recommendations of the Task Force to—

(i) the head of each relevant department or agency of the United States;

(ii) the President; and

(iii) the Vice President.

(B) **SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.**—The individuals who receive the report under subparagraph (A) shall submit to Congress such legislative recommendations, if any, as those individuals consider appropriate based on the report.

TITLE V—ADDICTION AND TREATMENT SERVICES FOR WOMEN, FAMILIES, AND VETERANS

SEC. 501. IMPROVING TREATMENT FOR PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM WOMEN.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 401, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999E. IMPROVING TREATMENT FOR PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM WOMEN.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (referred to in this section as the ‘Secretary’), acting through the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, may carry out a pilot program under which the Secretary makes competitive grants to State substance abuse agencies to—

“(1) enhance flexibility in the use of funds designed to support family-based services for pregnant and postpartum women with a primary diagnosis of a substance use disorder, including opioid use disorders;

“(2) help State substance abuse agencies address identified gaps in services furnished to such women along the continuum of care, including services provided to women in non-residential based settings; and

“(3) promote a coordinated, effective, and efficient State system managed by State substance abuse agencies by encouraging new approaches and models of service delivery that are evidence-based, including effective family-based programs for women involved with the criminal justice system.

“(b) **REQUIREMENTS.**—In carrying out the pilot program under this section, the Secretary—

“(1) shall require State substance abuse agencies to submit to the Secretary applications, in such form and manner and containing such information as specified by the Secretary, to be eligible to receive a grant under the program;

“(2) shall identify, based on such submitted applications, State substance abuse agencies that are eligible for such grants;

“(3) shall require services proposed to be furnished through such a grant to support family-based treatment and other services for pregnant and postpartum women with a primary diagnosis of a substance use disorder, including opioid use disorders;

“(4) shall not require that services furnished through such a grant be provided solely to women that reside in facilities; and

“(5) shall not require that grant recipients under the program make available all services described in section 508(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb-1(d)).

“(c) **REQUIRED SERVICES.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall specify minimum services required to be made available to eligible women through a grant awarded under the pilot program under this section. Such minimum services—

“(A) shall include the requirements described in section 508(c) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb-1(c));

“(B) may include any of the services described in section 508(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb-1(d));

“(C) may include other services, as appropriate; and

“(D) shall be based on the recommendations submitted under paragraph (2).

“(2) **STAKEHOLDER INPUT.**—The Secretary shall convene and solicit recommendations from

stakeholders, including State substance abuse agencies, health care providers, persons in recovery from a substance use disorder, and other appropriate individuals, for the minimum services described in paragraph (1).

“(d) **DURATION.**—The pilot program under this section shall not exceed 5 years.

“(e) **EVALUATION AND REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Out of amounts made available to the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, the Director of the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, in cooperation with the recipients of grants under this section, shall conduct an evaluation of the pilot program, beginning 1 year after the date on which a grant is first awarded under this section. The Director of the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, in coordination with the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, not later than 120 days after completion of such evaluation, shall submit to the relevant Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on such evaluation.

“(2) **CONTENTS.**—The report to Congress under paragraph (1) shall include, at a minimum, outcome information from the pilot program, including any resulting reductions in the use of alcohol and other drugs, engagement in treatment services, retention in the appropriate level and duration of services, increased access to the use of drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of substance use disorders in combination with counseling, and other appropriate measures.

“(f) **STATE SUBSTANCE ABUSE AGENCY DEFINED.**—For purposes of this section, the term ‘State substance abuse agency’ means, with respect to a State, the agency in such State that manages the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant program under part B of title XIX of the Public Health Service Act.”.

SEC. 502. REPORT ON GRANTS FOR FAMILY-BASED SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT.

Section 2925 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797s-4) is amended—

(1) by striking “An entity” and inserting “(a)

ENTITY REPORTS.—An entity”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) **ATTORNEY GENERAL REPORT ON FAMILY-BASED SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT.**—The Attorney General shall submit to Congress an annual report that describes the number of grants awarded under section 2921(1) and how such grants are used by the recipients for family-based substance abuse treatment programs that serve as alternatives to incarceration for custodial parents to receive treatment and services as a family.”.

SEC. 503. VETERANS’ TREATMENT COURTS.

Section 2991(j)(1)(B)(ii) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa(j)(1)(B)(ii)) is amended—

(1) by inserting “(I)” after “(ii)”; and

(2) in subclause (I), as so designated, by striking the period and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(II) was discharged or released from such service under dishonorable conditions, if the reason for that discharge or release, if known, is attributable to drug use.”.

TITLE VI—INCENTIVIZING STATE COMPREHENSIVE INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE

SEC. 601. STATE DEMONSTRATION GRANTS FOR COMPREHENSIVE OPIOID ABUSE RESPONSE.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

(1) the term “dispenser” has the meaning given the term in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802);

(2) the term “prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance” does not include a

prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance that dispenses the substance—

(A) for use on the premises on which the substance is dispensed;

(B) in a hospital emergency room, when the substance is in short supply;

(C) for a certified opioid treatment program; or

(D) in other situations as the Attorney General may reasonably determine;

(3) the term “prescriber” means a dispenser who prescribes a controlled substance, or the agent of such a dispenser; and

(4) the term “schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance” means a controlled substance that is listed on schedule II, schedule III, or schedule IV of section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812(c)).

(b) PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and in consultation with the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, may award grants to States, and combinations thereof, to prepare a comprehensive plan for and implement an integrated opioid abuse response initiative.

(2) PURPOSES.—A State receiving a grant under this section shall establish a comprehensive response to opioid abuse, which shall include—

(A) prevention and education efforts around heroin and opioid use, treatment, and recovery, including education of residents, medical students, and physicians and other prescribers of schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances on relevant prescribing guidelines and the prescription drug monitoring program of the State;

(B) a comprehensive prescription drug monitoring program to track dispensing of schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances, which shall—

(i) provide for data sharing with other States by statute, regulation, or interstate agreement; and

(ii) allow for access to all individuals authorized by the State to write prescriptions for schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances on the prescription drug monitoring program of the State.

(C) developing, implementing, or expanding prescription drug and opioid addiction treatment programs by—

(i) expanding programs for medication assisted treatment of prescription drug and opioid addiction, including training for treatment and recovery support providers;

(ii) developing, implementing, or expanding programs for behavioral health therapy for individuals who are in treatment for prescription drug and opioid addiction;

(iii) developing, implementing, or expanding programs to screen individuals who are in treatment for prescription drug and opioid addiction for hepatitis C and HIV, and provide treatment for those individuals if clinically appropriate; or

(iv) developing, implementing, or expanding programs that provide screening, early intervention, and referral to treatment (commonly known as “SBIRT”) to teenagers and young adults in primary care, middle schools, high schools, universities, school-based health centers, and other community-based health care settings frequently accessed by teenagers or young adults; and

(D) developing, implementing, and expanding programs to prevent overdose death from prescription medications and opioids.

(3) PLANNING GRANT APPLICATIONS.—

(A) APPLICATION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—A State seeking a planning grant under this section to prepare a comprehensive plan for an integrated opioid abuse response initiative shall submit to the Attorney

General an application in such form, and containing such information, as the Attorney General may require.

(ii) REQUIREMENTS.—An application for a planning grant under this section shall, at a minimum, include—

(I) a budget and a budget justification for the activities to be carried out using the grant;

(II) a description of the activities proposed to be carried out using the grant, including a schedule for completion of such activities;

(III) outcome measures that will be used to measure the effectiveness of the programs and initiatives to address opioids; and

(IV) a description of the personnel necessary to complete such activities.

(B) PERIOD; NONRENEWABILITY.—A planning grant under this section shall be for a period of 1 year. A State may not receive more than 1 planning grant under this section.

(C) AMOUNT.—A planning grant under this section may not exceed \$100,000.

(D) STRATEGIC PLAN AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—A State receiving a planning grant under this section shall develop a strategic plan and a program implementation plan.

(4) IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—

(A) APPLICATION.—A State seeking an implementation grant under this section to implement a comprehensive strategy for addressing opioid abuse shall submit to the Attorney General an application in such form, and containing such information, as the Attorney General may require.

(B) USE OF FUNDS.—A State that receives an implementation grant under this section shall use the grant for the cost of carrying out an integrated opioid abuse response program in accordance with this section, including for technical assistance, training, and administrative expenses.

(C) REQUIREMENTS.—An integrated opioid abuse response program carried out using an implementation grant under this section shall—

(i) require that each prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance in the State—

(I) registers with the prescription drug monitoring program of the State; and

(II) consults the prescription drug monitoring program database of the State before prescribing a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance;

(ii) require that each dispenser of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance in the State—

(I) registers with the prescription drug monitoring program of the State;

(II) consults the prescription drug monitoring program database of the State before dispensing a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance; and

(III) reports to the prescription drug monitoring program of the State, at a minimum, each instance in which a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance is dispensed, with limited exceptions, as defined by the State, which shall indicate the prescriber by name and National Provider Identifier;

(iii) require that, not fewer than 4 times each year, the State agency or agencies that administer the prescription drug monitoring program of the State prepare and provide to each prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance an informational report that shows how the prescribing patterns of the prescriber compare to prescribing practices of the peers of the prescriber and expected norms;

(iv) if informational reports provided to a prescriber under clause (iii) indicate that the prescriber is repeatedly falling outside of expected norms or standard practices for the prescriber's field, direct the prescriber to educational resources on appropriate prescribing of controlled substances;

(v) ensure that the prescriber licensing board of the State receives a report describing any pre-

scribers that repeatedly fall outside of expected norms or standard practices for the prescriber's field, as described in clause (iii);

(vi) require consultation with the Single State Authority for Substance Abuse; and

(vii) establish requirements for how data will be collected and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the program.

(D) PERIOD.—An implementation grant under this section shall be for a period of 2 years.

(E) AMOUNT.—The amount of an implementation grant under this section may not exceed \$5,000,000.

(5) PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS.—In awarding planning and implementation grants under this section, the Attorney General shall give priority to a State that—

(A)(i) provides civil liability protection for first responders, health professionals, and family members who have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone in administering naloxone to counteract opioid overdoses; and

(ii) submits to the Attorney General a certification by the attorney general of the State that the attorney general has—

(I) reviewed any applicable civil liability protection law to determine the applicability of the law with respect to first responders, health care professionals, family members, and other individuals who—

(aa) have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone; and

(bb) may administer naloxone to individuals reasonably believed to be suffering from opioid overdose; and

(II) concluded that the law described in subclause (I) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons;

(B) has in effect legislation or implements a policy under which the State shall not terminate, but may suspend, enrollment under the State plan for medical assistance under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) for an individual who is incarcerated for a period of fewer than 2 years;

(C) has a process for enrollment in services and benefits necessary by criminal justice agencies to initiate or continue treatment in the community, under which an individual who is incarcerated may, while incarcerated, enroll in services and benefits that are necessary for the individual to continue treatment upon release from incarceration;

(D) ensures the capability of data sharing with other States, such as by making data available to a prescription monitoring hub;

(E) ensures that data recorded in the prescription drug monitoring program database of the State is available within 24 hours, to the extent possible; and

(F) ensures that the prescription drug monitoring program of the State notifies prescribers and dispensers of schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances when overuse or misuse of such controlled substances by patients is suspected.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDING.—For each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020, the Attorney General may use, from any unobligated balances made available under the heading “GENERAL ADMINISTRATION” to the Department of Justice in an appropriations Act, such amounts as are necessary to carry out this section, not to exceed \$5,000,000 per fiscal year.

TITLE VII—MISCELLANEOUS

SEC. 701. GAO REPORT ON IMD EXCLUSION.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease exclusion” means the prohibition on Federal matching payments under Medicaid for patients who have attained age 22, but have not attained age 65, in an institution for mental diseases under subparagraph (B) of the matter following

subsection (a) of section 1905 of the Social Security Act and subsection (i) of such section (42 U.S.C. 1396d).

(b) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the impact that the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease exclusion has on access to treatment for individuals with a substance use disorder.

(c) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required under subsection (b) shall include a review of what is known regarding—

(1) Medicaid beneficiary access to substance use disorder treatments in institutions for mental disease; and

(2) the quality of care provided to Medicaid beneficiaries treated in and outside of institutions for mental disease for substance use disorders.

SEC. 702. FUNDING.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 501, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999F. FUNDING.

“There are authorized to be appropriated to the Attorney General and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out this part \$77,900,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.”

SEC. 703. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) is amended—

(1) in the part heading, by striking “**CONFRONTING USE OF METHAMPHETAMINE**” and inserting “**COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY**”; and

(2) in section 2996(a)(1), by striking “this part” and inserting “this section”.

SEC. 704. GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY.

(a) **GRANTS UNDER PART II OF TITLE I OF THE OMNIBUS CRIME CONTROL AND SAFE STREETS ACT OF 1968.**—

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 702, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 2999G. GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY.

“(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘applicable committees’—

“(A) with respect to the Attorney General and any other official of the Department of Justice, means—

“(i) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

“(ii) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

“(B) with respect to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and any other official of the Department of Health and Human Services, means—

“(i) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

“(ii) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives; and

“(2) the term ‘covered agency’ means—

“(A) the Department of Justice; and

“(B) the Department of Health and Human Services; and

“(3) the term ‘covered official’ means—

“(A) the Attorney General; and

“(B) the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

“(b) **ACCOUNTABILITY.**—All grants awarded by a covered official under this part shall be subject to the following accountability provisions:

“(1) **AUDIT REQUIREMENT.**—

“(A) **DEFINITION.**—In this paragraph, the term ‘unresolved audit finding’ means a finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of a covered agency that the audited grant-

ee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within 12 months after the date on which the final audit report is issued.

“(B) **AUDIT.**—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this section, and in each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of a covered agency shall conduct audits of recipients of grants awarded by the applicable covered official under this part to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

“(C) **MANDATORY EXCLUSION.**—A recipient of grant funds under this part that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive grant funds under this part during the first 2 fiscal years beginning after the end of the 12-month period described in subparagraph (A).

“(D) **PRIORITY.**—In awarding grants under this part, a covered official shall give priority to eligible applicants that did not have an unresolved audit finding during the 3 fiscal years before submitting an application for a grant under this part.

“(E) **REIMBURSEMENT.**—If an entity is awarded grant funds under this part during the 2-fiscal-year period during which the entity is barred from receiving grants under subparagraph (C), the covered official that awarded the grant funds shall—

“(i) deposit an amount equal to the amount of the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

“(ii) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

“(2) **NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS.**—

“(A) **DEFINITION.**—For purposes of this paragraph and the grant programs under this part, the term ‘nonprofit organization’ means an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

“(B) **PROHIBITION.**—A covered official may not award a grant under this part to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

“(C) **DISCLOSURE.**—Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a grant under this part and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees, and key employees, shall disclose to the applicable covered official, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, a covered official shall make the information disclosed under this subparagraph available for public inspection.

“(3) **CONFERENCE EXPENDITURES.**—

“(A) **LIMITATION.**—No amounts made available to a covered official under this part may be used by the covered official, or by any individual or entity awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under this part, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than \$20,000 in funds made available by the covered official, unless the covered official provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host the conference.

“(B) **WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION.**—Written authorization under subparagraph (A) shall include a written estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food, beverages, audio-visual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and entertainment.

“(C) **REPORT.**—

“(i) **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.**—The Deputy Attorney General shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Attorney General under this paragraph.

“(ii) **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.**—The Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under this paragraph.

“(4) **ANNUAL CERTIFICATION.**—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this section, each covered official shall submit to the applicable committees an annual certification—

“(A) indicating whether—

“(i) all audits issued by the Office of the Inspector General of the applicable agency under paragraph (1) have been completed and reviewed by the appropriate Assistant Attorney General or Director, or the appropriate official of the Department of Health and Human Services, as applicable;

“(ii) all mandatory exclusions required under paragraph (1)(C) have been issued; and

“(iii) all reimbursements required under paragraph (1)(E) have been made; and

“(B) that includes a list of any grant recipients excluded under paragraph (1) from the previous year.

“(c) **PREVENTING DUPLICATIVE GRANTS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Before a covered official awards a grant to an applicant under this part, the covered official shall compare potential grant awards with other grants awarded under this part by the covered official to determine if duplicate grant awards are awarded for the same purpose.

“(2) **REPORT.**—If a covered official awards duplicate grants to the same applicant for the same purpose, the covered official shall submit to the applicable committees a report that includes—

“(A) a list of all duplicate grants awarded, including the total dollar amount of any duplicate grants awarded; and

“(B) the reason the covered official awarded the duplicate grants.”

(b) **OTHER GRANTS.**—

(1) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this subsection—

(A) the term “applicable committees”—

(i) with respect to the Attorney General and any other official of the Department of Justice, means—

(I) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(II) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

(ii) with respect to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and any other official of the Department of Health and Human Services, means—

(I) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

(II) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the term “covered agency” means—

(i) the Department of Justice; and

(ii) the Department of Health and Human Services; and

(C) the term “covered official” means—

(i) the Attorney General; and

(ii) the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(2) **ACCOUNTABILITY.**—All grants awarded by a covered official under section 201, 302, or 601

shall be subject to the following accountability provisions:

(A) **AUDIT REQUIREMENT.**—

(i) **DEFINITION.**—In this subparagraph, the term “unresolved audit finding” means a finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of a covered agency that the audited grantee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within 12 months after the date on which the final audit report is issued.

(ii) **AUDIT.**—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act, and in each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of a covered agency shall conduct audits of recipients of grants awarded by the applicable covered official under section 201, 302, or 601 to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

(iii) **MANDATORY EXCLUSION.**—A recipient of grant funds under section 201, 302, or 601 that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive grant funds under those sections during the first 2 fiscal years beginning after the end of the 12-month period described in clause (i).

(iv) **PRIORITY.**—In awarding grants under section 201, 302, or 601, a covered official shall give priority to eligible applicants that did not have an unresolved audit finding during the 3 fiscal years before submitting an application for a grant under such section.

(v) **REIMBURSEMENT.**—If an entity is awarded grant funds under section 201, 302, or 601 during the 2-fiscal-year period during which the entity is barred from receiving grants under clause (iii), the covered official that awarded the funds shall—

(I) deposit an amount equal to the amount of the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

(II) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

(B) **NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS.**—

(i) **DEFINITION.**—For purposes of this subparagraph and the grant programs under sections 201, 302, and 601, the term “nonprofit organization” means an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

(ii) **PROHIBITION.**—A covered official may not award a grant under this section 201, 302, or 601 to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(iii) **DISCLOSURE.**—Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a grant under section 201, 302, or 601 and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees, and key employees, shall disclose to the applicable covered official, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, a covered official shall make the information disclosed under this clause available for public inspection.

(C) **CONFERENCE EXPENDITURES.**—

(i) **LIMITATION.**—No amounts made available to a covered official under section 201, 302, or 601 may be used by the covered official, or by any individual or entity awarded discretionary

funds through a cooperative agreement under those sections, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than \$20,000 in funds made available by the covered official, unless the covered official provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host the conference.

(ii) **WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION.**—Written authorization under clause (i) shall include a written estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food, beverages, audio-visual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and entertainment.

(iii) **REPORT.**—

(I) **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.**—The Deputy Attorney General shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Attorney General under this subparagraph.

(II) **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.**—The Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under this subparagraph.

(D) **ANNUAL CERTIFICATION.**—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act, each covered official shall submit to the applicable committees an annual certification—

(i) indicating whether—

(I) all audits issued by the Office of the Inspector General of the applicable agency under subparagraph (A) have been completed and reviewed by the appropriate Assistant Attorney General or Director, or the appropriate official of the Department of Health and Human Services, as applicable;

(II) all mandatory exclusions required under subparagraph (A)(iii) have been issued; and

(III) all reimbursements required under subparagraph (A)(v) have been made; and

(ii) that includes a list of any grant recipients excluded under subparagraph (A) from the previous year.

(3) **PREVENTING DUPLICATIVE GRANTS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Before a covered official awards a grant to an applicant under section 201, 302, or 601, the covered official shall compare potential grant awards with other grants awarded under those sections by the covered official to determine if duplicate grant awards are awarded for the same purpose.

(B) **REPORT.**—If a covered official awards duplicate grants to the same applicant for the same purpose, the covered official shall submit to the applicable committees a report that includes—

(i) a list of all duplicate grants awarded, including the total dollar amount of any duplicate grants awarded; and

(ii) the reason the covered official awarded the duplicate grants.

**COMMITTEE-REPORTED SUBSTITUTE AMENDMENT
WITHDRAWN**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the committee-reported substitute is withdrawn.

The Senator from Iowa.

AMENDMENT NO. 3378

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I call up the substitute amendment No. 3378.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. GRASSLEY] proposes an amendment numbered 3378.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of March 1, 2016, under “Text of Amendments.”)

AMENDMENT NO. 3362 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3378

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I call up the Feinstein-Grassley amendment No. 3362.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. GRASSLEY], for Mrs. FEINSTEIN, proposes an amendment numbered 3362 to amendment No. 3378.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide the Department of Justice with additional tools to target extraterritorial drug trafficking activity, and for other purposes)

At the end, add the following:

**TITLE —TRANSNATIONAL DRUG
TRAFFICKING ACT**

SEC. 01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Transnational Drug Trafficking Act of 2015”.

SEC. 02. POSSESSION, MANUFACTURE OR DISTRIBUTION FOR PURPOSES OF UNLAWFUL IMPORTATIONS.

Section 1009 of the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21 U.S.C. 959) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively; and

(2) in subsection (a), by striking “It shall” and all that follows and inserting the following: “It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture or distribute a controlled substance in schedule I or II or flunitrazepam or a listed chemical intending, knowing, or having reasonable cause to believe that such substance or chemical will be unlawfully imported into the United States or into waters within a distance of 12 miles of the coast of the United States.

“(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture or distribute a listed chemical—

“(1) intending or knowing that the listed chemical will be used to manufacture a controlled substance; and

“(2) intending, knowing, or having reasonable cause to believe that the controlled substance will be unlawfully imported into the United States.”.

SEC. 03. TRAFFICKING IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS OR SERVICES.

Chapter 113 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 2318(b)(2), by striking “section 2320(e)” and inserting “section 2320(f)”; and

(2) in section 2320—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

“(4) traffics in a drug and knowingly uses a counterfeit mark on or in connection with such drug.”;

(B) in subsection (b)(3), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “counterfeit drug” and inserting “drug that uses a counterfeit mark on or in connection with the drug”; and

(C) in subsection (f), by striking paragraph (6) and inserting the following:

“(6) the term ‘drug’ means a drug, as defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).”.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am pleased we are considering the bill before us entitled the “Comprehensive

Addiction and Recovery Act”—acronym CARA—and that we are on the floor discussing this very important issue.

Since I spoke about the bill earlier this week, I will not have any more opening remarks at this point. I look forward to a bipartisan process where we are able to consider many amendments and move this bill forward.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

OBAMACARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss more of the troubling news that has come out on how the health care law has affected the people of this country. A new poll just came out from National Public Radio as well as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This is what they found: According to the poll, 26 percent of Americans are telling us that the health care law—ObamaCare—has directly hurt them. Twenty-six percent of Americans say that ObamaCare, the health care law, has directly hurt them. Only 14 percent of the people in the poll said that their personal health care has gotten better under ObamaCare. So it is just one in seven who say it is better; over one-quarter say they have personally been hurt. So almost twice as many people have been directly hurt by the law compared to the people who have been helped.

American taxpayers are also being hurt by ObamaCare because of the waste and the fraud in the health care system. There is a new report just out from the Government Accountability Office. It came out last week. It found that the Obama administration is still failing to stop the fraud in health care subsidies.

Here is how the law was designed to work: People must have government-approved insurance because of the law. It is a mandate. There are a lot of people who have been forced to buy very expensive insurance to comply with the law, and in many cases it is far more coverage than they want, that they need, or that they can afford. So the health care law, which the Democrats voted for and the Republicans voted against, said that the government will give subsidies to people to help them pay for this Washington-mandated, expensive insurance.

To get the subsidy, people are supposed to be able to prove they are eligible for the subsidy. There are various criteria to make sure people are eligible. That means things like proving they make a certain income or how many people are in their family or that they are citizens of the United States or that they are here legally.

Washington then pays the subsidy directly to the insurance company. Then later, the government comes around and tries to figure out if the person even qualified for the money, so there is a huge potential for fraud and for wasting taxpayer dollars.

This new report from the Government Accountability Office found that, despite the billions of dollars at stake, the Obama administration has taken what they describe as a “passive approach” to identifying and preventing the fraud. The Obama administration has taken a “passive approach.” It says the Obama administration has struggled—struggled to confirm the eligibility of millions of people who applied for subsidies. This is a report from the Government Accountability Office. We want accountability in government.

The report found that there are 431,000 people who still had unresolved issues with the subsidy paperwork more than a year after they first applied. The cases amount to over \$1.7 billion in taxpayer subsidies. Now, the insurance coverage that these people had for that year has already ended. The Obama administration still did not know if they should have gotten the money that was sent out to the insurance companies on their behalf.

There are another 22,000 cases where it still is not clear if the person who got the subsidy was serving time in prison. How can Washington not even know if someone is in prison? This should be one of the easiest things to find out. But there are millions of cases where the administration is taking this passive approach to figuring out if there is fraud occurring with these subsidies.

People all around the country are asking: Where is the accountability from the Obama administration? They are spending billions of taxpayer dollars. Where is the accountability to make sure that it is being spent properly and not wasted? There is no accountability because the Obama administration does not seem to care about protecting taxpayer money. It cares more about getting a large number of people enrolled in insurance. That is what they want, no matter what the law says, no matter how much money they waste to do it.

This report from the Government Accountability Office came out last Wednesday. The very next day, there was more bad news for taxpayers because of the health care law. There was an article in the Wall Street Journal on Thursday, February 25, under the

headline “Insurance Fight Escalates.” It goes on to say: “Health co-op leaders say the effort to recoup Federal loans will come up short.”

This is taxpayer money. Remember, the health care law gave out billions of dollars—billions of dollars in loans to set up these health insurance co-ops across the country. They set up 23. Already, more than half of them have collapsed and have gone out of business, 12 out of 23 have gone bust, and 700,000 Americans lost their insurance because these co-ops failed.

Now it looks as if hard-working taxpayers are going to lose the money that the government loaned to these failed insurance businesses. According to this Wall Street Journal article, leaders of the co-ops say that taxpayers are going to lose more than \$1 billion in the failed co-ops. They say it is because most of the money has already been spent.

The article quotes the head of the co-op in New Mexico as saying: “Will there be any money left?”

“Yeah, maybe.” That is what he said. That is his answer: “Yeah, maybe.” Maybe there will be a little money left out of more than \$1 billion in taxpayer loans. It is outrageous. It was not supposed to be a bailout of the insurance company. These were supposed to be loans.

Is that how the administration thinks loans are supposed to work? Does the Obama administration think that if they lend out money and people borrow it from the taxpayers and spend it, then they don’t have to pay it? Where is the accountability from these co-ops for the American people? Where is the accountability for the Obama administration to make sure that they loan this money responsibly and don’t waste it? Reports like this paint a very bad picture of health care and the health care law in this country.

We talked about these 23 co-ops and half of them have failed. This was headlined yesterday: “Losses deepen for remaining ObamaCare co-ops.”

Losses snowballed in the fourth quarter at four co-op health plans [that have now reported their numbers for 2015].

The article says:

The nonprofit startups based in Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio and Maine lost about \$270 million last year. . . . That’s more than five times the level of losses those plans recorded in 2014.

That was the first year they operated. They are still waiting for the updated financial reports on the other seven remaining co-ops that have not yet posted their returns.

Here we are. Six years ago, there was a debate in Congress about the Americans’ health care system. Everyone in this body agreed we had a problem. Everybody agreed we needed to do something to help Americans. Republicans presented our ideas on the floor of the Senate. We went to meetings at the

White House. We offered President Obama solutions. Democrats and the President rejected our ideas, and they came up with their own massive plan.

Washington took on too much power over the health care decisions of American families. More Washington control, less Washington accountability—they are never the right answers for our country. If Washington can't protect taxpayer dollars, it shouldn't be collecting so many of these dollars in the first place.

Republicans warned that ObamaCare would be bad for patients, bad for providers, and terrible for the taxpayers. The news keeps coming out, showing that we were exactly right. Republicans are going to continue to talk about our health care ideas and will continue to talk about ideas that will actually hold Washington accountable as Washington spends taxpayers' dollars. We will continue to talk about ideas such as giving families more control over their health care and their health care decisions and giving Washington less control. That is what Americans want.

This new report out from the National Public Radio poll showed 26 percent of Americans say that the health care law, ObamaCare, has directly hurt them. They didn't want this kind of health care reform that directly hurts them, instead of helping them; they wanted to be helped. They don't want an approach like we have; they want an approach that gives them control and, certainly, not a passive approach to preventing fraud. The American people do not want ObamaCare.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3378

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I wish to call up amendment No. 3345, which is my supplemental amendment to address the heroin and opioid epidemic.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Hampshire [Mrs. SHAHEEN] proposes an amendment numbered 3345 to amendment No. 3378.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To make appropriations to address the heroin and opioid drug abuse epidemic for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016)

At the end, add the following:

**TITLE VIII—ADDITIONAL
APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016
SEC. 801. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.**

(a) STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is

appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016, \$230,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Department of Justice for State law enforcement initiatives (which shall include a 30 percent pass-through to localities) under the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program, as authorized by subpart 1 of part E of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3750 et seq.) (except that section 1001(c) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 3793(c)) shall not apply for purposes of this Act), to be used, notwithstanding such subpart 1, for a comprehensive program to combat the heroin and opioid crisis, and for associated criminal justice activities, including approved treatment alternatives to incarceration.

(2) EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

(b) HEROIN AND METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016, \$10,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Department of Justice to carry out section 2999 of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 204 of this Act, to be used to assist State and local law enforcement agencies in areas with high per capita levels of opioid and heroin use, targeting resources to support law enforcement operations on the ground.

(2) EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

SEC. 802. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

(a) SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016—

(A) \$300,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services, for “Substance Abuse Treatment”, to address the heroin and opioid crisis and its associated health effects, of which not less than \$15,000,000 shall be to improve treatment for pregnant or postpartum women under the pilot program authorized under section 508(r) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb-1), as amended by section 501 of this Act; and

(B) \$10,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services, for grants for medication assisted treatment for prescription drug and opioid addiction under section 2999A of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 301 of this Act.

(2) EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section

251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

(b) CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016, \$50,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the Department of Health and Human Services, for prescription drug monitoring programs, community health system interventions, and rapid response projects.

(2) EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am not going to speak to this amendment right now because I hope to do it later. I spent a fair amount of time yesterday talking about the need to provide the resources to address the heroin and opioid epidemic, but I am very pleased to see my colleague from Maine on the floor to speak to it. He has been a cosponsor of the legislation and a huge advocate for addressing the challenge that Maine—like New Hampshire and so many other States—is facing from the heroin and opioid epidemic. I look forward to his remarks and to the opportunity for us to vote on this amendment later today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, this week, this body is talking about one of the most serious problems facing our country. The word “epidemic” really isn't strong enough to represent what we are seeing in terms of drug addiction—opioids and heroin, in particular. The bipartisan support for the bill that is on the floor this week is an indication of the belief of Members of both parties, of all parties of all parts of the country, that this is a critically important question.

We have heard the appalling figures in committees and caucuses and on the floor. In the State of Maine, there are 200 deaths a year from overdoses. This is an eightfold increase in the last 3 years. The figure that got my attention most dramatically was that a year ago in Maine, we had 12,000 babies born, and of that number over 950 were addicted to a substance. That is almost 1 in 12 babies born in my State.

Nationally, the figures are just as shocking and as bad. In my neighboring State of New Hampshire, the number of overdose deaths is now over 380 a year. It is more than one a day. Nationally, there are 47,000 overdose deaths—more deaths than are caused by automobiles.

If this were Ebola or ISIS or any other kind of national crisis, we would be in 24-hour session to find a solution.

We would be doing everything the equivalent of the Manhattan Project to deal with something that is killing so many of our citizens, particularly our young people.

Like any other problem that gets to this body, this is complicated. There isn't any single solution. It involves law enforcement. It involves national security—stopping drugs at the border. It involves treatment of mental illness. It involves treatment of drug addiction and figuring out what works. It involves figuring out prevention. It involves dealing with the overwhelming number of opioid prescription drugs that we now know lead to heroin and other addictions.

It is a very complex problem. There is no single answer, but there are some things we do know about this problem:

The first thing we know is that law enforcement alone isn't enough. Essentially, we have tried that for 25 years. Law enforcement alone isn't enough. It is important. It is a critical part of our defense against the scourge, but it is not the entire answer.

The second thing we know is that this epidemic is directly related to the dramatic rise of prescription painkillers based upon opioids. The data is that four out of five new heroin users started with prescription drugs. This is something we need to discuss. We need to discuss it with the medical community. We need to discuss it with the educational community, and we need to understand that when these drugs are prescribed, there are risks—serious, undeniable, dangerous risks that are taking an enormous toll on our society.

Four out of five new heroin users started with prescription drugs. I met a young man in Maine who was in treatment, who was trying to recover, who had become an addict. He got there starting with a high school sports injury, and he was prescribed opioid treatment—opioid pills—and he ended up in the drug culture that was destroying his life.

That is the second thing we know. We know that law enforcement isn't enough. We know that a big part of our focus has to be on opioids and prescription drugs.

The third thing we know is, there are some treatments that appear to work. We don't know for sure. One of the things that I think we need to do in this body is to provide for the research and the data sharing and the data collection from around the country so we can find out what works. It appears that medication and counseling together are something that works, but we need more research and more data.

The fourth thing we know is that treatment resources are grossly inadequate. This epidemic has exploded in the last few years, but the resources in terms of treatment have, in some cases, actually diminished. There are

fewer beds today than there were 3 years ago because of budget cuts, because of policy changes, and we end up with young people and people generally that have this terrible problem eating up their lives with no place to go.

The greatest tragedy is when we have someone who is suffering from addiction and wants treatment and is ready to take the step and say "I need it," and there is no place to go. The estimates are that among teenagers who are caught in this trap, only 20 percent have treatment available to them.

All these numbers and statistics and policy prescriptions aren't really my subject today. I don't want to talk about politics or even policy. I want to talk about people. In particular, I want to talk about this little boy. This picture is of a young man from Maine named Garrett Brown. There was an extraordinary story about Garrett in the Bangor Daily News late last week. A reporter, Erin Rhoda, an editor at the Bangor Daily News—one of our great newspapers—got to know this young man named Garrett Brown and spent a lot of time interacting with him over the last 3 years and recounted it in this extraordinary piece of journalism. It is the story of this young man's attempts to survive and what happened in his life.

This isn't politics. It isn't policy. It is people. In reading this story as I sat in my darkened office late last week—as my staff went home, they thought there was something wrong with me. The lights were dimmed, the sun was setting, and I read this story. It was like reading the story of the Titanic or of the Lincoln assassination. You knew how it was going to come out, but you hoped it wouldn't happen. You kept seeing moments when it could have been avoided; the tragic end could have been avoided, but it didn't happen. That was what was so gripping to me about this story. It was so real, and it was so close to home.

I have four boys of my own. I venture to say that every family in America that has a son has a picture like it or just like it somewhere in their family scrapbooks or stored on their telephone or in their computer. This is a wonderful Maine kid—a smiling 8-year-old, happy, and ready to go to school with his backpack. Then, about 15 years later, he is with his mom, and he is on his way out. He had a mom who loved him, but he had a system that failed him.

He took responsibility, by the way. He said: It's not that my mom or my stepdad didn't care. They tried. My grandparents tried everything they could. They were devout Christians. There was nothing they would have done to change it.

He took responsibility. But when he took responsibility, we didn't provide the means for him to effectuate that and save his own life. He had to want

to beat it, but he also had to have the means, the resources to take that step.

The Bangor Daily News quite accurately laid out the issue: "Opioid addiction like Garrett's requires treatment." We have this idea in our society that it is just a choice. You make the choice; you don't have to take that pill. Well, the way these drugs work on your brain, they hijack the very parts of your brain that enable you to make that decision. They actually go to the parts of the brain that deal with executive function, decisionmaking, and fear, and derail those parts of the brain. It requires treatment. I am sure that occasionally there are people who can do this by themselves, but that is very rare. Most people require treatment, and odds are that those with an addiction to drugs or alcohol won't get any treatment at all. As I mentioned, only one out of five teenagers who needs treatment has it available to them. If they do go through treatment, they are likely to get the wrong treatment. There is a world of different theories on treatments options, and that is why I say we need to have the research so we can understand what works and put our resources into the things that will actually bring results. Often it means they die, and that is what happened to young Garrett.

Between 2010 and 2014, the number of overdose deaths in Maine involving heroin overdose increased eightfold. This is Maine. This could have been any State in the country. It seems to be striking rural States now as strongly or even worse than urban areas of the country.

I didn't know Garrett Brown, but he was a brave kid. I could tell by his conversations with Erin Rhoda and by his conversations with us. He knew he was talking to us. He knew this was going to be public. He knew he was communicating with us, and here is what he said:

If this changes one kid's life, saves one kid from being in jail, saves his family the pain of seeing him go through it—

This is a guy with an addiction saying this. It is extraordinary.

He continued:

If this . . . saves one kid from overdosing and dying, then all that I've done hasn't been in vain. I guess that's why I keep doing this with you?

This is a tragedy. It is not a tragedy of numbers. It is a tragedy of real people. It is a tragedy of young lives lost, of treasures squandered, and of hearts broken. I have never in my adult life seen a problem like this that is facing my State and every State in this country. We can't solve it all at once. There is no magic wand. But if we find young people like Garrett who are ready to take a step toward a cure—if not a cure, at least have an ongoing recovery—we need to meet them halfway. We need to meet them halfway through the support of treatment, the support

of creating options that are available, by understanding the relationship between addiction and the criminal justice system, and ultimately by loving our neighbors as ourselves.

People sometimes ask me: What is so special about Maine? I tell them Maine is a small town with very long streets. We know each other, care about each other, think about each other, and we try to help each other. I think this country can also be a community—should be a community where we think about and care about each other.

Young lives lost, treasures squandered, and hearts broken. I hope we can start to change that tragic trajectory that is breaking so many hearts in this country this week so we can make a difference, not for Garrett but for the young people to whom he was desperately sending this message. We can, we should, and we shall.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMEMORATING TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I rise to speak about a very important day in the history of my State of Texas, a day that inspires pride and gratitude in the hearts of all Texans. I rise to commemorate Texas Independence Day.

In a moment, I wish to read a letter that was written 180 years ago from behind the walls of an old Spanish mission called the Alamo—a letter written by a 26-year-old lieutenant colonel in the Texas Army, William Barret Travis—and in doing so, I carry on a tradition that was started by the late Senator John Tower, who represented Texas and this body for more than two decades. This tradition was upheld by his successor, Senator Phil Gramm, and then by Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison after him. So it is an honor today to carry on this great tradition.

On February 24, 1836, with his position under siege and outnumbered nearly 10-to-1 by the forces of the Mexican dictator Antonio Lopez de Santa Ana, Travis penned the following letter:

To the people of Texas and all Americans in the world:

Fellow citizens and compatriots, I am besieged by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Ana. I have sustained a continual bombardment and cannonade for 24 hours and have not lost a man.

The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion. Otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword if the fort is taken.

I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from

the walls. I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism and everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid, with all dispatch.

The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to 3,000 or 4,000 in 4 or 5 days. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor and that of his country. Victory or death.

Signed:

William Barret Travis.

Of course, we know in the battle that ensued, all 189 defenders of the Alamo lost their lives, but they did not die in vain. The Battle of the Alamo bought precious time for the Texas revolutionaries allowing General Sam Houston to maneuver his army into position for a decisive victory at the Battle of San Jacinto.

With this victory, Texas became a sovereign nation, and so today we celebrate the adoption of the Texas Declaration of Independence on March 2, 1836. For 9 years, the Republic of Texas thrived as a separate nation. In 1845, it was annexed to the United States as the 28th State. Many Texan patriots who fought in the revolution went on to serve in the U.S. Congress, and I am honored to hold the seat of one of them, Sam Houston. More broadly, I am honored to have the opportunity to serve 27 million Texans, thanks to the sacrifices made by these brave men 180 years ago.

RETURN FROM SPACE OF COMMANDER SCOTT KELLY AND MANIFEST FOR HUMAN SPACE FLIGHT ACT

Mr. President, on a separate matter, one thing William Barret Travis and the other early settlers of Texas had in common was a thirst for adventure and a hunger for the great next frontier. It is an attitude of optimistic perseverance that has become a trademark of Texans for generations. So I think it is fitting today that we also celebrate a man who has devoted his life to expanding our footprint in space.

Last night Scott Kelly returned to Earth after almost a year in space—one of the longest lasting space flights of all time. By tomorrow Scott should be back in Houston, home to the Johnson Space Center.

In June I was able to tour the Johnson Space Center and meet some of the men and women who made Scott Kelly's mission possible. They make their work look easy. They literally have a hand in sending someone to space, ensuring their safety, and executing multiple projects all at the same time. Yet for them it is all in a day's work. They are doing an outstanding job, not only for Houston but for Texas and the United States. As you might expect, Texans view the space center with a particular pride. The world has turned to it as a leader in space exploration and research for more than 50 years. As one of NASA's

largest research centers, it continues to keep the United States in the forefront of innovation and research related to science, technology, engineering, and medicine as well.

Importantly, the Johnson Space Center also leads our commercial space partnerships—a growing sector in my State—and helps design and test the next generation of exploration capabilities and systems. The space center also trains members of our brave astronaut corps, people such as Scott Kelly, to ensure they are prepared for the incredible challenge they face.

A real highlight of my most recent visit to the Johnson Space Center was my ability to actually speak to Scott Kelly while he was in space in the International Space Station. As you can tell from his social media presence—and I follow him on Twitter; he publishes pictures of his incredible view from space on his Twitter feed—he is an optimistic guy, and it is easy to see that he loves his job, but I am sure he is looking forward to being back home.

Scott's mission aboard the International Space Station was about something much bigger than just he, which I am sure he would say if he were here. It was about an investment in the next generation and a commitment to new discoveries and exploring new frontiers. The research he was a part of, included studies to evaluate the effects of living in space on the human body. Scott is actually a twin. His twin brother was here on Earth while he was in space for a year, and I am sure there will be a lot of extensive studies, given the fact that they are twins, on what changes Scott experienced in his own metabolism, body, and the like. They also grew plants in zero gravity in space and much more, which will lay the groundwork for preparing future Americans to go farther, explore more places, and push the outer limits of human space exploration safely without endangering their health and well-being.

The work Scott Kelly accomplished, along with all of the men and women at the Johnson Space Center and with NASA, is so important because it secures America's position as the global leader in space exploration. As important, this research and development impacts more than our space program. It helps applications in the medical field, for our military, and other scientific endeavors. I remember growing up, when we landed the first astronaut on the Moon and what an inspiration it was to me as a young person. I think space exploration has a way of opening the eyes and the imaginations of young people even today about the future—a future perhaps in space exploration or other fields of science, lured as they are to work in the forefront of discovery or help engineer the next great innovation.

Developments like this don't occur automatically and they don't occur overnight. We have to task our space program with taking on new challenges to reap the full benefits, technological breakthroughs, and scientific advancements, and that is why we needed a long-term strategy for the U.S.-manned space mission.

Today I am introducing legislation called the Manifest for Human Space Flight Act that would require NASA to provide Congress with a clear goal and thoughtful strategy. This would include outlining our exploration goals and selecting destinations for future manned space missions that fully utilize our existing assets, provide opportunities to work with commercial and international partners, and position our overall space program on a more focused and stable trajectory. This legislation would also, for the first time, designate a human presence on Mars as a long-term goal of NASA.

Lieutenant Watley was perhaps an American on Mars in a great movie "The Martian," but I believe actually establishing a human presence on Mars would be a worthy goal that would then necessitate the strategy to accomplish that goal. With this bill, I hope we can rightly prioritize space exploration and confirm our commitment to discovering the next great frontier.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, while the distinguished senior Senator from Texas is still on the floor, he mentioned the astronaut and his year in space. As one who has a hobby of photography, I was envious as I looked at all those. I am sure the distinguished Senator from Texas has the same feeling I had seeing these photographs and seeing what an amazing country we are in all times of days and nights and seasons. So I thank him for raising that issue.

Mr. President, this week we are considering the Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act or as they call it CARA. There are few problems in this country that have had more of a devastating impact on American families than opioid abuse. Communities across the country are struggling and they are seeking help. Vermont is no exception, and I found this as I held hearings around the State.

Finally, after years of a misguided approach, Congress now sees addiction for what it is, a public health crisis. We have before us a bipartisan bill we are considering that demonstrates strong bipartisan support by Senators for addressing addiction.

CARA authorizes a critical public health program that I helped create to expand access to medication-assisted treatment programs. Some Vermonters who have been struggling with addiction have had to wait nearly a year to

receive treatment. In fact, several died waiting. Unfortunately, the story is not unique.

The bill also includes my provision to support rural communities with the overdose reversal drug naloxone. Rural locations have the highest death rates in the country from opioid poisoning, talking about my small State of Vermont, but every State, no matter how large or how small, has rural areas. I want people to know that rural locations have the highest death rate. Now, if we can get naloxone into more hands, we can save lives.

Last week, the police in Burlington, VT, were equipped with naloxone, and they were able to save a man's life with this impactful treatment. In fact, the man was unconscious. They saved his life, and Police Chief Brandon del Pozo called it "a textbook case of how police save lives using naloxone."

Now, CARA recognizes that law enforcement will always play a vital role. That is why I worked to include an authorization for funding to expand State-led anti-heroin task forces.

These are important efforts, but I can't emphasize enough that one authorization bill alone is not going to pull our communities out of addiction—not the communities in my State, in the distinguished Presiding Officer's State or in anybody else's State. We can't pretend that solving a problem as large as opioid addiction does not require more resources.

That is why the amendment proposed by Senator SHAHEEN is so essential. It puts real dollars behind the rhetoric. It is going to ensure that the important programs authorized in CARA can actually succeed.

We can all feel good about going on record saying we are against the problem and that we want to solve the problem of opioid addiction. But if we say we are not going to give you any money to do it, it sounds more like empty rhetoric.

In fact, Congress has approved much larger emergency supplemental bills addressing Ebola and swine flu. Even though we didn't have a single Ebola case in this country, we had supplemental funds addressing it, while we have thousands of opioid addiction cases across the country. These efforts were appropriate—but for Ebola and swine flu. Now we have a public health crisis that is here in our own country, and we must respond. Of course, we have responded to epidemics in other countries, but this is an epidemic here at home.

I think everybody agrees that opioid addiction is an epidemic. We should start treating it like one. The Shaheen amendment provides that commitment. I urge every Member who supports CARA—and that is a strong bipartisan group in this body—every Member who is concerned about addiction in their community—and I have to

assume that includes every Senator—to put real resources behind CARA.

I think of the different hearings I have held around our State. In one city, where some had suggested maybe we shouldn't have a hearing yet because we shouldn't talk about what is going on, the mayor of that city took just the opposite view. He said: We have a problem; so we should talk about it to see what we can do about it. He was happy I came there. Although he is a Republican and I am a Democrat, we both said there is no politics and partisanship in this and we ought to face it.

But here is what happened. We scheduled that hearing, and we thought we could use a hall of such-and-such a size. As the days toward the hearing kept coming, we found we needed a bigger and bigger hall because more and more people wanted to come there. We found we had the faith community, law enforcement, the medical profession, mothers and fathers, addicts, and educators. All of these people came together and said: We have a problem, and we need the resources to work together. Law enforcement can't do it alone. The medical profession can't do it alone. The faith community can't do it alone. Educators can't do it alone. But together, with the resources, we might be able to do something.

For another hearing I held—again, the very same thing in a small town—we had to keep enlarging the place where we were going to meet. I recall several people testifying, but one was a now-retired but highly respected, decorated pediatrician. He told us about talking to a couple. He didn't identify them for obvious reasons. But he said: You know, we have this opioid problem here in our city. We have young teenagers who come from very good families—families that are well educated, prosperous, have good income, nice homes. But these teenagers are addicts, and they are getting some of this right from their home medicine cabinet. In this hall with hundreds of people, you could hear a pin drop. He stopped and paused for a moment, and he said: The parents thanked me and said: This is something we should watch out for. He said: No, I am talking about your daughter. Your 14-year-old daughter is an addict. I am talking about her. There are a lot of others in this community, but I am talking about her. I am talking about her.

To this day, I can hear the collective gasp in that room.

I later had the opportunity to meet the parents and the doctor and see the things they were doing. They had the ability, and to the extent that there were things available, they could pay for them, but most people couldn't.

Yes, we should pass CARA, but we should also acknowledge that we have this problem in every single State in the Union, across every demographic,

every income level, every area of education. Let's pass some appropriations so that we are not just giving empty words and we are not addressing a terrible problem with just empty words. But the Senate is saying: We will stand up for a problem in our own country, as we have in other countries when we have helped other countries, and we will stand up for a serious problem right here at home, and we have the courage to spend the money to do it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from New Jersey.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I appreciate the distinguished ranking member of the Judiciary Committee for yielding at this time. I agree with him on the issue of the legislation before us, but I felt compelled to come to the floor to speak about the vacancy in the U.S. Supreme Court.

I rise to support this President's obligation—any President's obligation—to name a Supreme Court nominee to fill a vacancy, no matter when that vacancy occurs—election year or not. We should rightfully expect any President to fulfill his or her constitutional duty and send an eminently qualified nominee to the Senate. All logic, all reason, and the Constitution itself dictates that every President has the duty to do so, under any interpretation of constitutional law. Likewise, we should rightfully expect the Senate to do its job and send that name to the Judiciary Committee, hold a hearing, debate the nomination on the floor, and take a vote.

We are not talking about a vague clause that invites interpretation. We are talking about a very clear and concise clause—article II, section 2, clause 2—that states: “The President. . . shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the Supreme Court. . . .”

It does not say: except in an election year. It does not say: except when it does not suit the political agenda of the majority party in the Senate. It does not say: No appointments can be made in the final year of a President's term. And it does not say: The Senate can arbitrarily and preemptively choose to obstruct the President's responsibility to make appointments.

The point is, the Constitution is clear. In fact, in the last 100 years, the Senate has taken action on every Supreme Court nominee, regardless of whether the nomination was made in a Presidential election year.

But this goes far beyond the filling of a Supreme Court vacancy. This goes to the very heart of the constant and continuous attacks this President has had to endure. For more than 7 years, some Republicans have, time and again, questioned the legitimacy of this President. From his election, beginning

with the legitimacy of his birth certificate to accusing the President of lawlessness, having a Republican Member of Congress shout “liar” during the State of the Union to questioning his legitimate authority in his final year in office to fill the vacancy left by the death of Justice Scalia. It begs the question of why this President is being denied the opportunity to fulfill his constitutional obligation.

Why are constitutional standards, backed by history and precedent, being questioned for this President's Supreme Court nominee? If we were to rely on pure logic and simple consistency, the question to ask is, Would our friends on the other side deny a President of their own party the right to make that appointment? I think not.

The only conclusion we can draw is that this is yet another validation of their strategic decision 7 years ago at a Republican retreat to make Barack Obama a one-term President and obstruct this President at every turn, and then claim political victory for their own misguided inaction and refusal to govern.

What is most astonishing is that they claim, like Justice Scalia, that the Constitution is carved in stone, that it is undeniable and impervious to interpretation. Yet, somehow, they can completely ignore what it clearly states in yet another effort to obstruct this President's ability to govern.

So I say to my friends on the other side: This President was elected twice to serve two full terms. It has only been 7 years. It is time to accept it and move away from obstructionism and on to governing.

The President and I may have differences on certain policies, but we are in complete agreement that he should not be denied the ability to fill this vacancy on the Court. Democrats did not deny President Reagan the ability to confirm Justice Kennedy in an election year, and the Republicans should not deny this President the same ability under the same circumstances. We should have the decency and respect for the Constitution to let the unambiguous wisdom of article II, section 2, clause 2 to determine our actions today, as we did then.

So let's stop the political posturing. Let the President fulfill his constitutional responsibility and the Senate fulfill its advice and consent role. Let's fulfill one of the most basic and solemn duties we have. Let's have a hearing and take a vote. The American people deserve a fully functioning Supreme Court.

There is a bipartisan tradition of giving full and fair consideration to Supreme Court nominees. Even when a majority of the Senate Judiciary Committee has not supported the nominee, the committee has still sent the nominee to the full Senate for a floor vote. And it should be noted that at no time

since World War II has the Court operated with fewer than nine Justices because of the Senate simply refusing to consider a nominee.

Now, every day when I come to work, I pass the Supreme Court, and the words over the portal of the Supreme Court say: “Equal Justice Under Law.” Equal justice under law demands that the judicial branch be fully functional.

When we have a Supreme Court deadlocked in a decision, the decision in the lower court stands and the highest court in the land has no precedential value. Let's be clear. When there is a difference between different Federal courts in our country in different jurisdictions, it is the Supreme Court that determines what is the law of the land so that Federal law is not different in New Jersey than it is in Texas. But if the Court is deadlocked in two similar cases and the decision reverts to the finding of the lower court, there could be differences in how a person in New Jersey is treated than a person is in Texas under the same Federal statute. It is not equal justice under the law.

To have equal justice under the law, the Nation needs the Supreme Court to be fully functioning. Justice Scalia himself spoke of the problems with an eight-Justice Court. In 2004, in explaining why he would not recuse himself in a case involving former Vice President Dick Cheney, he said:

With eight Justices, [it raises] the possibility that, by reason of a tie vote, the Court will find itself unable to resolve the significant legal issue presented by the case. Even one unnecessary recusal impairs the functioning of the Court.

So I believe that in life, Justice Scalia, as a textualist, would say the President has an obligation to nominate a Supreme Court Justice. In 1987, before the Democratic Senate confirmed Justice Kennedy, it was President Reagan who said: “Every day that passes with the Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body.”

I ask my Republican colleagues: How long are you willing to impair the people's business? How long are you willing to stick to a strategy of obstructionism over good governance? How long are you willing to deny this President his constitutional authority and obligation to appoint a nominee to satisfy your political agenda? How long are you willing to deny equal justice under the law?

It was John Adams who reminded us that this is “a government of laws, not of men.”

It was Justice Felix Frankfurter who said: “If one man can be allowed to determine for himself what is law, every man can. That means first chaos then tyranny. Legal process is the essential part of the democratic process.”

Let's not in this Chamber be the “one man.” Let's respect the Constitution and do our jobs. In this case, the

Constitution is settled law. Let's not unsettle it through a misguided determination to score political points to undermine the legitimacy of this President.

The American people understand that our obligation in this process is to advise and consent, not neglect and obstruct. The American people will see the harm to our country and our courts if the majority continues these political tactics. Let's do the right thing. Let's do our jobs and respect this institution and the Constitution by holding hearings and voting on a Supreme Court nominee.

Let's provide for equal justice under the law.

With that, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, we just heard some very legitimate questions from the previous speaker that ought to be answered, and I am going to go back to the familiar to answer that—to the so-called Biden rules.

By now everyone is pretty familiar with the Biden rules, so I am not going to take time to go over all of them again, but they boil down to a couple basic points.

First, the President should exercise restraint and "not name a nominee until after the November election is completed," or, stated differently, the President should let the people decide. But if the President chooses not to follow this model, but instead, as Chairman BIDEN said, "goes the way of Fillmore and Johnson and presses an election-year nomination," then the Senate shouldn't consider the nomination and shouldn't hold hearings.

It doesn't matter, he said, "how good a person is nominated by the President." So the historical record is pretty clear. But we haven't talked as much about one of the main reasons Chairman BIDEN was so adamant that the Senate shouldn't consider a Supreme Court nominee during a heated Presidential election. It is because of the tremendous damage such a hyperpolitical environment would cause the Court, the nominee, and the Nation. In short, if the Senate considered a Supreme Court nominee during a heated Presidential election campaign, the Court would become even more political than it already is.

That is a big part of what was driving Chairman BIDEN in 1992 when he spoke these strong words. Here is how Chairman BIDEN described the problem in an interview—not the speech on the floor that I have quoted in the past—about a week before his famous speech of 1992:

Can you imagine dropping a nominee . . . into that fight, into that cauldron in the middle of a Presidential year?

He continued:

I believe there would be no bounds of propriety that would be honored by either side. . . . The environment within which such a

hearing would be held would be so supercharged and so prone to be able to be distorted.

As a result, Chairman BIDEN concluded:

Whomever the nominee was, good, bad or indifferent . . . would become a victim.

My friend the Vice President—but a friend when he was in the Senate—then considered the tremendous damage that thrusting a Supreme Court nominee into a frenzied political environment would cause and weighed it against the potential impact of an eight-member Court for a short time. He concluded that the "minor" cost of the "three or four cases" that would be reargued were nothing compared to the damage a hyperpoliticized fight would have on "the nominee, the President, the Senate, and the Nation, no matter how good a person is nominated by the President."

The former chairman concluded that because of how badly such a situation would politicize the process, and based on the historical record, the only reasonable and fair approach—or as he said, the "pragmatic" approach—is to not consider a nominee during a Presidential election.

He said.

Once the political season is underway . . . action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over. That is what is fair to the nominee and is central to the process. Otherwise, it seems to me, Mr. President, we will be in deep trouble as an institution.

He concluded:

Senate consideration of a nominee under these circumstances is not fair to the President, to the nominee, or to the Senate itself.

This, in part, is why Chairman BIDEN went to such lengths to explain the history of the bitter fights that occurred in Presidential years. He said: "Some of our Nation's most bitter and heated confirmation fights have come in Presidential election years."

I will state this about the discussion we are having today and will probably have every day for the next several months: Everyone knows that this nominee isn't going to get confirmed. Republicans know it, Democrats know it, the President knows it, and, can you believe it, even the press knows it. That is why the Washington Post called the President's future nominee a "judicial kamikaze pilot," and the New York Times noted that the nominee would need an "almost suicidal willingness to become the central player in a political fight that seems likely to end in failure."

So the only question is, Why would the other side come to the floor to express outrage about not having a hearing? It is because they want to make this as political as possible.

The press has already picked up on it. For instance, CNN reported that the other side hopes to use the fight over a Supreme Court nominee to "energize

the Democratic base." They are already using the Supreme Court and the eventual nominee as a political weapon. They want nothing more than to make the process as political as possible. That is why the President wants to push forward with a nominee who won't get confirmed. That is why the other side is clamoring for a hearing on a nominee everyone knows won't get confirmed. Making the Court even more political is absolutely the last thing the Supreme Court needs.

The Court has been politicized enough already. A recent Gallup poll documents the frustration I hear expressed even at the grassroots of my State of Iowa. In the 6 years since President Obama has appointed two Justices, the American people's disapproval of the Supreme Court jumped from 28 percent disapproval in 2009 to 50 percent disapproval in 2015. That is what happens when Justices legislate from the bench. This Senator might say there is even a Republican nominee sitting on that bench that has legislated from the bench as well.

That is what happens when Justices make decisions based on their personal political preferences or what is in their heart rather than what is in the Constitution and the law. The last thing we need is to further politicize that process and the Court.

I just want to make sure that everyone understands what all of this outrage is really about. It is about making this process as political as possible.

We aren't going to let that happen to the Court, the nominee or the Nation, to follow the suggestion of then-Senator BIDEN. We are going to have a debate—a national debate—between the Democratic nominee and the Republican nominee about what kind of Justice the American people want on the Supreme Court. That is what the American people deserve, and that is why we are going to let the people decide.

But beyond one Justice, there is an even more basic debate occurring. At my town meetings, often somebody will come in very outraged about why I won't impeach Supreme Court justices. They say: "They're making law, instead of interpreting law. How come you put up with that?"

So we can have a debate between the Republican nominee and the Democrat nominee on what the constitutional role of the Court is. And we can have a debate about whether we want a Justice who expresses empathy and understanding of people's problems—the President's standard. As we all know, that is not the purpose of the judicial branch of government. That branch of government isn't supposed to let their personal feelings be involved whatsoever. And the President should not encourage the Justices he appoints to let their feelings decide cases. Their job is to look at what the law says, what the

Constitution says, what the facts of the case are, and to make an impartial judgment.

Consider a Justice appointed to the Supreme Court by a Republican president, who wrote that the Affordable Care Act didn't fit into what Congress could do in regards to regulating interstate commerce—because that reasoning could not be upheld under the Constitution. Instead, that Justice decided the Court could uphold the Act under the Congressional taxing power and found a way to sustain this President's legacy. It was also a Republican Justice who said: Find all kinds of ways to do what you want to do as opposed to what the Constitution requires or what Congress intends in legislation.

It would be nice to have a debate between a Democratic nominee and a Republican nominee, whether we have two, three, or four national debates or whether they have hundreds of appearances around the country, to have these basic constitutional issues discussed. And then we should let the people decide not only who appoints the next Justice but who will decide the direction of the Supreme Court for generations to come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I found this interesting. When my children were little, I would read fairy tales to them, and they especially loved "Through the Looking-Glass" and "Alice in Wonderland." And listening to this speech, I thought of "Through the Looking-Glass" and "Alice in Wonderland."

It is interesting how President Obama gets blamed for everything. "Oh, the approval rating of the Supreme Court has gone down." The majority of the Supreme Court Justices have been appointed or nominated by Republican Presidents. And we are going to blame President Obama because the Republican Justices, nominated by Republican Presidents, are bringing down the approval rating of the U.S. Supreme Court? According to my dear friend from Iowa—he is saying President Obama should be blamed for what those Republican Justices on the Supreme Court did. This is "Alice in Wonderland."

I don't care what happens; President Obama has to get blamed for it. Even if we have a hurricane or something, it must be President Obama's fault. But this is about as far a stretch as I've ever heard. If the approval rating of the court goes down because of the five Republicans who constitute the majority of it, it is about as farfetched as "Alice in Wonderland" to blame President Obama for it.

Let's talk about facts. I like to talk about facts. It's the way Democrats have handled Republicans' nominees.

What my distinguished friend doesn't point out, even though it has been pointed out to him by the Vice President and by the President personally, certainly in my presence, Vice President BIDEN's speech—you should read the whole speech—he is talking about what happens after the election. Vice President BIDEN as Chairman BIDEN put through, in an election year, a Republican nominee to the Supreme Court and got a unanimous vote of Democrats and Republicans in this body. Those are the facts. The fact is that we now use a different standard, it appears. In President Bush's final 2 years, Democrats controlled the Senate. I was chairman. We confirmed 68 of his nominees. In President Obama's final years in office, Republicans have allowed only 16. These are facts. This isn't rhetoric, these are facts. We allowed 68 for a Republican President and Republicans allowed only 16 for a Democratic President, and then they are going to blame the state of the judiciary on President Obama?

Then he talked about Vice President BIDEN when he was chairman and what he might have said during President H.W. Bush's last year in office. Do you know what Vice President BIDEN did? They tried to imply that he blocked judges. He put through 11 Republican nominees for the circuit court and 53 Republican nominees for the district court—11 for the circuit court, 53 for the district court. Do you know what Republicans have allowed? Five lower court nominees this year. So if you say we want to follow the Biden rule, I wish we would. We put through 53 district court nominees and 11 circuit court nominees, and during a Democrat President's last year in office the Republican-controlled Senate has allowed only five. Come on, let's be fair.

The fact is, in a Presidential election year, we have never blocked a Supreme Court nominee because it was a Presidential election year. In fact, since the Judiciary Committee began holding confirmation hearings for Supreme Court nominees in 1916, it has never denied a nominee a hearing.

I tell you this because the Constitution requires the President to make a nomination—it is very clear—and then it says that we shall advise and consent. Well, they are saying: "No, we won't advise; we won't consent; we won't even have a hearing."

Mr. President, I have taken the oath of office here seven times. It is a moving, thrilling moment. I am sure the distinguished Presiding Officer, when he was sworn in, knew it was a solemn moment. You promise to uphold the Constitution, so help me God. The Constitution says the President shall nominate. It says we shall advise and consent.

I took my oath very, very seriously. That is why—just as Vice President BIDEN did when he was chairman—I

moved a significant number of Republican judges through, even in the last year that President Bush was in office. And that is so different from what we see now.

Just think about it. They criticize Vice President BIDEN. The last year President George H.W. Bush was in office, Vice President BIDEN was chairman of the Judiciary Committee. He put through 11 circuit court judges and 53 district court judges. If you want to talk about the Biden rule, the Republicans have allowed only five lower court judges. Come on, let's get this out of partisanship. By any standard whatsoever, when there has been a Republican President and a Democratically-controlled Senate, we have treated that Republican President far better than they have treated Democratic Presidents.

But then to hear that because the five Republican-appointed majority members of the Supreme Court are bringing down the approval rating of the Supreme Court for the American people, telling the American people it must be President Obama's fault—even if those five members were nominated and approved before President Obama's Presidency—that goes too far. That is "Through the Looking-Glass." That is "Alice in Wonderland."

I see the distinguished senior Senator from Rhode Island on the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I thank the distinguished ranking member of the Judiciary Committee very much. While he is on the floor, let me thank him for his leadership, support, and passion for the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which was shepherded through the Judiciary Committee under his guidance and with his wise and benevolent support. I am very grateful.

I am on the floor to talk about the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act today because it has been said by several of my colleagues that there is funding to implement this bill and that that funding is already in the government's accounts, that if we pass the CARA bill, we will be able to fund it and put it to work right away. Let me say with regret that I disagree with that assertion.

I am sorry to have a disagreement with my colleagues over this funding question after all the very excellent bipartisan work we have done to get this bill to this point. This really has been a legislative model. For years we worked on the statute. We had five different full-on national seminars in Washington, bringing people in from all around the country to advise us on all the different aspects of the opioid problem. We had an advisory committee that supported us which was broadly represented from all the different interests that are affected by

the opioid crisis. We came up with a bipartisan bill which came through committee in regular order, without objection from anyone, and which is now on the Senate floor awaiting passage. That is the way it is supposed to work. But on this question of whether it is funded, I must disagree, and I wish to explain why.

For openers, let me explain that in Congress, there are committees that authorize funding. In the case of this bill, the relevant committees are the HELP Committee and the Judiciary Committee. But it is the Appropriations Committee that actually determines what funding will go into which accounts. The Appropriations Committee, in turn, is broken up into subcommittees, which determine the funding of different accounts in different areas of government. So one subcommittee has jurisdiction in one set of accounts and another subcommittee has the appropriations authority over other accounts.

The funding my colleagues have referred to as the funding for this CARA bill was appropriated by what we call in the Senate the Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee. The Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee appropriates two accounts that generally correspond to the authorizing power of the HELP Committee. So there are three committees involved: Judiciary, HELP, and Appropriations. The subcommittee on Appropriations that appropriated this money generally correlates to the authorizing power and jurisdiction of the HELP Committee. There are other Appropriations subcommittees. For instance, there is one that we refer to as CJS. CJS appropriates to, among others, the accounts within the authorizing power of the Judiciary Committee. So that is the background.

Now let's go through the problems. One problem with my friend's argument that the bill is funded is that the funding measure to which they refer originally passed out of its Appropriations subcommittee last June. We didn't even take up the CARA bill in the Judiciary Committee until this February. So there is a timing problem. How could the appropriators last June have predicted this state of affairs on the floor right now? The appropriators would have had to have had an astonishing, wizard-like ability to read the future in order to fund back then an unpassed bill—indeed, a bill that then didn't even have a committee hearing scheduled, let alone markup, passage, and the choice to bring it to the floor. Clearly, in June the Labor-HHS appropriators were funding existing programs, and when the omnibus passed in December, these same programs were funded at an even higher level. In fact, Democrats demanded they be funded at nearly the identical level proposed in the President's bud-

et. The President's budget goes even further back in time. The President's budget certainly could not have foreseen CARA, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. So there is a timing problem.

Second, this CARA bill, back when these appropriations were passed in June, was funded through different accounts than the accounts it is funded through now as we see it on the floor. When the appropriations were passed, it was funded through accounts that would be funded by CJS appropriators. So there is a committee mismatch as well as a timing problem to any claim that these funds were intended for the CARA bill.

The bulk of the CARA bill back then—in fact, 10 out of its 13 programs—authorized funding through Judiciary Committee programs, which is why the bill was sent by the Parliamentarians here to the Judiciary Committee. So if back then the intention was to fund CARA, it would have been CJS that would have funded 10 of those 13 programs. The appropriators for the funds my colleagues speak of were not the CJS appropriators but the Labor-HHS appropriators. Again, there is a committee mismatch.

Here is what happened that explains the shift. After the fiscal year 2016 omnibus had passed, we were informed—the sponsors and authors of the legislation—that in order to get our bill out of the Judiciary Committee, the CARA bill had to be rewritten so that it operated only through existing Federal programs. There are Republicans, as the Presiding Officer well knows, who live by the principle of no new Federal programs, even for new crises, and we were asked in the Judiciary Committee to accommodate them. So we accommodated them. We rewrote the bill in January to accommodate those concerns.

So this February, when CARA came before the Judiciary Committee, it had been revised to move the bulk of its new programs out of the Judiciary Committee accounts and into accounts under the jurisdiction of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. Now, of the 10 programs remaining in the bill, 8 are located at the Department of Health and Human Services, in the jurisdiction of the HELP Committee. But that move was long after these appropriations were made. You cannot connect them.

I should interject that this change created an intrusion by our Judiciary bill into the jurisdiction of the HELP Committee. All here today who support the CARA bill owe a great debt of gratitude and appreciation to Chairman ALEXANDER and to Ranking Member MURRAY for allowing this bill to proceed, even though it now involves a considerable number of accounts under their committee's jurisdiction. They have done so very graciously, without demanding further hearings or other-

wise asserting their HELP Committee's turf. So to both of them I offer, and we should all offer, our sincere and heartfelt thanks.

It does seem a stretch to think that the appropriators in the Appropriations subcommittee that funds these HELP accounts could have foreseen last June not only that CARA would pass out of the Judiciary Committee in February and not only that it would come to the floor now, but also could have foreseen that so many of its programs would have been transferred from Judiciary Committee to HELP Committee accounts. That would have been an astonishing—indeed, truly magical—feat of prediction.

The simple fact is that the Labor-HHS appropriations that my friends rely on as the funding for this CARA bill passed out of the relevant subcommittee with little or no regard for CARA.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter dated April 2, 2015, regarding this matter.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, April 2, 2015.

Hon. RICHARD SHELBY,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies, Committee on
Appropriations, Washington, DC.

Hon. ROY BLUNT,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education, and Related
Agencies, Committee on Appropriations,
Washington, DC.

Hon. BARBARA MIKULSKI,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science and Related Agencies, Com-
mittee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.

Hon. PATTY MURRAY,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education,
and Related Agencies, Committee on Approp-
riations, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHELBY, CHAIRMAN BLUNT, RANKING MEMBER MIKULSKI, AND RANKING MEMBER MURRAY: As you may know, heroin use and prescription opioid abuse are having devastating effects on public health and safety across the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), drug overdoses now surpass automobile accidents as the leading cause of injury-related death for Americans ages 25 to 64. Every day, more than 120 Americans die as a result of drug overdose. Over half of these drug overdoses are related to prescription drugs. While addiction is a treatable disease, only about ten percent of those who need treatment receive it.

We write to express our strong support for fiscal year (FY) 2016 funding for programs that would support the integrated strategies for addressing opioid abuse included in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015 (CARA, S. 524). This bipartisan legislation was developed over the past year and a half through a cooperative process involving key national stakeholders in the public health, law enforcement, criminal justice, and drug policy fields, and is designed to fight prescription opioid abuse and heroin use holistically—from expanding prevention to supporting recovery.

Among other objectives, CARA would:

Expand prevention and educational efforts—particularly aimed at teens, parents and other caretakers, and aging populations—to prevent prescription opioid abuse and the use of heroin.

Expand the availability of the overdose reversal drug naloxone to law enforcement agencies and other first responders.

Expand resources to promptly identify and treat individuals suffering from substance use disorders in the criminal justice system.

Expand disposal sites for unwanted prescription medications to keep them out of the hands of children and adolescents.

Launch an evidence-based prescription opioid and heroin treatment and intervention program to expand best practices throughout the country.

Launch a medication-assisted treatment and intervention demonstration program.

Strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs to help states monitor and track prescription drug diversion and to help at-risk individuals access services.

As you begin consideration of the FY 2016 appropriations bills, we urge you to provide sufficient funding for the provisions included in CARA, which would provide the resources and incentives necessary for states and local governments to expand treatment, prevention, and recovery efforts for the millions of Americans who are affected by substance use disorders. Among other things, we ask that you ensure adequate funding for CDC's prescription drug surveillance and monitoring activities and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Medication-Assisted Treatment for Prescription Drug and Opioid Addiction program. Because we know that medication-assisted treatment should be an important component in treating those suffering from opioid abuse in the criminal justice system, we urge you to continue your support for the Medication-Assisted Treatment Pilot Program at the Bureau of Prisons.

Only through a comprehensive approach that leverages evidence-based law enforcement initiatives, treatment, and support for recovery can we reverse the current skyrocketing numbers of heroin and prescription opioid overdoses and deaths. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

KELLY A. AYOTTE,
SUSAN COLLINS,
CHRISTOPHER A. COONS,
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE,
AMY KLOBUCHAR,
United States Senators.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, the letter I have submitted was written to bring CARA to the attention of both the CJS and the Labor-HHS subcommittees. But those subcommittees, when they got this letter, had no idea the bulk of this would move from the Judiciary Committee to the HELP Committee. Back then, CARA was mostly funded through another subcommittee—CJS. Back then, CARA had not even been scheduled for its hearing in Judiciary.

So why was the funding for the opioid crisis put in and, indeed, increased by the appropriators of the HELP accounts? Obviously, because 47,000 people died last year—in 2014, the last year we have on record—of opioid overdose deaths. This is a national cri-

sis. They were paying attention to it. They were putting resources in, but not resources to implement the bill that we are about to vote on in the next few days.

Indeed, as we speak, SAMSHA, the relevant agency, is gearing up its grant applications to go forward and solicit bids for all the money the appropriators approved and that was dialed up in the omnibus. And SAMSHA is proceeding under the pre-CARA laws. SAMSHA intends to spend every dollar of the appropriated funds, CARA or no CARA. That means if this CARA bill passes, every dollar that goes this year to fund a CARA program will take away funds from that pre-CARA grant array that SAMSHA is preparing right now. In that case, we will necessarily be robbing Peter to pay Paul. You cannot count the same funding twice, and there is no new money for CARA.

One can make the argument, and, indeed, I would accept the argument that though we are robbing Peter to pay Paul, CARA's Paul is better than pre-CARA's Peter. CARA is, after all, a very good bill, but the funding math is still undeniable. We are, in fact, robbing pre-CARA Peter to pay for a new CARA-improved Paul. So one can argue that funded programs may improve because of CARA, at least to the extent the funding goes to new CARA-authorized purposes. But that is an argument that the same money will be better spent. It is not a fair argument that there is new money for CARA programs. There is no new money.

In sum, the timing does not support the argument that there is new funding for CARA. That money was appropriated long ago. Indeed, this bill will not even be law if we get it through the Senate. There is still the House, the Conference, and the President. What kind of wizards do we think our appropriators must have been 8 months ago at seeing a future for this bill which we even now cannot see?

On top of that, the jurisdictional problem between Judiciary and HELP shows that the HELP appropriations had to be intended back in June for other programs, specifically for the HELP grants now underway at SAMSHA, which we would be robbing to fund CARA programs.

Unless they were time-traveling wizards, if the appropriators had intended to add extra money for CARA for this fiscal year, they would have added the money to the Judiciary accounts that were what CARA authorized back then when it was introduced and when the appropriators passed the appropriations in the subcommittee.

Finally, it is a fact that all of this appropriated money my friends speak of is already on its way to being spent. It will be spent even without CARA. It will be spent even if, for some reason, CARA fails. It may even be spent before CARA becomes law, and it will be

spent in programs to support addiction recovery.

That is the logic of my conclusion that there is no funding for CARA. That is the logic of my conclusion that to fund CARA without robbing other addiction recovery programs, we would need new funding, not just last year's appropriations. And that, my friends, is why Senator SHAHEEN's emergency funding bill is so important.

With that, I see my distinguished chairman on the floor, and I yield the floor.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I would like to start my remarks on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act today by complimenting all of the Members—Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator GRASSLEY, Senator PORTMAN, Senator AYOTTE, Senator SHAHEEN, and all the Members who have been working so hard on this legislation to produce something which is very much needed by our country.

I will start my remarks by telling a little story of a constituent who wants to remain anonymous. This is her story:

On July 20, 2009, I was the passenger in a vehicle with my close friend at the time behind the wheel. The light turned green and as expected he hit the gas. While he was hitting the gas, the oncoming car never hit their brakes to stop at the red light they were approaching.

I was painfully pinned in the passenger's seat. All I could hear was my friend asking me if I was OK. Upon arriving in the ER I was quickly poked, prodded, and injected with high-level painkillers. This is where it all began.

Walking out of the hospital, I wasn't only walking out with crutches, but a prescription that changed the next 5 years of my life. I was prescribed OxyContin to help manage the pain I was experiencing. With continuing follow-up appointments and check-ins, also came more prescriptions for "pain management prescriptions."

Two months after getting into a car accident, I was a heroin addict. How quickly all things I knew changed. In September of 2009 I not only began shooting heroin but I also began my first semester of college. I was a freshman at UMass Boston, worked full time, but, secretly, I was also a heroin addict. I kept my addiction a secret from everyone I knew including my close friends and family.

On August 31, 2014 I woke up and said to myself "enough is enough." It took three overdoses in order to open my eyes. Since leaving treatment in November of 2014, my recovery has not stopped; I continue to learn and to grow daily. I have also learned of the medical issues and complications that my heroin use has led to. I now suffer from seizures because the excessive drug use over 5

years has led to minor brain damage. Along with the seizures, I have tested positive for Hepatitis C and HIV, which is common with injection drug users.

At the end of the day, all I want to do is to help others who are struggling because I know what they are going through.

Mr. President, she is one of the fortunate ones. She found the help she needed and had the strength and support to get clean. But I am hearing enormous frustration from people who don't feel that sufficient resources are being brought to bear on this enormous epidemic of prescription drug and heroin addiction.

All week we have heard the statistics here in this Chamber. Our Nation is experiencing more deaths from drug overdoses than from gun violence or auto accidents. Eighty percent of the people suffering from heroin addiction started with opioid pain medications approved by the FDA and prescribed by doctors, with 27,000 people dying from an opioid overdose in 2014 and 1,300 of those coming from the State of Massachusetts.

This issue is one that doesn't just affect the Bay State. America is drowning in a tsunami of heroin and prescription drug addiction that we must stop before it drowns any more families and communities.

Let us compare what we are doing as a nation when confronted with other deadly epidemics. A bipartisan majority in Congress funded more than \$5 billion to respond to Ebola. We dispatched the medical community and public health experts. Today the Obama administration is asking Congress for \$1.8 billion in emergency funding to fight the Zika virus.

Imagine if we applied the same commitment, the same urgency, and the same level of resources to the prescription drug and heroin epidemic. We need an immediate and comprehensive strategy that requires commitment from all levels of government—State, local, and Federal. That means Congress must step up to respond with leadership and with resources. We need to stop the overprescription of opioid pain medication, we must prevent addiction before it takes hold, and we must provide the funding necessary to ensure that we stem this tide of deadly addiction.

The Food and Drug Administration must change its decision not to seek expert advice about the risks of addiction before it approves abuse-deterrent opioids. Abuse-deterrent opioids is a contradiction in terms. Whether an opioid is used as a deterrent or not, it has not prevented tens of thousands of people who have had their wisdom teeth removed or experienced lower back pain from getting addicted to these painkillers. By refusing to convene the advisory committee to inform all of its opioid approval decisions, the FDA continues to ignore outside experts who could help stem the tide of

tragic deaths and overdoses plaguing this country.

That is why I have filed an amendment to require the FDA to convene advisory committees of outside experts for all opioid approval decisions—period. Now is the time to implement effective and commonsense solutions, but we need funding to do that; funding for families, funding for treatment providers, funding for our sheriffs and firefighters who carry overdose prevention drugs that save lives. We need to provide the real resources necessary to address a crisis that is only growing in numbers and severity, and that comes in the form of emergency funding. We are hemorrhaging lives by the day, and supplemental funding is the first step needed to staunch the flow of suffering and death.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are at a watershed moment in this national debate to address the public health crisis of addiction. So let us be clear. Stopping the overprescription of pain medication that is fueling opioid addiction and overdoses starts with the prescribers. We need to require anyone who prescribes opioid pain medication and other controlled substances to undergo mandatory training on safe prescribing practices and the identification of possible substance abuse disorders. That is why I have filed an amendment that requires prescribers to get the education needed to help staunch this wall of suffering and death.

The doctors will say they don't want education to be mandated; that it should be voluntary. Well, the FDA has had voluntary education for opioid prescribers in place since 2013 and has been actively encouraging doctors to take these voluntary education modules, but in more than 2 years, less than 12 percent of prescribers have actually completed the FDA's voluntary education program. A survey of 1,000 physicians nationwide found that nearly one-half of doctors erroneously reported that abuse-deterrent formulations were less addictive than their counterparts. It is unconscionable that our doctors know so little about these potentially deadly painkillers.

I intend to call up amendment No. 3382 later so we can make consideration of the bill. The amendment would ensure that as a condition of receiving a license to prescribe opioids, the recipient of the license is educated in the best practices for using opioids and the connection with addiction and with diversion. I intend to call up that amendment later, asking for consideration.

From my perspective, if we are going to have a real strategy, then we have to make sure there is a requirement that there is continuing education. We also need to remove the barriers to effective treatment, including outdated Federal restrictions on medication-assisted therapies like SUBOXONE.

Medication-assisted therapy for opioid addiction is cost-effective, it decreases overdose deaths, and it reduces transmission of HIV and hepatitis C. That is why I have filed an amendment that would lift the caps that are limiting the number of patients doctors can treat with medication-assisted therapy. If we are going to reduce the supply of heroin and illicit prescription drugs, we have to reduce the demand through effective treatment. I have been working with Senator PAUL from Kentucky on that amendment.

Also, fear of a lawsuit should not deter anyone from trying to save the life of someone suffering from an overdose. That is why I have filed an amendment that creates a Federal Good Samaritan provision that shields from civil liability family members, friends, and other bystanders who administer opioid prevention treatments like Narcan.

The debate we are having on this legislation this week is just the beginning. We must let prescribers know that unless they get basic education in opioids, they will have to turn off the spigot of painkillers that are flooding this country and leading to deadly overdoses. We must let law enforcement and the judicial system know we cannot incarcerate our way out of this problem. We must let Big Pharma know we are going to work to ensure that we have a lifting of awareness of this issue every single day. Enough is enough in this country. Enough is enough. We have just seen an explosion in terms of this problem.

We must now let all of those struggling with addiction know that help is on the way and that no matter how dark life seems right now, there is hope and the Sun will rise for them once again.

I thank the Presiding Officer for giving me the opportunity to speak for some time, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from Oregon.

(The remarks of Mr. MERKLEY pertaining to the introduction of S. 2621 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I rise to offer some thoughts about the current discussion over a vacancy on the Supreme Court.

I had high hopes yesterday for the meeting in the White House between the majority leader, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, President Obama, and Vice President BIDEN. I had high hopes that meeting might lead to an opening and a willingness to entertain the important business of filling a vacancy on the Supreme Court, but the announcements made directly after that meeting suggested—a

phrase we sometimes use back home—that the schoolhouse door is going to stay closed. There will not be a debate. There will not be a vote. There will not be a committee hearing. In fact, there was even a suggestion, a commitment, that the majority would refuse even to entertain courtesy office visits with the nominee that President Obama is expected to send up soon.

I was disappointed in that, and I wanted to take the floor to offer a simple message. It is very important that the Senate do its constitutional duty and do its job with respect to the Supreme Court vacancy. The job is pretty plain. We have a job description, as most people do who have jobs. The job description is contained mostly in article I of the Constitution, but there are also descriptions of what we must do in the Senate in article II. Article II, section 2, clause 2 of the Constitution says the President “shall nominate, and . . . with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint” a variety of officials, including Supreme Court Justices.

This is part of our job description, to entertain Presidential nominations for Supreme Court Justices. We volunteer for the job. We take an oath to do the job. We cash a paycheck written by the American people to pay for us to do the job. Frankly, we don't have the option of refusing to do the job.

Is there anything unusual about this situation, a vacancy on the Supreme Court occurring during the last year of a President's term? The answer to that is no.

On 17 occasions, this body has entertained and had a confirmation vote on a Supreme Court Justice in the final year of a President's term—17 times. When this happened, people thought it seemed rare, but when you go back and look at the historical record, it is not rare at all. On each of those occasions in a Presidential election year, the Senate has done its job under article II, section 2, clause 2, and entertained a nominee. There is no reason why this Senate should not do exactly the same thing, follow that historical precedent.

As I have traveled around Virginia in the weeks since the vacancy became open, I have talked to a lot of citizens about this. Sometimes it is helpful for us in this body to think about the way others—especially our citizens—look at what we are doing or not doing here. Citizens ask me: What possibly could be the reason why the Senate would not follow its clear historical precedent and do a job description that is contained in the Constitution and would refuse a vote, refuse debate, refuse committee hearings, refuse even to meet with a nominee? Why would Congress not do its job? Why would the Senate not do its job?

I have been thinking about that, and I can only conceive of two reasons why this Senate would not do its job, and

both of the reasons are highly illegitimate, in my opinion.

The first reason—and this is a reason that occurs to many citizens, and they are very concerned about this—is that the Senate is announcing that it will not do its job because of the identity of this particular President. The Senate has been willing to do the job for other Presidents, but is there something about this particular President that is making the Senate decide to break its historical traditions and violate article II, section 2, clause 2, and not do the job?

This question has been given some added oomph because of another recent event. In early February, President Obama sent his budget to the Congress. Pursuant to the Budget Act of 1974—and this has been followed uniformly by the Senate and the House—when the President sends up a budget, the Budget Committees have a hearing about the President's budget—even if they do not like it, and they often don't like it, but that is what you do. You have a hearing about the President's budget. If you don't like it, you criticize the budget and then you write a different budget. That is what has happened for every President since the Budget Control Act of 1974 passed.

In the last year of the Bush administration, when there were Democratic majorities in both Houses when President Bush sent up his budget, hearings were held on the budget. But in this instance, just within the last month, when the budget was sent up from President Obama, both committees said: For this President—breaking the statute, breaking all tradition—we will not even have a hearing on this President's budget.

So if we are going to break a constitutional command and break a history in which 17 Justices have been confirmed in a Presidential year, and if we are going to break it for this President, and if we are going to break the Budget Control Act and break a uniform history since 1974 by not acceding even a hearing for the budget submitted by this President, then a question that is being asked by the citizens of this country—certainly the citizens of this Commonwealth—is whether the actions taken here on this Supreme Court nomination to not allow a vote, not allow a debate, not allow a committee hearing, and not even allow courtesy office visits, is actually not about the Supreme Court at all, not even about the nominee, whosoever it shall be, but it is a particular mark of disrespect for this President that is unprecedented in the history of this body. That is an explanation which many of my citizens are deeply worried about and which many of my citizens are talking about and asking about, and frankly I don't have a good answer to that concern.

There is a second reason that suggests itself to me with respect to

breaking all of the historical precedent on this particular Supreme Court vacancy. It connects to another concern that I have taken to the floor many times to talk about as a member of the Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees. There is another clause of the Constitution that I care deeply about, and that is article 1, section 8, clause 11. We should not be at war without a vote of Congress.

We are now in the 20th month of a war, and Congress hasn't even voted—this war against ISIL. I go to hearings all the time where Members of the Senate criticize the President for what he is doing or not doing in the war, but I see a complete unwillingness in this House and the House of Representatives to actually do what the Constitution commands and have a vote on the war.

This circumstance reminds me of that: a clear constitutional command in article 2, section 2, clause 2; a clear historical precedent of the Senate engaging; but now, for this President, on this vacancy, a decision: Hold on a second. Maybe we can just avoid voting yes or no. If we vote yes for a nominee the President might send up, we will make some people mad. If we vote no on a nominee the President sends up, we will make some other people mad. Maybe we can just avoid the commands of article II, section 2, clause 2, avoid the uniform history of this body, and not vote at all. If we can avoid voting at all, maybe we can evade accountability; maybe we can evade the criticism that might come to us from our constituents.

That is also highly troubling.

I can't think of any other reasons why this body would violate the clear commands of article II, section 2, clause 2, and violate a uniform history of approving 17 Supreme Court Justices during a Presidential year other than, A, it is fundamentally a sign of disrespect for this particular President or, B, it is a desire by a Senate that certainly has the votes to confirm or deny, consistent with the constitutional provision, to avoid taking a vote and thereby think we can avoid the accountability to our citizens for casting a vote on something that might be controversial. Needless to say, both of those reasons are highly illegitimate and, in my view, are really beneath what we should be doing in this Chamber.

The last thing I will say is this: The job description of a Senator is laid out in the Constitution, but there are other parts of the job that may not be laid out so plainly but that we all understand to be our job. For example, I don't think it is laid out that we should passionately represent our citizens and do constituent service for them, but we all understand that is part of the job.

Well, another part of the job of a U.S. Senator that may not be spelled out as

directly as the power to advise and consent on nominations or the power to declare war is that we are elected guardians of this institution, and more than just the institution of the Senate, we are elected to be guardians of the Democratic traditions that are set out in the Constitution, in this marvelous Constitution that establishes three branches of government that have checks and balances against each other.

We should always act, regardless of our disagreements, regardless of our debates or arguments, and the differences of opinion are legitimate. We should always act to promote respect for our institutions, not only the institution of the Senate but the institution of the court system, which has a vacancy right now on the Supreme Court, the institution of the Presidency, toward whom we are sending a signal of disrespect by the actions that are being undertaken in this body. It is part of the job we need to do to build up the respect for the institutions of our government. If Senators don't respect the institutions of our government, why would anyone else respect them? If we act in a way that subverts or tears them down, why would we expect anyone else to respect the institution?

I came here to this body because I do respect the institution. I respect its history. We are all humans; we can make mistakes. Votes have been cast that in the light of day you could look at and expect to be different. But compared to other systems in the world—and I lived in a country that was a military dictatorship when I was a young man, and I can certainly see the great blessing it is to live here in this country and serve here in this body. I deeply fear that the actions we are embarking on in connection with the Supreme Court nomination are expressing a profound disrespect for the article III branch, the courts; a profound disrespect for the article II branch of the Presidency; and, frankly, a profound disrespect for our own history, traditions, and job description in this article I branch of the legislature.

It is not too late for us to turn this around. It is not too late for us to take a pause and, when the President sends over a nomination for the Supreme Court, to do what justice demands. If justice demands anything, it should be that we would analyze an individual on that person's own merits instead of just saying that the blanket rule is that no matter who you are, no matter what your qualifications, because you were sent by this President, we will create a unique rule for you and refuse to entertain you.

We still have time to turn this around. I have no idea when the President will send a nominee over, and I have no idea who that nominee will be, but when that nominee is delivered and

recommended to the Senate, it is my prayer that this body will do what article II, section 2, clause 2, demands; that we will do what we have done in every other instance when a President has sent a nominee over in a Presidential election year; that we will not bar the schoolhouse door but we will open the doors to our office to accord a nominee the courtesy of a discussion; that we will have hearings in the Judiciary Committee; and that we will have a robust debate and a vote on this floor. If that vote is a yes, that will be great. If that vote is a no, that will still be fully in accord with the constitutional job description of this Congress. But to not entertain a nominee at all, in my view, would violate our oath, would violate the Constitution, and would express a significant disrespect for all three branches of government.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

AMENDMENT NO. 3367 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3378

(Purpose: To establish a life-saving program to prevent drug and opioid abuse in Medicare.)

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I call up the Toomey amendment No. 3367.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the pending amendment is set aside.

The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. GRASSLEY], for Mr. TOOMEY, proposes an amendment numbered 3367 to Amendment No. 3378.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of March 1, 2016, under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

AMENDMENT NO. 3395 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3378

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I call up amendment No. 3395.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the pending amendment is set aside.

The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oregon [Mr. WYDEN] proposes an amendment numbered 3395 to amendment No. 3378.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for comprehensive provisions for the prevention and enforcement of opioid abuse and treatment of opioid addiction)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ INCREASED ANTI-KICKBACKS PENALTIES.

Paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1128B(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320a-7b(b)) are each amended by inserting "(or, beginning January 1, 2017, \$50,000)" after "\$25,000".

SEC. ____ CENTER FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID INNOVATION TESTING OF OPIOID ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM MODEL FOR PART D PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN ENROLLEES.

Section 1115A of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1315a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2)(A), by adding at the end the following new sentence: "The models selected under this subparagraph shall include the model described in subsection (h)."; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(h) OPIOID ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM MODEL.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall test a model requiring prescription drug plans under part D of title XVIII to have in place, directly or through appropriate arrangements, an opioid abuse treatment program for applicable enrollees in lieu of the medication therapy management program under section 1860D-4(c)(2) with respect to such applicable enrollees.

"(2) START DATE.—The model under this subsection shall start in plan year 2018.

"(3) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall select a limited number of Medicare part D regions in which to the model, giving priority to regions based on the number of total opioid prescriptions in the region.

"(4) REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAM.—Under an opioid abuse treatment program, the PDP sponsor offering the plan shall—

"(A) establish a care team that includes at least—

"(i) a pharmacist;

"(ii) a physician; and

"(iii) an individual licensed in a State with expertise in behavioral health (as determined by the Secretary), which may be the physician described in clause (ii); and

"(B) develop, in consultation with the applicable enrollee and with input from the prescriber to the extent necessary and practicable, a care plan for the applicable enrollee that is intended to treat the applicable enrollee's pain and limit any unnecessary opioid prescriptions when possible.

"(5) PAYMENT.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall make a monthly payment to the PDP sponsor offering the prescription drug plan for each applicable enrollee who receives services under the opioid abuse treatment program.

"(B) SHARED SAVINGS.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall (using a methodology determined appropriate by the Secretary) make payments (in addition to the payments under subparagraph (A)) to the PDP sponsor offering the prescription drug plan if the Secretary determines that total spending under parts A, B, and D of title XVIII (and including the payments under subparagraph (A)) for applicable enrollees who receive services under the opioid abuse treatment program is less than a historical benchmark of total spending under such parts A, B, and D for such enrollees or similar enrollees. Such benchmark shall be adjusted at the Secretary's discretion for changes in law or regulation, unforeseen circumstances, or advances in medical practice.

"(6) QUALITY.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall measure the

quality of care furnished by opioid abuse treatment programs, including elements related to access to care, the unnecessary use of opioids, pain management, and the delivery of behavioral health services.

“(7) APPLICABLE ENROLLEE.—In this subsection, the term ‘applicable enrollee’ means an individual who is, with respect to a prescription drug plan—

“(A) enrolled with the plan; and

“(B) an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse (as defined in section 1860D-4(c)(5)(C)).

“(8) MODEL NOT APPLICABLE TO MA-PD PLANS.—The model under this subsection shall not apply to MA-PD plans or enrollees of such plans.

“(9) CLARIFICATION OF APPLICATION.—For purposes of the preceding provisions of this section (including paragraphs (3) and (4) of subsection (b) and subsections (d) and (f)), the model under this subsection shall be deemed to be a model under subsection (b).”.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, along with my colleague Senator SCHUMER, I rise to offer what, in my view, are some needed changes to the amendment Senator TOOMEY has now offered to the opioid bill. My bottom line for the opioid legislation is that a real solution has to include three priorities: more prevention, better treatment, and tougher enforcement. To be successful, all three priorities must work in tandem.

The Toomey amendment, which is often called the Part D lock-in, would allow Part D plans to identify people in Medicare who may be abusing opioids. These people would then be assigned to one prescriber and one pharmacy to get their pills. This is an enforcement policy, and it cracks down on those who game the system.

What is important, what is critical for the Senate to understand is that the story does not stop there. If someone is addicted to opioids, they need a path—a real path—to treatment. Without treatment, they may get their pills on the street or they may turn to heroin. This amendment ensures those who are at risk for opioid abuse are connected to meaningful treatment choices so they can better manage their pain and limit excessive prescriptions. Those struggling with addiction need the health care system to be all hands on deck, working to ensure that there is adequate treatment. That means your doctor, your health care plan, and your pharmacy need to come together and develop a treatment plan in order to ensure that Americans are on the road to real recovery. Without access to treatment, the Toomey amendment alone would simply lock persons suffering from addiction into a pharmacy, and they would still be without a path out of addiction. Effective treatment has to be more than handing a pamphlet to somebody struggling with a condition as powerful as addiction.

My amendment also aims to end the tide of overprescribing in the first place. It doubles the penalties for

opioid manufacturers that provide kickbacks to prescribers in order to boost their profits by promoting the unapproved use of these drugs at the expense of a patient's safety. The inappropriate practices of these companies have been well documented in recent years, and it is high time for real accountability when the opioid manufacturers go too far.

I will close by saying that at the Finance Committee hearing, which was held last week, I asked the three panelists—one was a witness chosen by the distinguished chairman, Senator HATCH, one was a witness I chose, and one was an individual that both of us thought would make an important contribution. The panel consisted of a pharmacist, a State assistant attorney general, and a child welfare and substance abuse expert. I asked all of them one simple question, and that question was: Does treatment and enforcement have to work in tandem to solve the opioid crisis? Each one of these witnesses—a witness chosen by Chairman HATCH, a witness chosen by me, and an independent witness—answered yes to my question. Prevention, treatment, and enforcement must work in tandem, and to do that we have to adopt this amendment.

We ought to take action to improve policies in our government that will actually solve the opioid crisis. I hope all of my colleagues will support my perfecting amendment to the Toomey amendment.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I rise to speak in favor of amendment No. 3354. I filed this amendment with my colleague from West Virginia, Senator CAPITO, who has been a leader in our fight against opioid addiction. The opioid addiction problem in our country is severe. It is growing, and it is not going to end unless Congress comes together to pass a law that targets the root causes of this epidemic. The stakes are simply too high to ignore.

Last year alone, in communities all across our country, including many in New York, 1.4 million more Americans started abusing opioids. Every day, 44 more people are killed by an overdose. We have seen enough data to know that our opioid addiction problem is spiraling out of control. Opioid addiction is destroying too many lives in our cities, too many families in our rural communities, and too many young men and women in our suburbs.

I wish to tell the story of one of my constituents whose name is Sean Murdick. Sean was a really special and gifted young man. He was cocaptain of his high school football team and had that rare ability to bring people together and connect with anyone. Sean didn't care if you were on the football

team or had a disability, he was always the first one there to help you when you needed it.

After high school, Sean loved working with his hands, so he got a good job as a construction worker. One day Sean broke his arm. Sean's doctor gave him a prescription for oxycodone, a powerful opioid to mask his pain. By the time his prescription ran out, Sean was already addicted. He couldn't shake the addiction no matter how hard he tried. He started using heroin and tried to quit many times, but the system failed. The system failed him nearly every step of the way, and last fall Sean overdosed and died.

I would like to tell you Sean's story from the perspective of his parents. My hometown paper, the Times Union, did an incredible story about his life. I can imagine the pain they suffer because I have two young sons. The Murdicks had many questions but very few answers, and they have been lost in a fog of grief since their son's death 2 months ago.

The Times Union wrote:

They want to speak out in Sean's memory, to reclaim what heroin stole from them in the hope that it might help other parents struggling with a child's addiction.

“Sean did not die in vain,” his father said, choking back tears.

“We tried our best to save him. It wasn't enough,” his older brother said, his voice cracking. . . . His mother walked over, embraced her son and spoke soothing words into his ear. The father buried his head in his hands. It was a tableau of sorrow.

We have seen this happen far too often. When their son spiraled down into addiction—

His parents could see something was wrong with Sean. He lost a lot of weight and seemed distant and fidgety. He nodded off at the dinner table.

His father found a syringe in the bathroom and confronted Sean.

“Dad, I'm sick. I need help,” he said. “This is not me. I don't want to be like this.”

The parents told their story to our paper. The paper says:

It was a revolving door of failure: detox, intensive outpatient care, relapse. He did not qualify for the most intensive and costliest level of care, inpatient residential treatment. They denied him because he was not homicidal or suicidal and had a stable home environment. “It was a never-ending battle with the insurance companies,” his mother said. “They treated him like the scum of the Earth.”

Now imagine being a parent and going through this with your son—going from treatment center to treatment center.

When Sean finally died, he had the best care. He was in a treatment center. When he called his mother, he said:

“Mom, I've gotta go. My steak's ready,” he said. “Love you, mom.”

He went into the bathroom, and he overdosed.

Sean left his parents a final solace. Not long before he died, he thanked them for their unconditional love and how they supported him through a long road of misery.

"You did everything right," he told them.

I don't know how a parent can hear those words and think they did everything right, but I can tell you as a Senator that the U.S. Congress is not doing everything right.

Too many parents are telling these stories about their children who have died and too many patients are being prescribed opioids, such as Percocet, Vicodin, and OxyContin for acute pain. This medication is prescribed to patients for a broken wrist or when they have a wisdom tooth pulled—medication that they may need for only 2 or 3 days. Why in Heaven's name are they sent home with a dose of 30 oxycodone pills? What happens to those pills? Are they given to kids at a party? Are they sold to addicts?

We know there is a huge issue with how prescriptions are being made, how much medicine is being given to patients for this acute care, and right now there are no guidelines—no guidelines—given to doctors.

I have a bill to create that guideline. We need a guideline for the CDC. Our amendment is very simple. It would require the CDC to issue clear guidelines to our medical community for when it is appropriate to prescribe opioids instead of something nonaddictive, such as Extra Strength Tylenol.

Our amendment simply requires the CDC to issue these clear guidelines for how much opioid medication our medical professionals can prescribe without putting a patient at high risk for addiction. These guidelines are already being done for chronic pain, so they should also do them for acute pain.

We need to do something. As Members of Congress, we need to respond to the suffering of so many of our constituents. It is truly an epidemic, and it needs a response.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at 2:30 p.m. today, the Senate vote in relation to the following amendments in the order listed: 3362, Feinstein; 3395, Wyden; 3367, Toomey; 3345, Shaheen; that there be no second-degree amendments in order to the amendments and that, where applicable, Senator ENZI or his designee be recognized to offer a budget point of order against the respective amendment and that the sponsor or their designee be recognized to make a motion to waive; further, that all the amendments be subject to a 60-affirmative-vote threshold for adoption

and that there be 2 minutes equally divided in the usual form prior to each vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

KARI'S LAW

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I rise today to discuss a bipartisan bill that ensures all Americans can access 9-1-1 in emergencies.

In December of 2013, Kari Hunt was attacked in her Texas hotel room. As this was unfolding, her 9-year-old daughter tried desperately to call 9-1-1, but the call did not go through. Like millions of American children, Kari's brave daughter was taught to dial 9-1-1 for emergency assistance, but because they were in a hotel room, the phone required her to dial 9 followed by 9-1-1.

In any emergency, a few precious seconds can mean the difference between life and death. And although we cannot prevent tragic events from taking place, we do have the ability to make it easier to get help. That is why I have teamed up with Senators AMY KLOBUCHAR, JOHN CORNYN, TED CRUZ, and BRIAN SCHATZ to put forward a new bill that could save countless lives. Our legislation, named in honor of Kari Hunt, would require that everyone has the ability to call 9-1-1 in an emergency. This problem isn't isolated to one hotel room or a particular incident.

As of March 2014, consumers could not directly dial 9-1-1 in 44.5 percent of hotel franchises and 32 percent of independent hotels. Over the past 2 years, the hotel industry and phone manufacturers have undertaken voluntary efforts to improve the problem, and I do commend those efforts, but we need to do more. If one person cannot call 9-1-1 in a life-or-death situation, that is one person too many.

The bill we have introduced, known as Kari's Law, would require multiline telephone systems, such as those used in hotels and schools and office buildings, to have a default setting that enables people to directly call 9-1-1 without first dialing an access code such as 9 or 1. The bill also requires that these phone systems be programmed to allow a central location—such as the hotel front desk—to be notified if a 9-1-1 call is made. Through our legislation, first responders can more easily locate people during an emergency. Then they face fewer barriers while this is unfolding.

Kari's Law has already received generous support from across the country. For example, in Nebraska, the bill is supported by the firefighters associations in Omaha and Lincoln, the Buffalo County Sheriff's Office, the city of Beatrice Fire and Rescue Department, Cheyenne and Scotts Bluff County 9-1-1 representatives, and the chairman of

the Scotts Bluff County Board of Commissioners. The bill is also supported by the hotel industry and the American Hotel and Lodging Association.

I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of FCC Commissioner Pai, who has devoted time and resources to bring attention to this very important issue. Commissioner Pai traveled to Nebraska last June, and he participated in a workshop on direct-dial 9-1-1 issues while at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. He has continued to encourage the industry to work with him in an effort to find solutions to this important issue. The Nebraska Public Service Commission, which led the workshop, has also been at the forefront of the discussion.

And finally, we would not be here discussing this bill without the tireless work of Kari's father, Hank Hunt. Hank has worked day in and day out to advocate for this legislation at both the State and the national level. Hank has made it his mission to ensure that no other family will have to suffer through a similar tragedy. I paraphrase Hank: It was the look on my granddaughter's face when we failed her. A 9-year-old did what she was instructed to do by her parents, teachers, and adults. She was in a true, dire emergency, and she followed instructions, but it didn't work.

I would call on all my colleagues to support this important legislation. We owe it to Kari Hunt, her family, and the Americans who rely on their ability to call 9-1-1 for emergency help.

SPOOFING PREVENTION ACT

Madam President, I also want to take a moment to speak about another bipartisan bill that is currently before the Senate. This legislation also seeks to protect Americans by updating our telecommunications laws. It would fix loopholes in our laws that are allowing scammers to take advantage of innocent Americans through a practice known as caller ID spoofing.

Caller ID spoofing allows predators to deliberately falsify their identification and telephone numbers relayed through caller ID. The scammers frequently ask for personal information and for money. Often, senior citizens and our veterans are the target of these predatory practices. Caller ID spoofing has become a major problem for Nebraskans and for law enforcement, which is why I am committed to eliminating this practice.

In September 2013, USA Today highlighted the story of Marian Kerr from Hastings, NE. Ms. Kerr is an 83-year-old retired hospital nursing administrator who fell victim to a spoofing scam. She received a call from individuals who claimed to work for the Federal Government, and they asked for her bank account information. The scammers told her they were Federal officials and already had her name, address, and her phone number. They

used this information to trick Marian into providing her bank account number. Ms. Kerr had caller ID, but it displayed a number in Nevada, not Washington, DC, or Hastings, NE. She attempted to call back repeatedly, but she either received a busy signal or was sent to voice mail. Ms. Kerr reported the incident to the police, but by then it was too late. Her money was gone, and there was nothing that law enforcement could do.

Last fall, the Omaha FBI issued a warning about the danger posed by scammers using the Bureau's identification to target Nebraskans. The callers claimed to be offering a grant from the Federal Government, and they proceeded to solicit credit card and banking information. This practice is happening across the country and it needs to stop. Whether it is hard-working Nebraskans like Ms. Kerr or veterans who bravely served our country, no one is immune to this form of fraud.

That is why I was very pleased to join with Senator NELSON last month to introduce the bipartisan Spoofing Prevention Act. This bill would amend the Truth in Caller ID Act. Currently, loopholes in this law are allowing scammers to manipulate caller ID information and to harass millions of Americans.

While the Truth in Caller ID Act has helped to curb spoofing, the growth in new technologies has allowed scammers, especially those operating overseas, to continue this fraudulent practice. The Spoofing Prevention Act would crack down on spoofing by prohibiting caller ID spoofing on all voice calls, including those originating outside the United States, and all calls made using IP-enabled voice services. It would also prohibit caller ID spoofing done via text messaging, which is now becoming a really common practice. Additionally, the bill directs the GAO to look at what the FCC and the FTC have done to combat spoofing.

We must call for new solutions as technology continues to evolve, and I urge all my colleagues to support this important legislation so we can ensure that our citizens are protected from fraud and abuse.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I would like you to recognize the assistant minority leader from Illinois, Senator DURBIN.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank my colleague from Indiana.

Mr. President, the bill before us is the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. It is one of the few bills on which we find so much bipartisanship. It really is an issue that all of us un-

derstand back home is a major problem, wherever home may be. In my State of Illinois, there is no town too small and no suburb too wealthy to avoid the challenge of this heroin crisis.

Here is what is happening. Over the last 10 years, we have seen the pharmaceutical industry dramatically increase the number of painkiller pills for sale. One classification of those opioids includes OxyContin, hydrocodone, and other names that are pretty familiar to us. It turns out that there have been so many of these pills produced that they have now created an industry of their own—an illicit industry where people are buying and selling them to get high. When they reached a point where they can't find these pills or they are too expensive, they switch, in the same category of narcotics, to heroin. Of course, heroin can kill you if you have an overdose.

We now have more people dying from overdoses of heroin across the United States than people who are dying in traffic accidents. To give you an idea of the volume of this challenge, I have been all across my State, from one end to the other, from Southern Illinois all the way up to Chicago and the suburbs and towns in between. There is hardly a single town that has been spared where some teenager wasn't found dead because of a heroin overdose. There are things we are doing to try to resolve this, but we are not doing enough and not doing it fast enough.

So the bill that is on the floor, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, is an attempt to find new ways for prevention, education, and treatment of substance abuse. There is an amendment offered by Senator SHAHEEN from New Hampshire. It is really a test. All of us can agree on the goals. Senator SHAHEEN says that is not enough. That is an empty promise unless you pay to achieve the goals. We have to put the money into substance abuse treatment. We have to put the money into efforts with law enforcement to reduce the likelihood of these drugs coming into the United States. That is why I support her amendment.

I will offer another amendment too. What we are finding is that there are not enough treatment facilities for this huge growth in people who are addicted to heroin and other narcotics. There just aren't enough. So my bill takes a look at Medicaid. That is the health insurance plan for people in low-income categories. A few years ago, we changed this law and said you can't treat people for substance abuse if you have any more than 16 beds in your facility—16. Can you imagine in the city of Chicago what that means?

Well, I went to Haymarket, which is a wonderful operation started by Monsignor Ignatius McDermott decades ago, which treats people for alcoholism and substance abuse. They have empty

beds now that can treat people who are addicted to heroin and help them to break away from this habit. But if they are under Medicaid, they can't offer these beds to these individuals. So I have an amendment with Senator ANGUS KING of Maine, and this increases the number of beds in each facility to 40. This isn't a runaway number. It is a manageable number, and it is a realistic number. If we are going to deal with heroin addiction, we have to deal with it in an honest fashion.

Let me give an example of what I consider to be one of the more effective approaches. In Gloucester, MA, the chief of police decided to try something new. They were having too many heroin overdose deaths, so he made the decision and announced that if you came to his police department or sheriff's office and announced your addiction, they wouldn't arrest you. They would put you into treatment. What happened was a number of people came forward and went into treatment. It was a good outcome for them and for the community.

I have a similar story from the town of Dixon in Illinois. They had too many scary instances where people were either close to a heroin overdose or actually passed away. They tried the same thing as Gloucester, MA, and offered that if you came in and confessed your need for help and treatment, they wouldn't arrest you. They would take you into treatment. It worked. Over 20 local teenagers showed up because of their addiction and they were put into treatment.

Of course, the problem is there aren't enough treatment facilities. So this amendment I have would expand the opportunities for treatment, and we have to do that.

The good news about this, if there is a good part of this, is that we are finally dealing with addiction in reality. It is no longer viewed just as a moral failing or characterized as some omission of conscience. It is being viewed as a disease—a medical condition that should and can be treated—and that is why we are making a step in the right direction.

We also—I think it bears repeating—we also changed the law in this Chamber not that many years ago, a law which was brought to the floor originally by Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota and Senator Pete Domenici of New Mexico, and that bill required that health insurance policies in the United States, in the future, would cover mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment. So, now, because that became the law, the health insurance plans we buy cover our families for those needs. Many families who never dreamed they would need substance abuse treatment for their kids, thank goodness, can turn to their health insurance plan for that kind of help. We have to protect that.

Those who talk about repealing the Affordable Care Act would be repealing this very protection that families are using now for substance abuse treatment. That isn't the answer. The answer is to have more treatment facilities available so people can rid themselves of this addiction and get on with their lives.

I have met so many of these people in my roundtables, including law enforcement and doctors, but the ones I remember the most are the young people addicted in high school who finally were able to break the habit. They have a chance now for real life, but it is because there was treatment there when they needed it.

I hope my colleagues will consider this amendment. It will not come up today, but it will soon.

This is a good bill. I hope they will vote for the Shaheen amendment because it pays for the services we are promising. I don't want to end up making an empty promise to America as we face this heroin crisis.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I thank the assistant minority leader for those inspiring words, and I recognize the Senator from Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 6 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, let me also join my colleague in agreeing with the Senator from Illinois on his comments, and I, too, will join him on voting in favor of the Shaheen amendment. It is important we not only take on this question of opioid drug abuse but that we also make sure we fund the program. I thank him for his leadership.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. President, I wish to take a couple of moments and join with many of my colleagues to talk about an issue of enormous importance on the constitutional obligation to fulfill our duty in terms of reviewing whomever the President of the United States nominates for the Supreme Court. I wish to start, though, by saying a few words about Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia and to offer my condolences to his family. Whether you agreed or disagreed with Judge Scalia's decisions—and mechanically I disagreed with many of them—he was a remarkable jurist and he was a remarkable individual. Over the last 10-plus years, I got to know him and his wife Maureen more in a social setting. He was warm, witty, charming, brilliant, and he will be missed by all who agreed or disagreed with him. My thoughts continue to be with Maureen and his family.

I rise, I think, almost in the mode of what I believe Justice Scalia would have said as someone who was a strict constructionist and someone who believed so firmly in the words of the Constitution. The words of the Constitution are quite clear in article II, section 2, where it says the President shall nominate Justices to the Supreme Court, and it is the responsibility of the Senate to advise and consent.

So my request to all colleagues in this body is simply let's do our job. It is not if the President will nominate, it is when the President will nominate—and I hope he nominates soon—we should give that nominee their due consideration, a fair hearing, and then an up-or-down vote. The President has repeatedly voiced his strong commitment to nominating an eminently qualified replacement. That is his duty, and we must do ours.

To those who suggest we should wait and let the American people decide, the truth is, they already did. In 2012, the American people voted to return President Obama to the White House for a second 4-year term. That 4-year term doesn't end until January 20, 2017. I believe there is ample time to vet a nominee and still wrap up this process this spring.

Are we going to allow politics to totally overtake the work of this body? Are we resigned to a complete and utter failure to govern until next January?

I know the Presiding Officer and I both share a common background; that is, a background in business. It is remarkable to me. No business in America—no business in the world—would operate under the presumption that because it is a Presidential year, that somehow we can default on all of our duties and simply kick over every issue until next year. If we operated a business that way, we would be out of business.

I believe it is absolutely essential that when the President—and I hope expeditiously—nominates an individual to the Supreme Court, that this body do its job constitutionally: review that applicant, meet with that applicant, hold hearings on that nominee, and then give that nominee the up-or-down vote the Constitution requires.

The remarkable thing is in a year where there is a lot of commentary about what the public wants, I can at least tell my colleagues what the public wants in Virginia. They want us to do our job.

I have received an overwhelming response from Virginians from one end of the Commonwealth to the other. They are expressing their opinion clearly about how the nomination process should move forward. A lot of Virginians are expressing their thoughts about what kind of nominee the Senate should confirm or not confirm, but

what they are not saying is that the U.S. Senate should punt on this constitutional responsibility. They want us to do our job.

Over the past week, what I have found most striking is the awkward public position held by so many people who otherwise claim to be advocates of a strict reading of the words of the U.S. Constitution, who somehow are saying—imagining something that doesn't appear in the Constitution, that a President or at least this President in his last year—we are not going to follow the Constitution. We are going to kick it over until next year. I believe that is irresponsible. I believe it is inappropriate. I believe that does not follow the interpretation of the Constitution and quite honestly I don't believe it would follow what Justice Scalia, who was a strict constitutionalist, would want to see this body do.

Yet we saw some on the other side of the aisle, literally within hours of Justice Scalia's passing, saying: No vote. No proceeding. We are not going to do our job. We saw certain members of the leadership meet yesterday with the President, again reaffirming their unwillingness to do their job.

This failure to act, this failure to do our constitutional duty, could result—will result—in a vacancy on the Supreme Court stretching close to a year, across two distinct terms of our highest Court. Over that time, the Supreme Court could be deciding extremely important cases, and in many ways they are not going to function as the Constitution laid out.

Many of my friends on the other side of the aisle often quote President Reagan. President Reagan himself said: "Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body."

As a matter of fact, if we don't do our job, in effect, what we will be doing is potentially shutting down another branch of government. Regardless of where we fall on the political spectrum, if there is one message we have heard loud and clear over the last couple of years, the American people do not abide shutting down various branches of government. The American people deserve better than this.

I would again urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to step up and do their job. Let's give the President's Supreme Court nominee the appropriate respect, hear them out, have those hearings, and give the Senate a chance to exercise its will in a straight up-or-down vote.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I rise for all Hoosiers who have been touched by addiction or suffered the loss of a loved one as a result of opioid abuse, heroin use or other drug epidemics. I

am here for every Hoosier community that has been gripped by addiction.

I am here from Austin, IN, a small town of 4,200, much like many small towns in the Presiding Officer's home State of North Carolina, where more than 185 people tested positive for HIV, largely caused by injection drug users who shared needles. I am here for Connersville, which was devastated by a heroin epidemic that saw 41 overdoses and 8 deaths in a 3-month span. I am here for my hometown of Granger, which was shaken last year when two teenage brothers, Nick and Jack Savage, died in just one night from a prescription drug-related overdose. I am here for Fort Wayne, Lafayette, and Terre Haute, and Indianapolis, and every community across our State. No part of Indiana or our country is immune from the pain of addiction and these drug epidemics.

By now many of us have heard the staggering statistics. One person in America dies every 25 minutes from an opioid overdose, and overdose deaths in the United States now outnumber fatal auto accidents.

Ultimately, this is about people. People like Mike Zoss of Tippecanoe County. Mike was the youngest of three boys. Mike was creative, enjoyed reading, and had a ton of friends. In high school he began experimenting with prescription drugs. During his senior year, Mike's mom Donna got a call no parent wants to receive. Mike had overdosed at a friend's house from a combination of LYRICA and methadone. He landed in intensive care and was in a coma for nearly 3 weeks. Miraculously, Mike survived, but after struggling for nearly 3 more years with his addiction, Mike died from another overdose.

This scourge is about families and the heartbreak they endure and all the people whose lives are shattered by addiction or even cut short. That is why I have been working on this issue for over 2 years, listening to Hoosiers, introducing bipartisan legislation, partnering with Federal, State, and local officials, and bringing stakeholders together.

These families are why I support the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. This bill provides States and local communities with the tools to prevent and treat drug addiction and to support individuals in recovery. CARA strengthens prevention efforts, increases access to treatment and recovery services, develops best prescribing practices, and expands access to naloxone, also known as Narcan, which can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. In addition, CARA expands disposal sites for unwanted and unused prescription drugs to keep them out of the hands of children and teens, and CARA strengthens prescription drug monitoring programs. This bill provides States and local communities

with the tools to prevent and treat drug addiction and to support individuals in recovery.

CARA strengthens prevention efforts, increases access to treatment, develops best prescribing practices, and expands access to naloxone, as I said. Naloxone can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. These are incredible steps that can make a huge change in what happens in the future of our country.

While this bipartisan bill includes many important provisions that help families in my home State of Indiana and across our entire country, it will take all of us working together to prevent and treat addiction. Prescribers and pharmacists, law enforcement and first responders, parents and families, and officials at the Federal, State, and local levels all have a role to play.

I want to talk today about how CARA can best help in these efforts. First, I want to talk about prescribers. Our prescribers play a vital role in addressing addiction because they are our partners in the fight to reduce the risk of prescription drug abuse. They have the knowledge and authority to help our patients, friends, neighbors, and family members understand both the benefits of prescription opioids and the potentially devastating dangers associated with opioid abuse.

Last year, we hosted a roundtable discussion in Indianapolis on prescribing practices with my colleague, Congresswoman SUSAN BROOKS. By bringing together State officials, doctors, and pharmacists, all of whom play key roles in curbing overprescribing, we can better engage health professionals in the fight against the opioid epidemic. We want to make sure doctors have the training, the tools, and the resources to prevent overprescribing and also to help them make the best possible decisions about how to treat their patients.

Right now there is not one set of currently nationally accepted best practices that can help prescribers make the best informed decisions about prescribing opioid drugs. Existing guidelines vary in the recommendations that are made.

CARA would help. It includes a provision adopted from my bipartisan legislation that I reintroduced last year with my friend and colleague, Senator KELLY AYOTTE from New Hampshire, which brings experts together to review, modify, and update, where necessary, best practices for pain management and prescribing pain medication.

Second, I want to talk about our first responders and our law enforcement who are on the front line of this crisis. Frequently they are called to scenes where an individual has overdosed, and they are working to find ways to address these drug epidemics. In Northwest Indiana, the Porter County sheriff's department is reaching out to educate families about the heroin crisis

there with a video that includes first-person accounts about how the epidemic has impacted the local community. In the northeast part of our State, over by the Ohio border, the Fort Wayne Fire Department began using Narcan just last August to try to help save people who had overdosed. In the first 4 days, they had to use it three different times—and many times since then. In Central Indiana last year, Indianapolis EMS had administered naloxone an astounding 1,227 times. We need to make the overdose reversal drug naloxone more readily available to first responders and law enforcement.

CARA includes a provision similar to one from my bill with Senator AYOTTE that provides grants to train law enforcement and other first responders in the administration of naloxone to save lives. I have also offered an amendment that encourages first responder units receiving funding through this program to use outreach coordinators to ensure that every individual who receives naloxone also receives in-person followup. Indianapolis EMS recently began a similar outreach program designed to connect overdose victims who receive naloxone with the help they need.

CARA assists law enforcement by expanding resources to identify and treat individuals facing addiction in criminal justice centers. I hear frequently from my friends—the police officers, sheriffs, judges, and court personnel throughout the Hoosier State—that more resources are sorely needed.

Third, I want to talk about families. There are countless personal stories across our State and almost every State about moms and dads, brothers and sisters, wives and husbands, and grandparents who have been impacted by addiction. I want to share a couple of these stories.

Our young friend Aaron—Justin Phillips remembers her son Aaron, a talented athlete who had dreams of playing football in college and the NFL. He was a starting quarterback on Lawrence North's varsity team. He was smart and charming, with a generous heart.

It started for Aaron with a prescription pain medicine and then led to heroin. At the age of 20 years old, in October 2013, Aaron died of a heroin overdose. His mom said, "We can't pretend it is not our kid because it very well may be our kid who is next."

There are people like Michelle Standeford of Lebanon, IN, who lost her son and her nephew to addiction. Her nephew Greg died 3 years ago from a heroin overdose at the age of 21. Her son Troy, 33, died following a long battle with addiction. His struggle began when he was prescribed opioids for the pain he was struggling with after a jet ski accident. This past Christmas, Michelle visited Troy, who was in

South Florida seeking treatment. She said he was in great spirits and eager to reunite with his family. A few weeks after Troy came back home to Indiana, he passed away. Think of this. He left behind parents, a wife, and two sons, 2 and 4 years old. These stories are way too common.

As Donna Zoss of Lafayette said, "There are way too many kids dying, and as a community we need to do something." She wants to make sure other families learn from her experience before it is too late.

CARA would help families by raising awareness about opioid abuse and heroin abuse and expanding access to treatment. It includes a provision from our bipartisan bill with Senator AYOTTE that establishes a national drug awareness program. By helping families learn about the serious effects of opioid abuse and its connection to heroin, it can make a difference.

CARA also would strengthen additional prevention efforts and increase access to treatment and recovery services with the goal of helping more people overcome addiction, including specific initiatives for women, youth, and vets.

We are not doing enough, and the burden of addressing the opioid and heroin use epidemic has fallen heavily on our criminal justice system, which is clearly not equipped to treat all those struggling with addiction. That is why CARA is so important and why we need to pass this critical legislation quickly.

We have an opportunity to work together—all of us—to pass a good bipartisan bill that helps confront opioid abuse, heroin abuse, and other drug epidemics. On the Federal level, it is our job to support and strengthen partnerships on the State and local levels to make sure every town in every State is accounted for and can heal. CARA will do just that. It would be a significant step forward, although I think we can all agree that it is just a first step.

Mr. President, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

AMENDMENT NO. 3367

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise on the same topic that the Senator from Indiana was addressing very eloquently through the absolutely heart-wrenching stories he told of his constituents and their families. These are stories we hear all across America. I hear them all across Pennsylvania day in and day out.

Drug addiction is an enormous problem. It is devastating families and communities in our States. I share the view of the Senator from Indiana that this legislation is very important. It takes a number of steps that are very constructive. I congratulate Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator PORTMAN for a very good piece of legislation that is going to help save lives. It is going to help save families and communities.

I have an amendment that I am going to address that is going to take another step to help save lives, and I hope my colleagues will overwhelmingly support this because it is an epidemic the likes of which I don't know we have seen in a very long time.

Last October, I convened a field hearing of the Senate Finance Subcommittee on health care to learn more about this very epidemic of opioid addiction and heroin addiction and the overdoses that are resulting. We did it in Pittsburgh, and Senator CASEY joined me. We reserved a very large auditorium, and we invited some of the leading local experts, doctors who were dealing with people who were suffering from addiction, law enforcement folks, recovering addicts. We had a standing-room-only crowd in that room. Such was the intensity of the concern of this issue and the breadth of it because we all know people who are affected by this terrible scourge.

A couple of things I learned in the hearing that are important is that we have to figure out how we can reduce some of the overprescribing of these narcotics—these prescription opioids—upon which people then become addicted. We also have to find ways to address the diversion from prescriptions that are obtained through the conventional process, the black market, the streets, and the places where it feeds the addiction.

I think one of the overlooked elements of this problem has been the opioid epidemic that is affecting older folks, aging baby boomers, and senior citizens who have become addicted to opioids for a variety of reasons.

The headlines have screamed about this. USA Today's headline said: "Many seniors Hooked On Prescription Drugs." The Wall Street Journal had a headline recently: "Aging Baby Boomers Bring Drug Habits Into Middle Age." This came from a TV news channel: "Senior citizens getting hooked on painkillers."

This is growing problem, and it doesn't know any demographic limits. It affects senior citizens as well as young people. In fact, to give a sense of one of the, perhaps, contributing elements to this, in 2013 there were 55 million opioid prescriptions written in America for Americans over the age of 65. It is a stunning number. It is a 20-percent increase in just 5 years. We have not had a comparable increase in the number of senior citizens. It is a huge increase in the number of prescriptions per person. This is probably related to the fact that the number of opioid-addicted seniors has itself tripled in the last decade.

One of the problems has been identified by the Government Accountability Office. They estimate that in 1 year alone, 170,000 Medicare enrollees engaged in doctor shopping. That is the process by which beneficiaries go to

multiple doctors to get multiple prescriptions for the same or similar powerful narcotics. They go to multiple pharmacies to get them all filled, and they end up with these commercial quantities of prescription drugs—vastly beyond anything that any individual could need.

The GAO discovered that one beneficiary had visited 89 different doctors in one year just to get prescription painkillers—89 doctors in one year. That is almost 2 a week. Another beneficiary received prescriptions for 1,289 hydrocodone pills. That is almost like a 2-year supply. It makes no sense. I could go on and on with cases in which fraud is being committed for the purpose of obtaining these prescriptions, which are then sold in the black market.

There is also a subset of Medicare beneficiaries who are innocently getting duplicate opioid prescriptions because they are being treated by different doctors for different maladies. They have multiple illnesses. They get multiple prescriptions because in many cases there is nobody providing adequate oversight and coordination for their care. So we have both, people who are intentionally and fraudulently getting multiple prescriptions and then we have people who are innocently getting it. So there is a way we can deal with this inappropriate prescription and diversion into the black market, and the administration has asked us to do this.

This administration—the Obama administration—has asked Congress to give them, in Medicare, the power to limit certain beneficiaries who are engaged in doctor shopping, exactly as people already can do so within Medicaid and with private health care providers. So the simple idea is to give Medicare the power when it identifies a beneficiary who is engaged in doctor shopping—getting multiple, duplicative prescriptions, either intentionally or unintentionally—to allow Medicare to lock that patient into one prescriber and one pharmacy. That way you don't have this problem. That is what the administration has asked us to do.

So I have introduced a bill that does exactly that. It is called the Stopping Medication Abuse and Protecting Seniors Act. Senator BROWN of Ohio is the lead Democrat on this bill. I thank Senators PORTMAN and McCAIN also for their work. This is the amendment we are offering to this bill to give Medicare the very same tool that Medicaid has, the tool that the administration is asking for, and the tool that all experts say makes sense.

As I said, Medicaid and commercial users already do this, and we are not inventing something new. What we are doing is simply applying a proven technique that limits overprescribing and diversion, applying that to Medicare, where it does not exist today. No one who legitimately needs a prescription

for opioids will be denied that. That would be completely unreasonable and inappropriate.

In fact, we exempt seniors in nursing homes, where the nursing home can provide the monitoring, and seniors who are in hospice, and cancer patients who might need unusually large quantities are exempted. In fact, this legislation would actually lock in a small fraction of 1 percent of Medicare enrollees, but that is the fraction that is engaging in this very dangerous behavior.

First, I am grateful for the very broad bipartisan support that we have. As a result, if we get this passed today—which I certainly hope we will—we will help opioid-addicted seniors find treatment because they will be notified when they come up on this list—when it is discovered that they are going to multiple doctors and multiple pharmacies. It will stop the diversion of these powerful narcotics.

It will save taxpayer money because taxpayers reimburse for all of these prescriptions, even those that are fraudulent. Maybe, most importantly, it will reduce the availability of these opioids. We have 25 Republican and Democratic cosponsors on the bill. We have the support of the National Governors Association. Nearly identical language was already passed in the House. It was embedded in the 21st Century Cures Act, where it passed overwhelmingly.

The President's budget has asked for this very mechanism repeatedly. The CMS Acting Administrator was before our committee, and Administrator Slavitt said this legislation "makes every bit of sense in the world." The CDC Director is for it. The White House drug czar is for it. The Pew Charitable Trusts testified on behalf of our legislation, and the Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing support it—not to mention many law enforcement groups and senior groups, such as the Medicare Rights Center.

This is a tool that is overdue. We have this tool in private health care insurance coverage. We have this tool in Medicaid. We just need to have this tool in Medicare.

I wish to single out for a special thanks my coauthor SHERROD BROWN. Senator BROWN and his staff worked very hard and did a tremendous job. They provided, in fact, very valuable feedback to make sure that all the stakeholders were going to be treated fairly and specifically, that beneficiary rights would be properly respected. That is a very important and very constructive contribution that Senator BROWN made to this legislation. He also helped to secure many endorsements from outside groups.

My fellow Pennsylvanian, Senator CASEY, was very helpful and is passionate about this issue. He has seen firsthand the damage that is being

done across Pennsylvania from opioid abuse. He is a cosponsor of the legislation.

We had a very successful hearing in the Finance Committee. I thank Senator HATCH for having this very topic of how we can limit the diversion through Medicare of these very dangerous narcotics, and I thought that was a very constructive hearing.

I also thank Senator KAINE, who, through his work on the Senate Aging Committee, has been very active and extremely helpful on this issue.

Again, this is an amendment that has broad, bipartisan support. It has been vetted by the stakeholders. It has been vetted by and requested by the administration. It is endorsed by numerous health care and law enforcement groups. The reason it has such broad support is because it will save lives, it will protect seniors from opioid overprescriptions, it will stop fraud, and it will dramatically reduce pill diversion. So to vote no on this would be to allow the continued flooding of very dangerous prescription opioids onto the black market, and I can't think of any reason we would want to do that.

I urge my colleagues to support the bipartisan Toomey-Brown-Portman-Kaine amendment. Let's get this adopted and then let's pass this underlying bill, which is very, very constructive as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, as one of the authors of the bill before us on the floor now, I wish to say that I appreciate and welcome the Senator's amendment, and I appreciate the bipartisan way in which it was achieved, with SHERROD BROWN and TIM KAINE, as well as with the other cosponsors of the bill.

With that, I yield the floor back so that we may hear from another coauthor of this legislation who was with us through the long and arduous process of preparing this bill, running the seminars, putting together the advisory committee, and crafting the legislation.

I yield for the Senator from New Hampshire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I very much thank the Senator from Rhode Island for the work that we were able to do together on this important legislation, for his leadership, and, really, his passion for this issue that is devastating my State—the heroin and opioid epidemic that is facing all of us. I thank him for a very thoughtful approach and bringing people together around this. I am so pleased we are debating this on the Senate floor today.

HONORING OFFICER ASHLEY GUINDON AND
LIEUTENANT JAMES "JIMMY" GERAGHTY

Mr. President, I come to the Senate floor today with great sadness to dis-

cuss and to honor the lives of two of our outstanding law enforcement officers from New Hampshire who were taken from us far too soon. One is New Hampshire State Police Lieutenant Jimmy Geraghty, a U.S. Army veteran and outstanding public servant. Another is Prince William County Officer Ashley Guindon of Merrimack, NH.

Ashley was a Merrimack, NH, native and a Marine Corps veteran who was killed in the line of duty in Virginia 1 day after being sworn in as a police officer to serve in the Prince William County Police Department.

These individuals represent the very best of law enforcement. It is with such a heavy heart that I pause to remember Ashley Guindon, an incredible young woman whose life was tragically cut short. Ashley was killed in the line of duty last week, tragically, on her first day as a police officer with the Prince William County Police Department in Virginia.

Ashley could not have known her fate when she responded to an emergency call, but she responded to the call with the same sense of duty and resolve that all of our faithful law enforcement officers do every single day because they don't know at that next stop, at that next house that they respond to help someone in need, what they are going to be confronted with.

Ashley's death is a terrible, unthinkable tragedy and serves as a somber reminder of the tremendous sacrifices that our law enforcement officers make every single day by putting their lives on the line to keep us safe.

My heart breaks for Officer Guindon's mother Sharon, for her family, for her friends, and for the public safety community, as they mourn the loss of this tremendous young woman whose life ended far, far too soon. I will keep them in my thoughts and prayers as I know everyone in this Chamber will.

But Officer Guindon should not be remembered because of the circumstances of her death. Rather, she should be remembered for her tremendous life of service to her Nation, to the people whose community she worked to keep safe, and for the sacrifices that she has made and her family has made on behalf of all of us.

Officer Guindon demonstrated an incredible commitment to her country in so many ways. Following her graduation from Merrimack High School in 2005, she joined the Marine Corps. In doing so, she was honoring the life of her father and the service of her father, who deployed to Iraq as a member of the New Hampshire Air National Guard. So she comes from a family of service. Her father lost his life after returning home from serving in Iraq, and Officer Guindon felt that she could honor his memory by joining the armed services herself. So she joined and became a marine.

In her high school yearbook she wrote:

As I take flight it only makes me closer to u daddy. Mom, thanks for everything it'll be a long road but we can manage and it will only make u stronger.

Underneath her picture in her high school yearbook, the caption read: "live for something rather than die for nothing."

Think about that: "live for something rather than die for nothing."

Well, absolutely, Officer Guindon did live for something. She lived for our country in her service as a marine. She lived for members of her community, giving of herself and making the ultimate sacrifice to keep others in her community safe. She lived with such honor and distinction, and she answered the call to duty.

Officer Guindon was taken from us far too soon. But by working to ensure that we honor her service, her heroism, her commitment, and the sacrifice she and all law enforcement officers make on our behalf every single day, we can ensure that her inspiring legacy of dedication to others, of service to her country and to her community will never be forgotten. We will never forget her service or her sacrifice. We will continue to honor her and her family for what they have done in service to our Nation every single day.

I also wish to take a moment to honor another law enforcement officer, someone with whom I had the privilege of working personally when I served as attorney general of our State, someone whom I probably called a friend, and who has also been taken from us far too soon.

I honor Lieutenant James "Jimmy" Geraghty, who passed away recently following a courageous battle with cancer. I join his family, his friends, and the law enforcement community in New Hampshire who mourn his death. I am speaking about someone who touched so many people in our State, who really lived a life of service, a life of heroism, a life of integrity. I honor his service, his integrity, and his dedication to excellence.

He was a member of the New Hampshire State Police for 24 years and rose to the rank of commander of the New Hampshire State Police Major Crimes Unit. The New Hampshire State Police Major Crimes Unit is the unit that handles the most difficult cases in our State—murder cases, very difficult cases. It is a unit where you are called upon at every hour of the day in the most difficult of circumstances.

Lieutenant Geraghty handled some of the most troubling cases and the most horrific cases you can imagine as a law enforcement officer. He handled them with such incredible dedication, compassion, and commitment, and he did his job so well.

In the most high-profile case of his career, Lieutenant Geraghty led the in-

vestigation into the brutal 2009 Mount Vernon homicide—a horrific, horrific case. It was a complex and extremely time-consuming investigation that focused on multiple juvenile defendants.

Because of the thoroughness, professionalism, and dedication brought to the case by Lieutenant Geraghty and the major crimes unit, the prosecution was able to pursue the successful conviction of all the defendants involved.

For their work on the 2009 Mount Vernon case, Lieutenant Geraghty and the major crimes unit were presented with the New Hampshire Congressional Law Enforcement Award for unit citations.

I had the privilege of being there when Lieutenant Geraghty received that award, when he was there with his family. Really, the incredible work that he did on that case made such a difference in bringing to justice defendants who committed horrific, horrific crimes and in keeping New Hampshire safe.

Lieutenant Geraghty will also be remembered for his entire outstanding career of service to both New Hampshire and the Nation.

Lieutenant Geraghty also served very honorably in the U.S. Army for 5 years, holding posts at Fort Benning in Georgia, Fort Polk in Louisiana, and at Fort Richardson in Arkansas.

He also served overseas by participating in the REFORGER exercise in Germany. He achieved the rank of sergeant, E-5, during his career with the U.S. Army and received an honorable discharge. But his service did not end there. After serving in the armed services, he then returned home and embarked on his career in law enforcement, first serving as a police officer in the Hudson Police Department, after which he was accepted as a trooper in the New Hampshire State police.

During his time with the New Hampshire State police, Lieutenant Geraghty spent 8½ years with the Narcotics and Investigations Unit, and he did a phenomenal job there investigating a variety of cases, from street-level buys to multistate trafficking organizations.

While serving in the Narcotics and Investigations Unit, Lieutenant Geraghty was assigned to the HIDTA—high-intensity drug trafficking area—for 2½ years, so he understood and worked hard on the issues we are trying to address on the Senate floor today regarding heroin and opioid addiction and so many other illegal substances as he fought to keep them off our streets. Lieutenant Geraghty's natural talent for leadership and his ability to work with others were critical in the role he played in HIDTA. During his time with HIDTA, he received several awards and recognitions for his dedication and commitment to excellence.

He was promoted to the rank of sergeant in May of 2006, and from there he

was assigned to the Major Crime Unit as a detective sergeant in February of 2008. In 2010 he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant within his unit, assuming the commanding officer's position—a post in which he served until he became ill last year. And he served with such distinction.

I have many friends at the attorney general's office who worked with the Major Crime Unit and with whom I have spoken—the chief of the criminal bureau unit and with other prosecutors—and they speak of Jim Geraghty's service with such glowing reviews, with such incredible compassion, and they speak of the incredible hard work he put in. He represented the very best of our law enforcement officers.

I wanted to talk about his career today because it was important for me to mention his professional accolades, and there are many, because he was such a humble man and he never liked to talk about all of his accomplishments. He liked to focus on something I want to make sure we remember about Jim Geraghty: He lived by the motto "family first," which was incredibly apparent to anyone who knew him. He was married to his wife Valerie for 30 years. Together they had four wonderful children. They are an amazing family, son Jimmy and daughters Colleen, Katie, and Erin.

I want to offer my thoughts and prayers to Valerie, to Jimmy, to Colleen, and to Katie and Erin. You are an incredible family, and your husband and father will never be forgotten. What an incredible person he was. He impacted the lives of so many people with the service he gave to his State.

It has been said that although Geraghty had an exceptional law enforcement career, he considered his family his greatest adventure. In a 2015 letter, his fellow local law enforcement officers described him as a "gallant public servant who has spent most of his life serving others." Others said of him that "he [was] truly a consummate team player who demonstrated the true meaning of a quiet professional." Another individual said that "he [was] humble, dedicated, and resilient with any duties and/or responsibilities [he was] faced with." And, lastly, "His remarkable and unblemished career within law enforcement is a true testament and shining example of what we all wish to aspire to." This is how the officers who served with him, the troopers who served with him, described Lieutenant Jim Geraghty. He will be deeply missed.

I am honored to recognize Lieutenant Jim Geraghty and to honor his tremendous contributions as the commander of the State Major Crime Unit and to say what an amazing family man and great human being. He was someone who lived his life with great integrity. He was truly someone we would all want to emulate in living our lives.

Again, I offer my prayers to his family. They are an incredible family as well, and I hope they know we will continue to stand with them in their most difficult days ahead.

So today I wish to say about both Officer Ashley Guindon and Lieutenant Jim Geraghty that they were incredible law enforcement officers who gave so much to New Hampshire, to our country, and that they really represented the very best in what it means to be an American.

Mr. President, with that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). The Senator from Florida.

RETURN FROM SPACE OF COMMANDER

SCOTT KELLY

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I rise to welcome a national hero back to planet Earth—CDR Scott Kelly. After spending 340 days in space on his most recent visit to the International Space Station, Commander Kelly has smashed the previous U.S. record in space flight and for most of the total time spent in space as well. But Commander Kelly's accomplishment, while notable in its own right, is serving a greater purpose. NASA is preparing to undertake one of the greatest technological challenges in human history—a voyage to the planet Mars. Depending on the alignment of the planets, Mars is anywhere from 35 million miles to an astounding 250 million miles from Earth. It is all according to the alignment of the planets.

If you want to put that into perspective, Mr. President, the distance from you and me reflecting the 238,000 miles from Earth to the Moon, which is as far as we have gone and is a long way—that is the farthest we have ever been—if that distance from the Earth to the Moon were represented by the distance from you to me, then the distance to Mars from right where this Senator is standing would be way out to the edge of the District of Columbia and Maryland.

Commander Kelly's mission is a milestone on this journey to Mars. The International Space Station—our football-sized laboratory orbiting in space, as large as a football field from one goalpost to the other—is our test bed for exploration. Indeed, Commander Kelly spent those 340 days at the International Space Station.

Now, as we venture out, traveling those vast distances between Earth and Mars, it is going to mean that humans are going to spend more time in space than ever before, so Commander Kelly's yearlong stay aboard the station is an important validation of our ability to live and work in space for the long periods of time someone would be in zero-g.

But there is another very interesting aspect to his mission. Scott Kelly has an identical twin, his brother Mark. Retired Navy CAPT Mark Kelly, also

an astronaut, remained on Earth while his brother was in space, and now he is a baseline to compare the changes in the body and the psychological effects to his brother Scott. This comparison is going to provide important insights into the effects of space flight on the human body and perhaps even effects on the Human Genome itself. The more we learn about how the human body changes in space, the better off we are because we can prepare for the longer and longer voyages in space. But we also gain insights into the fundamental working of the human body that we may never have learned confined to Earth's gravity. And who knows where these discoveries are going to lead—perhaps to new cures and therapies for afflictions folks suffer here on the face of the Earth.

The space station where Commander Kelly stayed for almost a year is a powerful tool for science and for discovery and for exploration. That is why at the end of last year we extended the authorization of the space station all the way until at least through the year 2024. It is also why I am so excited about the crewed flights from U.S. soil to the space station resuming next year. Next year, Americans on American rockets will go to and from low-Earth orbit. Once we have the *Dragon* on the SpaceX or the *Starliner* on the Atlas V, those crewed capsules are going to make regular trips to and from the space station. But we should also then be able to expand the space station crew, because of that regular visitation, from six to seven doing their research projects on board the station. That means a lot more discoveries.

Some people may not appreciate how difficult it is to spend a year in space, but I can tell you it is not only an amazing experience, but it is tough on your body. The body experiences muscle atrophy in zero-g and also bone loss. This is why astronauts have to be in peak physical condition and also try to continue that as they are out in space for long durations. And spending a year away from loved ones, of course, is no easy task. This demonstrates the strength and the courage Scott Kelly has shown.

So I want the Senate to recognize CDR Scott Kelly for this accomplishment. It is going to take him some days to readapt to the Earth's gravitational pull. I commend him for the contributions to space exploration and thank him for the sacrifices he has made and the sacrifices his family has made over the last year.

Welcome home, Commander, and thank you for offering to be a part of this great adventure we call space exploration.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, prescription drug abuse is the fastest

growing problem in the country. It is a problem the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention classifies as an epidemic.

The availability of prescription painkillers is a leading factor in the increase of opioid abuse. Since 1999, opioid abuse overdose deaths have quadrupled nationwide.

Unfortunately, my home State of Arkansas is not immune to the problem. CDC data shows that it is one of 12 States with more painkiller prescriptions than people—I repeat, one of 12 States with more painkiller prescriptions than people.

Benton, AR, police chief Kirk Lane has seen the impact in his community. During a recent visit to my office, he said: "A lot of people become addicted very innocently and can't find a way back."

Placing prescription drugs in the medicine cabinet for safekeeping is no longer the best option because 70 percent of Americans misusing painkillers are getting them from friends and family.

Arkansas has implemented measures to combat this problem by decreasing the availability of prescription drugs and properly disposing expired and unneeded medication through the Arkansas Take Back Program. This is an important step that has resulted in the removal of more than 72 tons of unneeded medication from homes in the State.

Congress has taken action to fight this epidemic. As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I have pushed the Department of Veterans Affairs to reform its culture of prescription. Nationwide, pharmacies have a system in place to prevent overfilling prescriptions. It is time for VA to adopt a similar system.

I pressured the DEA—the Drug Enforcement Administration—to reform its policy to allow clinics and pharmacies to serve as dropoff sites for the collection of unused or unwanted prescription drugs.

Last year, we passed legislation to improve the prevention and treatment of opioid abuse by pregnant women and care for newborns affected by this abuse. That bill was signed into law.

Congress approved more than \$400 million in funding to address the opioid epidemic this fiscal year. That is an increase of more than \$100 million from the previous year. Calls for additional funds for this legislation are premature. We need to see the progress and results made with the current finding.

We must continue our commitment to the fighting of this epidemic and providing our communities with the tools they need to improve response to addiction and promote treatment and recovery. That is why we need to pass the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.

This bill can help give communities the ability to combat the growing opioid epidemic in Arkansas and across the country by expanding prevention efforts, supporting law enforcement, combating overdoses, and expanding access to treatment.

I have heard from many Arkansans who support this bill. It has the support of a wide range of organizations that represent law enforcement officials, drug treatment providers, and health care professionals. This speaks to the comprehensive approach we are taking to fight this epidemic.

It also authorizes the Attorney General to award grants to veterans treatment courts. These courts are critical in helping our veterans break the cycle of addiction and turning their lives around.

Prescription drug abuse is a widespread problem that impacts all ages and populations of Americans. I am committed to providing Arkansas communities the resources they need to fight this epidemic.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments from my colleague from Arkansas about the challenges of the heroin and opioid epidemic. I think it is really a pandemic that we are facing in too many States across this country. Certainly it is a huge issue in New Hampshire, my home State, where we have the highest percentage of deaths from overdoses of any State in the country.

In a few minutes, we are going to be voting on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which is an excellent piece of legislation, sponsored by my colleagues SHELDON WHITEHOUSE from Rhode Island and AMY KLOBUCHAR from Minnesota, as well as my colleague from New Hampshire, Senator AYOTTE, and Senator PORTMAN.

We are also going to be voting on a number of amendments, including an amendment that I have proposed, which is emergency supplemental funding to make sure that the changes we are making as a result of the CARA legislation actually get the resources that need to be provided in order to make those changes work.

In 2014, more than 47,000 Americans died from lethal drug overdoses. Each day, 120 Americans die from drug overdoses in New Hampshire. We are losing more than a person a day from drug overdoses—three times as many people as we lost last year in automobile accidents. These are numbers we have been using a lot on the floor of the Senate in the last couple of days, but I think they are numbers that we need to continue repeating and repeating because losing 47,000 Americans from drug overdoses is not acceptable.

Everywhere I go in New Hampshire, I am told one thing consistently by drug

treatment professionals and by law enforcement, and that is, they need more resources and they need them now. Health workers are being overwhelmed. Nationwide, nearly 9 out of 10 people with substance use disorders don't receive treatment. They are being turned away. They are being denied treatment because of a chronic lack of resources.

The amendment Senator WHITEHOUSE and I have proposed addresses this problem. It provides \$300 million in emergency funding for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant Program. This is funding that will save lives in our States of New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Arkansas, and in the Presiding Officer's home State of South Carolina. This is funding that will save lives in each of our States.

Not only are health workers being overwhelmed, but law enforcement officials are also being overwhelmed. We need an infusion of new funding to mobilize additional efforts to stop opioid traffickers and drug dealers.

This emergency supplemental amendment would allocate \$230 million to the Byrne JAG Program to directly combat the opioid crisis. These are efforts that will keep drugs off the streets.

In total, the Shaheen-Whitehouse amendment appropriates \$600 million in emergency funding that will be immediately available to States and those working on the frontlines to address this crisis. I think that is why the National Governors Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the American Public Health Association, the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the American Academy of Pain Management, the American College of Physicians, the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, and so many other groups support this amendment. Again, the critical point here is that this amendment funds key provisions of the CARA bill.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act is a good bill. It is excellent work that so many people have been involved in. The sponsors did great work in writing the legislation. I support it. I am a cosponsor. But it is an authorization bill that does not provide funding. So if we support making the changes in law that are included in the CARA bill, we should also support providing emergency funding to those same programs.

To all my colleagues in this body, we know that doing the same thing is not working. Every year more and more people are dying from drug use. Congress needs to rise to this challenge, just as it has in so many previous public health emergencies, because, make no mistake about it, this is a public health emergency, and we have a history of providing supplemental funding to address public health emergencies.

In 2009, Congress appropriated \$2 billion in emergency funding to fight swine flu—a bill that passed the Senate 91 to 5. Many of us who voted for that are still in this body. Just last year, Congress approved \$5.4 billion to combat the Ebola outbreak—an outbreak that killed just one person in the United States. Compare that to the 47,000 people we lost in 2014 to drug overdoses. Surely—surely Congress can come together now to fight this raging epidemic that is right here at home.

We can't avert our eyes from the 47,000 Americans who are killed by lethal overdoses each year. We can't accept that 9 out of 10 Americans with substance use disorders don't get treatment. We can't ignore the fact that law enforcement officers in communities across this country are overwhelmed by aggressive drug traffickers and a rising tide of opioid-related crimes. The \$600 million emergency funding in the amendment I am proposing will help stem the tide. It will make a powerful difference in communities all across America.

CARA is important legislation. I intend to vote for it. I hope this body will pass it. But I urge my colleagues to also support the amendment that makes sure we have the urgent emergency funding to ramp up this fight in the months immediately ahead. Passing CARA without any funding is like offering a life preserver to people who are drowning and not putting air in that life preserver. This is a nationwide crisis. It is way past time we mobilized a nationwide response that is equal to the challenge.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I know we have a vote coming. I ask unanimous consent to complete my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss why I believe the Senate should not hold hearings or schedule a vote on any Supreme Court nominee offered by President Obama until the American people choose our next President this November.

The American people are reacting to our global security and debt crises when they go to the polls, and this upcoming election will not only determine the direction of our country, but it also serves as a referendum on the Presidency, Congress, and now the Supreme Court balance.

The last 7 years have shown that this President has sought to exceed the constitutional bounds of the Executive office by assuming powers that were delegated to this body. For instance, in January of 2013 the President attempted to recess-appoint nominees to the National Labor Relations Board in direct violation of the Senate's will. Of

course, the Supreme Court later intervened and struck down those appointments. As well, my colleagues across the aisle have repeatedly shown a willingness to aid this administration in making unprecedented power grabs, including employing the nuclear option for judicial nominees. The American people were outraged at these events, as was I.

So while I acknowledge the President's position on insisting that the Senate consider a nominee, it is vital that the people get their say on this lifetime appointment. It is the role of the Senate to rise above current political theater. It is about upholding principle and not about the individual. The Senate simply should not consider a nominee at this time and let the people have their say.

I should also point out that my position and the position of many of my colleagues is not a novel idea. For instance, it was then-Senator Obama who filibustered Justice Alito's nomination in 2006. It was then-Senator BIDEN who in 1992 preemptively said that President George H.W. Bush should avoid a Supreme Court nomination until after that year's election. As chairman of the Senate's Judiciary Committee, then-Senator BIDEN also made the same point we are today when he came to the floor of the Senate and made this quote: "It is my view that if a Supreme Court justice resigns tomorrow or within the next several weeks, or resigns at the end of the summer, President Bush should consider following the practice of a majority of his predecessors and not—and not—name a nominee until after the November election is completed."

The balance of the Supreme Court is in serious jeopardy. We must ensure that balance remains as a check against efforts by government to bypass the will of the people.

As a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I stand with Chairman GRASSLEY and other members in saying we will not consider a nominee to the Supreme Court before the next President is sworn into office. We are already in the midst of a political campaign season, so any nominee will be seen through the lens of partisan politics. It is disingenuous for the minority party to say otherwise. And this is to the point that then-Senator BIDEN was speaking in 1992.

As we said in our letter last week, we intend to exercise the constitutional power granted to the Senate under article II, section 2. While the President shall nominate judges to the Supreme Court, the power to grant or withhold consent of such nominees rests solely with this body.

At a time when the stakes are so high, the American people deserve the opportunity to engage in a full and robust debate over the type of jurist they wish to decide some of the most crit-

ical issues of our time and for the next generation. Not since 1932 has the Senate confirmed a Supreme Court nominee in a Presidential election year to a vacancy arising in that year—not since 1932.

It is necessary to go even further back, to 1888, to find an election year nominee who was both nominated and confirmed under divided government, as we have now. Today, the American people are presented with an exceedingly rare opportunity to decide the direction the Court will take over the next generation. The people should have this opportunity.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

AMENDMENT NO. 3362

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to amendment No. 3362, offered by the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I wish to say a few words in support of amendment No. 3362, which Judiciary Committee Chairman GRASSLEY and I, with Senators CANTWELL and AYOTTE, have cosponsored.

This bill has passed the Senate by unanimous consent three times. It ensures that international drug traffickers can be prosecuted when there is reasonable cause to believe that their illegal drugs will be trafficked into our country. It also better enables the prosecution of manufacturers and distributors of listed precursor chemicals who know or intend that these chemicals will be used to manufacture illicit drugs destined for the United States.

Finally, it makes a technical fix to the Counterfeit Drug Penalty enhancement Act of 2012 at the request of the Justice Department.

I would like to thank Senators GRASSLEY, AYOTTE, and CANTWELL for cosponsoring this amendment. I hope my colleagues will pass it this time with a vote, since it has been done by unanimous consent three times in the past.

I yield the floor.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I wish to speak in strong support of amendment No. 3362, offered by Senator FEINSTEIN and me, the Transnational Drug Trafficking Act. This is a bill that she and I have worked on for many years.

One of the many reasons for the ongoing heroin epidemic in this country is the increase in heroin supply on the streets of the United States.

Mexican cartels are aggressively expanding into new territory here. And

they are flooding our communities with cheap, pure heroin. Indeed, heroin seizures at the border have more than doubled since 2010. The U.S. Government estimates that Mexican heroin production jumped an incredible 62 percent from 2013 to 2014 alone.

And the reality is that it isn't just heroin coming over the border. Between 2009 and 2014, U.S. Customs and Border Protection reported a 300 percent increase in methamphetamine seizures on the southwest border as well.

This bill is a natural complement to CARA. We can't arrest our way out of this heroin epidemic. We can try to reduce the heroin supply on our streets by making it easier to target these cartels for prosecution.

This is in part why Senator FEINSTEIN and I introduced this legislation. Our bill would make it easier for the Department of Justice to prosecute cartels who harm our communities from abroad by trafficking heroin, other drugs, and precursor chemicals for ultimate delivery here.

If this amendment is adopted, prosecutors would need to prove only that an international drug trafficker had reasonable cause to believe that the illegal drugs or chemicals he manufactured or distributed would be unlawfully imported into the United States, as opposed to knowing or specifically intending that result.

This amendment passed the Senate by unanimous consent in October. It also passed the Senate unanimously the past two Congresses.

But the House still hasn't taken it up. So I ask my colleagues to vote for this amendment so we can send it to the House again, this time along with CARA.

We need to attack the problem of opioid addiction from every angle, and this amendment should be part of a comprehensive approach.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. PAUL (when his name was called). Present.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 94, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 28 Leg.]

YEAS—94

Alexander	Fischer	Murphy
Ayotte	Flake	Murray
Baldwin	Franken	Nelson
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Reed
Booker	Hatch	Reid
Boozman	Heinrich	Risch
Boxer	Heitkamp	Roberts
Brown	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hirono	Sasse
Cantwell	Hoeven	Schatz
Capito	Inhofe	Schumer
Cardin	Isakson	Scott
Carper	Johnson	Sessions
Casey	Kaine	Shaheen
Cassidy	King	Stabenow
Coats	Kirk	Sullivan
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Lankford	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Tillis
Corker	Lee	Toomey
Cornyn	Manchin	Udall
Cotton	Markey	Vitter
Crapo	McCain	Warner
Daines	McConnell	Warren
Donnelly	Menendez	Whitehouse
Durbin	Merkley	Wicker
Enzi	Mikulski	Wyden
Ernst	Moran	
Feinstein	Murkowski	

ANSWERED “PRESENT”—1

Paul

NOT VOTING—5

Cruz	Rubio	Shelby
McCaskill	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is agreed to.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the votes following this first vote in the series be 10 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3395

Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to amendment No. 3395, offered by the Senator from Oregon Mr. WYDEN.

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, this amendment keeps the Toomey amendment on enforcement completely intact and makes two critical improvements. It adds prevention and treatment.

Colleagues, this is what the Republican witness in the Finance Committee said is needed. It is what the Democratic witness in the Finance Committee said is needed. We need more prevention, better treatment, and tougher enforcement to work in tandem. The Toomey amendment is about enforcement, but we also need prevention and treatment. If somebody is addicted to opioids, they need a real path out of addiction. This amendment en-

sures people who need help are connected to meaningful treatment choices to better manage their pain and limit excessive prescriptions.

My amendment also aims to end the tide of overprescribing in the first place. It does that by doubling the penalties for manufacturers that provide kickbacks to prescribers in order to boost their profits.

I offer this with my colleagues Senator SCHUMER and Senator MURRAY. I very much hope we can get this amendment adopted. If we can have a bipartisan effort in the Senate that ensures there is tougher enforcement but also better treatment and better prevention to do that we have to vote for this amendment.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, the pending amendment, No. 3395, offered by Senators WYDEN and SCHUMER, would establish a new demonstration program within Medicare Part D to coordinate the treatment of opioid addiction. The proposal would also increase the penalties on drugmakers.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the amendment would increase direct spending over both the 2016 through 2020 and the 2016 through 2025 periods. If the amendment were adopted, then the Judiciary Committee would exceed its spending allocation over both of these time periods. As a consequence of the new spending proposed, the Wyden-Schumer amendment is a violation of section 302(f) of the Congressional Budget Act.

As I said before, we all agree that the heroin and opioid abuse epidemic is real and has to be addressed, but I believe we ought to address the problem living within the confines of the budget we previously agreed to just last December. The underlying bipartisan bill provides a good framework for tackling this problem. It provides a comprehensive, specific, and evidence-based approach to help Americans combat this epidemic.

In light of that, the pending amendment No. 3395, offered by the Senator from Oregon, would cause the underlying legislation to exceed the authorizing committee's section 302(a) allocation of new budget authority or outlays. Therefore, I raise a point of order against the measure pursuant to section 302(f) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, I move to waive the applicable sections of that act for purposes of the pending amendment, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 46, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 29 Leg.]

YEAS—46

Ayotte	Franken	Nelson
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Reid
Booker	Hirono	Schatz
Boxer	Kaine	Schumer
Brown	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cardin	Leahy	Tester
Carper	Manchin	Udall
Casey	Markey	Warner
Collins	Menendez	Warren
Coons	Merkley	Whitehouse
Donnelly	Mikulski	Wyden
Durbin	Murphy	
Feinstein	Murray	

NAYS—50

Alexander	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Capito	Heller	Rounds
Cassidy	Hoeven	Sasse
Coats	Inhofe	Scott
Cochran	Isakson	Sessions
Corker	Johnson	Shelby
Cornyn	Kirk	Sullivan
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Daines	McCain	Toomey
Enzi	McConnell	Vitter
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Murkowski	

NOT VOTING—4

Cruz	Rubio
McCaskill	Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BARRASSO). On this vote, the yeas are 46, the nays are 50.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The point of order is sustained and the amendment falls.

AMENDMENT NO. 3367

Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to amendment No. 3367, offered by the Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. TOOMEY.

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, this is a bipartisan, commonsense policy. I wish to thank my coauthors, Senators BROWN, PORTMAN, and KAINE.

Lock-in is a tool by which beneficiaries who are abusing prescription opioids are locked in to a single prescriber and a single pharmacy for access to these powerful narcotics. It

would make it difficult or impossible for these excessive prescriptions to continue when a patient is so locked in.

It is a tool that is already used by Medicaid and private insurers. What our amendment would do is extend this important tool to Medicare. It is a policy that has been requested by the administration. It is in the President's budget. It has broad bipartisan support. It will help stop fraud, help coordinate care for seniors, and save taxpayer money.

As Senator WYDEN observed, his amendment, had it proceeded, would not have actually extended this tool to Medicare. The only way we can do that on this bill is to pass this amendment.

I would encourage everyone's support. I think we have an agreement for a voice vote on this, but before we go to that, I wish to yield to Senator BROWN for his comments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Pennsylvania for his leadership.

Various doctors may not realize they are prescribing duplicative opioid painkillers. We have done the lock-in with Medicaid. In many States, it has worked. This is a commonsense solution to help a relatively small number of people but a growing number of seniors whom a Medicare lock-in could assist.

I urge support for the Toomey-Brown amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, in light of the agreement for a voice vote, I ask unanimous consent that the 60-vote affirmative threshold with respect to amendment No. 3367 be vitiated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 3367) was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate prior to a vote in relation to amendment No. 3345, offered by the Senator from New Hampshire, Mrs. SHAHEEN.

The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, we are voting on very good legislation with the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. This is a way to expand programs that work to address what is a real pandemic of heroin and opioid abuse in this country. But the reality is that unless we provide the resources to make these programs work, it is like giving a drowning person a life preserver that has no air in it. It doesn't make a difference. We are losing 47,000 people a year—120 people a day—to

overdoses. Our law enforcement needs additional funding. The substance abuse treatment folks need additional support.

What my emergency supplemental amendment would do is to support the programs that are in the CARA legislation. It is about equally divided between support for law enforcement and support for treatment. It helps with prescription drug monitoring, with education, and with recovery. It is the kind of support we need to provide if we are really going to make a difference in this epidemic we are all facing.

I urge my colleagues to not just support the underlying legislation—that is good and we should support it, but unless we provide the funding, we will not have done what we need to to accomplish real change to keep people from dying. I urge all of my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I wish to speak in opposition to the Shaheen amendment No. 3345.

Of course, the opioid crisis demands resources, and significant resources are being directed to it. But this amendment is political gamesmanship by some of my Democratic colleagues for whom the Senate's advancement of CARA doesn't fit their preferred political narrative.

CARA is a bipartisan bill that addresses the clear and present public health crisis of heroin and prescription opioid abuse. Through the hard work of many on both sides of the aisle, it passed the Judiciary Committee unanimously. And just a few weeks later, we are considering it on the Senate floor. This is the Senate working in a constructive, bipartisan way on behalf of the American people, unlike the way it worked under Democrat control.

But that is not a narrative some Democrats want the American people to hear. So a controversy must be manufactured to create a distraction. And the controversy that has been manufactured today is that CARA doesn't appropriate any funds for this crisis.

CARA, of course, is an authorizing bill. It does many significant things that I talked about here on the floor earlier in the week. But it was never intended to appropriate funds.

That is what we have the Appropriations Committee for. That is why we have an appropriations process. We should follow that process.

In fact, according to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the fiscal year 2016 appropriations act passed in December provides more than \$400 million in funding specifically to address the opioid epidemic.

This is an increase of more than \$100 million over the previous year. None of that money has even been spent yet—it is available today. So there is simply no reason to leap ahead of the fiscal year 2017 appropriations process.

The reality is that this public health crisis festered while the Senate was in Democratic control for years. For example, heroin overdose deaths more than tripled from 2010 to 2014.

And all the while, no emergency supplemental spending bill was brought to the floor specifically to address it. In fact, no authorization bill like CARA was brought to the floor either during those years.

So I ask my colleagues to ignore this manufactured controversy. \$400 million is available today to combat this crisis, an increase of \$100 million. We should follow the appropriations process, which is just around the corner, where competing priorities and tradeoffs can be evaluated.

That is the best way to ensure both that adequate resources are directed to this epidemic while at the same time maintaining fiscal discipline.

I urge my colleagues to vote against the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, the pending amendment offered by the Senator from New Hampshire appropriates \$600 million on top of the \$571 million provided in the bill as reported by the Judiciary Committee over the 2016–2020 period. Unlike the underlying bill, which requires appropriators to provide the authorized funding within the discretionary spending caps, the Shaheen amendment would designate new spending as emergency not subject to budget enforcement.

I am also concerned that this amendment lacks specificity in how the funds are allocated. For example, the bill provides \$300 million to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for substance abuse treatment to address the heroin and opioid crisis and its associated health effects. While we all agree that the heroin and opioid abuse epidemic must be addressed, I believe the underlying bipartisan bill provides a better framework to tackle this problem. It provides a comprehensive, specific, and evidence-based approach to help Americans combat this epidemic.

In the meantime, the Senate Appropriations Committee shepherds resources to the opioid problem in the consolidated appropriations bill signed into law late last year. Nearly \$600 million was included to start down the road to helping States and communities to address this problem.

The appropriators, working with our authorizers inside the framework of this bill, can evaluate the effectiveness of this year's spending as they make decisions about how much to spend and how to spend most effectively in upcoming years.

Finally, last year's budget resolution conference report contained a deficit neutral reserve fund, spearheaded by Senator AYOTTE and adopted unanimously by the committee, to address

the opioid challenge. Together, Republicans and Democrats agreed that, if Congress were to agree on policies and funds to tackle this urgent problem, we should work to pay for it. The Shaheen amendment does not do that.

Also, the Obama administration did not request opioid funding in the supplemental request sent just last week for emergency Zika funding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. ENZI. In that case, let me say that the pending amendment, No. 3345, offered by the Senator from New Hampshire would cause the aggregate level of budget authority and outlays for fiscal year 2016 as established in the most recently agreed to concurrent resolution on the budget, S. Con. Res. 11, to be exceeded; therefore, I raise a point of order against the amendment under section 311(a)(2)(A) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, do I have any time left to speak under the previous 2 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is no time remaining.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Then pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and the waiver provisions of applicable budget resolutions, I move to waive all applicable sections of that act and applicable budget resolutions for purposes of the pending amendment, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID), and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 48, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 30 Leg.]

YEAS—48

Ayotte	Durbin	Markey
Baldwin	Feinstein	Menendez
Bennet	Franken	Merkley
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Mikulski
Booker	Graham	Murphy
Boxer	Heinrich	Murray
Brown	Heitkamp	Nelson
Cantwell	Hirono	Peters
Cardin	Kaine	Portman
Carper	King	Reed
Casey	Kirk	Schatz
Collins	Klobuchar	Schumer
Coons	Leahy	Shaheen
Donnelly	Manchin	Stabenow

Tester
Udall

Warner
Warren

Whitehouse
Wyden

NAYS—47

Alexander
Barrasso
Blunt
Boozman
Burr
Capito
Cassidy
Coats
Cochran
Corker
Cornyn
Cotton
Crapo
Daines
Enzi
Ernst

Fischer
Flake
Gardner
Grassley
Hatch
Heller
Hoeven
Inhofe
Isakson
Johnson
Lankford
Lee
McCain
McConnell
Moran
Muskowski

Paul
Perdue
Risch
Roberts
Rounds
Sasse
Scott
Sessions
Shelby
Sullivan
Thune
Tillis
Toomey
Vitter
Wicker

NOT VOTING—5

Cruz
McCaskill

Reid
Rubio

Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 48, the nays are 47.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The point of order is sustained, and the amendment falls.

The Senator from Iowa.

AMENDMENT NO. 3374, AS MODIFIED, TO
AMENDMENT NO. 3378

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I call up Donnelly amendment No. 3374, as modified.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. GRASSLEY], for Mr. DONNELLY, proposes an amendment numbered 3374, as modified, to amendment No. 3378.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide follow-up services to individuals who have received opioid overdose reversal drugs)

On page 33, line 9, strike the period and insert “, which may include an outreach coordinator or team to connect individuals receiving opioid overdose reversal drugs to follow-up services.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I, Senator SHAHEEN, and Senator KING be recognized for a 15-minute colloquy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, we rise to express our disappointment with what just took place. I am one of the authors of the underlying bill. I think it is a very good piece of legislation, but it would make a very significant difference if it had some funding.

The simple fact that we have to face is this bill has no funding right now. I know colleagues on the other side have come to the floor to say there is funding—\$80 million, \$400 million—but in

point of fact I must disagree with them. Let me list the points that show, I believe, why there is no funding to this bill at this point.

The first is that the funding they point to was passed out of the Appropriations subcommittee 7 months before this bill even had its markup. It would have been an astonishing feat of prediction to be able—back then—to fund this bill now.

If that weren't clear enough, there was a change in the bill between then and now. Then, if you wished to fund this bill, you would have put the bulk of the money through the CJS Appropriations Subcommittee because the bulk of this bill was written in the CJS Appropriations Subcommittee. We only changed it this January in response to Republican objections that nobody wanted to create new programs. So we rerouted the new programs through existing programs. That is when it became a Labor-HHS-dominated bill. So there is no way that last June, when this money came through that Appropriations subcommittee, they knew it was going to this.

Moreover, if you go to the agency that is responsible for distributing this money, they are bidding the money out right now. They have a use right now for every dollar of it. If we don't pass this bill, they will put the money out and it will be spent. If we do pass this bill, they will put the money out and it will be spent. If we don't get the bill out soon enough, they will have to pass it out and get it spent under existing law. So you simply can't say with a straight face that this is a funded bill.

The only way this is funded is by robbing the accounts that SAMHSA is now putting out now to bid to fund, in order to fund this bill. You can say the money will be better spent under this legislation. I think that is true. I support this bill. I am going to be for the bill all the way through, even if it is not funded, but you can't say there is funding.

This is a very solvable problem. We have done it before. As Senator SHAHEEN pointed out on the floor, when it was the swine flu, on an emergency appropriations process, we appropriated \$2 billion and when it was Ebola, \$5 billion. If you say: Well, no, now something has changed, we can't do that, we have pay for it—Senator MANCHIN has a pay-for. A penny per milligram of opioid raises over \$1 billion. You could do half a penny that could be contributed by the pharmaceutical industry that is so culpable in this predicament, in this tragedy we have, but, no, rather than allow this good program, this bipartisan program to be expedited out there, to help the people who are dying—47,000 in 2014, the last year—what we have done is protect the pharmaceutical industry from having to pay any share of the solution.

I yield to my colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments from my colleague from Rhode Island, who is the author of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. That is the underlying bill we were trying to amend.

I would just point out that despite what the honorable chairman of the Budget Committee said, the fact is that the emergency supplemental funding amendment we introduced is very specific about where the funding goes. It goes to programs that are addressed in CARA, expanded, and improved; the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grants that go to the States to be distributed, funding the law enforcement through the Byrne-JAG and COPS grants that are very specific in how they can be used to fight heroin and opioid abuse.

Like my colleague, I am disappointed—not surprised but disappointed. I very much appreciate those people who voted for this amendment, who were willing—particularly some of my colleagues from the other side of the aisle—who were willing to step forward and say, if we are going to address this problem, we have to provide the resources that communities, that States need to fight this addiction.

The question I have for those people who didn't vote to support this amendment is, How many more people have to die before we are willing to provide the resources that are needed to fight this epidemic—47,000 people in 2014. In New Hampshire, we are losing more than a person a day. In 2015, we lost over 400 people to overdose deaths from opioid and heroin, three times as many people as we lost in traffic accidents. So many communities will continue to be ravaged because we are not willing to commit the resources to tackle this pandemic.

What do we tell the families of those people who have overdosed? What do we tell the parents of young people such as Courtney Griffin, whose father came and testified at a hearing Senator AYOTTE and I had last fall in New Hampshire. He talked about the difficulties of getting Courtney treatment before she overdosed and died.

I met a man at a treatment center in Lebanon, NH, a man in recovery who had been in and out of prison. I thought he put it very well when he said: You know, it costs about \$35,000 a year to keep somebody in prison. Wouldn't it make more sense to put dollars into treatment because it is a whole lot less expensive to provide the funding to treat people who are using opioids and heroin, who are substance abusers, than to put them in jail?

To all of my colleagues, I am disappointed, but I am not defeated. The fact is, this is coming back. It will come back in the appropriations proc-

ess, and it will come back at every opportunity because I am not going to quit on those families in New Hampshire who need help. I am not going to quit on the treatment professionals who are trying to provide treatment for the people who are in need. I am not going to quit on the law enforcement, the police officers, the sheriffs, and all of the people in law enforcement in New Hampshire who are trying to put pushers behind bars and trying to get people off the streets and into treatment.

I hope at some point the rest of the Members of this body are willing to take up this cause and provide the resources people need because I will tell you it is certainly worth it to address the 47,000 people we lost. We were willing to put \$5.4 billion into Ebola, and we lost one person in America. We were willing to put \$2 billion into fighting swine flu, and we lost about 12,000 people in the swine flu epidemic. We have not been willing to put funding in to address the thousands, the tens of thousands of people we are losing each year in this country.

So we are going to keep at it. We are going to keep fighting until we get the resources that families and communities need to fight this scourge.

I yield to my colleague from Maine, who has been—like my colleague from Rhode Island—a real leader in trying to address this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I rise in disappointment, surprise, and some confusion that we have this bill. We spent a week—I went to the Judiciary Committee. The bill came out of the committee unanimously. There is tremendous interest in this subject. When I have talked about it at home, I have said to my people in Maine, this is something we are going to be able to do because every Member of this body is being affected by this tragedy that is engulfing our country. This is something we are going to be able to do together and indeed we have done a lot together. We have a good bill. We have passed some good amendments. One of the President's amendments was in the bill that we passed this afternoon. This is important work, but it has to be funded—the old saying in Maine, and I suspect everywhere else, put your money where your mouth is.

I was on a teleconference with some folks in Maine just 2 hours ago talking about this, and one of the chiefs of police said: It is time to move from talking about being interested in this to investing in it. We cannot solve this problem without money. It would be nice if we could. There is a drastic and dramatic shortage of treatment facilities in this country, and the only way we are going to be able to do it is to pay for it.

We had a point of order on the budget. I have to tell you I am confused be-

cause I stood here less than 3 months ago when we passed the budget bill and \$680 billion of tax extenders. Where was the point of order then? It wasn't funded. A dime of it wasn't funded. Maybe there was a point of order, but it was rejected and overwritten so fast that none of us noticed it. It was the speed of light.

My mother used to say we strain at gnats and swallow camels. We swallowed \$680 billion of entirely unfunded tax extenders, and we cannot solve it and bring it into our hearts to save lives for one one-thousandth of that amount, \$500 million—one one-thousandth of the amount that we passed in a matter of minutes last December. I am confused by this. I don't understand it.

By the way, 47,000 people, that sounds like a lot, but this is what really sounds like a lot. Since this debate started at 2 o'clock this afternoon, 10 people have died; 10 people have died in the last 2 hours; 47,000 people is 5 people every hour, 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year. We are not talking about abstractions here, we are talking about people's lives. We are talking about what I consider one of the most serious problems I have ever seen in my State. We talk about Ebola. We talk about ISIS. We talk about all of these challenges we have. Yet this is something that is killing five people an hour, and we are not willing to put the funds in to do it. It is a false promise.

I believe this bill is going to do a lot of good, but it is not going to meet the promise we are making to the American people by all of this drama this week about drug abuse and that we are going to do something about it. We are not going to do enough about it because in order to deal with this problem—and this is true everywhere—it is going to take money to provide treatment for people who need it.

As I talked about this morning, the tragedy is when someone is ready to change their life and ready to try to defeat this awful disease—and they cannot find any place to give them treatment. I was at a detox center in Portland just last week. They are turning away 100 people a month from a detox center—not even a treatment center but a detox center—because they do not have the beds.

I am delighted we are working on this bill. I am delighted we are passing it. I think there is a lot of good in it, and it is, in fact, a bipartisan bill. But to venture up to the edge of this problem and then step away because we are not willing to pay for what, in my mind, is one of the most serious emergencies we have faced since I have been in public life is disappointing, surprising, and it is a great missed opportunity for the country.

I join my colleagues in regretting the decision that was just made. I think it was an opportunity where we could

have spoken as one to realistically attack this scourge that is devastating our people. We are losing lives, we are squandering treasure, and we are breaking hearts. The only way we are going to be able to solve this problem or at least make a dent in it is to provide the wherewithal to the programs throughout the country that are struggling manfully and mightily to confront the problem and defeat it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Nevada for yielding to me to speak for a moment in response to the comments made by my colleagues about the legislation before us, which is legislation to address the horrible problem we have in all our States of the addictions caused by heroin and prescription drugs. About 100 people will die today from overdoses, and that is just the tip of the iceberg because there are so many other people whose lives are being ruined, families being torn apart, and communities being devastated.

Senator WHITEHOUSE, other Members of this body, and I drafted this legislation over the period of the last few years, including five summits we had in this Congress to bring in experts from all over the country on prevention, education, treatment, and recovery—dealing with the law enforcement side and the importance of having Narcan available and also helping to get prescription drugs off bathroom shelves and ensure we had drug-monitoring programs. It is a comprehensive approach.

I will say I disagree a little with my coauthor, my colleague from Rhode Island, in saying that if we could pass this bill, there would be no funding for it somehow. There was a huge increase in funding, as everyone knows, at the end of the year for opioids. Senator WHITEHOUSE, others, and I approached the appropriators and asked them to be sure that funding was consistent with where we were on CARA at that time—in the middle of the Judiciary Committee. When we had some jurisdictional issues, we worked hard to draft the legislation so that if we could get it enacted this fiscal year—that is between now and September 30—there would be funding to help us accomplish what is in the legislation.

However, as my colleagues know, this bill is an authorization bill. What does that mean? It means it is a bill that directs how funding will be spent. It is not a spending bill.

Having said all that, as Senator SHAHEEN knows, I supported her efforts to add additional resources over and above what could be spent this year on CARA because I believe this is such an urgent problem, and I believe it does rise to the level of being an emergency. That is saying a lot. I am a fiscal con-

servative. But that means it is not paid for by offsetting other programs. It is just additional funding because it is such an urgent need.

We have done this on other occasions with health care emergencies when we have had something like the Ebola crisis. Well, I think this is a crisis too, so I voted with Senator SHAHEEN today. I am a cosponsor of her amendment. I support it, but I don't support the efforts of some who say somehow there is no money in here. This is an authorization bill. This is the first step toward getting the money, not just this year but into the future. That is the point.

Back in the House, I was the author of the Drug-Free Communities Act. Some 19 years later, \$1.3 billion has been spent in support of the Drug-Free Communities Act, helping to create over 2,000 community coalitions, including in just about every State represented in this body. Was that a spending bill? No. It was like this—an authorization bill to direct the spending based on a lot of research and effort, evidence-based practices we know would work. That is what this is. This is taking it to the next level.

Specifically directed to the points my good friend from Maine just mentioned about treatment centers being filled and detox centers not having room for someone to go to get the detox and then get into treatment, these are real problems in our communities now. That is what this legislation is meant to address, not just by appropriations for 1 year but by changing the law for the future.

If we do this, and do it right, in another 19 years in this legislation, we will spend even more than we spent on the Drug-Free Communities Act. It will be well over \$2 billion that will have been spent that would otherwise not have gone out because of this legislation. So just as Senator WHITEHOUSE said that he strongly supports this bill because it is evidence based, because we spent the right time putting the effort into making sure it would be money well spent, this bill is really important.

I appreciate the support of my colleagues—Senators SHAHEEN, KING, and WHITEHOUSE. Senator WHITEHOUSE and I have been at this for a few years together. It is the right thing to do for our country at a time when we do face a crisis.

Again, I will support the additional spending because I think this is so critical. But let's not go forward with this sense that somehow this doesn't matter. This does matter in a very big way. This is a necessary first step. And in terms of this year, because we increased funding dramatically at the end of the year for this fiscal year—not one penny of that has been outlaid, by the way; it has been appropriated but there has been no outlay yet—I believe anything we could get done this year—

getting it through the House, getting it through the Senate, and the President signing it—would be funding we could use for these important CARA programs just in the 7 months of this fiscal year.

Certainly we should right now—as I have done and I know Senator WHITEHOUSE is doing and others are doing—go to the Committee on Appropriations and say: With regard to next fiscal year, let's be sure that we have the entire bill funded. And again, I would support even additional funding beyond that. But at a minimum, let's get this done. This is an opportunity on a bipartisan basis to actually get something done to help people who are crying out for our help. Communities need our help. Families that are being broken apart need our help.

I appreciate the fact Senator SHAHEEN made her best effort today. She was right, in my view, but let's also continue to work together to get this legislation passed with whatever funding we can add to it. That is great with me, but let's get this bill passed to ensure that going into the future we are directing this funding effectively and increasing this funding to help those who need it most.

Again, I appreciate my colleague from Nevada, and I am sorry to take so much of his time.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, if I can have 1 minute before the Senator departs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I thank the Chair.

I would like to end this conversation on a happy note, after what I consider to be a very unhappy vote, and that is to express my appreciation to Senator PORTMAN for his collegiality and his work over many years to get this bill to where it is now in the Senate. I express my appreciation to him for voting for the amendment of Senator SHAHEEN. I express my appreciation to him for publicly pledging to work as hard as we can together to get funding for this bill into the appropriations process that is underway right now.

I look forward to working with him on all those endeavors. I do believe that we missed a big opportunity, because Senator SHAHEEN's bill, had it passed, would have flooded a lot more money, a lot faster, into the solution of this problem.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle on this particular piece of legislation. I know there is a lot of passion behind this, and there should be, and I do believe at the end of the day there will be an appropriate authorization and spending level so we can get

this bill passed, which is something I support.

I also want to thank Chairman GRASSLEY, Ranking Member LEAHY, and all those who have been involved in this particular topic of bringing opioid abuse to the forefront. Opioid abuse is an issue every Member of the Senate hears about when they go home. For many Nevadans, substance abuse is an issue that hits close. It is an issue I read about in constituents' letters and hear in far too many calls that come in to my office on this issue.

Like many of my colleagues, I have heard from those who are struggling with addiction or who have lost a loved one to this epidemic. In my home State of Nevada, there were 545 drug overdose deaths in 2014 alone. I have heard countless stories from young Nevadans who have experienced addiction themselves or seen their friends slip into this scary spiral of abuse.

I recently met a young man from Reno who was advocating on behalf of multiple friends whom he had lost to heroin overdose. He said it started with experimenting with leftover painkillers in his friend's parents' medicine cabinet. Eventually, the pills were gone, and the group of friends started experimenting with harder and cheaper drugs. Some of their friends fell into the juvenile court system after being caught with illegal drugs.

Unfortunately, the court system wasn't equipped to adequately treat their addiction. They slipped back into their old habits, and the young man from Reno has now gone to multiple funerals.

I am glad he had the courage to tell his friends' stories. Opioid abuse and addiction has stolen the lives of far too many Nevadans, and it is time we do something about it.

I know my colleagues also hear the same stories in their offices on a daily basis. In 2014, opioids were involved in almost 30,000 American deaths. That means more Americans now die each year from drug overdoses than they do from car crashes.

The unfortunate reality of opioid abuse has become a major public health concern, and something needs to be done. We know this epidemic hits all ages, all socioeconomic levels, all races, and all genders.

Opioid use often starts with treating legitimate pain needs. There are two groups of Nevadans that are extremely important, and I have focused my efforts today on these two very important populations: our veterans and our seniors.

First, I have two amendments that improve access to treatment for our Nation's veterans. My first amendment, Heller amendment No. 3346, would include veterans service organizations in the Pain Management Best Practices Interagency Task Force. Giving VSOs a seat at the table on this

task force will help us better understand the unique circumstances our Nation's veterans face that drive them to use opioids in the first place.

My second amendment, Heller amendment No. 3351, would allow veterans nonprofit organizations to be eligible for grants from the Building Communities of Recovery program. The Building Communities of Recovery program is designed to pool community resources to help those affected by opioid abuse seek the proper treatment to recover from these highly addictive pain medications and avoid slipping into a cycle of chronic drug abuse.

Including veterans nonprofit organizations in this grant program will allow places like Veterans Village in Las Vegas to access more resources to treat the servicemen and -women in our State. As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am concerned about how opioid abuse impacts America's heroes. Some of these veterans are in severe pain due to the injuries they sustained during service to our Nation, and numerous veterans have reached out to my office for help when the VA's policies are negatively impacting them.

As we debate the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, it is critical for Congress to ensure VSOs have a voice. These organizations understand the unique challenges veterans face with opioids and how to resolve these issues. That is why I have filed two amendments to allow this important stakeholder to come to the table and help reduce opioid abuse.

I encourage my colleagues to accept these amendments, and I would like to continue to work with the bill managers as we find a path forward on them.

The senior population is another group of Nevadans that face unique circumstances on how they become dependent on opioids. They are prescribed opioids to cope with chronic pain and discomfort after surgery and, obviously, rightfully so. In fact, about 40 percent of Nevada's seniors are on some type of opioid, but opioids have qualities that make them highly addictive and prone to abuse.

Pain is a highly complex issue, and there are many barriers to pain management. Just recently I had a constituent reach out to my office because they were being denied access to a life-saving opioid pain medication for a very rare and serious condition. Fortunately, we were able to help resolve the situation, but it was disappointing that this Nevadan had to go to such extremes to receive the treatment they deserved.

No doubt Congress should play a role in addressing opioid addiction and this epidemic, and I think there are ways to accomplish this goal while ensuring that seniors in Nevada and throughout the United States continue to receive

the care they need. One of those ways is to permanently repeal the Medicare caps on therapy services. Right now, current law places an annual per-beneficiary payment limit of \$1,880 for all outpatient therapy services.

I firmly believe that if patients had better access to physical therapy, they would not be as dependent on highly addictive pain medication. Seniors would also have a higher quality of life by treating the sources of the pain and rebuilding their strength. With proper access to care, seniors will be able to enjoy a happy and healthy retirement rather than cope with the pain through highly addictive medication that only masks their discomfort.

Senator CARDIN and I have been working on a responsible alternative to the Medicare's therapy cap. I believe more work needs to be done to ensure that these proposals will solve the problem and ensure that these seniors have access to the therapies and treatments they need.

Right now, the cap has been lifted until March of 2017. We have until early next year to come up with a permanent solution to the therapy cap issue, and I have no doubt that Senator CARDIN and I will be able to deliver results for seniors across this country.

The American people want us to put partisan politics aside and come up with solutions to the problems we see every day. CARA is an example that Congress can, and should, come together to solve these problems. The epidemic of opioid abuse has reached a serious point in our debate. I believe the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act is a step in the right direction.

I encourage my colleagues to pass this important legislation, and I am hopeful that we can do it this week, showing Nevadans and all Americans that we are serious about addressing this problem.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the Supreme Court vacancy for the second time on the floor, but I did want to thank the cosponsors of our bill, Senator PORTMAN, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and Senator AYOTTE, and also Senator SHAHEEN for her strong amendment that I think would have made such a difference if we could get some immediate emergency funding.

As we know, there are other important provisions in this bill, especially the work I am focused on with prescription drug monitoring, the simple idea that when I talk to doctors, they are never sure if this is someone who is actually abusing the system. They want to do well. They have been trained to do well to get people out of pain. But so often there is not a lot of monitoring about what is going on.

And this is going to help get the States to start doing their work. I again thank Senators WHITEHOUSE, PORTMAN, AYOTTE, and SHAHEEN for their work on this bill.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. President, I come today to talk about the Supreme Court.

Last Wednesday, I led a meeting of the steering and outreach committee on the Supreme Court and the Senate's constitutional responsibilities. We had the opportunity at that meeting to hear from four distinguished law professors on the constitutional implications of the current vacancy and to put some historical and constitutional context about the choice before us. I would like to share some of the insights with my colleagues.

First of all, Jamal Greene, a professor of law at Columbia Law School, looked to the original intent of the Framers of the Constitution, noting that "the Framers did not contemplate the use of the Senate's advice and consent power solely to run out the clock on a presidential appointment. As [Alexander] Hamilton speculated in Federalist 76, rejection of a nominee 'could only be to make place for another nomination by [the President].'"

The critical point made by Professor Greene, which was echoed by the rest of the panel, is that inaction is not an appropriate response when the Constitution says that the President shall nominate and that the Senate has a duty to advise and consent. In fact, Professor Gerhardt from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill noted that the only time Members truly abandoned their constitutional duties and left this position open was during the Civil War. Think about that. Senators before us in this great Chamber—even before we had this Chamber, when they were meeting in other places. We have been through World War I, we have been through World War II, we have been through the Vietnam war, we have been through civil rights tumult, and always the position was filled and not left vacant for that year time period. We have to go back to the Civil War.

Another common theme we heard from all of the panelists is that the proposed inaction by our colleagues on the other side of the aisle is without precedent in our Nation's history. In the last 135 years, no President has been refused a vote on a nominee for an open seat on the Court. The Senate has confirmed more than a dozen Supreme Court Justices in Presidential election years, including five in the last 100 years. So it is not as if we have to go way back in time; five of them were in the last 100 years. Probably the most oft-cited example is the example of President Reagan nominating Justice Kennedy in his last few years in the White House. He nominated Justice Kennedy, and a Democratic Senate

confirmed—not just confirmed but confirmed unanimously.

Another member of the panel was Professor Jeff Stone. He is a professor at the University of Chicago Law School—actually, my professor, my evidence professor. I always enjoy asking my professors questions now that I am a Senator as opposed to when they used to ask questions of me. He was, of course, a former colleague of Justice Scalia's. In fact, when Justice Scalia left the University of Chicago to be appointed to the bench, he actually gave his papers and all of his notes to Professor Stone. While they had some different political views, without a doubt, he had admiration for Professor Stone and Professor Stone had admiration for Justice Scalia, as he has written about since his death.

After reviewing the history of Supreme Court nominations, Professor Stone concluded:

Despite all the fuss and fury over the Supreme Court confirmation process, the plain and simple fact is that the Senate always defers to the president as long as the president puts forth nominees who are clearly qualified and who are reasonably moderate in their views. And this is true even when the Senate is controlled by the opposing party. In short, nominees who are both qualified and moderate are confirmed. Period.

I think he was using as an example—we know there have been nominees who have been turned down by the Senate in past, including in the recent past, but the point is, they got a hearing and they got an up-or-down vote. There are cases where people withdrew their names. There are cases where the up-or-down vote was not in their favor. But they always were moved forward.

Although we have been accustomed to a certain level of partisanship in Congress, Professor Stone pointed out that the nomination process for Supreme Court Justices has remained in large part a bipartisan process. Again, people may vote differently, but as a member of the Judiciary Committee and a relatively new member in confirmation processes for both Justice Kagan and Justice Sotomayor, those hearings were very civil. At the time, Senator SESSIONS was the ranking member and Senator LEAHY was the chair. At those hearings, people asked the questions they wanted to. They went on for a number of days. Then we had a final vote, and then we came to the Senate and all was done. As we know, among the Justices currently serving, the longest time from the nomination to the confirmation was actually 99 days; that was Justice Thomas.

So we have always had a process that has worked. And while the result has, sadly, become more partisan—although there have been a number of Republicans who voted for the recent nominees, it has been more partisan over time. When we look at the unanimous vote Justice Kennedy got, the process

itself worked, and that is very important to the functioning of the Senate.

The fact is, we may have a very difficult atmosphere around us politically and sometimes right here in this Chamber, but we have tried to keep our dignity and move forward with our processes, and we find ways to work together and we treat each other with respect. For me, that is a lot about what this is about, this process for a nominee. Yes, it is about what the Constitution says. Yes, it is about respecting history. Yes, it is about not leaving a vacancy on the third pillar of our government when, in fact, our only job as Senators is not to determine what happens in those cases or what the individual decisions are, but it is to fund that Court and make sure that vacancies are filled in our advice and consent function. But it often goes beyond all of that for me. It is about how we function as a body, that we keep to our processes, that we move legislation, that we move nominees, and that we respect our traditions, we respect the Senate, and we respect each other.

Looking beyond the constitutional duties of the Senate and the historical precedent of the Senate considering Supreme Court nominees, we have had the opportunity to hear from our panel, as I mentioned, as well as from a number of others, about the importance of filling a vacancy on the Supreme Court.

Professor Greene, whom I mentioned before, and others noted that this inaction could leave the Court for two full terms without the ability to resolve closely contested cases. They don't get the easy cases on the Supreme Court. That is not why they are there. That is not why they are called the Supreme Court. They get the tough cases. They get the cases in the gray area. When the lower courts are in disagreement and can't figure out what to do, they are the decisionmaker.

Professor Greene went on to say in our panel: "The Supreme Court has multiple responsibilities, but one of its main, core functions is to resolve those disagreements [among the lower courts], and [this vacancy] leaves the law in a state of uncertainty."

The people of this country have enough uncertainty to deal with. Of course, because of our democratic functions, we do not know who our next President will be. There is a lot of blame and a lot of finger-pointing going on throughout our political system right now. There is a lot of uncertainty. There is uncertainty with the way our laws have worked. But one of our jobs is to put some certainty in people's lives. We did that with the budget at the end of last year. We did that with the Transportation bill last year. We did that with a number of pieces of legislation that were passed on a bipartisan basis. Now it is our job to not leave the entire legal system in a state of uncertainty.

Former Justice Sandra Day O'Connor has also spoken out. When asked about Republicans seeking to wait a year until considering a nominee, she said: "I don't agree. I think we need somebody there to do the job now and let's get on with it."

In fact, former President Ronald Reagan, who nominated Justice O'Connor to the Supreme Court, said in 1987: "Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body."

He made that statement around the same time he nominated Justice Kennedy, who was confirmed, as I noted, unanimously by a Senate controlled by the opposite party in the last year of a Presidency. That is our closest and most recent example—confirmed in the last year of the Reagan Presidency by a Democratic Senate, with a Republican President.

We now have a Democratic President who is not running for President again—he can't—who is in the last year of his Presidency, with a Republican Senate.

The critical importance of filling this seat is clear, and it is not something we can wait on for over a year. Not since the Civil War have we had a vacancy for over a year. And, may I add, there is plenty of time for the Senate to consider and confirm the nominee. Is it convenient? No, it is not convenient. There is a lot going on. It is an election year. Things happen. Unexpectedly, Justice Scalia died. And many people who knew him well, such as my law professor in Chicago, miss him. But he died, and that triggered a duty on the part of the President and on our part.

The Senate has taken an average of only 67 days—about 2 months—from the date of the nomination to the confirmation vote since 1975. This means that if the President offers a nomination this month, that nominee should receive a vote in the Senate by Memorial Day. If for some reason that doesn't happen and the hearings take longer than we think, I would put one other day forth: We could finish this by the Fourth of July. For those who love the Constitution, that is certainly a good holiday and end date.

Looking at the text of the Constitution, the precedent of the Senate, and the importance of the circumstances, the matter is clear: It is the duty of the Senate to thoughtfully consider the President's nominee to the Supreme Court, and anything less than that disregards our oaths of office.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I wish to associate my remarks with the Senator from Minnesota and just say that what the Constitution says is so clear. It says that the President shall—not

may—it says shall nominate and then the Senate will advise and consent. That is clear. The President is going to nominate. So are we going to wait around for a whole year without giving our advice and/or consent? In other words, just do your job. So I thank the Senator for her comments.

TAKATA AIRBAGS

Mr. President, I have a very touchy subject to talk about again—the ongoing Takata airbag fiasco. It is now a recall fiasco. To this point, some 26 million of these airbags that are in the center of the steering column that we drive around with right in front of us or in front of the passenger's seat or on the sides, side airbags—some 26 million of them have already been recalled.

A little over a week ago, I spoke about this continuing customer confusion over this recall fiasco. For the sake of the safety of our American consumers who happen to be drivers in these vehicles with these Takata airbags, we need to end this confusion. I think the process has to begin with having the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, or NHTSA, take a hard look at whether they need to start the process of recalling all Takata airbags with ammonium nitrate-based inflaters.

Ammonium nitrate seems to be the problem. It is a chemical compound that is ignited when you have a collision. Within less than a second, it inflates with gases. This is the airbag that is supposed to save our lives. But what is supposed to save lives has been killing lives because the explosive force is so great that it starts to shred the metal housing. That is sending pieces of shrapnel right into the driver or into the passenger.

Last week, I showed the Senate one of these airbags, and then I showed them a piece of metal that became, in effect, shrapnel, like a grenade, only this piece was that big and it had killed a lady in Orlando, FL. As a matter of fact, when the police got to the intersection where she had a collision and the airbag deployed and they got there and found her in the car, they thought it was a murder because her neck had been slashed. But, in fact, it was this airbag, exploding with such force that it shredded the metal. In this case, it was a piece that big.

On February 10, I sent a letter to the NHTSA Administrator, Mark Rosekind, asking him to do two things. First, I asked him to use his authority to phase out the production of the new Takata ammonium nitrate-based airbag inflaters as soon as possible. With all that we know about these things, this ammonium nitrate should not be used as replacement for the old Takata inflaters, and it certainly shouldn't be used in the new cars that are produced and sold to consumers.

Second, in this letter, I asked him to seriously consider a total recall of all

Takata ammonium nitrate-based inflaters that are currently in vehicles. My goodness, that is a big number. That is potentially another 90 million units in this country alone. That could be as much as 260 million worldwide. But with all the manipulation of data and the serious safety lapses that our staff on the Senate Commerce Committee has detailed in two separate reports, I think it is something that we should seriously look at. Potentially, it is a big number of recalls of this ammonium nitrate-based inflater that is currently in vehicles.

I want to say that I supported Administrator Rosekind's nomination, and I think he has done a number of things to try to improve NHTSA. But I was not too pleased with his written response to my letter that I received from him on February 26, just a few days ago. In my letter, I asked him to provide me with the total number of inflaters that Takata could supply under existing contracts with automakers. He didn't supply that.

Will Takata continue to produce millions of these things? We don't know. We don't know the answer.

Are consumers today basically getting a newer version of the old version that has been so defective? No answer to that either. In other words, are we going to replace an old live grenade with a new live grenade?

In the letter, I also asked the Administrator to consider an accelerated phaseout of the production of new Takata ammonium nitrate-based inflaters. In his letter, he declined.

As to the request for NHTSA to look at a larger recall of Takata ammonium nitrate-based airbags, Administrator Rosekind declined to call for a larger recall. He based that statement on the fact that most of the Takata airbags that have not been recalled contain something called desiccant, which removes the moisture and is supposed to stabilize the ammonium nitrate in the inflaters.

That desiccant is there because moisture is considered to be the culprit that causes the ammonium nitrate to be defective in its explosion. So desiccant is supposed to remove that moisture, and it is supposed to stabilize the ammonium nitrate.

The exact quote in his letter is this: "In fact, to date, NHTSA is unaware of any inflator rupture, in testing or in the field, of a Takata inflator using chemical desiccant to counteract the effects of moisture."

He says that NHTSA is unaware of any inflator rupture using the chemical desiccant.

That statement is not true. On October 15 of last year, General Motors recalled about 400 vehicles for Takata side airbags with the chemical desiccant. Fortunately, in that testing, nobody was injured. But that wasn't correct information given to the Commerce Committee, and NHTSA finally

admitted their error to our staff on Monday of this week.

Why didn't NHTSA seem to know about it beforehand? This really raises serious questions when a regulator doesn't even seem to know about its own data. NHTSA had that data. As a result, it continues to raise questions about who is really in control of this recall. Is it who ought to be, NHTSA, or is it the manufacturer of the defective airbag, Takata?

Deaths and serious injuries have occurred as a result of these defective airbags. They have been in Florida, but they have been in many other places. The last one was in the Carolinas in December, and a Ford driver is dead as a result of it.

I can tell you that this Senator and many of the members of the Senate Commerce Committee are not going to sit quietly and wait for this to get sorted out in good time. Lives are at stake. We are going to keep pushing until all consumers who have vehicles with Takata airbags get answers and get help.

I wish I didn't have to bring this to the Senate floor, but in the safety and sake of consumers we have to.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WHOLE WOMAN'S HEALTH V. HELLERSTEDT

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the Texas case that was heard by the U.S. Supreme Court, *Whole Woman's Health*. This morning, I joined hundreds of pro-choice advocates on the steps of the Supreme Court in advance of the oral arguments. They came from all parts of the country with signs such as "Don't mess with access" and "Respect my fundamental human dignity."

The lead-up to this case was a Texas law, HB2, which imposes unnecessary medical requirements on the State's clinics that provide abortion services.

According to the American Medical Association and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, these requirements are not necessary to protect the health of women seeking these services. Rather, these onerous restrictions, known as targeted regulation of abortion providers, or TRAP laws, have only one purpose—to deny abortion services to women.

Three-quarters of clinics in Texas will close if this law is upheld, leaving nearly a million women without adequate access to reproductive services. By making the false claim that restrictions like those passed in Texas will actually protect women's health, oppo-

nents of abortion hope to conceal their true agenda, which is putting an end to abortion and women's reproductive choices.

The Texas law is just one more example of a litany of legislation and other attempts to limit a woman's constitutionally protected right to choose. Attacks on reproductive rights, such as misleading undercover videos, violence at clinics, and numerous attempts in Congress to roll back progress on women's health care continued in 2015.

Since *Roe v. Wade* was decided, State legislatures have passed hundreds of laws to chip away at a woman's right to choose. In the last 4 years alone, States have passed 231 anti-choice laws. Among the most invasive are those requiring ultrasounds of women seeking abortion care, and some of the most ill-conceived laws require providers to give medically unsound information to scare women seeking abortion care. Laws that are not based on medical science and opposed by medical practitioners do not protect a woman's health. No matter how loudly or how often these arguments—or these claims—are repeated, they are lies. Lies repeated do not become truths.

While these restrictive laws impact all women, they impact minority and lower income women most. For example, the Texas law will result in the closure of more and more provider clinics. Women in Texas will have to travel farther and farther to get to open clinics. Women who have limited resources to travel for needed services or cannot afford to take time from work to travel these long distances are the most negatively impacted by TRAP laws.

Why do women need to be protected from being able to access the reproductive services they need and choose? Fundamentally, what is the point of a constitutional right if one is unable to exercise that right? I cannot think of any other constitutionally protected right that has seen so many restrictions placed upon it, except perhaps the right to vote, but that is a subject for another speech.

It is more than ironic that while many of our anti-choice colleagues vehemently speak out in support of constitutional rights, when it comes to women's bodies and reproductive choice, they are all too willing to set aside their constitutional principles to invade those fundamental rights. Neither Congress nor the States have a right to do that.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I am not a lawyer. I am a politician. I was a businessman before I was elected to the Senate. I watched with interest the debates since the death of Antonin Scalia about what the Senate and country should do in terms of filling its vacancy, in terms of its timing.

The Constitution tells us what to do. The Constitution tells us that the President shall make an appointment, or a nomination, to fill that vacancy and the Senate shall offer its advice and consent. There is no deadline or trigger date. There are no other rules or guidelines.

There have been a lot of historic debates on both sides of the aisle over whether or not a nomination for a Supreme Court justice should be named in the last year of a Presidency. Interestingly enough, if you read the history, sometimes it is the Republicans saying they shouldn't do it and sometimes it is the Democrats. In fact, if you really go back and look, we have all said the same thing. It would just depend on whose ox was getting gored in the politics of a particular day.

I love JOE BIDEN. He is a personal friend of mine and a great Vice President of the United States. I served with him in the Senate and on the Foreign Relations Committee, which the Presiding Officer serves on today.

I did a little research on what JOE had to say because I appreciate his wisdom. In the last year of the Bush administration—H. W. Bush—in 1992 on June 25, then-Senator BIDEN made two statements, and I would like to share those statements. The first is the following:

[I]t would be our pragmatic conclusion that once the political season is under way, and it is, action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over. That is what is fair to the nominee and is central to the process. Otherwise, it seems to me, we will be in deep trouble as an institution.

Let's take that quote and apply it to the current contemporary time we are in today. We are in a politically unknown territory. Yesterday was Super Tuesday, and 15 States went to the polls. We had newcomers getting the most votes, and we had old-timers getting the most in one primary. We have women getting votes. We have men getting votes. We have conservatives and we have liberals. We don't know who our President is going to be or what party he or she will be from. But we do know that when they are elected and sworn in January of next year, they will be the President of the United States most contemporarily appointed and elected by the people of the United States of America.

The Supreme Court is the ultimate arbitrator of what the executive and legislative branches do. It is only appropriate that the Supreme Court majority, as it is cast, be made up of nine people, five of whom are in the majority, who were appointed freely and without political influence, judged for their best political and legal acumen and in the best interest of the country.

I don't think going to the current President, Mr. Obama, who is in the last year of his term, and getting him to make an appointment that will only last a few months of his last year in office is the right way to go.

I think we need to say the following: The President of the United States who is elected this November and sworn in next January will be the President of all the people most contemporarily voted by the people of America. That is the President who should make the nomination, and that is the Senate that should make the confirmation.

I urge my colleagues who argued about going ahead and moving forthrightly and quickly on filling Antonin Scalia's seat to think about this. Next year the Senate will be a new Senate. It won't be this Senate. Many of us are up for reelection. I may not be here. I don't know who will be here. I am trying. I don't know who will be here. I want to get here, but I don't know if I will be here.

We don't know who the President will be. Each of us, Republicans and Democrats, have our pick. We hope it is our President. We hope it is the man or woman we want, but we don't know that. But we do know that on the first Tuesday in November, we will elect a new President. In January, that President will be sworn in, and it will be his or her opportunity, if we wait, to make the nomination for whomever will fill Antonin Scalia's place. It will be the new Senate's place to confirm that nomination. The Senators who are elected will be the ones most recently elected to the Senate, and the President who is elected will be the most recently elected President of the United States. That is the person who should make that appointment, and that Senate should make that confirmation.

Think about this. Ronald Reagan appointed Antonin Scalia in 1986. Antonin Scalia served on the Court for 30 years until 2016. The next person appointed to take his place may serve 30 years as well. That takes us to 2046. That is a long time from now. Shouldn't we take the most contemporarily elected President to make that appointment rather than one who is going away and will be in the history books? I think it is right to allow the President who has been most recently elected to make that nomination and allow the newest Senate to make the confirmation and do what is right for the American people.

This is not a Republican or Democratic thing. I respect my colleagues on

both sides of the aisle. We have all made the same statements. It would just depend on whether it was our President or the other guy's President, whether it was our Senate or the other guy's Senate.

In fact, I will close my remarks by again quoting my friend JOE BIDEN from the same speech he made on June 25, 1992. He said: "Others may fret that this approach would leave the court with only eight members for some time, but as I see it, the cost of such a result . . . [is] quite minor compared to the cost that a nominee, the President, the Senate, and the Nation would have to pay for what would assuredly be a bitter fight, no matter how good a person is nominated by the President."

Vice President BIDEN made that statement when he was a Senator and faced the same situation that we face today. He was smart and wise beyond his years. He said: It is best to look to the future for the appointment, the next President for the nomination, and the next Senate for the confirmation and look to the future of the of the Court, because it is the Supreme Court—many times on a vote of 5 to 4—that will decide the fate of legislative and executive action. It is only right that we have the best and most contemporarily appointed Court that we could possibly have, and the only way to do that is to make sure that the next President makes the appointment.

I underscore what I said at the beginning. It is not a Republican or Democratic thing. It is a political thing. We are all politicians and creatures to our politics. All of us have said the same thing. It would just depend on who was in charge at the time as to whether we spoke like JOE BIDEN as a Republican or spoke like JOE BIDEN as a Democrat.

I commend Antonin Scalia for being a great servant to the American people. He was a great jurist, a great writer, and a great judge. He will be missed.

Somewhere out there in America today, there is another Antonin Scalia just waiting to be nominated and confirmed by the Senate. I don't know who it is, but I know this: I want them to be found by the next President of the United States elected this November and confirmed next January by this Senate. That is the right person. That is the right way, and I submit that is the way I recommend we do it.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

WOMEN'S HEALTH PROTECTION ACT

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, earlier today I joined a number of my

colleagues outside the Supreme Court to work with advocates who were gathered there, thousands of people, including many young people. Looking into their faces, I realized that for them *Roe v. Wade* is history, but my mind went back to 1974, the year after *Roe v. Wade*, when I was a law clerk to Justice Blackmun. I heard similar voices from the serene, contemplative chambers of Justice Blackmun and thought then—in fact all of us thought then—that *Roe v. Wade* would settle for all time, at least for the next decades, the reproductive rights of women in the United States of America, and we were wrong. We were wrong that the law would be settled, that rights would be protected, that *Roe* would be accepted, and that privacy would become enshrined as a matter of constitutional law or at least accepted politically. We were wrong.

Today, in a historic case, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments on a challenge to the basic fundamental right of privacy with practical implications that will alter the lives of women in Texas, where the case rose, and throughout the country.

I know firsthand from my experience as a law clerk, but even more so in the decades since as an advocate for reproductive rights and women's health care, as U.S. attorney, as a member of the Connecticut General Assembly, first as a member of the House and then in the State Senate, and as our State attorney general, working and fighting to enshrine in State law the rights protected by *Roe v. Wade* and then protect them from physical threat and intrusion at the clinics where those rights were made real.

Those rights mean nothing if they are unprotected. If women need to travel hundreds of miles, if women need to leave their jobs and their children for days, if women have no access to those rights, they are unreal for them. That is the net fact of the law that is underchallenged in the case before the U.S. Supreme Court, *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*. That law, HB2, in effect, so restricts the availability of reproductive rights in practical, real terms as to place an insurmountable burden for many women on the exercise of those rights. Those rights are prevented from being real for them, for countless others, and they will be put out of reach for countless women across the country if this law is not struck down.

That is what we are asking the Supreme Court to do: to strike down this law that under the pretense of protecting women's health, imposes restrictions that deny rights, rights to privacy that are basic to the human condition. They are constitutional rights, but nothing is more basic than the right to control your own body. Nothing is more essential than protection of rights to decide when to have a

child. These issues of control over one's body involve control over one's faith, rights of privacy, and power to make basic life decisions.

That is what it means to have a right to privacy. It is the right to be left alone—as one of our Supreme Court Justices said, the right to be left alone from unwarranted and unnecessary government intrusion. The Supreme Court will have to make a judgment about whether the burden placed on that right is justified by this supposed protection of women's health.

Anybody familiar with this case knows that supposed reason for these laws that require many privileges for doctors or particular widths of hallways in clinics is a ruse, a pretense, in fact, a falsehood.

My view is the outcome should be clear in this deliberative battle before the Court, but the ramifications, the practical impacts, are severe for those women in Texas who would have no access to reproductive health care, and for women around the country because the simple stark fact is, since 2011, State legislatures have enacted 288 laws like the one in Texas, designed to restrict access to reproductive rights. We are not talking about a situation limited to Texas. In State after State, legislature after legislature, these rights would be restricted by similar laws.

That is the reason I have introduced the Women's Health Protection Act, to stop this invasion—it is truly an invasion—of women's reproductive rights. The measure I have introduced would, in effect, strike down such measures, prevent them, so as to reduce, and hopefully even eliminate, the cost and the time required for litigation challenging them in State after State, like what happened in Texas where women have been denied the certain assurance, the basic security of knowing that this care will be available to them, because of the continuing litigation, the costs of lawsuits, and the time-consuming contention and controversy that arises from it.

The arbitrary and arcane restrictions imposed by the Texas law concerning admitting privilege requirements and building specifications are unrelated to health and safety and clearly create an undue burden on women's right to choose. That is the legal principle, the core tenant that needs to be upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court.

I joined with a number of my colleagues, and in fact led the amicus brief to the Supreme Court, which urges them to reach the right result and strike down this law. My hope is that the outcome will not only be right for Texas and the women of Texas—and the people of Texas because the right of privacy is not guaranteed only to women, it is to men, and the decisions that women make affect families and children as well as their spouses. I hope

the Supreme Court finally does what *Roe v. Wade* was thought to do in clear, bright-line text that will prevent States from intruding with these pretense, ruse laws, supposedly protecting health when, in fact, all they do is restrict the right to privacy.

I am proud to join with my colleagues in fighting these attacks on women's health care. But I hope that the clerks, as I once was, in the Supreme Court will look from those windows today and think to themselves that this case will, in fact, finally settle these issues, finally give women the assurance and security they need.

There is no need to keep returning and relitigating these issues. There is no need for this body to consume time and energy on defunding Planned Parenthood. There is no need for these kinds of repeated battles over rights that should be secure and unchallengeable in 21st Century America. Rehashing this fight simply costs us in time and other precious commodities that we should be spending on jobs, economic progress, veterans, national security, investment in infrastructure, investment in our human capital, and college affordability. All of the present issues—those and others of this day—are what should occupy us on this floor and occupy the country as we move forward, hopefully guaranteeing that the rights in *Roe* will be real for every American woman.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015, which is bipartisan, I might add, and to discuss several amendments that I have submitted.

Mr. President, our country is facing a prescription drug epidemic, and today is a good step toward addressing this crisis. This is a crisis I have been dealing with since my days as Governor of the great State of West Virginia. Opioid abuse is ravaging my State of West Virginia and many other States. I know the Presiding Officer has the same problem in Utah. Our State has been hit harder than any other State in the country. Drug overdose deaths have soared more than 700 percent since 1999. We lost 627 West Virginians to opioids last year alone. Mr. President, 61,000 West Virginians used prescription pain medication for nonmedical purposes in 2014. This includes 6,000 teenagers. Our State is not unique. Every day in our country, 51 Americans

die from opioid abuse. Since 1999 we have lost almost 200,000 Americans to prescription opioid abuse.

The fact that we have with the bill in front of us is simply this: It is an important first step. It will authorize \$77.9 million in grant funding for prevention and recovery efforts, which we need, and expand prevention and education efforts particularly aimed at teens, parents and other caretakers, and aging populations. It will also prevent the abuse of opioids and heroin and promote treatment and recovery. It will expand the availability of naloxone to law enforcement agencies and other first responders to help in the reversal of overdoses to save lives. It will expand disposal sites for unwanted medication to keep them out of the hands of our children and adolescents. It will also launch an evidence-based opioid and heroin treatment and intervention program to expand best practices throughout the country. It will strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs to help States monitor and track prescription drug diversion.

While the bill is a good start and addresses critical problems, there is more that needs to be done. I have a few amendments I want to speak about and explain that I think will improve the bill by changing the FDA mission statement, providing grants for consumer education, and requiring prescription prescriber training.

First of all, I firmly believe we need cultural change at the FDA. That is why I submitted the Changing the Culture of the FDA Act as an amendment to this bill. This amendment would strengthen the actions that the FDA recently announced that they were committed to taking into consideration the public health impact of approving opioid medications. Mind you, what they said is that they were committed to taking it into consideration. I don't think that is much of a change, and it is definitely not a cultural change. It is a movement in the right direction, which I acknowledge. By solidifying this commitment in the agency's mission statement, we ensure that the agency oversees the approval of these dangerous drugs and cannot waiver from their stated goals.

The language in my amendment is similar to the language in the FDA's current mission statement regarding tobacco, and we all know the devastating effects of tobacco. The mission statement says simply this: "FDA also has the responsibility for regulating the manufacturing, marketing, and distribution of tobacco products to protect the public health and to reduce tobacco use by minors."

If we think it is that serious that we put this in the mission statement for tobacco, why can't we do it for opiates? Tobacco kills hundreds of thousands of Americans every year, and we have rightly recognized this as a public

health crisis. However, opiates killed more than 18,000 people just by the end of 2014. That is 51 people every day. This, too, is a public health crisis. It is absolutely ridiculous that the FDA has treated opiates like any other drug up for approval.

To date, the agency has failed to consider the devastating public health impact of their repeated decisions to approve dangerously addictive opiates. We have seen that in their resistance to rescheduling hydrocodone, their approval of Zohydro against the advice of their own advisory committee, and their refusal to consult an advisory committee on other dangerous opioid approvals, including their decision to allow the use of OxyContin in children as young as 11 years old. Opioids are simply different from many types of drugs the FDA oversees. As I noted before, they have killed almost 200,000 people since 1999 and have ruined the lives of countless others.

The FDA must be held accountable for their actions. Like our efforts to protect the public—particularly children—from the dangers of tobacco, the U.S. Congress must take action to ensure that the FDA does, in fact, do what it has promised to do and take the devastating public health impact of opiate addiction into account when approving new drugs. It is putting it on par with tobacco, that is all. In a mission statement, one has more responsibility than just passing it through as a business plan.

My second amendment also relates to the critical role the FDA plays in addressing the opiate epidemic. It would require the FDA to seek the advice of its advisory committee before approving any new opiate medication. These are experts, scientists, people who know the makeup and composites of these chemicals and what they do to human beings. If the FDA approves a drug against the advice of the advisory committee—that means if they do not take the recommendation by their own experts and they wish to put this drug on the market—the agency would be required to submit a report to us, the people's representatives, the Congress, justifying that decision. The approval will be delayed until the report is submitted. Tell us why you won't take the advice of your experts and why you even subvert and basically pay no attention.

The FDA plays a critical role in addressing the opiate epidemic as the agency overseeing the approval of these drugs. Under the FDA's own rules, they are supposed to convene a committee of scientific experts when a matter is of significant public interest, highly controversial, or in need of a specific type of expertise. With 51 people dying every day in the country from an overdose of prescription opiates, it is clear that the approval of opiates meets every one of these stand-

ards and that the FDA should seek the counsel of its expert panel and adhere to its recommendations with regard to approving dangerously addictive opioids.

Unfortunately, this hasn't happened. It truly hasn't happened. Let me give an example. It took us 3 years just to get rescheduled from a schedule III to a Schedule II all opiates—Zohydro, Vicodin. These are the most widely prescribed opiates. It took us 3 years, which should have been a 3-week turnaround.

The week after they even approved the taking down of these drugs from a schedule III to a schedule II, which took over 1 billion pills off the market, they came right back and they recommended a drug called Zohydro. This is a drug that their expert panel had basically advised 11 to 2 not to put on the market. They failed to seek their council's advice on the concerns with the safety of this drug.

Since that time, three new extended-release opioid medications—Targiniq, Hysingla, and Morphabond—have been approved without any advisory committee meeting at all. Let me give my reasoning on why I think this happened. There was so much pushback on Zohydro from the Governors, Senators, and Congress people for putting this high-powered drug on the market against the advice of their own council that they didn't want to go through that again, so basically they just skipped it altogether and brought these drugs right to market. They also approved OxyContin for use in children as young as 11, again without seeking the advice of a pediatric advisory committee. This is a dangerous precedent and must stop.

I am encouraged that in the FDA's recent announcement on opioid approvals, the FDA has finally agreed that the approval of these powerful drugs must be subject to an advisory committee. I am very concerned, however, that the FDA will continue to exempt abuse-deterrent opioids from this process and has not promised to abide by the advice. They said they will take it under consideration. They are not bound to take the advice of the advisory committee.

While abuse-deterrent formulations, which are harder to crush or liquify, have a role to play in reducing the impact of this epidemic, these drugs are no less addictive than traditional opiates. In addition, in the real world, we have seen these so-called abuse-deterrent properties easily overcome. The tragic HIV outbreak we saw in Scott County, IN, last year occurred after hundreds of people in that community shared needles to shoot up Opana. They used the same needle to shoot up Opana—something that should have not been possible if it were truly abuse-deterrent.

This amendment would solidify the FDA's commitment to seek the advice

of an advisory committee when approving opioid medications and would strengthen it by extending that commitment to all opioids and by holding the FDA accountable. The FDA does not listen to its own experts. This is such a reasonable request and such a reasonable amendment to protect all the people in all of our States. It is a commonsense measure that would ensure that the FDA is fully considering the public health impact and the many lives lost as a result of these dangerous opioid medications.

Another amendment I have is on mandatory prescriber education. This epidemic is one that needs to be fought on all fronts, but most importantly, we need to fight it on the frontlines with prescribers, which is precisely what my third amendment seeks to do. It requires medical practitioners, our doctors—the people we trust—it basically requires them to receive training. You would think they are getting training on this now, but they are not. There is no specific training, going through school or at any other time, on the safe prescribing of opiates prior to receiving and renewing their DEA license to prescribe a controlled substance. That is all we are saying. This training must include information on safe opioid prescribing guidelines, the risks of overprescribing opioid medication, pain management, early detection of opiate addiction, and the treatment of opiate-dependent patients. This is something only the doctors can do. These are the people writing on their prescription pads, sending them to the pharmacists, and fulfilling all of our prescriptions. We are asking for them to have that type of required training when they get their DEA license and renew their DEA license.

This must be fought on all fronts, but most importantly we need to fight it on the frontlines with the prescribers. According to the National Institutes of Health, more than 259 million prescriptions were written in 2012. Think about that—259 million prescriptions were written in 2012 just in the United States for opiate painkillers. That equals one bottle of pain pills for every adult in the United States of America. We are the most addicted country on planet Earth. With a population of less than 5 percent of us living in this great country of ours, we consume 80 percent of the opiates produced in the world. The other 6.7 billion people don't use what we use. Why? That is a 400-percent increase in the number of prescriptions since 1999. In a little over a decade, there has been a 400-percent increase, and we are pumping out more pills, thinking this is going to cure America. This is without a corresponding increase in reported pain. They are not complaining any more about pain; they are just getting more pills. But it has come with a corresponding 400-percent increase in

overdose deaths. So if overdose deaths are related to the increase of pills on the market, don't you think we ought to do something about it? It is pretty simple.

I have too many stories from my constituents that they receive significantly more pain medication than they need to treat their pain, and those extra pills increase the risk of addiction for individuals and are dangerous for society if diverted. Someone can get their teeth worked on, get their teeth extracted, and they will get 30 days of pain pills when they may only need them for 1 or 2 days. It is ridiculous.

I hear from physicians themselves that they do not receive enough training. These are doctors telling us it is not in their basic education as they go through medical school—prescribing these drugs—or even after they leave medical school. There is no continuing education demanded about this. Until we ensure that every prescriber has a strong understanding of the state of opiate prescribing practices and the very great risk of opiate addiction, abuse, and overdose deaths, we will continue to see too many people prescribed these dangerous drugs which can lead them down the tragic path of addiction.

Finally, we must improve our consumer education efforts. My fourth amendment would establish consumer education grants through SAMHSA to raise awareness about the risks of opiate addiction and overdose. There are 2.1 million Americans addicted to opiates. Many of these individuals began the road to addiction with a seemingly innocent prescription and little or no warning about the danger from a physician. They weren't told they could be addicted. They weren't told they would be hooked and it would change their life forever. Or it began when a friend offered a pill that they thought couldn't be that dangerous because a doctor had given it to them: Here, I have got something that will help you. Try this.

And they get started. There is simply too little understanding about the dangers of these drugs, and too many get sucked into opioid addiction because they don't understand the risk and because the people close to them don't know how to recognize the signs of addiction or know how to access the resources to help their loved ones.

It is the silent killer. It is the one we all keep quiet—every one of us. Every one of us in America knows somebody—either in our immediate family, extended family or a close friend—who has been affected, but we say nothing. Use and abuse of prescription drugs cost the country an estimated \$53.4 billion a year in lost productivity. These are people who can't function, who can't work, and are basically drawing off of their unemployment or off of their insurance.

Medical costs and criminal justice costs—you name it. You talk to any law enforcement anywhere in the United States of America and they will all tell you a minimum of 80 percent of the crimes that are reported that they have to go and serve are drug related—80 percent. So the cost is probably even higher than that.

This amendment provides \$15 million a year to help prevent these costs in the first place. It makes sense. That is \$15 million. OK, you are going to say: Oh, that is a lot of money.

Let me just tell say that as a society we regularly invest in efforts to prevent unnecessary deaths. We already have done that, and we continue to do that. Thirty thousand people died in car accidents in 2013, and we invested \$668 million in motor vehicle safety and accident prevention. That is more than \$22,000 per death that we have invested trying to prevent people from getting killed in automobile accidents, driving safely, DUI, everything. With 28,000 people dying of prescription opioid or heroin overdose in 2014, this \$15 million funding represents an investment of \$500 per person for a life that we could save. We spend \$22,000 trying to prevent accidents in automobiles.

As to opiates, all we are asking for is a \$500 investment to save their lives. We have to put our priorities where our values are, and we can do that. The grants that would be authorized under this amendment would help those on the frontlines of this terrible epidemic to provide their communities with the information they need to help stop the spread of opioid addiction and to help people seek treatment. This funding will better enable us to educate individuals about the dangers of opioid abuse.

There are practices to prevent opioid abuse, including the safe disposal of unused medication and how to detect the warnings of early addiction. I would venture to say that most people do not know how to look at their children and know that there is a chance that they may get addicted or are getting addicted. It is sometimes too late.

It will help us save lives by raising awareness about the dangers of prescription opioid medications to prevent opioid addiction in the first place and ensuring that loved ones know how to help when a friend or family member becomes addicted.

This amendment that we are asking for, this amendment that I am asking for is one that really makes sense. If we can't educate the public, then we have little chance of ever curing this epidemic.

We have had a lot of talk about the funds and how much money we are spending. We just had a final amendment that I would like to address, as there is a great need for funding to pay for substance abuse treatment.

Well, I strongly agree with my colleagues who supported Senator SHAHEEN's amendment to provide \$600 million in funding, which we desperately need to support Federal programs that work to prevent opioid abuse and provide much needed treatment.

If you look at the amount of money it is costing now for incarceration, all the lost time, all of the drug-related crimes that have been committed, it would have been an investment well made, but I know there are people who believe differently.

In 2014, 42,000 West Virginians, including 4,000 youths, sought treatment for illegal drug use but failed to receive it. There was no place to get it. In your State and my State people are looking. Sometimes they are looking for this, and there is no place to put them. If you have day courts or drug courts in your State, they will tell you: We have no place to put them. There is no place to get the treatment to cure a person who truly is looking for a cure. This is just unacceptable. There are people who recognize that they need it, and they beg for it. They have been turned away because there simply weren't enough facilities, beds or health care providers in their community.

But we spend money every year building new prisons all over the country. We have a backlog, and we have an overcrowding prison population. We know from long experience that when a person asks for help, that is our opportunity. If we turn them away, they will never come back. They just don't when they are turned away. That is why I wish to introduce this amendment, and I would like a very vigorous discussion on it.

We have tobacco, which we know is very dangerous and kills people. It is harmful, and we spend a lot of money trying to prevent people from using it and young people from starting to use it. We even tax it. We tax it so that basically we can deter the use of it.

We have alcohol. We know alcohol can be very addictive and, basically, it ruins people's lives. We know that and we tax that. We have nothing on opioids—nothing.

What we are asking for is consideration of a 1-cent fee on every milligram of opiates that are produced—one penny per milligram. This fee would be levied on the pharmaceutical company, and the money raised will be used to create a permanent funding stream to strengthen the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant.

I know so many people have taken a pledge: We are not going to pass any new taxes.

I understand that. We are really at a crunch. We basically have cut back, and our military is struggling. Every part of a program that we think is near and dear to our States and to the people in our States is having trouble. I am not asking to take away from another one. I am asking that this one

penny per milligram of opioids that are produced in this country would give us permanent funding to start having the treatment centers that we so desperately need. I don't know of any other way to do it in a more compassionate way. We do it for cigarettes; we do it for alcohol. We have opiates killing more than all of that. I am just asking for that dialog, that consideration. It could be something of a bipartisan movement, because this silent killer—opiates—doesn't have a partisan home. It is not Democratic. It is not Republican. It is not Independent. It is killing Americans—all of us.

The substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant goes to the States to pay for critical substance abuse treatment programs. The new funding raised, which is based on past opiate sales—I am basing it on past opiate sales—could be anywhere between \$1.5 billion to \$2 billion a year, and all the States will be able to participate. Every State would participate in these moneys that would be available. They could be used by States to establish new addiction treatment facilities, to improve access to drug courts, to operate support programs for recovering addicts, to care for babies born with neonatal abstinence syndrome or to meet any other treatment need that your State or my State might face. These treatments save lives and strengthened communities. We are losing a generation, a whole generation.

Opioid producers have made billions of dollars selling their drugs over the past several decades. I am not here railing against the pharmaceuticals. They do a lot of good for our country and save a lot of lives too. This is one that doesn't, and this one has been proven that it is a killer.

This amendment asks them to contribute a small portion of their profits to help pay for this treatment. Everyone says: They are going to pass it on. Don't worry; you will be paying more. This is one time, one penny—one penny a milligram. That is all we are asking.

For the 2.1 million Americans who are addicted to their products, my amendment also provides exemptions. I am talking about the exemptions now because I know people are going to say: What about our veterans? What about those in severe chronic pain? What about those who are terminally ill?

We have, basically, exemptions built into this amendment for those people, so they are not put into hardship, and for the neediest in our country. They are not going to be put in a hardship.

This is a cost that if we look at it, I don't know of any other way to fix it. I really don't. I know people have taken pledges: We are not going to do this, not going to do that, not going to consider it. Well, you ought to consider the damage that is doing to America. I am not asking for any other program

to be sacrificed at all. So I think this is responsible. This one penny. That is all I am asking for—one penny.

I am pleased the Senate is addressing this epidemic. It is in a bipartisan way. We have the CARA package in front of us. I appreciate that, and I know we all have a great passion for trying to cure this.

This is how we need to work to solve the major challenges in our country that face us. I am pleased to see we are going through regular order. We have amendments that we are able to put on and talk about. I think it is worthy to have these discussions. We must provide the critical resources needed, and I think we have a solution to that. I hope we can have that discussion. I hope all of us can have an adult discussion about how we save Americans, how we save our families, our children, and the next generations to come.

I look forward to working with all of my colleagues and with you to see if there is a better way we can strengthen and make a piece of legislation better than what it is.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments from my friend from West Virginia and his work on this issue that has hit West Virginia and, particularly, southeast Ohio kind of first and hardest. But it has spread to so many other places and caused so much heartache and so much family disruption—not just for the young men or women, in the case of young people who are addicted, but the whole family. As one mother of a teenager said to me in Youngstown, OH, or in Warren, OH, one day, this is really a family affair.

I am pleased to see bipartisan support for finally tackling the opioid addiction epidemic. It has touched every State and almost every community in our country. In 2014, more people died from drug overdoses than any year on record, with 2,482 in Ohio. That is a record number of prescription drug overdoses and a record 1,177 overdoses related to heroin. People often start with pain medication, sometimes over-prescribed prescription medicine that will, in far too many cases, lead to heroin addiction. Heroin is cheaper to buy on the street than for people to get OxyContin or oxycodone or Percocet or any number of legal morphine pain medications.

These numbers mean that in 1 year alone, 2,500 Ohioan families lost a loved one to addiction. What those numbers don't account for are the thousands of other families and hundreds of other communities that continue to struggle with opioid abuse. It should not be easier for Americans to get their hands on opioids than it is for them to get help to treat their addiction. It should not be easier for Americans to get their hands on opioids than it is to get help to treat their addiction.

Addiction is not an individual problem. It surely is not a character flaw, as many people half a generation ago liked to say when it was people who didn't look like them. But the fact is it was not a character flaw then and it is not a character flaw now. It is a chronic disease.

When left untreated, it places a massive burden on our health care system and a terrible, terrible cost on families who have an addicted family member. When we think about this epidemic, we have in our minds a young worker who turned to painkillers after a back injury or a car accident, someone who started with oxycodone—maybe as a party drug—and then turned to heroin. This problem is bigger than that.

Our national conversation forgets the hundreds of thousands of seniors who often are given unsafe and duplicative prescriptions for opioids. It is not uncommon for seniors to be treated by multiple specialists and physicians. Doctors may not know they are prescribing duplicative painkillers, meaning this doctor prescribed a painkiller—maybe oxycodone or OxyContin or Vicodin or another—and this other doctor may have done the same thing. They weren't communicating, and didn't know. Seniors find it difficult to manage all of their different prescriptions far too often.

Take, for example, Ohioan Dennis Michelson. I met him at the Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging in Cleveland last August. He is one of the estimated 170,000 Medicare beneficiaries who recently battled an addiction to pain medication.

He was prescribed pain medication by his doctor to manage chronic migraines. When his primary care doctor sought to wean him off the medication, he went to other doctors and pharmacists to obtain those opioids. He was eventually arrested and charged with felonies for tampering with prescriptions. He has since recovered. He is now an advocate for reform to address the prescription drug epidemic.

After hearing his story, it strikes me that if a patient with legitimate and sometimes complex medical needs winds up getting pain medication from several different doctors—you could see how that would happen; none of those doctors know about one another—the system has failed the patient.

It is why I worked with Senator TOOMEY from Pennsylvania to introduce the Stopping Medication Abuse and Protecting Seniors Act. I was proud to see this body support it as an amendment today. We already have a proven tool to address the problem of patients getting duplicative opioids from multiple doctors and pharmacists. It is called Patient Review & Restriction Programs. But despite their success in State Medicaid programs and commercial plans, these programs aren't available in Medicare prescriptions under current law. That is the

purpose of the Toomey-Brown amendment and what we are trying to fix.

The amendment will ensure that a small number of seniors who receive high doses of addictive opioids from multiple doctors get those painkillers from one doctor and one pharmacist. It is what we did on so-called Medicaid lock-in—for people who were abusing the system on purpose or more likely those who sort of fell into this trap and went from doctor to doctor, pharmacist to pharmacist, in some sense doctor shopping or pharmacy shopping—so that practice would end. We have done the same sort of thing now with so-called Medicare lock-in. It would save taxpayers \$100 million over the next decade. It will reduce overprescribing, and it will crack down on fraud.

I am pleased we have bipartisan support for this commonsense measure, but this amendment and this bill are a step. We need a comprehensive approach that addresses the entire spectrum of addiction from crisis to recovery. I have introduced the Heroin and Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention and Reduction Act. It will boost prevention efforts, it will improve tools for crisis response, it will expand access to treatment, and it will provide support for lifelong recovery.

Addiction is chronic. It doesn't mean that when somebody overcomes their addiction and seems to defeat it, it won't come back later in life. If we are serious about fighting this epidemic, we have to make sure we provide a serious investment that will deliver results long term.

My colleagues, Senator SHAHEEN of New Hampshire and Senator WHITEHOUSE of Rhode Island, introduced an amendment that would have provided \$600 million to fight this epidemic. It would have gone directly to public health workers, directly to law enforcement officials who are working on the frontlines of this battle every day. It would have shown constituents we are serious about addressing this crisis.

I was disappointed this body was unwilling and unable to find the money necessary to address these problems. This legislation is a good bill. Without the money, it is a good bill, but it is really only half a good bill because my colleagues are simply unwilling—maybe it is the tea party influence, maybe they are afraid of a Republican rightwing primary, whatever it is—to ante up the dollars that would fully help us deal with this epidemic. We can't do this without an investment.

I met with a number of tuberculosis experts in my office today. We have been successful in this country with eliminating smallpox, eliminating polio, and keeping Ebola from being contracted in the United States and killing any Americans. We have done all of that because we invested in a public health system. We can't address this opioid epidemic without dollars.

Yet my colleagues will simply always back off and say: Well, we can't afford to do this. They can afford tax cuts for wealthy people, and they can afford continuing to pump money into expensive weapons systems, but they will not spend money to address probably the most serious public health crisis we have seen in this country in years.

Once again, I say that it should not be easier for Americans to get their hands on opioids than it is to get help to treat their addiction. This Senate should get serious about this. We should pass this bill, to be sure, but there is so much else. I am distressed my colleagues chose not to step up to the plate and do what deep down they know we should do.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, earlier today, I missed the vote on the Shaheen amendment No. 3345. If I had voted, I would have voted yea.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Mrs. McCASKILL. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for today's amendment votes in relation to S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015.

On amendment No. 3362 by Senator FEINSTEIN, I would have voted yea.

On the motion to waive the Budget Act with respect to amendment No. 3395 by Senator WYDEN, I would have voted yea.

On the motion to waive the Budget Act with respect to amendment No. 3345 by Senator SHAHEEN, I would have voted yea. •

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I wish to join my colleagues in supporting the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.

This bipartisan legislation takes a strong and balanced approach to tackling the prescription drug and heroin epidemic our Nation faces, and I am proud to be a cosponsor.

I would like to note the hard work by many of my colleagues and their staffs—Senators WHITEHOUSE, AYOTTE, COONS, KIRK, KLOBUCHAR, and PORTMAN. Their States have been especially hard hit by this epidemic, and this bill would help alleviate some of the suffering.

We are all well aware of the sobering statistics. Drug overdoses kill more than 120 Americans each day—more than motor vehicle crashes or gunshot wounds. Opioid and heroin overdoses account for more than half of these deaths. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2014, 25,760 people died from prescription drugs, and of that, 18,893 deaths were caused by opioid painkillers. Heroin caused an additional 10,574 deaths.

These numbers have continually increased over the past 15 years, and today we are in the midst of an epidemic. That is why we need this bill.

We need a comprehensive response to a problem that has touched every State of our country.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act strengthens our substance abuse prevention, treatment, recovery, and law enforcement infrastructure. While it focuses on prescription opioid abuse and heroin use, it also has the potential to help other drug problems that we face. Specifically, it authorizes a number of programs to: ensure access to appropriate, evidence-based medical treatment; address local and emerging drug threats and trends; equip first responders with lifesaving tools, such as Naloxone, an opioid overdose-reversal drug; and strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs to reduce overprescribing, doctor shopping, and ultimately overdose deaths. The bill also establishes an interagency task force on pain management and opioid painkiller prescribing. The overprescription and overuse of these drugs are a major factor in this epidemic.

Lastly, to examine ways to improve access to drug treatment, the bill requires a Government Accountability Office study on the 16-bed limit for Medicaid reimbursement to drug treatment programs, also known as the Institutions for Mental Disease exclusion.

The holistic nature of this bill is a clear step in the right direction. It also supports the administration's efforts to confront this epidemic and can help accomplish the goals laid out in the 2015 National Drug Control Strategy.

However, there are two things that I believe would have made this comprehensive bill even more effective: 1, addressing the sheer volume and availability of opioid painkillers; and 2, full funding.

First, on the widespread availability of prescription opioids, I would like to outline a few often-cited facts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Health care providers wrote 259 million prescriptions for opioid painkillers in 2012. This was enough for every American adult to have their own bottle of pills. Since 1999, the sale of prescription opioid painkillers has increased by 300 percent. At the same time, there has been no change in the amount of pain patients reported. During this same time period, deaths from overdose of prescription opioid painkillers quadrupled.

Additionally, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, 20 percent of people ages 12 and older have used prescription drugs nonmedically at least once. The majority of those who abuse prescription opioids get them for free from a friend or relative, often from legitimate prescriptions written in excess.

And, over the past 5 years, the Drug Enforcement Administration has collected more than 5.5 million pounds of

unused or unwanted drugs, including opioids.

Moreover, data from Express Scripts shows that while there are fewer individuals filling prescriptions for opioids, the overall number of prescriptions filled, as well as the number of days per prescription, both increased.

All of this shows there are simply too many pills available for diversion and abuse, and I believe better prescribing practices can play an important role in reducing excess supply.

Our doctors and health care providers must improve the way they prescribe these opioids, to ensure safe and effective pain relief, but also to prevent misuse and overdose. At the same time, we must also maintain appropriate access for legitimate medical needs.

Updated guidelines, such as those the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will soon release, will help improve prescribing practices. Increased prescriber education can also help.

I am also looking into the possibility of responsibly regulating initial opioid prescriptions to reduce risk for misuse, addiction, and diversion. In my view, a patient who has a simple dental procedure does not need a 30-day supply of Vicodin. This is the type of prescribing that I believe we need to fix. Second, a bill like this can only have a positive impact if its programs are actually funded.

My colleague from New Hampshire, Senator SHAHEEN, has introduced an amendment that would provide emergency funding for the programs authorized in this bill, and I urge its passage.

I do not need to tell you that opioid and heroin abuse are very serious problems, but today we have an opportunity to address the issue head-on and save lives. I encourage my colleagues to join me in voting for this important bill.

Thank you.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, the United States is in the midst of a full-blown drug crisis. More people died from drug overdoses in 2014 than any previous year on record, claiming more lives than car accidents across the country. Since 2000, there has been a 200 percent increase in the rate of overdose deaths involving opioid pain relievers and heroin, with 61 percent of all drug overdose deaths in 2014 involving some type of opioid.

These tragedies are proof of the fierce bonds of addiction, and it seems no State has been spared from the opioid epidemic. In my State of California, deaths involving prescription pain medications have increased by 16.5 percent since 2006. In fact, there were more than 1,800 opioid-related deaths in 2012 alone, and 72 percent of those involved prescription pain medications.

We cannot ignore the opioid crisis anymore. This is not a problem for only the local communities or State officials. This is a nationwide crisis and

addressing it requires a multi-pronged response at all levels of government. Last year, California was one of only 16 States selected to receive funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC to help improve safe prescribing of opioid painkillers, an important step forward in tackling the root cause of this debilitating drug crisis.

The pain and sorrow of drug addiction knows no limits. This is a tragedy that impacts families from all backgrounds, including our servicemembers and veterans. There is substantial evidence that prescription drug use and abuse is a major contributing factor to military and veteran suicides. This has been a concern of mine for several years, and I was proud to work with my colleagues in 2013 to ensure that military and veterans hospitals were included in the Drug Enforcement Administration's prescription drug take-back efforts so that our military personnel, veterans, and their families could voluntarily dispose of unwanted or unused prescription drugs.

However, much more must be done to combat this epidemic. To address this emergency fully and effectively, we need to provide immediate funding to the key grant programs included in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA. I applaud Senator SHAHEEN and Senator WHITEHOUSE for introducing an amendment to give the Department of Justice, DOJ, and the Department of Health and Human Services, HHS, the tools they need to fund the essential prevention, treatment, and law enforcement programs to help the families and communities torn apart by drug abuse.

American lives are on the line, and we cannot wait to act. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WHOLE WOMAN'S HEALTH V. HELLERSTEDT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today the Supreme Court heard the oral arguments in *Whole Woman's Health v.*

Hellerstedt. At issue in this case is a Texas law that puts restrictions on women's health clinics and providers.

Contrary to what proponents claim, these restrictions do not enhance women's health in any way. They are medically unnecessary, according to groups like the American Medical Association and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Instead, these restrictions serve just one purpose: to restrict women's access to clinics.

If the Texas law stands, nearly three-quarters of the State's clinics will be forced to close. That would leave just 10 clinics statewide to serve 5.4 million Texan women of reproductive age. But unfortunately, this is the type of thing we have come to expect from the State of Texas. The Texas Legislature and Governor have already passed laws that infringe on its citizens' constitutional rights.

For example, the State has passed laws that limit victims' ability to recover much-deserved damages after accidents. And they have passed one of the strictest voter ID laws in the Nation. We are seeing the results of the State's pattern of undermining their citizens' constitutional rights. Just yesterday it was reported that more than half a million registered voters in Texas can't even vote.

This is the pattern of disenfranchisement Texas is engaged in. The State's women are, sadly, the latest example of Texas infringing on important constitutional rights. Though it is not entirely surprising that the radical Republicans in Texas have targeted women's health, it is nonetheless disappointing. I hope the Supreme Court will choose to protect women's health and strike down this disastrous Texas law.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE GEORGIA PUBLIC POLICY FOUNDATION

• Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I am honored to recognize a great leader in Georgia politics, a leader that studies hard, presents ideas, and analyzes State public policy issues to educate citizens and enhance economic opportunity. This leader is not a person but an organization that is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2016: the Georgia Public Policy Foundation.

Established in 1991, the foundation is an independent, State-focused think tank that proposes market-oriented approaches to public policy to improve the lives of Georgians. Whether they are aware of it or not, Georgians have benefitted from the positive line of influential leaders of this organization, including my good friend Rogers Wade. It was founded by a great Georgian, Hank McCamish, and today is led by a Georgian who will leave another great legacy of his own, Kelly McCutcheon.

Through dozens of events each year, facilitating discussions between State members and political, education, media, and business leaders, the Georgia Public Policy Foundation has lived up to its motto: "Changing Georgia Policy, Changing Georgians' Lives since 1991."

The Georgia Public Policy Foundation performs scholarly research and analysis of State public policy issues and works to educate citizens, policymakers, and the media. It maintains a State-focused, independent, non-partisan, and market-oriented approach to improve the lives of Georgians, and it affords opportunities for advocacy membership and volunteering.

The Georgia Public Policy Foundation helps shape meaningful policy on education, the environment, criminal justice, government reform, health care, legal reform, regulation, spending, taxes, transportation, and welfare reform. And it walks the walk on education, too—its members donate to the Student Outreach Scholarship Program, providing assistance for lower-income students to attend college and learn about public policy issues.

The Georgia Public Policy Foundation has forged over the years many positive changes in Georgia in its non-partisan but very specific way. It raises issues of importance above political rhetoric to a point where politicians focus on the true merits and ultimately make quality decisions.

For all the Georgia Public Policy Foundation has done on behalf of my home State over the last 25 years, I honor the foundation today.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13660 ON MARCH 6, 2014, WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE—PM 43

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes

in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016.

The actions and policies of persons that undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets, as well as the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation, including its purported annexation of Crimea and its use of force in Ukraine, continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 with respect to Ukraine.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, March 2, 2016.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13288 ON MARCH 6, 2003, WITH RESPECT TO THE ACTIONS AND POLICIES OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE AND OTHER PERSONS TO UNDERMINE ZIMBABWE'S DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES OR INSTITUTIONS—PM 44

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, and renewed every year since then, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016.

The threat constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions, contributing to the deliberate break-

down in the rule of law, to politically motivated violence and intimidation, and to political and economic instability in the southern African region, has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, March 2, 2016.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:32 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1596. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, as the "Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building".

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 136. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1103 USPS Building 1103 in Camp Pendleton, California, as the "Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office".

H.R. 1132. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1048 West Robinhood Drive in Stockton, California, as the "W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building".

H.R. 2347. An act to amend the Federal Advisory Committee Act to increase the transparency of Federal advisory committees, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2458. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5351 Lapalco Boulevard in Marrero, Louisiana, as the "Lionel R. Collins, Sr. Post Office Building".

H.R. 2814. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Sevierville, Tennessee, the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic.

H.R. 3082. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5919 Chef Menteur Highway in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the "Daryle Holloway Post Office Building".

H.R. 3274. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4567 Rockbridge Road in Pine Lake, Georgia, as the "Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office".

H.R. 3601. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7715 Post Road, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, as the "Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building".

H.R. 3735. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston Salem, North Carolina, as the "Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office".

H.R. 4046. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 220 East Oak Street, Glenwood City, Wisconsin, as the Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office.

The message further announced that pursuant to section 4703(b) of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Act (20 U.S.C. 4703), the Minority Leader appoints the following Member of the House of Representatives to the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation: Mr. JOHN B. LARSON of Connecticut.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 136. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1103 USPS Building 1103 in Camp Pendleton, California, as the "Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1132. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1048 West Robinhood Drive in Stockton, California, as the "W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2347. An act to amend the Federal Advisory Committee Act to increase the transparency of Federal advisory committees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2458. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5351 Lapalco Boulevard in Marrero, Louisiana, as the "Lionel R. Collins, Sr. Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2814. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Sevierville, Tennessee, the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3082. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5919 Chef Menteur Highway in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the "Daryle Holloway Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3274. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4567 Rockbridge Road in Pine Lake, Georgia, as the "Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3601. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7715 Post Road, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, as the "Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3735. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston Salem, North Carolina, as the "Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4046. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 220 East Oak Street, Glenwood City, Wisconsin, as the Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4543. A communication from the Under Secretary, Rural Utilities Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Environmental Policies and Procedures" (RIN0575-AC56) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4544. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Bennet S. Sacolick, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4545. A communication from the Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General John F. Campbell, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4546. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Addition of Certain Persons and Modification of Certain Entries to the Entity List; and Removal of Certain Persons from the Entity List" (RIN0694-AG81) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4547. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Probabilistic Risk Assessment and Severe Accident Evaluation for New Reactors" (NUREG-0800, SRP Section 19.0) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4548. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Chapter 11, Radioactive Waste Management" (NUREG-0800, SRP Branch Technical Positions 11-3; 11-5; and 11-6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4549. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Chapter 11, Radioactive Waste Management" (NUREG-0800, SRP Sections 11.1; 11.2; 11.3; 11.4; and 11.5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4550. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Update of Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates" (Notice 2016-18) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Of-

fice of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4551. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendments to the Low-Income Housing Credit Compliance-Monitoring Regulations" ((RIN1545-BL84) (TD 9753)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4552. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Qualified Zone Academy Bond Allocations for 2015 and 2016" (Notice 2016-20) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4553. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Reporting of Specified Foreign Financial Assets" ((RIN1545-BM54) (TD 9752)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4554. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "PATH Act Changes to Section 1445" ((RIN1545-BN22) (TD 9751)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4555. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Applicable Federal Rates—March 2016" (Rev. Rul. 2016-07) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4556. A joint communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4557. A communication from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Fiscal Assistant Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards" (RIN1505-AC48) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4558. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15-134); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4559. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15-100); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4560. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to

law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15-052); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4561. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2016-0022–2016-0025); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4562. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Mid-Year Changes to Safe Harbor Plans and Safe Harbor Notices” (Notice 2016-16) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4563. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “2014 Progress Report on Understanding the Long-Term Health Effects of Living Organ Donation”; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4564. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) report to Congress on the study on raising the minimum age to purchase tobacco products; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4565. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulations Governing Organization of the Joint Board for the Enrollment of Actuaries” ((RIN1545-BM81) (TD 9749)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4566. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Financial Report of the United States Government for Fiscal Year 2015”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4567. A communication from the Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board’s calendar year 2015 Annual Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4568. A communication from the Chairman, Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board Annual Performance Report for FY 2015 and Annual Performance Plan for FY 2016 (Final) and FY 2017 (Proposed)”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4569. A communication from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Explanatory Notes, Annual Performance Plan, and Annual Performance Report for the Office of Government Ethics for fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4570. A communication from the Chairman of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission’s Buy American Act Report for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4571. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Duwamish Waterway, Seattle, WA” ((RIN1625-AA09) (Docket No. USCG-2015-0285)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4572. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Lake Pontchartrain, Slidell, LA” ((RIN1625-AA09) (Docket No. USCG-2015-0814)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4573. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Missouri River, Atchison, KS” ((RIN1625-AA09) (Docket No. USCG-2014-0358)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4574. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Acushnet River, New Bedford and Fairhaven, MA” ((RIN1625-AA09) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0058)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4575. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulated Navigation Area; Kill Van Kull and Newark Bay; Bayonne, NJ, NY” ((RIN1625-AA11) (Docket No. USCG-2014-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4576. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulated Navigation Area; Reporting Requirements for Barges Loaded with Certain Dangerous Cargoes, Inland Rivers, Eighth Coast Guard District; Expiration of Stay (Suspension) and Administrative Changes” ((RIN1625-AA11) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0760)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4577. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulated Navigation Area; Reporting Requirements for Barges Loaded with Certain Dangerous Cargoes, Illinois Waterway System located within the Ninth Coast Guard District; Expiration of Stay (Suspension) and Administrative Changes” ((RIN1625-AA11) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0849)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4578. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursu-

ant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Circle Line Sightseeing Fireworks, Liberty Island, Upper New York Bay, Manhattan, NY” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2015-1048)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4579. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Pleasure Beach Bridge, Bridgeport, CT” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2015-1088)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4580. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Security Zone; Kailua Bay, Oahu, HI” ((RIN1625-AA87) (Docket No. USCG-2015-1030)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4581. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Closure of Morro Bay Harbor Bar Entrance; Morro Bay, CA” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2015-1083)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4582. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; New Years Eve Firework Displays, Chicago River, Chicago, IL” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2015-1074)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4583. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Transit Restrictions, Lower Mississippi River Mile Marker 365.0-361.0” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0014)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4584. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Bayou Chene beginning at mile 130.0 on the Atchafalaya River extending through the Bayou Chene ending at Mile 85.0 on the Intercoastal Waterway Morgan City, LA” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0016)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4585. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Transit Restrictions, Lower Mississippi River Mile Marker 311.0-319.0” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0023)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4586. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Upper Mississippi River and Illinois River, MO and IL" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2015-1121)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4587. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; RICHLAND, Apra Harbor/Philippine Sea, GU" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2015-1101)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4588. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; James River, Newport News, VA" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0044)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4589. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Bayou Petite Caillou, Boudreax Canal Floodgate, Chauvin, LA" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2015-1125)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4590. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Hudson River, Anchorage Ground 19-W" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0028)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4591. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Navy UNDET, Apra Outer Harbor, GU" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2015-1096)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4592. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Moving Security Zone; Escorted Vessels; MM 90.0—106.0, Lower Mississippi River; New Orleans, LA" ((RIN1625-AA87) (Docket No. USCG-2014-0995)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4593. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Intracoastal Waterway; Lake Charles, LA" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2015-1086)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4594. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department

of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Moving Security Zone; Escorted Vessels; MM 90.0—106.0, Lower Mississippi River; New Orleans, LA" ((RIN1625-AA87) (Docket No. USCG-2014-0995)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4595. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Expansion of Online Public File Obligations To Cable and Satellite TV Operators and Broadcast and Satellite Radio Licensees" ((MB Docket No. 14-127) (FCC 16-4)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4596. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Expanding Consumers' Video Navigation Choices; Commercial Availability of Navigation Devices" ((MB Docket No. 16-42, CS Docket No. 97-80) (FCC 16-18)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BARRASSO, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, without amendment:

S. 817. A bill to provide for the addition of certain real property to the reservation of the Siletz Tribe in the State of Oregon (Rept. No. 114-219).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. GARDNER:

S. 2616. A bill to modify certain cost-sharing and revenue provisions relating to the Arkansas Valley Conduit, Colorado; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 2617. A bill to provide for the development of a United States strategy for greater human space exploration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 2618. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to publish a Medicaid fee-for-service provider directory; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. HEITKAMP:

S. 2619. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to carry out a pilot program on the award of financial assistance to local governments to support the development of startup businesses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 2620. A bill to facilitate the addition of park administration at the Coltsville National Historical Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 2621. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to genetically engineered food transparency and uniformity; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. REED, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. Kaine, Mr. DURBIN, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. Res. 384. A resolution designating March 2, 2016, as "Read Across America Day"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 425

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 425, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a five-year extension to the homeless veterans reintegration programs and to provide clarification regarding eligibility for services under such programs.

S. 707

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 707, a bill to provide certain protections from civil liability with respect to the emergency administration of opioid overdose drugs.

S. 743

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 743, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to recognize the service in the reserve components of the Armed Forces of certain persons by honoring them with status as veterans under law, and for other purposes.

S. 849

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 849, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for systematic data collection and analysis and epidemiological research regarding Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson's disease, and other neurological diseases.

S. 1659

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1659, a bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1887

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Michigan

(Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1887, a bill to protect and preserve international cultural property at risk due to political instability, armed conflict, or natural or other disasters, and for other purposes.

S. 2067

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2067, a bill to establish EUREKA Prize Competitions to accelerate discovery and development of disease-modifying, preventive, or curative treatments for Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, to encourage efforts to enhance detection and diagnosis of such diseases, or to enhance the quality and efficiency of care of individuals with such diseases.

S. 2216

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2216, a bill to provide immunity from suit for certain individuals who disclose potential examples of financial exploitation of senior citizens, and for other purposes.

S. 2307

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2307, a bill to promote the strengthening of the private sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

S. 2424

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2424, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

S. 2426

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2426, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

S. 2496

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2496, a bill to provide flexibility for the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to increase the total amount of general business loans that may be guaranteed under section 7(a) of the Small Business Act.

S. 2531

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 2531, a bill to authorize State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related

boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 2571

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2571, a bill to provide for the eligibility for airport development grants of airports that enter into certain leases with components of the Armed Forces.

AMENDMENT NO. 3290

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3290 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3330

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3330 intended to be proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) and the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3345 proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3345 proposed to S. 524, *supra*.

AMENDMENT NO. 3362

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3362 proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

AMENDMENT NO. 3369

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3369 intended to be proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

AMENDMENT NO. 3376

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Colorado

(Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3376 intended to be proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 2617. A bill to provide for the development of a United States strategy for greater human space exploration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2617

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Mapping a New and Innovative Focus on Our Exploration Strategy for Human Spaceflight Act of 2016" or the "MANIFEST for Human Spaceflight Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. REAFFIRMATION OF POLICY AND FINDINGS.

(a) REAFFIRMATION OF POLICY.—Congress reaffirms that the long-term goal of the human space flight and exploration efforts of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall be to expand permanent human presence beyond low-Earth orbit and to do so, where practical, in a manner involving international partners, as stated in section 202(a) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18312(a)).

(b) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) In accordance with section 204 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-267; 124 Stat. 2813), the National Academy of Sciences, through its Committee on Human Spaceflight, conducted a review of the goals, core capabilities, and direction of human space flight, and published the findings and recommendations in a 2014 report entitled "Pathways to Exploration: Rationales and Approaches for a U.S. Program of Human Space Exploration".

(2) The Committee on Human Spaceflight included leaders from the aerospace, scientific, security, and policy communities. With input from the public, the Committee on Human Spaceflight concluded that many practical and aspirational rationales together constitute a compelling case for human space exploration. These rationales include economic benefits, national security, national prestige, inspiring students and other citizens, scientific discovery, human survival, and a sense of shared destiny.

(3) The Committee on Human Spaceflight affirmed that Mars is the appropriate long-term goal for the human space flight program.

(4) The Committee on Human Spaceflight recommended that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration define a series of

sustainable steps and conduct mission planning and technology development as needed to achieve the long-term goal of placing humans on the surface of Mars.

SEC. 3. HUMAN EXPLORATION STRATEGY.

(a) HUMAN EXPLORATION OF MARS.—Section 202(b) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18312(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) to achieve human exploration of Mars, including the establishment of a capability to extend human presence to the surface of Mars.”

(b) EXPLORATION STRATEGY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with this subsection, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall submit an interim report and final report setting forth a strategy to achieve the objective in paragraph (5) of section 202(b) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010, as amended by subsection (a) of this section, through a series of successive, sustainable, free-standing, but complementary missions making robust utilization of cis-lunar space and employing the Space Launch System, Orion crew capsule, and other capabilities provided under titles III, IV, V, and IX of that Act (42 U.S.C. 18301 et seq.).

(2) STRATEGY REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the strategy under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall include—

(A) the utility of an expanded human presence in cis-lunar space toward enabling missions to various lunar orbits, the lunar surface, asteroids, Mars, the moons of Mars, and other destinations of interest for future human exploration and development;

(B) the utility of an expanded human presence in cis-lunar space for economic, scientific, and technological advances;

(C) the opportunities for collaboration with—

(i) international partners;

(ii) private industry; and

(iii) other Federal agencies, including missions relevant to national security or scientific needs;

(D) the opportunities specifically afforded by the International Space Station (ISS) to support high priority scientific research and technological developments useful in expanding and sustaining a human presence in cis-lunar space and beyond;

(E) a range of exploration mission architectures and approaches for the missions identified under paragraph (1), including capabilities for the Orion crew capsule and the Space Launch System;

(F) a comparison of architectures and approaches based on—

(i) assessed value of factors including cost effectiveness, schedule resiliency, safety, sustainability, and opportunities for international collaboration;

(ii) the extent to which certain architectures and approaches may enable new markets and opportunities for United States private industry, provide compelling opportunities for scientific discovery and technological excellence, sustain United States competitiveness and leadership, and address critical national security considerations and requirements; and

(iii) the flexibility of such architectures and approaches to adjust to evolving technologies, partners, priorities, and budget projections and constraints;

(G) measures for setting standards for ensuring crew health and safety, including limits regarding radiation exposure and countermeasures necessary to meet those limits, means and methods for addressing urgent medical conditions or injuries, and other such safety, health, and medical issues that can be anticipated in the conduct of the missions identified under paragraph (1);

(H) a description of crew training needs and capabilities (including space suits and life support systems) necessary to support the conduct of missions identified under paragraph (1);

(I) a detailed plan for prioritizing and phasing near-term intermediate destinations and missions identified under paragraph (1);

(J) an assessment of the recommendations of the report prepared in compliance with section 204 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-267; 124 Stat. 2813), including a detailed explanation of how the Administrator has ensured such recommendations have been, to the extent practicable, incorporated into the strategy under paragraph (1); and

(K) technical information as needed to identify interest from potential stakeholder or partner communities.

(3) INDEPENDENT REVIEW.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall enter into an arrangement with the National Academy of Sciences to review and comment on each interim report pursuant to paragraph (1). Under the arrangement, the National Academy of Sciences shall review each interim report on the strategy described in paragraph (1) and identify the following:

(i) Matters in such interim report agreed upon by the National Academy of Sciences.

(ii) Matters in such interim report raising concerns for the National Academy of Sciences.

(iii) Such further recommendations with respect to matters covered by such interim report as the National Academy of Sciences considers appropriate.

(B) TIMING OF REVIEW AND COMMENT.—The Administrator shall ensure that the review and comment on an interim report provided for pursuant to subparagraph (A) is conducted in a timely manner to comply with the requirements of this subsection and, to the maximum extent practicable, to facilitate the incorporation of the comments of the National Academy of Sciences pursuant to subparagraph (A) into the applicable final report required by this subsection.

(4) DEADLINES.—

(A) INTERIM REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not less than every five years thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the National Academy of Sciences an interim report on the strategy required by paragraph (1) in order to facilitate the independent review and comment on the strategy as provided for by paragraph (3).

(B) FINAL REPORTS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not less than every five years thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a final report on the strategy required by paragraph (1), which shall include and incorporate the response of the National Academy of Sciences to the most recent interim report pursuant to paragraph (3).

By Ms. HEITKAMP:

S. 2619. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to carry out a pilot program on the award of financial

assistance to local governments to support the development of startup businesses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I am introducing the Startup Entrepreneur Empowerment Delivery, SEED, Act today to address the challenges faced by startup businesses in North Dakota, as well as other rural States and small cities, by helping them get the early stage funding they need to grow their business.

Access to capital is one of the single largest barriers between startup businesses and success. This bill addresses the unique needs of startup companies in our country's more rural States by creating a pilot program through the U.S. Department of Commerce aimed at providing small amounts of capital to qualifying startups.

Innovation does not just happen in Silicon Valley or at our country's biggest research institutions. Innovative ideas are blooming in our heartland and startups are forming on our main streets making the entrepreneurial ecosystem of our smaller cities stronger than ever before. But too often, we hear the same challenges from startups and small businesses that they are trying to fit a square peg into a round hole, meaning they run into the barrier of not being able to qualify for Federal support or Federal programs because they are asking for too little funding. We can't let these innovators slip through the cracks.

The Startup Entrepreneur Empowerment Delivery, SEED, Act would grant financial assistance to ten small sized cities across the country which then would make awards directly to startups to use for marketing, infrastructure, recruitment and hiring resources. This bill directly addresses the concerns that I continue to hear from startups in North Dakota and will help drive them to success and reinvest and diversify the local economies of our Nation's more rural areas.

With my SEED Act, we can invest in small cities, in rural States, like North Dakota, helping drive startups to success. Just like anyone from a small or rural town, we know how to make a little go a long way, and this bill will help make that possible. The SEED Act will allow the Federal Government to continue its priority of investing in innovation and will ensure those investments are felt in America's heartland.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself,
Mr. LEAHY, Mr. TESTER, Mrs.
FEINSTEIN, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 2621. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to genetically engineered food transparency and uniformity; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, the genius of America was a government

designed, as President Lincoln so eloquent summarized, "Of the people, by the people, for the people."

I will be rising periodically to address issues that affect Americans across our country and that this Chamber should be addressing. This week I am using my speech to highlight the labeling of genetically modified foods. This is truly a "We the people" versus "We the Titans" battle because citizens routinely poll in very high numbers about their desire to know what is in their food, and they like the idea of being alerted when their food contains genetically modified organisms or GMOs, but that is not necessarily the consequence, as when we go through the legislative process, often the "We the people's" commonsense vision is lost in favor of pressures applied by powerful interest groups. We are in the middle of a debate like that right now. So that is why I thought it appropriate to rise at this moment to address this.

This is a debate about whether you believe that in a democracy, citizens have a right to know or whether that right to know is going to be taken away from them. I guess it goes to whether you feel that citizens have the minds they are put on this Earth with to make decisions of their own versus being told what decisions to make by a Federal Government.

This debate over genetically modified organisms is a debate that gets complicated because there are tremendous differences in the types of genetic changes in plants. Let me give you some examples. You might have a crop where the crop has been modified genetically in the laboratory to produce natural toxins that defend plants against root-dwelling insect pests. Perhaps as a result of that, the farmers can reduce the amount of synthetic pesticides they apply to crop lands. That might be a very positive thing. It might save a lot of money, and it also might save a lot of runoff of pesticides. That is one example.

Other crops have been modified to fortify foods with vitamins and nutrients. For example, golden rice, developed by the International Rice Institute, provides greater amounts of vitamin A to reduce the deficiency of this essential vitamin in our diets. There are other positive impacts. For example, you have transgenic carrots—carrots that have been modified genetically to produce drugs inside the carrot to treat the genetic disorder known as Goucher's disease. Other genetic modifications have been used to attempt to increase crop yields through more efficient photosynthesis.

So that is a whole variety of different ways of trying to make plants contribute better to our nutrition and certainly in terms of the dynamics to the farming environment, but there are also changes that are made that raise concerns among some of our citizens.

For example, most of the genetically modified crops grown in the United States have been altered to confer resistance to a chemical herbicide known as glyphosate. I was looking at a chart. I do not have it to display, but I will describe it. After the introduction of these GMO crops in the early 1990s, the amount of acreage that has been planted with glyphosate-resistant crops has gone to nearly 100 percent. With soybeans, it went to 100 percent by about 2005—just about every soybean plant in America. Glyphosate-resistant cotton, virtually all cotton, falls into that category, and a great deal of the corn, the vast majority of the corn planted in our country falls into that category.

So now we have millions of acres being sprayed with glyphosate. At first glance, one might say: Well, that is a great thing because it is an easy way to reduce weeds—but often Mother Nature is complicated. For example, when you have all of that glyphosate being sprayed on acre after acre, millions of acres, the weeds start to evolve a resistance to it. Then that resistance means you have to put more herbicides on than before. So that is a concern or, for example, as you put more glyphosate on, you have more glyphosate runoff, and that runoff becomes a concern because you have herbicides running off into our waterways, and that can have an impact on sensitive aquatic species, including fish, mussels, amphibians, microorganisms. So it merits study, but it is certainly something to be concerned about.

You can also have the impact of going to a separate item in which you have, as I mentioned as a positive, the fact that plants have been genetically modified to resist certain bugs that attack the roots. Western corn rootworm is an example of that, but now it appears to be evolving to eat the corn that was bioengineered to kill it because, over time, with millions and millions of acres, there is some genetic change, and some worm that would have been killed because it has a genetic diversity and genetic changes is now resistant. It produces offspring, and suddenly you have a bug that is sometimes referred to as superbugs that are evolving to be resistant to pesticides. What is the impact of that?

Let me give you another example. We had a huge drop in the population of Monarch butterflies, magnificent creatures. I think humans just see a Monarch and they fall in love, just seeing one beautiful butterfly. Of course, these butterflies manage to travel thousands of miles in the course of their lives, which is just stunning that such a fragile, beautiful, little creature could travel so far to go way south in order to reproduce and come way back north. When we apply huge amounts of glyphosate herbicides, one of the side effects is that it kills a lot of the plants; that is, the milkweed, that the

Monarch eats. So you have an attack on the Monarch. That is not the only impact on the Monarch, but it is a contributing factor, and the result is that it has contributed to a crash in this population.

To summarize, you have many potential positive impacts of genetic engineering, and you have many potential concerns from genetically engineered crops. So there are considerations that need to be balanced. Some individuals hear that and are not concerned at all. They say: It is fine. I want to buy products that are genetically engineered or I would like to buy these and not those. Others say: I am really concerned about a specific feature of genetically modified crops, and I don't want to use my dollars to buy that crop and contribute to the problem I am concerned about. This is an adult conversation. It is a complex conversation. There are benefits and there are disadvantages and there are more studies to be done to discover just how much the concern should be. Some individuals are concerned that with this huge amount of biphosphate being sprayed—and biphosphate is now a known carcinogen—is there any residue that stays on the crops that people harvest and eat. So they are concerned about that.

That is why labeling is leveling the field. It allows those who are concerned to know what is going on. It allows those who are not concerned to not pay attention. My daughter happens to like to look at ingredient lists and tries not to consume high-fructose corn syrup. It is helpful to her to know what is in it, and she can exercise her consumer preference. Other folks don't want to have excessive salt or maybe they are allergic to peanuts, so peanuts are on the ingredients list, and it is helpful to them to be able to make that decision.

Honoring our citizens' right to know seems to be disappearing on Capitol Hill because we have powerful special interests that don't want to let citizens make these judgments, make these evaluations, between the advantages and the disadvantages. Last summer, a few hundred yards from here in the House of Representatives, the majority voted for a law that blocks States from passing laws to provide this type of information on a label.

Just yesterday in the Senate, the Senate Agricultural Committee voted out a law to block the rights of citizens to know whether GMOs are in their food. That is an outrageous—outrageous—bill. It would halt any progress in ensuring that consumers can simply and easily access information about GMO ingredients through labeling.

This bill that was passed out of committee also included a proposal that the Secretary of Agriculture do an education campaign touting the economic, nutritional, humanitarian, and scientific benefits of GMOs, but the bill

didn't say—and educate consumers about the substantial concerns the scientific community has, about the impact on the evolution of weeds, about the impact on the evolution of bugs, about potential residues that are on the crops, about the runoff that is in our waterways affecting how healthy our waterways are and the organisms that live in our streams and in our rivers.

So this is a very unbalanced presentation to the American public. It is the type of thing that government shouldn't be involved in—basically, running a promotional campaign on taxpayers' dollars to not create a balanced understanding of an issue but instead an unbalanced understanding of an issue.

The truth is, all Americans have the right to know what is in their food. They are buying food to feed their children. They have the right to know the ingredients so they can make responsible decisions. Providing information regarding genetically modified ingredients is a commonsense way to empower consumers to make their own personal decisions on issues they care about on the food they purchase. It is a pretty emotional issue when you start talking about the food you are putting in your own mouth or the food you are feeding your children.

Campbell's Soup has begun taking steps to voluntarily disclose on all of their soups whether the products contain genetically modified ingredients. Why are they doing this? They say they have a relationship of integrity with their customers. They want their customers to know full information about their products and let the customer decide what the customer wants, and they will provide information about the type of genetic modifications and what they mean so the customer will have enough information to make a decision. There are advantages and disadvantages to GMO ingredients.

Our Federal Government already requires the labeling of ingredients and basic nutritional information in order to protect the public and guard against false product marketing. These food labels tell consumers many things. They are supposed to tell how many calories. They tell how much there is of a variety of vitamins. They list the ingredients and do so in order of how prominent they are in the product. Our labeling laws even say that when fish are sold in large supermarkets, they have to state whether a fish is farm raised or wild caught. Why do we require supermarkets to label the fish as farm raised or wild caught? Because our consumers care about that. There are implications of whether a product was grown in an artificial lake or whether it was caught in the wild. Consumers want to know and use their own minds to make these decisions. That is something about being in a free society—

you get to make your own decisions based on disclosure. We make the information available.

This type of labeling about genetic modifications or genetically modified organisms in the ingredients is routine around the world. Sixty-five other countries, including twenty-eight members of the European Union, plus Japan, plus Australia, plus China, plus Brazil, already require mandatory GM labeling. Has it come to the point that we in America are denying information that is routinely required in China for consumers? Is that the point we are coming to on this bill, this DARK Act, Denying Americans the Right to Know Act? This is not the direction we should be going.

Instead, we believe in our American citizens, we believe in education, we believe in individual decisionmaking, and consumer information on the label honors that. Blocking States from being able to provide information that those State legislators or those State citizens, by initiative, say they want, that is an overstepping of Federal authority to crush States' rights on an issue important to citizens.

That is why today I am introducing a compromise bill, a bill trying to bring this conversation to a commonsense compromise. It is called the Biotechnology Food Labeling and Uniformity Act. I am introducing this bill today with Senator TESTER and Senator LEAHY. It would give the FDA the authority to develop a uniform Federal standard for on-package disclosure of genetically modified ingredients.

I have met with industry groups. I have met with the pro-label groups. I tried to find that area of compromise between the two. What I found is a great deal of flexibility on the labeling groups. Those groups said there doesn't have to be information on the front of the package. It is OK if it is on the ingredients list on the back of the can or the back of the package. It doesn't have to be in supersized print. It is OK if it is in the same small print that the ingredients are printed in. In fact, they are open to many different versions of how a company discloses this information, as long as a person can go to the store, pick up the package, turn it over, and quickly find out if there is a GMO impact.

These are some of the ideas—and there are a variety—that are acceptable to the labeling side of the world. One is on the ingredients area. After the ingredient, it could either say it is genetically modified or put in a code like GM—it doesn't take up much space, it is on the list of ingredients—or if there are several ingredients and you would rather use an asterisk, you would rather put an asterisk and put what the asterisk means: "This ingredient has been genetically modified," or "May contain genetically modified ingredients." So a simple phrase at the

bottom or a symbol. Brazil uses a symbol. They use a T. This is an example of using a symbol T for transgenic—not all of them at once, just each of them would be fine. It will take effort for consumers to look and see it. It is not upfront. They have to pick up the product. They have to look. It can be typed in small print, but it gives a person who cares the ability to get to the bottom of the question. Then, if they want, they can look up at the Web site the product, through a quick response code, and get more details. That range of flexibility is where the compromise can be honoring a citizen's right to know, while not taking up a lot of space on a package or not doing anything on the front of the package that says that this product is healthy or unhealthy or otherwise. It means the share of Americans who want this information—just as there is a share of Americans who want to know if there is high-fructose corn syrup, there is a share of Americans who want to know if fish is farmed or wild fish—can in fact find this out.

This also addresses the big issue manufacturers have been raising. They don't want a patchwork across the country of 50 different States having different labeling laws. Our supply inventory doesn't work that way. We don't have a warehouse that only serves one State. Quite frankly, it gets very complicated and even more so on the East Coast, where the States are all packed together, than it does back home in Oregon. That is a legitimate concern. So there are big concerns. About 50 different versions of the law or maybe counties even having different laws is addressed.

I am going to simply conclude with this understanding: Citizens have a right to know in a free society what is in their food. Let's honor that. Should the DARK Act—the Deny Americans the Right to Know Act that passed out of the Agriculture Committee—come to this floor, many of us will stand up to fight it in every possible way. It shortchanges American citizens, denies them critical information, and takes the right of a fundamental privilege in our society. It strips our States. It is a Federal overreach, and it is an assault on consumer information and consumer rights. It is just wrong, and we will oppose it vigorously.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 384—DESIGNATING MARCH 2, 2016, AS "READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY"

Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. REED, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. DURBIN, and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 384

Whereas reading is a basic requirement for quality education and professional success and is a source of pleasure throughout life;

Whereas the people of the United States must be able to read if the United States is to remain competitive in the global economy;

Whereas Congress has placed great emphasis on reading intervention and providing additional resources for reading assistance, including through the programs authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) and through annual appropriations for library and literacy programs; and

Whereas more than 50 national organizations concerned about reading and education have joined with the National Education Association to designate March 2, the anniversary of the birth of Theodor Geisel (commonly known as "Dr. Seuss"), as a day to celebrate reading: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 2, 2016, as "Read Across America Day";

(2) honors Theodor Geisel (commonly known as "Dr. Seuss") for his success in encouraging children to discover the joy of reading;

(3) celebrates the 19th anniversary of Read Across America Day;

(4) encourages parents to read with their children for at least 30 minutes on Read Across America Day in honor of the commitment of the Senate to building a country of readers; and

(5) encourages the people of the United States to observe Read Across America Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3386. Mr. COCHRAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3387. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3388. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3389. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3390. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3391. Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. PETERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 pro-

posed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3392. Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Ms. STABENOW) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3393. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. PAUL, Mr. REID, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. WARREN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3394. Mr. LEAHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3395. Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra.

SA 3396. Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3397. Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3398. Mr. UDALL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3399. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3400. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. KIRK) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3401. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. KIRK) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3402. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3403. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3404. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3405. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3406. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3407. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3408. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3409. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3410. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3411. Mr. TESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3412. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3413. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. TESTER, Mr. COCHRAN, and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended

to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3414. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3415. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3416. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3386. Mr. COCHRAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 205. ATTORNEY GENERAL COORDINATION WITH NATIONAL GUARD.

The Attorney General shall coordinate with the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to maximize the utilization and support of existing training facilities and programs of the National Guard, including counterdrug training centers, in carrying out this title, including by giving priority to entities seeking grants made under this title that utilize the National Guard training facilities and programs.

SA 3387. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 7. GAO REPORT ON GRANTS TO INDIAN TRIBES.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian tribe” has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603).

(2) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term “tribal organization” has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 250 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report—

(1) listing each Federal grant relating to mental health or substance abuse available to an Indian tribe or a tribal organization;

(2) describing the number of Indian tribes and tribal organizations receiving a grant described in paragraph (1);

(3) listing each Indian tribe and tribal organization that received a grant described in

paragraph (1) during the period beginning on October 1, 2011, and ending on the date of enactment of this Act;

(4) identifying areas in which Federal agencies can increase coordination and collaboration to improve the ability of an Indian tribe or tribal organization to receive a grant described in paragraph (1); and

(5) identifying barriers that Indian tribes or tribal organizations frequently encounter when seeking a grant described in paragraph (1).

SA 3388. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VIII—OPIOID OVERDOSE REDUCTION ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Opioid Overdose Reduction Act of 2016”.

SEC. 802. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Overdoses from opioids have increased dramatically in the United States.

(2) Deaths from drug overdose, largely from prescription pain relievers, have tripled among men and increased fivefold among women over the past decade.

(3) Nationwide, drug overdoses now claim more lives than car accidents.

(4) Overdose deaths from heroin and other opioids can be prevented if the person who overdosed is timely administered an opioid overdose drug.

(5) Medical personnel as well as non-medical personnel can be trained to administer opioid overdose drugs safely and effectively.

(6) On April 13, 2014, the Food and Drug Administration approved a prescription opioid overdose drug hand-held auto-injector for use by family members and caregivers to treat a person known or suspected to have had an opioid overdose.

(7) Several States, including Massachusetts, have established programs allowing for the administration of opioid overdose drugs by non-medical personnel, and those programs have saved lives.

(8) The willingness of medical and non-medical personnel to administer opioid overdose drugs may be deterred by potential civil liability, and the willingness of physicians to prescribe opioid overdose drugs to persons other than a patient may also be deterred by potential civil liability.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this title is to save the lives of people who intentionally or inadvertently overdose on heroin or other opioids by providing certain protections from civil liability with respect to the emergency administration of opioid overdose drugs.

SEC. 803. DEFINITIONS.

In this title—

(1) the term “health care professional” means a person licensed by a State to prescribe prescription drugs;

(2) the term “opioid overdose drug” means a drug that, when administered, reverses in whole or part the pharmacological effects of an opioid overdose in the human body; and

(3) the term “opioid overdose program” means a program operated by a local health

department, community-based organization, substance abuse treatment organization, law enforcement agency, fire department, other first responder department, or voluntary association or a program funded by a Federal, State, or local government that works to prevent opioid overdoses by in part providing opioid overdose drugs and education to individuals at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose or to an individual in a position to assist another individual at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose.

SEC. 804. PREEMPTION AND ELECTION OF STATE NONAPPLICABILITY.

(a) PREEMPTION.—Except as provided in subsection (b), this title preempts the law of a State to the extent that such law is inconsistent with this title, except that this title shall not preempt any State law that provides additional protection from liability relating to the administration of opioid overdose drugs or that shields from liability any person who provides or administers opioid overdose drugs.

(b) ELECTION OF STATE REGARDING NON-APPLICABILITY.—Sections 805, 806, and 807 shall not apply to any civil action in a State court against a person who administers opioid overdose drugs if—

(1) all parties to the civil action are citizens of the State in which such action is brought; and

(2) the State enacts legislation in accordance with State requirements for enacting legislation—

(A) citing the authority of this subsection;

(B) declaring the election of the State that such sections 805, 806, and 807 shall not apply, as of a date certain, to any civil actions covered by this title; and

(C) containing no other provisions.

SEC. 805. LIMITATION ON CIVIL LIABILITY FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS WHO PROVIDE OPIOID OVERDOSE DRUGS.

(a) LIMITATION ON LIABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a health care professional who prescribes or provides an opioid overdose drug to an individual at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose, or who prescribed or provided an opioid overdose drug to a family member, friend, or other individual in a position to assist an individual at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose, shall not be liable for harm caused by the use of the opioid overdose drug if the individual to whom such drug is prescribed or provided has been educated in accordance with paragraph (2) about opioid overdose prevention and treatment by the health care professional or as part of an opioid overdose program.

(2) EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS.—For purposes of paragraph (1), an individual who has been educated in accordance with this paragraph shall have been trained on—

(A) when to administer the opioid overdose drug;

(B) how to administer the opioid overdose drug; and

(C) the steps that need to be taken after administration of the opioid overdose drug.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to a health care professional if the harm was caused by the gross negligence or reckless misconduct of the health care professional.

SEC. 806. LIMITATION ON CIVIL LIABILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WORKING FOR OR VOLUNTEERING AT A STATE OR LOCAL AGENCY OPIOID OVERDOSE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except as provided in subsection (b), no individual who provides an opioid overdose drug shall be liable for harm

caused by the emergency administration of an opioid overdose drug by another individual if the individual who provides such drug—

(1) works for or volunteers at an opioid overdose program; and

(2) provides the opioid overdose drug as part of the opioid overdose program to an individual authorized by the program to receive an opioid overdose drug.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply if the harm was caused by the gross negligence or reckless misconduct of the individual who provides the drug.

SEC. 807. LIMITATION ON CIVIL LIABILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ADMINISTER OPIOID OVERDOSE DRUGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except as provided in subsection (b), no individual shall be liable for harm caused by the emergency administration of an opioid overdose drug to an individual who has or reasonably appears to have suffered an overdose from heroin or other opioid, if—

(1) the individual who administers the opioid overdose drug—

(A) obtained the drug from a health care professional or as part of an opioid overdose program; or

(B) is doing so pursuant to a prescription for an opioid overdose drug under section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355) or is licensed under section 351 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 262); and

(2) was educated in accordance with section 805(a)(2) by the health care professional or an opioid overdose program.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to an individual if the harm was caused by the gross negligence or reckless misconduct of the individual who administers the drug.

SA 3389. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ PROGRAMS TO PREVENT PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE UNDER THE MEDICARE PROGRAM.

(a) DRUG MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK BENEFICIARIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1860D-4(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-104(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) DRUG MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK BENEFICIARIES.—

“(A) AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH.—A PDP sponsor may establish a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under which, subject to subparagraph (B), the PDP sponsor may, in the case of an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse who is an enrollee in a prescription drug plan of such PDP sponsor, limit such beneficiary’s access to coverage for frequently abused drugs under such plan to frequently abused drugs that are prescribed for such beneficiary by a prescriber (or prescribers) selected under subparagraph (D), and dispensed for such beneficiary by a pharmacy (or pharmacies) selected under such subparagraph.

“(B) REQUIREMENT FOR NOTICES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—A PDP sponsor may not limit the access of an at-risk beneficiary for

prescription drug abuse to coverage for frequently abused drugs under a prescription drug plan until such sponsor—

“(I) provides to the beneficiary an initial notice described in clause (ii) and a second notice described in clause (iii); and

“(II) verifies with the providers of the beneficiary that the beneficiary is an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse, as described in subparagraph (C)(iv).

“(ii) INITIAL NOTICE.—An initial written notice described in this clause is a notice that provides to the beneficiary—

“(I) notice that the PDP sponsor has identified the beneficiary as potentially being an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse;

“(II) information, when possible, describing State and Federal public health resources that are designed to address prescription drug abuse to which the beneficiary may have access, including substance use disorder treatment services, addiction treatment services, mental health services, and other counseling services;

“(III) a request for the beneficiary to submit to the PDP sponsor preferences for which prescribers and pharmacies the beneficiary would prefer the PDP sponsor to select under subparagraph (D) in the case that the beneficiary is identified as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse as described in clause (iii)(I);

“(IV) an explanation of the meaning and consequences of the identification of the beneficiary as potentially being an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse, including an explanation of the drug management program established by the PDP sponsor pursuant to subparagraph (A);

“(V) clear instructions that explain how the beneficiary can contact the PDP sponsor in order to submit to the PDP sponsor the preferences described in subclause (IV) and any other communications relating to the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries established by the PDP sponsor;

“(VI) contact information for other organizations that can provide the beneficiary with information regarding drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries (similar to the information provided by the Secretary in other standardized notices to part D eligible individuals enrolled in prescription drug plans under this part); and

“(VII) notice that the beneficiary has a right to an appeal pursuant to subparagraph (E).

“(iii) SECOND NOTICE.—A second written notice described in this clause is a notice that provides to the beneficiary notice—

“(I) that the PDP sponsor has identified the beneficiary as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse;

“(II) that such beneficiary has been sent, or informed of, such identification in the initial notice and is now subject to the requirements of the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries established by such PDP sponsor for such plan;

“(III) of the prescriber and pharmacy selected for such individual under subparagraph (D);

“(IV) of, and information about, the right of the beneficiary to a reconsideration and an appeal under subsection (h) of such identification and the prescribers and pharmacies selected;

“(V) that the beneficiary can, in the case that the beneficiary has not previously submitted to the PDP sponsor preferences for which prescribers and pharmacies the beneficiary would prefer the PDP sponsor select under subparagraph (D), submit such preferences to the PDP sponsor; and

“(VI) that includes clear instructions that explain how the beneficiary can contact the PDP sponsor in order to submit to the PDP sponsor the preferences described in subclause (V).

“(iv) TIMING OF NOTICES.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subclause (II), a second written notice described in clause (iii) shall be provided to the beneficiary on a date that is not less than 30 days after an initial notice described in clause (ii) is provided to the beneficiary.

“(II) EXCEPTION.—In the case that the PDP sponsor, in conjunction with the Secretary, determines that concerns identified through rulemaking by the Secretary regarding the health or safety of the beneficiary or regarding significant drug diversion activities require the PDP sponsor to provide a second notice described in clause (iii) to the beneficiary on a date that is earlier than the date described in subclause (II), the PDP sponsor may provide such second notice on such earlier date.

“(III) FORM OF NOTICE.—The written notices under clauses (ii) and (iii) shall be in a format determined appropriate by the Secretary, taking into account beneficiary preferences.

“(C) AT-RISK BENEFICIARY FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse’ means a part D eligible individual who is not an exempted individual described in clause (ii) and—

“(I) who is identified through criteria developed by the Secretary in consultation with PDP sponsors and other stakeholders described in subsection section ____ (g)(2)(A) of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 based on clinical factors indicating misuse or abuse of prescription drugs described in subparagraph (G), including dosage, quantity, duration of use, number of and reasonable access to prescribers, and number of and reasonable access to pharmacies used to obtain such drug; or

“(II) with respect to whom the PDP sponsor of a prescription drug plan, upon enrolling such individual in such plan, received notice from the Secretary that such individual was identified under this paragraph to be an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under a prescription drug plan in which such individual was previously enrolled and such identification has not been terminated under subparagraph (F).

“(ii) EXEMPTED INDIVIDUAL DESCRIBED.—An exempted individual described in this clause is an individual who—

“(I) receives hospice care under this title;

“(II) resides in a long-term care facility, a facility described in section 1905(d), or other facility under contract with a single pharmacy; or

“(III) the Secretary elects to treat as an exempted individual for purposes of clause (i).

“(iii) PROGRAM SIZE.—The Secretary shall establish policies, including the criteria developed under clause (i)(I) and the exemptions under clause (ii)(III), to ensure that the population of enrollees in a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries operated by a prescription drug plan can be effectively managed by such plans.

“(iv) CLINICAL CONTACT.—With respect to each at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse enrolled in a prescription drug plan offered by a PDP sponsor, the PDP sponsor shall contact the beneficiary’s providers who have prescribed frequently abused drugs regarding whether prescribed medications are

appropriate for such beneficiary's medical conditions.

“(D) SELECTION OF PRESCRIBERS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—With respect to each at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse enrolled in a prescription drug plan offered by such sponsor, a PDP sponsor shall, based on the preferences submitted to the PDP sponsor by the beneficiary pursuant to clauses (ii)(III) and (iii)(V) of subparagraph (B) if applicable, select—

“(I) one, or, if the PDP sponsor reasonably determines it necessary to provide the beneficiary with reasonable access under clause (ii), more than one, individual who is authorized to prescribe frequently abused drugs (referred to in this paragraph as a ‘prescriber’) who may write prescriptions for such drugs for such beneficiary; and

“(II) one, or, if the PDP sponsor reasonably determines it necessary to provide the beneficiary with reasonable access under clause (ii), more than one, pharmacy that may dispense such drugs to such beneficiary.

“(ii) REASONABLE ACCESS.—In making the selection under this subparagraph, a PDP sponsor shall ensure, taking into account geographic location, beneficiary preference, impact on cost-sharing, and reasonable travel time, that the beneficiary continues to have reasonable access to drugs described in subparagraph (G), including—

“(I) for individuals with multiple residences; and

“(II) in the case of natural disasters and similar emergency situations.

“(iii) BENEFICIARY PREFERENCES.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—If an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse submits preferences for which in-network prescribers and pharmacies the beneficiary would prefer the PDP sponsor select in response to a notice under subparagraph (B), the PDP sponsor shall—

“(aa) review such preferences;

“(bb) select or change the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy for the beneficiary based on such preferences; and

“(cc) inform the beneficiary of such selection or change of selection.

“(II) EXCEPTION.—In the case that the PDP sponsor determines that a change to the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy under item (bb) by the PDP sponsor is contributing or would contribute to prescription drug abuse or drug diversion by the beneficiary, the PDP sponsor may change the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy for the beneficiary. If the PDP sponsor changes the selection pursuant to the preceding sentence, the PDP sponsor shall provide the beneficiary with—

“(aa) at least 30 days written notice of the change of selection; and

“(bb) a rationale for the change.

“(III) TIMING.—An at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse may choose to express their prescriber and pharmacy preference and communicate such preference to their PDP sponsor at any date while enrolled in the program, including after a second notice under subparagraph (B)(iii) has been provided.

“(iv) CONFIRMATION.—Before selecting a prescriber or pharmacy under this subparagraph, a PDP sponsor must notify the prescriber and pharmacy that the beneficiary involved has been identified for inclusion in the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries and that the prescriber and pharmacy has been selected as the beneficiary's designated prescriber and pharmacy.

“(E) APPEALS.—The identification of an individual as an at-risk beneficiary for pre-

scription drug abuse under this paragraph, a coverage determination made under a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries, and the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy under subparagraph (D) with respect to such individual shall be subject to an expedited reconsideration and appeal pursuant to subsection (h).

“(F) TERMINATION OF IDENTIFICATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop standards for the termination of identification of an individual as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under this paragraph. Under such standards such identification shall terminate as of the earlier of—

“(I) the date the individual demonstrates that the individual is no longer likely, in the absence of the restrictions under this paragraph, to be an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse described in subparagraph (C)(i); or

“(II) the end of such maximum period of identification as the Secretary may specify.

“(ii) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in clause (i) shall be construed as preventing a plan from identifying an individual as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under subparagraph (C)(i) after such termination on the basis of additional information on drug use occurring after the date of notice of such termination.

“(G) FREQUENTLY ABUSED DRUG.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘frequently abused drug’ means a drug that is determined by the Secretary to be frequently abused or diverted and that is—

“(i) a Controlled Drug Substance in Schedule CII; or

“(ii) within the same class or category of drugs as a Controlled Drug Substance in Schedule CII, as determined through notice and comment rulemaking.

“(H) DATA DISCLOSURE.—

“(i) DATA ON DECISION TO IMPOSE LIMITATION.—In the case of an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse (or an individual who is a potentially at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse) whose access to coverage for frequently abused drugs under a prescription drug plan has been limited by a PDP sponsor under this paragraph, the Secretary shall establish rules and procedures to require such PDP sponsor to disclose data, including necessary individually identifiable health information, about the decision to impose such limitations and the limitations imposed by the PDP sponsor under this part.

“(ii) DATA TO REDUCE FRAUD, ABUSE, AND WASTE.—The Secretary shall establish rules and procedures to require PDP sponsors operating a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under this paragraph to provide the Secretary with such data as the Secretary determines appropriate for purposes of identifying patterns of prescription drug utilization for plan enrollees that are outside normal patterns and that may indicate fraudulent, medically unnecessary, or unsafe use.

“(I) SHARING OF INFORMATION FOR SUBSEQUENT PLAN ENROLLMENTS.—The Secretary shall establish procedures under which PDP sponsors who offer prescription drug plans shall share information with respect to individuals who are at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse (or individuals who are potentially at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse) and enrolled in a prescription drug plan and who subsequently disenroll from such plan and enroll in another prescription drug plan offered by another PDP sponsor.

“(J) PRIVACY ISSUES.—Prior to the implementation of the rules and procedures under

this paragraph, the Secretary shall clarify privacy requirements, including requirements under the regulations promulgated pursuant to section 264(c) of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (42 U.S.C. 1320d-2 note), related to the sharing of data under subparagraphs (H) and (I) by PDP sponsors. Such clarification shall provide that the sharing of such data shall be considered to be protected health information in accordance with the requirements of the regulations promulgated pursuant to such section 264(c).

“(K) EDUCATION.—The Secretary shall provide education to enrollees in prescription drug plans of PDP sponsors and providers regarding the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries described in this paragraph, including education—

“(i) provided through the improper payment outreach and education program described in section 1874A(h); and

“(ii) through current education efforts (such as State health insurance assistance programs described in subsection (a)(1)(A) of section 119 of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. 1395b-3 note)) and materials directed toward such enrollees.

“(L) CMS COMPLIANCE REVIEW.—The Secretary shall ensure that existing plan sponsor compliance reviews and audit processes include the drug management programs for at-risk beneficiaries under this paragraph, including appeals processes under such programs.”.

(2) INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS.—Section 1860D-4(a)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-104(a)(1)(B)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(v) The drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under subsection (c)(5).”.

(3) DUAL ELIGIBLES.—Section 1860D-1(b)(3)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-101(b)(3)(D)) is amended by inserting “, subject to such limits as the Secretary may establish for individuals identified pursuant to section 1860D-4(c)(5)” after “the Secretary”.

(b) UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS.—Section 1860D-4(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-104(c)), as amended by subsection (a)(1), is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following new subparagraph:

“(E) A utilization management tool to prevent drug abuse (as described in paragraph (5)(A)).”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT TOOL TO PREVENT DRUG ABUSE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A tool described in this paragraph is any of the following:

“(i) A utilization tool designed to prevent the abuse of frequently abused drugs by individuals and to prevent the diversion of such drugs at pharmacies.

“(ii) Retrospective utilization review to identify—

“(I) individuals that receive frequently abused drugs at a frequency or in amounts that are not clinically appropriate; and

“(II) providers of services or suppliers that may facilitate the abuse or diversion of frequently abused drugs by beneficiaries.

“(iii) Consultation with the contractor described in subparagraph (B) to verify if an individual enrolling in a prescription drug plan offered by a PDP sponsor has been previously identified by another PDP sponsor as an individual described in clause (ii)(I).

“(B) REPORTING.—A PDP sponsor offering a prescription drug plan in a State shall submit to the Secretary and the Medicare drug integrity contractor with which the Secretary has entered into a contract under section 1893 with respect to such State a report, on a monthly basis, containing information on—

“(i) any provider of services or supplier described in subparagraph (A)(ii)(II) that is identified by such plan sponsor during the 30-day period before such report is submitted; and

“(ii) the name and prescription records of individuals described in paragraph (5)(C).”

“(C) CMS COMPLIANCE REVIEW.—The Secretary shall ensure that plan sponsor annual compliance reviews and program audits include a certification that utilization management tools under this paragraph are in compliance with the requirements for such tools.”

(C) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN COMPLAINTS FOR PURPOSES OF QUALITY OR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT.—Section 1860D-42 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-152) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN COMPLAINTS FOR PURPOSES OF QUALITY OR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT.—In conducting a quality or performance assessment of a PDP sponsor, the Secretary shall develop or utilize existing screening methods for reviewing and considering complaints that are received from enrollees in a prescription drug plan offered by such PDP sponsor and that are complaints regarding the lack of access by the individual to prescription drugs due to a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries.”

(d) SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING USE OF TECHNOLOGY TOOLS TO COMBAT FRAUD.—It is the sense of Congress that MA organizations and PDP sponsors should consider using e-prescribing and other health information technology tools to support combating fraud under MA-PD plans and prescription drug plans under parts C and D of the Medicare Program.

(e) GAO STUDY AND REPORT.—

(1) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on the implementation of the amendments made by this section, including the effectiveness of the at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse drug management programs authorized by section 1860D-4(c)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-10(c)(5)), as added by subsection (a)(1). Such study shall include an analysis of—

(A) the impediments, if any, that impair the ability of individuals described in subparagraph (C) of such section 1860D-4(c)(5) to access clinically appropriate levels of prescription drugs;

(B) the effectiveness of the reasonable access protections under subparagraph (D)(ii) of such section 1860D-4(c)(5), including the impact on beneficiary access and health;

(C) how best to define the term “designated pharmacy”, including whether the definition of such term should include an entity that is comprised of a number of locations that are under common ownership and that electronically share a real-time, online database and whether such a definition would help to protect and improve beneficiary access;

(D) the types of—

(i) individuals who, in the implementation of such section, are determined to be individuals described in such subparagraph; and

(ii) prescribers and pharmacies that are selected under subparagraph (D) of such section;

(E) the extent of prescription drug abuse beyond Controlled Drug Substances in Schedule CII in parts C and D of the Medicare program; and

(F) other areas determined appropriate by the Comptroller General.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than July 1, 2019, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate committees of jurisdiction of Congress a report on the study conducted under paragraph (1), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines to be appropriate.

(f) REPORT BY SECRETARY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the appropriate committees of jurisdiction of Congress a report on ways to improve upon the appeals process for Medicare beneficiaries with respect to prescription drug coverage under part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act. Such report shall include an analysis comparing appeals processes under parts C and D of such title XVIII.

(2) FEEDBACK.—In development of the report described in paragraph (1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall solicit feedback on the current appeals process from stakeholders, such as beneficiaries, consumer advocates, plan sponsors, pharmacy benefit managers, pharmacists, providers, independent review entity evaluators, and pharmaceutical manufacturers.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (d)(2), the amendments made by this section shall apply to prescription drug plans for plan years beginning on or after January 1, 2018.

(2) STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS PRIOR TO EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 1, 2017, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall convene stakeholders, including individuals entitled to benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act or enrolled under part B of such title of such Act, advocacy groups representing such individuals, clinicians, plan sponsors, pharmacists, retail pharmacies, entities delegated by plan sponsors, and biopharmaceutical manufacturers for input regarding the topics described in subparagraph (B). The input described in the preceding sentence shall be provided to the Secretary in sufficient time in order for the Secretary to take such input into account in promulgating the regulations pursuant to subparagraph (C).

(B) TOPICS DESCRIBED.—The topics described in this subparagraph are the topics of—

(i) the impact on cost-sharing and ensuring accessibility to prescription drugs for enrollees in prescription drug plans of PDP sponsors who are at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse (as defined in paragraph (5)(C) of section 1860D-4(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-10(c)));

(ii) the use of an expedited appeals process under which such an enrollee may appeal an identification of such enrollee as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under such paragraph (similar to the processes established under the Medicare Advantage program under part C of title XVIII of the Social Security Act);

(iii) the types of enrollees that should be treated as exempted individuals, as described in clause (ii) of such paragraph;

(iv) the manner in which terms and definitions in paragraph (5) of such section 1860D-4(c) should be applied, such as the use of clinical appropriateness in determining whether an enrollee is an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse as defined in subparagraph (C) of such paragraph (5);

(v) the information to be included in the notices described in subparagraph (B) of such section and the standardization of such notices;

(vi) with respect to a PDP sponsor that establishes a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under such paragraph (5), the responsibilities of such PDP sponsor with respect to the implementation of such program;

(vii) notices for plan enrollees at the point of sale that would explain why an at-risk beneficiary has been prohibited from receiving a prescription at a location outside of the designated pharmacy;

(viii) evidence-based prescribing guidelines for opiates; and

(ix) the sharing of claims data under parts A and B with PDP sponsors.

(C) RULEMAKING.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, taking into account the input gathered pursuant to subparagraph (A) and after providing notice and an opportunity to comment, promulgate regulations to carry out the provisions of, and amendments made by subsections (a) and (b).

SEC. ____ INCREASED ANTI-KICKBACKS PENALTIES.

Paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1128B(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320a-7b(b)) are each amended by inserting “(or, beginning January 1, 2017, \$50,000)” after “\$25,000”.

SEC. ____ CENTER FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID INNOVATION TESTING OF OPIOID ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM MODEL FOR PART D PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN ENROLLEES.

Section 1115A of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1315a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2)(A), by adding at the end the following new sentence: “The models selected under this subparagraph shall include the model described in subsection (h).”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h) OPIOID ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM MODEL.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall test a model requiring prescription drug plans under part D of title XVIII to have in place, directly or through appropriate arrangements, an opioid abuse treatment program for applicable enrollees in lieu of the medication therapy management program under section 1860D-4(c)(2) with respect to such applicable enrollees.

“(2) START DATE.—The model under this subsection shall start in plan year 2018.

“(3) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall select a limited number of Medicare part D regions in which to the model, giving priority to regions based on the number of total opioid prescriptions in the region.

“(4) REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAM.—Under an opioid abuse treatment program, the PDP sponsor offering the plan shall—

“(A) establish a care team that includes at least—

“(i) a pharmacist;

“(ii) a physician; and

“(iii) an individual licenced in a State with expertise in behavioral health (as determined by the Secretary), which may be the physician described in clause (ii); and

“(B) develop, in consultation with the applicable enrollee and with input from the prescriber to the extent necessary and practicable, a care plan for the applicable enrollee that is intended to treat the applicable enrollee’s pain and limit any unnecessary opioid prescriptions when possible.

“(5) PAYMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall make a monthly payment to the PDP sponsor offering the prescription drug plan for each applicable enrollee who receives services under the opioid abuse treatment program.

“(B) SHARED SAVINGS.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall (using a methodology determined appropriate by the Secretary) make payments (in addition to the payments under subparagraph (A)) to the PDP sponsor offering the prescription drug plan if the Secretary determines that total spending under parts A, B, and D of title XVIII (and including the payments under subparagraph (A)) for applicable enrollees who receive services under the opioid abuse treatment program is less than a historical benchmark of total spending under such parts A, B, and D for such enrollees or similar enrollees. Such benchmark shall be adjusted at the Secretary’s discretion for changes in law or regulation, unforeseen circumstances, or advances in medical practice.

“(6) QUALITY.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall measure the quality of care furnished by opioid abuse treatment programs, including elements related to access to care, the unnecessary use of opioids, pain management, and the delivery of behavioral health services.

“(7) APPLICABLE ENROLLEE.—In this subsection, the term ‘applicable enrollee’ means an individual who is, with respect to a prescription drug plan—

“(A) enrolled with the plan; and

“(B) an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse (as defined in section 1860D-4(c)(5)(C)).

“(8) MODEL NOT APPLICABLE TO MA-PD PLANS.—The model under this subsection shall not apply to MA-PD plans or enrollees of such plans.

“(9) CLARIFICATION OF APPLICATION.—For purposes of the preceding provisions of this section (including paragraphs (3) and (4) of subsection (b) and subsections (d) and (f)), the model under this subsection shall be deemed to be a model under subsection (b).”.

SA 3390. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 8, after line 25, insert the following:

(19) Veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder are also at a high risk of substance abuse. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, more than 20 percent of veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder also have a substance abuse disorder.

SA 3391. Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. PETERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 66, strike line 5 and insert the following:

disorder, service-connected post-traumatic stress disorder, military sexual trauma, or a service-connected traumatic brain injury, as determined on a case-by-case basis.”.

SA 3392. Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Ms. STABENOW) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 705. EXPANSION OF THE EXCELLENCE IN MENTAL HEALTH ACT.

Section 223(d)(3) of the Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014 (42 U.S.C. 1396a note) is amended by striking “8” and inserting “24”.

SA 3393. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. PAUL, Mr. REID, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. WARREN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE —MARIJUANA BUSINESSES ACCESS TO BANKING

SEC. .01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Marijuana Businesses Access to Banking Act of 2016”.

SEC. .02. SAFE HARBOR FOR DEPOSITORY INSTITUTIONS.

A Federal banking regulator may not—

(1) terminate or limit the deposit insurance or share insurance of a depository institution under the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1811 et seq.) or the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) solely because the depository institution provides or has provided financial services to a marijuana-related legitimate business;

(2) prohibit, penalize, or otherwise discourage a depository institution from providing financial services to a marijuana-related legitimate business;

(3) recommend, incentivize, or encourage a depository institution not to offer financial services to an individual, or to downgrade or cancel the financial services offered to an individual solely because—

(A) the individual is a manufacturer or producer, or is the owner or operator of a marijuana-related legitimate business;

(B) the individual later becomes an owner or operator of a marijuana-related legitimate business; or

(C) the depository institution was not aware that the individual is the owner or operator of a marijuana-related legitimate business; and

(4) take any adverse or corrective supervisory action on a loan to an owner or operator of—

(A) a marijuana-related legitimate business solely because the business owner or operator is a marijuana-related business; or

(B) real estate or equipment that is leased to a marijuana-related legitimate business solely because the owner or operator of the real estate or equipment leased the equipment or real estate to a marijuana-related legitimate business.

SEC. .03. PROTECTIONS UNDER FEDERAL LAW.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In a State or political subdivision that allows the cultivation, production, manufacturing, transportation, display, dispensing, distribution, sale, or purchase of marijuana pursuant to a law (including regulations) of the State or political subdivision, a depository institution and the officers, director, and employees of the depository institution that provides financial services to a marijuana-related legitimate business may not be held liable pursuant to any Federal law (including regulations)—

(1) solely for providing the financial services pursuant to the law (including regulations) of the State or political subdivision; or

(2) for further investing any income derived from the financial services.

(b) FORFEITURE.—A depository institution that has a legal interest in the collateral for a loan made to an owner or operator of a marijuana-related legitimate business, or to an owner or operator of real estate or equipment that is leased to a marijuana-related legitimate business, shall not be subject to criminal, civil, or administrative forfeiture of that legal interest pursuant to any Federal law for providing the loan.

SEC. .04. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this title shall require a depository institution to provide financial services to a marijuana-related legitimate business.

SEC. .05. REQUIREMENTS FOR FILING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTS.

Section 5318(g) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) REQUIREMENTS FOR MARIJUANA-RELATED BUSINESSES.—A financial institution or any director, officer, employee, or agent of a financial institution that reports a suspicious transaction pursuant to a marijuana-related legitimate business (as defined in section 6 of the Marijuana Businesses Access to Banking Act of 2016) shall comply with appropriate guidance issued by the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network. The Secretary shall ensure that the guidance is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Marijuana Businesses Access to Banking Act of 2016 and does not inhibit the provision of financial services to a marijuana-related legitimate business in a State or political subdivision of a State that has allowed the cultivation, production, manufacturing, transportation, display, dispensing, distribution, sale, or purchase of marijuana pursuant to law or regulation of the State or political subdivision.”.

SEC. .06. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) DEPOSITORY INSTITUTION.—The term “depository institution” means—

(A) a depository institution as defined in section 3(c) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1813(c));

(B) a Federal credit union as defined in section 101 of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1752); or

(C) a State credit union as defined in section 101 of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1752).

(2) FEDERAL BANKING REGULATOR.—The term “Federal banking regulator” means each of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the National Credit Union Administration, or any Federal agency or department that regulates banking or financial services, as determined by the Secretary of the Treasury.

(3) FINANCIAL SERVICE.—The term “financial service” means a financial product or service as defined in section 1002 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (12 U.S.C. 5481).

(4) MANUFACTURER.—The term “manufacturer” means a person who manufactures, compounds, converts, processes, prepares, or packages marijuana or marijuana products.

(5) MARIJUANA-RELATED LEGITIMATE BUSINESS.—The term “marijuana-related legitimate business” means a manufacturer, producer, or any person that—

(A) participates in any business or organized activity that involves handling marijuana or marijuana products, including cultivating, producing, manufacturing, selling, transporting, displaying, dispensing, distributing, or purchasing marijuana or marijuana products; and

(B) engages in such activity pursuant to a law established by a State or a political subdivision of a State.

(6) MARIJUANA.—The term “marijuana” has the meaning given the term “marihuana” in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802).

(7) MARIJUANA PRODUCT.—The term “marijuana product” means any article which contains marijuana, including an article which is a concentrate, an edible, a tincture, a marijuana-infused product, or a topical.

(8) PRODUCER.—The term “producer” means a person who plants, cultivates, harvests, or in any way facilitates the natural growth of marijuana.

(9) STATE.—The term “State” means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and any territory or possession of the United States.

SA 3394. Mr. LEAHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ OPIOID ADDICTION TREATMENT.

Section 303(g)(2)(B)(ii) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)(B)(ii)) is amended by adding at the end the following: “Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016, the federally regulated opioid addiction treatment infrastructure shall be organized according to the hub and spoke model, so that the following goals are

met without causing undue burden on physician practices:

“(I) Opioid addicted individuals who are patients in a federally regulated opioid addiction treatment program should be educated about all treatment options and strategies.

“(II) Each patient shall be offered an individualized assessment, followed by a treatment plan developed with the patient’s involvement.

“(III) Patient compliance and progress should be monitored to protect against medication diversion and to guide changes to the treatment plan as needed.

“(IV) All practitioners participating in a federally regulated opioid addiction treatment program shall offer, either directly or by referral, the treatments that are most appropriate for the patient.

“(V) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services shall ensure training on all available treatments as well as treatments that may become available in the future.”

SA 3395. Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ INCREASED ANTI-KICKBACKS PENALTIES.

Paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1128B(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320a-7b(b)) are each amended by inserting “(or, beginning January 1, 2017, \$50,000)” after “\$25,000”.

SEC. ____ CENTER FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID INNOVATION TESTING OF OPIOID ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM MODEL FOR PART D PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN ENROLLEES.

Section 1115A of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1315a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2)(A), by adding at the end the following new sentence: “The models selected under this subparagraph shall include the model described in subsection (h).”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h) OPIOID ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM MODEL.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall test a model requiring prescription drug plans under part D of title XVIII to have in place, directly or through appropriate arrangements, an opioid abuse treatment program for applicable enrollees in lieu of the medication therapy management program under section 1860D-4(c)(2) with respect to such applicable enrollees.

“(2) START DATE.—The model under this subsection shall start in plan year 2018.

“(3) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall select a limited number of Medicare part D regions in which to the model, giving priority to regions based on the number of total opioid prescriptions in the region.

“(4) REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAM.—Under an opioid abuse treatment program, the PDP sponsor offering the plan shall—

“(A) establish a care team that includes at least—

“(i) a pharmacist;

“(ii) a physician; and

“(iii) an individual licensed in a State with expertise in behavioral health (as determined by the Secretary), which may be the physician described in clause (ii); and

“(B) develop, in consultation with the applicable enrollee and with input from the prescriber to the extent necessary and practicable, a care plan for the applicable enrollee that is intended to treat the applicable enrollee’s pain and limit any unnecessary opioid prescriptions when possible.

“(5) PAYMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall make a monthly payment to the PDP sponsor offering the prescription drug plan for each applicable enrollee who receives services under the opioid abuse treatment program.

“(B) SHARED SAVINGS.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall (using a methodology determined appropriate by the Secretary) make payments (in addition to the payments under subparagraph (A)) to the PDP sponsor offering the prescription drug plan if the Secretary determines that total spending under parts A, B, and D of title XVIII (and including the payments under subparagraph (A)) for applicable enrollees who receive services under the opioid abuse treatment program is less than a historical benchmark of total spending under such parts A, B, and D for such enrollees or similar enrollees. Such benchmark shall be adjusted at the Secretary’s discretion for changes in law or regulation, unforeseen circumstances, or advances in medical practice.

“(6) QUALITY.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall measure the quality of care furnished by opioid abuse treatment programs, including elements related to access to care, the unnecessary use of opioids, pain management, and the delivery of behavioral health services.

“(7) APPLICABLE ENROLLEE.—In this subsection, the term ‘applicable enrollee’ means an individual who is, with respect to a prescription drug plan—

“(A) enrolled with the plan; and

“(B) an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse (as defined in section 1860D-4(c)(5)(C)).

“(8) MODEL NOT APPLICABLE TO MA-PD PLANS.—The model under this subsection shall not apply to MA-PD plans or enrollees of such plans.

“(9) CLARIFICATION OF APPLICATION.—For purposes of the preceding provisions of this section (including paragraphs (3) and (4) of subsection (b) and subsections (d) and (f)), the model under this subsection shall be deemed to be a model under subsection (b).”

SA 3396. Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . MEDICARE DIRECT PAYMENT TO PHARMACIES FOR CERTAIN COMPOUNDED DRUGS THAT ARE PREPARED BY THE PHARMACIES FOR A SPECIFIC BENEFICIARY FOR USE THROUGH AN IMPLANTED INFUSION PUMP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The first sentence of section 1842(b)(6) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395u(b)(6)) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” before “(H)” ; and

(2) by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, and (I) in the case of covered compounded drugs that are prepared by a pharmacy for a specific individual, are dispensed, directly or indirectly, to the individual, are necessary for the effective use of, or therapeutic benefit from, an implanted infusion pump (regardless of who refills the pump), and are billed directly by the pharmacy, payment shall be made to the pharmacy”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply to drugs dispensed on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3397. Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VIII—ENSURING PATIENT ACCESS AND EFFECTIVE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act of 2016”.

SEC. 802. REGISTRATION PROCESS UNDER CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—

(1) FACTORS AS MAY BE RELEVANT TO AND CONSISTENT WITH THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY.—Section 303 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(j) In this section, the phrase ‘factors as may be relevant to and consistent with the public health and safety’ means factors that are relevant to and consistent with the findings contained in section 101.”.

(2) IMMINENT DANGER TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH OR SAFETY.—Section 304(d) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 824(d)) is amended—

(A) by striking “(d) The Attorney General” and inserting “(d)(1) The Attorney General”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) In this subsection, the phrase ‘imminent danger to the public health or safety’ means that, due to the failure of the registrant to maintain effective controls against diversion or otherwise comply with the obligations of a registrant under this title or title III, there is a substantial likelihood of an immediate threat that death, serious bodily harm, or abuse of a controlled substance will occur in the absence of an immediate suspension of the registration.”.

(b) OPPORTUNITY TO SUBMIT CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN PRIOR TO REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION.—Subsection (c) of section 304 of the

Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 824) is amended—

(1) by striking the last three sentences;

(2) by striking “(c) Before” and inserting “(c)(1) Before”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) An order to show cause under paragraph (1) shall—

“(A) contain a statement of the basis for the denial, revocation, or suspension, including specific citations to any laws or regulations alleged to be violated by the applicant or registrant;

“(B) direct the applicant or registrant to appear before the Attorney General at a time and place stated in the order, but not less than 30 days after the date of receipt of the order; and

“(C) notify the applicant or registrant of the opportunity to submit a corrective action plan on or before the date of appearance.”.

“(3) Upon review of any corrective action plan submitted by an applicant or registrant pursuant to paragraph (2), the Attorney General shall determine whether denial, revocation, or suspension proceedings should be discontinued, or deferred for the purposes of modification, amendment, or clarification to such plan.

“(4) Proceedings to deny, revoke, or suspend shall be conducted pursuant to this section in accordance with subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code. Such proceedings shall be independent of, and not in lieu of, criminal prosecutions or other proceedings under this title or any other law of the United States.

“(5) The requirements of this subsection shall not apply to the issuance of an immediate suspension order under subsection (d).”.

SEC. 803. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in coordination with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration and in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate identifying—

(1) obstacles to legitimate patient access to controlled substances;

(2) issues with diversion of controlled substances;

(3) how collaboration between Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies and the pharmaceutical industry can benefit patients and prevent diversion and abuse of controlled substances;

(4) the availability of medical education, training opportunities, and comprehensive clinical guidance for pain management and opioid prescribing, and any gaps that should be addressed;

(5) beneficial enhancements to State prescription drug monitoring programs, including enhancements to require comprehensive prescriber input and to expand access to the programs for appropriate authorized users; and

(6) steps to improve reporting requirements so that the public and Congress have more information regarding prescription opioids, such as the volume and formulation of prescription opioids prescribed annually, the dispensing of such prescription opioids, and outliers and trends within large data sets.

(b) CONSULTATION.—The report under subsection (a) shall incorporate feedback and recommendations from the following:

(1) Patient groups.

(2) Pharmacies.

(3) Drug manufacturers.

(4) Common or contract carriers and warehousemen.

(5) Hospitals, physicians, and other health care providers.

(6) State attorneys general.

(7) Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies.

(8) Health insurance providers and entities that provide pharmacy benefit management services on behalf of a health insurance provider.

(9) Wholesale drug distributors.

(10) Veterinarians.

(11) Professional medical societies and boards.

(12) State and local public health authorities.

(13) Health services research organizations.

SA 3398. Mr. UDALL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE TRAINING AND SCREENING PROGRAMS.

A practitioner who registers or renews a registration under section 303(f) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(f)) shall, at the time of registering, certify to the Attorney General that such practitioner has completed continuing medical education or nursing continuing education, as applicable—

(1) in the case of a practitioner registering for the first time, with respect to prescription drug abuse; and

(2) in the case of a practitioner renewing a registration, with respect to medical understanding of the proper use of all drugs listed in the schedules under section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812).

SA 3399. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VI, add the following:

SEC. 602. COORDINATION OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAMS WITH THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE.

(a) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—In this section, the term “eligible entity” means—

(1) a State; or

(2) an Indian tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b)).

(b) GRANTS FOR COORDINATION PILOT PROGRAMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General, subject to the availability of appropriations, may award grants to eligible entities under the Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program established under the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002 (Public Law 107-77; 115 Stat. 748) to carry out a pilot program described in paragraph (2).

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—An eligible entity awarded a grant under paragraph (1) to carry out a pilot program shall coordinate with 1 or more service units of the Indian Health Service in the State or on the applicable Indian land and meaningfully consult and engage in a timely manner with Indian tribes served by the service units to improve the connection, coordination, and interoperability of each applicable Indian health program (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)) with the prescription drug monitoring program of the applicable State.

(c) GAO STUDY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall study and submit to the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report identifying barriers to, and potential solutions to improve, coordination between—

- (1) each applicable Indian health program (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)); and
- (2) prescription drug monitoring programs in the United States.

SA 3400. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. KIRK) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . HIGH INTENSITY DRUG TRAFFICKING AREAS PROGRAM.

Section 707 of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 (21 U.S.C. 1706) is amended—

- (1) in subsection (o)—
 - (A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “, heroin, opioid, and synthetic drugs” after “methamphetamine”; and
 - (B) in paragraph (2)—
 - (i) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “, heroin, opioid, and synthetic drug” after “methamphetamine”;
 - (ii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “, heroin, opioids, synthetic drugs,” after “methamphetamine”; and
 - (iii) in subparagraph (C), by inserting “, heroin, opioids, synthetic drugs,” after “methamphetamine”;
- (2) in subsection (p)(5), by striking “fiscal year 2011” and inserting “fiscal years 2016 through 2020”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(r) HEROIN AND OPIOID RESPONSE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION.—Using discretionary funds made available under this section, the Director, in consultation with the official in charge of each high intensity drug trafficking area, is authorized to implement a

heroin and opioid response strategy in high intensity drug trafficking areas on a nationwide basis by—

- “(1) coordinating multi-disciplinary efforts to address the threat of heroin and opioids;
- “(2) increasing data sharing among public safety and public health officials concerning heroin and opioid abuse trends and related crime; and
- “(3) enabling collaborative deployment of intervention, enforcement, and prevention resources to address heroin and opioid addiction and heroin and opioid trafficking.”.

SA 3401. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. KIRK) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . HEROIN RESPONSE STRATEGY.

Section 707 of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 (21 U.S.C. 1706) is amended—

- (1) in subsection (o)—
 - (A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “, heroin, opioid, and synthetic drugs” after “methamphetamine”; and
 - (B) in paragraph (2)—
 - (i) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “, heroin, opioid, and synthetic drug” after “methamphetamine”;
 - (ii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “, heroin, opioids, synthetic drugs,” after “methamphetamine”; and
 - (iii) in subparagraph (C), by inserting “, heroin, opioids, synthetic drugs,” after “methamphetamine”; and
- (2) by adding at the end the following:

“(r) HEROIN AND OPIOID RESPONSE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION.—Using discretionary funds made available under this section, the Director, in consultation with the official in charge of each high intensity drug trafficking area, is authorized to implement a heroin and opioid response strategy in high intensity drug trafficking areas on a nationwide basis by—

- “(1) coordinating multi-disciplinary efforts to address the threat of heroin and opioids;
- “(2) increasing data sharing among public safety and public health officials concerning heroin and opioid abuse trends and related crime; and
- “(3) enabling collaborative deployment of intervention, enforcement, and prevention resources to address heroin and opioid addiction and heroin and opioid trafficking.”.

SA 3402. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 705. MEDICAID COVERAGE PROTECTION FOR PREGNANT AND POST-PARTUM WOMEN WHILE RECEIVING INPATIENT TREATMENT FOR A SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER.

(a) MEDICAID STATE PLAN.—Section 1905(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: “In the case of a woman who is eligible for medical assistance on the basis of being pregnant (including through the end of the month in which the 60-day period beginning on the last day of her pregnancy ends), who is a patient in an institution for mental diseases for purposes of receiving treatment for a substance use disorder, and who was enrolled for medical assistance under the State plan immediately before becoming a patient in an institution for mental diseases or who becomes eligible to enroll for such medical assistance while such a patient, the exclusion from the definition of ‘medical assistance’ set forth in the subdivision (B) following paragraph (29) of the first sentence shall not be construed as prohibiting Federal financial participation for medical assistance for items or services that are provided to the woman outside of the institution.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) RULE FOR CHANGES REQUIRING STATE LEGISLATION.—In the case of a State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act which the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines requires State legislation (other than legislation appropriating funds) in order for the plan to meet the additional requirements imposed by the amendment made by subsection (a), the State plan shall not be regarded as failing to comply with the requirements of such title solely on the basis of its failure to meet these additional requirements before the first day of the first calendar quarter beginning after the close of the first regular session of the State legislature that begins after the date of the enactment of this Act. For purposes of the previous sentence, in the case of a State that has a 2-year legislative session, each year of such session shall be deemed to be a separate regular session of the State legislature.

SA 3403. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 2997(a)(2)(A) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 103 of the bill, insert after “1997” the following: “, or is an Indian tribe”.

In section 2997(a)(2)(B) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 103 of the bill, in the matter preceding clause (i), insert “or tribal” after “local”.

In section 2997(a)(3)(A) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 103 of the bill, insert “or tribal” after “local”.

In section 2997(a)(3)(B) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 103 of the bill, insert “or tribal” after “local”.

In section 2997 of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 103 of the bill, redesignate subsections (e), (f), and (g) as subsections (f), (g), and (h), respectively, and insert after subsection (d) the following:

“(e) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—The Attorney General shall ensure that, to the extent practicable, the geographical distribution of grants under this section is equitable and includes a grant to an eligible entity in—

“(1) each State;

“(2) rural, suburban, and urban areas; and

“(3) tribal jurisdictions.”

SA 3404. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 201(a)(1), strike “Indian tribe,” and insert the following: “Indian tribe (as defined in section 901(a) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3791(a))),”.

In section 201(b)(2), strike “between State criminal justice systems and State substance abuse systems” and insert “between State or tribal criminal justice systems and State or tribal substance abuse systems”.

In section 201(c)(2)(A), insert “, or in the case of an Indian tribe, Federal or tribal agencies,” after “local government agencies”.

In section 201(c)(2)(B), insert “if feasible,” before “demonstrate”.

In section 201(c)(2)(C), insert “, or in the case of an Indian tribe, a tribal criminal justice planning agency” after “agency”.

SA 3405. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 201(h)(1), insert after “between the agencies,” the following: “or between the agencies and tribal governments.”.

In section 201(h), insert after paragraph (1) the following:

(2) a State, unit of local government, or nonprofit organization that submits an application that proposes to use grant funds to facilitate or enhance planning and collaboration with Indian tribes; and

SA 3406. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr.

GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 2999(b) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 204, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), strike “State law enforcement agencies” and insert “State, tribal, or local law enforcement agencies, or Indian tribes served by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.”.

SA 3407. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 705. REFUGEES AND UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.

(a) EQUITABLE TREATMENT OF UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 235(a)(2) of the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 (8 U.S.C. 1232(a)) is amended—

(A) by striking the paragraph heading and inserting “RULES FOR UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.—”;

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking “who is a national or habitual resident of a country that is contiguous with the United States”; and

(C) in subparagraph (C)—

(i) by striking the subparagraph heading and inserting “AGREEMENTS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES.—”; and

(ii) by striking “countries contiguous to the United States” and inserting “Canada, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and any other foreign country that the Secretary determines appropriate”.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply to any unaccompanied alien child who was apprehended on or after October 1, 2015.

(b) EXPEDITED REMOVAL AUTHORITY FOR UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES.—Section 235(a)(5)(D) of the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 (8 U.S.C. 1232(a)(5)(D)) is amended—

(1) by striking the subparagraph heading and inserting “EXPEDITED REMOVAL FOR UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.—”;

(2) in the matter preceding clause (i)—

(A) by inserting “described in paragraph (2)(A) who is” after “Any unaccompanied alien child”; and

(B) by striking “, except for an unaccompanied alien child from a contiguous country subject to exceptions under subsection (a)(2).”; and

(3) by amending clause (i) to read as follows:

“(i) placed in an expedited removal proceeding in accordance with section 235 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1225);”.

(c) INCREASING THE NUMBER OF REFUGEE ADMISSIONS FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the President, in determining the number of refugees who may be admitted under section 207(a) for fiscal years 2016 and 2017, shall authorize the admission, in each such fiscal year, of—

- (1) up to 5,000 refugees from El Salvador;
- (2) up to 5,000 refugees from Guatemala; and
- (3) up to 5,000 refugees from Honduras.

SA 3408. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the amendment, add the following:

SEC. 705. UNLAWFULLY HINDERING IMMIGRATION, BORDER, AND CUSTOMS CONTROLS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Transnational Criminal Organization Illicit Spotter Prevention and Elimination Act”.

(b) ENHANCED PENALTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 9 of title II of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1351 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 295. UNLAWFULLY HINDERING IMMIGRATION, BORDER, AND CUSTOMS CONTROLS.

“(a) ILLICIT SPOTTING.—Any person who knowingly transmits, by any means, to another person the location, movement, or activities of any Federal, State, local, or tribal law enforcement agency with the intent to further a Federal crime relating to United States immigration, customs, controlled substances, agriculture, monetary instruments, or other border controls shall be fined under title 18, imprisoned not more than 10 years, or both.

“(b) DESTRUCTION OF UNITED STATES BORDER CONTROLS.—Any person who knowingly and without lawful authorization destroys, alters, or damages any fence, barrier, sensor, camera, or other physical or electronic device deployed by the Federal Government to control the border or a port of entry or otherwise seeks to construct, excavate, or make any structure intended to defeat, circumvent, or evade any such fence, barrier, sensor camera, or other physical or electronic device deployed by the Federal Government to control the border or a port of entry—

“(1) shall be fined under title 18, imprisoned not more than 10 years, or both; and

“(2) if, at the time of the offense, the person uses or carries a firearm or who, in furtherance of any such crime, possesses a firearm, that person shall be fined under title 18, imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both.

“(c) CONSPIRACY AND ATTEMPT.—Any person who attempts or conspires to violate subsection (a) or (b) shall be punished in the same manner as a person who completes a violation of such subsection.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in the first section of the Immigration and Nationality Act is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 294 the following:

“Sec. 295. Unlawfully hindering immigration, border, and customs controls.”.

(c) PROHIBITING CARRYING OR USE OF A FIREARM DURING AND IN RELATION TO AN ALIEN SMUGGLING CRIME.—Section 924(c) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “, alien smuggling crime,” after “crime of violence” each place that term appears; and

(B) in subparagraph (D)(ii), by inserting “, alien smuggling crime,” after “crime of violence”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘alien smuggling crime’ means any felony punishable under section 274(a), 277, or 278 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1324(a), 1327, and 1328).”

(d) STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.—Section 3298 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting “, 295, 296, or 297” after “274(a)”.

SA 3409. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . EVALUATION OF THE HOSPITAL CONSUMER ASSESSMENT OF HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS AND SYSTEMS (HCAHPS) SURVEY; MORATORIUM ON THE USE OF PAIN MANAGEMENT MEASURES TO ASSESS HOSPITAL PERFORMANCE SCORES UNDER THE MEDICARE VBP PROGRAM IN ORDER TO ALLOW TIME FOR EVALUATION.

(a) EVALUATION.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”) shall conduct an evaluation of the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey, including items on such survey related to pain management. Such evaluation shall include an analysis of—

(1) any implications of using such survey under the Medicare hospital value-based purchasing program under section 1886(o) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ww) on opioid prescribing practices;

(2) how best to revise such survey and any effect that such revisions may have on quality of care; and

(3) other areas determined appropriate by the Secretary.

(b) INPUT.—As part of conducting the evaluation under subsection (a), the Secretary shall convene a group that includes the Interagency Pain Research Coordinating Committee, hospital representatives, physicians and other health care providers, experts in the fields of pain research and addiction research, and representatives of the addiction community, pain management professional organizations, and pain advocacy groups to provide the Secretary with input on the items to be evaluated.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than March 1, 2017, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the evaluation conducted under subsection (a), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(d) MORATORIUM ON THE USE OF PAIN MANAGEMENT MEASURES TO ASSESS HOSPITAL

PERFORMANCE SCORES UNDER THE MEDICARE VBP PROGRAM IN ORDER TO ALLOW TIME FOR EVALUATION.—Section 1886(o)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ww(o)(5)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence of subparagraph (A), by striking “subparagraph (B)” and inserting “subparagraphs (B) and (C)”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) MORATORIUM ON USE MEASURES OF PAIN MANAGEMENT TO ASSESS HOSPITAL PERFORMANCE SCORES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—With respect to payments for discharges occurring during fiscal year 2017, the performance of a hospital on measures of pain management during the performance period for such fiscal year shall not be used in assessing the hospital performance score of the hospital for such performance period.

“(ii) NO AFFECT ON REPORTING OF SELECTED MEASURES.—Nothing in the clause (i) shall affect the requirement for a hospital to report measures selected under paragraph (2), including any measures related to pain management.”

SA 3410. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. ____ . SUPPORT FOR STATE RESPONSE TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND URGENT MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated, and are appropriated, out of monies in the Treasury not otherwise obligated, \$750,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 and 2017, to the Secretary of Health and Human Services (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) to award grants to States to address the substance abuse public health crisis or to respond to urgent mental health needs within the State. In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary may give preference to States with an incidence or prevalence of substance use disorders that is substantial relative to other States or to States that identify mental health needs within their communities that are urgent relative to such needs of other States. Funds appropriated under this subsection shall remain available until expended.

(b) USE OF FUNDS.—Grants awarded to a State under subsection (a) shall be used for one or more of the following public health-related activities:

(1) Improving State prescription drug monitoring programs.

(2) Implementing prevention activities, and evaluating such activities to identify effective strategies to prevent substance abuse.

(3) Training for health care practitioners, such as best practices for prescribing opioids, pain management, recognizing potential cases of substance abuse, referral of patients to treatment programs, and overdose prevention.

(4) Supporting access to health care services provided by Federally certified opioid treatment programs or other appropriate

health care providers to treat substance use disorders or mental health needs.

(5) Other public health-related activities, as the State determines appropriate, related to addressing the substance abuse public health crisis or responding to urgent mental health needs within the State.

SA 3411. Mr. TESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 101(c)(1), strike subparagraphs (H) and (I) and insert the following:

(H) the National Institutes of Health;

(I) the Office of National Drug Control Policy; and

(J) the Indian Health Service;

In section 101(d)(1)(C), strike “State and” and insert “State, tribal, and”.

In section 101(f)(2), strike the period at the end and insert “and the Indian Health Service.”

In section 2997(a) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as amended by section 103), strike paragraph (2) and insert the following:

(2) the term “eligible entity” means an organization that—

(A)(i) on or before the date of submitting an application for a grant under this section, receives or has received a grant under the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997; and

(ii) has documented, using local or tribal data, rates of abuse of opioids or methamphetamines at levels that are—

(I) significantly higher than the national average as determined by the Secretary (including appropriate consideration of the results of the Monitoring the Future Survey published by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Survey on Drug Use and Health published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration); or

(II) higher than the national average, as determined by the Secretary (including appropriate consideration of the results of the surveys described in subclause (I)), over a sustained period of time; or

(B) is a tribal organization (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603));

In section 201(b)(1)(B)(vii), strike “and veterans treatment courts” and insert “veterans treatment courts, and tribal courts”.

In section 201(b)(2), insert “and tribal” after “State criminal”.

In section 201(c)(2)(A), strike “State and” and insert “State, tribal, and”.

In section 201(c)(2)(D), strike “and” at the end.

In section 201(c)(2)(E), strike the period at the end and insert “; and”.

At the end of section 201(c)(2), add the following:

(F) demonstrate consultation with affected Indian tribes.

At the end of section 201, add the following:

(k) TRIBAL SET-ASIDE.—Not less than 5 percent of the amounts made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year shall be

made available to Indian tribes and tribal organizations (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)).

At the end of section 203, add the following:

(c) TRIBAL SET-ASIDE.—Not less than 5 percent of the amounts made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year shall be made available to Indian tribes and tribal organizations (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)).

In section 2999(b) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 204), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), insert “and tribal” after “State”.

In section 302(e)(1), strike “and” at the end.

In section 302(e)(2)(B), strike the period at the end and insert “; and”.

At the end of section 302(e), add the following:

(3) consults with affected Indian tribes.

At the end of section 302, add the following:

(i) TRIBAL SET-ASIDE.—Not less than 5 percent of the amounts made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year shall be made available to Indian tribes and tribal organizations (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)).

In section 2999B(a)(1)(D) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 303), strike “or” at the end.

In section 2999B(a)(1)(E) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 303), strike the period at the end and insert “; or”.

At the end of section 2999B(a)(1) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 303), add the following:

(F) a Bureau of Indian Education-funded school.

In section 2999D(a) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 401), strike the period at the end and insert “or tribal organization.”.

In section 2999D(b)(5) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 401), insert “Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in section 316(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c(b)))” after “universities.”.

In section 402(b)(2)(B)(i), insert “Indian affairs,” after “employment.”.

In subsection (r)(3)(B) of section 508 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb-1) (as amended by section 501(b)(2)), insert “Indian tribes and tribal organizations,” after “agencies.”.

In section 2999E of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 702), strike the period at the end and insert “, of which not less than 5 percent shall be made available to Indian tribes and tribal organizations (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)).”.

SA 3412. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr.

COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ IMPROVING MEDICARE COVERAGE FOR BENEFICIARIES WITH DRUG AND ALCOHOL ADDICTIONS.

(a) ENSURING COVERAGE OF OPIOID DETOXIFICATION UNDER MEDICARE PART A.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1812 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395d) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h) Coverage for opioid detoxification (as defined by the Secretary) shall be available under this part in a similar manner as the coverage for alcohol detoxification is available under this part.”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to discharges occurring on or after October 1, 2016.

(b) INCLUSION OF METHADONE AS A COVERED PART D DRUG.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1860D-2(e)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-102(e)(1)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “or” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the comma at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following new subparagraph:

“(C) methadone for the treatment of opioid dependence.”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by paragraph (1) shall apply to plan year 2017 and subsequent plan years.

(c) PERMITTING SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELORS TO FURNISH ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE THERAPY SERVICES UNDER MEDICARE PART B.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1842(b)(18)(C) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395u(b)(18)(C)) is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(vii) A substance abuse counselor (as defined by the Secretary) with respect to the furnishing of alcohol and drug abuse therapy services (as defined by the Secretary) that such counselor is authorized to furnish under State law.”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to items and services furnished on or after January 1, 2017.

SA 3413. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. TESTER, Mr. COCHRAN, and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 104. ENHANCING BASIC AND APPLIED RESEARCH ON PAIN TO DISCOVER THERAPIES, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVES TO OPIOIDS, FOR EFFECTIVE PAIN MANAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Out of any money appropriated to the National Institutes of Health (referred to in this section as the “NIH”) not otherwise obligated, the Director of the NIH may intensify and coordinate fundamental,

translational, and clinical research of the NIH with respect to—

(1) the understanding of pain;

(2) the discovery and development of therapies for chronic pain; and

(3) the development of alternatives to opioids for effective pain treatments.

(b) PRIORITY AND DIRECTION.—The prioritization and direction of the Federally funded portfolio of pain research studies shall consider recommendations made by the Interagency Pain Research Coordinating Committee in concert with the Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force, and in accordance with the National Pain Strategy, the Federal Pain Research Strategy, and the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2016-2020, the latter which calls for the relative burdens of individual diseases and medical disorders to be regarded as crucial considerations in balancing the priorities of the Federal research portfolio.

SA 3414. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 101(d)(1)(C), strike “and local” and insert “, tribal, and local”.

In section 101(f)(2), insert “and the Indian Health Service” before the period at the end.

SA 3415. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 302(c)(2)(A), insert “or, in the case of an Indian tribe, Federal or tribal agencies” before “; and”.

In section 302(e)(1), strike “and” at the end.

In section 302(e)(2), strike subparagraph (B) and insert the following:

(B) concluded that the law described in subparagraph (A) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons; and

(3) consults with affected Indian tribes.

In section 508(r)(3)(B) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb-1) (as amended by section 501(b)(2)), insert “Indian tribes,” after “agencies.”.

In section 601(b)(4)(C)(vi), insert “and affected Indian tribes” before “; and”.

In section 601(b)(5)(E), strike “and” at the end.

In section 601(b)(5)(F), strike the period at the end and insert “; and”.

In section 601(b)(5), add at the end the following:

(G) ensures consultation with affected Indian tribes.

SA 3416. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 402(a), strike “or State” and insert “, State, or tribal”.

In section 402(b)(2)(B)(iii), strike “State and” and insert “State, tribal, and”.

In section 402(c)(1)(A), strike “or State” and insert “, State, or tribal”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 2, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SR-253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled “Oversight of the Federal Communications Commission.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 2, 2016, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Economic Opportunities from Land Cleanup Programs and a Legislative Hearing on S. 1479, Brownfields Utilization, Investment, and Local Development Act of 2015, S. 2446, Improving Coal Combustion Residuals Regulation Act of 2016 and Discussion Draft of Good Samaritan Cleanup of Orphan Mines Act of 2016.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 2, 2016.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 2, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Economic and Geopolitical Implications of Low Oil.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 2, 2016.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS’ AFFAIRS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Veterans’ Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 2, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-G50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Tim Brown, a research fellow on my team, be allowed privileges of the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Jennifer DeVito, a fellow in my office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the duration of consideration of S. 524.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 384, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 384) designating March 2, 2016, as “Read Across America Day.”

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 384) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow, Thursday, March 3; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of S. 524.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senators CASEY and BENNET.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Colorado.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I am here tonight to discuss the Supreme Court vacancy caused by Justice Antonin Scalia’s death.

First, I think it is important to reflect on Justice Scalia’s life and profound contribution and influence on the Court and our country. He was one of the longest serving Justices in our Nation’s history, and, as far as I can tell, every single day he served, he applied his considerable intellect, integrity, and wit to the work before him.

Although I disagreed with many of his decisions, I never doubted his commitment to the rule of law. He was a principled originalist. He was loyal to his country. By all accounts, including moving testimony from his children, he was devoted to his family and to his friends, including to Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, with whom he often disagreed.

Judge Scalia’s judicial philosophy was well understood when President Reagan nominated him to the Supreme Court in 1986. Many Senators then opposed his judicial approach, but in an echoing indictment of today’s Senate and its partisanship, 30 years ago the U.S. Senate confirmed Justice Scalia 98 to 0—a vote that testifies to Justice Scalia’s qualifications and to the integrity of Members of this body who disagreed with his vision of the Constitution but, exercising their constitutional duty, refused to withhold their support for a qualified nominee.

Here is what article II, section 2, clause 2 says about our and the President’s duty: The President “shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court.”

When a vacancy arises, the President shall nominate a replacement and the Senate shall advise and consent by voting on that nominee. That is what the plain language of the Constitution requires, and that is what Presidents and the Senate have done throughout our history. That is why, in the past 100 years, the Senate has taken action on every single Supreme Court nominee—even those made during a Presidential election year. Throughout our history, there have been at least 17 nominees confirmed by the Senate in Presidential election years. The last of these was Justice Kennedy in 1988.

This history reveals that when the chairman of the Judiciary Committee said last week that “[t]he fact of the matter is that it’s been standard practice over the last 80 years to not confirm Supreme Court nominees during a presidential election year,” he was incorrect. The fact of the matter is that since the founding of this country, the Senate has done its job even in an election year. In fact, during one election year, the Senate voted to confirm not just one but three Justices to fill vacancies on the Court. The President was none other than George Washington, and he was in the fourth year of his second term when that happened. That Senate included some of our Founders, delegates to the Constitutional Convention. But, come to think about it, what did they really know about the Constitution?

On that subject, by the way, it has been incredible in the truest sense of the word to hear people—Senators and even candidates for President who claim to be, as Justice Scalia surely was, constitutional originalists or textualists—willfully ignore the plain meaning of the Constitution in favor of this so-called standard practice. That is not a form of constitutional interpretation with which I am familiar, but it seems to be guiding the majority leader and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee away from the text they claim to revere. They wrote together in the *Washington Post*:

It is today the American people, rather than a lame-duck President whose priorities and policies they just rejected in the most-recent national election, who should be afforded the opportunity to replace Justice Scalia.

I have a chart. I redlined the actual words of the Constitution with the claim of the majority leader and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee. We can see they bear no relationship to one another. In fact, only seven words—the black words—remain from the original constitutional text, including in those seven words a conjunction, a definite article, and a preposition—otherwise known as “and,” “the,” and “of.”

Oh, and by the way, if we want to talk about a real standard practice, the President becomes a lameduck only after the election that is coming up and only until the inauguration.

When we look at the history, it is telling that, unlike almost all our other work, the Senate’s consideration of Supreme Court nominees has been remarkably expeditious. On average, the Senate has voted 70 days after the President’s nomination. When Justice Scalia died, 342 days remained in the President’s term—nearly a full quarter of his final term in office. Why has the Senate, notorious for its glacial slowness, historically acted with such deliberate speed when it comes to our consideration of Supreme Court Justices?

I suspect there are three principal reasons: first, the constitutional clarity that commands us; second, the unique nature of the responsibility—no one else, including the House of Representatives, can exercise it; and third, the essential importance of the Supreme Court’s composition.

With respect to the Supreme Court’s composition, no less of an authority than Justice Scalia himself explained it well. Asked to recuse himself from a case involving Vice President Cheney, Justice Scalia rejected the suggestion that he should “resolve any doubts in favor of recusal.” He observed that such a standard might be appropriate if he were on the court of appeals, where his “place would be taken by another judge, and the case would proceed normally. On the Supreme Court, however, the consequence is different: The court proceeds with eight Justices, raising the possibility that, by reason of a tie vote, it will find itself unable to resolve the significant legal issue presented by the case.”

Justice Scalia then quoted the Supreme Court’s own recusal policy observing that, “[e]ven one unnecessary recusal impairs the functioning of the Court.” If even one unnecessary recusal impairs the Court, imagine what a 14-month vacancy would do. Imagine if, in 2016, we had a repeat of 2000, when the Supreme Court decided *Bush v. Gore*, except with only eight Justices on the bench. Imagine the constitutional crisis our Nation would have to endure.

I know it has become fashionable for Washington politicians to tear down rather than work to improve the democratic institutions that generations of Americans have built. But to impair so cavalierly the judicial branch of our government is pathetic. It is a standard one would expect of a lawless nation, rather than a nation committed to the rule of law. It is the behavior of a petty kangaroo court, not of the U.S. Senate. And it threatens to deny justice to millions of Americans in the name of petty politics. It is time for the Senate to do its job, as every Senate before us has done.

I am not asking my colleagues to support the nominee. That is a matter of conscience for each of us. But what is unconscionable is that the majority, if it keeps its word, will have no hearing, will hold no vote, and refuse even the courtesy of a meeting with the President’s nominee.

Speaking of doing our job, in view of the seriousness of the Court’s nomination, we should reconsider the majority’s proposed 7-week summer recess for the Senate. In July and August alone, we are barely in session for 8 days. Unlike our responsibility to vote on Supreme Court nominees, the Senate schedule is not enshrined in the Constitution. It is set by the majority.

In that connection, I am glad to invite any of my colleagues to my office

to watch a video of a constituent of mine whom I met 2 weeks ago in Pueblo West. She manages a retail store and struggles every month to keep it going. Unlike the Senate, she has 22 vacation days a year, not a month. Instead, she works a second job to pay for childcare so she can keep her main job. Millions of Americans are watching the Senate take the entire summer off and claim there isn’t time to do our job. That doesn’t meet the standard of a great nation or a great parliamentary body. What is worse is that this whole charade has become an extension of playground politics, the childish pettiness that has metastasized in this Presidential primary season.

How far have we drifted from our simple constitutional obligations when one side refuses to even meet with any prospective nominee? What message does that send to the people of Colorado and across the country? Where I come from, taking your ball and going home isn’t acceptable behavior on the playground. How could it possibly be acceptable in the U.S. Senate?

Senate greatness, the national interest as a legislative guide, maturity, and comity will not be restored overnight or with a single decision. It has taken far too long for us to travel down this destructive road to deadlock, ideological rigidity, and bitter partisanship for restoration of greatness to the Senate to occur quickly, but we should begin—we must begin, and we can begin—with our treatment of some of our most serious, even sacred duties: the confirmation of the next Justice of the Supreme Court.

We are not here to pacify a political base or satisfy one or more special constituencies or rally our political parties. We are here to elevate our Republic, to make it a beacon for the world, to demonstrate how mature representatives of sovereign States govern a mature nation.

This Supreme Court nomination is not a test of strength between the executive and legislative branches. It is a test of our strength as leaders with an honorable history and a heritage of wisdom and maturity. How we manage our constitutional duty to provide serious consideration and deliberation to a rare appointment to the Nation’s highest judicial office will determine whether we deserve the respect of Americans who rightly expect us to exhibit dignity, mutual respect, and wisdom on their behalf.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I, too, rise this evening to discuss the vacancy on the Supreme Court and the need for

the Senate to do its job and give fair consideration to any nominee made by President Obama to fill this seat on the Supreme Court. Many of my Republican colleagues have vowed to block any nominee out of hand, and every single Republican member of the Judiciary Committee has likewise vowed to refuse any nominee a fair hearing. The Senate majority leader, along with several other Republican Senators, went as far as to say they would not even meet with the nominee. I am not sure I ever heard anything like that in my 9 years in the Senate, going on 10. This is inconsistent, totally inconsistent with our duty as U.S. Senators.

Let me start tonight by saying to my Republican colleagues, respectfully: Do your job. Do your job, consider this nominee, and then vote whichever way you want.

We know the Supreme Court cannot permanently function as the Constitution intends with only eight members. Last week I asked questions of a panel of experts, constitutional scholars, including Georgetown law professor Peter Edelman at a steering committee hearing in the Senate. These constitutional experts confirmed that because split decisions defer to the holding of the lower court, it is entirely possible we could see a string of split decisions that would undermine the primary purpose of the Supreme Court; that is, to resolve differences in the opinions coming out of the various circuit courts across the country.

This is no doubt why the Constitution provides specific instructions on filling Supreme Court vacancies. Article II, section 2 of the Constitution states, in part, “[The President] shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall Appoint . . . Judges of the Supreme Court.”

In both instances, the word “shall” is used. There is no equivocation. It doesn’t say “shall appoint at a certain time in a presidency” or “may appoint.” It is very clear from the Constitution what the Senate must do and what the President must do.

Barack Obama is the President of the United States. According to the Constitution, in the event of a vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court, the President of the United States shall nominate a replacement. Nothing more needs to be said to counter the, what I would argue, outrageous calls for the President to refrain from nominating a re-

placement simply because his 323 days left in office are fewer than 365 days. To refrain would violate the letter of the Constitution.

Republican Senators, for whatever reason, seem to disagree with the original intent of the Framers in this situation. Often those same Republican Senators come to the floor and make floor statements inciting the Constitution, but now they would completely ignore a constitutional directive.

The Constitution is also clear with respect to the Senate’s duty to advise and consent on the President’s nominee. No sincere reading could lead to the conclusion that the Senate would be within its rights and upholding its responsibility if it refused any potential nominee fair consideration. My Republican colleagues argue they are absolved of their responsibility to give fair consideration to a nominee simply because the Senate is constitutionally allowed to withhold its consent.

That is one argument. It doesn’t make sense, but that is the argument they make. The other argument is that “we should let the American people decide” by refusing to consider any nominee until the next President takes office. This denies precedent. Justice Kennedy was confirmed in the last year of President Ronald Reagan’s final term under a Democratic Senate, and the Senate has confirmed 17 Supreme Court nominees in Presidential election years.

This point of view also neglects the obvious fact that the American people already decided in twice electing Barack Obama to be our President. Both the President and his office deserve to be treated with respect. Denying the President’s legitimate authority to nominate a candidate for Supreme Court is more than just an irresponsible attempt to score political points; it is a distortion of the separation of powers unprecedented in modern times.

Senate Republicans have not been granted authority to prematurely terminate Presidential powers. They have not been granted that authority. The Senate has taken action on every Supreme Court nominee in the last 100 years, regardless of whether the nomination was made in a Presidential election year, and not since the Civil War has the Senate taken longer than a year to fill a Supreme Court vacancy. These nominees have always been seen as entitled to timely consideration as

well. Since 1975, the Senate has taken an average of just 70 days from the date of nomination to the date of confirmation.

Like many Senators here—virtually every Senator who serves in this body receives mail all the time from our constituents. On this issue, I have received thousands of letters urging the Senate to fulfill its duty and give fair consideration to the Supreme Court nominee that the President chooses.

One particular letter came from a woman by the name of Jane from Southeastern Pennsylvania, a community outside of Philadelphia. The letter Jane sent me was profound in its simplicity. Jane said that having an understaffed Court would be “unfair to the process of justice.”

Jane’s words, not mine. A fully functioning Supreme Court is not about obscure details of Senate procedure to Jane. It is about something more than that. To her, one of my constituents, it is also not about who said what 10 years ago, nor is it about Presidential politics. It is about something else. Access to justice is what matters to Jane. It is what should matter to every Senator.

Jane ended this letter she sent me with a reminder that I will repeat in the hope that my Republican colleagues will take it to heart, as I did. Jane said the “opportunity to take part in a Justice’s nomination is a privilege and deserves respect.”

I agree. Consideration and casting a vote regarding a Supreme Court nominee nominated by the President of the United States to serve as one of only nine Justices on the Supreme Court, you bet, that is a privilege and it deserves respect.

To my Republican colleagues, I say, again, do your job, as I must do my job, and give this duty that you have—the duty to consider and to vote on a Supreme Court nominee—this rare privilege, the respect it deserves.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow morning.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:44 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 3, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, on February 25, 2016, I regret that I was otherwise detained and unable to cast a vote on roll call vote no. 88, on the motion to recommit with instructions H.R. 3624, the Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act. Had I been present, I would have voted yes.

HONORING DR. MIGUEL ENCINIAS

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of Dr. and Lt. Col. Miguel Encinias, who passed away on February 20th in Albuquerque at the age of 92.

A native of Las Vegas, New Mexico, Dr. Encinias served in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War during his long and distinguished military career. After joining the New Mexico National Guard at the age of 16, in the heart of the Great Depression, he applied for and was accepted to the air cadet academy following the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, where he was one of the very few Hispanic pilots in the academy. Dr. Encinias was shot down over Italy in 1944 and became a German prisoner of war until the Russians liberated his camp in 1945. He also flew in the Korean and Vietnam Wars before retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 1971. During his career, he earned the Distinguished Flying Cross, two Purple Hearts, and fourteen Air Medals, making him one of New Mexico's most decorated veterans.

Dr. Encinias continued to serve his country after his time in the Air Force when President Clinton asked him to join the World War II Memorial Advisory Board in 1995, where he helped oversee the creation of the World War II Memorial, a Washington, D.C. landmark that reminds us of the bravery, triumph, and sacrifice of our soldiers who fought for our freedom.

Dr. Encinias was also a passionate scholar, studying at Georgetown, the Institute of Political Studies in Paris, and earning his doctorate in Hispanic literature and Education at the University of New Mexico. He taught throughout the state of New Mexico and helped develop New Mexico's Bilingual Education program. He also wrote several books on the rich history of New Mexico.

I want to personally thank Dr. Encinias for his many decades of service to his country

and his state. His bravery on the battlefield, passion for New Mexico, and love for his family and friends will be sorely missed. I extend my sincere condolences to Dr. Encinias' family—Jeannine, his wife of 52 years; his three children; and four grandchildren—and hope that during this sad time they find comfort in the enduring legacy that Dr. Encinias leaves behind.

RECOGNIZING JOHN H. FOLWELL IV FOR EARNING ALL 141 BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA MERIT BADGES

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge John H. Folwell IV of Fairport, NY. John is currently a senior at McQuaid Jesuit High School and is a member of Troop 31 of the Boy Scouts of America who has completed all 141 merit badges, and I rise today to recognize that achievement.

To put this remarkable feat in perspective, Stephen Hoitt, Scout Executive of the Seneca Waterways Council of the Boy Scouts of America, has been involved with the organization for twenty-four years and notes that John is the first Scout under his tutelage to complete all of the merit badges. With this achievement, John H. Folwell IV joins the elite number of approximately 270 Scouts nationwide who have earned every merit badge offered by the organization.

Joining the Boy Scouts of America was a natural step for John. His father, John H. Folwell III, in fact serves as a Scoutmaster for Troop 31. Mr. Folwell has dutifully guided his son throughout this journey, including the Cycling badge. In addition to several other biking excursions, the Folwells traveled along the historic Erie Canal for fifty miles, completing their trip in the required time of eight hours, despite a flat tire.

Equally impressive is the level of determination put forth by John to maximize his experiences as a Boy Scout. Stating he "didn't want to leave Scouting knowing that I had not done it to its fullest," his quest has taken him in many directions. He traveled to the Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico where he earned the backpacking badge, appeared on stage in the role of Jud Fry in Oklahoma!, and instead of relaxing over a holiday break, created a Morse code telegraph for the Signaling badge.

Clearly, John represents the spirit and tenacity of the 25th Congressional District of New York, and I'm proud to represent him and all my constituents in the Rochester area.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCKLAWAHA CHAPTER, DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge a special occasion for the Ocklawaha Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution of Eustis, Florida. In 1916, the Ocklawaha Chapter, named after the area Ocklawaha River basin, was established and this year they celebrate their 100th anniversary. It is my pleasure to recognize them on their Centennial.

Since their establishment on March 31, 1916, the Ocklawaha Chapter's goal and focus of serving the community through efforts of volunteerism, patriotism and education has remained constant. The Ocklawaha Chapter is dedicated to supporting local schools with donations and awards, and since their inception has awarded hundreds of Good Citizen Awards to local high school students, ROTC awards to cadets, and donated to National Society Daughters of the American Revolution founded schools. They donate American flags to organizations such as post offices, court-houses, schools, and veterans' groups, in need of our flag. In 1976, the Ocklawaha Chapter created and presented Bicentennial flags to the cities of Eustis, Mount Dora, and Tavares.

The Ocklawaha Chapter is dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history, and safeguarding America's future through better education for children. Their motto encapsulates that philosophy: "for God, Home, and Country." Through the strong leadership displayed by the Ocklawaha Chapter, they have earned both state and national recognition. They have been honored with many awards including DAR Project Patriot, Celebrate America Award, Chapter Achievement Level 1 and 2, Bronze Honoring the Flag, State and National Honor Roll, Literacy Promotion, Service for Veterans, and American History.

The excellence with which the Ocklawaha Chapter serves the Central Florida community is evident from their history and recognitions. I commend them for their many achievements and I am pleased to congratulate them on the celebration of their 100th anniversary. May their leadership, service and patriotism inspire many to follow in their footsteps.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

HONORING NEW HAMPSHIRE
STATE REPRESENTATIVE ROBERT A. LUTHER FOLLOWING HIS
PASSING ON FEBRUARY 20, 2016

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor New Hampshire State Representative Robert Luther of Laconia, New Hampshire.

On February 20, 2016, the State of New Hampshire lost a true public servant with Robert's passing. During this time of great sadness, we remember and celebrate the life of not only a dedicated law enforcement officer and legislator, but also a father, husband and friend.

Representative Luther devoted his life to serving our communities and protecting our families, first as a member of the U.S. Navy from 1965–1968, then as a police officer and security officer in the Laconia area from 1973–2009. A devoted public servant, he stayed engaged in local and state issues, serving as a member of the Laconia City Council and most recently as a member of the New Hampshire House of Representatives.

As his family, friends, neighbors and all who knew Robert would say, he was really one of a kind. The dedication and compassion he demonstrated during his years of service are not—and will not—be forgotten. So let us take a moment today and pause, reflect, and celebrate the life of Representative Robert Luther.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent on Tuesday, March 1, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following ways:

Yes on Roll Call No. 103—H.R. 136, To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1103 USPS Building 1103 in Camp Pendleton, California, as the Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office.

Yes on Roll Call No. 104—The Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 3735, the Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office.

COLONY MEADOWS ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Colony Meadows Elementary School on 25 years of nurturing and educating our young children.

For the past quarter of a century, teachers and educators at Colony Meadows in Sugar Land, TX, have helped to develop the bright

minds of students in a fun and educational atmosphere.

A lot has changed since this school opened its doors 25 years ago but one thing has remained the same—Colony Meadows commitment to excellence. It has remained a great place for our future leaders to learn and grow. Thank you to the many teachers and faculty members who've worked so hard to make CMES great throughout the years.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to Colony Meadows Elementary School on 25 successful years of educating our leaders of tomorrow.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast my floor vote on roll call vote number 102. Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted "yes" on roll call vote number 102.

HONORING NEW HAMPSHIRE
STATE POLICE LT. JAMES 'JIM'
GERAGHTY AFTER HIS PASSING
ON FEBRUARY 27, 2016

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Granite State hero and fallen state police officer Lt. James Geraghty of Bedford, New Hampshire.

On February 27, 2016, the State of New Hampshire lost a true Granite State hero when Lt. Geraghty succumbed to cancer. During this time of great sadness, we remember and celebrate the life of not only a tremendous police officer, but also a father, husband and friend.

Geraghty devoted his life to protecting our families and our communities through his military service with the U.S. Army, and his time as a police officer in the Town of Hudson before joining the New Hampshire State Police.

As his family, friends, neighbors and fellow police officers knew, Geraghty was really one of a kind. The dedication and compassion he demonstrated during his years of service are not—and will not—be forgotten.

It takes a remarkable individual like James Geraghty to risk their life daily to keep us safe and protect us from harm. So let us take a moment today and pause, reflect, and celebrate the life and valor of Lt. Geraghty. He put his life on the line to protect the Granite State, and we are forever grateful.

TRIBUTE TO INDEPENDENT
NEWSGROUP EDITOR BILL
CONSTINE

HON. JOHN R. MOOLENAAR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Independent Newsgroup editor, Bill Constine. As the son of Vincent and Veronica, the husband of Beth and the father of Mindy, Chad and Kevin, Bill made many contributions to Owosso, Shiawassee County and the great state of Michigan.

Bill's news career began in 1973 at WOAP, where he started as a DJ and became a popular radio personality. Under his leadership as news director, the station was recognized by the Michigan Associated Press for its excellence. Bill would go on to work at The Flint Journal and then WJSZ, a local radio station that he owned until 1994. For the past 25 years, Bill worked as a reporter and editor at the Independent Newsgroup, which publishes local weekly and biweekly papers in Shiawassee County, bringing our communities the local news they need.

As a leader, Bill challenged his employees to go out of their comfort zone, but never allowed them to fail. He took people under his wing and helped them discover a love for writing. Known for his great attention to detail, enthusiasm for pursuing stories, caring manner for his staff and his passion for Shiawassee County history, Bill's positive impact on the community will be felt for generations.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Michigan, I am honored today to recognize Bill Constine for his lifetime of work as an editor and community leader.

IN RECOGNITION OF MEDAL OF
HONOR RECIPIENT SENIOR CHIEF
SPECIAL WARFARE OPERATOR
(SEAL) EDWARD C. BYERS, JR.,
UNITED STATES NAVY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. LATTI. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize United States Navy Senior Chief Special Warfare Operator (SEAL) and Ohio native, Edward Byers, as the recipient of the Medal of Honor for his brave and heroic actions during Operation Enduring Freedom on December 8–9, 2012.

The citation for the Medal of Honor states: "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as Hostage Rescue Force Team Member in Afghanistan in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM on 8–9 December 2012. As the rescue force approached the target building, an enemy sentry detected them and darted inside to alert his fellow captors. The sentry quickly reemerged, and the lead assaulter attempted to neutralize him. Chief

Byers with his team sprinted to the door of the target building. As the primary breacher, Chief Byers stood in the doorway fully exposed to enemy fire while ripping down six layers of heavy blankets fastened to the inside ceiling and walls to clear a path for the rescue force. The first assaulter pushed his way through the blankets, and was mortally wounded by enemy small arms fire from within. Chief Byers, completely aware of the imminent threat, fearlessly rushed into the room and engaged an enemy guard aiming an AK-47 at him. He then tackled another adult male who had darted towards the corner of the room. During the ensuing hand-to-hand struggle, Chief Byers confirmed the man was not the hostage and engaged him. As other rescue team members called out to the hostage, Chief Byers heard a voice respond in English and raced toward it. He jumped atop the American hostage and shielded him from the high volume of fire within the small room. While covering the hostage with his body, Chief Byers immobilized another guard with his bare hands, and restrained the guard until a teammate could eliminate him. His bold and decisive actions under fire saved the lives of the hostage and several of his teammates. By his undaunted courage, intrepid fighting spirit, and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of near certain death, Chief Petty Officer Byers reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

I extend my deepest thanks to Chief Byers on his service to our nation and upon his receiving our nation's highest military award, the Medal of Honor.

CONGRATULATING COLONEL STEVEN W. NOTT FOR HIS YEARS OF SERVICE AT FORT MCCOY, WISCONSIN

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished service of Colonel Steven W. Nott, whose tenure as Garrison Commander at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, concludes March 11, 2016. Colonel Nott assumed his duties as Garrison Commander on February 29, 2012.

Colonel Nott's 31 years of dedicated service in the U.S. Army is noteworthy in every respect. He earned a bachelor's degree in History from the University of Wisconsin—Platteville; a master's degree in Education from Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa.; and a master's degree in Strategic Studies from the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa. His military education includes Ranger School, Airborne School, Air Assault School, the Infantry Officer Advanced Course, and the Command and General Staff College.

Colonel Nott received his commission as an Infantry Officer in May 1986 and served one year in the Iowa National Guard. He entered active duty in April 1987 and served in Germany with the 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment. He next served on the 1st Brigade

staff and then Commander of B Company, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment within the 10th Mountain Division. From 1995 to 1998 he was a Military Science Instructor at Lehigh University Military Science Department. Nott entered the Active Guard Reserve program in 1999 with the 98th Division (Institutional Training) in Rochester, N.Y. In 2003 he was assigned to the 99th Regional Readiness Command in Pittsburgh, Pa., as the Training Officer. In 2005 he was assigned to the 166th Aviation Brigade, Fort Riley, Kan., as the Brigade Executive Officer. From 2007 to 2009 he served as Commander, United States Army Garrison, Fort Devens, Mass. Nott became the Senior Operations Officer within the Office of the Chief Army Reserve Employer Partnership Office, Washington, D.C. in 2010.

Colonel Nott deployed to Operations Desert Shield/Storm in Iraq, Hurricane Andrew Relief in Florida, Operation Restore Hope in Somalia, and Operations Restore and Uphold Democracy in Haiti.

Colonel Nott has committed his life to serving our country and has received many deserving awards and decorations, including the Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal with seven Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Commendation Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Achievement Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Service Star, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal with Bronze Service Star, Southwest Asia Service Medal with two Bronze Service Stars, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal with Bronze Service Star, United Nations Medal (Somalia), Kuwait Liberation Medals, Combat Infantry Badge, Expert Infantry Badge, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, the Valorous Unit Award, and the Army Staff Identification Badge.

Under Colonel Nott's outstanding leadership, Fort McCoy has taken it to the next level as one of the most capable and desirable Reserve Component training installations in the Army, providing stellar base operations support to over 150,000 Soldiers annually. During his tenure, Colonel Nott focused on the importance of Fort McCoy's Strategic Plan and ensuring that the base was a good neighbor and community partner. Thanks to Colonel Nott, Fort McCoy is well positioned for the future.

It has been an honor for me to serve as U.S. Representative for Wisconsin's Third Congressional District during Colonel Nott's tenure at Fort McCoy. I know Colonel Nott's leadership will be greatly missed at the base and surrounding communities, but I am thankful for his leadership and contributions to ensuring that Fort McCoy remains a shining star in the nation's military training infrastructure.

On behalf of my constituents in Wisconsin and a grateful nation, I would like to thank and commend Colonel Steven W. Nott for his years of dedicated service in the U.S. Army and in particular as Garrison Commander at Fort McCoy. I wish him, his wife Charlotte and their children Christian, Elissa, Bethany and Ethan the very best as they turn the page on the next chapter of their lives.

RECOGNIZING CONNIE HUNT'S 80TH BIRTHDAY AND HER POLITICAL ACTIVISM

HON. BLAKE FARENTHOLD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 80th birthday of Ms. Connie Hunt. Born on March 7, 1936, Connie spent her career in civil service. She served the government at every post where she, and her husband lived until her retirement in 1986.

She has also been active in the Calhoun County Republican Party for over 20 years, serving as Chairman or Vice Chairman for 18 of those years. While volunteering as a tutor for high school students, she worked tirelessly to bring civics to life for Calhoun High School students with the Calhoun High School Young Republican Club.

Connie Hunt is a proud Texan and a tremendous friend to the conservative cause. She has been an enthusiastic supporter of the principles that make our country what it is, and her dedication and achievements are the types of things that make the United States so exceptional. I am so proud to have constituents like Connie. Happy birthday.

CONGRATULATING ANNAMARIE GULINO GENTILE

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Annamarie Gulino Gentile on receiving the Community Service Award from the Italian American Women of Staten Island.

Ms. Gentile graduated magna cum laude from the State University of New York at Albany and received her J.D. from Brooklyn Law School. She then rose to become the Supervising Partner at Angiuli & Gentile, LLP, where she handles matters such as real estate, family and matrimonial law, personal injury law, and, particularly, elder law. With her extensive background as an elder law attorney, Annamarie advises families in the event that a loved one requires long-term care.

As a member of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) and as a Department of Veterans Affairs-Accredited Attorney, Annamarie has worked tirelessly to give our local veterans any and all legal advice they may need. Moreover, she is a passionate volunteer for various causes in support of senior citizens and those with special needs. But her service to the community doesn't stop there. She is also the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce as well as Chair of the Community Agency for Senior Citizens (CASC). Ms. Gentile was also a recipient of the Staten Island Friends for Hospice Care Couple of the Year Award, and was an honoree of the Garibaldi's Meucci Annual Luncheon for her involvement as an Italian American in the Staten Island community.

Mr. Speaker, I can think of no one more deserving of this award than Annamarie Gulino Gentile. I thank her for all she has done for our community, and I am proud to call her my constituent.

ISIS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the definition of genocide is clear: it is the deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial or cultural group. ISIS has been specifically and intentionally targeting Christians and other minorities for extermination for the past five years. Genocide is exactly what ISIS is doing. ISIS is trying to destroy all those that do not conform to its beliefs.

ISIS has already forced hundreds of thousands of Christians to leave their ancestral homes. For the first time since the time of Christ, there are almost no Christians left in some of these areas. Some of those who could not get out before ISIS came in have been tortured, crucified, and executed. ISIS has also targeted the Yezidi community of Iraq. It slaughtered almost all the men of one community on Mount Sinjar and sold the women and girls to satisfy the evil desires of their fighters.

ISIS is proud of these horrible atrocities. ISIS fighters post videos and pictures online of their barbaric beheadings of Christians and others who refuse to bow to their ideology. They hate, kidnap, and murder because Christians and other ancient minority communities will not renounce their faith.

The world, including the United States, needs to be clear about what ISIS is doing. America must denounce murder because of a person's religious belief.

I am a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 75 and support its passage. Justice demands that ISIS be held accountable and justice is what must be done because justice is what we do in America.

And that's just the way it is.

WILLIAM G. JONES

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress and the Second District of Ohio, I wish to commemorate the life of Sgt. William G. Jones and recognize his receipt of the Montford Point Marines Congressional Gold Medal.

A Virginia native, Sgt. William Jones moved to southern Ohio as a young man to attend the University of Cincinnati, where he studied Business Administration. Upon graduation Sgt. Jones spent a few years in the workforce, but was soon called to serve his country. During the height of World War II from 1942–1945, Sgt. Jones proudly served in the United States

Marine Corps, one of the first 100 African Americans to do so.

When he returned to the United States, Sgt. Jones continued to serve his country and his community. He became a member of the Montford Point Marine Association, a veterans' group that preserves the legacy of the nation's first African American Marines, and was elected the group's first Vice President. Sgt. Jones went on to found and head the Cincinnati chapter of the association.

Sadly, Sgt. Jones passed away on September 29, 1988 at the age of 70. But the impact of his service lives on.

The freedom that our nation now enjoys is due in large part to the sacrifices made by so many individuals, like Sgt. Jones, who have committed themselves to our nation through service in our Armed Forces. On behalf of a grateful nation, I sincerely thank Sgt. Jones and all of the Montford Point Marines for their commitment to protecting us and our freedoms.

RECOGNIZING CAROLINA PANTHERS HEAD COACH RON RIVERA FOR BEING NAMED THE 2015 NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE COACH OF THE YEAR

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Carolina Panthers Head Coach Ron Rivera, who was named the National Football League Coach of the Year for the second time in three years. Coach Rivera did an outstanding job this year leading the Carolina Panthers, and he should be extremely proud of this impressive distinction he has so rightly earned.

Before this NFL season started, few people expected the Carolina Panthers to win enough games to seriously compete for a spot in the postseason playoffs. However, Coach Rivera never let the detractors get in the way of preparing his team to focus only on the challenge directly in front of them. What happened over the course of the season is almost unbelievable, even to the most devoted Panthers fans. The Panthers won 15 of 16 games during the regular season, making the Panthers only the seventh team in NFL history to win 15 games, and set a franchise record for the most victories in a single season. In the postseason, the Panthers hosted the NFC Championship in Charlotte for the first time in the franchise's history and earned a spot in the Super Bowl for only the second time since the team's first season in 1995. Needless to say, this was a fantastic season that will long be remembered by the players, coaches and fans.

Coach Rivera deserves much of the credit for the Panthers' success this year, and this award is a testament to the outstanding job he did preparing for each game and putting his players in the best position to achieve success. While he already had a reputation as a tough player and as one of the top defensive minds in the sport, I believe this award, along with the continued success of the Panthers

during his tenure as head coach, shows Coach Rivera is quickly becoming known as one of the finest coaches in the game.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Carolina Panthers Head Coach Ron Rivera for earning the 2015 NFL Coach of the Year award. I look forward to seeing Coach Rivera build upon this historic season and further cement the Panthers' status as one of the best teams in the NFL. Go Panthers and Keep Pounding!

KELVIN ZHANG SPELLS HIS WAY TO A WIN

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Kelvin Zhang for winning the 2016 Alvin Independent School District (ISD) Spelling Bee.

Kelvin, a fifth-grader at York Elementary School, competed against 18 other students from 4th through 8th grade within the Alvin ISD. Over the course of 36 rounds, Kelvin won his Spelling Bee title by perfectly spelling the word "toboggan." He advances to the Houston Public Media Spelling Bee on April 2nd. We are very proud of Kelvin and wish him luck at the Houston Public Media Spelling Bee.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Kelvin for winning the Alvin ISD Spelling Bee. Keep up the great work.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, due to unforeseen circumstances, I missed the following votes:

H.R. 136—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1103 USPS Building 1103 in Camp Pendleton, California, as the "Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office". Had I been present, I would have voted "YES" on this bill.

H.R. 3735—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston Salem, North Carolina, as the "Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office". Had I been present, I would have voted "YES" on this bill.

NORWOOD VIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CENTENNIAL

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress and the Second District of Ohio, I congratulate the students

and teachers, past and present, of Norwood View Elementary School on their 100th anniversary.

Providing a first-rate education for America's youth is one of our greatest responsibilities and is essential to creating the educated, productive, and innovative citizens who will shape our nation.

For the past 100 years, Norwood View Elementary School has demonstrated a strong commitment to the children in our community. Thousands of students have graduated with a quality education and countless memories.

I sincerely thank the school for their contribution to the Norwood community, and I look forward to their continued success in the years to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF EXETER BOROUGHS POLICE CHIEF JOHN "MAXIE" MCNEIL FOR FORTY-ONE YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of Exeter, Pennsylvania's Police Chief John "Maxie" McNeil, as he celebrates his retirement from an extensive career in law enforcement. Chief McNeil will be honored by friends and family on March 5, 2016. For forty-one years, Chief McNeil dedicated his life to ensuring the safety and welfare of the people of Exeter, thirty-two years as police chief.

Chief McNeil led his department with dedication, honesty, and integrity. Over the years, he guided his beloved police department from a small town force into a skilled and mobile law enforcement agency capable of providing safety and security to the residents of a changing Exeter. Under his leadership, he has helped make Exeter and the surrounding communities a safer place for everyone.

I am grateful for Chief McNeil and the Exeter Police Department for their dedicated service. These courageous individuals face each moment not knowing for certain of the peril that may wait with the next challenge of the job. Yet they carry on, made strong by a resolve to protect and serve. Police officers, be they big city beat cops or small town sheriffs, defend what is dear to us, including our loved ones, and we owe them a great deal of gratitude for standing as a shield from harm.

It is an honor to recognize John for his contribution to the safety of his community. I am immensely thankful for his many contributions to the security of Exeter throughout his long career of public service. I wish him all the best in retirement.

DANA CLEMENT CHILD ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dana Clement for being named

the 2015 Child Advocate of the Year at the Child Advocates of Fort Bend's Annual Volunteer Celebration.

The non-profit agency, Child Advocates of Fort Bend, aims to serve as many children within their community as possible. Their mission is to stop child abuse in its tracks and help give these children a voice. The 200 trained volunteers they have make it possible to help serve more than 400 kids on a monthly basis. Dana is a critical volunteer for this agency thanks to her dedication through her time, energy and resources. We are so proud of Dana for helping to serve these kids through her love and positive attitude. Thank you for making the community of Fort Bend a safer place for its residents.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Dana Clement for being named Child Advocate of the Year. We appreciate all of her selfless and hard work.

RECOGNIZING THE GATHERING PLACE

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize The Gathering Place in Brunswick, Georgia and to congratulate them on their 35th anniversary.

Started by college students from the University of Georgia in 1979, this year marks the 35th anniversary that The Gathering Place has served the spiritual growth and development of youth in Glynn County.

The Gathering Place was originally known as "Sunday Night Live at 8:45," and after 2 successful summers of singing, skits, and messages about Jesus, the college students expanded the program and officially founded The Gathering Place in June, 1981.

The Gathering Place has expanded since 1981 developing into a year round leadership development youth ministry with a highly diverse group of attendees. Beginning with around 100 participants, The Gathering Place now has approximately 1,000 people attending "The Main Event," taking place each summer night which includes lights, music, videos, gifts, speakers, and more.

The ministry of The Gathering Place has accomplished major spiritual achievements in the youth of coastal Georgia as the organization's goal is to reach students with the word of Jesus Christ, equip them to be Christian leaders, and to then send the students to spiritually impact their local communities.

I am thankful to have The Gathering Place in the First Congressional District of Georgia and am proud to recognize the impact that it is making in young Georgians' lives.

RECOGNITION OF THE CAREER AND RETIREMENT OF MR. JOHN MATTHEWS

HON. MARK POCAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of a respected advocate and relentless fighter for public education in my district. For nearly half a century, John Matthews has been at the helm of Madison Teachers Inc. (MTI), steering the union through such volatile events as the 1976 teachers' strike, the recent public uprising against Act 10 and everything in between.

It is a testament to John's work and what his union has continually done for them that in November, Madison teachers voted overwhelmingly to recertify their union.

Today, when a pregnant teacher does not have to resign her job as her pregnancy begins to show—something she once had to do in Wisconsin—she can credit John, who successfully fought that policy all the way to the Supreme Court in 1971. That was precisely the kind of battle and victory he relished.

John's career began as an English and history teacher in his native state of Montana, where his grandfather was a Supreme Court justice. He immediately became involved in his union and started, as he puts it, "raising a little hell," in contract negotiations over health insurance. Six years later, he was in the middle of a primary race to serve in the Montana House of Representatives when he withdrew his candidacy because he was offered the opportunity to pursue his true passion as executive director of Madison Teachers Inc. (And no one who knows John will be surprised to hear—he won that race anyway).

At that time in 1968, MTI had 900 members—it now has more than 4,000. Other victories John secured on behalf of the teachers and other educational workers he represents included the right to take time off for their religious holidays. In 1976, he led workers in a teachers' strike that cemented his reputation as a fierce advocate and fighter on behalf of the people and causes he represents. As Capital Times Editor Emeritus Dave Zweifel put it when John's retirement was announced: "No one I've known has been more committed to public education and what it means to American democracy than Matthews." He not only stood up for his members, he served the children and families of our community sitting on the board of such groups as Fair Wisconsin, Citizens Against Handgun Violence, Fighting Bob Fest, the Social Justice Center and the Citizens Utility Board.

Yet John seeks to meet and converse with opponents in an open and friendly fashion, making regular lunch or coffee dates with adversaries. The day former Madison Schools Superintendent Art Rainwater stepped into that job, he phoned John right away that morning to talk about building bridges and asked when they could get together. John quickly replied: "How about noon?" In articles announcing his planned January 2016 retirement, glowing quotes of praise for his work came as frequently from his adversaries as

from his allies. Anyone who has worked with him also knows him to be a caring, warm friend with a great wit and deep dedication to his colleagues and friends.

It is an honor to recognize five decades of dedication, passion and advocacy in John's career with MTI. Anyone who knows John will not be at all surprised to hear that when asked by reporters what he plans to do in his retirement, he answered that he would remain committed to social justice issues and helping people. After all, it's what he's been doing for the past 50 years.

RECOGNIZING CAROLINA PANTHERS QUARTERBACK CAM NEWTON FOR BEING NAMED THE 2015 NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Carolina Panthers Quarterback Cam Newton, who was named the 2015 National Football League Most Valuable Player (MVP). In his fifth season at the helm of the Carolina Panthers offense, Cam has become one of the NFL's best players and has established himself as a leader his teammates trust and depend upon.

Throughout the season, Cam played a crucial role in the team's success. With Cam as quarterback, the Panthers were one of the best offenses in the league—averaging over 30 points per game—and set a franchise record for most wins in a regular season after winning 15 of their 16 games. Cam also led the Panthers to their second NFC Championship with a commanding 49–15 victory over the Arizona Cardinals, completing 19 of his 28 passes for 335 yards and two touchdowns while also scoring two touchdowns running the football. This performance demonstrated Cam's importance to the team and is a clear example of why he deserved the league's MVP award.

In addition to his outstanding performance and exceptional leadership on the field, Cam has been an active member of the community and has made public service an important priority in his life. Shortly after arriving in the NFL, he established the Cam Newton Foundation to help the young people of Charlotte, and in his hometown of Atlanta. Through this foundation, Cam has been able to provide many young people the resources and support they need to pursue their childhood dreams and ambitions.

While Cam earned this award by distinguishing himself as one of the most gifted players in the game today, and his dedication to helping others and serving as a role model to young people across the country further exemplifies why he is a champion both on and off the field. I look forward to seeing Cam back on the field next season, building off this historic season and further establishing himself as one of the most elite quarterbacks in the game.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Carolina Panthers Quarterback Cam

Newton for being named the 2015 NFL MVP, and thanking him for his continued service to the people of our community. Go Panthers and Keep Pounding!

U.S.-TURKEY BILATERAL RELATIONS

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the strong and important relationship between the Republic of Turkey and the United States. For years, Turkey has been an indispensable strategic, geopolitical and economic partner of the U.S.

Turkey is a significant ally in confronting the challenges of the 21st century, such as international terrorism, ethnic and religious extremism, energy security, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Ankara is a central stakeholder in the ongoing efforts to resolve the Syrian Civil War and aid its victims. I witnessed this firsthand when I visited a refugee camp in Kilis, Turkey. The Turkish government and other surrounding nations have made selfless investments to meet the humanitarian needs of the Syrian people and must be applauded for these efforts.

In addition to our strong geopolitical ties, economic cooperation is increasingly becoming a major aspect of the Turkey-U.S. bilateral relationship. Turkey has become an indispensable U.S. trading partner, constituting a large and growing market for United States exports. In 2015, Turkey was identified as Europe's third-fastest growing economy, and its increasing energy demand makes it an appealing market for continued U.S. investment.

Mr. Speaker, with the continuing threat of the Islamic State, the uncertainty of the situation in Syria, and an ever increasingly globalized economy it is now more important than ever to reaffirm our commitment to, and cooperation with, the Republic of Turkey. I look forward to strengthening and growing the U.S.-Turkey relationship in the years ahead.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE PEOPLE OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague, Representative DEVIN NUNES, to recognize the people of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Over the course of the past century, the Armenian people have been subject to some of the worst treatment in modern history. From the Armenian genocide and the repressive years under Soviet rule, to the pogroms committed against Armenians in the cities of Sumgait, Kirovabad, and Baku, the tragic plight of the Armenian people in their search for freedom cannot be overstated.

As a nation built on the concept of freedom, the United States must support those who put

their safety on the line in the pursuit of that most basic human right. The people of Nagorno-Karabakh have suffered enough under Azerbaijan's aggressive policies, and it is time for the international community to recognize their right to self-determination.

Today, I rise to recognize the Armenian people, especially the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, who struggle for the same things the United States fought for over 200 years ago: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

JOY GASSAMA WINS CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Joy Gassama of Sugar Land, TX for winning a U.S. State Department Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Award for 2015.

Joy is currently a student at the University of Texas-Austin. Through her CLS scholarship, she was hosted in Meknes Morocco, where she became proficient in Advanced Beginning level Arabic. CLS recipients, like Joy, are sent abroad to study the language and the culture of the region they are hosted in. These prestigious scholarships are funded by the State Department through their Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The Critical Language Scholarship program aims to spread diversity and critical language skills to all of its awardees. We are proud of Joy for all of her hard work, and congratulate her on her scholarship.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Joy for winning the Critical Language Scholarship Award. Keep up the great work.

IN HONOR OF DOMENIC LALLI OF WATERTOWN, MA

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Domenic Lalli in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the Xaverian Brothers High School in Westwood, Massachusetts, and to commend him for forty years of dedication to the education of young men.

An accomplished athlete, Mr. Lalli excelled in football at Watertown High School, and was inducted into the Watertown High School Hall of Fame. He served as football coach there as well. Further, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Lalli was captain of the football team at Boston University, and he was the USA Natural Bodybuilding Champion in 1991. He went on to win the Mr. Massachusetts Master's Division in 2004.

Mr. Lalli received a Bachelor of Science in Human Movement Health and Leisure from Boston University and earned a Master's in Education from Boston State College. He is also a graduate of the Catholic Schools Leadership Program at Boston College.

Mr. Lalli began his career at Xaverian in 1976, teaching Physical Education and coaching track and football. In 1984, he was appointed as the Administrator of Students. Mr. Lalli was appointed Principal of Xaverian in 1991, the same year that Brother Daniel Skala, C.F.X. became Headmaster.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Lalli has influenced several generations of young men and is beloved by countless alumni, parents, and trustees. An outstanding leader, he has shaped a strong community where respect for everyone, no matter their differences, is the norm. He has served as an extraordinary role model in his care and concern for all. Throughout his tenure at Xaverian, Mr. Lalli has touched the lives of 7,951 students, in addition to the current student body of 950.

Mr. Lalli was born and raised in Watertown, MA where he lives today with his wife Lydia. They are the proud parents of two children, Daniel, a graduate of Xaverian, and Victoria, and they are blessed with two grandchildren, Connor and Colbie.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take the floor of the House today to join with Domenic Lalli's family, friends, and contemporaries to thank him for his forty years of remarkable service to Xaverian Brothers High School.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast my floor vote on roll call vote numbers 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100 and 101.

Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted "no" on roll call vote numbers 95, 96, 97, 98, and 101.

Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted "yes" on roll call vote numbers 92, 93, 94, 99, and 100.

RECOGNIZING MS. DIXIE WHITMAN'S WORK FOR THE MILITARY WORKING DOG TEAM SUPPORT ASSOCIATION

HON. TOM PRICE

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to speak in honor of Dixie Whitman. The organization she cofounded, Military Working Dog Team Support Association, Inc., supports American military working canines and their handlers.

Ms. Whitman started the organization ten years ago in her garage, back when it was only a group of a few neighbors and friends in Georgia. Under Ms. Whitman's leadership and through her tireless work the non-profit has expanded to eight more states. All of the workers are volunteers who are united in the common good of serving both human and canine soldiers. Since the founding in 2006,

MWD TSA has sent over 3,500 care packages to currently deployed Military Working Dog teams. These packages contain everything from dog treats and boots for the dogs to DVDs for the handlers.

Mr. Speaker, Dixie had to step down from the organization that she poured her heart and soul into this year but she will continue to be the heartbeat of the Military Working Dog Team Support Association. On behalf of the Sixth District of Georgia, I would like to thank Ms. Whitman for supporting and being a voice for human and canine soldiers alike.

SOFIA AHMED WINS CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sofia Ahmed of Katy, TX for winning a U.S. State Department Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Award for 2015.

Sofia is currently a student at the University of Texas—San Antonio. Through her CLS scholarship, she was hosted in Beijing, China, where she became proficient in Advanced level Chinese. CLS recipients, like Sofia, are sent abroad to study the language and the culture of the region they are hosted in. These prestigious scholarships are funded by the State Department through their Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The Critical Language Scholarship program aims to spread diversity and critical language skills to all of its awardees. We are proud of Sofia for all of her hard work, and congratulate her on her scholarship.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Sofia for winning the Critical Language Scholarship Award. Keep up the great work.

HUNGER

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman MCGOVERN for the tireless work he does every day for hungry families and children.

I rise as Chair of the Democratic Whip's Task Force on Poverty, Income Inequality, and Opportunity, which Congressman MCGOVERN is also a member of and I want to thank him for that and for our SNAP challenge almost 3 years ago. That was truly an eye opener and so important to make sure we stop any cuts from this critical program.

Mr. Speaker, persistent hunger is truly a stain on our nation.

Fourteen percent of households in America—that's nearly one in seven—are food insecure.

These are people, who despite working full time, simply don't earn enough to feed their families. For these families, putting food on the table is a constant struggle.

It is truly a disgrace that in the richest and most powerful nation, that this many families are going hungry every day.

And this burden is hard on children. More than 15.3 million American children are living in food-insecure households today. Let me say that again: more than 15 million kids are at risk of going to bed hungry—every night.

And hunger is far from color blind.

We know that communities of color are disproportionately affected by hunger. For example in 2014:

One in four African American households and

One in five Latino families were food insecure.

And for rural families, food insecurity is coupled with other barriers including lack of access to transportation and limited job opportunities. More than 17% of rural households—that's 3.3 million households—are food insecure.

We know that hunger is a problem that affects people in every zip code. It is endemic in our counties, rural communities, urban streets and suburban neighborhoods.

I've seen its impact in my community, Alameda County, where one in five residents have turned to our local food bank for help. These families are forced to make impossible choices to feed their children. Many must decide between food and medicine, food and school clothes, or food and paying the electric bill.

One Alameda County mother, Claire, said "My kids need milk, but we can't afford it. So, I buy condensed milk and water it down."

This is the tragic reality of millions of families in our country. And this epidemic of hunger is the direct result of persistent poverty and continued cuts to vital safety net programs.

As a young mother, I struggled to keep food on the table for my two little boys. Food stamps, or SNAP as we call it now, was a bridge over troubled water for my family. Thanks to this safety net, I was able to get my degree, start a small business, and eventually be elected to Congress.

Surely we should be providing these benefits for all families?

Programs like SNAP, housing vouchers, Head Start, Medicaid and Pell Grants help families lift themselves out of poverty and were critical to President Johnson's War on Poverty.

And SNAP—which is our nation's first line of defense against hunger—is also a critical tool in the fight against poverty. In 2015, it kept nearly 5 million Americans—including 2.2 million children—out of poverty in 2014.

We should be strengthening these programs instead of cutting them.

Mr. Speaker, we need real solutions to these very real problems. My legislation, the Half in Ten Act (H.R. 258), would develop a national strategy to cut poverty in half over the next decade. That's more than 23 million Americans lifted out of poverty and into the middle class in just the next 10 years.

We must recognize that addressing food insecurity in America is a critical first step in this ongoing war on poverty. We can do this, and we can do so much more.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GEORGE HOLDING

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, on roll call No. 99, I would have voted "Nay" on roll call vote No. 99, on the Huffman Amendment to H.R. 2406, to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, on February 26, 2016. I missed the vote due to being unavoidably detained.

GRAZIA ITALIAN KITCHEN HAS
THE "BEST BITES"**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Pearland Restaurant, Grazia Italian Kitchen, for winning both Reserve Grand Champion in the People's Choice Award category and the Rookie Award at the "Rodeo Uncorked! Roundup and Best Bites Competition" at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

Grazia's Chef, Steve Haug, former chef at Del Frisco's Double Eagle Steakhouse, created a dish that pleased not only the judges, but 5,500 guests as well. The Houston Rodeo's Best Bites Competition this year consisted of 102 competing restaurants at the NRG Center on February 21, and sold-out due to its overwhelming attendance. The Best Bites Competition is the kick-off to the Houston Rodeo, one of the most popular and attended attractions in Houston. We are so proud of Grazia's and can't wait to taste their delicious meals for ourselves.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the entire team at Grazia Italian Kitchen for being recognized at the Houston Rodeo Roundup Best Bites Competition.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$19,125,455,057,425.90. We've added \$8,498,578,008,512.82 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, this week I missed a roll call vote. I wish to state how I would have voted had I been present: Roll Call No. 102—"yes."

TRIBUTE TO AIR FORCE 2ND LIEU-
TENANT ESTEBAN HOTESSE,
TUSKEGEE AIRMAN, DOMINICAN-
AMERICAN**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, as Dominican-Americans across our great nation celebrated their heritage and their compatriots commemorated Dominican Independence Day over the weekend, on February 27th, today I rise to posthumously honor and pay tribute to Tuskegee Airman Second Lieutenant Esteban (Stephen) Hotesse (Service Number 32218759).

Esteban Hotesse, a Dominican native who immigrated to the country as a child, enlisted during World War II, and served in the lauded Tuskegee Airmen brigade. Though his team was scheduled to go into battle, they never saw combat abroad. As a member of the all-black unit, Hotesse was among a group of 101 Tuskegee Airmen officers arrested for refusing to follow Jim Crow orders from a white commanding officer at a base near Seymour, Indiana, where the KKK had a strong presence.

In March 1945, the last of the Tuskegee groups, the 477th Medium Bombardment Group, was moved from Godman Field, adjacent to Fort Knox, to Freeman Field because of the latter's better flight facilities. Tensions between the 477th and the white command structure on the base were tense as soon as the 477th arrived, and shortly thereafter, an incident occurred unparalleled in Air Corps history.

Upon their arrival at Freeman, the commanding officer of the base, Colonel Robert R. Selway, moved quickly to set up and enforce a segregated system. The group was housed in a dilapidated building. Col. Selway also created a novel system to deny the Airmen entry into the officers' club. He classified the Black airmen as "trainees," even though they had all finished flight school, and therefore were all commissioned officers. As trainees, they were forced to use a rundown, former noncommissioned officers club nicknamed "Uncle Tom's Cabin." This all occurred despite an order issued in 1940 issued by President Roosevelt himself that no officer should be denied access to any officer's club. On April 5, 1945 a group of the Airmen peacefully entered the officers' club in protest. Sixty-one were arrested within 24 hours. This act of disobedience later became known as the Freeman Field Mutiny. Hotesse perished later that year in an accidental plane crash. His obituary in a Domini-

can newspaper lists his cause of death as a B-25 crash in the Ohio River in Indiana.

Esteban (Stephen) Hotesse was born on February 2, 1919 in Moca, Dominican Republic, and he came to the U.S. at the age of 4 with his mother, Clara Pacheco, who at the time was 25 years old. Hotesse was also accompanied by his sister Irma Hotesse, age 2. They came through the famous port of Ellis Island and, like many Dominicans at the time, went to live in my Congressional District within Upper Manhattan. At the time of his enlistment, he was living with his wife, Iristella Lind, who was Puerto Rican. They applied for U.S. citizenship in April 1943 after he'd served almost a year. The couple had two daughters before he enlisted. Today, one of his daughters, Mary Lou Hotesse, resides in New York City and two granddaughters, one named Iris Rivera, live in the South.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our distinguished colleagues join me in paying tribute to one of our nation's heroes. In life, he immigrated to our shores to join ranks with our military force in the advancement of peace, justice, and freedom here and abroad.

DON'T WRESTLE WITH CINCO
RANCH GIRLS**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Queena Chen, Charlotte Fowler, Taylor Rosario, and Kayla De Leon for winning the state championship 6A trophy at the University Interscholastic League (UIL) Girls Wrestling Championships.

Queena, Charlotte, Taylor and Kayla are students at Cinco Ranch High School in the Katy Independent School District. The four Lady Cougars racked up a total of 87 points, all placing in the top four; a new achievement. The 2016 UIL State Wrestling Championships were held at the Berry Center in Cypress, Texas on February 19th and 20th. Senior Taylor Rosario has a standing record of 40-1, Senior Charlotte Fowler's record is 48-1, Senior Queena Chen's record is 41-15, and finally, Sophomore Kayla De Leon has a record of 49-0. These talented students have made the Katy community proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Queena, Charlotte, Taylor, and Kayla for winning the UIL 6A State Championship. We can't wait to see what these talented ladies do next.

TRIBUTE TO REPRESENTATIVE
DIANA HOPPE**HON. KEN BUCK**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to recognize the passing of Representative Diane Hoppe on February

27th, 2016. Rep. Hoppe was a beloved and distinguished community leader and longtime state lawmaker.

Rep. Hoppe grew up in Sterling and devoted her life to improving Colorado. In 1999 she was elected to House District 65 of the Colorado House of Representatives, where she served through 2006. During her service she was Chair of the House Agriculture, Livestock & Natural Resources Committee; Chair of the Water Resources Review Committee; and House Minority Whip.

In addition to her leadership in the Colorado legislature, Governor Hickenlooper appointed her to the Colorado Water Conservation Board in 2012. She was later elected as Chair in 2015. In addition, she was presented the Colorado Water Congress 2013 Wayne N. Aspinall Award for Outstanding Water Leader. Rep. Hoppe's limitless knowledge of agriculture and water has made a lasting impact on Colorado.

It is the hard work Rep. Hoppe embodied throughout her life that makes Colorado an exceptional place to live. She has shown true service to her industry and community. I extend my deepest sympathies to Rep. Hoppe's family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Representative Diane Hoppe for her commitment to family, community, and the State of Colorado. She will be sorely missed.

THE RULES OF THE U.S. HOUSE DENY MEMBERS THE ABILITY TO FULFILL OUR CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, the rules of the U.S. House prohibit congressionally directed spending. This prohibition undermines the ability of Members of Congress to represent their constituents, denies Members the opportunity to respond to critical needs that are in the national interest, and it strips Members of their authority pursuant to Article 1, section 9, clause 7 of the U.S. Constitution—the authority to appropriate funds. Members of Congress are not even allowed the opportunity to offer amendments to a bill to be voted on by a committee or the Committee of the Whole on a construction project or research program deemed to be in contrary to the rule.

What the ban on congressionally directed spending does do is empower the Executive Branch to dictate to Congress projects, programs and priorities without input from Members. It denies Members the ability to advance alternatives to the President's priorities that better reflect the needs of states, communities and constituents. With this rule, Congress has unilaterally diminished our own power and ceded excessive power to the President. The House of Representatives' "power of the purse" must be more than simply rubber stamping funding for whatever project or program the President proposes.

My attached letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction,

Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies highlights an example of how the ban on congressionally directed spending denies me—a member of the Appropriations Committee—the opportunity to advocate for a project that has been approved by the Department of Defense, in the Department's funding queue, and is now delayed for arbitrary budget reasons without any consultation with Congress. House rules deny me the opportunity to amend this decision. I find this outrageous and a clear example of how this Congress cedes power to unelected federal officials in the Executive Branch.

It is time to change the rules, repeal the prohibition on congressionally directed spending, and allow Members of Congress to do our job on behalf of the people who elected us.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 1, 2016.

Hon. CHARLIE DENT,
Chair, Subcommittee on Military Construction,
Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies,
Washington, DC.

Hon. SANFORD BISHOP,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Military
Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related
Agencies, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIR DENT AND RANKING MEMBER BISHOP: I am extremely concerned that the President's FY2017 budget proposal has failed to fund a shovel ready Minnesota Army National Guard project that has been in the pipeline since the release of the FY13 budget for FY17. The \$39,000,000 for the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arden Hills, MN (Project Number 270132 in the Department of the Army, Army National Guard FY17 Military Construction budget) now has been moved to FY18. This delay will directly affect the ability of members of the Minnesota National Guard to train effectively and carry out their duties to their utmost potential.

This facility is necessary to house the Headquarters and Headquarters Company and Company A 34th Infantry Division currently assigned to the Rosemount, MN Readiness Center, and Company B 34th Infantry Division currently assigned to the Inver Grove Heights, MN Readiness Center. Both of these facilities are undersized and seriously lacking in critical areas that support mission readiness. The construction of the Readiness Center in Arden Hills is long overdue and necessary to relieve over population in other aging National Guard facilities in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

What is truly outrageous is that this Congress has ceded the authority of Members, and particularly Appropriators, under the Constitution, to fund critically significant federal investments in our communities. Congress, by giving up the authority to direct spending and projects, has conceded a vital authority to the Administration. This Military Construction, Veterans Affairs bill makes it clear that the House and the Appropriations Committee now takes its guidance from Administration staff and the Office of Management and Budget, which I find unacceptable. Meanwhile the representatives elected by the American people, including Appropriators, are denied the opportunity to advance vital projects unless granted permission by the Executive Branch.

Therefore, I will not be submitting any requests to the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies because if I were to advocate for the members of the Minnesota Army National Guard and attempt to get funding re-

instated in this year's appropriations bill, I would presumably be in violation of the ban on congressionally directed spending.

It is time to change this flawed system.

Sincerely,

BETTY MCCOLLUM,
Member of Congress.

KAY THACKER

HON. CARLOS CURBELO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today we honor the life of Kay Thacker, a woman who worked to make politics nobler and spent every hour of her life dedicated to helping others. As a visitor to the Keys since childhood and a 27-year resident, we will miss Kay Thacker tremendously. She was a woman who embodied the heart of the small and tight-knit community that we are.

Though born in Kentucky, Kay spent much of her life in Indiana. In the late 1960s and into the early 1970s she ran her own salon, Casa de Kay. She received her degree from the University of Indiana and then proceeded to earn the title of Vice President of Sales for Metal Honing Inc. Thankfully, she then decided to make Key Largo her home where she embodied the role of a passionate civic activist.

Tenacious and firm in her principles, Kay stood proudly as an environmental conservationist, advocate for the Arts and a staunch overseer of spending by public agencies. Even in the face of fierce adversity, Kay was a woman who refused to back down. Well known for her stubbornness, Kay knew when to put her foot down and fight for her beliefs, all the while never making that fight personal.

Kay Thacker's impact on our community is far reaching and universally appreciated, even from those that she stood up to. She will forever be remembered for her unyielding devotion to the community that we are all fortunate to call our own.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF ELLINGTON, MO

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th anniversary of the United Methodist Church of Ellington, MO. The occasion was marked by four services held at the church: a morning Dedication Service, an Afternoon Service, a Youth Service, and an Evangelistic Service held later in the evening, presided over by Pastor Sandy Estes.

United Methodist Church was founded in 1887 by five trustees, Marian Copeland, Leon Daniels, P.B. Smith, U.G. Barnes, and Jefferson Wadlow. It was originally located on Cemetery Hill on land donated by Copeland. As the church grew, so did the congregation, eventually surpassing the capacity of the original property.

In 1909, the church founded the Women's Missionary Society, who purchased the land on which the current church stands today. The cornerstone of the church was laid in 1913, and the construction concluded with a Dedication Ceremony on August 20, 1916. Although the building has since been renovated, much of the Sanctuary is original, including the stained glass and bell tower, which still rings every Sunday service.

The surnames of the five original trustees are still common to the Ellington area, a true testament to the enduring legacy of the United Methodist Church. The church has long served as a staple in the local community, offering a valuable service and place of worship for citizens. Thus, it is my pleasure to recognize its impressive history before the House of Representatives.

TRIBUTE TO SOSY ROBINSON

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Canyon Lake in Riverside County, California are exceptional. On Friday, March 11th, Sosy Robinson will be honored as the Citizen of the Year by the Canyon Lake Chamber of Commerce.

Born in Pasadena, California, Sosy Robinson was the first American citizen in her family which migrated to this country from the Middle East. Sosy's family moved to Canyon Lake in 2012 from Orange County and she went on to graduate from Temescal Canyon High School. Sosy and her husband, A.J., have six children, whose ages range from two to 25 years old.

In Canyon Lake, Sosy is serving for the second consecutive year as President of the Family Matters Club. The club hosted over 38 events, meetings and family meet-ups last year alone. Sosy is also a member of the Canyon Lake Lioness Club, serves as the official bingo caller at the Canyon Lake Senior Center, and graciously delivers groceries for homebound seniors in need. The nomination of Sosy for the Citizen of the Year award summed it up well: "Our community is made a much, much better place because of Sosy and all her hard work and dedication."

In light of all that Sosy has done for the community of Riverside County and the city of Canyon Lake, it is only fitting to honor her as Citizen of the Year. Sosy has contributed immensely to the betterment of our region and I am proud to call her a fellow community member, American and a constituent of the 42nd Congressional District. I add my voice to the many who will be congratulating Sosy Robinson on being named Citizen of the Year by the Canyon Lake Chamber of Commerce.

IN RECOGNITION OF JIM PERRY'S SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Jim Perry for his 35 years of distinguished service at the Downriver Community Conference located in Southeast Michigan. Jim's commitment to the downriver community has touched the lives of many and is significantly responsible for this region's collective and coordinated success.

The Downriver Community Conference (DCC) is one of the oldest and most successful interlocal agreements in the State of Michigan and the United States. Representing twenty communities in Wayne County, the DCC coordinates and supports a vast array of initiatives for its communities including; Economic Development, Job Training and Placement, Veterans Services, Public Safety Coordination, Transportation, Weatherization, Energy Assistance, Senior Support Programs, and Youth Support Programs. In addition to these programs, the DCC also acts as a critical voice in the region, advocating for the interests of its communities with elected officials and government agencies. It is a model nationwide for communities working together on many issues to the benefit of the entire region. The DCC is a remarkable success story, and Jim Perry has been a critical component of that success for the last 35 years. Humble in his success, he reminds me that it is only by putting together an extraordinary team that he can do great things. I entirely agree with that, and I stand here today to say that Jim Perry is a remarkable recruiter, coach and leader.

Jim was born and raised in Allen Park, MI, graduated from Allen Park High School, and went on to play basketball at the University of Houston, where he excelled. He returned to Michigan and in 1981, began working at the DCC and has worked there ever since. In the year 2000, Jim was named executive director of the DCC, making him the youngest person to have served in that role. He has given so much of his time and talent to our region, serving on a wide variety of boards and commissions including; the Michigan Department of Human Services Board where he served as chair, the Southeast Michigan Substance Abuse Services Board, Wayne County Head Start Board, and the Detroit-Wayne Mental Health Authority Board, and the Allen Park Parks and Recreation Commission. Jim gives his time because it is who he is, and it is what our community needs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor my friend Jim Perry for his 35 years of service to our communities. I thank him for his leadership and wish him many more years of success.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NO LEAD IN THE AIR ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the No Lead in the Air Act. The bill prohibits the use of lead in aircraft fuel by 2021. Lead exposure can have harmful effects on children as well as adults. Since 1980, the amount of lead in the air has decreased 89 percent, but while lead gas for automobiles has been banned since 1995, the piston-engine aircraft industry and airports that supply their fuel continue to use leaded aircraft fuel. Without a federal ban, they will continue to do so and put our communities and children at risk.

Lead particles from airplane exhaust can fall widely during flight and there may be high concentrations of lead near airports. It is estimated that 16 million people live and three million children go to school within a half-mile of airports that sell leaded aircraft fuel, called avgas. The health effects of lead in children include behavioral and learning problems, lower IQ, hyperactivity, slowed growth, hearing problems, and anemia. Lead exposure can cause premature births and spontaneous abortions in pregnant women, and adults can suffer from increased blood pressure, decreased kidney function, and reproductive problems.

Seventy-five percent of piston-engined aircraft already operate safely with fuel that does not use lead. However, small airports continue to only sell leaded avgas for these piston-engine aircraft. But small airports will have to comply if the federal government bans the use of leaded fuel. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which implements the Clean Air Act, announced plans in 2010 to phase out leaded aviation fuel, but in the intervening six years we still have not seen a proposed rule. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has created a task force of government and aviation industry stakeholders to study alternative fuels for piston-engine aircraft that do not use lead, and the agency has indicated it may certify lead-free aviation fuel sometime in 2018.

With so much evidence of the harmful impacts of lead exposure, we can no longer put our communities at risk. My bill would give enough time for a full phase-out of lead in aircraft fuel—five years—by directing the FAA Administrator, in consultation with the EPA Administrator, to issue regulations prohibiting the use of leaded fuel in aircraft in U.S. airspace beginning January 1, 2021.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

TRIBUTE TO NEW YORK'S 7TH
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT HOL-
OCAUST SURVIVORS

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a special group of my neighbors who are an incredible part of the Williamsburg, Brooklyn community—Holocaust survivors. I am privileged to represent approximately one thousand Holocaust survivors in New York's 7th Congressional District.

These individuals arrived from across Eastern Europe fleeing unspeakable horrors. Many of them had lost their mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters during one of the darkest periods in our history. They survived concentration camps and came to the U.S. as refugees looking to launch a fresh start, rebuild anew and escape the horrific crimes they had suffered in their pasts.

From a small group of survivors that arrived after World War II in Williamsburg, this community has grown and flourished by tens of thousands. From meager beginnings, they rebuilt their families, religion and traditions, and established a wonderful part of our City that, to this day, contributes to New York's diverse cultural mosaic. Their accomplishments are a testament to the perseverance and persistence of the Holocaust survivors.

In 1966, Holocaust survivors created the United Jewish Organizations (UJO) of Williamsburg which is celebrating its 50th year of service to the community. The UJO was conceived as a vehicle to help the Yiddish-Speaking population adapt to life in the United States, participate in the civic sphere and ensure access to public benefits.

Throughout their jubilee of activity the UJO has put the needs of Holocaust survivors at the forefront. They work closely with the Claims Conference and the NYC Department for the Aging to help survivors age gracefully and independently with a wide array of social services and in-home care. They have truly evolved into a community anchor for all of Brooklyn and New York. I salute their many achievements.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in acknowledging all that our nation's Holocaust Survivors have not only endured, but also accomplished. We must never forget the horrors they underwent, but, likewise, we must also honor the achievements they secured in the face of enormous adversity. Their spirit and strength are a credit to the Williamsburg community, to our City and, indeed, to our entire nation.

CLERMONT COUNTY
COMMISSIONER BOB PROUD

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate Clermont County Commissioner

Bob Proud on a distinguished career serving the residents of Clermont County and southern Ohio.

A seven-term Clermont County Commissioner, Bob has effectively guided Clermont County into the 21st Century. Involved in everything from the construction of a new Clermont County Animal Shelter in 2002, to the reclamation of the former Ford transmission plant on State Route 32, to his service for senior citizens as a Meals on Wheels volunteer, to his work on the Coalition for a Drug-Free Clermont County, Bob has served Clermont with integrity and class.

Bob is also a champion for our troops, both at home and abroad. He has been nationally recognized for his work on behalf of our military and has even founded a local military family support group.

For the last twenty-five years, Bob has served as Chairman of the Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission (OVRDC), a public regional planning commission that serves twelve southern Ohio counties, the majority of which are in Ohio's Second Congressional District. As he prepares to retire from this position, I commend him for his hard work and leadership to make Southern Ohio a better place to live and work.

Thank you Bob, and God bless you.

IN HONOR OF T&M ASSOCIATES

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to T&M Associates of New Jersey on the occasion of their 50th anniversary and for their tireless work meeting the engineering needs of communities throughout New Jersey and the United States.

On March 21, 1966, Richard T. Noble and Richard M. Schulz founded T&M Associates and over the past five decades it has grown from a seven-person local operation to a nationally-recognized professional services firm, with 400 professionals stationed in offices throughout the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Midwestern states. Even with this remarkable growth, the enduring mission of T&M Associates has remained the same: to improve quality of life and create sustainable value for their employees, clients and partner communities.

Over the years, T&M Associates has demonstrated a remarkable commitment to providing high-value consulting, technical and engineering solutions to promote the vitality of their community and business partners. This commitment to community improvement goes beyond just business interests, as demonstrated by their "50 Ways of Giving" community service campaign—a company wide effort to bring employees together to participate in 50 acts of volunteerism that give back to their communities. Through its reputation for excellence and commitment to community improvement, T&M Associates has proven itself to be a source of pride for New Jersey and a true asset to the New Jersey business community.

Mr. Speaker, I join with all of New Jersey in congratulating T&M Associates on their Gold-

en Anniversary and encouraging them to continue providing quality consulting, engineering, and technical services throughout the United States.

RECOGNIZING THE CAROLINA PANTHERS FOR THEIR NFC CHAMPIONSHIP VICTORY

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my hometown team, the Carolina Panthers, for representing the National Football Conference in Super Bowl 50 after winning the NFC Championship. I would like to congratulate the entire Panthers organization on this outstanding accomplishment and thank them for the excitement the team brought the entire Panthers fan base this season.

Before this NFL season started, few people expected the Carolina Panthers to win enough games to seriously compete for a spot in the postseason playoffs. However, Head Coach Ron Rivera and star quarterback Cam Newton led the Panthers to victory in 15 of their 16 games during the regular season, making the Panthers only the seventh team in NFL history to win 15 games and set a franchise record for the most victories in a single season. In the postseason, the Panthers hosted the NFC Championship in Charlotte for the first time in the franchise's history and earned a spot in the Super Bowl for only the second time since the team organized in 1995. Needless to say, this was a fantastic season that will long be remembered by the players, coaches and fans.

While the team's success on the football field this season is certainly extraordinary, what is even more impressive about the Carolina Panthers is the culture of the organization. The Carolina Panthers are one of the most highly respected organizations in the National Football League; filled with high-character individuals who continually display an active commitment to community service. A great example of their community-centered focus is the grant fund the Carolina Panthers established after the historic flooding that took place in South Carolina during October of 2015. This fund awarded \$250,000 in grants to assist 19 high school athletic departments in the region repair or replace damaged or lost athletic equipment, supplies and infrastructure. This is just one of the many ways the Carolina Panthers give back to their community through charitable acts and community service programs.

In addition to their long list of charitable acts and dedication to serving the community off the field, the Carolina Panthers are frequently recognized as having players and coaches who play the game with character and integrity. This year alone, several players have been recognized for their sportsmanship and leadership on the field. Cam Newton was recognized as the league's Most Valuable Player and Thomas Davis, a linebacker on the Panthers' defense, was awarded the Bart Starr Award, given to a player who exemplifies

character and leadership on and off the field. Head Coach Ron Rivera was also recognized as the league's Coach of the Year and was honored by the Panthers for two consecutive years as its Salute to Service Award nominee. This award is given by the NFL in partnership with the United Services Automobile Association to a member of the NFL community who demonstrates a commitment to honor and support members of the armed services, veterans and their families.

Clearly, the Carolina Panthers are a first-class organization both on and off the field. This can be attributed to one man, Carolina Panthers' founder and owner Jerry Richardson. Mr. Richardson is the epitome of dignity and class, and is one of the finest men I have ever known. In everything he does, Mr. Richardson carries himself as a true professional and Southern gentleman. He always looks for opportunities to give back to the community he loves and to assist those who are in need. Mr. Richardson is a loyal and patient man who genuinely cares about those who work for him, and I would argue he is one of the finest owners in NFL history. Without Mr. Richardson, there would be no Carolina Panthers and the success this franchise has achieved on the field and the superior culture established within the organization would not be possible. There is no one more deserving of this championship than Mr. Richardson, and I look forward to him leading the Carolina Panthers to even greater success in the future.

Mr. Speaker, please join me again in congratulating the Carolina Panthers for their NFC Championship victory, and thanking Mr. Richardson and the entire Panthers organization for their tireless efforts to better our community. Go Panthers and Keep Pounding!

CINCO RANCH SWIM TEAM RACES TO STATE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Cinco Ranch High School Swimming Program from Katy, TX for earning Gold, Silver and Bronze medals and for setting a state record at the 2016 Division 6A finals of the University Interscholastic League (UIL) Swimming and Diving Championships.

The Cinco Ranch Cougars took home three gold medals, two silver, and three bronze in addition to a State Record for the 200-yard freestyle relay at the UIL State Competition on February 20th, 2016. In addition to this impressive standing, both girls and boys teams were in the top 10 ranking within the division 6A tier; how impressive. Athletes compete in the Breaststroke, Medley, Freestyle, Diving, Butterfly, and Backstroke categories. We are proud of our Cinco Ranch Cougars and can't wait to see what they do next.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the Cinco Ranch High School Swimming Program for all of their success at the UIL meet. Keep up the great work.

IN RECOGNITION OF RICHARD "RICK" D. DEGRAW

HON. KYRSTEN SINEMA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the retirement of an Arizona political legend, a recognized business leader, an advocate for worker's rights and a dedicated husband and father. Richard "Rick" DeGraw has been a fixture in Arizona public service for three decades, working for Governor Bruce Babbitt, the Arizona Legislature and the Maricopa County Community College District.

Mr. DeGraw is now retiring after serving as the Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer at CopperPoint Mutual Insurance Company, Arizona's largest provider of worker's compensation insurance. Mr. DeGraw came to CopperPoint in 2006 to create and oversee the Communications and Public Affairs Division. In this role he oversaw the successful rebranding of the company and was responsible for the Legal Division, Human Resources, Facilities, Real Estate Operations, Security, Public Affairs, Legislative Affairs, Community Development, Corporate Outreach and Executive Administration and Support.

In addition to his more than full-time job, Mr. DeGraw spearheaded the effort to build a memorial honoring the 119 fallen firefighters and paramedics who have died in the line of duty in Arizona. Mr. DeGraw has long been an advocate and friend to the Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona, even earning their coveted award of Honorary Fire Fighter many years ago, one of only ten individuals in the State of Arizona to earn the title.

Mr. DeGraw has been an advisor and a mentor for generations of Arizona elected officials and their staff on both sides of the aisle. He has worked on over 100 political campaigns and is credited with helping create true political change in Phoenix and across Arizona. Mr. DeGraw is also a social worker and served as a pastor and a Chaplain in his youth. I can personally attest to Rick's political genius, calming warmth, and dedication to public service. I am proud to call him my friend and I know he will continue to bring positive change to our community for many years to come.

CELEBRATING THE INSTALLATION OF A HISTORIC MARKER FOR JIMMIE LEE JACKSON

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, the Alabama Tourism Department will honor the life of Voting Rights martyr, Jimmie Lee Jackson, by installing a historic marker in front of the courthouse in Marion, Alabama. I want to join in acknowledging this great honor and the tremendous personal sacrifice of the family of Jimmie Lee Jackson who lost his life in the fight for voter equality in America.

At the age of 26, Jimmie Lee Jackson, a Marion, Alabama native, was brutally killed at the hands of an Alabama State Trooper on February 18, 1965. He was killed while trying to protect his mother and 82 year old grandfather after attending a voting rights rally. The state trooper confronted the family at Mack's Café in Marion and shot Jimmie Lee Jackson at point blank range for simply shielding his family from the intimidation and retribution being carried out by law enforcement. It is heartbreaking to think that it was the audacity of this young man and his family to peacefully protest for their constitutional rights that led to his brutal murder at the hands of law enforcement.

The senseless murder of Jimmie Lee Jackson served as the catalyst for the voting rights movement in Selma. Jimmie Lee Jackson deserves to have his proper place in American history as a true agent of change. Likewise, I was honored to sponsor the National Park Service efforts that led to the City of Marion being added to the Selma to Montgomery Historic Trail as the starting point of the historic road of the Voting Rights Movement.

So today, March 2, 2016, it is befitting that the State of Alabama would honor Jimmie Lee Jackson with the installation of a historic marker at the front of the courthouse in Marion. The marker will commemorate the bravery and sacrifice of Jimmie Lee Jackson, and will also serve as a reminder for generations to come that freedom is not free—but rather freedom is paid for at a hefty cost.

The senseless killing of Jimmie Lee Jackson shocked the consciousness of the American public and galvanized the local folks to be even more resolved to fight against the inequalities in voting. Jimmie Lee Jackson's death helped reignite the push for federal voting protections and led James Bevel of the SCLC to organize the Selma to Montgomery march.

On February 24, 2016, the United States Congress awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to the Foot Soldiers who participated in the 1965 Voting Rights Marches from Selma to Montgomery. While Jimmie Lee Jackson did not live to participate in the Selma to Montgomery March, he was there in spirit. It was his spirit that gave strength to the weak, that gave courage to the scared, and that gave hope to the hopeless.

To the family of Jimmie Lee Jackson, I say this Nation owes a debt of gratitude for your personal sacrifice for which we will never be able to fully repay. My hope is that the national recognition of the special role that Jimmie Lee Jackson played and today's historic marker by the State of Alabama is a powerful tribute to his life and the significance of his sacrifice.

Today we celebrate Jimmie Lee Jackson, but we are also reminded that the fight for voting rights still continues. Jimmie Lee Jackson did not stand on the sidelines, waiting patiently for justice to come. Nor should we. We must continue the fight to renew the full protections of the Voting Rights Act, to ensure that every eligible voter is able to cast their ballot, and that every vote matters.

Jimmie Lee Jackson recognized the importance of the vote. He recognized the power that the ballot box held. Accordingly, we owe

it to ourselves and to the memory of Jimmie Lee Jackson to continue his fight.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 3, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 8

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States Central Command, United States Africa Command, and United States Special Operations Command.

SD-G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of the Treasury.

SD-138

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Forest Service.

SD-366

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine State Department reauthorization, focusing on an opportunity to strengthen and streamline United States diplomacy.

SD-419

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Homeland Security.

SD-342

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security

To hold hearings to examine measuring results and proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

SD-138

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Airland

To hold hearings to examine Air Force modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Personnel

To hold hearings to examine military personnel posture in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SH-216

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety and Security

To hold hearings to examine the state of the United States maritime industry, focusing on the Federal role.

SR-253

3 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Government Accountability Office and the Congressional Budget Office.

SD-192

MARCH 9

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine cooperative federalism, focusing on state perspectives on Environmental Protection Agency regulatory actions and the role of states as co-regulators.

SD-406

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Justice.

SD-226

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Indian Health Service.

SD-124

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of General Joseph L. Votel, USA, for reappointment to the grade of general and to be Commander, United States Central Command, and Lieutenant General Raymond A. Thomas III, USA, to be general and Commander, United States Special Operations Command.

SD-G50

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider S. 1878, to extend the pediatric priority review voucher program, S. 1077, to provide for expedited development of and priority review for breakthrough devices, S. 1101, to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for the regulation of patient records and certain decision support software, S. 2055, to amend the Public Health Service Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to national

health security, S. 1767, to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to combination products, S. 1597, to enhance patient engagement in the medical product development process, S. 2512, to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus, and the nomination of John B. King, of New York, to be Secretary of Education.

SD-106

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Defense Health Program.

SD-192

2 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Agriculture.

SD-124

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the enforcement of the antitrust laws.

SD-226

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for Indian Country.

SD-628

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Energy.

SD-138

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To hold hearings to examine the Department of Defense security cooperation and assistance programs and authorities.

SR-232A

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold closed hearings to examine military space threats and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SVC-217

MARCH 10

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

SD-192

SD-628

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the Department of Defense budget posture in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

SD-G50

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Thursday, March 3, 2016

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: God of mercy, thank You for giving us another day. Give us the resolve to bring an end to hunger in our world.

Quicken our spirits so that we will know the blessings of living together in unity and peace. We all have our personal aspirations and ideas of what is best. Grant that we might know the satisfaction of sharing our common concerns and experience the joy of mutual accomplishment.

Bless the Members of the people's House with success in bringing fruition to all efforts to work toward common solutions to the issues facing our Nation, solutions which often seem so distant.

During the days of the coming week, may the American people be able to communicate their hopes for the efforts of their Congressmen and -women. May they understand as well that a unified Nation is equally the work of each of us where we live.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) come for-

ward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WELCH led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

KLAMATH DAM REMOVAL SECRET MEETINGS

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, a government for, by, and of the people cannot hold its most basic deliberations in secret. I am not talking about matters of national security, but basic, everyday government deliberations.

Yet the Department of the Interior, the State of California, and the State of Oregon are meeting with select groups in private in places like Portland, Sacramento, and even proposed San Francisco, to make public policy decisions affecting my district in the north end of California and south Oregon without public or legislative input. In order to be invited to join these meetings, individuals are required to sign confidentiality agreements and agree to a predetermined outcome.

The issues involving the Klamath River water and possible removal of the hydroelectric dams are indeed of concern to the public. The decisions regarding whether these dams should be removed and what water and environmental policy should govern the region are fundamentally a public policy decision. The deliberations should be made in public and free for all to be involved, yet long-distance locations an hour or a full day's drive away don't make that possible, especially when they are held in secret.

These secret meetings have been happening for years, and they are wrong. The agencies of the government are meeting in secret to create a 501(c)(3) dam removal entity called the Klamath River Renewal Corporation. This new corporation will be the recipient of taxpayer and utility rate dollars.

These meetings need to be held in public where the people can meet and hear what they are planning to do.

TRUTH IN LABELING

(Mr. WELCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, this is pure Vermont maple syrup made at a family farm, Maverick Farm, by friends and neighbors Arthur and Anne Berndt. People love it. Sugar makers from Maine to Michigan, it is a labor of love and real additional income in small farm economies.

Big companies have figured that out. They know that consumers love maple syrup. But instead of buying maple syrup from those farmers, they provide fake labels to mislead consumers. These are some of the biggest companies in the world.

Take a look at some of these companies and the products that they claim have maple in them. Quaker, Kellogg's, Hood, Bakery on Main. They say they have maple, but there is not a trace of maple in it. The ingredients include rice syrup, artificial flavor, caramel color, gelatin, molasses. That is not maple syrup.

We who represent farmers producing maple syrup are writing the FDA telling them to have truth in labeling. Let's have real syrup, not fake labels.

VERA HOUSE WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN

(Mr. KATKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about an important issue that faces our society: domestic violence and sexual abuse. Violence against women is a worldwide but underexamined problem. Sadly, we are still far from a world where women are free from the threat of harassment, battering, and sexual assault.

Consider some of these statistics: according to the FBI, a woman is battered every 15 seconds; 2 to 4 million American women are abused each year; up to 50 percent of homeless women and children in this country are fleeing domestic violence.

Our country has a moral obligation to stand up against those who exploit their power to commit violence against women and children.

In an effort to raise awareness and put an end to domestic violence and sexual abuse, the Vera House in Syracuse will be kicking off the White Ribbon Campaign. This campaign is one of the largest efforts in the world to prevent and end domestic violence and

sexual assault. The campaign will begin Friday, March 4, and run through March 31.

During this month, thousands of my constituents in central New York will be wearing a white ribbon or white wristband to raise awareness about domestic violence and sexual abuse. Wearing the white ribbon demonstrates a personal pledge to never commit, condone, or remain silent about violence against women or children.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in this effort.

CONGRATULATING RIVERSIDE CITY COLLEGE ON THEIR CENTENNIAL

(Mr. TAKANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th anniversary of Riverside City College, one of the oldest and most respected community colleges in California. Since 1916, RCC has provided thousands of students with an engaging and affordable educational experience that prepares them for successful careers.

The college boasts of many great alumni who have gone on to lead remarkable lives, but the one I admire most is my father. He attended RCC to build up credits for a degree in business administration, and with that degree he was able to earn a good-paying job that secured my family's place in the middle class.

I was honored to serve on RCC's board of trustees for 22 years, and I take pride in what the school continues to do for thousands of students every year.

Congratulations to Riverside City College on your centennial. Thank you for the incredible impact you have had on our community.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS STATE FLOOR HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the 10th anniversary of the Pennsylvania State Floor Hockey Tournament at Bald Eagle High School, located in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District. This Special Olympics tournament is scheduled for this Saturday and Sunday.

Each year more than 300 Special Olympians and more than 100 coaches from across Pennsylvania compete in this event, which includes teams from a large number of the Commonwealth's counties.

I congratulate the athletes participating in this week's tournament in

advance for their hard work and perseverance, rising above the challenges to excel in athletics. I look forward to seeing them in person at Bald Eagle High School this weekend.

I also commend Special Olympics of Pennsylvania for its work in planning this annual event.

Mr. Speaker, the Thompson family has a special connection to these games. My younger son, Kale, who is now a music teacher, was the first student director when the floor hockey tournament moved to the Bald Eagle Area site.

Along with the annual floor hockey tournament, Special Olympics holds its summer games each year at Penn State University in State College. This is a great organization which helps so many people across Pennsylvania and our Nation.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF ISABELLA GREENWAY

(Mr. GALLEGO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as part of Women's History Month to recognize and celebrate the life of Isabella Greenway, the first female Member of Congress from Arizona.

Congresswoman Greenway was a trailblazer, social activist, and dedicated public servant. She worked tirelessly to serve the people of Arizona and the Nation through the Great Depression and many years after.

Congresswoman Greenway was particularly committed to ensuring that those who served the Nation in World War I were taken care of after they returned home. Following the war, she opened Arizona Hut, a furniture manufacturer focused on employing disabled veterans and their families.

During her time in Congress, she was known for her willingness to fight for the rights of veterans, including acting as a vocal defender of veterans' pensions and introducing legislation to expand the VA in Arizona.

Congresswoman Greenway was an inspiration for women in our State and throughout our country. She refused to be limited or defined by her gender, instead devoting her life to serving and protecting the most vulnerable members of our society.

I hope my colleagues will join with me in honoring the lasting legacy of Isabella Greenway.

TEXAS LAWMAN—OFFICER DAVID HOFER

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, he was a son, a brother, and a soon-to-be

groom. David Hofer's life was ripped from this world on March 1, 2 days ago, leaving behind his family and his fiancée.

Officer Hofer was 29. He was from Fort Worth, Texas. He was shot and coldly murdered after a gunfire exchange with an outlaw in a nearby park. The criminal who gunned him down was a 22-year-old drug addict who had been released from prison that very day.

Officer Hofer served with the Euless, Texas, Police Department. He had been serving there for 2 years. He had previously served with the NYPD for 5 years. He dedicated his life to protecting the rest of us.

Mr. Speaker, hundreds of blue lights from patrol cars lit the way as Officer Hofer's body was transported from the hospital.

Mr. Speaker, this is the 16th police officer killed this year. In fact, two officers now have been murdered in 2 days.

Mr. Speaker, we must always honor and respect and mourn the life of such valiant men and women. The thin blue line stands strong in the face of evildoers that live among us.

The men and women who wear the badge are America's best—men such as Officer David Hofer. They sacrifice their lives to keep the homefront safe from the dregs of society, misfits, and bandits who wish to do the rest of us harm.

Back the blue, Mr. Speaker. Back the blue.

And that is just the way it is.

IT IS TIME TO ACT ON IMMIGRATION

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I want to give a little history about the efforts of the Democratic Party to secure our Southern border.

We had an immigration bill last session. In that bill that passed the Senate with bipartisan support—not only every Democrat, but also many Republicans, like JOHN MCCAIN and MARCO RUBIO—we had \$40 billion to secure our Southern border. Talk about a secure wall—security, making sure that illegal products and illegal people do not cross across that border—we had that.

Thanks to the Republicans' failure to take action in this body, the House of Representatives, and simply pass the Senate bill, there is still no security on the Southern border. There are people, illegal drugs, and illegal products sneaking across every day because this body hasn't acted.

Now, it is pie in the sky to think that some other country is going to pay for a wall to protect America. It isn't going to happen.

What we did is we actually had fines for people who were here illegally. So people who are here illegally were actually the very ones who contributed money back into our coffers to help secure our Southern border, not to mention the additional economic benefit and taxes that they would pay going forward.

It is time to act on immigration and secure our border.

□ 0915

TRIBUTE TO COACH JIM BELDEN

(Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a beloved member of the Hamilton County, Indiana, community, Jim Belden.

Jim was a dedicated public servant and a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. Sadly, he passed away after a battle with cancer. He will be dearly missed by the Hoosier community, but what a legacy he left.

Jim left his mark as a family man, a teacher, a U.S. Navy veteran, and a 23-year member of the Hamilton County Council, but he is best known for being one of the best football coaches in Indiana, an Indiana Football Hall of Fame coach. I am the daughter of a high school football coach as well.

For more than 30 years, Jim coached and mentored young men in Westfield, Noblesville, and Carmel High Schools. He led Carmel High School to four State championship titles and is the 12th winningest coach in Indiana State history.

I attended his memorial service just last weekend. There were hundreds of players there. I heard from those whose lives had been touched. There were those he coached who were now not quite so young, because he coached in the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and the 2000s.

I also heard from the students he taught, the assistant coaches, the faculty he worked with, the community he served, and, most importantly, his family, who loved him so dearly.

I offer my deepest condolences to his family, especially his wife Bev. They had just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. We all mourn his loss and cherish his memory. What a legacy lives on in Jim Belden.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4557, BLOCKING REGULATORY INTERFERENCE FROM CLOSING KILNS ACT OF 2016, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 4, 2016, THROUGH MARCH 11, 2016

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call

up House Resolution 635 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 635

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 4557) to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce; and (2) one motion to recommend.

SEC. 2. On any legislative day during the period from March 4, 2016, through March 11, 2016—

(a) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and

(b) the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

SEC. 3. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KELLY of Mississippi). The gentleman from Alabama is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alabama?

There was no objection.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 635 provides for consideration of H.R. 4557, the Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act of 2016. The resolution provides for a closed rule. No amendments are made in order, as none were filed with the Rules Committee. Additionally, the rule also provides for standard adjournment authority.

H.R. 4557 is an important piece of legislation. It is a bipartisan bill that addresses an unfortunate recurring theme: overreach by the EPA that takes jobs away from hardworking Americans.

Last September the EPA finalized the National Emission Standards for

Hazardous Air Pollutants for Brick and Structural Clay Products and Clay Ceramics, commonly known as Brick MACT. Only in the Federal Government would we string that many words together and think it makes sense.

In that rule, the EPA set stringent standards for brick industry emissions of mercury and nonmercury pollutants as well as health-based standards for acid gases.

EPA previously promulgated Brick MACT standards in 2003. That rule was vacated by a Federal court in 2007, but, by that time, many brick manufacturers had already spent millions of dollars in irreversible compliance costs.

Now, let's be clear. Those aren't just costs that are borne by those businesses. Those get passed along to the American consumers, raising the price of brick to each and every one of us.

The brick industry faces again the uncertainty of having to spend millions of dollars to comply with revised Brick MACT while the fate of the rule makes its way through the court system.

Mr. Speaker, the brick industry employs thousands of Americans at more than 70 brick plant and supporting facilities nationwide. These facilities are located in 38 States. Alabama, my home State, is one of the top five States for brick manufacturing capacity and faces some of the largest job losses.

Unlike other industries targeted by EPA's overreach, the brick industry is dominated by small, family-owned businesses that have been struggling in our current economy.

EPA estimates industry-wide annual compliance in Brick MACT will cost \$25 million annually. The industry estimates that the costs may be as much as \$100 million per year. For a facility with two kilns, which is the industry average, costs are estimated to be \$4.4 million.

Remember, those costs get passed along to us consumers in the cost of bricks. These costs will likely cause many of these small facilities to shut their doors and are, of course, over and above the millions of dollars already spent by the industry to comply with the earlier rule that was vacated by the D.C. Circuit.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4557 ensures that the brick industry will not again have to make millions of dollars in expenditures before Brick MACT works its way through the courts.

H.R. 4557 would implement a legislative stay to Brick MACT and block the rule until all related court challenges have been resolved by the Federal courts.

Opponents of this bill argue that a legislative stay is unnecessary because the brick industry can request a judicial stay in Federal court; however, as an attorney, I can tell you that the standard to receive such a stay is incredibly high and such stays are rarely granted.

The recent case of *Michigan v. EPA* provides a great example of why this legislation is necessary. In that case, the Supreme Court found the EPA's Utility MACT rule to be legally flawed and remanded the case; however, by that time, utility companies had already been forced to spend billions of dollars to comply with Utility MACT. Remember, that gets passed along to the consumers in our utility bills.

EPA Acting Administrator Janet McCabe stated that, although EPA lost, the Supreme Court's decision was of limited practical effect because the majority of power plants were already in compliance or well on their way to compliance. Thus, the EPA was, in practicality, able to evade any meaningful judicial review, which makes a mockery of this process.

The EPA should not get to do the same again to the brick industry while Brick MACT makes its way through the court system. Thousands of American jobs should not be put at risk due to a rule which has already been vacated once. Again, the consumers of America should not be penalized for the same reason.

I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 635 and the underlying bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill. The Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act—certainly, a mouthful to say—is yet another of the endless list of attempts by this body—and it will not become law—to block implementation of an administrative rule or regulation that some people don't like, rather than tackling the issues that this country cares about and that I hear from voters back home when I have townhall meetings or I am at the grocery store.

I hear about fixing our broken immigration system and securing our border. I hear about balancing the budget deficit. I hear about making sure that Medicare and Social Security are solvent and there for the next generation. I hear about making sure we create jobs, that housing is affordable, and that our roads and bridges are safe so traffic can flow safely and quickly.

Yet, here we are again, spending an entire legislative day debating a bill that won't become law, which you will certainly hear about over the next couple of hours, regarding a series of regulations around brick kilns.

Once again the Republicans are approaching a complex rulemaking process with a knee-jerk reaction in a non-transparent process with a closed rule, not even allowing a debate for a single amendment.

Not only is this bill not transparent and not necessary, in this particular case, it sets a bad precedent because

the courts already have the authority to issue a stay of compliance on a final rule.

As we saw through the recent delay of the Clean Power Plan, our judicial and legislative systems are separate for a reason.

Let the courts do their work and let us do ours. Let us not preempt the courts from their normal process. Our judicial and legislative systems are separate. Individuals, organizations, and companies have plenty of recourse and options through the court system to address this matter.

The floor of the House is not the place to be requesting a stay. If there was something done that was illegal or wrong, the place to request a stay is the courtroom.

But time and time again legislation like this has come to this floor, disposing of the judicial process and shortcutting the justice system that we have to delay a rule until all legal challenges are completed, which effectively means that frivolous lawsuits can jam up the rule indefinitely and forever.

Over the past 45 years, it is proven that clean air regulations are important to protect the public health and consistent with growing a strong economy.

Of course, I understand the pressure requirements placed on brick and clay ceramic makers. They have legitimate reasons to provide input to question or contest the rule.

The judicial avenue is and will be available to them. That is the appropriate venue to request a stay, not the floor of the House of Representatives.

There are several brick and clay companies in my State of Colorado, such as the Summit Brick & Tile Company in Pueblo, Colorado. I know these companies updated and changed their industry after the 2004 rule.

But, unfortunately, like so many rules under the administration of George Bush, the rule is written so poorly that it was vacated by the courts in 2007, which means there is no rule under the authority of the Clean Air Act, which this Congress has made the law of the land, that sets standards for eliminating air pollution in this industry. Not only is that unacceptable, but, of course, it needs to be rectified urgently.

There is nothing special about brick kilns. Like anything else, of course, they affect air quality. I have a picture of what we are talking about here.

Of course, like any other economic activity that creates issues regarding air quality, we need a nuanced and thoughtful rule that ensures that the economic activity continues, subject to maintaining the public health.

In fact, the EPA has a responsibility under section 112 of the Clean Air Act to control pollution from stationary sources of pollution, like brick kilns.

Let me repeat that. The EPA was actually required by Congress to implement a rule that covers this industry because, according to the judiciary, President Bush enacted the rule incorrectly.

If Congress wants to get at the underlying statutes, let's have that debate. Let's talk about what the EPA should and shouldn't do.

I believe that we should close down loopholes that exempt fracking from regulation under the Clean Air Act. We have a series of bills that would do that—the BREATHE Act and the FRESHER Act—to ensure that the small site exemption does not occur, does not exist with regard to fracking activities that, in the aggregate, can have a considerable impact on air quality.

We have seen areas of our State and our neighboring State of Wyoming have worse air quality than downtown Los Angeles because of the extraction and fracking-related activity, which is largely exempt from the clean air law.

That is the debate I would be happy to have. Let's debate the appropriate jurisdiction of the EPA. If there is something we got wrong in that with regard to brick kilns and their authority or responsibility, that is the place to have the debate.

□ 0930

It is not to give an indefinite stay to simply implement what is the law of the land and the will of Congress, which is the EPA's responsibility.

Congress has told the EPA, through the Clean Air Act, that they have the responsibility under section 112 to control pollution from stationary sources of pollution. They tried to do it under President Bush. It was tossed out by the courts because it was improperly constructed, and they are doing their job.

Yet, Congress is trying to use something that is normally a judicial procedure, a stay, to get around the very mandate that Congress gave the Environmental Protection Agency. So it is simply the wrong way to go about it.

Brick and clay plants, if left unregulated, which is why they are covered under the Clean Air Act, can be major sources of toxic air pollutants, like hydrogen fluoride, hydrogen chloride, and hazardous metal, heavy metal pollutants that can endanger people with everything from asthma to cancer.

Now, I don't know about you, but I would rather have my children running around a playground of a town where plants that put out hazardous pollutants are regulated in a thoughtful and responsible way, which is what this rule attempts to do.

That is why opponents of this legislation include the Center for Biological Diversity, League of Conservation Voters, League of Women Voters, National Resource Development Council, the Sierra Club, and the Union of Concerned Scientists.

All of these experts understand that, for 15 years, Congress has expected air pollution from these facilities to be covered by the Clean Air Act standards, and that delaying the process further is irresponsible, prevents the EPA from doing their mandate that Congress has given them, sets a dangerous public health precedent, and will endanger lives of American citizens.

Not only is this a treacherous pattern but, again, it is a waste of time. This bill won't become law. It came out of committee on a party-line vote. The majority knows that, even in the off chance that the Senate were to consider this legislation, which I highly doubt, the President would veto the bill.

It was indicated in the Statement of Administration Policy that I will include in the RECORD, Mr. Speaker, which reads, in part, H.R. 4557 would create "an incentive for parties to litigate this rulemaking and the related corrections notice for as long as possible in order to delay air pollution reductions."

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 4557—BLOCKING REGULATORY INTERFERENCE FROM CLOSING KILNS ACT OF 2016—REP. BILL JOHNSON, R-OH, AND SEVEN CO-SPONSORS

The Administration strongly opposes H.R. 4557, which could extend indefinitely deadlines for the brick and structural clay industry to limit mercury and other hazardous air pollution. Specifically, H.R. 4557 would extend compliance deadlines for the Brick and Structural Clay National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants until all litigation on the final rule is complete, thereby creating an incentive for parties to litigate the rulemaking and the related corrections notice for as long as possible in order to delay air pollution reductions. In the meantime, H.R. 4557 would undermine the public health protections of the Clean Air Act (CAA) by allowing further emissions of approximately 30 tons per month of toxic air pollution from brick and clay products production facilities. These toxic emissions include mercury, gases, and other hazardous metals which are associated with a variety of acute and chronic health effects, including cancers.

The CAA required the Environmental Protection Agency to finalize pollution standards for toxic air pollution from all industrial sectors by 2000. Since then, sources in many other sectors have been complying with standards that limit their emissions of cancer-causing toxic air pollutants. The subject rule reflects CAA requirements while providing flexible compliance options and the maximum time allowed by law for compliance. It also makes distinctions between requirements for small and large kilns in order to reduce the impacts on small businesses.

Since its enactment in 1970, and subsequent amendment in 1977 and 1990—each time with strong bipartisan support—the CAA has improved the Nation's air quality and protected public health. Over that same period of time, the economy has grown over 200 percent while emissions of key pollutants have decreased nearly 70 percent. Forty-five years of clean air regulation have shown that a strong economy and strong environ-

mental and public health protection go hand-in-hand.

Because H.R. 4557 threatens the health of Americans by allowing more toxic air pollution, if the President were presented with H.R. 4557, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.

Mr. POLIS. Again, so long as even there are the most frivolous lawsuits and anybody could continually file a lawsuit, and so long as any one of them is pending, the rule does not take effect. It is indefinitely stayed.

So, yet again, we are debating something on the floor going nowhere. We are not debating improving our roads and bridges. We are not debating securing our southern border. We are not debating balancing our Federal budget deficit. We are not debating making America more competitive and bringing jobs from overseas and China back home here and creating a growing middle class. Instead, we are wasting time on legislation that won't become law, that shouldn't even become law because it is the inappropriate role of this body.

There are so many things that we could be talking about even within the energy realm and the EPA realm that would be productive discussions. I will give you an example.

I have had the opportunity in hearings in the Natural Resources Committee to bring up a bipartisan bill that I have with Mr. GOSAR twice this week, and this is the third time. It is a bill that would create jobs and create renewable energy. It is called the Public Lands Renewable Energy Development Act.

Why don't we have a rule on that bill or bring it up on suspension?

Mr. GOSAR and my bill would incentivize renewable energy development by streamlining the permitting process on public lands for renewable energy projects.

Isn't that something we can come together about, making sure that we can find a way to expedite siting for renewable energy products on public land, creating jobs and creating clean energy?

Or we could be discussing the need for a permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, something that just last week was offered as a bipartisan amendment by myself and Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. SANFORD of South Carolina.

But, of course, that amendment was not given an hour of debate, 2 hours of debate, like this. We have the rule, we have the bill. The entire legislative day is discussing a stay on brick kilns. It should be in a courtroom, not in the U.S. House.

We weren't even given 10 minutes. We weren't even given 1 minute to discuss that bipartisan amendment from Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. SANFORD and myself.

Look, the list goes on and on of what we could be doing. It has been said that politics is the art of the possible.

When the American people look at our proceedings on the floor and what the Republican majority is doing with Congress, is it any wonder that the approval rating of Congress is 8 percent?

The people look at Congress and say, look, you are spending an entire day debating a stay on kiln rules. First of all, why are you talking about it? It should be in a courtroom.

Second of all, aren't there critical national priorities that you need to be debating right now to create jobs, make America more competitive overseas, improve our schools, make college more affordable, balance our deficit, fix our broken immigration system, improve our roads and bridges, make America more competitive and grow the middle class? Aren't there?

That is what 92 percent of the American people are crying out. There is still time for this Congress to listen. I hope that we begin.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Alabama for his important work on this issue, and also the gentleman from Ohio.

I rise today in support of H.R. 4557, the BRICK Act. This legislation delays an unnecessary EPA rule that imposes overly strict emission standards on American brick kilns.

Manufacturers shouldn't have to deal with the hassles of an overzealous regulator in the first place, but they should at least get to have their day in court fighting this unreasonable regulation before incurring millions of dollars of expense to comply.

Since 2003, brick manufacturers have reduced emissions from kilns by 95 percent. However, EPA decided to impose another Washington mandate on small businesses, which they may not even be able to meet.

Shuttering U.S. brick factories will lead to higher costs for American consumers, making it even more expensive to open a business or raise a family.

Additionally, manufacturers will shed good-paying jobs in places like Malvern, Arkansas. And, once again, our manufacturing needs will move offshore to a place that pollutes much worse than we do here.

Not only is the EPA out of touch with reality on this issue, they exhibit no common sense when they regulate jobs away from America and send them to countries that pay sub-par wages and have sub-par pollution control technology. They have a lose-lose proposition.

Mr. Speaker, this is the same EPA that negligently released millions of gallons of toxic mine water into the Animas River, tried to cover up and minimize their actions, refused to take

responsibility, and resisted being held accountable.

If anyone needs more regulation, it is this out-of-control Federal agency, not hard-working Americans.

Mr. Speaker, for the sake of our environment and economy, I urge the House to pass the BRICK Act to keep the air cleaner and to save good-paying jobs here at home.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to talk a little bit more about when we say this bill will never become law what exactly we mean and I mean when I indicate that.

There have been an enormous number of bills that have passed the House of Representatives. As an example, repealing the Affordable Care Act, ObamaCare, taking health care away from tens of millions of Americans—that has passed this House in one form or another 64 times. So 64 times the House of Representatives has voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act. That is clearly what people who have been elected to the House have decided to do.

The House of Representatives alone, however, doesn't get to make the law. We have the United States Senate and we have a President. The United States Senate usually requires, as a procedural matter, 60 votes to move legislation forward. And of course, even after a bill in the same form passes the House and the Senate, for it to become law, the President needs to sign it. If the President vetoes it, it immediately comes back and will require two-thirds to override the veto.

So what we are talking about with this bill around kilns, like this one here, we are talking about a bill that probably will pass the House. I expect that that is what we are spending a whole day on. I don't think the Republicans would want to spend a whole day on it if it was going to fail. So let's assume it passes.

I have heard no indication whatsoever that the Senate is going to take this up in any way, shape, or form. In the unlikely event that the Senate takes it up, they have the challenge of getting 60 votes.

The bill had no bipartisan support in committee. It is hard to see how they would get enough Democratic support in the Senate to get the 60 votes to pass the bill. Even if they somehow did, President Obama and the administration is, of course, against providing a stay against their own rule that they promulgated. Therefore, we are spending an entire day doing nothing, talking about brick kilns, fiddling while Rome burns.

The American people are upset, Mr. Speaker. The American people want this Congress to tackle the issues that affect them and their family around their kitchen table: rising rents and mortgage prices; maybe the mom or

the dad or the kids lost their job and need to get back to work; making sure that they have a way to commute to work every day, and that our roads and bridges are strong, and they spend a minimal amount of time in traffic so they can spend more time with their family or at work earning money; balancing our budget deficit to secure a strong financial future for our country; making sure that Medicare and Social Security are there and safe, not only for today's retirees, but for the next generation and the next generation of American retirees; securing our southern border and replacing our broken and nonsensical and costly immigration system with one that works for America to make us more competitive, generate more revenues, unites families, and reflects our values as a Nation of immigrants.

We could be doing any of those things. We could be debating any of those things. No one says they are easy. It starts with time to debate here on the floor of the House. What a great way to spend a day, a Thursday.

By the way, Speaker RYAN and the Republicans don't even have us working Friday, tomorrow. They are sending us all home on Thursday, after spending a day debating brick kilns. We are not even debating anything tomorrow, Friday, or Monday or Tuesday or Wednesday or Thursday or Friday of next week.

I mean, look, the American people would love this kind of job which the Republican majority has given themselves with the congressional calendar where we have worked 3½ days this week, get Friday off, all of next week off, and spend a whole day debating brick kilns, rather than the issues that the American people care about.

That is what is going on here. That is why Congress has such a low approval rating.

Well, look, let's begin by debating the issues that people care about. They are hard. I get that. Fixing our broken immigration system, balancing our budget deficit, securing Medicare and Social Security, are not easy issues.

But why don't we spend a day doing that, today, all day, having ideas from both sides of the aisle, having Members speak about their plans to make America better and stronger, rather than debating a court procedure, a stay on brick kilns, all day, and then rewarding ourselves with a day off tomorrow.

Job well done, Congress. We did a court procedure on brick kilns as our work product and, for that, we deserve a week and a half off.

That is the job that Congress has defined for itself, and it is why the American people are so outraged.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule that would require the Republicans to stop their partisan games and hold hearings on the budget proposal, the President's budget.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, if we pass this previous question motion that I am making, we can actually begin the important discussion of how we can bring our budget into balance and restore fiscal responsibility.

Let's have hearings on the President's budget proposal. Let's talk about the tradeoffs around investments and savings. Let's have those meaningful discussions, rather than to spend an entire day on brick kilns, and then giving ourselves a week and a half off.

We can still salvage this Congress for the American people. We can restore trust in the integrity and the desire of the American Government to do good and tackle the big issues we face. I am confident we can.

That can begin by passing my previous question motion and getting to debate about the budget and balancing our budget and the tradeoffs and investments in our future, rather than debating kilns and giving ourselves a week and a half off.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 0945

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I was very interested to hear my colleague talk about what makes the American people frustrated and angry right now. I have just come through a primary campaign for my seat in Alabama. I spent a lot of time with the citizens of the United States in my district. They are indeed frustrated and angry, and let me tell you why. They are frustrated and angry because we have a government in the Federal sphere that is out of control, and it is taking away their jobs.

This regulation will take away jobs from people in Alabama. It will take away jobs from people in 38 States. That is what makes them angry: a Federal Government that cares so little about them that they would put out a regulation like this that kills jobs, that raises the price of bricks on those of us who buy them to build our homes, and the Federal Government thinks that is necessary. But we have to do this today because we have a Federal Government that doesn't understand that its role is not to do that.

So let's get back to what this really means. This is not a partisan issue. Two of the sponsors of this bill are from the other party. My colleague from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) is a sponsor of this bill and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP) is a sponsor of

this bill because they understand it is going to hurt their constituents. It is going to hurt the average working person in this country.

My colleagues on the other side don't get that, and because they don't get that, there is no job too small for them, in their minds, to kill. There is no business too small for them to put out of business. There is no amount of money that they are going to increase what we consumers have to pay that is too much for them. They would kill every job, and they would hold back every consumer's ability to get a home at a decent price to get some little, small, almost nothing benefit.

There were no amendments offered as part of this debate today because none were offered in committee and none were offered to the Rules Committee. So this is not a closed debate because we are trying to close off amendments. There aren't any amendments.

Now, I heard a lot about a judicial stay. I said this in my initial remarks: saying that there is a "possibility" for a judicial stay says nothing about the practicality of it. I addressed that in my opening remarks. Let me just tell you, as a practical way, it is almost impossible to get this stay. Yet, when they got a stay several years ago, it was so late in the game that the brick industry had to go ahead and make all the changes, which cost jobs and increased the price of bricks for the rest of us.

Here is the truth. My colleague said that there is an obligation to have a rule here. There is already a rule on particulate matter, and most of the benefits in the rule that has been proposed here are to particulate matter. It is already regulated.

And, oh, by the way, when that prior regulation that was turned back by the Supreme Court was put out there and the industry had to go ahead and comply with it, they had already reduced emissions by over 90 percent.

So what we are talking about in this regulation is another effort to get at some small, little, almost imperceptible benefit at the cost of hundreds, if not thousands, of American jobs. I am astonished that this administration is so insensitive to that. The people of America are angry and frustrated because of that.

Now, I know that we are going to be having debates about some of the issues that my colleague talked about, and I am looking forward to those debates. But to the people who work in the industry, this is an important issue. It may not be important to other people in this House, but it is important to people that work for these brick businesses. It is important to me as a consumer looking at what it is going to cost me for buying new bricks.

So I would hope that there would be greater sensitivity from this administration for my colleagues in this House

to people who are being hurt by this rule, and I hope that we will all take this very seriously as the important issue that it is.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to, first of all, congratulate the gentleman from Alabama. He had a recent election and triumphed, and, of course, we will be excited to continue to serve with him.

When we run, it is difficult. We have our ear to the ground, and we hear people. The gentleman mentioned that people were angry back home. I think there are a lot of people in my district that are angry, too. But again, I want to ask the gentleman: Is what they were angry about this brick kiln rule, or were they angry about the failure of Congress to secure our borders and the failure of Congress to balance our budget, all those things? I want to ask whether what you heard about in that anger was about brick kilns, or was it about other issues.

I yield to the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, they are angry about a Federal Government that is overreaching and hurting them. That is what they are angry about.

Mr. POLIS. Did anybody who was angry bring up brick kilns as something they were angry about?

I yield to the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, they brought up the EPA over and over again. I hear about the EPA everywhere I go.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, as I indicated, it would be an appropriate discussion for us to talk about the statutory obligations of EPA. We might have differing opinions. I think they should have the authority, we should remove the small site exemption, and they should look at emissions from the fracking industry and the extraction. But that is a valid discussion to have.

Instead of that, we are saying you are doing what we told you to do, but we want to grant a stay. So Congress, under the EPA in section 112, directed the EPA under the Clean Air Act to promulgate these regulations. President George Bush did so. They were tossed out, and now there is a new set of regulations going forward to implement what Congress wanted the EPA to do.

Now, if the gentleman from Alabama doesn't want the EPA to do that, let's have that discussion about EPA's authority. I am happy to do it. I have ideas. Maybe there are some areas the EPA shouldn't have that mandate authority. There are other areas, like making sure we look at emissions from fracking where we need enhanced authority because there is something

called the small site exemption in the Clean Air Act, where, even though each particular fracking pad has a very small contribution to air quality, when you start having thousands of them in a limited area—which we do—it starts looking a lot less like a couple automobiles and a lot more like a large industrial factory. So they shouldn't be exempt just by nature of being small, because when you have a lot of small things, it equals not only one big thing, it equals 10 big things and 100 big things.

We have over 40,000 active wells in the greater Weld-Larimer County area alone, and there is an enormous impact on our air quality, which is exempt under the small site exemption.

So again, section 112 directs the EPA to promulgate these rules. If we want to open up the mandate that Congress has given the EPA, let's have that discussion.

As an individual legislator, I might trade you this brick kiln authority if we can close the small site exemption. I would say, fine; my constituents care more about closing that small site exemption than they do if there are two brick kilns in our entire State. So I think, in general, my constituents and Coloradans care more about making sure our air quality is good and protected with regard to the emissions from the fracking activity than from the two brick kilns. So I would be open to that as a legislative compromise. That is how legislation is made. But we are not allowed to have that debate.

The gentleman mentioned, oh, no amendments were brought forward. Guess what? We did a motion in the Rules Committee—I am sure the gentleman from Alabama remembers—yesterday to do an open rule on this. If that had passed—and it failed on a partisan vote. Not a single Republican voted to allow an open rule on this bill. If that had succeeded, if that had passed, that open rule the Democrats wanted, we could then introduce amendments like the ones that I mentioned to talk about the authority of the EPA or other issues that we have to improve the statutory requirements in charge of the EPA. Right on the floor, we would have the opportunity to do that. Instead, we have an entire day on brick kilns without even being allowed to introduce amendments that affect our clean air and water in any way, shape, or form. I think we can do better.

The gentleman also asked what the impact of the brick kilns on this is. The EPA estimates that the brick and clay rule would reduce national air toxins by approximately 375 tons in 2018. Again, that is what Congress has told the EPA to do under the Clean Air Act.

If Congress wants the EPA to do something different, let's have that discussion, section 112, other sections

of the Clean Air Act, of the mandate that Congress has given the EPA. Let's not use a court procedure, a stay, that won't become law to short-circuit something that Congress has told the EPA to do. It is positively schizophrenic for Congress to require an agency to do something and then say we are not going to allow you to do what we told you to do.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, if I heard the gentleman correctly, he wants an open rule. Let me restate: we had no amendments offered at the committee of jurisdiction and no amendments offered before the Rules Committee, so that would fly in the face of our desire here to have regular order. What he has proposed is not regular order. He is proposing chaos, and I don't think the American people want us to be in chaos around here.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from the great State of Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS), a great conservative leader.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the time to speak on the rule.

Our process for a bill to get to the floor is it has to go through the Rules Committee. This was a very, very important bill. It was interesting in the debate, listening to the sides, because there is an argument by constituents of having clean bills: one bill, one issue, simply understood, vote on it, instead of this horse trading that sometimes gets proposed: you give me this for my giving you that. I can tell you one thing, I know in my district they really don't like this. They want us to be accountable for a bill.

I also get frustrated with how easy it is to throw away jobs: I only have blank kilns in my State. Those are good-paying jobs for families, and they are important to the fabric of those communities. Just to say, "Look, I have only got two. I don't really worry about them. Let's trade them off" is really troublesome, and I am sorry we fall into that type of debate.

This is really part of a bigger debate in that the courts have already done this with the Clean Power Plan, the climate change bill. The debate is, "Okay. EPA, you can do the regulation. Do the regulation." What the EPA likes to do is do the regulation; and they play this game: "We know it is not legal, so we will impose the regulation. We know it is not legal. We are going to force industry to comply," and then when the courts say it is not legal, they have already gone too far, and the jobs have been lost.

That is factual. That is what happened in 2003. That is what happened when the EPA promulgated the MACT rules in 2003. The rules were vacated by the Federal court in 2007—vacated—which means you can't do it. But the

industry already was forced to do it, either to spend millions and millions of dollars, or they had to close.

So fast-forward. Where are we today?

The courts have done this on the Clean Power Plan, the big climate change rule. What the Court just said for the first time, the Supreme Court said: No, we are not going to force the States to implement the Clean Power Plan until it is litigated in the courts. They put a stay on everyone and said: Don't do anything. Let's have the legislative-judicial debate and fight.

That is what this bill does. Let's just have the litigation on the legality of this new rule. If it comes up that it is legal, then the industry is going to have to comply. But if it comes out that it is not legal, guess what. We are going to save jobs. We are going to save communities, and we are going to save the family income for two kilns in a State or maybe more, depending upon the brick-producing capability of individual States.

So I am down here just to thank the Rules Committee for bringing this bill to the floor.

I look forward to the debate. It is much more than brick kilns. It is about when can the EPA force a company to do something. We would hope they could only do it after it has been ruled legal by the courts if someone challenges a rule, and that is what this does.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

□ 1000

There is a way that our process works around here. If a rule is illegal, it will be tossed out by the courts. George Bush's attempt to implement the Clean Air Act, section 112, around brick kilns was tossed out.

What this bill does is says that, so long as there is a court challenge, there is some sort of presumption that the rule be tossed out and, therefore, an indefinite stay.

Now, there can be challenges all the time. The minute one fails, another one can be launched. No bones about it. This would indefinitely prevent this rule from ever taking effect with regard to brick kilns.

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, I haven't heard from a single constituent on this issue. Like the gentleman from Alabama, my constituents are angry. They are angry at Congress and worried about the direction of the country.

They want Congress to replace our broken immigration system with one that works and secure our southern border. They want Congress to return to fiscal responsibility and balance our budget. They want to make sure that college is affordable for the next generation. They want to make sure they have good jobs here at home.

They want to make sure that we encourage companies to locate and grow

here in America rather than take tax advantages for relocating overseas or inverting their headquarters to occur overseas, as occurs with today's Tax Code. Those are some of the many issues that my constituents want me to talk about here.

I just had a townhall meeting last week in Fort Collins, Colorado, the biggest city in my district. About 100 people came. Not a single person was angry about brick kilns.

But, yes, there was a lot of anger there about some of the issues I indicated: people frustrated with why Congress refuses to act on making college more affordable, why Congress has refused to act in making sure that Medicare and Social Security are there for the next generation, and why Congress doesn't put our country on the course of fiscal responsibility and reduce our debt-to-GDP ratio.

But, instead, we are debating a bill that won't become law without allowing amendments here on the floor. That is what a closed rule means. If it was an open rule, I would be able to offer my amendment to close the small site exemption with regard to fracking, but I can't.

We are debating a bill that won't become law, attacking a rule that is merely implementing what Congress has told not just this President, but any President, to do. George Bush tried. Obama tried.

It is because Congress, under the Clean Air Act, tells the executive: You have to do this under section 112. And then, when they do it, there is the issue that went through the courts.

That is appropriate. That is their role. But when they implement what Congress has told them to do, we are saying: No. There is an indefinite stay.

That is what this bill would do.

I know, Mr. Speaker, regardless of what they think about any of the policies or rules put out by this administration or any administration, it is not the place of Congress to issue stays on rules. It is the role of the courts.

The Constitution established three branches in our government for a reason under our Constitution. It is the courts' job, not Congress' job, to interfere with the legal process.

It is not Congress' job to take that responsibility away from the judicial branch, especially with a bill that would actually encourage more frivolous litigation by rewarding frivolous litigation and endless appeals when we already have too much of that in our court system.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" to defeat the previous question, which, if we succeed on that vote, we can immediately get to hold hearings on the President's budget proposals.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the rule as well, again, a closed rule, not allowing amendments here on the floor of the House.

I yield back the balance of my time.
Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The American people are sick and tired of a Federal Government that is out of control. I can't imagine the Founders of this country in that constitutional convention in Philadelphia in 1787 saying: Now, let's think about a government agency established under our Constitution that is going to regulate bricks.

No wonder the American people look at the Federal Government and say: Have you lost your mind? What are you doing?

These other issues that my colleague talked about are important. But we have to stop here in this Congress to deal with another out-of-control Federal agency—and the EPA is one of the most out-of-control Federal agencies—to protect the American people and, yes, to protect their jobs, to protect the consumers of America from unreasonable increases in the cost of things like bricks because another agency has done something to them.

Yes, I think the American people are sick and tired of that, and I do think it is the role of this Congress to do something about it.

The EPA would have no power except for the fact that this Congress has delegated its own legislative power to the EPA. Indeed, it is our role to not only provide oversight to that power but, on particular occasions, to take it back.

Frankly, in my judgment, we don't take it back enough. If we took it back more, we would be protecting the American people more and their jobs and the cost of things that they buy every day.

I understood what my colleague just said. I heard it. But once again I don't think he is thinking about those people who work for these brick companies and I don't think he is thinking about the consumers of America, who are ready for the Congress to do its job to protect them. This is one way that we can do that.

Mr. Speaker, I again urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 635 and the underlying bill.

The material previously referred to by Mr. POLIS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 635 OFFERED BY
MR. POLIS OF COLORADO

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC 4. Immediately upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 624) Directing the Committee on the Budget to hold a public hearing on the President's fiscal year 2017 budget request with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget as a witness. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and rank-

ing minority member of the Committee on the Budget.

SEC. 5. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of House Resolution 624.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT
IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution. . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools

for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RIBBLE). The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adopting the resolution, if ordered, and suspending the rules and passing S. 1826, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 233, nays 174, not voting 26, as follows:

[Roll No. 106]

YEAS—233

Abraham	Emmer (MN)	LaHood
Aderholt	Farenthold	LaMalfa
Amash	Fincher	Lamborn
Amodei	Fitzpatrick	Lance
Babin	Fleischmann	Latta
Barletta	Fleming	LoBiondo
Barr	Flores	Long
Barton	Forbes	Loudermilk
Benishek	Fortenberry	Love
Bilirakis	Fox	Lucas
Bishop (MI)	Frelinghuysen	Luetkemeyer
Bishop (UT)	Garrett	Lummis
Black	Gibbs	MacArthur
Blackburn	Gibson	Marchant
Blum	Gohmert	Marino
Bost	Goodlatte	Masse
Boustany	Gosar	McCarthy
Brady (TX)	Gowdy	McClintock
Brat	Granger	McHenry
Bridenstine	Graves (GA)	McKinley
Brooks (AL)	Graves (MO)	McMorris
Brooks (IN)	Grothman	Rodgers
Buchanan	Guinta	McSally
Buck	Guthrie	Meadows
Bucshon	Hanna	Meehan
Burgess	Hardy	Messer
Byrne	Harper	Mica
Calvert	Hartzler	Miller (FL)
Carter (GA)	Heck (NV)	Miller (MI)
Carter (TX)	Hensarling	Moolenaar
Chabot	Hice, Jody B.	Mooney (WV)
Chaffetz	Hill	Mullin
Clawson (FL)	Holding	Murphy (PA)
Coffman	Hudson	Neugebauer
Cole	Huelskamp	Newhouse
Collins (GA)	Huizenga (MI)	Noem
Collins (NY)	Hultgren	Nugent
Comstock	Hunter	Nunes
Conaway	Hurd (TX)	Olson
Cook	Hurt (VA)	Palazzo
Costello (PA)	Issa	Palmer
Cramer	Jenkins (KS)	Paulsen
Crawford	Jenkins (WV)	Pearce
Crenshaw	Johnson (OH)	Perry
Culberson	Johnson, Sam	Pittenger
Curbelo (FL)	Jolly	Poe (TX)
Davis, Rodney	Jones	Poliquin
Denham	Jordan	Pompeo
Dent	Joyce	Posey
DeSantis	Katko	Price, Tom
DesJarlais	Kelly (MS)	Ratcliffe
Diaz-Balart	Kelly (PA)	Reed
Dold	King (IA)	Reichert
Donovan	King (NY)	Renacci
Duffy	Kinzing (IL)	Ribble
Duncan (SC)	Kline	Rice (SC)
Duncan (TN)	Knight	Rigell
Ellmers (NC)	Labrador	Roby

Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions

Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Walberg

Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin

□ 1026

Mrs. DINGELL, Messrs. WELCH and COOPER changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 106, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster

Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Walberg
Walden

Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin

NAYS—174

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Clever
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Engel
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge

Gabbard
Gallo
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebach
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham
Lujan, Ben Ray
Lujan, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Neal

Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 235, noes 173, not voting 25, as follows:

[Roll No. 107]

AYES—235

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishak
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Cooper
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)

Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fox
Franks (AZ)
Frelighuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)

NOES—173

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Clever
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster

Frankel (FL)
Gabbard
Gallo
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebach
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham
Lujan, Ben Ray
Lujan, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)

Nadler
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—26

Allen
Bass
Beatty
Cárdenas
Costa
Engel
Franks (AZ)
Graves (LA)
Green, Gene

Griffith
Harris
Herrera Beutler
Hinojosa
McCaul
Meeks
Moore
Mulvaney
Napolitano

Pascarell
Pitts
Roybal-Allard
Sanchez, Loretta
Smith (WA)
Wagner
Westmoreland
Zinke

NOT VOTING—25

Beatty
Bishop (UT)
Black
Cárdenas
Costa
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.

Hinojosa
Love
McCaul
McDermott
Moore
Mulvaney
Napolitano
Pascarell
Perry

Pitts
Roybal-Allard
Sanchez, Loretta
Smith (WA)
Wagner
Westmoreland
Zinke

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1033

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 107, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 107, I was detained and missed the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAMES "MAGGIE" MEGELLAS POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1826) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James "Maggie" Megellas Post Office, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WOMACK. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 406, nays 1, not voting 26, as follows:

[Roll No. 108]

YEAS—406

Abraham	Blum	Carney
Adams	Bonamici	Carson (IN)
Aderholt	Bost	Carter (GA)
Aguilar	Boustany	Carter (TX)
Allen	Boyle, Brendan	Cartwright
Amash	F.	Castor (FL)
Amodei	Brady (PA)	Castro (TX)
Ashford	Brady (TX)	Chabot
Babin	Brat	Chaffetz
Barletta	Bridenstine	Chu, Judy
Barr	Brooks (AL)	Cicilline
Barton	Brooks (IN)	Clark (MA)
Bass	Brown (FL)	Clarke (NY)
Becerra	Brownley (CA)	Clawson (FL)
Benishek	Buchanan	Clay
Bera	Buck	Cleaver
Beyer	Bucshon	Clyburn
Bilirakis	Burgess	Coffman
Bishop (GA)	Bustos	Cohen
Bishop (MI)	Butterfield	Collins (GA)
Bishop (UT)	Calvert	Collins (NY)
Black	Capps	Comstock
Blackburn	Capuano	Conaway

Connolly	Higgins	Meeks
Conyers	Hill	Meng
Cook	Himes	Messer
Cooper	Holding	Mica
Costello (PA)	Huizenga (MI)	Miller (FL)
Courtney	Hoyer	Miller (MI)
Cramer	Hudson	Moolenaar
Crawford	Huelskamp	Mooney (WV)
Crenshaw	Huffman	Moulton
Crowley	Huizenga (MI)	Mullin
Cuellar	Hultgren	Murphy (FL)
Culberson	Hunter	Murphy (PA)
Cummings	Hurd (TX)	Nadler
Curbelo (FL)	Hurt (VA)	Neal
Davis (CA)	Israel	Neugebauer
Davis, Danny	Issa	Newhouse
Davis, Rodney	Jackson Lee	Noem
DeFazio	Jeffries	Nolan
DeGette	Jenkins (KS)	Norcross
Delaney	Jenkins (WV)	Nugent
DeLauro	Johnson (GA)	Nunes
DelBene	Johnson (OH)	O'Rourke
Denham	Johnson, E. B.	Olson
Dent	Johnson, Sam	Palazzo
DeSantis	Jolly	Pallone
DeSaulnier	Jones	Palmer
DesJarlais	Jordan	Paulsen
Deutch	Joyce	Payne
Diaz-Balart	Kaptur	Pearce
Dingell	Katko	Pelosi
Doggett	Keating	Perlmutter
Dold	Kelly (IL)	Perry
Donovan	Kelly (MS)	Peters
Doyle, Michael	Kelly (PA)	Peterson
F.	Kennedy	Pingree
Duckworth	Kildee	Pittenger
Duffy	Kilmer	Pocan
Duncan (SC)	Kind	Poe (TX)
Duncan (TN)	King (IA)	Poliquin
Edwards	King (NY)	Polis
Ellison	Kinzinger (IL)	Pompeo
Ellmers (NC)	Kirkpatrick	Posey
Emmer (MN)	Kline	Price (NC)
Engel	Knight	Price, Tom
Eshoo	Kuster	Rangel
Esty	Labrador	Ratcliffe
Farenthold	LaHood	Reed
Farr	LaMalfa	Reichert
Fattah	Lamborn	Renacci
Fincher	Lance	Ribble
Fitzpatrick	Langevin	Rice (NY)
Fleischmann	Larsen (WA)	Rice (SC)
Fleming	Larson (CT)	Richmond
Flores	Latta	Rigell
Forbes	Lawrence	Roby
Fortenberry	Lee	Rogers (AL)
Foster	Levin	Rogers (KY)
Fox	Lewis	Rohrabacher
Frankel (FL)	Lieu, Ted	Rooney (FL)
Franks (AZ)	Lipinski	Ros-Lehtinen
Frelinghuysen	LoBiondo	Roskam
Fudge	Loebach	Ross
Gabbard	Lofgren	Rothfus
Gallego	Long	Rouzer
Garamendi	Loudermilk	Royce
Garrett	Love	Ruiz
Gibbs	Lowenthal	Ruppersberger
Gibson	Lowe	Rush
Gohmert	Lucas	Russell
Goodlatte	Luetkemeyer	Ryan (OH)
Gosar	Lujan Grisham	Salmon
Gowdy	(NM)	Sánchez, Linda
Graham	Luján, Ben Ray	T.
Granger	(NM)	Sanford
Graves (GA)	Lummis	Sarbanes
Graves (LA)	Lynch	Scalise
Graves (MO)	MacArthur	Schakowsky
Grayson	Maloney	Schiff
Green, Al	Carolyn	Schrader
Griffith	Maloney, Sean	Schweikert
Grijalva	Marchant	Scott (VA)
Grothman	Marino	Scott, Austin
Guinta	Massie	Scott, David
Guthrie	Matsui	Sensenbrenner
Gutiérrez	McCarthy	Serrano
Hahn	McClintock	Sessions
Hanna	McCollum	Sewell (AL)
Hardy	McGovern	Sherman
Harper	McHenry	Shimkus
Harris	McKinley	Shuster
Hartzer	McMorris	Simpson
Hastings	Rodgers	Sinema
Heck (NV)	McNerney	Sires
Heck (WA)	McSally	Slaughter
Hensarling	Meadows	Smith (MO)
Hice, Jody B.	Meehan	Smith (NE)

Smith (NJ)	Trott	Waters, Maxine
Smith (TX)	Tsongas	Watson Coleman
Speier	Turner	Weber (TX)
Stefanik	Upton	Webster (FL)
Stewart	Valadao	Wenstrup
Stivers	Van Hollen	Westerman
Stutzman	Vargas	Whitfield
Swalwell (CA)	Veasey	Williams
Takai	Vela	Wilson (FL)
Takano	Velázquez	Wilson (SC)
Thompson (CA)	Visclosky	Wittman
Thompson (MS)	Walberg	Womack
Thompson (PA)	Walden	Woodall
Thornberry	Walker	Yarmuth
Tiberi	Walorski	Yoder
Tipton	Walters, Mimi	Yoho
Titus	Walz	Young (IA)
Tonko	Wasserman	Young (IN)
Torres	Schultz	Zeldin

NAYS—1

Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—26

Beatty	McCaul	Rokita
Blumenauer	McDermott	Roybal-Allard
Byrne	Moore	Sanchez, Loretta
Cárdenas	Mulvaney	Smith (WA)
Cole	Napolitano	Wagner
Costa	Pascrell	Welch
Green, Gene	Pitts	Westmoreland
Herrera Beutler	Quigley	Zinke
Hinojosa	Roe (TN)	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1039

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and not present for rollcall vote No. 108. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on final passage of S. 1826, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James "Maggie" Megellas Post Office.

BLOCKING REGULATORY INTERFERENCE FROM CLOSING KILNS ACT OF 2016

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 635, I call up the bill (H.R. 4557) to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 635, the bill is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4557

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. EXTENDING COMPLIANCE DATES (PENDING JUDICIAL REVIEW) OF RULES ADDRESSING NATIONAL EMISSION STANDARDS FOR HAZARDOUS AIR POLLUTANTS FOR BRICK AND STRUCTURAL CLAY PRODUCTS MANUFACTURING OR CLAY CERAMICS MANUFACTURING.

(a) EXTENSION OF COMPLIANCE DATES.—

(1) **EXTENSION.**—Each compliance date of any final rule described in subsection (b) is deemed to be extended by the time period equal to the time period described in subsection (c).

(2) **DEFINITION.**—In this subsection, the term “compliance date” means, with respect to any requirement of a final rule described in subsection (b), the date by which any State, local, or tribal government or other person is first required to comply.

(b) **FINAL RULES DESCRIBED.**—A final rule described in this subsection is any final rule to address national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants (NESHAP) for brick and structural clay products manufacturing or clay ceramics manufacturing under section 112 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7412), including—

(1) the final rule entitled “NESHAP for Brick and Structural Clay Products Manufacturing; and NESHAP for Clay Ceramics Manufacturing” published at 80 Fed. Reg. 65469 (October 26, 2015);

(2) the final rule entitled “NESHAP for Brick and Structural Clay Products Manufacturing; and NESHAP for Clay Ceramics Manufacturing: Correction” published at 80 Fed. Reg. 75817 (December 4, 2015); and

(3) any final rule that succeeds or amends the rule described in paragraph (1) or (2).

(c) **PERIOD DESCRIBED.**—The time period described in this subsection is the period of days that—

(1) begins on the date that is 60 days after the day on which notice of promulgation of a final rule described in subsection (b) appears in the Federal Register; and

(2) ends on the date on which judgment becomes final, and no longer subject to further appeal or review, in all actions (including actions that are filed pursuant to section 307 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7607))—

(A) that are filed during the 60 days described in paragraph (1); and

(B) that seek review of any aspect of such rule.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on H.R. 4557.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Today, we have the important opportunity to protect the American brick

manufacturing industry and the ceramic kiln industry and its 7,000 employees from a costly regulation that has yet to survive a judicial scrutiny.

At this time, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP), one of the original sponsors of this bill.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I certainly appreciate the opportunity to speak on this bill.

I rise today in support of H.R. 4557, the Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act, or the BRICK Act. This legislation is important to preserving the viability of brick manufacturing facilities all across the country.

Simply put, the BRICK Act pauses the EPA's 2015 National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants until court challenges of the rule are resolved. I am very concerned that brick manufacturers in my district, as well as those in the districts of my colleagues, may be required to spend hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars to satisfy an EPA requirement similar to the EPA's 2003 rule, a rule, it should be noted, that was vacated by the Federal courts.

□ 1045

For example, Cherokee Brick & Tile from Macon, Georgia, spent over \$1.5 million to install controls in order to comply with the EPA's invalidated 2003 rule.

Cherokee is a small, family-owned business, and as my colleagues with small businesses in their districts can attest, \$1.5 million is a very substantial sum that can cut heavily into a bottom line. This rule impacts more than just Cherokee Brick & Tile in my State, but also General Shale and Pine Hall Brick, among others.

A basic material for home building and construction, bricks are more than just a figurative cornerstone in the United States construction industry. Passing this legislation would guarantee the EPA would wait until its 2015 emission standards are reviewed by the courts before implementing the rule and before manufacturers across the country are needlessly required to spend millions of dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 4557, the BRICK Act.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4557 is an unnecessary bill that would set a terrible precedent.

As the Statement of Administration Policy, which outlines the justification for President Obama's veto threat, states:

“H.R. 4557 would undermine the public health protections of the Clean Air Act by allowing further emissions of approximately 30 tons per month of toxic air pollution from brick and clay products production facilities. These

toxic emissions include mercury, gases, and other hazardous metals which are associated with a variety of acute and chronic health effects, including cancers.”

Mr. Speaker, the statement from President Obama goes on to say:

“Because H.R. 4557 threatens the health of Americans by allowing more toxic air pollution, if the President were presented with H.R. 4557, his senior advisers would recommend that he veto the bill.”

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4557 is the wrong remedy at the wrong time. Mr. Speaker, this bill is premature.

While I understand that the industry feels that it has been penalized for complying with the 2003 rule, that is not sufficient reason in itself to set up a unique process that incentivizes all parties that object to this rule to file endless challenges to the rulemaking.

The Brick and Clay Maximum Achievable Control Technology, or MACT, regulations that are the subject of this legislation are the subject of ongoing legal actions by industry and by public health communities across this Nation.

The courts already have the ability to grant a stay on this rule, yet for some reason the industry has not yet made that request to the court. But there are a number of pending cases filed by the industry on this very rule.

This week, Mr. Speaker, it was reported that the industry petitioned the court to put four suits on hold until the EPA decides whether to grant their requests to reconsider the regulations.

The pending decision by the court and by the EPA indicate that there is no need for H.R. 4557, as there are ample remedies available under the Clean Air Act to address concerns about this rule. Additionally, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4557 does not actually address the merits or the faults with the Brick and Clay MACT rules.

Instead, what this bill does is takes these rules and this rulemaking outside of the process in the Clean Air Act that allows the EPA to issue final rules with deadlines for their implementation, without waiting for the conclusion of all the appeals and all the reviews.

Mr. Speaker, this bill would also delay any subsequent rule issued that is similar in scope and similar in objective until any legal challenges to it were completed as well. In other words, Mr. Speaker, this bill allows an opportunity for endless lawsuits on this very issue.

I fear, Mr. Speaker, that if H.R. 4557 were to become law, we would end up in a situation where we would never, ever control air polluting emissions from these facilities, no matter how cost-effective or how necessary that rule might be. Mr. Speaker, this is a policy that we must reject.

As the Statement of Administration Policy also noted, if rules cannot go

forward until all legal actions are complete, there is a strong incentive to use frivolous legal challenges to prevent any rules from being implemented.

Under that scenario, we never would have achieved the improvements in air quality and in public health that have been accomplished under the Clean Air Act. We know, Mr. Speaker, that the Clean Air Act has delivered many cost-effective health benefits to the American people over the years.

It has been demonstrated many times that we do not have to make a choice between healthy air and jobs in this Nation. We can have both.

We cannot agree, Mr. Speaker, to setting this precedent and establishing a process that will delay important public health protections and encourage, at the same time, frivolous legal challenges to our clean air rules.

The brick, clay, and tile industries would be better served by pursuing the options available to them right now under the Clean Air Act.

For all of these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I must urge all of my colleagues to oppose this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON) for introducing this important bill. This is an industry that has been hard hit by the recession. It has lost 45 percent of its jobs. There are 70 of these plants around the country, and they employ 7,000 people.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON), the sponsor of the legislation.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the BRICK Act would simply allow for the consideration and completion of any judicial review regarding the EPA's 2015 National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for the brick, clay, and tile industries before requiring compliance.

So why is this important? Because this rule needlessly jeopardizes good-paying jobs all across America, as the chart right here next to me clearly demonstrates.

And for what reason? Why are they jeopardizing these jobs? The EPA itself concedes in the rule: "We do not expect that the combined emissions . . . would result in substantial cumulative health and environmental impacts."

Instead, the real health impacts due to this rule will be felt by the workers who lose their jobs, their health benefits, and even the education and training opportunities offered by their employers.

The brick industry primarily consists of small, family-owned businesses. They are often located in small communities that depend on the plant for good-paying jobs.

To comply with the EPA's requirement, these small businesses will be forced to borrow millions of dollars to pay for the required control tech-

nology. Many brick companies are already struggling to find the capital for plant modernization. I can't imagine how difficult it will be for these companies to secure the needed investments to pay for new control equipment, equipment that provides zero return on investment.

And let's not forget that the brick industry has already been through this before. The EPA finalized a similar rule in 2003 that required brick companies to spend millions of dollars on control equipment. A few years later, a Federal court vacated that rule.

Unfortunately, the brick industry couldn't roll back the clock and recover the investments they had made. Worse yet, the EPA's new emission rules use the reductions achieved by the vacated rule as the baseline for further reduction requirements, so the industry essentially got no credit for the hard work that they had already done.

This history further underscores why this legislation is so important. It also baffles me when I hear some of my colleagues say the BRICK Act is not needed because parties can already seek a judicial stay.

However, the EPA has effectively indicated, in a statement for the RECORD submitted to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, that they would oppose any requests to stay the rule.

Further, while the EPA's Clean Power Plan was recently stayed, the parties were only able to obtain relief by going to the U.S. Supreme Court. Here, the EPA's rule threatens the very existence of small brick and tile companies. These companies do not have unlimited resources to litigate against the Federal Government, and their jobs should not be put at risk due to a rule which has been vacated once already and has yet to be reviewed by the courts.

Mr. Speaker, the brick industry is part of our American culture. It has helped build some of the most iconic buildings, cities, and towns in existence in our country today. We must make certain our regulations and laws preserve this industry, not destroy it. The BRICK Act will do that.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers right now.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT).

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise in favor of this very important, I think, legislation sponsored by my colleague from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON). I want to thank him for his leadership on this bill because it is a very pro-growth jobs bill. I think it is very important that we pass this.

I happen to be the chairman of the House Committee on Small Business,

and our Nation's brick industry is primarily made up of small, family-owned businesses that employ thousands of workers. In Ohio alone, brick companies directly employ more than 700 workers and ensure the livelihoods of thousands of other workers.

□ 1100

Brick is used to construct, as we all know, residential homes and has been used to build some of our country's most iconic landmarks, such as Independence Hall, the birthplace of this great Nation.

With the severe downturn in construction during the Great Recession, the brick industry suffered significantly and still has not fully recovered. The industry is operating at about 50 percent of its capacity and suffered a 45 percent job loss from 2005 to 2012.

Now, small brick manufacturers are facing a costly new EPA regulation that may make it impossible for them to keep their doors open. That means those jobs would go away.

Compliance will require many companies to remove and replace costly air pollution control equipment with new devices that may not be able to meet the new, stringent emissions standards.

It is estimated to cost \$4.4 million to retrofit two kilns—the average number of kilns in a facility—with the new pollution control equipment. While the regulation is being challenged in Federal court, it just makes common sense to delay the compliance deadlines until that matter is resolved.

As chairman of the Small Business Committee, I urge my colleagues to stand up for small brick manufacturers and support this bill. This is a jobs bill.

Again, I want to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON) for his leadership in moving this bill forward.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois). The gentleman from Illinois has 21½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Kentucky has 22½ minutes remaining.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), the ranking member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the BRICK Act.

I agree with my colleagues that the brick, clay, and tile industries are in a tough position. The Bush administration issued final brick and clay emission standards—or Brick and Clay MACT standards—in 2003, 3 years after they were supposed to be completed.

Unfortunately, the rule was flawed and, when challenged, the court vacated those standards as unlawful. As a result, the EPA Administrator was able to redo the brick and clay rule.

I am sympathetic to the fact that the brick, clay, and tile industries have

been facing some real challenges since 2007, when the housing market began to decline, but some proponents of this bill will have you believe that all of the challenges are a result of the improvements the industry must make to meet the 2015 Brick and Clay MACT rule. What they refuse to acknowledge are the real health benefits that will come with the reduction of several major air pollutants.

I understand the industry stakeholders' reluctance to make further investments in pollution control technology to comply with this rule, given their previous experience with the 2003 rule, but the Clean Air Act provides a number of remedies that are available to them.

The courts are the proper venue for resolving issues with the Brick and Clay MACT. To date, industry groups have filed lawsuits on the merits of the rule, but none of the interested parties have actually asked the court to stay the rule's compliance dates.

The industry can also ask EPA to reconsider the rule, which I understand has already happened. In fact, earlier this week industry groups asked the D.C. Circuit Court to postpone consideration of their pending lawsuits until EPA makes a decision on whether to reconsider the rule. Neither of those remedies require action by Congress, but a legislative quick fix is the only remedy the proponents of this bill appear to care about.

H.R. 4557 does not resolve the ongoing issues with this rule. In fact, it is far more likely to create a drawn-out rulemaking process fueled by an endless stream of court challenges. That wouldn't resolve any of the industry's problems with the Brick and Clay MACT rule.

The bill also sets, in my opinion, a terrible precedent by delaying all of the rule's compliance requirements until all legal actions are complete.

If this remedy sounds familiar, that is because it is. The majority included a similar provision in a bill we considered earlier in this Congress: H.R. 2042, the Ratepayer Protection Act. I opposed that bill, and I oppose this one for the same reasons.

If we had included a litigation delay policy in the Clean Air Act, we would never have achieved the improvements in air quality and public health that we now enjoy.

The Clean Air Act provides ample opportunities for industry and the public to influence the development and implementation of regulations. These tools should be used in this case.

Finally, I do not support legislation to resolve the issues being raised by the bill's supporters. These issues can and should be resolved by the courts.

So I urge my colleagues to reject this attempt to get around the courts. I ask that they vote "no" on H.R. 4557.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished

gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL), one of the original cosponsors of this legislation.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to voice my support for H.R. 4557, the BRICK Act.

I want to tell a story about a small company in my hometown of Selma, Alabama. Henry Brick Company has been a family-owned business since 1945, providing jobs and economic support to the Black Belt of Alabama.

In 2003, the EPA passed a rule requiring Henry Brick Company, along with all other brick and structural clay manufacturers, to reduce their air pollutant emissions.

In order to meet these new regulations by 2006, Henry Brick Company of Selma, Alabama, spent \$1.5 million to come into compliance with the rule. This was a major financial burden for this small company, but Henry Brick Company is a good corporate citizen and understands the importance of protecting our environment.

However, 1 year after they spent \$1.5 million, the courts vacated the EPA's 2003 regulation. So the EPA went back to the drawing board to create a new rule, but they did not give these brick companies credit for emission reductions achieved under the previous rule.

On the contrary, in their new rule, the EPA actually used the emission reductions achieved under the vacated rule as a baseline for further reduction requirements.

Now, Henry Brick Company faces a new brick and clay manufacturing rule with even stricter emissions requirements and must come into compliance by December 2018.

This time the small company may have to spend up to \$8 million to comply with the new emissions standards, leaving Henry Brick Company one step closer to being forced to close their doors.

I am supportive, Mr. Speaker, of reducing emissions, and I am also in favor of protecting our environment. But this must be done in an economically viable way. It is simply unfair for regulators to continue to move the goalposts on small brick manufacturers like Henry Brick Company.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. WHITFIELD. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. That is why I support this legislation to delay the enforcement of the new EPA rule until all of the legal challenges have been concluded.

This is a necessary and commonsense bill. I ask my colleagues to vote "yes" on final passage.

I want to thank Representative JOHNSON of Ohio and all of those that are working hard to make sure that small brick companies, like Henry Brick Company of Selma, Alabama, do not have to close its doors.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4557, the BRICK Act.

Once again American businesses find themselves facing millions of dollars in compliance costs due to burdensome EPA regulations.

It is estimated that the EPA's Brick MACT rule may cost the brick and ceramics industry up to \$100 million per year, with the cost of compliance for the average facility at approximately \$4.4 million.

In addition, the industry will not be able to meet the requirement deadlines imposed by the rule, which is currently being challenged in Federal court.

The EPA's first attempt at a Brick MACT rule was judicially vacated, but not before the industry spent millions in compliance measures ultimately found to be invalid.

Small brick and ceramics businesses have been the hardest hit by the first rule, and if this situation repeats itself, many of these businesses will be forced to close their doors for good.

H.R. 4557 would provide much-needed regulatory relief to brick and ceramic businesses by stating that no additional compliance measures shall be mandated by the EPA until judicial review of the rule is completed.

I encourage my colleagues to support this bill, which will protect a vital industry and its thousands of jobs from potentially devastating regulatory uncertainty.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act, or the BRICK Act.

Rules handed down by the EPA have real-world consequences on businesses and our economy. You have heard the backstory today regarding the 2015 Brick MACT standards and the impact it will have on the brick manufacturing industry.

In my district, Columbus Brick Company, a fifth-generation, family-owned small business, will be forced to spend millions of dollars in compliance costs and significantly downsize or go out of business and tell 85 dedicated employees to find a new job. What is even more disappointing is that Columbus Brick has been forced to navigate this decision before.

The EPA promulgated Brick MACT standards in 2003, and then the rule was vacated by a Federal court in 2007, but not until a significant monetary investment had been made by Columbus Brick in an attempt to be in compliance. That is why it is imperative that we pass the BRICK Act today.

Companies like Columbus Brick aren't asking for zero regulation, but

they are asking to be regulated fairly, to have a seat at the table in determining new rules, and some certainty when it comes to making future business decisions.

The American people deserve better. They deserve a government that can ensure citizens have clean air to breathe without eliminating essential industries.

That is why I urge you to support the BRICK Act. Let's wait until judicial review is complete so our businesses aren't forced to make unnecessary, costly decisions with minimal or unknown environmental benefits.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know why we are even here debating this issue, which is an important issue, but not a prevailing issue. This is an issue that concerns one industry.

It is a concern that is already under consideration by the courts and by the administration. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it is a problem that is more appropriately addressed by those branches of government than by this Congress.

There are many other issues that this Congress has before it that it is our job to address. Yet, Mr. Speaker, we are not spending ample time on those things that are closely tied to the economic benefits and jobs for all Americans.

Our water infrastructure, Mr. Speaker, is in dire need of repair and maintenance. We spend little to no time on our water infrastructure and the problems associated with it.

We have Superfund sites and brownfield sites that need to be cleaned up and put to productive use. No time, no energy, no congressional resources are used to address these vital issues.

Our States need support for modernizing and hardening the electricity grid. We are AWOL on these issues.

And still, Mr. Speaker, many Americans are underemployed, unemployed, and underpaid for the work that they are doing.

□ 1115

Where is the time allocation, the resource allocation? Where are our efforts on behalf of these people?

All of these things, Mr. Speaker, particularly and especially the infrastructure issue, must be addressed by the Congress. There is no other place that can address these issues as appropriately, as effectively, as efficiently, except this Congress. And these issues, these infrastructure issues affect every industry, every State, every American in our Nation.

So, Mr. Speaker, let us use this body's time and efforts on the critical issues that are of great importance to the American people. Mr. Speaker, our time could be better served if we would just address some of these prevailing issues of the day.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I will conclude my remarks over on this side. I was listening to the debate on the rule about this bill, and some people did make the comment that this was not a particularly important issue.

I might say to the 7,000 people employed in this industry, to the owners of the companies, this is very important because some of them may very well lose their business, may very well lose their jobs.

So we have two goals with this legislation. One is simply to say this regulation coming out of EPA needs to be considered by the courts before these companies are required to invest significant sums of money.

In fact, the industry itself has said that the average plant has two kilns, and a plant with two kilns would have to spend roughly \$4 million to meet the requirements of this regulation.

Now, remember, in 2003, EPA came out with a regulation for this industry and, by 2006, the industry had to comply. They did comply and they reduced emissions of the regulated substance by 96 percent.

We see a pattern developing at EPA. They know full well that this President would veto any legislation that changes in any way anything coming out of EPA, so the only avenue left to the regulated parties is to file a lawsuit.

So just as the brick industry filed a lawsuit in 2003 on that extreme regulation, they had to comply by 2006; and then the Court, in 2007, after they had already complied, ruled that the regulation was illegal, but the money had already been spent.

Now, the money has already been spent, 96 percent reduction has occurred, and now the EPA is coming back with a new regulation.

So these people involved, they have no avenue. I mean, they are talking to EPA, pleading with EPA, and EPA, as usual, is not responsive.

So all this legislation does is say, we are not trying to reverse the regulation, change the regulation. We are simply saying, let the Court decide.

And guess what?

A pattern is also developing over at EPA because they are losing these court cases.

Now, on the Clean Energy Plan, which was one of the most extreme regulations ever to come from EPA, 3 days before Judge Scalia died, the Supreme Court issued a stay on the Clean Energy Plan, saying that you cannot implement this plan until the judicial remedies have been exhausted.

Then, even under Utility MACT, that also went to the Supreme Court, and the Court said, well, you didn't consider certain costs; we are remanding

this. But most of the industries have already spent the money, met the requirements, and some of them have closed as well.

So the question becomes, are we going to let an EPA adopting extreme rules under this administration make all the decisions?

Or will the Congress of the United States try to stand up and pass some legislation, not reversing, not changing, but simply saying, since lawsuits have been filed, let's give the Court the opportunity to determine if the regulation is legal or not legal?

So that is all we are doing here.

I want to thank those who introduced this legislation, both the Democrats and Republicans. And I would urge our colleagues to pass this legislation, to simply provide some commonsense balance, and let the courts make a decision before we require the companies to spend all this money and, in many cases, lay off employees and, in some cases, even close the business.

So I would urge the passage of H.R. 4557.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I voted against H.R. 4557, the Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act of 2016, yet another bill in a series of Republican attempts to block EPA's ability to effectively regulate pollution in a way that protects our health and the environment.

H.R. 4557 would delay the enactment of an important rule limiting mercury and other hazardous pollution from clay and brick products production facilities. I was disappointed to see it pass the House, but I know that President Obama and Democrats in the Senate will ensure that this misguided bill does not become law this year.

The Clean Air Act requires the EPA to establish standards for pollution from all industrial sectors, and many other sectors are already complying to improve air quality. There is no reason to further delay this rule, and no reason for this legislation.

I am hopeful that House Republicans will drop its obsession with pro-pollution bills and allow us to get to work on a budget and bills that will improve the lives of Oregonians.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, we have the opportunity today to help many struggling small businesses and the jobs they support by voting yes on H.R. 4557, the BRICK Act.

How did we get here? Last October, the EPA finalized an extremely stringent new rule for the brick making industry. Most of the companies that find themselves threatened by this rule are small businesses—many are family-owned—and the industry is still dealing with the effects of the recession and the weak recovery that continues to suppress demand for bricks and other building materials. Few, if any, brick makers can easily afford the estimated \$4.4 million dollars it will take to bring a typical facility into compliance and the industry is currently challenging the rule in federal court.

The BRICK Act simply extends the compliance deadlines for the rule until after judicial review is complete. This commonsense step

would prevent brick makers from having to initiate costly and potentially irreversible compliance steps—and in some cases shut their doors entirely and lay off workers—over a rule whose legality is still in question.

This is far from a hypothetical concern. EPA's last set of Brick standards in 2003 were vacated by a federal court in 2007, but by that time the industry had already been forced to spend millions on compliance. None of us want to see that happen again. It's a matter of fairness. It's a matter of commonsense.

For the sake of brick makers and their thousands of employees across the country, including nearly 2,000 in Michigan I urge my colleagues to vote yes on the BRICK Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 635, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that, I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on passage of the bill will be followed by a 5-minute vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 238, nays 163, not voting 32, as follows:

[Roll No. 109]

YEAS—238

Abraham	Cook	Gosar
Aderholt	Cooper	Gowdy
Allen	Costello (PA)	Granger
Amash	Cramer	Graves (LA)
Amodei	Crawford	Graves (MO)
Ashford	Crenshaw	Griffith
Babin	Cuellar	Grothman
Barletta	Culberson	Guinta
Bilirakis	Curbelo (FL)	Guthrie
Bishop (GA)	Davis, Rodney	Hanna
Bishop (MI)	Denham	Hardy
Bishop (UT)	Dent	Harper
Black	DeSantis	Harris
Blackburn	DesJarlais	Hartzler
Blum	Diaz-Balart	Heck (NV)
Bost	Dold	Hice, Jody B.
Boustany	Donovan	Hill
Brady (TX)	Duffy	Holding
Brat	Duncan (SC)	Hudson
Bridenstine	Duncan (TN)	Huelskamp
Brooks (AL)	Ellmers (NC)	Huizenga (MI)
Brooks (IN)	Emmer (MN)	Hultgren
Buchanan	Farenthold	Hunter
Buck	Fincher	Hurd (TX)
Bucshon	Fitzpatrick	Hurt (VA)
Byrne	Fleischmann	Issa
Calvert	Fleming	Jenkins (KS)
Carter (GA)	Flores	Jenkins (WV)
Carter (TX)	Forbes	Johnson (OH)
Chaffetz	Fortenberry	Johnson, Sam
Clawson (FL)	Foxx	Jolly
Coffman	Franks (AZ)	Jones
Cole	Frelinghuysen	Jordan
Collins (GA)	Gibbs	Joyce
Collins (NY)	Gibson	Katko
Comstock	Gohmert	Kelly (MS)
Conaway	Goodlatte	Kelly (PA)

King (IA)	Nunes	Shimkus
King (NY)	Olson	Shuster
Kinzinger (IL)	Palazzo	Simpson
Kline	Palmer	Sinema
Knight	Paulsen	Smith (MO)
Labrador	Pearce	Smith (NE)
LaHood	Perry	Smith (NJ)
LaMalfa	Peterson	Smith (TX)
Lamborn	Pittenger	Stefanik
Lance	Pitts	Stewart
Latta	Poe (TX)	Stivers
LoBiondo	Poliquin	Stutzman
Long	Pompeo	Thornberry
Loudermilk	Posey	Tiberi
Love	Ratcliffe	Tipton
Lucas	Reed	Trott
Luetkemeyer	Reichert	Turner
Lummis	Renacci	Upton
MacArthur	Ribble	Valadao
Marchant	Rice (SC)	Wagner
Marino	Rigell	Walberg
Massie	Roby	Walden
McCarthy	Roe (TN)	Walker
McClintock	Rogers (AL)	Walorski
McHenry	Rogers (KY)	Walters, Mimi
McKinley	Rohrabacher	Weber (TX)
McMorris	Rokita	Webster (FL)
Rodgers	Rooney (FL)	Wenstrup
McSally	Ros-Lehtinen	Westerman
Meadows	Roskam	Whitfield
Meehan	Ross	Williams
Messer	Rothfus	Wilson (SC)
Mica	Rouzer	Wittman
Miller (FL)	Royce	Womack
Miller (MI)	Russell	Woodall
Moolenaar	Salmon	Yoder
Mooney (WV)	Sanford	Yoho
Mullin	Scalise	Young (AK)
Murphy (PA)	Schweikert	Young (IA)
Neugebauer	Scott, Austin	Young (IN)
Newhouse	Sensenbrenner	Zeldin
Noem	Sessions	Zinke
Nugent	Sewell (AL)	

NAYS—163

Adams	Eshoo	Luján, Ben Ray
Aguilar	Esty	(NM)
Bass	Farr	Lynch
Becerra	Fattah	Maloney,
Bera	Poster	Carolyn
Beyer	Frankel (FL)	Maloney, Sean
Blumenauer	Fudge	Matsui
Bonamici	Gabbard	McCollum
Boyle, Brendan	Gallego	McDermott
F.	Garamendi	McGovern
Brady (PA)	Graham	McNerney
Brown (FL)	Grayson	Meeks
Brownley (CA)	Green, Al	Meng
Bustos	Grijalva	Moulton
Butterfield	Gutiérrez	Murphy (FL)
Capps	Hahn	Nadler
Capuano	Hastings	Neal
Carney	Heck (WA)	Nolan
Carson (IN)	Higgins	Norcross
Cartwright	Himes	O'Rourke
Castor (FL)	Honda	Pallone
Castro (TX)	Huffman	Payne
Chu, Judy	Israel	Pelosi
Ciilline	Jackson Lee	Perlmutter
Clark (MA)	Jeffries	Peters
Clarke (NY)	Johnson (GA)	Pingree
Clay	Johnson, E. B.	Pocan
Clyburn	Kaptur	Polis
Cohen	Keating	Price (NC)
Connolly	Kelly (IL)	Quigley
Conyers	Kennedy	Rangel
Courtney	Kildee	Rice (NY)
Crowley	Kilmer	Ruiz
Cummings	Kind	Ruppersberger
Davis (CA)	Kuster	Rush
Davis, Danny	Langevin	Ryan (OH)
DeFazio	Larsen (WA)	Sánchez, Linda
DeGette	Larson (CT)	T.
Delaney	Lawrence	Sarbanes
DeLauro	Lee	Schakowsky
DeBene	Levin	Schiff
DeSaulnier	Lewis	Schrader
Deutch	Lieu, Ted	Scott (VA)
Dingell	Lipinski	Serrano
Doggett	Loebach	Sherman
Doyle, Michael	Lofgren	Sires
F.	Lowenthal	Slaughter
Duckworth	Lowey	Swalwell (CA)
Ellison	Lujan Grisham	Takai
Engel	(NM)	Takano

Thompson (CA)	Vargas	Wasserman
Thompson (MS)	Veasey	Schultz
Titus	Vela	Waters, Maxine
Tonko	Velázquez	Watson Coleman
Torres	Visclosky	Welch
Tsongas	Walz	Wilson (FL)
Van Hollen		Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—32

Barr	Graves (GA)	Pascarell
Barton	Green, Gene	Price, Tom
Beatty	Hensarling	Richmond
Benishke	Herrera Beutler	Roybal-Allard
Burgess	Hinojosa	Sanchez, Loretta
Cárdenas	Hoyer	Scott, David
Chabot	Kirkpatrick	Smith (WA)
Cleaver	McCauley	Speier
Costa	Moore	Thompson (PA)
Edwards	Mulvaney	Westmoreland
Garrett	Napolitano	

□ 1140

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Messrs. MARCHANT and ZELDIN changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 109, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 109, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent on Thursday, March 3, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following ways:

Vote “no” on rollcall No. 106—Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4557.

Vote “no” on rollcall No. 107—H. Res. 635—Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4557—Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns (BRICK) Act of 2016.

Vote “yes” on rollcall No. 108—S. 1826—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James “Maggie” Megellas Post Office.

Vote “no” on rollcall No. 109—Passage of H.R. 4557—Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns (BRICK) Act of 2016.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I was absent for votes due to official business outside of Washington, D.C.

If I were present, I would vote in the following manner on the following votes:

(1) Previous Question—“yes.”

(2) Adoption of the Rule—“yes.”

(3) S. 1826—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James “Maggie” Megellas Post Office—“yes.”

(4) H.R. 4557, Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act—“yes.”

THE JOURNAL

The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 217, noes 154, answered “present” 1, not voting 61, as follows:

[Roll No. 110]

AYES—217

Abraham	Frelinghuysen	Murphy (FL)
Adams	Gabbard	Nadler
Allen	Gallego	Neugebauer
Ashford	Garamendi	Newhouse
Barletta	Garrett	Noem
Barr	Goodlatte	Nunes
Becerra	Gowdy	O'Rourke
Beyer	Graham	Olson
Bilirakis	Griffith	Palmer
Bishop (GA)	Guthrie	Pelosi
Bishop (MI)	Hahn	Perlmutter
Bishop (UT)	Hardy	Pingree
Black	Harper	Pocan
Blackburn	Harris	Polis
Bonamici	Hartzler	Posey
Boustany	Hastings	Price (NC)
Brady (TX)	Heck (WA)	Ratcliffe
Brat	Himes	Ribble
Bridenstine	Huffman	Roby
Brooks (AL)	Hultgren	Rogers (KY)
Brooks (IN)	Issa	Rohrabacher
Brown (FL)	Jeffries	Rooney (FL)
Buchanan	Johnson (GA)	Ross
Bustos	Johnson, E. B.	Rothfus
Butterfield	Johnson, Sam	Royce
Calvert	Jolly	Ruiz
Capps	Kaptur	Ruppersberger
Carson (IN)	Katko	Russell
Carter (TX)	Kelly (IL)	Salmon
Castro (TX)	Kelly (MS)	Sanford
Chabot	Kelly (PA)	Scalise
Chu, Judy	Kennedy	Schiff
Ciulline	Kildee	Schrader
Clark (MA)	King (NY)	Schweikert
Clay	Kline	Scott (VA)
Cleaver	Kuster	Scott, Austin
Cole	Labrador	Scott, David
Collins (NY)	LaHood	Sensenbrenner
Comstock	LaMalfa	Serrano
Cooper	Lamborn	Sessions
Cramer	Latta	Sewell (AL)
Crenshaw	Lipinski	Sherman
Cuellar	Lofgren	Shimkus
Culberson	Long	Shuster
Davis (CA)	Loudermilk	Sinema
Davis, Danny	Lowenthal	Slaughter
DeGette	Lucas	Smith (NE)
DeLauro	Luetkemeyer	Smith (NJ)
DelBene	Lujan Grisham	Smith (TX)
Dent	(NM)	Stefanik
DeSaulnier	Lujan, Ben Ray	Stewart
DesJarlais	(NM)	Stutzman
Deutch	Lummis	Takai
Diaz-Balart	Maloney,	Takano
Dingell	Carolyn	Thornberry
Doggett	Marino	Titus
Donovan	Massie	Torres
Doyle, Michael	McCarthy	Tsongas
F.	McClintock	Upton
Duckworth	McCollum	Van Hollen
Duncan (SC)	McHenry	Wagner
Emmer (MN)	McMorris	Walden
Engel	Rodgers	Walorski
Eshoo	McNerney	Walters, Mimi
Esty	Meadows	Walz
Fitzpatrick	Meeks	Wasserman
Fleischmann	Meng	Schultz
Fortenberry	Moolenaar	Webster (FL)
Foster	Mooney (WV)	Welch
Frankel (FL)	Moulton	Wenstrup
Franks (AZ)	Mullin	Whitfield

Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman

Womack
Yarmuth
Young (IA)
Young (IN)

NOES—154

Aderholt
Aguilar
Amash
Babin
Barton
Bass
Bera
Blum
Bost
Brady (PA)
Brownley (CA)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Capuano
Carney
Carter (GA)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Costello (PA)
Crowley
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
Delaney
Denham
Love
DeSantis
Dold
Duffy
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fox
Fudge
Gibson
Gosar

Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Guinta
Gutiérrez
Heck (NV)
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Honda
Huizenga (MI)
Hurd (TX)
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kilmer
Kind
Kinzinger (IL)
Knight
Lance
Langevin
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Love
Lowey
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Matsui
McDermott
McGovern
McKinley
McSally
Meehan
Messer
Miller (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Neal
Nolan

Zeldin
Zinke

Norcross
Nugent
Pallone
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Price, Tom
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rokita
Ros-Lehtinen
Rouzer
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Smith (MO)
Speier
Stivers
Swalwell (CA)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walker
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Westerman
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)

ANSWERED “PRESENT”—1

Tonko

NOT VOTING—61

Amodei
Beatty
Benishke
Blumenauer
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Byrne
Cardenas
Collins (GA)
Cook
Costa
Courtney
Crawford
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Gibbs
Gohmert
Granger
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Grothman

Hanna
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Hinojosa
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Hunter
Hurt (VA)
Keating
King (IA)
Kirkpatrick
Larsen (WA)
Loebbeck
McCaul
Mica
Miller (MI)
Moore
Mulvaney
Napolitano

Palazzo
Pascarella
Payne
Pittenger
Pitts
Pompeo
Quigley
Rangel
Reed
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roskam
Roybal-Allard
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Simpson
Sires
Smith (WA)
Trott
Westmoreland

□ 1148

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present in the House Chamber for cer-

tain rollcall votes on February 26th and the week of February 29 through March 3, 2016.

Had I been present on those dates, I would have voted “yea” for rollcalls 100, 102, 103, 104, 105, 108, and 110 and “nay” on rollcalls 101, 106, 107, and 109.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on Thursday, March 3, 2016, due to important events being held today in our district in Houston and Harris County, Texas.

If I had been able to vote, I would have voted as follows:

On the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4557, the Blocking Regulatory Interference from Losing Kilns Act, I would have voted “no.”

On H. Res. 635, the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4557, I would have voted “no.”

On S. 1826, To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James “Maggie” Megellas Post Office, I would have voted “yea.”

On passage of H.R. 4557, the Blocking Regulatory Interference from Losing Kilns Act of 2016, I would have voted “no.”

On the Journal Vote, I would have voted “yea.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I was absent due to illness and was not present for roll call votes on Thursday, March 3, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted in this manner:

Rollcall Vote No. 106—Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 635—the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4557—Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act of 2016—“no.”

Rollcall Vote No. 107—Adoption of H. Res. 635—the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4557—Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act of 2016—“no.”

Rollcall Vote No. 108—S. 1826 To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James “Maggie” Megellas Post Office—“yes.”

Rollcall Vote No. 109—Passage of H.R. 4557—Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act of 2016—“yes.”

Rollcall Vote No. 110—Journal—“yes.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, February 29; Tuesday, March 1; Wednesday, March 2; and Thursday, March 3, 2016, I was on medical leave while recovering from hip replacement surgery and unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted:

“Yes” on rollcall vote No. 102 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4238).

“Yes” on rollcall vote No. 103 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 136).

“Yes” on rollcall vote No. 104 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3735).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 105 (on passage of H.R. 3716).

"No" on rollcall vote No. 106 (on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 635).

"No" on rollcall vote No. 107 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 635).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 108 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 1826).

"No" on rollcall vote No. 109 (on passage of H.R. 4557).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 110 (on approving the journal).

ADJOURNMENT FROM THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2016, TO MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2016

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 4 p.m. on Monday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Michigan). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

BLOCKING REGULATORY INTER- FERENCE FROM CLOSING KILNS ACT

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, the President has a history of legislating through government agencies, and his flavor of the week continues to be the EPA.

Using faceless EPA bureaucrats, this administration issues new rules and regulations daily, passing them out like candy. Not only are they costly and time-consuming, these rules affect the heart of America's prosperity and economic growth: our small businesses.

I rise today in support of legislation that works to block the overreaching hand of this administration and protects Americans and American businesses from more burdensome regulations.

The BRICK Act delays a harmful EPA rule from being implemented until all judicial review has been completed. To me, this legislation is plain common sense.

Congress needs to stand up to this administration, which continues to legislate outside its jurisdiction, and increasingly, the courts confirm my claims. The legislative process begins and ends with Congress. I commend my colleagues today for passing the BRICK Act to prove we will stand up to Washington agencies that overstep their boundaries.

NO BUDGET, NO PAY

(Mr. PETERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I ran for Congress on the idea of no budget, no pay. If Congress can't do its job and pass a budget, they don't deserve a paycheck. No hardworking American gets paid for not doing their job. So why should we?

Just a few months ago we passed a bipartisan 2-year budget agreement that moved us away from the harmful sequester. Now many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are threatening to go back on that agreement and keep us from having a budget at all. That is what gridlock looks like, and that is what people hate about Congress.

What are we going to do to fix it? Come in to work 10 days in the entire month of March. Maybe if we came to work, we could debate and pass a budget and spending bills that will spur economic growth and create high-quality jobs.

But, instead, we have 2 months on the calendar this year where we don't come to work at all, even once. A 5-day workweek is expected from most Americans. Why should Congress be any different?

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Mr. DOLD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate March as Women's History Month. As this month is also Red Cross Month, I want to recognize one woman in particular: Clara Barton.

Ms. Barton was a nurse during the Civil War and a teacher before founding the American Red Cross in 1881. She then served as the organization's first president. Her compassion and accomplishments are truly inspiring, and her work has literally helped millions.

Unfortunately, in our society today, women make up less than 5 percent of CEOs and are equally underrepresented in other areas. As a father of two daughters, ensuring that young women can achieve anything that they set their mind to is personal for me.

In the 10th Congressional District, we run a Young Women's Leadership Academy. This program is designed to help young women develop the leadership skills necessary to overcome any and all challenges thrown their way.

This unique program gives young women the opportunity to learn from other inspiring female leaders, such as our own colleague, Congresswoman ELISE STEFANIK, the youngest woman ever elected to the United States Congress.

I encourage all of my colleagues to start similar programs in their district so that we can all do our part to help inspire young women to become leaders in their chosen fields.

Of course, this is just a small part of the solution. As we celebrate the in-

spiring achievements of women this month, we must rededicate ourselves to doing more to tear down barriers and ensure gender equality in our country.

HONORING EDWARD CHOW, JR.

(Ms. DUCKWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Captain Edward Chow, Jr., a decorated Army veteran who was awarded the Bronze Star for his selfless service in the Vietnam war.

True to his character, Ed's service to our great Nation did not end after the war. Out of uniform, Ed has continued serving his fellow Americans, dedicating his life to supporting fellow vets.

Ed's illustrious public service career culminated in leading the State of Maryland's Department of Veterans Affairs. Under Secretary Chow's leadership, the Department enhanced claims processing and improved the quality of its veterans' homes.

As Ed's friend, I witnessed his dedication and passion for helping the men and women who defended our country. Ed never hesitated to help whenever I called him on behalf of a veteran needing assistance.

I, like so many others, thank Ed for his admirable career of military and public service and want him to know his legacy will endure.

M&M'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. GARRETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 75th anniversary of an iconic American candy first made in the great State of New Jersey.

On March 3, 1941, in Newark, New Jersey, Mars began producing M&Ms as military rations for those serving in World War II. Over the 75 years since their founding, M&Ms grew to become an internationally recognized brand and a symbol of American innovation and quality.

To this day, Mars continues to produce M&Ms in my district in Hackettstown, New Jersey. New Jersey is also home to Mars Global Chocolate headquarters, and they operate four facilities in a State employing over 1,700 associates.

Mars has remained active in New Jersey communities over the years, and I applaud their philanthropic endeavors and their commitment to our local towns. No doubt New Jersey is a sweeter place because of M&Ms.

On behalf of the Fifth District of New Jersey, I am pleased to have the opportunity to recognize this extraordinary anniversary for M&Ms.

HONORING JAMES V. KIMSEY

(Mr. BEYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, America and the world lost an indefatigable champion, a distinguished gentleman, and a charismatic friend with the death of James V. Kimsey this past Tuesday.

Jim was larger than life. Everything Jim touched has become part of the history and culture of our community. From Bullfeathers to AOL, from his home above the Potomac to the orphanages in Vietnam, from the Kennedy Center to the International Commission on Missing Persons, Jim Kimsey has been a transformational leader.

Despite his too-short life, Jim's résumé is long and deep: founder and CEO of AOL, chairman of Refugees International, Library of Congress Trust Fund Board, Executive Committee of the National Symphony Orchestra, Kennedy Center Board of Trustees, West Point Board of Visitors, an Army tour in the Dominican Republic and two in Vietnam, the Army Ranger Hall of Fame, and so much more.

But for Jim's myriad of friends, he was so much more than a list of achievements. He was visionary, strategic, generous, mischievous, and always had a smile on his face.

Who else could be tossed out of Gonzaga College High School 2 months before graduation, graduate from our archrival St. John's College High School, and still be a generous and loyal Gonzaga friend for decades to come?

Jim's funeral will be this Saturday at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington, D.C.

We will all miss you for a long time.

□ 1200

WHEN WEAKNESS IS PROVOCATIVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Mr. ROTHFUS. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this week, the House Select Investigative Panel on Infant Lives began hearings to look into Planned Parenthood's harvesting and trafficking of human body parts, which was revealed in a series of undercover videos last year. These were videos that even Democrat Presidential frontrunner Hillary Clinton, in her words, "obviously found disturbing."

Since the release of the videos last year, some have rushed to defend the organization, and Planned Parenthood and its allies have been in full damage control mode. Among the more bizarre defenses has been that the videos were heavily edited, as if the statements made by Planned Parenthood officials and a worker who harvested body parts really aren't what they appear to be.

I do not serve on this select committee, but if I did, I would really want to take a hard look at that defense. The term "heavily edited" suggests that important, qualifying context may have been omitted in these videos; but I struggle, Mr. Speaker, with trying to understand any context that would soften the language in these tapes.

For example, in what context is this okay?

"We have been very good at getting heart, lung, liver, because we know that, so I am not going to crush that part."

What about: "A lot of people want intact hearts these days," or "always as many intact livers as possible"?

Do the defenders of Planned Parenthood think that they are talking about chicken hearts or livers at a butcher shop as opposed to baby body parts?

Just in what context does this sound right?

"Yesterday was the first time she said people wanted lungs."

How about: "Some people want lower extremities, too"—that would be legs. "I don't know what they're doing with it. I guess they want the muscle"?

Again, Mr. Speaker, what is the situation in which these statements would not shock a sensitive conscience?

What about this line? When is this an acceptable statement?

"Using a 'less crunchy' technique to get more whole specimens."

In that phrase, the context is you have a Planned Parenthood official who is talking about a "less crunchy" type of abortion, which begs the obvious question: What does that even mean?

Can anyone who defends Planned Parenthood give me the context in which this sounds good?

"I know I've seen livers; I've seen stomachs; I've seen plenty of neural tissue. Usually you can see the whole brain, usually, come out."

What about: "I don't think it would be as war torn" when discussing what fetal remains look like during a second trimester abortion? What would that sentence sound like in an unedited video?

At one point in a video, a clinic worker brings in another fetal body, saying, "And another boy." A boy. In another context, you might hear "and another boy" if a mom is giving birth to twin sons, but that is obviously not the context of these videos.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, can someone please tell me the context in which this dialogue does not mean what it says?

"This is a really good fetus, and it looks like we can procure a lot from it . . . we're going to procure brain." Further: "So she gave me the scissors and she told me I have to cut down the middle of the face; and I can't even, like, describe, like, what that feels like. And I remember picking it up and finishing going through the rest of the face and just picking up the brain and putting it in a container . . . and I'm just sitting there, like, what did I just do?"

What is the context in which these words might not be what they seem?

I can think of one: perhaps if you had a screenwriter who was talking about a new horror film she was writing.

But this is no horror film, Mr. Speaker. These words are direct quotes from a technician who is engaged in a real-world practice that is appalling, barbaric, and indefensible—the harvesting of fetal body parts for money.

It is not easy to come to the floor of the House to speak these words. I would prefer not to. It is uncomfortable to listen to these words, and many people would prefer not to hear them. If that is the case, Mr. Speaker—if I don't like talking about this and if people don't like hearing about it—why, for goodness sake, are we allowing hard-working taxpayers' dollars to go to the organization that is responsible for them?

We are a better nation than what is revealed in these videos. There are 13,000 other health clinics that are capable of providing health care for women, clinics which do not perform abortions. It is past time that the \$500 million in Federal dollars that Planned Parenthood receives every year be redirected to those clinics.

I thank the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. GOHMERT. I thank Mr. ROTHFUS, my friend from Pennsylvania. He is exactly right. We have so many people across this Nation who understand the tragedy of taking a child's life before it is fully born.

Mr. Speaker, I know there are some people, like our friend Donald Trump, who say Planned Parenthood has done a lot more good; but the trouble is, so often, Planned Parenthood takes money from the Federal Government and then just refers the women out. Of course, that has been perpetuated by this administration in its making it sound like Planned Parenthood does mammograms and other things that they don't do. They refer people to other people.

Why not have that money not get held up at Planned Parenthood? Why not have that money go directly to the thousands of healthcare providers that actually provide the care that the women are seeking and not have it go to Planned Parenthood so that they can get money from the government and then keep their abortion business going?

That also leads right into this article today from the National Review, Jim Geraghty, regarding ObamaCare. Headline: "Deductibles Increased in 41 States under ObamaCare."

It reads:

Freedom Partners unveils a new 'Deductibles Tracker' showing how much deductibles have increased, on average, in each State. I know this will shock you, but most people are finding their deductibles are going up and, in some cases, way up.

Their analysis shows deductibles have increased in 41 States under ObamaCare—in some States, like Mississippi, by over \$1,000. Seventeen States, representing over half of total exchange enrollment, are seeing double-digit spikes. The largest increases were in Mississippi, which went up 39 percent; Washington State went up 31 percent; South Carolina went up 26 percent; Louisiana went up 24 percent; Florida went up 23 percent; Minnesota and Vermont went up 22 percent; Arizona went up 21 percent; North Carolina went up 20 percent.

Mr. Speaker, what makes it so incredibly difficult is knowing there are Federal dollars that are being used for abortion and being used for purposes that are against the religious beliefs of so many Americans. When we think that the whole object we were told for having ObamaCare and passing it against the will of the majority of the American people was so that we could make sure everybody had insurance, now it appears that there has not been much change in the net number of people covered under insurance.

Oh, yes, it is true. There are some people who were paying for their insurance who no longer have it—they can't afford it anymore. It is true that we have some people who were not paying for it who are having it provided now, but it really appears to have been more a transfer of working people's money to people who were not working.

It appears that we have been moving into a socialist agenda for some time, and that goes back to what President Obama said when he first ran, telling "Joe the Plumber" that he wanted it to be about spreading the wealth around. The pilgrims found out that, at least in this world, if you try to share and share alike—the Early New Testament tried it, and it didn't work—and if you start allowing people who are not working to have the same benefits as those who work, you will have more and more people who are not working.

I hear from so many of my constituents—I know I hear from others of my friends here in Congress—that constituents are hurting. Their insurance is costing more, and like this article points out, the deductibles have gone higher. Ask one of my staff, who is not making very much.

If you make \$30,000 and if you have a deductible of \$6,000 as a healthy young person, what that basically means is that every dime you are paying into health care is not going to help your health care whatsoever. You are paying for the new IRS agents, the new navi-

gators, and the new government union workers who will never spray Bactine on anybody's cut, who will never put a Band-Aid on. They will just keep adding forms, adding requirements, taking more time away from the true healthcare providers and more money away from the true healthcare providers for bureaucrats.

I know, back when I was an exchange student in the Soviet Union and when I went and toured some of the most up-to-date facilities in what was the Soviet Union at the time, I thanked God that I lived in America. I thanked God that we had such incredible health care and that I didn't have to rely on what appeared to have been 30- or 40-year-old antiquated healthcare methods and equipment for my health care.

Even living in the small town of Mount Pleasant, as I did, I knew we had a lot better healthcare facilities in my hometown where I was growing up than they did in one of the largest cities—well, the largest city in Ukraine—Kiev, where I toured facilities. I toured a medical school and I couldn't believe how far behind our medical schools that they were.

It is what happens when you continue moving towards socialized health care. I know Mr. Trump, initially, wanted the government to provide everybody's health care, but apparently in his being informed that conservatives don't like that, he is now saying no, that that is not where he is going.

We know that President Obama, back before he was President, was caught on video saying that we want to go to single payer—in other words, socialized medicine—where the government is in charge of everybody's health care.

I know I have got conservative friends who say, LOUIE, we don't have to worry. We don't have to fight ObamaCare, because socialized medicine always fails. They are wrong. Socialism always fails. As Margaret Thatcher said, eventually, you run out of other people's money.

You incentivize not working and penalize working, and that is what we are doing here in America now. We are moving in that direction, toward socialism. The only time true capitalism, true free liberty, entrepreneurship in the marketplace fails is when it starts moving into socialist tendencies and adopting socialist ways. Then that can spell doom for capitalism, those who want to have a dictatorial Federal national government. That is where they want to see things go.

□ 1215

But it is ironic that when a free market society struggles, it is when they start incorporating socialist tendencies and rewarding improper conduct or nonworking. Then you have a lot more people not working.

You incentivize people not to hire. You penalize people for hiring. You pe-

nalize people for hiring more than 50 people, like ObamaCare does.

I have talked to people that still say that they could hire more, but they are not going to because of ObamaCare.

That means there are people walking around today going from business to business, looking for a job that will not find that business that will hire them because of ObamaCare.

When you have young people with 5-, 6-, \$7,000 deductible health insurance, they are paying for the bureaucracy. They are not paying for health care.

Apparently, some religious beliefs dictate against birth control. Mine doesn't, my Christian beliefs. But I absolutely respect the religious beliefs of those who are against it. They should not have to pay for people to violate their religious beliefs.

That used to be the way this country grew and was blessed by God. But as we turn further and further away from what was a blessing to America, then the world hurts. I have seen it in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, South America.

When we are not strong—as I have said numerous times, quoting a South African gentleman: When you get weak, we suffer. Please tell people in Washington to quit getting weaker. We suffer when you are weaker.

These kind of programs, ObamaCare, make us weaker. When we provide the resources, the ability for the largest supporter of terrorism in the world to have over \$100 billion, which they say some of it is for sure going to be spent on more terrorism, that is the kind of activity that will not be blessed. That is the kind of activity that brings a nation's demise.

So health care is costing more. Deductibles are going up. People are paying more for higher deductibles, less coverage. Yes. There are some who, because of the government subsidies, are saying: Well, mine's a little less than it was before. But the people that are working are paying more, and it is devastating.

Mr. Speaker, it is critical that those of us who have a voice in this city make our voices heard for those in our districts. You can't be listening to the talking heads in this town and think you have heard from America.

I mean, look at Politico. Last week they said I had a close race. Tuesday, with one opponent spending tremendously more than I did, two opponents, I won with 82 percent. So that is what Politico calls a close race.

Mr. Speaker, I know that I didn't win with 82 percent because of my looks and certainly not because of the way I sound.

It is because I make my voice heard for the huge majority of people in east Texas with all the common sense they have got. That is what I am hearing from them.

They are outraged that we have allowed ObamaCare to last as long as it has. They are suffering. They are outraged that this administration has turned on our friend, Israel, and seeing that Iran is rewarded for their massive misconduct, as they have continued to be the largest supporter of terrorism in the world, with this administration as an accomplice, as an enabler. There are consequences to nations and governments that enable crime and misconduct and terrorism and abuse.

For those who believe in the Bible, it was Hosea. God was explaining why he was about to come down on the children of Israel. I love the rather loose translation when he says that it is because they have selected leaders who were not my choice.

So people around the country can say all they want: Well, this President is not my President. This Governor is not my Governor. This person is not my elected representative.

I don't agree with them. But everyone in the country will suffer the consequences of poor choices as leaders. That is the way self-government works.

Now, I have been reporting, Mr. Speaker, from this very podium for years about the misuse and abuse and providing our security by Homeland Security.

I am very grateful to Judicial Watch. In their lawsuit against Homeland Security, they have been able to obtain records that verify what some of us have known to be true because of whistleblowers providing us information. While some, whether CNN and other places, belittle what we have said, we knew what we were talking about, but we couldn't give the sources.

Judicial Watch. This headline says: "Homeland Security Records Reveal Officials Ordered Terrorist Watch List Scrubbed."

It says: "Judicial Watch announced today that it obtained 183 pages of documents from the Department of Homeland Security revealing that the Obama administration scrubbed the law enforcement agency's 'Terrorist Screening Database' in order to protect what it considered the civil rights of suspected Islamic terrorist groups. The documents appear to confirm charges that Obama administration changes created a massive 'hands off' list. Removed data from the terrorist watch list could have helped prevent the San Bernardino terrorist attack."

Mr. Speaker, I would also submit that we have seen the email—I believe Senator GRASSLEY requested more information about it.

To my knowledge, we have not seen additional explanations or information about the email about a person's terrorist ties, indication that he was a radical Islamist. The email response was: Oh, this guy's on the Secretary of Homeland Security's hands-off list.

We have read stories about the White House allowing at least one or more individuals with terrorist ties to come to the White House. There are consequences for ignoring the law, ignoring the lawbreakers, and not protecting our homeland.

The article says:

"The new documents were produced in response to a Judicial Watch February 2015 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuit filed back on February 13, 2015."

It should be noted, I mean, that that is over a year ago. The Freedom of Information Act request should have been answered promptly, but this administration is too caught up in trying to cover up their own tracks.

That is why we haven't even gotten the Attorney General to provide Members of Congress the documents showing support for terrorism, the boxes of documents that were provided to people who were convicted of supporting terrorism.

The Justice Department provided it to them. I have asked repeatedly, and the most I have gotten is reference to a few Web sites.

They covered up their own wrongdoing. They have covered up ties to terrorism. They have covered up for people who have supported terrorism. And there are consequences for that. You learn more when you leave this town, Washington, D.C.

But when you have people in Africa, Egypt, Jordan, UAE, India, and Afghanistan telling you that your administration in America is supporting violence by not standing up against radical Islam and when you hear that from Muslim leaders who recognize the failures of this administration, then you know that the whole world is seeing what is going on and it is only here that people have become so blind.

I know there are people in the Republican establishment that just cannot believe that a man like Trump, who has spent his whole life taking one position, could be leading so big in different contests.

And, yes, my friend TED CRUZ is doing quite well. It is nice to see somebody that has been consistently doing well. But around the world they see what is going on.

The Republican establishment doesn't seem to understand. People are furious. They are furious about ObamaCare. They are furious that we turned on our friend, Israel. They are furious that we have enabled Iran to continue their terrorist ways.

All of this at the same time—of course, this was—Donald Trump's big issue that shot him to the top is border security.

This article from today from KRWG News, "Border Crime Taking A Toll On Residents In Southwest New Mexico, Arizona," says: "Residents of New Mexico's Bootheel and parts of south-

ern Arizona say human smuggling and drug trafficking is taking its toll on the region.

"The Deming Headlight reports that residents are scheduled Thursday to express their concerns to Federal officials during a meeting at the Animas Community Center in Animas, New Mexico.

"Judy Keeler, a longtime resident of the rural border region, says her home was recently burglarized and it's not an unusual episode for other residents.

"Residents have said State Highway 80 has become a favorite for Mexican cartel drug runners who manage to navigate out of the Peloncillo Mountains along the Arizona-New Mexico border. They want an even more increased presence from the U.S. Border Patrol."

Apparently, they are not going to get it.

We still hear people say there is no way to secure our entire border, but this brings back a recollection in history.

One of my least favorite Presidents, Woodrow Wilson, secured the border after Pancho Villa had some of his thugs come across the border and kill American families. Americans back then with good sense said: We can't have that.

They spurred the President on until he sent tens of thousands of what we call National Guard troops now, and they secured the border. Nobody came across our border that we did not want to come across. He did it back in the early 1900s, and we can't do it now.

Well, the truth is, Mr. Speaker, we could do it now, but you have to have an administration with the will to provide for the common defense of the American people.

Instead, we have enabled a massive amount of crime across the border regions that is spilling into other areas of the country. Drugs are spreading around the country.

We have heard, also, from the FBI Director himself. There are ISIS cells, and there are ISIS investigations in every State in the Union. So when are they going to be triggered?

We know that, when they are triggered with reports like we have just read here, the administration has continued to cleanse our Homeland Security records to purge training material for the FBI, for Intelligence, for Homeland Security so they don't actually learn exactly what radical Islam is. They don't actually learn the verses in the Koran that are relied upon by radical Islamists.

When we do finally have a Muslim leader like President Sissi in Egypt, who stands up in front of a room of Muslim imams and demands that they take back their region from the radical Islamists, this administration chooses to try to punish him and not help him, like this administration did, and wanted to do more for the Muslim Brotherhood.

□ 1230

I am tired of hearing from foreign Muslim leaders their question: Why is your country still helping the Muslim Brotherhood? Don't they know? Don't you know? The Muslim Brotherhood has been at war with you since 1979, and you keep helping them.

Well, that is the way you lose a country. You lose it. We have got our choice. Fiscal irresponsibility, which is immoral. Instead of doing like all preceding generations in this country, which have always had as their theme, "we want to make our country better for our children than we had it," now we have gone through a couple of generations who have said: You know what? Forget the future generations. We want future generations' money spent on us now.

Fifty years ago, seventy-five years ago, one hundred years ago, even when cars were first invented, you would not have seen a bumper sticker like is not uncommon today, retired persons say, "We are spending our children's inheritance." You wouldn't see that because they wanted to make the country better than they had it.

Mr. Speaker, I know you personally, and you and I and our colleagues, we talk about it. We have talked about it today—heated conference—because we want a better country even than we have had with more opportunity, more freedoms, as we see freedom slipping away.

Adam Kredo has a story here:

"The flow of illegal immigrant children into the United States is expected to rise to record-breaking numbers in 2016 as deportations decrease, according to leading members of the Senate's Judiciary Committee.

"At least 20,455 unaccompanied minors have been caught during fiscal year 2016 along the U.S.-Mexico border as of last month, according to Committee Chairman Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, who warned that if this trend continues, the number of illegal minors could eclipse a massive 2014 surge that strained the resources of the Department of Homeland Security and prompted investigations into the Obama administration's handling of the issue."

Now, one of many problems is you have people that are coming to America because there are more opportunities here, which begs the question: Why are there more opportunities here than there are in their home country?

When you analyze the situation, what you find is the reason they don't have businesses booming in their home country is because of graft or corruption or a corrupt government or a dictatorship because, as the old saying goes, "capital is a coward."

Money to capitalize or invest always goes to where it feels safest—that is why it is "capital is a coward"—and it is not very safe in countries where the

government is corrupt, the rule of law is not applied across the board, and the laws are not enforced across the board.

One of the great ironies in the world right now is that people are leaving countries where there is violence and the rule of law is not enforced. They are coming to America where, for most of our history, we have done a better job than most any country ever in enforcing the law across the board.

Once here illegally, those same people are saying: Now that we are here, we want you not to enforce the law across the board. We want you to ignore your law on immigration and law on becoming citizens. Ignore it.

If we do that, it will make us like the corrupt countries they came from and make us a land of no opportunity, where people will have to go to some other country where they enforce the law.

I have had even Members of Congress say: Well, if it all goes bad, we will all pack up and head to Australia. But I was talking to some people from Australia this year, and I mentioned that to them, and they didn't laugh. They looked very somber.

They said: You know, if something happens to the United States, you are not going to be coming to Australia, because China will take us over like that. If the United States is not standing strong, they said, our country, Australia, will be gone. China would grab us up in a heartbeat.

It is important that America stand strong. You can't stand strong when you are financially bankrupt. You can't stand strong when you are morally bankrupt. We seem to have our choice of ways we could meet our demise.

Our military is being degraded under this administration, the Navy going back to its size back in—was it?—the early 1900s before World War I. Weakness is provocative. I haven't heard anybody else notice. Maybe there is no correlation; maybe there is.

It seems historically, from my study of history, that when a nation's enemy sees that nation's biggest friend pulling away and not being as good a friend, then that enemy is provoked to attack. But it was in May of 2010 when this administration sided with Israel's enemies in demanding that Israel disclose all their weapons systems, including any potential nukes. I was shocked by that. The United States had never sided with all of Israel's enemies like that before.

I thought about the Bible story of King Hezekiah when the Babylonian leaders had come to visit and schmoozed with him, and Isaiah asked him: What have you done with the Babylonian leaders? Of course, this is a Texas paraphrased version, but he bragged about: I have taken them and shown them all of our treasure. The most literal translation from the He-

brew says: And I showed them all the defenses we have in our arsenal, our armory.

Isaiah explained: You are going to lose the country.

You don't show your enemy—you don't even show your friends—all of your defenses, and yet we were demanding that of Israel. Within 48 hours, Israel's enemies launched a flotilla to go challenge the lawful blockade of the Gaza Strip. All that Israel was doing was trying to prevent more rockets from going in because the rockets were being launched at them every day—totally legal. They were trying to defend themselves against rocket attacks and created a terrible situation at the blockade.

But as America continues to help fund Iran's desire to support terrorism, and as this administration has turned its back on nations like Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, I hear from leaders in those countries where they say: You know, all we wanted was a little help against our enemy.

Of course, in Nigeria, having been there and having met with so many of the parents of girls who were kidnapped by Boko Haram, radical Islamists, we then hear that our administration here says: Oh, yeah, we will give you some help, but you have got to change your religious beliefs. You have got to change your laws so it supports same-sex marriage and you fund abortion, and then we will give you more help.

The President in Kenya basically said at a news conference, in effect: You take care of your country. You are not going to come tell us what our religious beliefs and laws should be.

As a Nigerian Catholic bishop stated: Our religious beliefs are not for sale—not to President Obama, not to anybody.

But there are consequences in world history when one nation tries to destroy the religious beliefs of another country—their closely, firmly held religious beliefs. There are consequences when a nation forgets to say: Thank You, God, for all of our blessings. Thank You, God, for protecting us. Thank You for allowing us to live in the greatest country, a country in which there is more opportunity, more assets per person than anywhere in the world.

This is the one country where the number one health problem for our Nation's poor is obesity. It is a terrible problem that we need to deal with. But where in history do you have a country where the nation's poor have, as their number one health problem, obesity?

This Nation has been blessed beyond anything that people could have ever dreamed when this Nation was founded. But the Founders did see one thing. They saw the threat of giving more and more power to a Federal Government.

I was fortunate to call Justice Scalia a friend. A group of seniors from my

hometown of Tyler, Texas, from my church, Green Acres Baptist, came up to Washington, D.C. They said: Hey, you are supposed to be friends with Justice Scalia. We would love to meet him. That is one thing we really want to do in Washington.

So I called over, and Justice Scalia, bless his heart, he said: Sure, come on over.

So they arranged it. We had the meeting. He walks in. They are all seated there, the seniors from my church, and Justice Scalia could be very talkative. I treasure meals with him, exchanging jokes and stories. It made you feel good about the world. He walks in and leans up against the table at the front: So, you want to meet me. What is your question? What questions have you got?

It kind of took them by surprise. One said: Do you think we are the freest Nation in history because of our Bill of Rights?

Justice Scalia, in his inimitable style, said: Oh, gosh, no. No. The Soviet Union had a better Bill of Rights than we did.

I had forgotten. I made an A on a paper in college that I did about the Bill of Rights and the Constitution of the Soviet Union. Yeah, they were promised all kinds of rights, but the government was given the power to erode all of the rights that were said to be protected.

He said: No. The reason that we are the freest country in history is because our Founders did not trust government, and so they wanted to make it as hard as possible to pass laws. See, the Founders thought that gridlock was a blessing, gridlock was a great thing, because it meant that, as people anticipated passing laws, it would be tough because many laws regulate what you can and can't do.

The more laws you pass, just as this administration has shown the American people, as it has set all-time records for the most pages of regulations—there are over 79,000 new pages of regulations every year. How can anybody make a living with that kind of regulation coming out year after year, certainly for the last 7? Incredible.

The Founders knew that. They wanted to make it hard for any governmental agency, any government bureaucracy to create laws that took away freedom because they had some libertarian tendencies.

Justice Scalia, said: So they wanted it hard to pass laws, so what do they do? They create a legislature with two Houses, and certainly that was part of the compromise. But in England, the House of Lords is not particularly powerful, but they wanted both houses with the power to stop what the other one was doing. They wanted it very difficult in one house to pass a law.

I think they would cringe if they saw all the bills that are just passed with

unanimous consent or on suspension that we do more and more and more, because they wanted it tough to pass laws.

I have friends say: You guys should be in session more often.

I say: You don't know what you are asking for, because every day we are in session, we pass some new bill, we pass some new law.

□ 1245

Many of those laws take away freedoms of Americans. The Founders knew that. That is why, Justice Scalia said, they created two Houses. If one House got a law through it, the other one could stop it cold. But that wasn't enough to protect our freedom.

We want an executive, but not one like a prime minister. The prime minister is elected by the legislature. We don't want that. We want it tough.

We want independence. So we are going to have a chief executive, a President, that is elected totally separate from the legislature.

Even if the House and Senate finally agree on something, we will give him the power to just say: No. I am not going to let it happen.

But that is not enough. We want more gridlock. So let's create a judicial branch, as they did in Article III, that could turn around and say: No. The House, Senate, and the President may have agreed, but we don't agree.

It is not consistent with the Constitution. Justice Scalia said that is why we are the freest Nation in history: because our Founders did not trust government.

So, Mr. Speaker, it concerns me when I see voters begin to think that our hope is going to arrive on Air Force One. One of my greatest thrills was becoming friends with Chuck Colson.

As Chuck Colson said: Our hope will not arrive on Air Force One.

The old saying, the axiom, is true: democracy ensures a people are governed no better than they deserve.

If you want a good President, you have got to be a good country. An immoral country is not going to elect a great leader. They are going to elect an immoral leader.

When you see Christians who believe that the only way to the saving grace of Jesus is to ask for forgiveness and, as the Bible says, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, it is amazing to see Christian leaders saying they are going to put their faith in a guy that says he has never had to ask for forgiveness. But that was modified later to: Well, I don't think God's concerned with trivial things like that.

If I were God, I wouldn't be. But thank God I am not God. He seems to care about every individual. If you believe the Bible, that is what it says.

And then, if there is not enough bad news, this comes from KPNX today: "Attorney General Report: Possible

smuggling trail between the Middle East and Arizona border."

We have talked about that before. Long before, the Attorney General indicated that there appeared to be a trail between the Middle East and the Arizona border.

We have this story this week from Stephen Dinan from The Washington Times: "Top border chief to agents who object to Obama amnesty: 'Look for another job.'"

There you are, Mr. Speaker. When the head of the border agency says they are not going to enforce the laws that exist, then one of two things, either that is what the country deserves because it has become immoral and lawless or the country rises up and says: We will never have another administration like this. As long as we are alive, we are going to make sure we have an administration that enforces the law, no matter who it is.

Apparently, since people govern no better than they deserve, we now find out that Hillary's highly paid IT guru at the State Department had no actual national security experience.

So, apparently, we elected an administration that ensured people were governed no better than they deserve and, apparently, they felt like we didn't deserve a State Department with national security experience.

Is it any wonder—I thank God—that there have been more Benghazis under that kind of attitude? One was too many.

We see yesterday that the Justice Department grants immunity to the staffer who set up the Clinton email server. I have been a prosecutor. I have been a judge. I have been a chief justice. When someone grants immunity, they are closing in on a prosecution. That is the intent.

You don't grant immunity to someone and someone doesn't normally seek immunity unless they are concerned that they may have violated the law. They seek immunity because they violated the law.

Immunity is granted when, with the prosecution, the investigators—in this case, the FBI—feel that laws are being violated. So we are going to grant immunity to this person so that we can get the person further up.

But I still maintain that, as long as Hillary Clinton does not condemn or expose the Obama administration to any of the truth about what went on in Benghazi and about the hands-off list of terrorists and homeland security, I do not see her getting indicted. It is a good insurance policy.

Another article from the New York Times: "As Campaign Unfolds, So Do Inquiries Into Hillary Clinton's Emails."

So many voters don't seem to care. Why? Because people are governed no better than they deserve. If they are more concerned about themselves than

their children, they are going to get what they deserve.

Well, we had Mitt Romney come out today just before we voted condemning Donald Trump as phony and a fraud. Everybody knows that people across this country are furious with the establishment.

So if that idea was Donald Trump's—to get Mitt Romney to come out and condemn him—it was a brilliant plan. Because that is like asking Marv Levy to tell you how to win the Super Bowl, after he lost four of them.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, this country is in grave danger. I was all over the 12 counties that I represent. This country has so many great citizens. They deserve better than what they are getting.

I hope and pray the majority in the country will wake up and see the dangers to our own national defense, to our own national security, from government intrusions into our private lives, from drugs that are coming in through Mexico, and from terrorists that are coming into this country. The FBI Director himself says we have got them in every State.

We are in big trouble. It is time the American people woke up and said, as our parents did: We don't care what has happened before. We are going to make sure this country is left in better shape, with more opportunity, than we had growing up.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to have to hurry. The clock is ticking.

I yield back the balance of my time.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS AS CONGRESSIONAL ADVISORS ON TRADE POLICY AND NEGOTIATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to section 161(a) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2211), and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, of the following Members on the part of the House as Congressional Advisors on Trade Policy and Negotiations:

Mr. BRADY, Texas
Mr. REICHERT, Washington
Mr. NUNES, California

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of illness.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 1596. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at

2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, as the "Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building".

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 54 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, March 7, 2016, at 4 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4551. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Air Plan Approval; Illinois; Base Year Emission Inventories for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone Standard [EPA-R05-OAR-2014-0664; FRL-9943-33-Region 5] received March 2, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4552. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Regional Haze Glatfelter BART SIP Revision [EPA-R05-OAR-2014-0362; FRL-9943-29-Region 5] received March 2, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4553. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Air Plan Approval; Wisconsin; Base Year Emission Inventories for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone Standard [EPA-R05-OAR-2014-0860; FRL-9943-31-Region 5] received March 2, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4554. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Disapproval; Georgia; Disapproval of Automatic Rescission Clause [EPA-R04-OAR-2010-0816; FRL-9943-35-Region 4] received March 2, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4555. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Alpha-[2,4,6-Tris[1-(phenyl)ethyl]phenyl]-Omega-hydroxy poly(oxyethylene) poly(oxypropylene) copolymer; Tolerance Exemption [EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0485; FRL-9942-48] received March 2, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4556. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of Arizona Air Plan Revisions; Phoenix, Arizona; Second 10-Year Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Plan [EPA-R09-OAR-2015-0645; FRL-9942-17-Region 9] received March 2, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-

121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4557. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Fluensulfone; Pesticide Tolerance for Emergency Exemption [EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0475; FRL-9942-10] received March 2, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4558. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Pendimethalin; Tolerance Actions; Corrections [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0194; EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0397; FRL-9942-24] received March 2, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4559. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Penoxsulam; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0879; FRL-9940-36] received March 2, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4560. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Rulemaking to Affirm Interim Amendments to Dates in Federal Implementation Plans Addressing Interstate Transport of Ozone and Fine Particulate Matter [EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0491; FRL-9943-36-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AS40) received March 2, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4561. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Zoxamide; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0922; FRL-9942-18] received March 2, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4562. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Expanding Consumers' Video Navigation Choices [MB Docket No.: 16-42]; Commercial Availability of Navigation Devices [CS Docket No.: 97-80] received March 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4563. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Expansion of Online Public File Obligations to Cable and Satellite TV Operators and Broadcast and Satellite Radio Licensees [MB Docket No.: 14-127] received March 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4564. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Automotive Fuel Ratings, Certification and Posting (RIN: 3084-AB39) received March 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4565. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's

final NUREG — Chapter 11, Radioactive Waste Management [SRPs: 11.1; 11.2; 11.3; 11.4; 11.5] received March 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4566. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final NUREG — Probabilistic Risk Assessment and Severe Accident Evaluation for New Reactors [SRP Section 19.0] received March 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4567. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final NUREG — Chapter 11, Radioactive Waste Management [SRPs: BTP 11-3; BTP 11-5; BTP 11-6] received March 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4568. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(d) Public Law 92-403, Sec. 1; (86 Stat. 619); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4569. A letter from the Board Members, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting the Board's calendar year 2015 annual report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552b(j); Public Law 94-409, Sec. 3(a); (90 Stat. 1241); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4570. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's determination on a petition filed on behalf of workers who were employed at Battelle Laboratories at the King Avenue site in Columbus, Ohio, to be added to the Special Exposure Cohort, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 7384q(c)(2); Public Law 106-398, Sec. 1 (as amended by Public Law 108-375, Sec. 3166(b)(1)); (118 Stat. 2188); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4571. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Regulated Navigation Area; Reporting Requirements for Barges Loaded with Certain Dangerous Cargoes, Inland Rivers, Eighth Coast Guard District; Expiration of Stay (Suspension) and Administrative Changes [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0760] (RIN: 1625-AA11) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4572. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Pleasure Beach Bridge, Bridgeport, CT [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1088] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4573. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's notice of enforcement of regulation — Safety Zone; Circle Line Sightseeing Fireworks, Liberty Island, Upper New York Bay, Man-

hattan, NY [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1048] received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4574. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Navy UNDET, Apra Outer Harbor, GU [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1096] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4575. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Upper Mississippi River and Illinois River, MO and IL [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1121] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4576. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Regulated Navigation Area, Kill Van Kull and Newark Bay; Bayonne, NJ, NY [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0002] (RIN: 1625-AA11) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4577. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of the Lamorinda Viticultural Area [Docket No.: TTB-2015-0007; T.D. TTB-133; Ref: Notice No.: 151] (RIN: 1513-AC17) received March 2, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4578. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Regulations Governing Organization of the Joint Board for the Enrollment of Actuaries [TD 9749] (RIN: 1545-BM81) received February 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Education and the Workforce.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. CAPUANO (for himself, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. NEAL, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Ms. BROWNLEY of California):

H.R. 4677. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide death benefits for campus police officers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself, Mr. YOHO, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, and Mr. SALMON):

H.R. 4678. A bill to prohibit modification, abrogation, abandonment, or other related actions with respect to United States juris-

diction and control over United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, without congressional action; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. DENT (for himself and Mr. CUELLAR):

H.R. 4679. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to eliminate straight-party voting from any voting system used for Federal elections; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah:

H.R. 4680. A bill to prepare the National Park Service for its Centennial in 2016 and for a second century of promoting and protecting the natural, historic, and cultural resources of our National Parks for the enjoyment of present and future generations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts):

H.R. 4681. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide greater support to students with dependents, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself and Ms. ESHOO):

H.R. 4682. A bill to repeal debt collection amendments made by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. COFFMAN (for himself, Mr. WALZ, Mr. ZELDIN, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. JONES, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, and Mr. GALLEGO):

H.R. 4683. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for a review of the characterization or terms of discharge from the Armed Forces of individuals with mental health disorders alleged to affect terms of discharge; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. COFFMAN (for himself, Mr. KILMER, and Miss RICE of New York):

H.R. 4684. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish mental health care to certain former members of the Armed Forces who are not otherwise eligible to receive such care, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MCCARTHY:

H.R. 4685. A bill to take certain Federal lands located in Tulare County, California, into trust for the benefit of the Tule River Indian Tribe, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. REICHERT (for himself and Mr. NEWHOUSE):

H.R. 4686. A bill to amend Public Law 103-434 to authorize Phase III of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project for the purposes of improving water management in the Yakima River basin, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. MULLIN (for himself and Mr. RUSSELL):

H.R. 4687. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that temporary employees of the Department of Defense may compete for vacant permanent positions under internal merit promotion procedures, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. AMODEI (for himself, Mr. HARDY, Mr. HECK of Nevada, and Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 4688. A bill to promote conservation, improve public land, and provide for sensible development in Douglas County, Nevada, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BOUSTANY:

H.R. 4689. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts with administrative contractors for the processing of claims for hospital care and medical services furnished in non-Department of Veterans Affairs facilities; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. BUSTOS (for herself, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. TONKO):

H.R. 4690. A bill to revitalize Army arsenals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself and Ms. JACKSON LEE):

H.R. 4691. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require local educational agencies to implement a policy on allergy bullying in schools; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. CLARKE of New York:

H.R. 4692. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act, in relation to requiring adrenoleukodystrophy screening of newborns; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Ms. PELOSI, and Mr. LEVIN):

H.R. 4693. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a refundable and advanceable tax credit for individuals with young children; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Mr. KILDEE):

H.R. 4694. A bill to amend the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992 to define environmental intervention blood lead level, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ENGEL (for himself, Mr. STIVERS, Ms. GRAHAM, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. DOLD, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. ROSLEHTINEN, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. MACARTHUR):

H.R. 4695. A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to improve the quality, health outcomes, and value of maternity care under the Medicaid and CHIP programs by developing maternity care quality measures and supporting maternity care quality collaboratives; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. ESHOO (for herself and Mr. THOMPSON of California):

H.R. 4696. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a deduction for

homeowners association assessments; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. ESTY (for herself, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, and Mr. KNIGHT):

H.R. 4697. A bill to provide for increased Federal oversight of prescription opioid treatment and assistance to States in reducing opioid addiction, diversion, and deaths; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KATKO (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. KEATING, Mr. DONOVAN, and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 4698. A bill to enhance aviation by requiring airport security assessments and a security coordination enhancement plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. KATKO (for himself and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 4699. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for parent savings accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. NUNES, Mr. JONES, Mr. ZELDIN, and Mr. ISRAEL):

H.R. 4700. A bill to award a Congressional gold medal to the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), commonly known as "Merrill's Marauders", in recognition of their bravery and outstanding service in the jungles of Burma during World War II; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. KUSTER (for herself, Mr. LANCE, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Mr. HARPER):

H.R. 4701. A bill to encourage States to require the installation of residential carbon monoxide detectors in homes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LANCE (for himself and Mr. QUIGLEY):

H.R. 4702. A bill to direct the Director of the Government Publishing Office to provide members of the public with Internet access to Congressional Research Service reports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4703. A bill to eliminate the authority of the executive branch to further restrict intra-family firearm transfers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCKINLEY (for himself and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 4704. A bill to increase accountability with respect to Department of Energy carbon capture, utilization, and sequestration projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 4705. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a nonrefundable credit for the purchase of emergency position-indicating radio beacons and personal locator beacons; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PAULSEN:

H.R. 4706. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income certain interest and money market fund dividend income payments to charity and to modify the requirements relating to the reporting of such payments; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PRICE of North Carolina (for himself and Mr. ADERHOLT):

H.R. 4707. A bill to provide housing opportunities for individuals living with HIV or AIDS, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California):

H.R. 4708. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a nonrefundable credit for working family caregivers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Miss RICE of New York:

H.R. 4709. A bill to amend the CAN-SPAM Act of 2003 to require commercial email messages to include an option allowing recipients to unsubscribe from any such future emails; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4710. A bill to amend the Federal Crop Insurance Act to eliminate premium subsidies for crop insurance for tobacco; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. FARR, Ms. ESHOO, Mrs. CAPPS, and Mr. THOMPSON of California):

H.R. 4711. A bill to make funds available for Dungeness crab and rock crab emergency disaster assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Mr. WOODALL, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. CUMMINGS):

H.R. 4712. A bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide for an option under the Secure Mail Initiative under which a person to whom a document is sent under that initiative may require that the United States Postal Service obtain a signature from that person in order to deliver the document, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska (for himself and Mr. DEFAZIO):

H.R. 4713. A bill to amend the market name of genetically altered salmon in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. YOUNG of Indiana (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

H.R. 4714. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure Medicare coverage of certain costs associated with FDA-approved clinical trials; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LOUDERMILK (for himself, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. GOWDY, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. BRAT, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. BARTON, and Mr. RIBBLE):

H.J. Res. 85. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States requiring that the Federal budget be balanced; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GOODLATTE (for himself, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BRAT, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. FORBES, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. HURT of Virginia, Mr. RIGELL, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. WITTMAN):

H. Con. Res. 123. Concurrent resolution recognizing the George C. Marshall Museum and George C. Marshall Research Library in Lexington, Virginia, as the National George C. Marshall Museum and Library; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CROWLEY (for himself and Mr. CHABOT):

H. Res. 636. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding Burma's 2015 elections; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. DELANEY (for himself, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. POLIS, Mr. TONKO, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. KEATING, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. LEE, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. McDERMOTT, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. HONDA, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. WELCH, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. ESTY, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. NORTON, Mr. KILMER, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CARNEY, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. HIMES, Ms. BONAMICI, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. BEYER, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. RUPERSBERGER, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. BECERRA, Mrs. CAPPs, Mr. LEVIN, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. CLYBURN, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. NADLER, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. RUSH, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. COHEN, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. HAHN, Mr. NEAL, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. FOSTER, Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. MENG, Mr. NOLAN, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ):

H. Res. 637. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that

the United States should establish a national goal of more than 50 percent clean and carbon free electricity by 2030 for the purposes of avoiding the worst impacts of climate change, growing our economy, increasing our shared prosperity, improving public health, and preserving our national security; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

175. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Senate of the State of Michigan, relative to Senate Resolution No. 121, to memorialize the Congress of the United States to address freeze emergencies and their consequences by enacting legislation to define freeze emergencies as major disasters eligible for federal disaster relief and emergency assistance; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. CAPUANO:

H.R. 4677.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1; and Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ROYCE:

H.R. 4678.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 and Article IV, section 3 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. DENT:

H.R. 4679.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah:

H.R. 4680.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. DUCKWORTH:

H.R. 4681.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18, Section 8, Article 1 of the Constitution of the United States

By Ms. DUCKWORTH:

H.R. 4682.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18, Section 8, Article 1 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. COFFMAN:

H.R. 4683.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution (Clauses 12, 13, 14, 16, and 18), which grants Congress the power to raise and support an Army; to provide and maintain a

Navy; to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces; to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia; and to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the foregoing powers.

By Mr. COFFMAN:

H.R. 4684.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. MCCARTHY:

H.R. 4685.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Constitution, Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2

U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. REICHERT:

H.R. 4686.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. MULLIN:

H.R. 4687.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clauses 1, 12, 13, and 14 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. AMODEI:

H.R. 4688.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2: The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

By Mr. BOUSTANY:

H.R. 4689.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mrs. BUSTOS:

H.R. 4690.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4691.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 (relating to the power of Congress to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.)

By Ms. CLARKE of New York:

H.R. 4692.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 4693.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and the Sixteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 4694.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, Clause 3 and Clause 18.

By Mr. ENGEL:

H.R. 4695.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 1 of the Constitution.

By Ms. ESHOO:

H.R. 4696.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Ms. ESTY:

H.R. 4697.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18 of section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution, "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. KATKO:

H.R. 4698.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3—To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. KATKO:

H.R. 4699.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution: The Congress shall have the Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.

By Mr. KING of New York:

H.R. 4700.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 5 of the Constitution

By Ms. KUSTER:

H.R. 4701.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (relating to the power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States) of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LANCE:

H.R. 4702.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Sec 8, Clause 18, of the United States Constitution Which states: Congress shall have power . . . to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying in execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any other department or officer thereof.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4703.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the U.S. constitution. Specifically Clause 3 which gives Congress the authority to Regulate Commerce.

By Mr. MCKINLEY:

H.R. 4704.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 4705.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PAULSEN:

H.R. 4706.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PRICE of North Carolina:

H.R. 4707.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States, the general welfare clause.

By Mr. REED:

H.R. 4708.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution and Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution.

By Miss RICE of New York:

H.R. 4709.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution: To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4710.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 4711.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 4712.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article 1: Section 8: Clause 18: of the United States Constitution, seen below, this bill falls within the Constitutional Authority of the United States Congress.

Article 1: Section 8: Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:

H.R. 4713.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. YOUNG of Indiana:

H.R. 4714.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, to "provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States."

By Mr. LOUDERMILK:

H.J. Res. 85.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V of the Constitution, which grants Congress the power to propose amendments to the Constitution when two-thirds of both chambers shall deem it necessary.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 24: Mr. GUINTA.

H.R. 27: Mr. SANFORD.

H.R. 169: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 239: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 267: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 288: Mr. MICA.

H.R. 297: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. MCCOLLUM, and Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 314: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 448: Mr. MOULTON.

H.R. 491: Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 546: Mr. COOK.

H.R. 605: Mr. ROHRABACHER and Mr. LANDEVIN.

H.R. 654: Mr. DUFFY.

H.R. 662: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 664: Mr. NEAL, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. MEEKS.

H.R. 815: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 865: Mr. SHIMKUS.

H.R. 1151: Mr. HARRIS.

H.R. 1185: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. WALBERG, Ms. PINGREE, and Ms. MENG.

H.R. 1220: Mr. KNIGHT, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 1260: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 1342: Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 1399: Mr. FORBES and Mrs. CAPPS.

H.R. 1457: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 1523: Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 1567: Mr. WOMACK.

H.R. 1717: Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. ZELDIN, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 2124: Mr. TAKAI, Mr. LANCE, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 2400: Mr. BLUM.

H.R. 2404: Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 2411: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 2430: Ms. BONAMICI and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 2434: Mr. FORTENBERRY and Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 2460: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 2737: Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 2773: Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 2799: Mr. SHIMKUS.

H.R. 2800: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 2811: Mr. DEFazio.

H.R. 2849: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2939: Mr. HIMES.

H.R. 3092: Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 3119: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania and Mr. TED LIEU of California.

H.R. 3179: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 3185: Ms. ADAMS and Ms. GRAHAM.

H.R. 3222: Mr. FLORES.

H.R. 3235: Mr. FARR.

H.R. 3268: Mr. KIND and Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 3299: Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 3326: Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 3514: Mr. COHEN, Mr. SARBANES, and Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 3580: Mrs. BEATTY.

- H.R. 3860: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 3862: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 3917: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey and Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3929: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Mr. DEFazio, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. WELCH, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. BRAT, Mr. CLAY, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. BEYER, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. BABIN.
H.R. 3970: Mr. WELCH and Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 3985: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 4027: Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 4095: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 4167: Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. WILLIAMS.
H.R. 4209: Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. HECK of Washington.
H.R. 4219: Mr. ROYCE.
H.R. 4229: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H.R. 4293: Mr. ALLEN, Mr. BARLETTA, and Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 4352: Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. VALADAO, and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.
H.R. 4371: Mr. LABRADOR.
H.R. 4376: Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. COHEN, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. NADLER, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. POLIS, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. PINGREE, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 4386: Mr. KENNEDY and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4420: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 4430: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 4442: Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 4474: Mr. SENSENBRENNER and Mrs. LUMMIS.
H.R. 4479: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 4480: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 4491: Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 4500: Mr. POLIQUIN.
H.R. 4522: Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
H.R. 4524: Mr. ASHFORD and Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 4526: Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
H.R. 4570: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 4592: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. TIBERI, Ms. ESTY, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4599: Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 4600: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 4614: Mr. WOMACK.
H.R. 4622: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, and Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 4625: Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 4633: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 4641: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 4653: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4654: Mr. CICILLINE and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 4657: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. LUETKEMEYER and Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
H. Res. 33: Ms. MENG.
H. Res. 393: Mr. BEYER and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H. Res. 451: Mr. PALAZZO and Mr. WEBER of Texas.
H. Res. 501: Ms. PINGREE and Ms. LOFGREN.
H. Res. 552: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
H. Res. 591: Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. HANNA, and Mr. TONKO.

SENATE—Thursday, March 3, 2016

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, You are the strength of our lives. Use us to tell of Your wondrous works, inspiring others to glorify Your Name in the Earth. Help us to depend on You in the welter and variety of events we encounter each day. May we trust You to supply all of our needs, responding with gratitude to Your generous mercies.

Today, give our Senators an eternal perspective on the myriad issues they face. Infuse their hearts with faith, sharpen their minds with truth, and renew their spirits with courage. Bless the members of their staff who sacrifice so much for freedom's cause.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today we have an opportunity to take another step forward on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA, a critically important and bipartisan bill to address the growing prescription opioid and heroin epidemic.

As we have worked through debate on this legislation, we have heard numerous stories from across our Nation about the toll this crisis is taking on Americans. Today, I want to take a moment to address the difference CARA can make in my home State of Kentucky, which has been among the hardest hit by this epidemic.

More people are dying from drug overdoses than car crashes in the Commonwealth, and that is largely due to prescription opioids and heroin. We know education and prevention pro-

grams can help reduce the number of people who experience drug addiction and overdose. One program I have been proud to support is the Drug-Free Community Program, which provides funding to local communities so they can promote education and awareness about the dangers of substance abuse.

I wrote letters of support on behalf of Oldham and Carter Counties, which have both received drug-free community grants. This funding helps them train community members, parents, and school officials in preventing youth substance abuse.

There are other programs in CARA that can help build on these efforts through community-based coalition grants that address local drug crises. Education is incredibly important, and it is great to see what we are achieving on that front. But for Kentuckians and Americans currently struggling with addiction, the cycle can be very difficult to break.

We have seen a staggering number of people lose their lives to overdose, and we know more must be done to stop that terrible trend. Fortunately, groups like the Harm Reduction Coalition are providing overdose prevention and naloxone training for drug treatment programs, recovery advocates, and health departments across Kentucky and several other States. Through State demonstration and first responder grants, the group says CARA can give them a "stronger foundation to move from training to action."

Prescription drug monitoring programs are also instrumental in saving lives, and I have been a strong supporter of Kentucky's own program, called KASPER. Just last fall, I received confirmation from the CDC that the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center had been awarded funds to combat the prescription drug and heroin epidemic in Kentucky. These funds are being used to improve KASPER, as well as target interventions in counties such as Jefferson, Fayette, Boone, Kenton, and Campbell—counties that have seen some of the highest rates of overdose deaths in the Commonwealth. The bill we are considering today also places an emphasis on prescription drug monitoring programs and will strengthen efforts already in place.

Perhaps one of the most heartbreaking aspects of this epidemic is its effect on newborns. Just last year, I sponsored the Protecting Our Infants Act to address this specific issue and was proud to see it become law. Our work to protect these fragile lives continues with the legislation we have be-

fore us today. CARA would improve treatment for both pregnant and postpartum women by reauthorizing an existing grant program. It would also authorize a pilot program to enhance treatment options for this specific population.

CARA can make positive strides in terms of keeping communities safe, too. It would bolster the efforts of law enforcement through the authorization of grant programs for collaborative investigative units. What that means is Kentucky's outstanding drug task forces stand to benefit when it comes to investigating illegal trafficking and distribution of heroin, fentanyl, and prescription opioids. I have strongly supported each of these efforts to intensify the Commonwealth's fight against our prescription opioid and heroin crisis.

So because of efforts like those I mentioned—to strengthen education and treatment programs, to improve prescription drug monitoring tools, and to enhance law enforcement efforts—differences are already being made in the lives of many Kentuckians. With the passage of CARA, we can build upon these and other initiatives that can help shore up the fight against prescription opioid and heroin addiction.

Kim Moser, Director of the Northern Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy, says CARA will "address the growing needs" of Kentucky communities and "expand treatment resources for those suffering." She goes on to say that CARA "will allow individuals, families and communities to heal from this scourge."

I want to thank Senator GRASSLEY, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, for working with Senators to move this bill by voice vote in a timely manner, and I want to also acknowledge Senator PORTMAN and Senator AYOTTE for their responsiveness to this urgent problem and for their dedication to advancing the bipartisan bill that is before us now.

Remember, although this is an authorization bill, Congress has already appropriated \$400 million—funds that are still available today—for opioid-specific programs. We will have more opportunities for funding through the next appropriations process, but it is important we act on this legislation right now.

CARA will bring us closer to ending a national epidemic. It will help lift communities like those in Kentucky out of the throes of prescription opioids and heroin addiction. It will help save lives.

I look forward to joining my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this important legislation.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as Senators, we pride ourselves in making sure that we vote when we are required to vote, and we are always very aware of when the votes occur and what happens with the votes. I missed a vote yesterday at 4 o'clock.

My staff has told me the clerks here are concerned that they did something wrong. I missed the vote. It was my fault. It was no one's fault but my own. I had a doctor's appointment at 4:30, and I got here too late.

So everyone should understand that I have missed other votes, and I have already announced how I would have voted had I voted, and it wouldn't have changed the outcome of the vote. So all the clerks, who serve us so well all the time, shouldn't worry at all about my not being recorded on that vote.

So calm down, everybody. I don't care. You shouldn't care.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have heard my friend the Republican leader the last couple of days talking about what a good bill we have here. He is right. It is something that is important to do. We have this opioid problem sweeping the Nation. It is in Nevada, as well as in all other States. All the other 49 States have the problem. So I understand the importance of this legislation. I only wish the Republicans had joined with us yesterday in voting for the Shaheen amendment, which would have provided real money to meet the requirements of this legislation, if it passes.

I also know my friend keeps talking about the money we have already appropriated. We did it because there was an emergency then, and there is one now. The programs we have appropriated money for are totally separate and apart from this legislation. That is why Senator SHAHEEN offered her amendment. It was emergency funding that we badly need. So it is too bad my friends on the other side of the aisle are talking about taking money from other programs and funding this program. That isn't how it should be.

This is a scourge sweeping the country. We have programs in this new legislation that need to be funded, otherwise it won't have any meaning whatsoever to the problem we are facing in the country.

A number of Democrats have also tried to offer amendments. To this point, they have been able to offer one amendment and vote on one amendment. We have had more than 60 amendments filed over here. I know we are not going to have the ability to debate and vote on 60 amendments, but my friend the Republican leader has been out here boasting time and again about this robust amendment process, and it is only talk. We haven't had a robust amendment process.

I wouldn't think robust would mean having seven or eight amendments. We would accept a new definition of robust, I guess, if we got to offer a few amendments, but we should be able to offer amendments on this legislation.

So I hope the Senate will be able to have a full and open amendment process on this legislation. If not, we may not be able to proceed to vote on this legislation, and it would be too bad. Even though the legislation is not funded properly, we should pass it. We are not going to pass it if we get jammed, and that is what is happening.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, listen to these words: fair, respectful, deliberative, and thorough. These are the words the senior Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY, once used to describe the way Supreme Court nominations should be considered by the Senate—fair, respectful, deliberative, and thorough.

In June 2010, he said something more:

I have always been of the opinion that the Senate needs to conduct a comprehensive and careful review of Supreme Court nominees. It is important that the nominee be given a fair, respectful, and also deliberative hearing.

That same month, in June 2010, he also said:

I am committed to ensuring that this process is fair and respectful but also thorough. The Constitution tasks our Senate with conducting a comprehensive review of the nominee's record and qualifications.

Fair, respectful, deliberative, and thorough. I don't think refusing to meet with a nominee, refusing to hold a hearing of a nominee, refusing to vote on a nominee is fair, respectful, deliberative, and certainly not thorough.

He was not yet chairman of the Judiciary Committee when the senior Senator from Iowa made those comments. As I have noted, he has said on more than one occasion that the Constitution tasks our Senate with conducting a "comprehensive review of the nominee's record and qualifications." He made those statements when he wasn't chairman of the committee. He is now chairman of the committee—the committee he has served on for decades. Now his response for the Senate's con-

sideration of Supreme Court nominations sets the standard. He runs that big and powerful committee, and he has chosen an approach that could not be further from the fair, respectful, deliberative, and thorough that he has urged on more than one occasion.

Instead of exercising his once-respected independence, my friend the senior Senator from Iowa is taking his marching orders from the Republican leader and refusing to give President Obama's Supreme Court nominee a meeting, a hearing, or a vote.

Within an hour after Justice Scalia's death was announced, the Republican leader hijacked the Supreme Court nomination process in the Senate by declaring that the Republicans would not consider the President's nominee.

Then the Republican leader decided to seize control of the Judiciary Committee—I don't know if he twisted arms, but that certainly conveys the message I want to convey—twisting the arms of the senior Senator from Iowa and his committee members to get them to forfeit their independence and fall in line. Behind closed doors, the Republican leader compelled the 11 Republicans who make up the majority of the committee on the Judiciary to sign a loyalty oath. This loyalty oath, which abdicated the role of this once-dignified committee, took the form of a letter promising to follow the Republican leader's demands and block consideration of President Obama's Supreme Court nominee.

Earlier this week, the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY, discussed the arm-twisting that took place. During an interview on Tuesday on an NBC affiliate in Iowa, he was asked whether undue influence had been exerted by Republican leadership. This is what he said: "Some had reluctance, but all signed." Again, "Some had reluctance, but all signed" on when asked whether undue influence had been exerted by Republican leadership.

I don't blame Senator GRASSLEY's colleagues for their reluctance. The Judiciary Committee once had a proud history of independence. This committee is 200 years old and is one of 11 committees that were formed when this body came into being. So their reluctance is understandable. It is understandable that the Republican members don't want to abdicate their independence. I don't blame those Senators for being reluctant to follow the Republican leader's orders for refusal to do their jobs. I don't blame them for their reluctance to banish the independence of the Judiciary Committee's past, ensuring that this once powerful, independent, strong committee's reputation is now nothing but a memory.

I wish the Judiciary Committee Republicans had been a bit more reluctant to sign on to the McConnell-Grassley letter, a pledge not to do their jobs. It appears most voters also think

they should not have signed the letter. According to a new CNN poll that came out last night, two-thirds of Republicans want hearings on the President's Supreme Court nominee—almost 70 percent. Senate Republicans' pledge to obstruct doesn't make sense to the Republicans' own base.

The senior Senator from Iowa's blind adherence to the dictates of leadership doesn't stop there. The chairman of the Judiciary Committee was too timid to even meet with President Obama without the Republican leader's consent. He refused to go to the White House without the Republican leader by his side. When we all finally did meet with President Obama on Tuesday—the Republican leader, Democratic leader, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee—at that meeting, the chairman wouldn't commit to meeting the nominee or holding hearings. He wouldn't do that. He wouldn't give the nominee a vote. That is what he told the President.

This is not what Senator GRASSLEY advocated before his party assumed the majority. Back in January 2015, on the Senate floor, the Senator from Iowa said:

We must get back to what we in the Senate call regular order. I would say do things the way Madison intended.

Everything the chairman has done since assuming the role runs counter to those words and what Madison intended and obviously what the senior Senator from Iowa had intended.

Allowing 11 Republican members of the Judiciary Committee—and they are all men—to decide on behalf of 100 Senators and 300 million Americans that they will not even meet with or hold a hearing or vote on the Supreme Court nominee is certainly not regular order. This is about as irregular order as you can have. Given the opportunity to preside over a fair process, the chairman chose blind obedience to his party leaders instead. Nothing the Judiciary Committee chairman has done in the wake of this Supreme Court vacancy can be identified as regular order. It is about as irregular order as you can have.

Working behind closed doors is becoming the theme for Senator GRASSLEY and the Judiciary Committee. He sought to move a committee markup scheduled for today—a meeting that normally takes place in the full view of the public—behind closed doors. Everyone, think about that. This hearing has been scheduled for a long time, but the Republican leader wants to do it secretly. When Democrats objected, the chairman postponed the meeting altogether. No public hearing, a closed door hearing, Democrats objected, so he just canceled the meeting. This isn't transparency; this is obstruction and chaos.

Even Republicans agree—or at least some of them. Last week, the junior Senator from West Virginia said:

Do I worry that this would make the Senate look dysfunctional? That's a slight worry for me.

It may be a slight worry for the Senator from West Virginia, but it is a huge worry for the American people.

Again:

Do I worry that this would make the Senate look dysfunctional? That's a slight worry for me.

Well, it may be a slight worry for the Senator from West Virginia, but it is not a slight worry for the American people. It is a big, huge worry for the people of West Virginia.

The good news is that this can all be remedied very quickly. All my friend from Iowa needs to do is use the authority he has as the Judiciary Committee chair and give the President's nominee a meeting and a hearing. This would be what Iowa deserves and what this country deserves. All he needs to do is live up to his own words and be "fair," "respectful," "deliberative," and "thorough." Simply put, he needs to stop blindly following the Republican leader and just do his job.

Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 524, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 524) to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Pending:

Grassley amendment No. 3378, in the nature of a substitute.

Grassley (for Donnelly/Capito) modified amendment No. 3374 (to amendment No. 3378), to provide follow-up services to individuals who have received opioid overdose reversal drugs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the year was 1936. President Franklin Roosevelt had just been reelected with an overwhelming majority, and he decided he had had enough of the U.S. Supreme Court. They had been striking down some key pieces of legislation in his New Deal package. So he came up with a bold plan in February of 1937. That bold plan was to add enough new Justices to the Supreme Court to tip the balance his way.

He presented this plan to change the Supreme Court for his political purposes to a Democratic Congress and a

Democratic U.S. Senate, believing, with his big reelection majority and the fact that most of the Members of Congress had supported his New Deal agenda, that they would stand by him when it came to changing the Supreme Court so that it would start ruling his way. He was wrong. What happened then was that Members of the Senate decided to stand up to their President and to stand up for the Constitution.

A little-known Senator from Arizona, Henry Ashurst, was the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. He deliberately delayed the FDR Court-packing proposal to a point where, when it was finally called, it was overwhelmingly defeated.

Think about that in the context of our current debate about filling this Supreme Court vacancy created by the untimely death of Justice Scalia. In that case, in 1937, the Senate Judiciary Committee and its chairman stood up for the Constitution first, over and above even the President of their own political party. This was a popular President; yet they believed the Constitution was more important than any political issue when it came to the New Deal.

So where are we today? We are in a situation where we have a vacancy on the Supreme Court. The Court still continues to hear cases of great historic moment—yesterday, the case involving abortion and I am sure, in weeks ahead, even more controversial issues. It is a Court that is at least limited by the fact that there are only eight Justices. In many instances, this Court is likely to end up with a tie—a decision which doesn't decide the law but leaves it still unresolved.

So what is our responsibility as this Senate at this time as we reflect on the Senate of 1937? Well, we only have to turn to the U.S. Constitution—the Constitution which each of us, each and every one of us as Senators, Democratic and Republican, stood in the well and swore to uphold.

The second article in this Constitution relates to the powers of the Presidency. In this book, it is only three pages, but the people who wrote the Constitution, our Founding Fathers, tried to put in those three pages the critically important elements to make sure that our democracy would continue. They tried to envision the possibilities and to authorize branches of government to do certain things.

In article II, section 2, when it comes to the powers of the President, it says: he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court.

Did it say he may appoint? No. The language is explicit. He shall appoint, and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall fill the vacancies on the Supreme Court.

So what faces us today? An announcement by the Republican leadership, Senator MCCONNELL, within hours

of the announcement of the death of Justice Scalia, that for the first time in the history of the United States Senate, for the first time in our Nation's history, the Republicans have announced that they will not only refuse to fill this vacancy, they will not even allow a hearing on a Presidential nominee. And Senator McCONNELL went a step further and said he will not even meet with a nominee offered by the President to fill this vacancy. That is a clear violation of the constitutional responsibility which this Senate has. The Constitution doesn't require us to approve any nominee, no; it is advise and consent, not consent only. We can certainly vote no if we feel that vote is warranted. But the Constitution is very clear that we can't walk away from our constitutional responsibility when it comes to a vacancy on the Supreme Court.

If the Senate Republicans have their way, this vacancy on the Supreme Court will continue on until the next calendar year. It will be the longest vacancy on the Supreme Court since the Civil War, when this Nation was torn apart. If there was any excuse in those days for not filling the vacancy, there is no excuse today.

There is the argument made: Let the people decide. Let the people decide in the next election who the next Supreme Court Justice will be. But that ignores the obvious: There is a sitting President, elected for 4 years, with the constitutional authority every President has, and one of those authorities is to fill this vacancy on the Supreme Court.

They argue: Well, the people will decide in November what will happen next year. I might remind them that the people decided in the year 2012 by a margin of 5 million votes that Barack Obama would be President of the United States—not for 3 years, not for 3 years and 2 months, but for 4 years. And to argue that he is somehow now unable, unwilling, or cannot be called on to exercise his Presidential authority flies in the face of reality—a reality which most Republicans will readily concede, at least in private.

The Republicans think they are winning this debate. I think they are losing. They think their “let the people decide” approach to this is really carrying the day. I think our approach to this—saying to our Republican colleagues: Do your job—is carrying the day.

How is this playing in Peoria, IL? I want to read from an editorial of the February 28 edition of the Peoria Journal-Star:

The most worthless Congress in memory became more so last week, with Senate Republicans doubling down on their decision not to even hold hearings for any Obama nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court to fill the Scalia vacancy.

They went on to say:

Even as awful as Congress is, it's not often that its members combine dereliction of constitutional duty—(see Article II, Section 2)—with political cravenness (the aversion to tough decisions in an election year) in one fell swoop, but so Senate Republicans have here. Not only have they unconstitutionally changed a president's term from four to three years, not only are they renouncing their “advise and consent” role, not only are they effectively suggesting the Constitution be amended to popularly elect Supreme Court justices, but even more lame are the lengths Republicans went to in order to rationalize their decision.

No more excuses. The Senate Judiciary Committee and the Senate should do their job. When the President submits a nominee, we should give that nominee a fair and thorough hearing—a fair, respectful, and thorough hearing, as one Republican said over and over again—in full view of the American people and then vote.

A fair warning to my Senate Republicans. They said the American people should decide. They will decide—they will decide in November that the Republicans in the Senate should do their job.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. DURBIN. I will be happy to yield.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Senator may well recall—he was here when I was chairman of the Judiciary Committee in 2001 during President Bush's administration, the ranking member was then Senator HATCH—we put together an agreement about how the committee would consider Supreme Court nominees. We wrote: The Judiciary Committee's traditional practice has been to report Supreme Court nominees to the Senate once the committee has completed its consideration. This has been true even in cases where Supreme Court nominees were opposed by a majority of the Judiciary Committee.

Does the Senator recall that at that time the Republican leader of the Senate, Senator Lott, even read that letter into the RECORD to say that this is the way the Senate should operate?

Mr. DURBIN. I do remember that.

Mr. LEAHY. I appreciate that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor this morning because of the important subject that is before us, the bill that deals with the opioid epidemic, the follow-on heroin problem, a bill that was reported out of committee unanimously, a very important piece of legislation. Right now we have unfortunate political gamesmanship that has overtaken some of my Democratic colleagues at the very same time that everybody on the Judiciary Committee knows we need to pass the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act that goes by the acronym CARA for short.

It happens, though, that the opioid epidemic is not a political game. It is a real problem out there. A massive hearing we had in committee demonstrates that. I am very proud the Senate has taken up the CARA bill, after this public health crisis festered for so long while the Senate was controlled by the Democrats.

For example, tragically heroin overdose deaths more than tripled from 2010 to 2014. All the while, the Democratic leadership simply did not make it a priority to move a bill like CARA. It is a bipartisan bill that addresses the public health crisis of heroin and prescription opioid abuse.

Through the hard work of many on both sides of the aisle because it is a bipartisan bill, as I said, it passed out of our committee—and you can't say so often—unanimously. Everybody at the grassroots level of America thinks everything here is always partisan between Republicans and Democrats—not when it comes to the opioid issue or a lot of other issues. This bill came out of committee unanimously, and we ought to get it to the House of Representatives as fast as we can and to the President. Just a few weeks after it came out of committee, here we are working on it with an opportunity to pass it.

This reflects the Senate working in a very constructive, bipartisan way on behalf of the American people and the people who are addicted to heroin and opioids. This is very much unlike the way the Senate acted when the Democrats controlled it. This issue was not brought up. For political reasons, that is not a narrative some Democrats want the American people to hear, and so we are having this game today.

Yesterday, there was a manufactured controversy over the amount of funding. Of course, the opioid crisis demands resources, and significant resources are being directed to it, both by the Appropriations Committee and the programs laid out in this bill before us right now. In fact, according to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the Appropriations Act passed in December provides more than \$400 million in funding specifically to address the opioid epidemic. This is an increase of more than \$100 million over the previous year. None of that money has been spent yet. All of that money is still available today.

This bill authorizes so many activities to combat the crisis, but it was never intended to appropriate funding. That is what we have Appropriations Committees for. That is why we have an appropriations process. Through the appropriations process, we can evaluate competing priorities, evaluate trade-offs, and in the end ensure that adequate resources are directed to this epidemic while at the same time maintaining fiscal discipline.

I am glad the Senate rejected that attempt to inject gamesmanship into

the debate over ways to improve this bill. That vote happened yesterday. Now the minority in the Senate, the Democrats, are setting up additional procedural roadblocks. We tried to set up additional votes this morning to move this very important bill along so we can help the people of the various States, and particularly New England, solve this opioid addiction and heroin problem—also a problem in the eastern part of my State—but somehow the Democrats would not agree.

Because we have this bill on the floor, I also asked the Democrats on the committee to hold our weekly Judiciary Committee business meeting over here in the Capitol Building instead of in the committee room, right off the floor of this Senate, as we do quite regularly, particularly when we have so much business here.

That was a routine accommodation I asked them to make, similar to the accommodation I gave to them when we had a hearing scheduled earlier this week on the EB-5 immigration bill, when they asked to cancel that because this bill was on the floor of the Senate. So I accommodated them. Would they give me the accommodation of holding this meeting off the floor of the Senate so we could take up the business of voting out some judges? There was not any legislation on our agenda, but we could have voted out some judges. How often do we hear that the Judiciary Committee is not moving judges? We had a chance to do that probably in a 10-minute meeting right in the President's Room, just a few feet from where I am standing right now.

I gave them an accommodation, but now I am running into trouble because I canceled a meeting because we have this important bill on the floor of the Senate. I understand they are protesting the Judiciary Committee's lack of action on a Supreme Court nomination, which nomination we could not even possibly consider if the President does not send it up.

I imagine this is just the first of several problems we are going to have in the next few weeks. While they do that this morning, I want you to know I am going to be on the Senate floor trying to get this very important opioid addiction bill—heroin addiction bill—passed, and I will be thinking about so many people CARA will help once this bill is signed by the President.

At our Judiciary Committee hearing we had on this very important problem, we heard from Nick Willard, chief of the Manchester New Hampshire Police Department. His officers will benefit from the training the bill authorizes to use naloxone, a drug that can save lives after an overdose.

At that hearing, we also heard from Tonda DaRae, a courageous Ohio woman who lost a daughter to an overdose and who founded a support group for those in recovery called Holly's

Song of Hope. Her group may profit from this legislation's grants aimed at building communities of recovery.

I will be thinking about the many Iowans I have heard about who have been impacted by this crisis. I spoke earlier this week about Kim Brown of Davenport, who lost her son Andy to an overdose. She now speaks out across the State about the epidemic.

There is Carla Richards, of Waukegan, IA, who lost her daughter Anna to an overdose as well. She founded an organization to promote awareness called Anna's Warriors. There are all kinds of tragic stories that every Senator in this body could talk about that highlight the rationale behind this legislation and the \$400 million that is waiting to be spent to overcome the opioid addiction.

There is a seed of hope in many of them, hope that we can act to address this epidemic, each in our own way. I will be thinking of these stories today as we try to move CARA one step closer to becoming law. So why would a bill that got out of committee unanimously have this sort of shenanigans going on, on the floor of the Senate, at a time when people are dying—44,000 people in the most recent statistical year, more than automobile accidents and gun crimes together. This is a real problem. We need to get this bill passed, and we are working on accommodating amendments and moving it forward. It is not the time for the go-slow approach we are seeing already on the floor of the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with other Democratic members of the Judiciary Committee for 30 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, one, so we fully understand, we are perfectly willing to have—even though we don't hold Judiciary Committee meetings every week as we used to—we would be perfectly willing to have a meeting that was not in a backroom but open so the press would see it.

It is important to have such meetings open, for the press and anybody who wants to come in. It is unfortunate that we have had—with the Supreme Court vacancy—there has been a closed-door, back-room meeting. That is when a small handful of Republican Senators decided, with the Republican leader, to say the President should not follow his constitutional duty and nominate a Supreme Court nominee, and, in an unprecedented fashion, the Senate Judiciary Committee would not follow its constitutional obligation of advice and consent.

In that small closed-door meeting, it was decided that Senators should not

follow the solemn oath they have taken on this floor when they say they will uphold the Constitution “so help me God.” We have had enough closed-door meetings, especially closed-door meetings that tell us to violate an oath where they said “so help me God” and to not follow the Constitution.

I think it is important that we have these meetings since the untimely passing of Justice Antonin Scalia. There is certainly a disagreement over how to move forward in filling the Supreme Court vacancy, but I think the American people want us to do our job. This is a time we should have an open conversation about it, not closed-door meetings, where afterward self-serving press releases are issued, which may or may not accurately represent what went on in those meetings.

The American people deserve to have us do our job, hear us discuss and debate the committee's next steps in fulfilling our constitutional duty.

Last night, my friend, the senior Senator from Iowa, decided to postpone this meeting rather than have it in public. Now we have to wait another week before the committee can sit down in public so the American people can discuss an issue that is so important. The move to postpone today's meeting is troubling, given that last week's meeting—a meeting that should have happened with the participation of all the committee members in a room open to the public, showing us doing our jobs—was also postponed. So we didn't have a meeting in public. We weren't doing our job.

Instead, last week the committee's Republicans decided to meet behind closed doors—the public couldn't follow what they were doing—without any Democrats so they could hatch a partisan plan to obstruct any effort to consider the next nominee to the Supreme Court and do that no matter what the Constitution says. There was no consultation with any Democrats serving on the committee. There was no public discussion of any kind.

Certainly, in my 40 years here, whether Republicans have been in control of the Senate or Democrats, I cannot think of any precedent for this kind of closed-door discussion of how we avoid doing our job. Instead, 11 Republican Senators unilaterally decided the Senate would abdicate its responsibility and block all of us from fulfilling our constitutional obligation of advice and consent. They block all of us from doing our job.

Supreme Court nominations are a unique priority for the Judiciary Committee. Since I have served in the Senate—I voted on every member currently on the Supreme Court and on several who have since retired—the Judiciary Committee has always held hearings on Supreme Court nominees, and they have always reported them to the full Senate for consideration.

When I took over as chairman of the Judiciary Committee in 2001, George W. Bush was President. I did not agree with much of what his administration was already doing—I was very frank in discussions with President Bush to tell him that—and I was not sure if I would approve of any Supreme Court nominations he might have the opportunity to make, but even with those reservations, I wrote a letter with then-ranking member Senator HATCH memorializing an agreement we reached—which Republicans gave their word to follow—about how the Judiciary Committee would consider Supreme Court nominees.

In that letter that Senator HATCH and I wrote, he gave his word and I gave mine:

The Judiciary Committee's traditional practice has been to report Supreme Court nominees to the Senate once the Committee has completed its considerations. This has been true even in cases where Supreme Court nominees were opposed by a majority of the Judiciary Committee.

Senator HATCH and I gave our word on that. The Republican leader at the time, Senator Lott, then read our letter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to ensure that it was available to all Americans to see, and I took the word of Republicans in this body that they believed what they were saying. It showed the long understanding of the Senate Judiciary Committee's commitment to an open, fair process, even when the majority does not agree with the opposing party's President.

The priority of the Judiciary Committee has afforded Supreme Court nominees is exemplified by its consideration of two of the most contentious nominations to the Court: Robert Bork and Clarence Thomas.

In both instances, then-Chairman Biden moved the nominations to the full Senate, even though a majority of the Senate Judiciary Committee did not support the nominations. In other words, the majority did not support the nomination, but we still moved them forward.

In Robert Bork's case, a committee vote to report out his nomination favorably failed by a vote of 5 to 9, with both Republicans and Democrats voting against it. At the time, the Reagan administration was quietly asking him to withdraw his name, but he still wanted to have a vote, and the committee then voted to report his nomination with an unfavorable recommendation. He was reported out unfavorably by a vote of 9 to 5 so the full Senate could consider him. Some Democrats voted for him. Many Democrats voted against him. Some Republicans voted for him. Many Republicans voted against him, but he had his vote.

In Clarence Thomas's case, the committee voted to report out his nomination favorably. That failed by a vote of 7 to 7. The committee then voted to re-

port his nomination without recommendation, and by 13 to 1 we voted to give him a chance to be heard on the floor.

Even when a majority of committee members have not supported a nominee, as was the case with Robert Bork or Clarence Thomas, we have not denied the full Senate—or the American people—the opportunity to debate and consider a Supreme Court nominee. We were not going to say this Senate shouldn't do its job.

The Judiciary Committee has a strong tradition of transparency. I remember when I first came on, there was one of the most conservative Senators as chairman, Jim Eastland. We have done it with all who have been chairs. I believe the American people have a right to see and hear what we are doing. They have a right to know whether we are doing our job. They have a right to weigh in on the decisions we make. Nowhere does transparency matter more than a lifetime appointment to the highest Court in our land. You can't decide a question of somebody going on the highest Court of our land, with a lifetime appointment, and do it with a small group behind closed doors. That is not doing our job. There is no place for backroom deals for something so important. Public confirmation hearings are a vital part of our democracy. That is not just about us.

Public hearings are how Americans meet the nominee. Public hearings allow every American the opportunity to watch and listen to this person whose decisions may have a lasting impact on their lives. Ultimately, what this small group of Republican members of the committee meeting behind closed doors unilaterally decided last week was to reject the longstanding tradition of public hearings. In doing so, they are denying Americans—all Americans, Republicans and Democrats alike—the chance to participate in the consideration of a nominee. They deny Americans a chance to have us do our job.

The Judiciary Committee is one of the busiest in the Senate. It considers some of the most consequential issues affecting millions of Americans. When we commit ourselves to what brought us here, to do our job and work together for our constituents, we can achieve great things. This is what happened 3 years ago when the Senate passed comprehensive immigration reform. After six hearings and 3 weeks of markups—many lasting until very late at night—each of the 18 Senators serving on the committee participated in the process to draft that legislation. I allowed everybody who had an amendment to bring it up. We would go back and forth—one Democrat, one Republican, back and forth. We did this day after day, late at night sometimes, but all in public. It was all covered by tele-

vision. Not all of us supported the bill, but all of us had a chance to debate and amend it. Even the staunchest opponents of the legislation, including some in the Chamber right now, praised the Judiciary Committee's transparent and fair process for consideration of that bill. A Vermont editorial at the time called our committee proceedings—because they were open, because everybody had a chance to participate, because the American people could see what we were doing, because we were doing our job—“a lesson in democracy.” I think it is time for a refresher course.

The legal issues before the Supreme Court are significant, and its importance in our constitutional democracy cannot be overstated, nor can the responsibility of both the President to follow his constitutional duty to nominate and the Judiciary Committee's responsibility to fairly consider a nominee to serve in the highest Court in the land.

It is with deep concern I come to the floor. I urge my friend, the chairman, and all members of the Judiciary Committee to renew their commitment to transparency and regular order. I ask that you withhold judgment. I ask those who met behind closed doors to withhold your judgment until you can review the record of whomever the President nominates. I ask you to give the next nominee to the Supreme Court a fair hearing, as we have done in this body—the body should be the conscience of the Nation—for the last 100 years. The American people expect us to do our job.

Senator COONS is on the floor. The distinguished Senator from Delaware is the ranking member of the Court Subcommittee. I wish to ask Senator COONS, through the Chair, what his understanding of the role of the Senate Judiciary Committee with regard to the next Supreme Court nominee is.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I emphasize how important I think the role is of the Senate Judiciary Committee. As many present know, my predecessor, now Vice President BIDEN, is a former chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

As my good friend and colleague from the State of Vermont just reminded us, there is a long and important history on the Senate Judiciary Committee that I think bears repeating; that since its formation a century ago, the Senate Judiciary Committee has provided a hearing, a vote or both for every single Supreme Court nominee. The only exceptions being those that went straight to the floor because their confirmations were supported so broadly.

I also think there is a second important point, if I could briefly touch on it; that even in those instances where a nominee did not enjoy majority support on the committee, even in those

instances just cited by the Senator from Vermont, where a majority of the Senate Judiciary Committee voted against a nomination, that nomination proceeded to the floor of the Senate to ensure that advice and consent—our constitutional duty—could be carried forward.

If I might ask for the forbearance of the Senator from Vermont for one moment, I also want to set the record straight about what my friend and predecessor then-Senator, now-Vice President BIDEN actually said in a floor speech back in 1992, a floor speech that has been widely cited as evidence of some new set of so-called Biden rules that are somehow a basis for the obstructionism we now see—a refusal to even meet with a Supreme Court nominee, let alone give them a fair hearing.

I want to take this moment because then-Senator BIDEN has been quoted out of context. He gave—I am sure this will not surprise some in the Chamber—a somewhat long and winding speech. There was no Supreme Court vacancy at the time. He was simply observing what might happen if there were to be a vacancy. While he did, early in the speech, give some comments that have been now used, he also gave at the end of his speech a section I want to read. To quote directly:

I believe that so long as the public continues to split its confidence between the branches, compromise is the responsible course both for the White House and for the Senate. Therefore I stand by my position, Mr. President, if the President [then President George H.W. Bush] consults and cooperates with the Senate or moderates his selections absent consultation, then his nominees may enjoy my support, as did Justices Kennedy and Souter.

In conclusion, let me remark that what then-Chairman BIDEN did speaks more loudly even than what he said. I believe his record as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee is unmistakable. In case after case, he convened and held timely hearings, even in the election year of 1988. It means he considered and confirmed 64 judicial nominees, as late as September in a Presidential election year. It means he voted in favor of Justice Kennedy and Justice Souter, nominated by Republican Presidents, and it means that in his speech, in the section I quoted, I think he sent a clear request to then-President George H.W. Bush to work with the Senate, send us a moderate nominee, and I will consider supporting them.

I urge the chairman and ranking member, all of us who are members of this important and august committee, to follow the actual Biden rules by working across the aisle, by consulting, and by offering a fair, open, and timely hearing for any nominee who should be proffered by our President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Delaware for clearing that up. I don't normally discuss what is said in meetings with the President, but so much has been reported by the two Republicans who were there, the distinguished Senator from Iowa and the distinguished Republican leader. Vice President BIDEN was also there, and he was very clear as to what he meant so that there would be no question. He also pointed out that right through September, 64 of the Republican President's nominees went through. I think during President Bush's last 2 years, I was chairman, and I moved 68 judges.

We see a double standard by our friends from the Republican Party when it comes to the courts of appeals judges as well as district judges. In the majority, they have allowed only 16 of President Obama's judges. Facts do speak louder than words.

I thank the distinguished Senator from Delaware for clearing up that matter.

I know the distinguished Senator from Rhode Island also has something he wishes to say, and I will yield to him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I thank the ranking member for that courtesy. Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution states quite clearly that the President shall nominate a candidate when there is a vacancy in the United States Supreme Court. I would like the record of this discussion to reflect that the term "shall," as defined in the Merriam-Webster dictionary—the relevant definition—is A, used to express a command or exhortation, and, B, used in laws, regulations, or directives to express what is mandatory.

Under the Constitution that we are all sworn to uphold, the President of the United States has a mandatory duty. I think it is important that he accomplish it and nominate a candidate.

I ask my colleagues to imagine if there were another mandatory duty of the President of the United States that this President refused to perform—imagine the cavalcade of Republican Senators to the studios of Fox News to decry and condemn this President for that omission. This should be no different.

The President must and will do his constitutional duty. If and when he does that, then the constitutional burden of duty moves from the President to the U.S. Senate, and we will then have to decide whether we will abide by our constitutional duty, whether to follow the regular order that so many of us have articulated as an important goal, whether to follow the precedents of previous nominees, whether to act fairly, whether we are going to be an organization here, an institution, that

will prejudice a nominee before we even know who he or she is. Prejudice is at the heart of prejudice; it is not a good thing for the Senate to be doing. Finally, we will have to decide what kind of example we want to set to the rest of the world—of a country that follows the regular order as established in its constitution and has its institutions of government do their duty or as a country that will bend, twist, and dodge those responsibilities because of the demands of immediate politics.

Those are choices I will address when they come to us. For now I wish only to say that the President's mandatory duty is clear, and no one should be surprised that he performs it.

I thank the Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Rhode Island. He is a former attorney general of his State as well as a former U.S. attorney and is well familiar with what the Constitution requires, and I appreciate his urging the U.S. Senate to do its job and follow the Constitution.

Mr. President, at this point I will yield to the distinguished senior Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague and our ranking member on the Judiciary Committee not only for his friendship and his articulateness but his great work on this issue.

Just as the President has a constitutional responsibility to name a nominee to the Court, the Senate has its constitutional duty to provide advice and consent on the nominee. It is our job. It is the job of this body and specifically the Judiciary Committee to hold hearings on that nominee.

This chart says, "America to Senate Republicans: Do your job." Today we might be saying, "America to the Judiciary Committee: Do your job." The American people expect us to do our job in the Senate and in the committees and do what we are supposed to be doing.

As my colleague from Vermont has noted, the Judiciary Committee should be meeting right now at this moment, as we do every Thursday. This would have been the first opportunity for all members of this committee to debate in public the Republican chairman's unilateral decision to issue a blanket hold on an unnamed Supreme Court nominee. We hold Judiciary meetings on Thursday all the time while legislation is being debated on the floor. There were no votes scheduled. We meet every Thursday. We know why they are not meeting today. They are afraid to discuss the issue. They cannot win the argument that we shouldn't be doing our job in a public debate. They can't win the argument that the Judiciary Committee shouldn't be holding hearings. We had the meeting abruptly canceled at the last minute not because CARA is being debated on the

floor—CARA is important—but because people didn't want to debate the issue of the Supreme Court. Let's face it; that is the truth.

We are not asking the Senate or the Judiciary Committee to be a rubber stamp.

I have one more point on the Judiciary Committee. We are asking our Republican colleagues to simply do their job. Hold this body and the Judiciary Committee in some regard. We can disagree on the politics, we can disagree on a nominee, but hold a hearing and hold a vote. That is what our constituents sent us here to do.

I will remind my dear friend from Iowa, and he is a dear friend, what his own Web site—the Judiciary Committee's Web site—says is its job. This was pointed out by Senator DURBIN a few days ago, but I think it is worth repeating. This is a copy of the Web site of the Judiciary Committee. Here is part of what it says when it comes to nominations.

When a vacancy occurs on the Supreme Court, the President of the United States is given the authority, under Article II of the United States Constitution, to nominate a person to fill the vacancy. The nomination is referred to the United States Senate, where the Senate Judiciary Committee holds a hearing where the nominee provides testimony and responds to questions from members of the panel. Traditionally, the committee refers the nomination to the full Senate for a vote.

This is the Web page of the Senate Judiciary Committee. It does not say you hold a hearing when you want to. It does not say you hold a hearing when you like the nominee or only when your party has the Presidency. It says: "The nomination is"—not may be; is—"referred to the United States Senate, where the Senate Judiciary Committee holds a hearing where the nominee provides testimony and responds to questions from members of the panel." It doesn't say the Senate Judiciary Committee might hold a hearing or could at its whim hold a hearing. It says hold a hearing, no qualifiers.

We ought to be holding a hearing and we ought to be debating on whether to hold a hearing now in the Chamber of the Judiciary Committee on Thursday at 10 a.m., as we have done week after week after week when other important issues are being debated on the floor of the U.S. Senate. We can do both. We can move CARA—I admit it doesn't have the funding I would like to see there at this point—and we can meet in the Judiciary Committee.

I don't understand the decision by the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, who I believe holds the same reverence that I do and the same reverence that the ranking member and former chairman, the Senator from Vermont, does for its profound and historic standing in the Senate. I would like to hear directly from the chair-

man about the thinking behind his decision to unilaterally decide that this committee will have no voice, no ability to examine a nominee's record and qualifications.

Earlier this week, the chairman indicated that there are some members of his committee majority who might like to see us hold hearings. He said: As any chairman ought to do, I went to the members of my committee. They all agreed with me for different reasons, not just because I am chairman. Some had reluctance, but all signed.

The chairman indicated he would consider breaking ranks with his party leader by meeting the potential nominee, Eighth Circuit Court Judge Jane Kelly from his home State of Iowa. He was reluctant to issue the same across-the-board denial. I understand his reluctance. He is a good man. CHUCK GRASSLEY is a good man. He comes from the heartland of America and represents its finest values. I regret to say it, but I think politics are pulling him off course here, and I hope he will return because he is a good man and I understand the reluctance of Senators to sign that letter. Senators did not come to Washington to do that. The Senators know the folks out there want them to do their job.

Editorial boards across the country have castigated this policy of obstruction.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SCHUMER. Almost every poll shows the majority of Americans favor action.

Mr. President, just one more point.

It is not right to do what the committee is doing, and I sincerely hope the chairman will reconsider his position. If Republicans truly respect the Constitution, they should follow it and consider a nomination from the sitting President rather than play political games.

I yield back to my dear friend, our outstanding leader on the Judiciary Committee, Senator LEAHY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I realize our time has expired, but I ask unanimous consent that I be able to yield the floor for my colloquy but that I be followed for 5 minutes by the distinguished senior Senator from Connecticut and that he be followed by the distinguished senior Senator from Minnesota for 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRASSLEY). I am in the Chair and probably can't participate, but I want to make it clear that I want the manager of the bill to speak so—

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, could we have regular order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I am exercising my prerogative. If I don't have that prerogative, then I object.

The Chair recognizes the Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, may I make a unanimous consent request?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. I thank the Presiding Officer.

Mr. President, I didn't have any intention to speak today, but one of the blessings of being a freshman Member is you get the opportunity to preside and hear the arguments that are going on in the Chamber and the discussion about the SCOTUS nomination. We are going to have to agree to disagree with our friends from across the aisle on the SCOTUS nomination.

Let's take a look at what is going on here.

In North Carolina, over the past 24 hours, some four people have died of a drug overdose. We had more deaths associated with drug overdoses than we had with car accidents last year.

So what is going on here? Back in 2008, there was an opioid epidemic. There was a supermajority in the U.S. Senate. There was a Democrat in the White House and a majority in the House of Representatives. No action. In 2010, the epidemic was growing. In places in New England, in the Midwest, down in the South, people were dying. Yet there was no action.

Now this Congress has taken action. I think it is time to move the CARA bill. To hold hostage the CARA bill and shift the discussion to a genuine disagreement we have with the minority on SCOTUS is literally costing lives.

For those who sit here and want to hold up the CARA bill for the purposes of discussing the SCOTUS nomination, we don't even have a nominee yet. There is going to be plenty of time in committee and plenty of time on the floor to debate this difference of opinion between the minority and the majority. But in the meantime, for people who would hold up passing the CARA bill over the SCOTUS nomination, what are you going to tell the two people—last week, two friends of mine, when they heard my speech on the Senate floor, came to me and said: Thank you for moving this bill. I lost my son a year and a half ago.

Two of my friends have told me: Thank you for helping us increase the visibility and get to a point to where we are saving these lives.

Those who would hold up the CARA bill, what are you going to tell the first responders who, if they had naloxone, could have potentially saved the life of somebody who has fallen on the floor and died? What are you going to tell them? What are you going to tell the law enforcement officers who are trying to help people live who have succumbed to addiction and opioid abuse? What are you going to tell them by holding up this bill? What are you going to tell the parents who are struggling, who need help with education,

who need help with their incarcerated children who may have succumbed to addiction, who did a wrong thing and are in prison and now need help? They need to be rehabilitated. They need to be saved.

At some point, we need to recognize that we do need to do things separately. We need to recognize that it is disgraceful to hold up the CARA bill over a genuine disagreement we are going to have for months.

I am one of the Senators in the Judiciary Committee who signed the letter. I do not believe that until we hear the vote of the people, we should hear a SCOTUS nomination. But I am not here to talk about SCOTUS today. I am here to talk about saving lives. I am here to talk about addressing the addiction problem that is growing. I am here to talk about the sad, heart-breaking stories of families across this Nation who are starving for help.

This bill helps. This bill appropriates over \$100 million that can be spent between now and the end of September to save lives. If I come to the floor tomorrow, I am going to be talking about four more lives that have been lost in North Carolina, some that could have been saved if we would just do our job. There is a lot of discussion about doing our job, right? Let's do our job and get CARA passed.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask my colleague from North Carolina to yield for a question.

Mr. TILLIS. I yield.

Mr. SCHUMER. Thank you. I appreciate the courtesy. I so understand what you are saying. A week ago, I held in my arms a father whose son had committed suicide while waiting for treatment, so I understand the importance of the bill we have before us.

I don't see why we can't do both things at once. The Senator from North Carolina has sat with me while we debated important bills on the floor and met in the Judiciary Committee, and all of a sudden, at the last minute, the rug is pulled out from under that meeting. It was scheduled. The CARA bill was scheduled to be debated, and we could meet in the Judiciary Committee.

I am sure my colleague will admit that the issue with the Supreme Court is important, too, just as CARA is. So could he explain to me why we couldn't do both—have our meeting in the Judiciary Committee and let those who want to be in the Judiciary Committee speak there and let those who want to speak on CARA speak here? No votes were scheduled. I am right about that, correct? So just explain how one delays the other.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I actually was speaker of the house in North Carolina for 4 years. I like a good scrap. I don't have any problem with going to a committee hearing and explaining why I have taken the position

I have on the judicial nomination. But that is not what I am talking about today. I am talking about over the next 24 hours, four more people are going to die from overdoses in North Carolina. I am trying to figure out what I say to that mother and that father to say, well, gosh, you know, things got gummed up here because we decided to connect two unrelated issues. One has to do with the Supreme Court nomination, and that is very important. It is critically important. I get that. But what is more important than saving lives of people who we know are going to die? The data is compelling.

Folks, we have to get to a point where we get Washington working again, and you don't do it by playing chess. I am not an attorney. I am not a constitutional scholar. But I am a father and somebody who spends a lot of time in my State. I think we have reached a point where we need to get serious with it. We are creating obstacles on CARA that don't exist. People are absolutely costing lives by failing to move on this bill.

Let's have a fight. Let's have a committee hearing. I like a good scrap. I am looking forward to having that debate. I am looking forward to the history of other positions that have been taken by my friends across the aisle on how to dispose of nominations from the President. I am happy to do that. But I want this bill passed. I want to be able to go back to the people in North Carolina and say: We are doing everything we possibly can to save lives. That is what CARA does. That is why we need to act.

Mr. SCHUMER. Will the Senator yield?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who seeks the floor?

Mr. SCHUMER. I seek to ask another question of my friend from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, we were supposed to be here moving the bill forward. We need to make it clear that we were going to vote on amendments on CARA today to draw down the backlog and move the bill. The Presiding Officer decided to have the meeting off the floor so that we could move judicial nominations. We weren't going to take up legislation there.

I think what we need to do is get back to the work of disposing of amendments, making the bill better potentially, and getting it to the House and getting it to the President's desk. That is what I am talking about. This is the capacity. We have limited capacity in this Chamber. You all know the procedural games you can play around here. The limitations of time are numerous. We are just creating more of that. We are gumming up the works while people are dying. One person every 6 hours in the State of North Carolina is dying from a drug overdose.

If we delay by 6 hours, we are responsible for a life in North Carolina. These are lives we can save. We need to dispose of the amendments on this bill and move it to the House.

Mr. President, I apologize if I am angry, but when lives are involved, when youth is involved, I think it is time for us to do our job. Our job is to dispose of amendments and move this bill to the House of Representatives.

Thank you.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, will my colleague yield for a question?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator yield?

Mr. TILLIS. Yes, sir.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask my colleague, is it true that we have had debates in the committee in the committee room while important discussions have been carried on here in other instances? Is that true or false?

Mr. TILLIS. I say to Senator SCHUMER, it is true.

Mr. SCHUMER. Thank you.

Mr. TILLIS. But I don't see its relevance to the task at hand. That is the problem—

Mr. SCHUMER. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. TILLIS. If I may completely answer the question, that is the problem with this process. I hear that. I see the Kabuki dances going on. What I want to do is dispose of the amendments on the CARA bill and do our job. Let's do our job. Our job is to pass legislation and in this case save lives. So I get that we need to do the other things, but let's get to the task at hand. Let's do our job. I am prepared to do the job. I will stay here all weekend long. I will work 24/7 until this bill gets passed. Why don't we focus on that and introduce a little humanity into the discussion? I get the procedural issues. We need to have the debates in Judiciary. I am perfectly happy to do that. I want this bill passed. I want Members to come down to this floor, pass amendments, draw down the queue, and send this bill to the President's desk.

Let's do our job. I am prepared to do my job today, tomorrow, Saturday, Sunday, and through all of next week if that is what it takes to get this done. I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will be too.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has yielded the floor.

Who seeks recognition?

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as one who has held a lot of hearings on opioids, as one who has brought together law enforcement, the medical community, parents, the faith community, and physicians in my State on the opioid matter, I am perfectly happy that the Republicans control the schedule and perfectly happy that they want to stay here today, tomorrow, the next day, and go forth.

Mr. SCHUMER. Will my colleague yield for one more question?

Mr. LEAHY. Certainly.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Thank you, Mr. President.

I would just ask you, our ranking member, haven't we been able in the past to hold meetings in the Judiciary Committee and debate bills on the floor?

Mr. LEAHY. We did hate crimes legislation on the floor at the same time we were doing a Supreme Court nomination. Those are pretty significant things. It can be done.

Mr. SCHUMER. One more question to my colleague. Has the leader filed cloture, which would move this to a conclusion? As best to your knowledge, has the leader filed cloture? Because if he hasn't, we are not holding up anything.

Mr. President, I would suggest to my colleague from North Carolina that if he wants to move the bill quickly, he ought to go to the leader and say "File cloture," not say "Delay a meeting in the Judiciary Committee"; is that right?

Have you heard of the leader filing cloture yet?

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, my understanding is that cloture has not been filed.

Mr. SCHUMER. Thank you.

Mr. LEAHY. I would agree with the Presiding Officer. I will stay here Friday, Saturday, and Sunday and vote and pass this, I would hope with actually putting money in it so we are not just passing something symbolically without teeth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I would ask the Senator from Vermont a question, if he would take it.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, without losing my right to the floor, I yield to answer the question, yes.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I heard what they said about the meeting being canceled today, because we could have held the meeting off the floor and voted out three judges. So somehow that interfered with what they wanted to do in the Judiciary Committee meeting. I asked for an accommodation. I asked the ranking member for the same accommodation I gave his side when we canceled a hearing on the EB-5 Program earlier this week. And a hearing obviously doesn't take the same time away from the floor as a markup might. So consequently I am asking the ranking member if that accommodation isn't worth the accommodation that I asked today.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, addressing the distinguished Member through the Chair, he is well aware of my concern and the difference between EB-5,

which we debate all the time, and a Supreme Court nomination. This goes beyond apples and oranges. There is absolutely no comparison.

I think the Republicans having had a closed-door meeting where a small percentage of the Senate decided there should be no debate or discussion on a Supreme Court nomination—there is no way that having a closed-door meeting off the floor is something that—it wouldn't pass the giggle test. I think all of us, both Democrats and Republicans, would have been rightly criticized by the press if we had done that. This is anything but routine. We are talking about the Supreme Court.

I ask unanimous consent to yield 5 minutes to the distinguished senior Senator from Connecticut and then 5 minutes to the distinguished senior Senator from Minnesota.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I am always honored to be in this Chamber, and I feel immensely privileged to participate in any debate. But I must say, Mr. President, that the average American listening to the colloquy that has been conducted just within the past few minutes would regard it somewhat in disbelief, maybe dismay, because the Presiding Officer is absolutely right that the people of our States are literally dying as a result of the heroin and opioid epidemic that has created a public health hurricane, a crisis of untold proportion.

This body should and hopefully will pass a bill that will help to address that public health crisis. It is only a downpayment, only a first step, and only effective if accompanied by funding, an emergency supplemental necessary to provide the real resources to address this problem. But this body is capable of passing that bill and still debating whether there should be a hearing and vote on the President's Supreme Court nominee.

The voting on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, also known as CARA, is within the control of the majority. That is a simple fact. As Ronald Reagan said, facts are stubborn things. The fact is that control of the votes on that measure are within the prerogative of the majority.

In the meantime, the majority also has the power and authority to say we will have a hearing and a vote on the President's Supreme Court nominee; we will do our job. That is what Senators are elected to do. That is why we have come to the floor of the Senate to say that the Senate must do its job. It has a constitutional duty. It has no discretion whether it should wait for a politically opportune time to do its job or whether it should hear from its base politically. It should do its job when the President submits his nominee.

What may be most regrettable about this debate and about the majority

leadership's refusal to have a hearing and a vote on the President's nominee is that it demonstrates political machination—game playing—that threatens the Supreme Court as an institution. It endangers its credibility and trust. The Supreme Court has no armies or police force. It depends, for the enforceability of its decisions, on its credibility and trust. And when it is demeaned in the eyes of the public, when its stature is diminished, when it is dragged into the political morass of a partisan debate and partisan paralysis, its credibility and trust and its stature are vastly diminished, and its powers and institution are in danger.

I am dismayed that these machinations tend to diminish and demean this institution where I worked for a year as a law clerk for Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun, where I argued cases when I was attorney general, and where I was yesterday on those steps with the same awe and admiration and, indeed, reverence that the American people should feel for an institution above politics, higher than the ordinary give-and-take and contention that occurs on this floor and throughout the political institution. The refusal to even consider having a hearing, having a vote, having a meeting with the President's nominee endangers this institution.

Elections have consequences. We all say so. Obstruction has consequences too. The failure to consider these nominees means that critical decisions will be left undecided.

I urge my colleagues to enable us to have a vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. May I have just 1 more minute?

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator BLUMENTHAL be granted three more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Thank you.

Madam President, I want to close with the words of Justice Scalia, who said, when he was asked to recuse himself, that leaving the Court potentially equally divided 4 to 4—that a 4-to-4 vote was to be avoided if possible. He said:

With eight justices [it] rais[es] the possibility that, by reason of a tie vote, [the Court] will find itself unable to resolve the significant legal issue presented by the case. . . . Even one unnecessary recusal impairs the functioning of the Court.

Even one unnecessary 4-to-4 vote impairs the stature and credibility and the effectiveness of the Court.

I urge all of us to move forward with the President's nominee when it is made.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I thank the distinguished senior Senator from Connecticut, especially since he brings a wealth of knowledge here. He was one of the most noted attorneys general of his State. Also, he has that very unique knowledge of one of the most highly sought positions—a clerk to a member of the U.S. Supreme Court. In many ways, these are the people who have a closer view. So Senator BLUMENTHAL's experience as a clerk of the Supreme Court is something none of us should ignore.

Madam President, I ask to be able to yield to the distinguished senior Senator from Pennsylvania.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I thank the senior Senator from Vermont for the opportunity to speak.

I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ISIS

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I rise to discuss the United States and coalition strategy to bring about a lasting defeat of the terrorist group ISIS, often known by different acronyms, such as ISIL, as well as Daesh. I will use the acronym ISIS.

We know that ISIS proposes a direct threat to our partners in the Middle East and is exporting its distorted, hateful ideology to other nations, including here in the United States. Beginning in 2014, I have pressed the administration to take action against the financial and facilitation networks that support ISIS. The administration has done good work, but much more remains to be done.

In mid-February, I traveled to a number of countries in the region, including Israel, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Turkey to conduct oversight of our strategy to cut off the financial networks that support terrorist groups like ISIS. I found that the events of the last 2 years have brought the issue of terrorism financing into sharper focus, and certainly into sharper focus for the countries in the region. ISIS attacks in places like Saudi Arabia and Qatar should be a wakeup call for gulf countries. Terrorist financiers not only support ISIS, but they present a direct threat to their own internal security and stability—the security and stability of these gulf countries—as well as other countries the world over.

While coalition partners are taking steps in the right direction, much more work remains to be done. We need to see more investigations turn into more arrests, more prosecutions, more sentencing, and more accountability in these countries that will take these criminals and terrorists off the streets. It also became clear to me on my visit to the region that we need to improve

upon the international architecture that cuts off terrorist financiers and facilitators from the international financial system. As a first step, countries should seek to meet the requirements to be a member in good standing of the Financial Action Task Force, known by the acronym FATF. This is a multinational, intergovernmental organization tasked with addressing money laundering and financial crimes.

Countries also need to take steps to address the ways terrorist financiers use the black market and the gray market to facilitate their work. For example, in Turkey, my last stop on my visit to the region, I came away with the impression that the Turkish Government is not adequately prioritizing efforts to stop foreign fighter movements and the illicit smuggling of cash, oil, antiquities, and IED precursor components across its southern border. As terrorist financiers' tactics evolve, our strategies must improve and respond. For example, more work needs to be done to regulate and to cut off the informal exchange houses in countries bordering ISIS-occupied territory, which may be the primary way that ISIS gains access to the international financial system.

Much more work remains to be done, and the United States should continue leading the effort. At every stop, I was impressed by the good work of our U.S. military personnel and diplomats. One of the highlights of my trip was the afternoon I spent at the Al Udeid Air Base in Doha.

I spent time at the Combined Air Operations Center, known as the CAOC, where elements from all U.S. services and representatives of many of our coalition partners worked together to coordinate and execute air operations against ISIS. I also received a classified briefing from the AFCENT commander, Lt. Gen. Brown, which, of course, I cannot detail here. But General Brown has said publicly: "Successful strikes on oil facilities and on monetary centers have resulted in Daesh cutting pay to their fighters and increased the amount of money available to conduct and fund their operations."

This is an important development. It is important to note that U.S.-led air strikes are having a profound impact on ISIS's financial operations.

As lawmakers, we must continue to critically evaluate and develop constructive policies to bring about a lasting defeat of ISIS. We cannot abdicate our oversight responsibilities. To my colleagues who say we are doing "nothing" to fight ISIS, I encourage them to go to a place like the Al Udeid Air Base, meet directly with senior leaders who are bringing the fight to ISIS, and see firsthand the incredible work of our servicemembers, just as I did in the middle of February. We need to hear directly from military commanders

and national security experts before offering prescriptions like increasing troop levels in Iraq or expanding the mission sets our military is currently executing.

We owe it to these men and women to have a robust, bipartisan debate about this strategy and to vote on an authorization for the use of military force, vote on legislation to cut off financing, vote on bills to promote humanitarian aid—all of the elements of this strategy.

Rather than conducting oversight by sound bite and oversight by categorical condemnation, let's have a serious debate on this critical national security issue.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, we have had quite a discussion this morning on why the Judiciary Committee didn't meet.

We were prepared to meet the same way we often meet when there is just maybe 5 minutes of business. We meet off the Senate floor so that we can do both the work of the entire Senate and the work of the Judiciary committee. That happens often. And that's the accommodation I asked for from the minority. But they objected. Of course, they asked me to accommodate them on a hearing that I had scheduled for earlier this week on the EB 5 immigration issue. I postponed that hearing because minority members of the Judiciary Committee didn't want to have that hearing when this very important opioid addiction bill was on the floor. The heroin addiction bill is before the United States Senate with 44,000 lives being lost in a year because of that addiction. And we're considering important legislation to solve that problem. I did not get that accommodation, so I canceled the meeting.

So what we heard on the floor here, while my colleagues were holding up the opioid bill, all this talk about having a debate about the next nominee to the Supreme Court—a nominee that hasn't even been made yet.

So I come to the floor now to respond to just a couple ridiculous arguments that my friends made this morning.

First of all, we are going to have a debate about the Supreme Court and the proper role of a Supreme Court Justice in our constitutional system. We are going to debate whether or not the American people want yet another Justice who decides cases based on what is in his or her heart or whether they want a Justice who will decide cases based on the Constitution and the law. That is not my estimation of the debate; that is exactly what this President said regarding previous judges and Justices. He said he was looking for somebody who would have empathy for people who came before

the Court. Having empathy for people that come before the Court means that you are supposed to do something different than what judges are supposed to do. Judges are supposed to look at the facts and the law and base their decisions on the law. They aren't supposed to base their decisions on personal feelings. We are a nation based on the rule of law. So this is what the American people have to think about and decide. They need to have a voice in this process. As Senator BIDEN said in 1992 or as Senator SCHUMER said in 2007—we are not going to consider a Supreme Court nominee during a heated Presidential election. So we have an opportunity to have a national debate. This whole debate is about whether we are going to have Justices who decide cases based on empathy rather than the letter of the Constitution and the letter of the statute.

On the second point, we have heard a lot of complaining around here—and I suspect we are going to hear a lot more—because Senate judiciary Republicans met and then made public our decision not to hold hearings on the Supreme Court nomination during a heated Presidential election year. Give me a break.

We made a decision based on history and our intention to protect the ability of the American people to make their voices heard. We didn't play games, just as Senator BIDEN wasn't playing games when he gave that 20,000-word speech in 1992 where he said that we shouldn't have a lameduck President make a nomination during a Presidential election campaign, just like Senator SCHUMER said in 2007 before the American Constitution Society, 18 months before George W. Bush was out of office. So that is the historical approach. Very plain and open, both Democrats and Republicans taking the same tone so the people could make their voices heard. The American people should be heard not only on who is going to fill Justice Scalia's seat, but also on the proper role of the Supreme Court and whether or not the Court ought to be a legislative body.

Like I said, we made that decision and immediately made it public. I don't remember being invited to the secret meetings that the Democrats held before they walked onto the Senate floor in November of 2013 and invoked the nuclear option so they could pack the D.C. circuit. We wanted to save taxpayer money. The D.C. circuit is the least worked circuit court in the country. Everyone knew you didn't need three more judges. That court was fairly evenly divided between liberals and conservatives. But because that court reviews the President's Executive orders and regulations, this President wanted to make sure he had enough judges on that court, so that when the court reviews the actions he takes with his pen and phone, he would get favor-

able rulings. So they packed the D.C. circuit, so that is why we had the nuclear option, because the other side had to get around the 60-vote rule that we had here for the approval of judges.

I also keep hearing this claim Senator BIDEN, when he was chairman of the committee, should be praised for how he handled the Bork-Kennedy episode. Now, I happened to be here in 1987. I saw what happened to Robert Bork. I saw how he was smeared. And because he was smeared, that seat remained open and was filled in early 1988. If that is the other side's argument, then I think we all know how weak their position is.

Finally, let me say this. I said yesterday and I want to say it again, the other side knows that this nominee isn't going to get confirmed. Everyone knows it. The only reason that they are complaining about a hearing on the nominee is because they want to make the process as political as possible. And that goes to the heart of the matter.

We are not going to politicize this process in the middle of a Presidential election year. We are going to let the people have a voice.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KING. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KING. Madam President, I listened with great attentiveness to the very distinguished chair of the Judiciary Committee, whom I have the utmost respect for, but I feel that I must respond, given this important question that is not before this body but should be.

The first point this Senator would make is that the term "lameduck" is being used rather loosely. Lameduck, as I have always understood it, is the period between the election and a swearing-in of a successor. A lameduck Congress is the Congress before November and January. A lameduck President is the President's term between November and January. I think, as I have always understood the use of that term, to apply it to a President who is in the middle part or early part of the fourth year of his or her term is not an accurate characterization or usage of the term "lameduck."

The distinguished chairman said we are going to have a debate. I am delighted to hear that. The question is, When? I wasn't here in 1992. I wasn't here in 1987. I wasn't here in 2007. So I am trying to figure out how to respond to this situation, how to understand this situation, with reference to the Constitution.

There are lots of provisions in the Constitution that are subject to windy

law review articles, to lengthy court decisions, to interpretation, to characterization of what they actually mean, what was the original intent of the Framers, and all of those complicated issues of discussion, dissection, and explication. But the word "four," as in one, two, three, four, and the word "shall," as in "shall do something," are not among those confusing terms.

I would submit that the President has a constitutional obligation to submit a nominee to this body and this body has a constitutional obligation to consider that nomination—not an obligation to confirm, not an obligation to say yes, but an obligation to consider it.

The Presidential term is 4 years; it is not 3 years and 1 month. That is in the Constitution. Article II, section 2, says the President "shall nominate . . . Ministers . . . Judges of the supreme Court . . . with the Advice and Consent of the Senate."

I would not for a minute presuppose what the decision of the Senate should be, but to argue that the Senate will not even hear the nomination, will not discuss it, will not debate it—in fact, some of the Members have said they will not even meet the person, with no knowledge whatsoever of who this person is. The President may nominate a person who is a combination of Aristotle, Thomas Jefferson, and St. Thomas of Aquinas, but he or she is not even going to be met with. I don't understand that as a matter of interpretation of the Constitution.

There is a lot of discussion about the people "should have a role" in this decision. The Constitution makes that clear. They do have that role when they elect the President of the United States for a 4-year term, not for a 3-year, 1-month term.

I can see no wiggle room on the President's obligation to submit a nominee to this body. This decision to stall this nomination, to not meet with a nominee, to not hold hearings, to not hold a debate, to not hold a discussion, has profound implications for the Court because the reality is this means the Court will be without a Justice for essentially two terms.

We lost Justice Scalia in February. The term of the Court doesn't end until later this spring. He will not be present for the final decisionmaking on the matters that have been before the Court this term. Then, if we wait until a new President is elected, the new President comes into office on January 20, 2017, and submits a new nomination almost immediately. Let's say it is within the first 2 weeks of his or her taking office. The average time for consideration of a Justice is between 60 and 90 days. We are into February, March, April, and that is into the next term of the U.S. Supreme Court. By delaying this decision, we are basically going to leave the Court without a Justice, in contravention to the explicit

provision of the Constitution, for what amounts to two terms.

This Senator wants to be very clear: I am not saying that there is any constitutional obligation on this body to approve the President's nominee, but I believe there is a constitutional obligation to consider that nominee. That is really what we are debating.

I am delighted to hear the distinguished chairman say we are going to have this debate, but we ought to have it now, under the Constitution, which requires the President to submit a nominee and, I would argue, requires this body to at least consider that nominee, to hold hearings, to let the people hear who the nominee is, to hear what their views are, and to make the decision within this body whether this nominee should be approved for this incredibly important, august, and solemn obligation to undertake as a Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Again, "four" and "shall" are not debatable propositions. Whether or not the Senate should confirm is clearly within the discretion of every Senator in this body, but to say that we will not have the opportunity to make that decision I think is contrary to the Constitution. It is contrary to the best interests of the American people, and I am surprised, frankly, that my colleagues are taking this position. Nobody is saying how they have to vote. If they don't like the nominee, they can vote them down, but why not have a hearing, why not have a debate, why not have a discussion, why not find out who this person is? The President may nominate someone who is of great appeal to both sides of this body.

I would hope that the distinguished chair of the committee would reconsider his decision—the committee's decision—to not even hold a hearing and to carry out what I believe is the obligation to at least hear the nomination—not approve it, but to at least hear it—and therefore let the American people participate in this discussion. Therefore, let the American people participate in this discussion. But let's also follow the explicit provisions of the Constitution that require the President to submit a nominee and, I believe, require us to at least consider it, if not approve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I come to the floor to talk about the pending legislation, which is very important. It actually enjoys broad bipartisan support, and I am optimistic we can get it done.

Before I talk about that, I wish to comment on some of the things that have been said on the floor with regard to the vacancy created by the death of Antonin Scalia.

First, the Democratic leader, Senator REID, clearly wants to apply a different

set of rules when Republicans are in the majority than he did when Democrats were in the majority. That is very clear.

People may get lost in some of the arcane and convoluted nature of the arguments we make on the floor, but the American people understand hypocrisy when they see it. Clearly, in 2005, when President George W. Bush was President, Senator REID made this statement:

The duties of the Senate are set forth in the U.S. Constitution. Nowhere in that document does it say the Senate has a duty to give Presidential appointees a vote.

We actually agreed with Senator REID then. But to have him come to the floor and lambaste the chairman of the Judiciary Committee and others in a very personal way is surely beneath the dignity of this body and of any Senator. Somehow the Democratic leader feels as if the rules that apply to the rest of us simply don't apply to him. He comes to the floor and tries to provoke fights.

We actually have some important work to get done, and we will get it done on this Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, the so-called CARA Act.

I wish to make another point clear. Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee agreed in a united way to the same principle that our Democratic colleagues have argued for decades. During an election year, a Supreme Court nominee should not be confirmed. I previously had spoken about Senator JOE BIDEN making that point when he was chairman of the Judiciary Committee back in 1992. In 2005, Senator REID made that point. In 2007, Senator SCHUMER, the heir apparent to the Democratic leadership, made the same point. But, again, they feel that now the rules should apply differently under a Democratic majority than they do under a Republican majority.

We are not a rubberstamp for the President of the United States. The Constitution says as much. We can grant consent or we can withhold consent. I, for one, am for withholding consent to the confirmation of another liberal on the U.S. Supreme Court. We have seen the types of Justices that President Obama has nominated: Justice Kagan, Justice Sotomayor—clearly on the left in terms of the balance of power on the U.S. Supreme Court. To simply give President Obama the ability to appoint somebody who is going to change the balance of the Supreme Court to tilt left for the next 25 or 30 years is simply unacceptable.

So it really doesn't make any difference who the President nominates. I am sure they will be very much in the same mold as the two Justices that he has already nominated: Justice Kagan and Justice Sotomayor. I say that with respect to them as people. They are entitled to their opinions just as we are,

but their decisions make fundamental changes in the United States. And it is not just for a term of office; it is literally for a generation. We are not going to stand by and allow President Obama—on his way out the door as a lameduck President—to change the balance of power on the Supreme Court for the next 25 to 30 years.

Madam President, now to a more pleasant topic. I actually have been encouraged, despite the disagreement we have with our friends across the aisle on the Supreme Court, to see that there is interest in actually getting some work done. I hope that does not cause us to fail to do our duty when it comes to places we agree on, such as the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.

This bill has been the result of a lot of hard work and bipartisan discussions. I thank the leadership and chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, as he made this a priority. This wasn't just for Republicans who were proposing we move on this legislation. Senator KLOBUCHAR and Senator WHITEHOUSE on the Democratic side, and Senator PORTMAN, Senator TOOMEY and Senator AYOTTE on the Republican side brought this to everyone's attention, primarily because of the devastating impact of the opioid prescription drug abuse problem and the heroin problem in their parts of the country, but it affects the whole country.

I am thankful that the Democratic leadership understands that this legislation should not be taken as a partisan hostage because it is about helping to restore communities and families from the effects of drug addiction and it is about stemming the tide of a massive epidemic of opioid drug use and addiction that continues to claim lives across the country. It is an example of how in the 114th Congress, since the beginning of last year, we have actually been able to work together with our colleagues across the aisle.

Before that, under the leadership of the Senator from Nevada, this institution was deadlocked. It wasn't just when Republicans were in the majority. When Democrats were in the majority, even they could not get votes on amendments. It is pretty hard to explain that back home: Yes I am in the majority, but it doesn't make any difference in terms of my ability to get things done for the people I represent.

I actually am very pleased that we have been working our way through this legislation and other legislation that could help advance good policies that positively impact the lives of the American people on a daily basis.

Madam President, another effort we have worked on in the Judiciary Committee has to do with the intersection of mental illness and the criminal justice system. I recently met with a number of major county sheriffs, and I

was introduced to the sheriff of Los Angeles County. He said: I am the largest mental health provider in the country—the sheriff of Los Angeles. The fact is, after we deinstitutionalized people with mental illness, basically there was no safety net for them, no continuing treatment for their needs, so they either end up in jails or living homeless on our streets.

I have introduced legislation, and Chairman GRASSLEY allowed us to have a hearing on it. I think it was very instructive. It was also very interesting. I say this to my friend from Maine: It is one of the few times we have actually had a consensus panel of witnesses. I think on some committees in the Senate that is a common practice, but usually in the Judiciary Committee things are so polarized that we rarely have a consensus panel. But we did on the issue of mental illness.

Reforming our country's mental health system has become an area of real bipartisan consensus as well, along with criminal justice reform. In order to protect our communities and to get help to the people with mental illness, we actually need to act.

What has also become clear is that many people who struggle with mental illness suffer from addiction and substance abuse. In many instances they self-medicate. They have a mental illness, they cannot deal with it, they are not getting the prescriptions they need from their doctors, so they end up drinking or taking drugs. These are so-called co-occurring disorders. It is estimated that more than 10 million Americans suffer from both addiction and mental health disorders—co-occurring disorders. Unfortunately, many mental health services such as specialty courts—drug courts, veterans courts, and the like—have operated on separate tracks and treat only one aspect of the problem. Someone with a history of drug abuse and mental illness may be sent to a drug court where their mental health needs are not taken into account. By definition, a drug court deals with people with drug problems, not necessarily mental health issues. When that happens, the underlying problem isn't addressed at all.

I have submitted an amendment to this legislation that will address this common link between mental illness and substance abuse in the criminal justice system. It would direct existing programs to apply to co-occurring disorders as well, so that people suffering from both addiction and mental health problems are not seen and treated for just one of those problems. It seems as if it makes sense.

It would also expand substance abuse and transitional services to help people suffering from co-occurring disorders to receive the appropriate treatment they need in order to get back on their feet.

This amendment has been cosponsored by the chairman of the Health,

Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, the senior Senator from Tennessee, whom I thank for his important contribution to this effort. It also has the support of many stakeholders around the country, including the National Alliance on Mental Illness and the National Association of Police Organizations.

I hope, when the time comes, our colleagues will support this amendment as a commonsense measure that will help those suffering from both mental health and addiction problems, and I believe it will make the underlying bill that much stronger.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam President, I rise today to talk about the vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court. Following the passing of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia—and our condolences to his family and our gratitude for all his hard work on behalf of his country—the time has now come for the President to nominate a new Justice and for the Senate to do its job and to review, consider, and either confirm or reject the President's nominee. That is our job.

Hoosiers don't ask much, but they do expect common sense. Do your job; treat people fairly. That is what we expect from neighbors, friends, and family, and it is certainly what we expect from those elected to serve us in Washington.

Back home in Indiana, we have a proud tradition of Senators who have embodied that approach by looking beyond partisanship and giving full and fair consideration to a President's nominee. They don't have to vote yes, they don't have to vote no, but we should at least listen and do our job. That is what the people of Indiana elected me to do. That is what people across the country elect my colleagues in the Senate to do, even when the timing is inconvenient for one side or the other.

The confirmation of a Supreme Court Justice should not be taken lightly, and it deserves careful consideration and open debate.

Senators, using their best judgment, are free to ultimately reject whomever the President nominates. But to refuse to hold a hearing? To refuse to consider any candidate? I know my colleague from Maine talk about Aristotle or Aquinas. They might be two good candidates for the Supreme Court. But to not consider any candidate before the President has even chosen a nominee is a dereliction of our most basic duty to faithfully serve our country.

Some of my colleagues have been steadfast in promising they would not meet with a nominee, let alone hold a hearing or allow a vote—would not even meet. Common sense tells you

that is not right. I hope they will reconsider their position.

U.S. Senators, myself included, were elected to do a job, to do a job for our Nation—not only when it is convenient, but every day, every day we have been hired by the people back home to work here to stand for our country. That job includes considering and voting on nominees to the Supreme Court. Let's do the job we were elected to do.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

Mr. KING. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, there has been a great deal of discussion on the floor of the Senate about the current vacancy on the Supreme Court. Democrats want to fill it immediately. Republicans are much more interested in making sure the American people have an opportunity to weigh in on this very important decision.

This is a lifetime appointment—a lifetime appointment—and the stakes could not be higher for our country. So it is perfectly reasonable to wait for the next President to make this critical nomination. It is also exactly the precedent that Democrats in this body, in the Senate, created for situations just like this one.

First of all, let's remember it is not uncommon for there to be a vacancy on the Court. Sometimes the seat can be empty for even more than a year. There are eight Justices now. Two of them have already said they can handle the work that is available in front of them now with the seat vacant.

Justice Alito said so, as did Justice Breyer. Now Justice Breyer, of course, was appointed by President Clinton. When Justice Breyer was asked the other day about the death of Justice Scalia, he said: "We'll miss him, but we'll do our work." He has said: "For the most part, it will not change." So there is no urgency to fill this vacancy on the Supreme Court right now.

Second, we should acknowledge that the process of nominating and confirming a Supreme Court Justice has become very partisan. It has also become very political. Some Democrats in this Senate have spent the last three decades undermining the way these appointments used to be made. It started in 1987, when Senate Democrats launched an all-out assault against the nomination of Judge Robert Bork. It got so bad that the dictionary even created a new word. The word was to "bork" someone. It means to obstruct someone by "systematically defaming or vilifying" them.

Then, in 1992, Senate JOE BIDEN came down to floor of the Senate to explain his rule, the Biden rule, for Supreme Court nominations. He said that once the Presidential election is underway, "action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over." That is the Biden rule.

You can't get any clearer than that. JOE BIDEN was the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee at that time when he announced the Biden rule. You know, he was not all that worried about having only eight Justices for a while. Senator BIDEN said that a temporary vacancy on the Court "was quite minor compared to the cost that a nominee, the President, the Senate, and our nation would have to pay for what would assuredly be a bitter fight."

Well, if the fight would have been bitter in 1992, it would be even worse today. Today, we have had another 24 years of Democrats continuing to politicize the process. Just days after George W. Bush became President, Senate Democrats vowed that they would use—in their words—"whatever means necessary" to block the President's judicial nominations.

Democrats went so far as to try to filibuster a Supreme Court nominee. That was the first time in the history of the Senate that they ever tried to filibuster a Supreme Court nominee. It was the nomination of Justice Alito in 2006. The Democrats failed. Even though they failed, it set a new precedent.

Some of the leaders of that filibuster were Senator Barack Obama, now President; Senator Hillary Clinton, then-Secretary of State, now-Presidential candidate; and Senator JOE BIDEN, now-Vice President of the United States. Senator REID voted to filibuster as did current Senators DURBIN, LEAHY, and SCHUMER, all part of the filibuster of the Supreme Court nomination of Justice Alito by George W. Bush.

That is the history of how our confirmation process became so political; that is, three decades of Democrats politicizing the process. That is the precedent for where we are today. Those are the rules we will follow today.

On top of all of that, President Obama has spent 7 years ignoring Congress. He has made the confirmation process more confrontational and more contentious every step along the way. The President illegally made what he called recess appointments to the National Labor Relations Board. He even did it though Congress was not in recess.

I use the word "illegal" because the Supreme Court struck down this action by President Obama. The vote was 9 to 0 that the President acted illegally. Even Democrats in Congress have said

they think the President has gone too far with some of his Executive actions. So it is clear that Senate Democrats and President Obama have been injecting politics into the confirmation process for many years.

Today they seem to wish that they hadn't done it. Well, these are the rules they wrote and these are the standards they set. The Senate will follow these rules. We should wait until next year to take up this important decision. Let the American people consider it as part of deciding who to support in November. Let the new President make this lasting decision without the political influence of the election hanging over it. It is not the job of the U.S. Senate to rubberstamp the President's nomination. The job of the Senate is to protect the Constitution and to serve the American people. That is the oath every one of us has taken in this body. We have a process for nominating and confirming Justices to the Supreme Court. It is a system the Democrats created and now they should be willing to follow the rules they wrote themselves.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I rise to speak for the second time about the Supreme Court vacancy, and I do so not callously, not spontaneously but after 23 years of service on the committee. I like to believe I have some experience and some knowledge about how these matters have been handled in the past.

I truly believe we have an obligation to consider a President's judicial nominees no matter when, and I wish to speak about why that duty is so important—particularly for the Supreme Court—and the consequences of not fulfilling it. To be very candid, I am shocked at the supreme nature of what is happening because of what I believe its impact is going to be in the next year.

Since the Judiciary Committee started holding hearings on Supreme Court nominations in 1916, not a single nominee for a vacancy has been denied a hearing—ever. Even during Presidential election years, the Senate has done its job.

In 1988, President Reagan's final year in office, Senate Democrats confirmed Justice Kennedy. Three years later, 1991, Justice Thomas was confirmed after the Presidential campaign had begun. Democrats could have said no hearing, no committee work, no vote, no consideration by the full Senate,

but that didn't happen. The nominations were processed and they were confirmed.

So why is it so important that we do our job? Why is an eight-member Court unable to function to the highest and best use of the U.S. Supreme Court? Ties in the Supreme Court create uncertainty in the law. Important legal questions go unanswered. The law varies then, throughout the country, and people and businesses often fail to receive justice. I wish to review just some of the examples where an incomplete Court was unable to levy justice. There are several examples of the importance of nine Justices, if one looks at recusals over the past few years.

No. 1, in 2010, Justice Kagan recused herself from *Flores-Villar v. United States*. This case was going to decide whether a United States citizen father must reside in the United States longer than a United States citizen mother in order to confer citizenship to his child born abroad. The court deadlocked 4 to 4. The result is a child in one part of the United States may be considered a citizen while another in the exact same situation in a different judicial circuit may not be a citizen. This issue remains unresolved today.

No. 2, in 2000, Justice O'Connor recused herself from *Free v. Abbott Labs*. The court should have determined how many plaintiffs in a Federal class action suit must meet a certain damage threshold for the case to proceed in Federal court. Again, the Court deadlocked 4 to 4. Because the case was left undecided, a later Eighth Circuit case—the circuit covering Iowa and other Midwest States—was thrown out. That meant 30,000 individuals claiming damages from a nearby refinery were denied justice in the Federal court; this, even though the company admitted releasing lead and other pollutants into the air. The issue was resolved by another Supreme Court case, but it was 5 years later and that was little consolation to families who didn't receive justice in Federal court in the interim period.

No. 3, in 2007, Chief Justice Roberts recused himself from *Warner-Lambert v. Kent*. This case was meant to decide whether individuals can sue for injuries caused by defective pharmaceuticals when the drugmaker allegedly hid information from Federal regulators. The 4-to-4 tie in that case failed to clarify the law, which still varies across the country today.

Let me give an example. Plaintiffs in the Sixth Circuit are now unable to sue for personal injury in this situation, while individuals harmed in the same way by the same drug in States covered by the Second Circuit are allowed to do so.

No. 4, in another case in 2007, *New York City Board of Education versus Tom F.*, Justice Kennedy recused himself. The deadlocked Court failed to

rule on whether special needs children must first attend public school before they receive tuition reimbursements to attend a private school better equipped to help them learn. This meant courts in different States treated these children differently. The issue was eventually resolved, 2 years later—2 vital years of schooling that children may have missed out on.

No. 5, in 1987, before Justice Kennedy took his seat, the Court heard *U.S. v. Carpenter and Winans*. The case, which came in advance of that year's stock market crash, involved defendants convicted of securities fraud based on allegations they misused information from a Wall Street Journal investment advice column. The Supreme Court failed to determine whether the action could be a basis for prosecution. The law was left unclear for 10 years, during which time some lower courts overturned criminal convictions for this sort of fraud.

These are just a handful of cases that illustrate how an incomplete Court can't fulfill its duty and why the Senate must do its job and fairly consider this President's nominee. To leave the Supreme Court in this situation for a year and some months is, in my view, unconscionable.

So why is it happening? I actually can't come up with any reason to refuse to review Obama's nominee other than politics. The only explanation is that Senate Republicans want to deny this President the ability to fulfill his constitutional obligations, and this isn't the only evidence of such targeted obstruction. It has been a sustained course of action for more than a decade now.

During the Clinton administration, more than 60 nominees to the Federal courts were blocked by a Republican Senate. Many weren't even given a hearing. A comparison with the final years of President Bush's term is particularly telling. In the 2 final years of the Bush Presidency, the Democratically controlled Senate confirmed 68 judicial nominees. That included 10 confirmations in September of his final year in office. So 8 months from now, back in the Bush years, the Democrats in control were confirming Bush appointments. So far, over President Obama's final 2 years, Republicans have allowed confirmation votes on only 16 judicial nominees. Think about that—11 confirmations in President Obama's second-to-last year versus 10 confirmations just 4 months before President Bush left the White House. I think the inequality here must sink in. People must begin to understand that.

The length of the process has also ballooned. Under President Bush, the median number of days between committee and floor votes was 14 days—2 weeks—for circuit court nominees and 19 days—3 weeks—for district court nominees.

For President Obama, the corresponding length between committee and floor votes for circuit court nominees was 84 days—2½ months—and for district court nominees, 98 days. So we see immediately the difference between how the sides are handling judicial appointments of a President that may have been in the other party.

Most of these nominees were eventually confirmed by unanimous or near-unanimous votes. So that shows no need for extended delays. There were no problems with the nominees to deserve extended delays. When President Bush left office, there were 34 vacancies. That is a vacancy rate of 3.9 percent. Today there are more than 81 judicial vacancies, nearly 10 percent of all article III judges.

Republicans have clearly decided not to do their job, and the American justice system is going to suffer for it.

One thing I don't like to do or make is anything that can be described as a threat, but I will be candid with you because I don't think I am a firebrand. I don't think I am that partisan, but when this is done with the Supreme Court, it signals a whole other level of malevolent obstruction. One thing I have learned in my 20 years is what goes around comes around.

To do this, to keep this seat vacant for over a year because it is the fourth year of President Obama's term makes no sense at all. As I said, it is unconscionable. If you don't think an eight-member Court is a problem, you really don't need to take my word for it. Let's listen to the Justices themselves. Justice Scalia, in deciding not to recuse himself from a case in 2004, said the Court would be "unable to resolve the significant legal issue presented by the case." He pointed to the Court's own recusal policy, which remains in effect today. It says that "even one unnecessary recusal" limits the Court's ability to function.

One can interpret from that that by not doing their job, the Republican side of this aisle is certainly limiting the Court's ability to function. I am not sure the other side should want that on their shoulders. I am not sure what may come up this next year—the degree to which justice would be denied in a 4-to-4 Court, but justice would certainly be denied, and it is probably going to happen.

Judge Rehnquist said it in 1972—when he warned that a divided Court "would lay down one rule in Athens, and another rule in Rome."

So here is the conclusion. A President is elected to a 4-year term—both sides of this aisle know that—but today Republicans are in effect saying that a Democratic President only gets 3 years of judicial confirmations if a Supreme Court vacancy comes before it. That is not what the Constitution says. All of us swore an oath to fulfill the Constitution, and I truly hope my

Republican colleagues will stop, will think about this, will think about what will happen next year if this President is denied this appointment for the remainder of this year and a judgeship is certainly delayed way past that point. I think to deny this goes against both the spirit and the letter of our duties as spelled out in the Constitution of the United States.

Once again, I would say, please, Republicans in this House, do your job.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I am pleased to see that on the floor we continue to make progress on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. The legislation before us today, yesterday, and this week has been about how to deal with this growing problem we have around the country. It is at epidemic levels of heroin and prescription drug abuse, addiction, and overdoses.

Today, while we are talking about this legislation on the floor of the Senate, we expect over 100 Americans will die—die from overdoses of addiction, overdoses of heroin or prescription drugs. This is a problem that doesn't just affect my State of Ohio, although we are one of those States that is most severely impacted. It affects every single State represented by everyone in this Chamber. That is why, over the past few years, you have seen this body together, Republicans and Democrats alike, to address the problem.

Senator WHITEHOUSE and I have been the coauthors of this effort, but so many others have been involved. Senator AYOTTE, Senator KLOBUCHAR, Senator FEINSTEIN—who is on the floor right now—have been supportive of the legislation but also improved the legislation with an amendment which was accepted earlier this week dealing with the international drug cartels. There is an effort in this body to take on this issue, not in a partisan way but in a totally nonpartisan way.

Last week I was in Ohio meeting with groups, talking about various issues. Every single place I went this issue came up. I was on a plant tour, and people talked to me about it. We had a townhall meeting at that factory. At the end of the townhall meeting—after talking about taxes, energy, health care policy, and other issues—I asked for a simple show of hands of how many people have been affected where their families or friends have been affected by this new opiate addiction issue, heroin and prescription

drugs. Half the hands in the room went up. They went up because this is something that is tearing at our families and our communities. It is devastating so many of our communities. The cost to the taxpayers is also tremendous.

I went to a hospital and what they wanted to talk about was how the emergency rooms are being filled with people who are overdosing or abusing drugs. I have been to three different hospitals in our State that are doing amazing things to care for those babies who are being born with addictions. There has been a huge increase in my State of babies who were born with an addiction to opiates because of their mothers being addicted during the pregnancy. They have to take these babies—some of whom are so small they can fit into the palm of your hand—through the withdrawal process. We don't know what the long-term consequences are for many of these babies because this is such a new issue, but we know this is something that is tearing at our communities. It is time to address this issue. There has been a recognition of that, and I am very encouraged by the progress we have made this week on this legislation. I hope we can find a way to get to the final amendments and get the legislation passed because it is urgent we deal with this.

The House of Representatives has their own legislation. It is also called CARA—Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. It is bipartisan also. We believe if we can pass this bill with a strong vote—and we had an 89-to-0 vote to get on the bill itself to move to the legislation, which was very encouraging—Senator WHITEHOUSE and I believe we will get a strong vote in the House as well, and we can get it to the President's desk for his signature and begin to reverse this trend.

The legislation is something that went through a unique process around here, which is bipartisan or even non-partisan from the start and a process of bringing in experts from all around the country. Rather than us saying we know all the answers, we are going to write this legislation, we said let's hear from others. Senator WHITEHOUSE and I, Senator AYOTTE, Senator KLOBUCHAR and others held a series of summits here in Washington. We brought in people. Many of us have done this in our States as well, but here in Washington alone we had five of these conferences in 2014 and 2015. We brought experts in from around the country, but we also relied on expertise from the administration.

In April of 2014, we held a forum on criminal justice and how it is affected by this issue and treatment and alternatives to incarceration. One of the things this legislation does is it encourages diversion out of the criminal justice system for those who are addicted and gets them into treatment. It was an excellent forum. It featured Mi-

chael Botticelli. In my view, he has been a very effective Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. He is called the drug czar. This is within the White House.

Michael Botticelli came as a representative of the White House but so did a representative from the Drug Enforcement Agency and gave his great input.

In July of 2014, we held another forum. This was on how women are impacted by this drug epidemic, looking at addiction and treatment responses. We talked about pregnant women being addicted and their babies. Again, this forum featured Michael Botticelli, who is Director of the White House Office of Drug Control Policy.

In December 2014, at the end of the year, we held another forum. This was on the science of addiction and how we can potentially address the collateral consequences of addiction. This forum featured Dr. Nora Volkow, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse in the Obama administration. It also included the Department of Justice and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration officials. SAMHSA was there. DOJ was there. By the way, again, Director Botticelli was there as well. I appreciate him coming to that forum, which was very helpful to us.

Last year, in April of 2015, we held a forum on our youth and how we can better promote drug prevention as well as to develop communities of recovery for those who are suffering from addiction. Prevention and education is a big part of our legislation. Clearly, we need to do a better job to get people to make the right decisions to avoid getting into the funnel of addiction in the first place. This forum featured officials from the Office of National Drug Control Policy in the Obama administration. It also had officials from the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Lastly, in July of 2015, we held a forum on the impact of substance abuse and PTSD on our veterans. It focused a lot on the issue of addiction and the high rates we see sometimes of mental health and addiction coming from some of our returning veterans. This forum featured one of the giants in this field, GEN Barry McCaffrey. General McCaffrey and I have worked together since his days as Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy in the Clinton administration. He is not just a giant in this field, but he gave us great input as to how to write good legislation to help us with regard to veterans courts, which we have as part of this legislation where veterans can get the help they need to get their lives back on track. That forum also featured officials from the Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

From all these participants in this process, we received a lot of great feed-

back. It helped guide us as we wrote this legislation. In fact, we went back and forth with legislative language with all these experts in the Obama administration, as well as experts from around the country. This legislation is supported by over 130 groups—including those representing people who were in the trenches—providing treatment, providing services on prevention, law enforcement, and doctors. Those who are involved directly in this issue have given us a lot of guidance, but that included the expertise of these experts in the Obama administration. I am appreciative for that expertise and for their support of our efforts.

Because it was such an inclusive process, because it was a bipartisan process, because of the encouragement and the assistance we received from the drug experts in the Obama administration, when we introduced this bill, we actually said: OK. Here is our final product. After the back-and-forth on all the legislative language and with all the experts, this bill received a lot of support immediately on a bipartisan basis.

As I said earlier, indeed, 130 national anti-drug groups now support it in part because they helped write it, in part because some of those who might not have been intimately involved in the process are looking at this problem and realizing this is a solution that will really help.

We also have dozens of groups from my home State of Ohio that support it, in addition to the 130 national groups, from the Fraternal Order of Police to the National Attorneys General Association, to the folks who are involved day-to-day in helping to deal with this issue at their local level.

I believe it was the day before yesterday that we received a Statement of Administration Policy from the political officials at the White House on the CARA bill, and I have talked about how the administration and their experts have been so helpful, but despite all the work they have done to support this bill, the White House did not issue a Statement of Administration Policy that supported the legislation. It didn't oppose the legislation, but instead it said that the drug epidemic would not be greatly affected by this legislation unless there was substantial new funding provided. This is kind of incredible given that this is the legislation we all worked on together. I know there is a difference between the political folks at the White House and the people who actually know the issue and are experts on the issue, but I hope we can get a strong statement of administration support for a bill that was drafted with them on a bipartisan basis with myself, Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and others, but we will see.

I support additional funding over and above the \$80 million of new funding that CARA provides for, and not just

for this year but for next year and the year after that and the year after that. It is an authorization bill that is extremely important. I supported the Shaheen amendment yesterday, but it is factually wrong to say, as some of my colleagues have claimed and the White House seems to be saying, that there is not funding for these CARA programs. In fact, we have already appropriated, as my colleagues know, significantly more spending for this opioid problem for this fiscal year that we are in. Not a penny of that has been spent yet, by the way—over \$120 million of additional spending. That \$120 million of additional spending is targeted on ways to spend the money more wisely through CARA because we worked with the appropriators and the Judiciary Committee to ensure that was the case.

Again, having said that, I would have loved to have seen more funding over and beyond that provided by an amendment that was offered by my colleague Senator SHAHEEN yesterday because I think that would have helped even more, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't strongly support the underlying CARA bill. In fact, my colleagues who endorsed it and voted with us, as well as my coauthor Senator WHITEHOUSE and others, agree with that because this bipartisan bill ensures that more Federal resources will be devoted to evidence-based education, treatment, and recovery programs that we know actually work. It is not just throwing money at the problem. This is actually legislation that we know works to address the problem based on all the background I just mentioned about getting all the expertise.

Again, these groups out there that are in the trenches every day working on this issue are the ones who will tell you why it is going to work, but what they will say is it is going to help these young mothers battling addiction. It will help those veterans who return home from duty and desperately need our help. It will help young people make the right decision. It will help that teenager struggling with drug abuse. It will help in terms of dealing with this problem we have right now where people can't get treatment because there is not enough access to treatment. It will help in terms of ensuring that we get prescription drugs off the bathroom shelves so they are not being used to get people addicted to opioids and then move on to heroin. It will be helpful to ensure that we have a drug monitoring program nationally so we know who is being overprescribed and who is not. These are changes in law that are part of this legislation.

Again, I thank the experts in the Obama administration who deal with this issue every day and strongly support CARA. On January 27, 2016—so at the end of January this year—the Judi-

ciary Committee held a hearing on our bill. I was able to testify, as well as others, including experts. Here is what some of the leading administration experts said. First, Michael Botticelli—again, a guy who I think has been a very effective Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy at the White House—said:

There is clear evidence that a comprehensive response looking at multidimensional aspects of this that are embedded in the CARA Act are tremendously important. We know we need to do more, and I think that all of those components put forward in the bill are critically important to make headway in terms of this epidemic.

Again, that was the Director of ONDCP.

Dr. Nora Volkow, the Director of the administration's National Institute on Drug Abuse, and a real expert, said:

We support the comprehensive program delineated, and it is one of the strategies to address the problem.

Here is Ms. Kana Enomoto. She is the Acting Administrator of SAMSHA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. She said:

At SAMSHA we are so excited to be able to implement programs like medication-assisted treatment, prescription drug and opioid addiction, which Congress appropriated in 2015 and then another increase in 2016, which is very similar to some of the programs that were described in the CARA Act. Thank you, Senator Whitehouse, for your leadership on this issue and continued support of our mission. We believe that the public health approach of the CARA Act is vitally important to moving forward on this issue.

The next statement I have is by Mr. Milione. He is the Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Drug Enforcement Administration Office of Diversion Control. He said:

I am happy to work with you or anyone on any legislation that will help with this epidemic.

Again, I am thankful for these experts in the Obama administration who have put politics aside to work to support CARA. They helped us to come up with better legislation, and they support it because they know it will help support education and prevention so we can stop drug abuse before it begins. They support CARA because they know it will help with treatment and recovery and will help to reduce overdoses which will help to save lives. They support CARA because they know it will help our veterans as well as women and babies who are suffering from addiction. They also support CARA because they know there are more than 130 national groups out there that understand the importance of this bill and support it, including the National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers, Faces and Voices of Recovery, Children's Health, Children's Hospital Association, the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids, Fraternal Order of Police—again, I thank our law enforcement for

stepping up on this—the National District Attorneys Association, and the Major Counties Sheriff's Association.

I understand that some folks in Washington like to play politics with everything around here, but politics has never been a part of this bill. It has been inclusive from the start and it has been bipartisan from the start. We are here to help those suffering from addiction and to save lives, and that is exactly what this measure will do. Let's get on with it and pass this legislation so we can get it to the President's desk for signature and it can begin to help.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to call up Manchin amendment No. 3420; that at 1:45 p.m. today the Senate vote in relation to the Manchin amendment No. 3420; and that there be no second-degree amendments in order to the amendment prior to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Connecticut.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, last Thursday I was on the floor honoring the victims of the mass shooting in Kalamazoo, MI, another shooting spree that left six people dead and two others injured, and on that very same day another shooting spree broke out in Kansas that forever changed another town—another community in this country like the change that has overcome Sandy Hook, CT, since that fateful day in December of 2012.

This was a shooting spree in Kansas that spanned several miles in nearly 30 minutes. Three people were killed. It could have been a lot more. Fourteen were wounded. The shooting spree took place in two locations as well as the Kansas workplace.

The gunman had multiple felony convictions which prohibited him from buying a firearm, but he used his former girlfriend as a straw purchaser to buy yet another military-style semiautomatic weapon that he used in the shootings. It sounds a lot like many of the other shootings I talked about on the floor.

As has been the case, I try to come down to the floor, seemingly every week, to tell the stories of who these victims are because the numbers don't seem to be moving my colleagues—31,000 a year, 2,600 a month, and 86 a day are being killed by guns in this country. My hope is that by learning who these people are and learning the ripples of tragedy that unfold after a family member is killed by guns, that maybe that psychology and connection to the emotion of these shootings will move my colleagues to do something—anything at this point—to address this epidemic.

Brian Sadowsky was 44 years old when he was killed in the shooting. He was one of three people who were killed at their workplace, Excel Industries, in Hesston, KS. Brian was remembered by his coworkers as a very outgoing guy who was always telling jokes, always fun to be around, and had a biting sense of humor. He rabidly rooted for the Pittsburgh Steelers. He wore Pittsburgh Steelers paraphernalia and gear to work almost every day. He would drop whatever he was doing in order to help his friends who were in need.

A friend of Brian's remembered him as being "a little rough around the edges" at times, but he was the kind soul who was "always there to help. He was a big teddy bear once you got to know him."

His friends said he was a recovering addict who was clean and sober for many years and was instrumental in helping a lot of others overcome addiction.

Renee Benjamin was 30 years old when she was killed. Her friend remembered her by saying that "she's smart, she's beautiful. She was dedicated to Excel. She loved that job. She loved the people. I remember the way she loved people."

"If you ever saw someone smile from the inside out, she was an inside out person," one of her friends remembered.

Another friend said:

She is a person who always gave her all into whatever she did and whoever she loved. She was so smart, but shy about it. She was so funny, so beautiful, inside and out. She was my best friend. We shared everything. We shared a life. . . . All she wanted was to love and be loved.

Josh Higbee was just a year older. He was 31. People who knew Josh said he was a loving, hard-working man. He loved to fish and spend time with his fiancée and his 4-year-old son. His older brother said that Josh was "'Mr. Fix-It.' He loved tractors and toy cars, anything automotive. He was a car guy. He liked to work with his hands."

His sister-in-law said that Josh was "taught to be a very loving, kind man. He has a son that he adores, takes care of. . . . Josh would give you the shirt off his back and worked long, hard hours to take care of his family."

We pay a lot of attention to these victims of mass shootings because they tend to make the news. We see them on TV, but every single day there are 86 people who are being killed by guns. A lot of them are suicides, but many of them are homicides. It is happening all across this country, and not all of them make the national news.

Andre Lamont O'Neal, Jr., died earlier this year in Louisville, KY. Andre was 8 years old and his babysitter was grilling and also had a gun in his pocket. He had slippery fingers, and when he attempted to remove the gun from his pocket, it accidentally fired. It

struck Andre's arm and chest. His babysitter panicked and apparently put Andre in a car and took him to a nearby hospital, but it was too late.

Andre's father, as you can imagine, was overwhelmed. He was "a good little boy," he told reporters.

A few weeks later, Nicholas Hawkins, 19 years old and from Winfield, AL, told his mother that someone was trying to kill him. That was the last time anybody heard from Nicholas. Four days later his body was found shot to death.

He left high school because of bullying and was only 2 weeks away from completing his GED. He intended to go into cosmetology or a related field. He loved to dance, sing, write music, and play guitar. He was good with hair and makeup and described as very funny, quirky, and had a bubbly personality. His friends said he often stole the show.

Every day 86 people die in this country. You don't hear about all of them because this has just kind of become the wallpaper of American news. Shootings have become routine. This doesn't happen anywhere else in the world, and I just want to finish by talking a little bit about this unfortunate, tragic American exceptionalism.

America has 4.4 percent of the world's population, but we have 42 percent of the civilian-owned guns in the world. We have 4 percent of the population, but nearly half of all of the guns are in this country. It used to be that about half of Americans own guns. Today only about one-third of Americans own guns, but a small number of Americans own a lot of weapons. There are more high-powered guns, like the one that was used in Kansas, than ever before.

Why does this matter? Well, it is because the United States also has more gun deaths than any other nation in the developed world, and it is not even close. This chart shows the figures of homicides by firearm per 1 million people. Australia, New Zealand, and Germany have less than two. Switzerland gets all the way up to 7.7. In the United States it is 29.7. There is no other country in the world that comes close to the United States when it comes to the number of homicides in this country. This isn't aggregate numbers. This is per 1 million people.

The reason I show you these two charts is that when you put it together, it tells a pretty interesting and simple story. Here is the chart correlating guns per 100,000 people and gun-related deaths per 100,000 people. Here is the line of correlation. It is a pretty simple story.

With a handful of outliers such as Argentina and Cyprus, the story is that the more guns you have in a country, the more gun homicides are going to occur. Here is the United States on the line, but it is an outlier in terms of the

number of guns and the number of deaths—simply an extrapolation of a story that all of our other first world competitors could tell by themselves. This rebuts this ridiculous mythology by the gun industry, which tells us that if you have more guns, you are going to be safer. The solution in Sandy Hook was just that the Sandy Hook Elementary School didn't have enough firearms. If all the teachers had had weapons, that shooter would have been killed, and the best way to stop a shooter from attacking you is to arm yourself. That is not what the evidence tells us. The evidence tells us: The more guns there are in a community, the more people get killed.

I will show at another time this same chart on a State-by-State basis, and it will tell you the exact same story. A State that has more firearms has more gun homicides. You are more likely to be the victim of gun violence if you have a gun in your house than if you don't have a gun in your house.

Now, the Second Amendment is an incredibly important, vital, integral piece of the fabric of the U.S. Constitution, and I honor people's decisions to buy a weapon in order to protect themselves. Some people live in violent places. Some people live in very isolated places, and they have made that choice, and that is theirs to make. Of course, there are millions of Americans who own weapons in order to hunt, in order to shoot for sport, a pastime they enjoy and have the right to. But they should purchase those weapons with the understanding that there is no data that tells them they are safer with a weapon in their arm, no data that suggests that the more guns you have in a particular place, the less likely there are to be homicides and gun deaths. It is exactly the opposite.

Every single day there are 86 people who are killed in this country from guns, 2,600 a month, 31,000 a year—another mass shooting in Kansas, another one in Kalamazoo. My entire point is just to say that at some point we have to recognize that our silence has become complicity in these murders. If we are not willing to forge political consensus in this session on legislation that changes gun laws, then at least let's make a commitment to fix our mental health system to make sure law enforcement has the resources they need, to make sure we make straw purchasing illegal so the method by which the shooter in Kansas got the gun has consequences at the Federal level, potentially, as well as at the State level. Let us do something to honor the thousands of voices of victims that mount by the day.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from Connecticut.

MAHAN AIR

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I begin by calling attention to a private

Iranian airline, designated by the U.S. Department of Treasury for its support for terrorism and funneling of weapons to Hezbollah and to the Assad regime in Syria. This airline continues to operate and even expand its international business network, despite tough words from the administration. But this kind of tough language is insufficient.

The time to impose sanctions on Mahan Air is now. The time to impose sanctions on Mahan Air is clearly now. I have called on the administration in a letter, which I helped to lead and on which I am joined by a number of my colleagues, in late February—February 29—to the Secretary of the Treasury. Sanctions might be forthcoming against this airline if this body were to approve Adam Szubin to be Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, but so far we have failed to do so. His confirmation has been blocked. I regret it. Whether or not he is confirmed, sanctions should be imposed on this airline. Mahan Air relies on a host of local partners who provide financial and other services for it to maintain this robust international flight network.

So taking this action against Mahan Air will not only send a signal, it will end actions by Mahan Air that are against international law and support terrorism and the funneling of weapons to some terrorist groups that can do harm to the United States as well as to our allies and partners abroad.

Mr. President, I also want to talk about the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. Hopefully, we will vote today in support of it. It is a great bipartisan bill. I am privileged to have worked on it as a member of the Judiciary Committee. I thank all of the members of that committee and others, most especially Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator LEAHY, for incorporating provisions that I have helped to offer in this bill.

We heard from our colleagues around the country about the public health crisis that we face today. It is more than a crisis. It is a hurricane—almost like a public health hurricane—a natural disaster that requires us to act now. Abuse and addiction are crippling our communities, shattering our families, carrying enormous financial and human costs. The overdose deaths have steadily increased. They now surpass automobile accidents as the leading cause of injury-related deaths for Americans between the age of 25 and 64.

The United States consumes over 80 percent of prescription opioids, even though we make up only 4.6 percent of the world's population. In Connecticut, I have held roundtables across our State, and I hear again and again the tragic stories of young people who begin taking powerful painkillers when they break a leg or a wrist in a sports injury or when they have wisdom teeth

removed and they receive a prescription for 30 days. They only need 3 days' worth of painkillers, if they need them at all. But the overprescription and the abuse that results from it often leads to addiction.

The gateway to addiction is these powerful painkillers that provide the beginnings of the problem. One university counselor wrote to me recently:

When I first began this position 14 years ago, it was extremely uncommon to be working with a student who abused a substance besides alcohol. Today, I have a recovery house and a program full of students battling addiction from [prescription opioids].

I have heard from mothers and families, from teachers and counselors who have struggled to find quality substance abuse treatment programs and behavioral health services for their loved ones. One mother wrote to me about her two sons. Some 8 years ago, her oldest son died from a heroin overdose after a prescription program released him early. Her younger son continues to struggle with addiction but was recently told by his insurance company that he lacked a long enough history of substance abuse to qualify for inpatient treatment.

We must address these problems, and the solution is multifaceted. Supporting law enforcement is part of the solution, with resources and with other measures that will enable interdiction of the supplies of heroin and cracking down on the illicit supplies of painkillers. But law enforcement has told me, as a former colleague, that we are not going to arrest our way out of this problem. The jails and prisons alone do not provide a solution.

There is a need for more treatment and services. I hear that point again and again and again, but that source of solution alone will not be the panacea. There is no one solution. Education for our doctors and providers and prescribers is part of what is needed. Again, alone, no single solution is sufficient.

I want to thank the bill sponsors for incorporating the provision that I wrote with Senator COATS, the Expanding Access to Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs Act. This provision would allow nurse practitioners and physician assistants to access the information they need. Specifically, they would be able to access State prescription drug monitoring programs to consult a patient's prescription opioid history and determine if that patient has a history of addiction or is receiving multiple prescriptions from multiple sources. It is critical that we recognize the key role that nurse practitioners and physician assistants play in curbing prescription drug abuse and diversion.

I propose a number of amendments that attack other elements of this problem. I am going to continue to advocate for them, whether they are in

the final package or not—and some of them may well be. I will continue the effort to make them real and adopt them as law, whether or not they are included in this measure.

Over and again, we have heard that many struggling with addiction start by abusing those prescription drugs after receiving a legitimate prescription. That is why Senator MARKEY and I have submitted amendment No. 3382, which would cut down on overprescribing opioids by requiring providers, when they apply for a license from the DEA to prescribe these controlled substances, to first complete education programs so they are encouraged to adopt responsible prescribing practices. Those practices can be as simple as keeping track and scrutinizing the use of these painkillers. Every licensee, every provider, every nurse practitioner, everyone writing out a slip of paper that enables somebody to purchase these powerful prescription painkillers would have to take a course and complete this training.

In Blumenthal amendment No. 3327, a separate measure that I am proposing as ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, there would be better access to naloxone, known as Narcan, by veterans. We have seen how naloxone or Narcan is a lifesaver. It can bring people back from the brink of death. There should be more of it. It should be more available to our police, firefighters, and first responders on the streets of Connecticut and in neighborhoods and communities across the country. It is insufficiently available. It has skyrocketed in price, and there have been shortages. But I have seen how the opioid epidemic has affected, particularly, our veterans, and often, again, with overprescriptions in certain parts of the country.

We have moved to address that problem. In Wisconsin, for example, and with the great help of Senator BALDWIN, my colleague on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, we have worked to craft legislation that will help contain and cut that abusive prescription of opioids. I believe that this measure will give information to veterans and the tools they need also to prevent deaths in case of an overdose.

Much of the work of the Veterans' Affairs Committee is focused on the opioid epidemic and the Jason Simcakoski Memorial Opioid Safety Act we are working to pass into law. But safe prescribing of opioids is vital because many veterans, even when legitimately prescribed, have serious pain issues that can lead to abuse once those issues are addressed.

So I have filed this amendment that would eliminate the requirement that veterans pay a copay for naloxone kits and for education for providers as to how to use them. In other words, the providers will provide education, along with providing the prescriptions, as to

how to use the Narcan kits that veterans could receive without any copay. Naloxone is necessary for those first responders, and the underlying bill includes provisions that would help to provide it, but this measure would focus particularly on veterans, where the need is great and growing greater.

I wish to point out that the cost of this measure would be less than \$100,000 per year. The savings in dollars long term would vastly exceed that amount, and the savings in lives more than justifies this, even without the savings in dollars. We are talking here about the ability to save veterans' lives. We have an obligation to leave no veteran behind, to keep faith with our veterans, and to make sure that a minimum amount of spending will enable the saving of lives.

I appreciate again the work of my colleagues in crafting this bill. I hope we will move forward in passing it and that the amendments I have suggested will be adopted to strengthen it even further.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF ROBERTA JACOBSON

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, it has now been 7 months since the United States has had an Ambassador to Mexico. As we all know, Mexico is our third largest trading partner. Bilateral trade totals more than half a trillion dollars. There is more than \$1 billion in two-way trader exchanges between the United States and Mexico every day.

The border States obviously enjoy a close relationship and robust trade with Mexico. My home State of Arizona exports about \$9.2 billion in goods every year. Arizona has expanded its trade relationship with Mexico by reopening a trade office in Mexico City. Mexico has reciprocated by opening an office in Arizona. Yet, for more than half of the year, we have not had a representative in place with the Mexican Government to deal with issues of mutual cooperation, issues of importance and concern.

The bilateral relationship between the United States and Mexico is not the only issue of importance, obviously, between our two countries. Transportation issues, security threats, national resource management, and environmental issues are just a few of the fronts on which we can cooperate with Mexico, and such cooperation requires a close partnership between our countries. The longer we go without an Ambassador there, the more this partnership will suffer.

The relationship between the United States and Mexico has historically been important, and previous administrations have acknowledged this by appointing top-notch candidates to serve as our envoy to Mexico. The current nominee to serve in Mexico is no exception to this historical trend. As a career member of the Senior Executive Service, Roberta Jacobson has spent more than three decades working on Latin American policy for Presidents on both sides of the aisle. She is obviously fluent in Spanish. She has earned the respect of her colleagues. I can attest to her professionalism and her experience. She was reported out of the Foreign Relations Committee by a vote of 12 to 7 in November; yet the post with Mexico City remains open 3 months later.

Our relationship with Mexico is far too important to let this post go vacant any longer, particularly when we have a qualified candidate who has been vetted by the Foreign Relations Committee and reported to the Senate with a majority of its members. I urge the Senate to take up this matter expeditiously.

I yield back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3420 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3378

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 3420.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from West Virginia [Mr. MANCHIN] proposes an amendment numbered 3420 to amendment No. 3378.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To strengthen consumer education about the risks of opioid abuse and addiction)

On page 14, line 10, insert "consumers," after "patients,".

On page 14, line 12, strike "prescribed," and insert "prescribed, including opioid and methadone abuse. Such education and awareness campaigns shall include information on the dangers of opioid abuse, how to prevent opioid abuse including through safe disposal of prescription medications and other safety precautions, and detection of early warning signs of addiction."

On page 16, line 22, strike "or".

On page 17, line 2, insert "or" at the end. On page 17, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

"(C) a sudden increase in opioid-related deaths, as documented by local data;

On page 18, line 23, strike "1997," and insert "1997, and may also include an evalua-

tion of the effectiveness at reducing abuse of opioids, methadone, or methamphetamines."

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to vote in favor of my amendment No. 3420 to the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015.

As my colleagues know, our country is facing a prescription drug epidemic. Every one of our States—all 50—is having a horrific problem. The CARA Act that we are working on and are about to pass is a good start to addressing this crisis, which is why I am a proud cosponsor.

My amendment simply does what you would think common sense would already entail. My amendment improves the bill by helping those on the frontlines of this terrible epidemic provide their communities with the information they need to help stop the spread of opioid addiction and help seek treatment.

It will better enable us to educate individuals about the dangers of opioid abuse, practices to help prevent opioid abuse, including the safe disposal of unused medication, and how to detect the early warning signs of addiction.

This amendment will help to save lives by raising awareness about the dangers of prescription opioid medications to prevent opiate addiction in the first place and ensuring that loved ones will know how to help when a friend or family member becomes addicted.

We have over 2 million Americans who are addicted to opioids. Many of these individuals began the road to addiction with a seemingly innocent prescription and little or no warning about the dangers from their physicians. Or it began when a friend offered a pill that they thought couldn't be that dangerous because it was prescribed by their doctor.

There is simply too little understanding about the dangers of these drugs. Too many people get sucked into opioid addiction because they don't understand the risks. Likewise, the people close to them don't recognize the signs of addiction or know how to access the resources to help their loved ones.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time for debate has expired.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 30 additional seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANCHIN. I thank Senator MURRAY, Senator ALEXANDER, Senator GRASSLEY, and all the people who have helped me in considering this bipartisan amendment with a bipartisan piece of legislation.

If we want to stop opioid addiction, we ought to start by preventing it. Preventing it starts with information and education that people do not have today. This helps every one of us in all parts of this great country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question occurs on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent; the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted "yea" and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 90, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 31 Leg.]

YEAS—90

Alexander	Fischer	Murkowski
Ayotte	Flake	Murphy
Baldwin	Franken	Murray
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Paul
Bennet	Graham	Perdue
Blumenthal	Grassley	Peters
Blunt	Hatch	Portman
Booker	Heinrich	Reed
Boozman	Heitkamp	Reid
Brown	Heller	Risch
Burr	Hirono	Rounds
Cantwell	Hoeven	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Schatz
Cardin	Isakson	Schumer
Carper	Johnson	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Cassidy	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Cochran	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Lankford	Sullivan
Coons	Leahy	Tester
Corker	Lee	Thune
Cotton	Manchin	Tillis
Crapo	Markey	Udall
Daines	McCain	Vitter
Donnelly	McConnell	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Enzi	Merkley	Whitehouse
Ernst	Mikulski	Wicker
Feinstein	Moran	Wyden

NOT VOTING—10

Boxer	McCaskill	Sanders
Cornyn	Nelson	Toomey
Cruz	Roberts	
Gardner	Rubio	

The amendment (No. 3420) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 365; that the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, on behalf of myself and Senator RUBIO, from the great State of Florida, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized in morning business for such time as I may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF ROBERTA JACOBSON

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, my good friend, Senator JEFF FLAKE from Arizona, appeared here just an hour or so before and also spoke on the issue that I am going to speak about today. That issue is the ambassadorship to Mexico and the woman who has been nominated by President Obama, Roberta Jacobson. Senator FLAKE made a very strong case. It has been a pleasure working with him in a bipartisan way. We believe this nomination has very strong bipartisan support, and we look forward to working together to get this to the floor and get an up-or-down vote.

So I rise again today to urge support for Roberta Jacobson. She is a dedicated public servant. She is more than ready to be our Ambassador to Mexico. The Los Angeles Times has called Roberta Jacobson "among the most qualified people ever to be tapped to represent the U.S. in Mexico."

We have a distinguished candidate, a career member of the Senior Executive Service. She is ready to serve. We have strong support for her on both sides of the aisle. What we need now is an up-or-down vote. Once again, we failed to get one.

It is hard to explain this dysfunction when I talk to my constituents in New Mexico. They just don't understand this kind of dysfunction. They don't understand it, and, frankly, neither do I. We are a border State. This is a critical position. It is critical to our security, and it is critical to our economy.

Earlier today, Senators FLAKE, KLOBUCHAR, HEINRICH, and I met with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce about the urgent need to confirm this nomination. Our business leaders in New Mexico, Arizona, and every other State in our country are telling us they need an ambassador in Mexico City. We have

ongoing border-related business issues that need attention. From time to time, we will call on the Mexican government to take some action, to work with us on coordinating with ports of entry, infrastructure, and other important issues. We are at a disadvantage without an advocate for America in Mexico City. It is very frustrating.

This is not the first time we have faced this kind of dysfunction. I pushed for reform of the Senate rules in the last two Congresses, and we did change the rules to allow majority votes for executive and judicial nominees to the lower courts. But that does no good if they remain blocked, and that is what is happening in this Congress. The line gets longer and longer of perfectly qualified nominees who are denied a vote, denied an opportunity to be heard.

Roberta Jacobson was approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee months ago with bipartisan support. Yet the weeks go by, and still we wait. What is holding up her nomination? It isn't her qualifications; those aren't the problem. A big part of the problem is Presidential politics and the policy differences with the administration over her work with Cuba.

This year, we reopened diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba. As the Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Roberta helped negotiate on behalf of the administration. After 50 years of failed policy toward Cuba, we have opened a 21st-century relationship with the people of Cuba, one that is already seeing change as more Cubans enter the private sector. And more Americans, who are our best diplomats, continue to increase their engagement with the Cuban people. I congratulate the President for leading this historic change. Some disagree. I understand that. But their objection is with the President's Cuba policy. We are talking here about Mexico and an important position that has been unfilled since last summer because a few Senators would rather return to the failed policies of yesterday and are using Roberta to make a political point.

FAIR ELECTIONS

Mr. President, just when we think things can't get any worse, they do. Now a seat on the Supreme Court is empty, and the majority leader is actually arguing that it should stay empty for over a year, no matter who is nominated by the President. This isn't governing; this is a failure to do one's job.

Is it any wonder that the American people are frustrated, fed up with political games, with obstruction in the Senate, with special deals for insiders, and with campaigns that are being sold to the highest bidder? They see this obstruction as just another example of how our democracy is being taken away from the people.

Each year we have a Student Leadership Institute in my State. High school

juniors and seniors attend to learn about and discuss the challenges affecting our State and the Nation. I always look forward to meeting with these bright, young people. They are smart and committed, and they raise thoughtful points about how government works and how sometimes it doesn't work. One thing we talked about this year was how important it is to listen. This is one of the most underrated virtues, especially in politics—stating your views but also listening to the views of others. I am always optimistic when I see students engaged in that process. I only wish we could see more of it in Washington.

The art of politics is standing your ground, but also finding common ground and listening to the American people. Our democracy depends on every voice being heard and on every vote being counted. We are losing that. We have to get it back or we will continue to pay a heavy price. We can be sure of one thing: Beyond all the money, beyond all the special interests, these students and all Americans deserve to be heard, and they deserve a democracy that works.

Campaigns should be about the best ideas, not the biggest checkbooks or rigged districts. The U.S. Supreme Court created a Wild West of campaign finance regulations with their decision in *Citizens United* and their 2014 *McCutcheon* decision. It opened a fire sale of super PACs trying to buy elections nationwide. We are seeing the results—from the Iowa caucuses to local elections in Las Cruces, NM.

We need to overturn those bad decisions. That is why I have led efforts to amend the Constitution to restore power to Congress and to the States to pass commonsense campaign finance laws. We need to listen to the voters, not to the billionaires hiding in dark corners. That is why earlier this week I introduced legislation to abolish the broken Federal Election Commission.

Congress created the Federal Election Commission to fight political corruption when they created it after Watergate. But today, partisan gridlock leaves the agency powerless and dysfunctional. It even fails to enforce the few campaign finance laws remaining on the books. The Federal Election Administration Act would create a new agency, with five members appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. A chair would lead the agency, and the remaining members would equally represent both political parties. It is modeled after a bipartisan proposal previously introduced by Senator JOHN MCCAIN and former Senator Russ Feingold.

Super Tuesday was just 2 days ago. Once again, we are seeing record spending, including millions of dollars in undisclosed dark money. Without a strong watchdog looking over their shoulders, super PACs and billionaire

donors have free rein to push the limits.

It is clear that the FEC has outlived its usefulness. We need a new agency, one with the power and the will to crack down on campaign finance violations.

The Supreme Court has put billionaires and other special interests on a galloping horse. They are running away with our democracy—running away with our elections. We have created a dark money, special interest, gerrymandered train wreck, and the losers are the American people. That is why I have also introduced the Fairness and Independence in Redistricting Act, because part of that train wreck is the secretive and highly partisan congressional redistricting process, and we need to end it.

The President highlighted this issue in his State of the Union address, saying, "We've got to end the practice of drawing our congressional districts so that politicians can pick their voters and not the other way around." In most States today, congressional maps are drawn behind closed doors by partisan lawmakers. Their aim is to keep incumbents in office, and they do that. Pick almost any district in the country, and we will see that almost every one is skewed to favor one party or another.

We can end the gerrymandering status quo. Redistricting commissions should be independent. They should be led by citizens, not politicians. Arizona and California voted for reform, and they are already bringing new faces to Congress. The American people deserve fair elections—elections that are free of unlimited and hidden special interest money and free of rigged district lines.

Next year, I will meet again with students in my State. We will talk about leadership, about challenges, and about how government works. I hope I will be able to say to them that we have moved forward; we have reformed a broken system. I hope I can say to them that we have done our job and made sure that voters, not powerful elites, have their say.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of amendment No. 3391 to the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015. I am proud to join Senator DAINES in filing this important amendment.

The Daines-Peters amendment would make it possible for certain dishonor-

ably discharged veterans to be eligible for veterans treatment courts. Specifically, the amendment would allow the Attorney General to determine veterans treatment court eligibility on a case-by-case basis for dishonorably discharged veterans who have been diagnosed with service-connected post-traumatic stress disorder, military sexual trauma, or traumatic brain injuries.

Currently, veterans treatment courts are open to any veteran with a discharge other than dishonorable or a dishonorable discharge that can be attributed to substance abuse. However, studies have shown a direct connection to PTSD, TBI, and MST are a leading cause of substance abuse disorder. In general, drug courts reduce correctional costs, protect community safety, and improve public welfare. Veterans treatment courts take the work of drug courts one step further.

According to the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, veterans treatment courts bring the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs health care networks, the Veterans Benefits Administration, the State departments of veterans affairs, volunteer veteran mentors and veterans family support organizations together in one place in order to provide support for veterans. These are resources that speak to the unique needs of this Nation's veterans.

In my home State of Michigan, Judge Michelle Friedman Appel's veterans treatment court in Oak Park is the site of weekly accountability, encouragement, and rehabilitation, and I commend her work.

Our veterans treatment court judges are committed to the well-being of this Nation's veterans, connecting them to services they need to reach their full potential. Servicemembers suffering from the invisible wounds of war who are discharged, regardless of the characterization of that discharge, truly need the assistance provided by veterans treatment courts. That is why the Daines-Peters amendment is so important. Former servicemembers, particularly those suffering from PTSD, TBI, and MST should have access to veterans treatment centers and courts.

I urge my colleagues to support the Daines-Peters amendment No. 3391.

FAIRNESS FOR VETERANS ACT

Mr. President, I wish to stay on the subject of veterans for a moment longer. Behavioral changes are often seen in individuals suffering from mental traumas, such as PTSD and traumatic brain injury, or TBI. Unfortunately, those individuals will often receive a less-than-honorable discharge, also known as a bad paper discharge rather than an honorable discharge. This discharge status makes veterans ineligible for certain benefits, including GI benefits and VA home loans. This is simply unacceptable, and we need to make a change. Our Nation's

heroes who honorably serve their country deserve access to the care and benefits they have earned, and that is why I introduced the Fairness for Veterans Act, which will help these veterans.

The Fairness for Veterans Act will create a presumption in favor of the veteran with a bad paper discharge when petitioning the Secretary of Defense for an upgrade in discharge status based on hard medical evidence that is certified by the VA or appropriate medical professional. This bill has the support of both parties in both Chambers.

I introduced the Fairness for Veterans Act with my Republican colleagues, STEVE DAINES from Montana and THOM TILLIS from North Carolina. I appreciate the many Senators who have cosponsored the bill since its introduction, particularly Senator GILLIBRAND, who has been a champion for the bill on the Armed Services Committee.

Today, in the House of Representatives, MIKE COFFMAN, a Republican from Colorado; TIM WALZ, a Democrat from Minnesota; LEE ZELDIN, a Republican from New York; and KATHLEEN RICE, a Democrat from New York, led a number of Members introducing the bipartisan bill.

This legislation is also supported by a number of veterans groups, including Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled Veterans of America, Military Officers Association of America, the American Legion, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Vietnam Veterans of America, the Veterans Health Council, United Soldiers and Sailors of America, and the Military-Veterans Advocacy, Inc.

Improperly discharged servicemembers should not lose access to the benefits they have earned through their service. That is why we must ensure they are getting the fairness they deserve when petitioning for an upgraded discharge status. This is a nonpartisan issue, and I am committed to fighting on behalf of our Nation's veterans.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, the bill we are debating today is an important step forward in helping to combat addiction and opioid abuse.

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, 20 percent of veterans with PTSD also have a substance abuse disorder. Let me repeat that statistic. In our country, 20 percent of veterans, or one in five, with PTSD have a substance abuse disorder, and that is why we need to ensure that they have all the avenues to care and treatments available to them. We cannot allow them to suffer in silence. That is why I have offered two amendments to the bill that will help our veterans struggling with the invisible wounds of war.

My first amendment, No. 3390, makes sure that these veterans are not forgotten, including their struggles in the findings. My second amendment, No. 3391, allows veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder, military sexual trauma, and service-related traumatic brain injuries that received a dishonorable discharge to have access to veterans treatment courts.

I am proud to be joined by Senator PETERS in ensuring that veterans at risk of substance abuse have access to the veterans treatment courts, particularly those most at risk. We cannot turn our backs on those who answer the call to protect our country and are now struggling, many of whom are struggling in silence. We must do everything we can to uphold the promises our government made to our veterans, and I am honored to be doing just that.

I thank Senator PETERS for this bipartisan effort we are moving forward here to fight on behalf of our veterans.

I yield back my time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss two amendments I am submitting to S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.

Across the country, including in my home State of North Dakota, families are experiencing the devastating effects of opioid and heroin addiction. In fact, in 2014, 61 percent of all overdose deaths in the United States were related to opioids. In North Dakota alone, overdose deaths have tripled in the past decade. It is no mystery why. In 2014, the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation seized 1,549 dosage units of opioids. In 2015, they seized 5,593. That is a 3½-fold increase in just 1 year, so an increase of more than three times in just 1 year.

Similarly, law enforcement seizures of heroin from Canada have grown exponentially. But our data about cross-border drug smuggling is limited. To battle drug abuse effectively, we need to know not just how much but how those drugs are getting into our country. The amendments I am proposing today will strengthen the overall bill by providing law enforcement with additional resources to address security vulnerabilities at the northern border that could be exploited by drug traffickers.

My first amendment allows State law enforcement to use grant funds to partner with local and Federal law enforcement agencies. In the underlying bill, the Attorney General may make grants

to State law enforcement agencies to investigate the distribution of heroin and prescription opioids. My amendment allows States to use those grants to partner with local agencies, as well as the Drug Enforcement Administration—the DEA—and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

In North Dakota, our law enforcement has faced increased challenges in combatting the flow of illegal drugs, including prescription opioids and heroin; however, our State has had a successful track record of partnering with local, State and Federal law enforcement to investigate and prevent criminal activities, specifically drug-related offenses. One successful example of these partnerships is the Bakken Organized Crime Strike Force. This task force was created in part by North Dakota's attorney general, Wayne Stenehjem, along with the Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force, to address the increased drug activity in the Bakken oil-producing region in western North Dakota.

My amendment will give States greater opportunities to partner with local and Federal agencies to investigate the trafficking of heroin, opioids, and other illicit drugs, as we have done successfully by creating these task forces in North Dakota.

My next amendment also addresses drug smuggling. It requires a study of drug trafficking in States along the northern border. While there is much attention and energy focused on the trafficking of drugs through our southern border, there are vulnerabilities that exist on our northern border as well.

My amendment directs the Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Attorney General, to conduct a study on the trafficking of narcotics, specifically opioids and heroin, in States along the northern border. The Secretary of DHS and the Attorney General must submit a report on those findings to Congress. Those findings will give Congress greater insight into the security needs at our northern border to prevent the trafficking of illegal drugs into the United States.

Opioid and heroin addiction is a scourge that ruins lives and crushes the spirit. S. 524 is a potent weapon in the fight against them. I urge my colleagues to support the underlying bill, as well as my amendments, which seek to make the legislation even stronger by increasing collaboration among law enforcement and addressing the security needs of our northern border.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MAHAN AIR AND IRAN

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, earlier this week, I joined a bipartisan group of Senate colleagues, including Senator GRAHAM, Senator AYOTTE, and Senator BLUMENTHAL—Republicans and Democrats alike—to send a letter to the United States Department of the Treasury. In our letter, we urged Secretary Jack Lew to continue the Obama administration's necessary and vital efforts to crack down on Mahan Air, a private Iranian airline that provides support for Iran's terrorist proxies and funnels weapons to Hezbollah and the murderous Assad regime in Syria.

Mahan Air is only the latest example of a pattern of behavior we have come to expect from Iran: Supporting terrorism and conducting destabilizing activities in the Middle East, conducting illegal ballistic missile tests in violation of U.N. Security Council resolution 1929, and committing ongoing, major human rights violations.

Indeed, as we wrote in the letter to the Secretary of the Treasury: "Strong and swift sanctions enforcement is vital to hold Iran to account for its ongoing support of terrorism, ballistic missile development, and human rights violations."

Today I would like to dive further into Mahan Air activities and explain why it is important that America work with our allies to continue to push back on Iran's bad behavior and to hold Tehran to the terms of the agreement reached last summer with regard to Iran's nuclear agreement.

I will also explain why it is critical that the Senate confirm Adam Szubin, Treasury's now-Acting Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, who plays a key role in pressuring our allies to push back on Iran and who, in the absence of confirmation, is weakened in that vital role. If we are serious about our shared intentions to hold Iran accountable, then this Senate must confirm Adam Szubin, and our European allies must work with us to sanction Mahan Air.

Although Mahan Air is technically a private Iranian airline, it supports the operations of the IRGC—the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps—the hard-line military force committed to the preservation of the revolutionary and extremist Iranian regime. Mahan Air also provides services to the Quds Force, an elite IRGC military force that is designated as a terrorist group by the U.S. Treasury Department under Executive Order 13224.

Through its ties to the IRGC and the Quds Force, Mahan Air directly and indirectly provides men and materiel to Hezbollah, a terrorist organization based in Lebanon, and to the murderous regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria. Yet, despite these known ties,

Mahan Air is still flying into 24 airports in countries around the region and world, including the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Italy, and it is successfully procuring aircraft and equipment using front companies—an evasive approach that mirrors Iran's strategy in a number of industries, not just in airlines.

Since October of 2011, the Treasury Department has taken key steps to sanction Mahan Air. In that month—October of 2011—Mahan Air provided travel for members of the Quds Force, who flew to and from Iran and Syria for military training, and other suspected officers who flew covertly in and out of Iran.

Less than a year later, in September of 2012, Treasury further cracked down on Mahan Air and two other airlines for a series of bad actions, including sending military and crowd control equipment to the Assad regime in Syria in coordination with Hezbollah, often under the cover of being humanitarian aid. Later, in both February of 2014 and May of 2015, our Department of the Treasury took further action against two front companies that helped Mahan Air procure equipment and parts. The 2014 action penalized personnel and companies in the United Arab Emirates who helped Mahan Air transfer money and procure aircraft and other parts.

This ongoing, long-term pattern of behavior by Iran and its IRGC makes clear why the United States and our other vital allies must work together to cut off Mahan Air's access to international markets and airports, and I commend our Department of Treasury for taking these important steps to designate Mahan and its employees.

These actions alone are important—but not sufficient. Both the United States and our European allies must do more. To start, I urge governments across the European Union to also designate Mahan Air and its many front companies for their support for terrorism.

By continuing to support Syria's violent and discredited President, Bashar al-Assad, Iran has directly contributed to the slow and grinding collapse of Syria, to the enormous humanitarian crisis that has resulted, and to the destabilization of the region. There is a direct correlation between Iran's destabilizing actions in Syria, but also in Yemen, Lebanon, and Iraq, and the migrant crisis now facing all of Western Europe. The more that Iran uses Mahan Airlines to transport the very goods that supply Hezbollah, the longer the instability inside Syria will persist and the more refugees and migrants will flee Syria toward our allies in Western Europe.

Without the support of companies such as Mahan Air and the many front companies that it depends on, Iran and the IRGC would find supporting the

Assad regime substantially more difficult and expensive. We must work together to keep Mahan Air from purchasing engines, aircraft, and other equipment for these maligning purposes.

The second step our allies can and should take is simple: to stop allowing Mahan Air to land at their airports. A company like Mahan Air, which supports terrorism in defiance of international norms, should not have easy access to international airports.

More broadly, combating Iran's destabilizing actions in the Middle East and successfully and rigorously enforcing the terms of the nuclear deal with Iran will require meaningful international coordination.

As I recently wrote in an editorial that ran in the *Guardian*, while I understand that many European companies will seek to do business with Iran, now that certain economic sanctions have been lifted in compliance with the terms of the nuclear agreement, I urge our allies to remember three simple things.

First, the United States and the U.N. continue to maintain and enforce economic sanctions against Iran. The United States' designation of Mahan Air is one of many unilateral sanctions examples, and many that we continue to keep in place.

Second, stopping Iran's quest for a nuclear weapon must always remain a top priority. We are counting on our European allies to continue to share this view and to act in accordance with it—a view that they stated they shared during our negotiations that led up to the nuclear deal.

Third, as Iran's relationship with Mahan Air shows, the Iranian Government remains a revolutionary regime with a long history of pursuing nuclear weapons and a long track record of supporting terrorism and destabilization in the Middle East.

Iran's use of Mahan Air to evade international scrutiny is yet another reminder that we must remain vigilant in our oversight of Iran. Here in the United States, we appreciate the partnership of our European allies. In fact, the strength of this allegiance and our ability to act as one were key factors that led Iran to agree to the strict terms of the nuclear agreement. We must continue to advocate for and keep front of mind the idea that the most important contract with Iran is the one we have already signed in the nuclear agreement. We must pursue every possible means of enforcing it, and that means cracking down on front companies that facilitate Mahan Air, and companies that are playing a direct role in fomenting instability in the Middle East.

Just as importantly, I urge my colleagues today to put politics aside and confirm Adam Szubin, who oversees the implementation of sanctions in the

Treasury Department. With experience in both the Bush and Obama administrations, Adam Szubin is the definition of an outstanding career public servant: nonpartisan, dedicated to his job, and committed to his country. He has been widely praised by Senators of both parties, but his confirmation has been blocked for nearly a year for reasons utterly unrelated to his capabilities or his performance at the job.

The cause of this hold is and has been raw politics, but the consequences of the hold go far beyond that.

When Acting Under Secretary Szubin sits down at the negotiating table, the individuals on the other side, whether from the private sector or a foreign government, friend or foe, should know that he speaks for the American people and has the weight of the Senate and the whole Government of the United States behind him. When Adam Szubin travels around the world to ask senior officials from foreign governments to sanction Mahan Air and its front companies or to prevent Mahan from flying into their airports, he is trying to convince foreign governments to do something difficult, but necessary. Those foreign officials should know that he speaks not just for the Obama administration but for the executive and legislative branches of our whole government and that we as a people stand united against Iranian aggression.

Let's demonstrate to our allies and to Iran that Congress takes these issues as seriously as we proclaim. Let's confirm Adam Szubin and other nominees who are vital to this effort and whose confirmations have been stalled for too long. Let's work together to crack down on Mahan Air and other Iranian avenues for sowing terror throughout the Middle East. And, in the same spirit of collaboration that led to the nuclear agreement, let's come together to rigorously enforce the terms of the deal.

Thank you, Mr. President.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Delaware, Mr. COONS, for his leadership on this very important topic. I could not agree with him more that we need to fund the IAEA, that we need to confirm Adam Szubin for the position of Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, and that our European allies must join us in sanctions against Mahan Air.

The JCPOA is focused upon one clear goal: preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. The fact that an agreement like this was able to be achieved at the negotiating table is a testament to the strong economic sanctions that were imposed on Iran in direct response to Iran's past illicit nuclear activities.

The JCPOA required Iran to complete key nuclear-related steps,

verified by the IAEA, before any sanctions were removed. Iran has shipped out 25,000 pounds of low-enriched uranium, thereby tripling its breakout time. Iran has removed the core of the Arak heavy water plutonium reactor and has rendered it unusable. Iran is also limited to 300 kilograms of uranium enriched to only 3.67 percent, which is below weapons grade. These are positive steps toward preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

But they came at a time when the world community possessed the most leverage, and Iran had the most to lose by not complying with the deal. Now, in the aftermath of implementation day and with certain sanctions relief provided to Iran, we must remain increasingly vigilant in our efforts to counter the Iranian regime's support for terrorism and violations of human rights of their own people.

The Iranian regime must understand that there will be consequences for violations, however minor, of the JCPOA. If Iran seeks a nuclear weapon, the world community, led by the United States, is ready to implement the snapback of sanctions in response. And if Iran attempts to test our resolve through small but persistent violations of the JCPOA, they need to be punished swiftly.

I recently traveled to Vienna, along with Senator COONS and several of my colleagues, to meet directly with the U.S. Mission to the International Organization in Vienna, including the International Atomic Energy Agency, the IAEA. The IAEA is the world's "nuclear watchdog" and the organization that, under the terms of the JCPOA, is responsible for verifying Iran's compliance with the terms of the deal. We must ensure that the IAEA, which serves as our eyes and ears on the ground in Iran, with direct access and 24/7 online monitoring capabilities of nuclear sites, has the resources necessary to execute its critical mission.

It is incredibly important that we continue to ensure strict compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. The terms of the JCPOA do not change, regardless of progress or setbacks in Iran's politics, and our resolve to vigorously enforce the deal will not waver. We will judge Iran's leadership by its actions and not words.

Last week, Iran conducted some elections. But let's be clear: Many of the Iranian candidates being touted as so-called moderates are labeled that way simply because of their support for, or connections to, Iranian President Rouhani. But it is important to remember that, according to the United Nations, Iran continues to "execute more individuals per capita than any other country in the world."

Executions peaked at 753 in 2014, during President Rouhani's second year in office, including those conducted in public, along with executions of women

and at least one juvenile. Amnesty International has reported on continued crackdowns against artists and activists who were tortured into confessions to crimes such as "spreading propaganda against the system" and "insulting Islamic sanctities." And we know that Iran remains a leading state sponsor of terrorism.

Unfortunately, I do not believe that the election results in Iran are in any way transformational. I agree with my colleague's assessment that Iran's elections are neither free nor fair. The Guardian Council, a top clerical body of the Iranian regime, disqualified thousands of candidates from standing for election. We cannot reasonably expect a transformational shift in Iran's foreign policy, human rights record or support for terrorism when the hardline regime elements that promote these disturbing policies are allowed to prescreen and disqualify candidates for office.

Iran's support for terrorism and the ability to foster instability in the region has serious consequences for our European allies and for our own homeland security. I served in the U.S. Navy Reserve, including time in the Persian Gulf, where I saw firsthand the Strait of Hormuz and the strategic chokepoint that exists there. Last year Iran seized a commercial vessel in the States, requiring the U.S. Navy to accompany vessels and provide security when moving in and out of the Persian Gulf. The Iranian regime is a threat not just to the Middle East but to the security and stability of the entire world.

In closing, I want to reiterate the need to confirm highly qualified nominees like Alan Szubin, who will oversee Treasury Department sanctions against Iran and the front companies used to support illicit activities, and we need to urge our allies to join us in imposing these sanctions. We need to ensure that we provide the IAEA with the resources required to do its job and conduct rigorous daily oversight of the JCPOA.

Most importantly, we must continue to provide strict oversight of the JCPOA and ensure compliance with its terms. We cannot let up or be distracted by perceived improvements or setbacks in Iran's politics. We made a commitment to the American people that Iran must never be allowed to acquire a nuclear weapon. This is a commitment we must uphold and be focused on each and every day.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I take this time to explain four amendments that I have filed and would like to make pending on S. 524. I understand we are in a position now that we need consent in order to have these amendments pending. I am not going to ask for consent, but I will explain the four amendments in hopes I will have an opportunity to present these amendments and have them considered by the full Senate. I know Leader MCCONNELL wants an open amendment process, and I think all four of these amendments are very much relevant to the underlying bill which is aimed at authorizing the Attorney General to address the national epidemic of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

The first amendment I wish to talk about is an amendment on which I am joined by Senator CORNYN. It is amendment No. 3421, which would allow grants for 24/7 treatment centers.

I am proud to join with my colleague Senator CORNYN on this amendment, which clarifies that grants under section 301 of CARA may be awarded for the establishment and support of treatment centers that operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide immediate access to behavioral health services.

The epidemic of opioid abuse and addiction impacts every State in our country. Many of us know individuals and families who have been deeply affected by this tragic crisis. Heroin and opioid drug dependency has more than doubled in Maryland over the last decade. The number of deaths related to heroin and opioid drug dependency has increased by more than 100 percent in the last 5 years. In 2013, there were 464 heroin-related overdose deaths in Maryland, greater than the number of homicides. Some parts of Maryland have had the highest per capita rate of heroin and opioid drug use in the United States. In some regions of the State an estimated 1 in 10 citizens are addicted to heroin.

Improving access to behavioral health care—meaning both mental health and substance abuse treatment—is essential in combating this epidemic. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, more than half of the individuals with substance use disorders also have at least one serious mental health condition. There is often a small window of opportunity for getting an individual with substance abuse or mental health issues into treatment. If treatment cannot be provided on demand, often the opportunity is lost. Allowing grants for the establishment and support of 24/7 treatment centers providing behavioral health services on demand will help ensure those individuals in need have access to behavioral health services at the time they need it.

I ask my colleagues to join me in helping to get this amendment pending

and adopted. It is a bipartisan amendment, as I said. I am joined by Senator CORNYN in presenting it to our colleagues.

The second amendment is pretty simple. It requests a GAO report on naloxone price increases. I am pleased this amendment I would offer would require a study of the most recent dramatic increase in the price of this medicine. Naloxone is a lifesaving drug that is used to reverse the effects of opioid overdose. However, according to the Baltimore City Health Department, the cost per dose in Baltimore has quadrupled over the past 2 years—quadrupled in 2 years. This GAO study would evaluate the impact of the ability of States and local health departments to reduce the number of deaths due to opioid overdose. It is a pretty simple amendment, and I would hope we could get it pending and included in this legislation because I think it would save lives.

The next amendment I wish to talk about is again a bipartisan amendment that is being offered with Senator HELLER. This amendment would repeal the therapy cap. I was in the House of Representatives when the therapy cap was imposed on therapeutic rehab services. It was included in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and imposed annual financial limits on outpatient physical therapy and speech-language pathology services, as well as occupational therapy services. The decision to impose those caps was not based upon data, concerns about quality of care or clinical judgment. The sole purpose was to limit spending in order to balance the Federal budget.

I was in the Ways and Means Committee room when Chairman Thomas brought this issue up to include in the Balanced Budget Act, and I asked the question: Why are we doing this? He said: Well, we need these dollar amounts to equal the numbers. I said: What is the policy reason? None could be given.

These arbitrary caps create an unnecessary and burdensome financial barrier to Medicare beneficiaries who rely on essential rehab services such as physical and occupational therapy to live healthy and productive lives. Chronic pain, which is defined as pain that lasts for several months or in some cases years, affects at least 116 million Americans each year. Physical therapy plays an important role in managing chronic pain.

Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published draft clinical guidelines on the use of opioids for chronic pain, making it clear nondrug approaches, such as physical therapy, are “preferred” treatment paths for chronic pain. Approaches such as physical therapy “have been underutilized and, therefore, can serve as a primary strategy to reduce prescription drug medication abuse and

improving the lives of individuals with chronic pain.”

I urge my colleagues to join me and Senator HELLER to permanently repeal the therapy cap and ensure that Medicare beneficiaries, including those suffering from chronic pain, continue to have access to medically necessary outpatient physical therapy services.

The fourth amendment I would like to offer is in title IV of this legislation. It addresses the so-called collateral consequences. Section 402 directs the Attorney General to establish a “Task Force on Recovery and Collateral Consequences.” Collateral consequences refer to a penalty, disability or disadvantage experienced by an individual because of a criminal conviction, but that is separate from the court’s judgment or sentencing. The commission will study these consequences and whether they affect the ability of individuals to resume their personal and professional lives. In other words, we are talking about reentry into society.

But we do not have to wait for the results of a commission to take action to ameliorate one of the collateral consequences of a criminal conviction. Here, I am talking about the fundamental right to vote. An estimated 5.85 million citizens cannot vote as a result of criminal convictions, and nearly 4.4 million of those have already been released from prison. So 4.4 million people in our communities are denied the right to vote. Nationwide, 1 in 13 African Americans of voting age have lost the right to vote, a rate 4 times higher than the national average. Latino citizens are also impacted in an extreme way because they are disproportionately overrepresented in the criminal justice system. States have vastly different approaches to voting with a criminal conviction. This patchwork of State laws has caused confusion among election officials and the public, sometimes resulting in the disenfranchisement of even eligible voters. Some of these State laws are a holdover from the era of Jim Crow laws, where even misdemeanor convictions could take away an individual’s right to vote. In some cases, the right to vote is lost permanently, with no ability for rehabilitation. This is just plain wrong.

The amendment I wish to offer would provide much-needed information into the hands of citizens returning from incarceration. My amendment would direct the Justice Department to provide to individuals released from the custody of the Bureau of Prisons information regarding their right to vote following release. It would require notifications to individuals of the impact on their voting rights when they accept a plea agreement from the U.S. attorney and require the Department of Justice to report on the disproportionate impact of both Federal and State criminal disenfranchisement laws on minority populations, including data on

voter disenfranchisement rates by race and ethnicity.

My amendment does not change any existing Federal or State voting rights laws. It does not. It simply requires the Justice Department to provide additional information to ex-offenders upon their release from prison, and it makes sure that defendants are aware of the impact on their voting rights when accepting a plea agreement. The Department of Justice study can provide us additional information on the patchwork of State and Federal disenfranchisement laws, which Congress and the States can use to make further changes in the statute.

So I urge my colleagues to have a process where this amendment, along with the other three I have discussed, can be made pending so that we can vote on these amendments. I think they all would improve the underlying bill, and it is certainly consistent with the majority leader's commitment to an open amendment process. I hope there will be a way that I will be able to offer these amendments and the full Senate will be able to vote on these amendments.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

FILLING THE VACANCY ON THE SUPREME COURT

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, earlier this week and last week I joined a number of my colleagues on the floor and spoke at length about the need for our fellow Senators on the other side of the aisle to do something simple—to do their jobs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator does not have on his microphone.

Mr. BROWN. I thank the Presiding Officer.

Earlier this week and last I spoke at length about the need for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to do their job and to move forward with hearings and an up-or-down vote on whomever the President nominates to the Supreme Court. The outcry from the public continues from every corner of our justice system. Let's just recount quickly what happened after the tragic and untimely death of Justice Scalia.

Within an hour or so, the Republican leader of the Senate said: Don't bother sending up a nominee. History suggests that we won't do this in the last year of the Presidency. We are not going to do hearings. Don't even bother.

Other Republican Senators, sort of like one bird flying off the telephone wire—they all fly off a telephone wire—one Republican Senator after another, first said no hearings. Then, after the majority leader said that he would not even meet with prospective nominees, other Republican Senators said they wouldn't meet with nominees.

Just imagine that. We work hard to run for these offices. It is hard to get to the Senate. When we win, within a

month and a half or 2 months later, we take an oath of office. We get paid to do our jobs. But they are just not doing their job.

The Constitution says the President shall nominate to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court, and the Constitution says the Senate shall advise and consent—not except in the last year of the President's term, not only if we feel like it. We are just saying to our Senate colleagues—along with Americans saying to Senate Republicans: Do your job.

It is pretty simple. We are not saying you have to vote for the President's nominee. Understandably, you may not want to, but at least meet the nominee, at least hold hearings on the nominee. Then let's bring him or her to the Senate floor and have a debate and vote up or down.

Earlier this week I quoted from four former U.S. attorneys from my State of Ohio, from Washington State, California, and Virginia. They wrote: "It is unfair and unsafe to expect good federal agents, police and prosecutors to spend more than a year guessing whether their actions will hold up in court." These are criminal prosecutors, U.S. attorneys, saying how important it is that, ultimately, when something goes to the Supreme Court, there will be a decision made because there is an odd number of justices.

The last time there was a 1-year vacancy—which is what the Republican leader, MITCH MCCONNELL, is calling for—on the Supreme Court was 150 years ago, and that was because we were at war. It was during the Civil War. It is unprecedented to do what they are doing.

On Tuesday, former Ohio Court of Appeals Judge Mark Painter wrote an op-ed in the very conservative, very Republican Cincinnati Inquirer, sharing some of the same concerns. He wrote:

It would be irresponsible and unprecedented to let a vacancy on the court extend into 2017. If Congress fails to act, the Supreme Court will go two terms—well over a year—with a vacancy. The court will hear significant cases in the coming months and issue rulings that will impact our everyday lives.

As a judge for 30 years, I learned that it is important for the law to be settled.

Settled—not held in abeyance, not deadlocked, but settled—that is why we have an ultimate Supreme Court.

Uncertainty is bad for businesses, individuals and for commerce. Two court terms of possible 4-4 votes would be a nightmare.

There is no precedent for causing this damaging uncertainty. The only reason is politics.

That is the same Republican leader who some years ago said: My No. 1 political goal is to keep Barack Obama from being reelected, not, my No. 1 goal is to help improve the economy or to help wages go up or to preserve our freedom, our families or our economic

security from attack. He said: My No. 1 goal is to make sure that Barack Obama isn't reelected.

Then this same crowd shut down the government in 2013, after Barack Obama was reelected. They didn't like that—understandably. But they shut the government down—not understandable. Now they want to shut the Supreme Court down by locking it in with an even number where we will see 4-to-4 votes.

Judge Painter points out that we elected Barack Obama to a 4-year term:

The nomination to fill the seat of Supreme Court Justice Scalia is bigger than party or politics. And there is no doubt that Scalia himself would interpret the Constitution as requiring a nomination and a vote by the Senate. It's that simple.

That's why President Obama will do the job that the American people elected him to do. And that's why the Senate should do its job also.

Under our Constitution, we elect presidents for four-year terms. Obama has almost a quarter of his term left. Should the process of government stop for a year?

Should the process of government stop for a year? It should not. My colleagues, pure and simple, ought to do their jobs. They ought to meet the nominee. They ought to hold hearings. They ought to give an up-or-down vote to whomever the President nominates. Let's do our job.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I want to join my colleague from Ohio, Senator BROWN, in his message about our responsibility to do our job. It is very simple: Do our job. Do what the people of our State elected us to do.

Senator BROWN is absolutely correct. Article II, section 2 of the Constitution states that the President "shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court." The last time I checked, the President was elected for a term of 4 years, not 3 years and 2 months. We still have 10 months left of President Obama's Presidency. There is plenty of time for the Senate to consider his nomination for the Supreme Court of the United States.

I find it shocking that my colleagues would suggest, even before the President has submitted a nomination, that the Senate would not conduct hearings or consider the nomination of the President to the Supreme Court, even though that is our constitutional responsibility and even though we were elected for a 6-year term. The last time I checked, we are in session until the end of this year. We don't adjourn in March. The President has 10 months left in office, and Senators should do our work and do our job. I think the American people will ultimately demand that the Senate do its job and not threaten to stop working simply to

coddle and pander to the most extreme and fringe elements of its base.

Senators should look to the Constitution for the history and the precedents of the Senate on how to proceed. I say that because if we do not hold a hearing on President Obama's nomination for the Supreme Court, it will be the first time in the history of the United States that a nominee who requested a hearing is denied a hearing—the first time ever. This is a matter of what is the appropriate role in the Constitution of the United States. We all took an oath of office to uphold the Constitution of the United States, and it is our responsibility to respond with a serious effort.

The majority leader said that when we get a nomination, we should act with dignity. Well, we are not acting with dignity if we don't hold a hearing. Let me remind us that the last time a President nominated in an election year of the opposite party, President Reagan's nomination of Justice Kennedy was considered by a Democratic-controlled Senate and approved by a Democrat-controlled Senate.

Let me also remind us that there have been times where a nominee of the President has not been approved by the Judiciary Committee. They have still come to the floor of the Senate for action. Justice Thomas was approved by a majority vote of the Senate even though he was not recommended by the Judiciary Committee. It was short of the 60-vote threshold, which means that if the Democratic majority had wanted to filibuster, they could have. So we are on uncharted waters here with what the Republicans are doing.

We have separation of branches of government. That is the history of our country. That is the democracy in which we live. It is our responsibility to preserve that. We, the legislative branch of the government, have the responsibility to advise and consent on the independent judiciary. The Supreme Court operates with nine justices, not with eight. It is an abuse of power of the majority in the Senate—the Republicans—to say that we are going to reduce the Supreme Court of the United States to eight by inaction. What happens when we have conflicting decisions made by different circuits and the only court that can determine the law is the Supreme Court in its interpretation and they are 4-to-4 deadlocked? If we do not take up this appointment and we go the full year into next year, it will be two terms of the U.S. Supreme Court without the full complement of justices.

Do your job, my colleagues. That is all we have to do. You don't have to vote yes. Vote. Have a hearing. Have the courage to vote yes or no on the President's nominee. They are saying we are not even going to have a chance for a hearing or vote, and we don't even know who the nominee is, and that is

just plain wrong. I think the American people will speak with a clear voice and say that is not what the Senate should be doing.

I hope the Republican leadership will provide the dignity of the Senate, hold hearings, and allow the full Senate to vote up-or-down on the President's nominee for the Supreme Court.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, addiction to prescription opioid pain relievers and heroin is a growing public health epidemic that is taking a heart-breaking toll on families and communities in every State of this country. In 2014, more than 47,000 Americans died because of prescription opioid and heroin overdoses.

This crisis is very real in my home State of New Mexico. For years, without adequate treatment resources, communities in my State have suffered through some of the highest rates of heroin and opioid addiction in the country. Far too many New Mexico families have lost loved ones, and many more are struggling to find treatment and recovery resources for a father, a mother, a son, a daughter, or for themselves.

Two weeks ago, I visited Espanola Valley in Rio Arriba County. Rio Arriba, which is largely rural and has predominantly Hispanic and tribal communities, is filled with beautiful mountain and desert landscapes, the kinds of places that attract artisan visitors from around the world. Families from Rio Arriba can trace their lineage to Spanish settlers who came to New Mexico in the 1600s and to Indian Pueblos and tribes who have lived in this region for millennia. Tragically, Rio Arriba County has also long been home to the highest rates of heroin addiction and overdose deaths in the Nation. In fact, between 2010 and 2014, the county's overdose death rate was more than five times the national average. This is not only tragic, it is simply unacceptable.

Last month, I convened a roundtable discussion in the area with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Region 6 Director Marjorie Petty and a number of local stakeholders, including the Rio Arriba Community Health Council. We gathered at the Delancey Street Foundation in Ohkay Owingeh to discuss ongoing efforts and ways to better address the heroin and prescription drug crisis in my State. What I heard loud and clear from public health officials, from law enforcement and first responders, and, probably most importantly, from people who have coped directly with addic-

tion, is that this crisis is hitting entire communities and hitting them hard. Everyone knows a family who has a child suffering through addiction or in recovery, and many have literally lost loved ones to drug-related deaths.

For decades, drug addiction and substance abuse have been passed down generation to generation in too many families in Rio Arriba and in communities across New Mexico. The introduction of prescription opioid pain medications such as oxycodone and hydrocodone into the market over the last two decades has poured fuel on this fire, creating even more cases of opioid abuse and heroin addiction. These prescription opioid pain medications, which are so chemically similar to heroin, have produced whole new onramps onto the highway of addiction. In many instances, by the time someone has finished their first prescription drug treatment, they are literally already hooked, so they turn to purchase new pills, legally or illegally, either through a new prescription or through other means. When they can't afford the pills anymore, all too often they turn to heroin.

Overprescription of opioid drugs and the widespread trafficking of lethal black tar heroin have both contributed enormously to the ongoing public health crisis in New Mexico and now across our Nation. The statistics alone should get our attention. From 2002 to 2013, opioid-related deaths quadrupled nationally. Drug overdoses were the leading cause of injury death in 2013. Among Americans ages 25 to 64 years old, drug overdoses caused more deaths than motor vehicle crashes. Think about that.

Over this same period, New Mexico families and communities have borne the brunt of this epidemic. Between 2011 and 2013, New Mexico ranked second nationally for drug overdose deaths, and it is getting worse by the year. More New Mexicans died of drug overdoses in 2014 than in any other year on record. Some 547 people died in New Mexico due to drug poisoning, including deaths from prescription opioids and heroin overuse.

Rather than focus solely on these statistics, I want to talk a little bit about some of the people I met in my visit to Rio Arriba County because I think it puts a much more human and real face on the very nature of this problem.

Jesus toured me around Delancey Street.

The Delancey Street Foundation is a national residential self-help rehab organization that helps former substance abusers, ex-convicts, and others who have literally hit rock bottom turn their lives around, get clean, and learn academic and vocational and life skills. Residents have to commit to a minimum stay of at least 2 years. During

that period, a comprehensive treatment program often produces dramatic results.

Delancey Street's facility in New Mexico is located on a 17-acre ranch in Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo. Residents there learn vocational skills to get jobs in livestock management, culinary arts, retail sales, construction, wastewater management, and landscaping.

Jesus came to Delancey Street after getting caught up using and selling pills and heroin in the Espanola Valley. He had two DUIs and suffered through alcoholism and substance abuse. In 2011, when a judge gave him the option of going to Delancey Street instead of serving a 9-year prison sentence, he took the chance. Through a long process, he received treatment and learned how to cope with his addiction. Jesus has stayed at Delancey Street well past his 2-year commitment and has taken on new responsibilities. He now serves as a mentor and a role model to new residents who are trying to overcome their addictions.

I met another man named Josh. He is a peer-to-peer support worker at Inside Out Recovery Center in Espanola. Josh was born and raised in Espanola, where he saw drug and alcohol use as the way of life in his community. When he was 14 years old, a high school friend with a prescription for hydrocodone offered him some pills. Josh quickly became addicted. Over time, his opioid addiction led him to the point where he was shooting 7 grams of heroin every day, stealing from family and friends to pay for that addiction, and going in and out of the prison system at the same time. At one point, while going through withdrawal in a jail cell, Josh was unable to eat for weeks. He literally lost over a third of his body weight. He remembers later attempting suicide in an act of desperation to end his addiction and failing when his gun didn't go off.

In his late twenties, after going through these intense struggles, Josh was introduced to the Inside Out Recovery Center. He met a peer-to-peer support worker named Alex, who had done the same drugs and been through the same struggles. Josh realized there was a way to stop using, and he turned his life around. He got clean.

When a judge sentenced Josh to probation instead of prison for an offense, he was released from jail and went straight to Inside Out and committed to treatment. He said it was the first time he had been released and hadn't immediately returned to drug and alcohol abuse. At Inside Out, Josh received peer support and learned conflict resolution and coping skills. He credits the program with actually saving his life. Now that Josh has his life back, he is working to help others in his community to get their lives back from addiction.

Finally, I want to tell you about Rufus. Rufus is a 22-year-old Navajo

Hopi man who lives in Pojoaque. When I met Rufus during my visit, he was getting ready to graduate from his treatment at New Moon Lodge treatment facility in Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo.

New Moon Lodge is a residential addiction treatment center that serves clients from New Mexico's American Indian communities. Although the center treats different types of addiction and substance abuse, including alcoholism, recently they have seen many more cases of opioid and heroin addiction.

Rufus's addiction to opioids began when he was prescribed hydrocodone to help with a hand injury he received when he was 16. He became addicted. Once his prescription ran out, he turned to buying pills illegally, moved up to higher dosages, and eventually moved on to heroin. He got expelled from high school his senior year and fell even deeper into this addiction.

After years of use and going in and out of jail for various offenses, Rufus came before the Pojoaque Tribal Court last year and was given the option to go to New Moon for treatment. New Moon helped him see the person he could be without the drugs. Rufus just graduated from his treatment at New Moon last week. Now he is looking forward to building a stable home life for his girlfriend and his baby by going back to school to get his GED and working toward being a mechanic or an artist.

I tell these stories to demonstrate that when we provide an opportunity to receive comprehensive treatment and receive rehabilitation, people who have suffered through the trials of opioid addiction can turn their lives around and help their communities heal in the process.

Sadly, in addition to hearing these success stories, I have heard far too often that people who are looking to get help have absolutely nowhere to go. Particularly in New Mexico's rural, tribal, and impoverished communities, there is a severe lack of access to proven treatment and rehabilitation resources. We desperately need more detoxification centers, more transitional housing facilities, more outpatient services, and more behavioral health facilities.

We as a nation are not doing even close to enough to provide adequate treatment facilities and resources to communities like those in the Espanola Valley that are struggling to meet the challenges of the growing heroin and opioid addiction crisis. That is why I am a cosponsor of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, championed by our colleagues Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE of Rhode Island and ROB PORTMAN of Ohio.

This legislation provides a series of incentives and resources designed to encourage States and local commu-

nities to pursue a full array of proven strategies that combat addiction. To ensure that this effort meets the needs of rural and tribal communities such as those in New Mexico, I submitted a bipartisan amendment with my friend, the senior Senator from Wyoming, Mr. MIKE ENZI, to require that rural health professionals are included in the Pain Management Best Practices Interagency Task Force that is created by this legislation.

But, frankly, in order to truly provide local communities the tools they need to tackle this crisis head-on, we need funding, which is why I am also cosponsoring emergency funding legislation, championed by my colleague Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN of New Hampshire, to provide supplemental appropriations of \$600 million for drug prevention and treatment programs. I understand that Senator SHAHEEN's efforts to include her funding legislation as an amendment failed to get enough votes this week, which frankly I find deeply disappointing, but I think the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act is still a good first step toward addressing this epidemic. You can be sure I will continue to fight to address it in the Senate and back in New Mexico.

Addiction is a disease that can happen to anyone. It transcends region, race, gender, and socioeconomic status. It is a vicious cycle we have seen all too frequently in New Mexico. By taking a comprehensive approach to combat this epidemic, we can ensure that people have the opportunity to get back on the road to recovery.

I yield the floor.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the American people sent all of us here to solve problems, to strengthen and support our Nation and its people, and to help make ours a more perfect union. They expect us to govern responsibly and to work together to improve our communities. This week we are considering the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA. Few problems in our country have had as devastating an impact on American families as opioid addiction. From Vermont, to Kentucky, to Ohio, communities across the country are struggling, and they are reaching for answers and for help.

It is clear there is a strong, bipartisan interest in Congress to address the problems associated with opioid addiction. The legislation before us is a good bill. It demonstrates that Congress now sees addiction for what it is—a public health crisis. But CARA will not by itself pull our communities out of addiction. CARA is an unfunded framework. Addiction is too knotted and massive a challenge to address with a mere change in philosophy. We cannot pretend that solving a problem

as large as opioid addiction costs nothing. The emergency funding amendment by Senator SHAHEEN is an essential part of this effort. It puts real dollars behind the rhetoric to ensure that the carefully crafted programs authorized in CARA can actually be implemented and can succeed.

Congress has approved much larger emergency funding bills in the past. Just last year we approved more than \$5 billion to combat the Ebola outbreak in Africa, far from our shores. To be clear, I believe this funding was appropriate. But we must now turn our attention to the public health crisis here at home, in our own communities. More than 40,000 Americans are dying each year from drug overdoses. In Vermont, State leaders like Governor Shumlin have tackled opioid addiction with an all-hands-on-deck approach. Other community leaders, like the Boys & Girls Club of Burlington, have done wonderful work expanding education efforts to prevent young people from becoming addicted in the first place. I am proud of their efforts, but they will be the first to acknowledge that many challenges remain. As in other States, addiction has spread across our State, and more Vermonters are dying from drug overdoses. Several have died while on waitlists for treatment.

Addiction is nothing less than an epidemic, and to solve it, this crisis must be treated as an epidemic. More resources for targeted efforts will save lives and help stabilize families, neighborhoods, and communities. That is why we need Senator SHAHEEN's amendment. This amendment would have provided resources to strengthen both the law enforcement and public health components needed to tackle the crisis. Her legislation would have delivered support to State and local law enforcement agencies, anti-heroin task forces, and treatment alternatives to incarceration. It would have also delivered necessary resources to health care professionals who are overwhelmed by a need they cannot meet. No one should be turned away when seeking treatment for the terrible disease of addiction. If cancer patients were refused treatment, we would not hesitate to act, and this should be no different.

We must make a real investment in combatting this ravaging epidemic, and the Shaheen amendment would have ensured that. Actions speak louder than words, action requires resources, and budgets are where we set priorities. The American people are watching and waiting. It is time for us to stop talking and start acting. It is time for us to start investing in our own country, our own communities' needs, and our own people.

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for today's vote on

the Manchin amendment No. 3420 to S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Bill. I would have voted yea.●

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Mrs. McCASKILL. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for today's amendment vote in relation to S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015.

On amendment No. 3420 by Senator MANCHIN, I would have voted yea.●

Mr. HEINRICH. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, on a day that was sadly often marked by partisan differences, I thought I would take a moment near the end of this legislative day and simply remark on something where there has recently been some bipartisan progress, and I think it is worthy of some brief comment.

Today is the third annual World Wildlife Day. This day was declared by the United Nations and will soon be celebrated in another place on this Capitol complex by a wide range of organizations from all over the United States and the world that are dedicated to preserving wildlife in places in the world where it is under distinct pressure.

As I said, this is the third annual celebration of World Wildlife Day. It was first declared by the United Nations, and I want to briefly remark that a bipartisan delegation of this Senate recently went to Southern Africa. It was led by Senator FLAKE of Arizona, and he and Senator CARDIN, the ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator COCHRAN, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and I had an opportunity to meet with leaders from four different countries. They are working tirelessly to try and contain an epidemic of poaching that has reached nearly catastrophic levels.

Nearly 100 elephants are killed every day now so their ivory tusks can be sold on the black market at prices higher than heroin or gold. In 2014 alone, more than 1,000 rhinoceroses were illegally killed in South Africa, which is a 9,000-percent increase in the poaching of rhinos since 2007.

I think this is of concern to all of us, not just because of the loss of these remarkable and iconic wildlife species but because it is also funding and fueling a multibillion-dollar industry of organized crime that also traffics in

drugs, people, and weapons and destabilizes critical parts of the world.

We have a chance to make real progress. There is a bipartisan bill, the END Wildlife Trafficking Act, that Senator FLAKE and I have introduced, and that I am hopeful Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN, as the chair and ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, will take up, consider, and markup in our next business meeting. I do think this legislation offers us a real opportunity to show that we can come together to support the President's plan for combating wildlife trafficking and can make a modest and responsible investment in helping countries on the other side of the world that are facing the same sort of scourge of lawlessness and violence that marks those places in America where drug trafficking is at its peak, but instead of trafficking illegal drugs, the actions they are carrying out is the slaughter and the export of the pieces of killed animals, whether elephant tusks or rhino horns.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote, "Adopt the pace of nature: Her secret is patience." It is my hope that with patience, persistence, and bipartisan ship, we can celebrate this World Wildlife Day by doing something together to make progress in combating the scourge of illegal wildlife trafficking.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to call up the following amendments: No. 3336, Johnson, as modified; No. 3329, Durbin; further, that at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, March 7, the Senate vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed and that there be no second-degree amendments in order to these amendments prior to the votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Democratic leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

Our respective cloakrooms have been working for the better part of this week to get a list of amendments that could get votes.

As everyone knows, we have had, on our side, more than 60 amendments filed. So I want to hold my friend to an often-expressed promise that we would have a robust amendment process. Now, I know we aren't going to get 60 amendments—I got that—but there have been objections from Republicans

to a number of amendments my Senators want to offer. They want to do a few votes on a number of their amendments.

First of all, everyone should understand we are not holding up this bill. The leader has indicated he is going to file cloture today or tomorrow, so I got that. We are not going to oppose cloture, but we are not going to have the other side determine what amendments should be offered. We should be able to pick what amendments we want to offer. And I don't think it is appropriate—for example, one of the amendments he chose is from a Senator running for reelection. Is there some purpose to that? I think we should have a process where we have alternating amendments, and we pick our amendments.

So I would ask my colleague to agree to changing his unanimous consent request so that it would be in order to call up the amendments I mention now. There would be an hour of debate on each amendment. We could certainly even shorten that time significantly prior to a vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed, and no second-degree amendments be in order prior to the votes: Durbin No. 3329, Gillibrand No. 3354, Markey No. 3384—who has been begging me for 4 days now to get a vote on his amendment—Blumenthal No. 3327, Cardin No. 3421, McCaskill No. 3375, Wyden No. 3402, Heinrich No. 3372, Schatz No. 3413, and Markey No. 3382—10 out of 60.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator so modify his request?

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I object to the modification.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard to the modification.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to the original request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard to the original request.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I might just point out that apparently the amendment that was in my consent request that was objectionable to the other side was a simple amendment from the Senator from Wisconsin to include a representative of the Indian Health Service in the Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand, I am sure, the importance of this amendment, but the other amendments are important also.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to call up the following amendments: No. 3334, Kirk; No. 3336, Johnson, as modified; No. 3329, Durbin; No. 3337, Johnson, as modified; No. 3354, Gillibrand; No. 3366, Lankford; Markey-Paul related to the TREAT Act; No. 3407, McCain; and No. 3408, McCain; further, that at 5:30 p.m., Monday, March 7, the Senate vote in relation to the Durbin amendment No. 3329 and the

Johnson amendment No. 3336; and that there be no second-degree amendments in order to these amendments prior to the votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object. I don't like to admit this publicly that I have learned anything from the Republican leader, but I have. One of the things I have learned is that it is not right to have the majority pick the votes of the minority, so I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the Grassley substitute amendment No. 3378.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Senate amendment No. 3378, the substitute amendment to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Deb Fischer, John Barrasso, Shelley Moore Capito, Roy Blunt, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Mike Crapo, David Vitter, Mike Rounds, Bill Cassidy, James E. Risch, Lindsey Graham, John McCain, Thom Tillis, Orrin G. Hatch.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the underlying bill, S. 524.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Deb Fischer, John Barrasso, Shelley Moore Capito, Roy Blunt, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Mike Crapo, David Vitter, Mike Rounds, Bill Cassidy, James E. Risch, Lindsey Graham, John McCain, Thom Tillis, Orrin G. Hatch.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls with respect to the cloture motions be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the filing deadline for first-degree amendments to amendment No. 3378 and S. 524 be at 3:30 p.m. on Monday, March 7.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the cloture vote on the Grassley substitute amendment No. 3378 occur at 5:30 p.m., Monday, March 7.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING BERTA CACERES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last night Honduras lost one of its most courageous, charismatic indigenous leaders, Berta Caceres. Ms. Caceres was the general coordinator of the National Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras, and she was assassinated in her hometown of La Esperanza, Intibuca.

According to initial reports, at least two people broke down the door of the house where she was staying for the evening and shot and killed her.

Berta Caceres spent her life fighting in defense of indigenous rights, particularly to land and natural resources. In 2015, she won the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize for her outstanding activism and leadership.

This horrific crime demonstrates that no one, not even an internationally known social activist, is safe in Honduras if they speak out against corruption or abuse of authority. Her death will have a profound impact on the many communities she worked with, her organization, Honduran civil society, and all who knew her.

Berta Caceres and COPINH have been supporting land struggles throughout western Honduras. In the last few weeks, threats and violence towards Berta and the communities she and her organization support had escalated.

In Rio Blanco on February 20, Berta, her organization, and the community of Rio Blanco were threatened as they engaged in a peaceful protest to protect the river and their way of life from the construction of a large hydroelectric dam by an internationally financed Honduran company.

As a result of supporting the Rio Blanco struggle, Berta had received many threats against her life and was granted, like dozens of other endangered Honduran social activists, precautionary measures by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Berta Caceres was an inspiration to people around the world, and her death

is a great loss for all the people of Honduras. The immediate question is what President Hernandez and his government, which has too often ignored or passively condoned attacks against Honduran social activists, will do to support an independent investigation, prosecution, and punishment of those responsible for this despicable crime and, beyond that, what steps will the government take to protect the many others, including members of COPINH, who are in need of protection, and to stand up for the rights of people like Berta who risk their lives peacefully defending the environment and their livelihoods.

The answers to those questions will weigh heavily on the Congress's support for future assistance for that government.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, with the passing of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, our Nation has lost an exceptional jurist and unshakable defender of the U.S. Constitution.

Justice Scalia will be remembered for using his substantial intellect to affect how the American public views the Constitution and the role of the courts in interpreting the law. His thoughtful opinions over nearly 30 years on the Court shaped modern jurisprudence and helped facilitate a larger discussion on the role of the Constitution in contemporary terms and application.

Justice Scalia had an accomplished career as an attorney, law professor, general counsel for the Office of Telecommunications Policy, chairman of the Administrative Conference, Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel for the Department of Justice, and as a judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. It was an honor for me to support his confirmation as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court following his nomination by President Reagan in 1986.

Justice Scalia, who had a great love for the arts, education, and hunting, developed an affinity for the State of Mississippi and made many friends during his visits to my State. Many Mississippians shared Justice Scalia's interest in hunting deer, duck, quail, and turkey, but his most important influence on Mississippi may result from the generous time he invested speaking to young scholars during his visits to university campuses in my State.

We mark Justice Scalia's passing by rightfully acknowledging his many years of public service, his defense of the founding principles of our Nation, and his steadfast adherence to a conservative view of our Constitution. I am proud to have known and supported him.

I extend to his family sincere condolences and the thanks of a grateful Na-

tion for Justice Scalia's distinguished contributions and service to our Nation.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JOHN MATTHEWS

• Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor John Matthews on his recent retirement from Madison Teachers Incorporated, MTI, after serving the local teachers union for an impressive 48 years as executive director. Hired in 1968 as MTI's first executive secretary, a title subsequently changed to executive director, it is believed that John is one of the longest serving full-time heads of a teachers' union in the country.

Formed as the Madison Education Association, MEA, in the 1930s, MTI served as a predominantly professional organization until 1964 when it became certified as the exclusive collective bargaining agent for teachers serving in the Madison Metropolitan School District, MMSD. In rapid succession, the first professional negotiations committee, PNC, was elected in 1965, followed by a name change to Madison Teachers Incorporated, MTI, in 1966. With an expanding membership of approximately 1,125, MTI realized the need for professional staff, hiring John to lead their efforts in June of 1968.

Growing up in Billings, MT, as the son of the State budget director and the grandson of a Montana Supreme Court justice, John began to develop his passion for fighting injustice within his grandfather's chambers, as well as in and around the Montana State Capitol. In 1968, as a high school history and English teacher, John almost immediately found himself involved in negotiations regarding health care coverage for teachers. It was a path that would define both the man and his career in a profound way.

His almost five decades as MTI executive director have been dedicated to protecting MTI's employees and the teachers of Madison's public schools. His strong belief in the power of contracts, especially in a school district where contracts govern schools, has guided his every decision. Under his leadership, MTI has negotiated for the enforcement of strong contracts that uphold and strengthen the rights of teachers. His undeniable dedication to the teachers' union has been demonstrated in his fiery leadership style and tenacity to speak out and protect workers' rights to collectively bargain.

Described by others as engaged, insightful, and ever ready to not only listen to teachers' concerns but act on them, John's leadership exemplifies an unwavering dedication to the rights of public school teachers and public workers. His success in leading MTI is evidenced by the positive actions and out-

comes achieved by organized labor, particularly in a State where the role of unions has recently been challenged.

Over the years, I have been honored to stand in solidarity with John on the issues and am proud to call him my friend. On the occasion of his retirement, I am pleased to recognize John Matthew's longstanding dedication to Madison Teachers Incorporated and his fight to protect the rights and personal livelihood of the Madison teachers he served. He has impacted lives through his constant engagement, personal kindness, and fiery leadership. I wish John and his family all the best in his retirement and happiness for many years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT TIM LINGLE

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Sergeant Tim Lingle of the Roosevelt County Sheriff's office. Sergeant Lingle has recently been named the Montana American Legion Law Enforcement Officer of the Year.

Sergeant Lingle has been living and working in Roosevelt County for 15 years, 9 of those years has been for the county's sheriff's office. He started his Montana law enforcement career with Poplar Police Department in 2000, then moved to the Fort Peck Department of Law and Justice before transferring to Roosevelt County Sheriff's Office.

Sergeant Lingle serves the Roosevelt County Sheriff's Office not only as a sergeant but also as deputy coroner, firearms instructor, and as the Culbertson-Bainville-Froid contract deputy. He has also served the State of Montana as a member of the American Legion and has attended training as a driving instructor and a DARE instructor.

Sergeant Lingle has always gone the extra mile for the county, community, and the sheriff's office. He never fails to show his loyalty and passion to the citizens of Roosevelt County.

I would also like to highlight the recent efforts by Sergeant Lingle and the entire Roosevelt County Sheriff's Office in the search of missing 4-year-old Maci Lilley, who I am happy to report has been found and reunited with her family.

Thank you Sergeant Lingle and all of Roosevelt County Sheriff's Office for their tireless efforts and dedication to law enforcement for the State of Montana.●

TRIBUTE TO PAULA FRANCIS

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Paula Francis on her retirement after bringing the great State of Nevada accurate and reliable news coverage for the last 30 years. Ms. Francis was an important icon in Nevada journalism, bringing local residents nightly news at 5, 6, and 11 p.m.

Her passionate and in-depth coverage of southern Nevada's news will be sorely missed.

Ms. Francis's career began in Madison, WI, immediately after graduating from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 1985, she moved to Las Vegas, beginning her experience in broadcast journalism for southern Nevada at KTNV. In 1988, Ms. Francis joined KLAS's news team, initially starting her extended tenure with the news station as a health reporter. After proving to be an invaluable resource to the news team, she moved into the anchor chair. During her time on air, Ms. Francis placed a special emphasis on health care issues, familiarizing viewers with important health information, in addition to bringing southern Nevada breaking news coverage.

Throughout her tenure, Ms. Francis was recognized as Best TV Anchor in Las Vegas by Las Vegas Review Journal readers more than 15 times and was inducted into the Nevada Broadcasters Association hall of fame and the KLAS TV Hall of Fame. Ms. Francis went above and beyond in her ambitions to bring Nevadans up-to-date and truthful news coverage. The accolades she has received are awarded to only the greatest of Nevada journalists, and without a doubt, she deserves each one.

For the past 30 years, Ms. Francis has been a tremendous contributor to southern Nevada journalism. Her commitment to the local community is without question, creating a great amount of trust between the viewers and the station. She stands as a role model to journalists across Nevada with her unwavering dedication to familiarizing herself with the local issues. The knowledge she gained throughout her tenure is irreplaceable to the newsroom. Ms. Francis's legacy both at KLAS and within Nevada journalism will be felt for years to come.

Outside of her career, Ms. Francis continues to be highly involved in a number of activities for the betterment of the local community. She is a founding member of the Nevada chapter of the International Women's Forum and serves as a member of the board of trustees for the Shade Tree Endowment Fund. She has also received numerous humanitarian awards for her efforts and spearheaded Buddy Check 8, a campaign to increase breast cancer awareness. I extend my deepest gratitude for all of her efforts on behalf of the Silver State.

I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in thanking Ms. Francis for her tireless dedication to bringing southern Nevada excellent news coverage and in congratulating her on her retirement. I wish her well in all of her future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO LEN STEVENS

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Len Stevens on

his retirement after serving as CEO of the Chamber for nearly 14 years. It gives me great pleasure to recognize his years of dedication to creating growth and success for northern Nevada's business community.

Before joining the Chamber, Mr. Stevens served as a basketball coach for 34 years, guiding teams at both Washington State University and the University of Nevada, Reno successfully through numerous seasons. In 2002, he was chosen for the role of CEO at the Chamber, and he served the State of Nevada in this position for over a decade. As CEO, Mr. Stevens led the Chamber through challenging times, including the merger of chambers of commerce in Reno and Sparks. This merger, which was one of the largest and most complex mergers in northern Nevada history, led to creation of the Chamber in 2011. This incredible organization has helped businesses through times of economic downturn to stay on their feet and succeed. Through the incredible work of the Chamber, northern Nevada's business community continues to thrive and maintain a high quality of life for residents. We are fortunate to have had someone like Mr. Stevens leading the way at this important establishment.

Throughout his tenure, Mr. Stevens served as a powerful voice, advocating for businesses across northern Nevada. His hard work brought greater attention to the needs of this community, and I am grateful for everything he has done to support it. Under his leadership, the Chamber saw consistent growth in membership, as well as additional opportunities for business leaders to come together. He also implemented new programs to help residents, including the Young Entrepreneurs Academy, which is a yearlong program that teaches middle school and high school students the mechanics of operating a business. His work for northern Nevada is invaluable.

Mr. Stevens has demonstrated professionalism, commitment to excellence, and dedication to the highest standards during his tenure at the Chamber. I am both humbled and honored by his service and am proud to call him a fellow Nevadan. Today I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Stevens on his retirement from the Chamber and in wishing him well in his future endeavors. I give my deepest appreciation for all that he has done for the Silver State.●

TRIBUTE TO EDITH TUCKER

● Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, last month, one of New Hampshire's most respected veteran journalists retired after two decades of prolific work at the Coos County Democrat, a weekly newspaper based in Lancaster, in my State's North Country. I have had the privilege of knowing Edith and admir-

ing her work since I first ran for Governor in 1996. In particular, I have respected her extraordinary work ethic. She was the only full-time reporter with the Democrat, often filing several stories a day. At times, the front page would be filled with stories carrying her byline.

No story was too big or too small for Edith. She covered Presidential campaigns, select board meetings, festivals, factory openings, and, among her last stories, a characteristically detailed and colorful article on a proposal to renew bobcat hunting in the North Country.

Over the years, Edith became a fixture on the landscape of New Hampshire's first-in-the-Nation primary. Presidential candidates knew that to gain credibility with North Country voters, they needed to successfully navigate a grilling from Edith. She has been a regular public affairs commentator on "The Exchange with Laura Knoy," a popular New Hampshire Public Radio call-in show.

As State Representative Rebecca Brown, a longtime colleague of hers, noted: "Edith embraced small town reporting. She was indefatigable, including putting countless miles on the old Jeep, in which she took to carrying a step ladder in case she needed to get a better camera vantage over a taller crowd."

Edith speaks with unrivaled knowledge and insight about her beat, the North Country. No reporter has better captured the struggle and indomitable spirit of that region. In her early years with the Democrat, her stories documented the pain and upheaval of too many devastating factory closings and job losses. More recently, she has covered heartening stories of new businesses and development projects flowing to the region, creating new jobs and opportunities.

In many retirement tributes, Edith Tucker has been described as a North Country institution and icon, but I suspect Edith would prefer to be recognized simply as a skilled, hard-working beat journalist, always determined to get the story right and keep her community informed. She did exactly that for two decades.

Edith Tucker has made the Granite State a better place, both by what she has accomplished and by who she is. There are many more stories—and chapters—yet to be written in the life of this beloved and accomplished journalist. I join with people across the North Country in thanking Edith for a job superbly done and wishing her many happy years in retirement.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and withdrawals which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:35 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3716. An act to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 11:58 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 1596. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, as the "Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building".

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3716. An act to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4597. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Zoxamide; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9942-18-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4598. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Penoxsulam; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9940-36-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4599. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pendimethalin; Tolerance Actions; Correction" (FRL No. 9942-24-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4600. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fluensulfone; Pesticide Tolerance for Emergency Exemption" (FRL No. 9942-10-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4601. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Alpha-[2,4,6-Tris(1-(phenyl)ethyl)phenyl]-OMEGA-hydroxypoly(oxyethylene)poly(oxypropylene)copolymer; Tolerance Exemption" (FRL No. 9942-48-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4602. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Trifloxystrobin; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9941-92-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4603. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "D-Glucitol, 1-deoxy-1-(methylamino)-, N-C8-10 acyl derivatives; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9942-43-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4604. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Golden Nematode; Removal of Regulated Areas in Orleans, Nassau, and Suffolk Counties, New York" (Docket No. APHS-2015-0040) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4605. A communication of from the Director of the Transparency and Accountability Reporting Division, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards" (RIN0505-AA15) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4606. A communication from the Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General Lloyd J. Austin III, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4607. A communication from the Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense

(Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Mary A. Legere, United States Army, and her advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4608. A communication from the Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of ten (10) officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of major general or brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4609. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4610. A communication from the Program Specialist of the Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Expanded Examination Cycle for Certain Small Insured Depository Institutions and U.S. Branches and Agencies of Foreign Banks" (RIN1557-AE01) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4611. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rulemaking to Affirm Interim Amendments to Dates in Federal Implementation Plans Addressing Interstate Transport of Ozone and Fine Particulate Matter" ((RIN2060-AS40) (FRL No. 9943-36-OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4612. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval of Arizona Air Plan Revisions; Phoenix, Arizona; Second 10-Year Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Plan" (FRL No. 9942-17-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4613. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Disapproval; Georgia; Disapproval of Automatic Rescission Clause" (FRL No. 9943-35-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4614. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Wisconsin; Base Year Emission Inventories for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone Standard" (FRL No. 9943-31-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4615. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Regional Haze Glatfelter BART SIP Revision" (FRL No. 9943-29-Region 5) received in the Office of

the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4616. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Illinois; Base Year Emission Inventories for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone Standard" (FRL No. 9943-33-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4617. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Plan Requirements for Sewage Sludge Incineration Units Constructed on or Before October 14, 2010" ((RIN2060-AR77) (FRL No. 9940-50-OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4618. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval of Iowa's Air Quality Implementation Plans; Iowa Plan for the 2008 Lead Standard" (FRL No. 9942-79-Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4619. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; Prevention of Significant Deterioration; Fine Particulate Matter" (FRL No. 9942-90-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4620. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Utah; Revisions to the Utah Division of Administrative Rules, R307-300 Series; Area Source Rules for Attainment of Fine Particulate Matter Standards" (FRL No. 9935-54-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4621. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Quality: Revision to the Regulatory Definition of Volatile Organic Compounds—Requirements for t-Butyl Acetate" ((RIN2060-AR65) (FRL No. 9942-80-OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4622. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report of the Attorney General to the Congress of the United States on the Administration of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended, for the six months ending June 30, 2015"; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4623. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to

law, a report consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (P.L. 107-243) and the Authorization for the Use of Force Against Iraq Resolution of 1991 (P.L. 102-1) for the August 15, 2015–October 13, 2015 reporting period; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4624. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers who were employed at Battelle Laboratories at the King Avenue site in Columbus, Ohio, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4625. A communication from the Acting Director, Pay and Leave, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Prevailing Rate Systems; Definition of Hancock County, Mississippi, to a Nonappropriated Fund Federal Wage System Wage Area" (RIN3206-AN20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4626. A communication from the Report to the Nation Delegation Director, Boy Scouts of America, transmitting, pursuant to law, the organization's 2015 annual report; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4627. A communication from the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, transmitting proposed legislation entitled "Beijing Treaty Implementation Act of 2016"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4628. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Uninformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) Quarterly Report to Congress; First Quarter of Fiscal Year 2016"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-4629. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Automotive Fuel Ratings, Certification and Posting" (RIN3084-AB39) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-132. A petition from a citizen of the State of Minnesota relative to the election of a Senator; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. THUNE for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Thomas F. Scott Darling, III, of Massachusetts, to be Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

*Daniel B. Maffei, of New York, to be a Federal Maritime Commissioner for a term expiring June 30, 2017.

*Coast Guard nomination of Francis S. Pelkowski, to be Rear Admiral.

*Coast Guard nomination of Rear Adm. Fred M. Midgette, to be Vice Admiral.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND:

S. 2622. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of Fort Ontario in the State of New York; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. UDALL):

S. 2623. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to deny the deduction for advertising and promotional expenses for prescription drugs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CASEY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 2624. A bill to establish the "Biomedical Innovation Fund", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TOOMEY:

S. 2625. A bill to protect our servicemembers' children from convicted pedophiles and other felons infiltrating the classroom; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 2626. A bill to authorize the operation of unmanned aircraft systems by institutions of higher education for educational and research purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. REID):

S. 2627. A bill to adjust the boundary of the Mojave National Preserve; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. COONS:

S. 2628. A bill to authorize the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Foundation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. COONS, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2629. A bill to establish in the United States Agency for International Development an entity to be known as the United States Global Development Lab, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2630. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to require certain disclosures be included on employee pay stubs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 2631. A bill to amend the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992 to define environmental intervention blood lead level, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CASSIDY:

S. 2632. A bill to promote freedom, human rights, and the rule of law as part of United States-Vietnam relations and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BENNET, Mr. UDALL, Mr. BROWN, and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 2633. A bill to improve the ability of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide health care to veterans through non-Department health care providers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. FRANKEN:

S. 2634. A bill to establish an interagency One Health Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 2635. A bill to enhance the ability of the United States to carry out icebreaking in the polar regions and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. TESTER:

S. 2636. A bill to amend the Act of June 18, 1934, to require mandatory approval of applications for land to be taken into trust if the land is wholly within a reservation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2637. A bill to amend the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to clarify the treatment of authentic Alaska Native articles of handicraft containing nonedible migratory bird parts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SULLIVAN:

S. 2638. A bill to provide for the issuance of a Battle of Midway 75th Anniversary Semipostal Stamp; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 2639. A bill to direct the Director of the Government Publishing Office to provide members of the public with Internet access to Congressional Research Service reports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 2640. A bill to amend the market name of genetically altered salmon in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 2641. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act, in relation to requiring adrenoleukodystrophy screening of newborns; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2642. A bill to require air carriers to provide training to certain employees and contractors to combat human trafficking; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. Res. 385. A resolution recognizing the historic achievement of astronaut Scott Joseph Kelly of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as the first person of the United States to complete a continuous 1-year mission in space; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. COONS, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. NELSON, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. WARREN, Mr. KING, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. CARPER):

S. Res. 386. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States should establish a goal of more than 50 percent clean and carbon-free electricity by 2030 to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, grow the economy, increase shared prosperity, improve public health, and preserve the national security of the United States; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. Res. 387. A resolution congratulating the Historic Columbia River Highway on its 100th year; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. KIRK, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MURPHY, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. Res. 388. A resolution supporting the goals of International Women's Day; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. Res. 389. A resolution designating March 6, 2016, as the first annual "World Lymphedema Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. INHOFE):

S. Res. 390. A resolution designating March 3, 2016 as "World Wildlife Day"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 578

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 578, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from North Caro-

lina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 1506

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1506, a bill to provide for youth jobs, and for other purposes.

S. 1661

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1661, a bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to preserve consumer and employer access to licensed independent insurance producers.

S. 1775

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1775, a bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to accept additional documentation when considering the application for veterans status of an individual who performed service as a coastwise merchant seaman during World War II, and for other purposes.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1989

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1989, a bill to improve access to primary care services.

S. 2185

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2185, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

S. 2235

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2235, a bill to repeal debt collection amendments made by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015.

S. 2373

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2373, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to

provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 2426

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2426, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

S. 2536

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2536, a bill to require the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue a notice of proposed rulemaking regarding the inclusion in aircraft medical kits of medications and equipment to meet the emergency medical needs of children.

S. 2544

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2544, a bill to increase public safety by punishing and deterring firearms trafficking.

S. 2551

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2551, a bill to help prevent acts of genocide and mass atrocities, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States civilian capacities to prevent and mitigate such crises.

S. 2600

At the request of Mr. LEE, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2600, a bill to amend the Military Selective Service Act to provide that any modification to the duty to register for purposes of the Military Selective Service Act may be made only through an Act of Congress, and for other purposes.

S. 2611

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2611, a bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to replace the Federal Election Commission with the Federal Election Administration, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 4

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 4, a concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act.

S. RES. 383

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) and the Senator from

Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 383, a resolution recognizing the importance of the United States-Israel economic relationship and encouraging new areas of cooperation.

AMENDMENT NO. 3402

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3402 intended to be proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 2639. A bill to direct the Director of the Government Publishing Office to provide members of the public with Internet access to Congressional Research Service reports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Senator MCCAIN and I are introducing bipartisan, bicameral legislation to make reports published by the Congressional Research Service, CRS, available to the American public online. This legislation will open up an invaluable, taxpayer-funded resource for use by schools, universities, researchers, libraries, and individuals across the country.

The CRS was founded more than 100 years ago to provide comprehensive, non-partisan information on vital issues affecting national policy. In 2015, CRS issued over 1200 new reports and updated almost 2500 existing products, on matters ranging from the structure of government agencies, to summaries of legislative proposals, foreign policy primers, and everything in between. These reports are posted on an internal website for use by Members of Congress and their staff, but they are not distributed directly to the public. In an informal arrangement that is all too familiar in Washington, this unnecessary restriction has created a cottage industry of services that make copies of the reports available to lobbyists for a subscription fee. Schools and the general public cannot access them, nor do readers know whether the scattering of CRS reports they can find online through third-party websites are authentic, complete, or up-to-date. That's not very 'public' and does nothing for the average citizen in Vermont or the rest of the country who does not have easy access to Washington.

Our bipartisan, bicameral legislation stops this unequal access by providing for CRS Reports to be published online in a comprehensive free, and searchable database on the website of the

Government Publishing Office, GPO. This straightforward but important step has long been called for by libraries, educators, and public interest groups across the country. It is also supported by retired and former CRS employees, who note that "CRS reports are widely available on Capitol Hill to staff and lobbyists alike, are released with no expectation of confidentiality, and could be of immense value to the general public."

The century-old CRS was founded on the principles of nonpartisanship and respect for accurate, thoughtful information to inform the policy conversations of the day. It is a testament to the best ideals of Congress, and all Americans should benefit from the work and resources it provides. When I think of my grandchildren working on research reports for school, I want them to have access to this resource. I also want the American people to know what information their Members of Congress are receiving on leading policy issues of the day.

The legislation includes several important measures—responsive to concerns from CRS—to ensure that only appropriate materials are shared online. It makes clear that the GPO website will include only final, non-confidential CRS Reports and similar written, non-confidential CRS products that are intended for general Congressional distribution. It firmly excludes from publication any memoranda or other custom materials that CRS provides in response to a research request from an individual Member of Congress. The bill allows for identifying information for individual CRS researchers to be redacted so that CRS, not individual staffers, is the named author of a work. It also requires the inclusion of a written notification in all CRS Reports to explain that the materials were prepared by CRS for use by Congress, and should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role.

This is an exciting time for the Library of Congress and its divisions such as CRS. For the first time since 1987, the President has nominated, and I hope the Senate Rules Committee will soon consider, a new Librarian of Congress to lead one of the largest libraries in the world. As we move further into the digital age, now is an important moment to consider the promise of this great American institution and the resources it provides.

I thank Senator MCCAIN for his long partnership with me on this effort, as well as Representatives LANCE and QUIGLEY who today are introducing bipartisan companion legislation in the House. I hope members will join us in supporting this straightforward, but important, step to make CRS reports

available to the public so that all Americans may enjoy this invaluable resource equally.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that letters of support be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

OCTOBER 22, 2015.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BLUNT, CHAIRMAN CAPITO, CHAIRMAN MILLER, CHAIRMAN GRAVES, RANKING MEMBER SCHUMER, RANKING MEMBER SCHATZ, RANKING MEMBER BRADY, RANKING MEMBER WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, AND VICE CHAIRMAN HARPER: We are former employees of the Congressional Research Service (CRS), with more than a collective five hundred years with the agency. We write in strong support of timely, comprehensive free public access to CRS reports. In doing so, we distinguish between CRS reports, which are non-confidential, and other CRS products, such as memoranda, which are confidential.

CRS plays a vital role in our legislative process by informing lawmakers and staff about important policy issues. To that end, nothing should impair CRS's ability to provide confidential support to members of Congress, such as through briefings and confidential memoranda. Nor should Congress take any steps to weaken the Constitutionally-protected status of CRS's work product. In contrast, CRS reports are widely available on Capitol Hill to staff and lobbyists alike, are released with no expectation of confidentiality, and could be of immense value to the general public.

Longstanding congressional policy allows Members and committees to distribute CRS products to the public, which they do in a variety of ways. In addition, CRS provides reports upon request to the judicial branch, to journalists, and to the executive branch, which often publishes them on agency websites. Insiders with relationships to congressional staff can easily obtain the reports, and well-resourced groups pay for access from third-party subscription services. Members of the public, however, can freely access only a subset of CRS reports, usually via third parties.

It is difficult for the public to know the scope of CRS products they could obtain from Congress. A Google search returned over 27,000 products including 4,260 hosted on .gov domains, but there is no way to know if those documents are up to date, whether the search is comprehensive, or when the documents might disappear from view.

We believe Congress should provide a central online source for timely public access to CRS reports. That would place all members of the public on an equal footing to one another with respect to access. It would resolve concerns around public and congressional use of the most up-to-date version. Additionally, it would ensure the public can verify it is using an authentic version. And it would diminish requests to analysts to provide a copy of the most recent report. Other legislative support agencies, i.e., the Congressional Budget Office and the Government Accountability Office, publish non-confidential reports on their websites as a matter of course. Doing so does not appear to harm their ability to perform their mission for Congress.

We thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts on implementing full public access to non-confidential CRS reports. If you wish to discuss this further, please contact Daniel Schuman, Demand Progress policy director, at daniel@demandprogress.org, or

Kevin Kosar, R Street Institute senior fellow and governance director, at kkosar@rstreet.org. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

With best regards,

Henry Cohen, George Costello, Heather Durkin, Gregg Esenwein, Louis Fisher, Peggy Garvin, Bernie Gelb, Jeffrey C. Griffith, Pamela Hairston, Glennon J. Harrison, Kevin Holland, Thomas Hungerford, W. Jackson, Kevin Kosar, Jon Medalia, Elizabeth Palmer, Harold Relyea, Morton Rosenberg, Daniel Schuman, Christine Scott, Sherry Shapiro, Nye Stevens.

NOVEMBER 12, 2015.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BLUNT, CHAIRMAN MILLER, RANKING MEMBER SCHUMER, RANKING MEMBER BRADY, AND VICE CHAIRMAN HARPER: We write in support of expanded public access to Congressional Research Service (CRS) reports. Longstanding congressional policy allows Members and committees to use their websites to disseminate CRS products to the public, although CRS itself may not engage in direct public dissemination. This results in a disheartening inequity. Insiders with Capitol Hill connections can easily obtain CRS reports from any of the 20,000 congressional staffers and well-resourced groups can pay for access from subscription services. However, members of the public can access only a small subset of CRS reports that are posted on an assortment of not-for-profit websites on an intermittent basis. Now is the time for a systematic solution that provides timely, comprehensive free public access to and preservation of non-confidential reports while protecting confidential communications between CRS and Members and committees of Congress.

CRS reports—not to be confused with confidential CRS memoranda and other products—play a critical role in our legislative process by informing lawmakers and staff about the important issues of the day. The public should have the same access to information. In 2014 CRS completed over 1,000 new reports and updated over 2,500 existing products. (CRS also produced nearly 3,000 confidential memoranda.)

Our interest in free public access to non-confidential CRS reports illustrates the esteem in which the agency is held. CRS reports are regularly requested by members of the public and are frequently cited by the courts and the media. For example, over the last decade CRS reports were cited in 190 federal court opinions, including 64 at the appellate level. Over the same time period, CRS reports were cited 67 times in the Washington Post and 45 times the New York Times. CRS reports often are published in the record of legislative proceedings.

Taxpayers provide more than \$100 million annually in support of CRS, and yet members of the public often must look to private companies for consistent access. Some citizens are priced out of these services, resulting in inequitable access to information about government activity that is produced at public expense.

In fact, while CRS generates a list of all the reports it has issued over the previous year, it silently redacts that information from the public-facing version of its annual report, making it difficult for the public to even know the scope of CRS products they could obtain from Congress. A Google search returned over 27,000 reports including 4,260 hosted on .gov domains, but there is no way to know if those documents are up to date, what might be missing, or when they might disappear from view.

Comprehensive free public access to non-confidential CRS reports would place the reports in line with publications by other legislative support agencies in the United States and around the globe. The Government Accountability Office, the Congressional Budget Office, the Law Library of Congress, and 85% of G-20 countries whose parliaments have subject matter experts routinely make reports available to the public.

We hasten to emphasize that we are not calling for public access to CRS products that should be kept confidential or are distributed only to a small network on Capitol Hill. Memoranda produced at the request of a Member or committee and provided to an office in direct response to a request should remain confidential unless the office itself chooses to release the report. By comparison, we believe no such protection should attach to reports typically published on CRS' internal website or otherwise widely disseminated.

We value the work of CRS and in no way wish to impede its ability to serve Congress. CRS reports already undergo multiple levels of administrative review to ensure they are accurate, non-partisan, balanced, and well-written. Authors of every CRS product are aware of the likelihood that reports will become publicly available.

We do not make a specific recommendation on who should comprehensively publish non-confidential CRS reports online, although the approaches outlined in H. Res. 34 (114th Congress) and S. Res. 118 (111th Congress) are reasonable. The Clerk of the House, the Secretary of the Senate, the Government Publishing Office (GPO), the Library of Congress and libraries in the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) are all reasonable places for the public to gain access to these documents. Even bulk publication on GPO's website would be a major step forward.

We ask only that all non-confidential reports be published as they are released, updated, or withdrawn; that they be published in their full, final form; that they are freely downloadable individually and in bulk; and that they be accompanied by an index or metadata that includes the report ID, the date issued/updated, the report name, a hyperlink to the report, the division that produced the report, and possibly the report author(s) as well.

In the attached appendix we briefly address concerns often raised by CRS regarding public access to reports. In doing so, we note that many committees, including the Senate Rules Committee, have published CRS reports on their websites. Also, that many CRS reports are available through third parties. We urge you to give great weight to the significant public benefit that would result from comprehensive, timely access.

We welcome the opportunity to further discuss implementing systematic public access to non-confidential CRS reports. Please contact Daniel Schuman, Demand Progress policy director, at daniel@demandprogress.org, or Kevin Kosar, R Street Institute senior fellow and governance director, at kkosar@rstreet.org. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter.

With best regards,

American Association of Law Libraries, American Civil Liberties Union, American Library Association, Americans for Tax Reform, Association of Research Libraries, Bill of Rights Defense Committee, California State University San Marcos, Cause of Action, Center for Democracy and Technology, Center for Effective Government, Center for Media and Democracy, Center for Responsive

Politics, Citizens Against Government Waste, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, Congressional Data Coalition, Data Transparency Coalition, Defending Dissent Foundation, Demand Progress, Engine, Essential Information.

Federation of American Scientists, Freedom Works, Free Government Information, Government Accountability Project, Middlebury College Library, Minnesota Coalition On Government Information, National Coalition for History, National Security Archive, National Security Counselors, National Taxpayers Union, NewFields Research Library, Niskanen Center, OpenTheGovernment.org, Project on Government Oversight, Public Citizen, R Street Institute, Sunlight Foundation, Taxpayers for Common Sense, Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC) at Syracuse University, Union of Concerned Scientists, Western Illinois University Libraries.

Amy Spare, Andrew Lopez, Connecticut College, Barbara Jones, Ben Amata, California State University, Sacramento, Ben Doherty, Bernadine Abbott Hoduski, Professional Staff Member, Joint Committee on Printing, retired, Bert Chapman, Purdue University Libraries, Bill Olbrich, Bradley Seybold, Brandon Burnette, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Brenda Ellis, BWS Johnson, Carol Bredemeyer, Carrie Russell, Christine Alvey, Maryland State Archives, Claire King, Kansas Supreme Court Law Library, Crystal Davidson, King College, Daniel Barkley, University of New Mexico, Danya Leebaw, Dave Morrison, Marriott Library, University of Utah.

Deborah Melnick, LLAGNY, Dianne Oster, Donna Burton, Union College, Dorothy Ormes, Edward Herman, Eileen Heaser, CSUS Library, Ellen Simmons, Eric Mill, Francis Buckley, former Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Gail Fithian, Gail Whittemore, Genevieve Nicholson, Helen Burke, Jacques Howell, Jane Larrington, Janetta Paschal, Jeanette Sparks, Jennifer Pesetsky, JoAnne Deeken, Joy T. Pile, Middlebury College.

Judith Downie, Julia Hughes, Karen Heil, Government Information Librarian, Middletown Thrall Library, Karen Russ, Kathleen L. Amen, Kathy Carmichael, KC Halstead, Kelly McGlynn, Kristine R. Kreilick, LaRita Schandorff, Larry Romans, Laura G. Harper, Linda Johnson, University of New Hampshire, Lois Fundis, Mary H. Weir Public Library, Lori Gwinett, Lori L. Smith, Louise Buckley, University of New Hampshire Library, Louise England, Marna Morland, Mamita Simpson, University of Virginia Law Library.

Mary Anne Curlee, Mary Jo Lazun, Megan Brooks, Melissa Pinch, Michael J. Malbin, Professor of Political Science, SUNY Albany, Michele Hayslett, UNC at Chapel Hill, Mike Lynch, Mohamed Haian Abdirahman, Norman Ornstein, P. Duerr, Patricia J. Powell, Government Documents Librarian, Roanoke College Library, Professor Patricia B.M. Brennan, Rachel H. Carpenter, Reference Government Documents Librarian, Rhode Island College, Rebecca Richardson, Robert Sippel, Florida Institute of Technology, Rosemary Campagna, Sandy Schiefer, University of Missouri—Columbia, Schuyler M. Cook, Scott Casper, Shari Last-er.

Stephanie Braunstein, Stephen Hayes, Hesburgh Libraries, University of Notre Dame, Susan Bucks, Monmouth University, Susan Udry, Tammy Savinski, Taylor Fitchett, Thomas E. Hickman, Thomas E. Mann, Victoria Mitchell, Wendy Swanberg, Wilhelmina Randtke.

FEBRUARY 29, 2016.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MILLER, CHAIRMAN BLUNT, AND VICE CHAIRMAN HARPER: As a coalition of 12 conservative, free market organizations we urge you to expand public access to Congressional Research Service (CRS) reports.

Each year CRS receives \$100 million in taxpayer funding to produce and update thousands of nonpartisan reports describing government agencies, explaining public policy, and tallying government spending. They are an invaluable resource to Congress in its efforts to oversee our massive federal government and hold it accountable.

Members of Congress and their staff have easy access to CRS reports. So too do lobbyists and other Beltway insiders, who often pay for the reports through expensive subscription services. But taxpayers cannot easily get copies of CRS reports.

This policy is unfair and outdated. It also stands in stark contrast to other legislative branch agencies: both the Congressional Budget Office and the Government Accountability Office release their reports to the public.

Making CRS reports easily accessible by the public will increase transparency in government, and allow everyday citizens access to important information that will better educate them on the issues before Congress. The bottom line is taxpayers pay for these reports. It is only fair that they have easy access to them.

Sincerely,

Phil Kerpen, President, American Commitment; Grover Norquist, President, Americans for Tax Reform; Norm Singleton, President, Campaign for Liberty; Neil Bradley, Chief Strategy Officer, Conservative Reform Network; Tom Schatz, President, Council for Citizens Against Government Waste; Adam Brandon, President and CEO, Freedom Works; Michael Needham, CEO, Heritage Action for America; Michael Ostrolenk, Co-Founder, Liberty Coalition; Brandon Arnold, Executive Director, National Taxpayers Union; Jerry Taylor, President, Niskanen Center; Kevin Kosar, Senior Fellow and Director of the Governance Project, R Street Institute; David Williams, President, Taxpayers Protection Alliance.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 385—RECOGNIZING THE HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT OF ASTRONAUT SCOTT JOSEPH KELLY OF THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION AS THE FIRST PERSON OF THE UNITED STATES TO COMPLETE A CONTINUOUS 1-YEAR MISSION IN SPACE

Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. RES. 385

Whereas Scott Joseph Kelly was born on February 21, 1964, to Richard and Patricia Kelly in Orange, New Jersey, and raised in West Orange, New Jersey;

Whereas Scott Kelly received—

(1) a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from the State University of New York Maritime College in 1987; and

(2) a Master of Science degree in aviation systems from the University of Tennessee in 1996;

Whereas in July 1989, Scott Kelly was designated as a naval aviator in Beeville, Texas, and subsequently made overseas deployments aboard the *USS Dwight D. Eisenhower* to—

- (1) the North Atlantic Ocean;
- (2) the Mediterranean Sea;
- (3) the Red Sea; and
- (4) the Persian Gulf;

Whereas since completing training at the United States Naval Test Pilot School in June 1994, Scott Kelly has—

- (1) logged over 8,000 hours in not fewer than 40 different aircraft and spacecraft; and
- (2) made not fewer than 250 carrier landings;

Whereas in 2012, Scott Kelly retired from the Navy as a captain;

Whereas since being selected by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (referred to in this preamble as “NASA”) for astronaut training in 1996, Scott Kelly has served—

- (1) in 1999, as a pilot of the Space Shuttle Discovery on STS-103 to service the Hubble Space Telescope;
- (2) in 2007, as Mission Commander of the Space Shuttle Endeavor on STS-118 to the International Space Station (referred to in this preamble as the “ISS”);
- (3) as a flight engineer for ISS Expedition 25;

- (4) as the Commander of ISS Expedition 26; and
- (5) as a 1-year crew member of ISS Expeditions 43, 44, 45, and 46, including 6 months of service as Commander;

Whereas on March 27, 2015, Scott Kelly launched into space for a 340-day mission aboard the ISS;

Whereas during his 340-day voyage aboard the ISS, Scott Kelly—

- (1) remained in continuous orbit around the Earth;
- (2) achieved the longest continuous amount of time that a United States astronaut has spent living in space;
- (3) in addition to his regular duties of ISS maintenance, participated in hundreds of scientific studies; and
- (4) conducted 3 space walks;

Whereas Scott Kelly participated in a 1-year twins study in space while his identical twin brother, former NASA astronaut Mark Kelly, acted as a human control specimen on Earth, providing an understanding of the physical, behavioral, microbiological, and molecular reaction of the human body to an extended period of time in space, which could—

- (1) be pivotal for the United States goal for humans to explore Mars; and
- (2) contribute to unforeseen scientific innovations that benefit all of humanity;

Whereas the 340-day space mission of Scott Kelly—

- (1) generated new insight into how the human body adjusts to weightlessness, isolation, radiation, and the stress of long-duration space flight; and
- (2) will help support astronaut physical and mental well-being during longer space exploration missions in the future;

Whereas Scott Kelly completed the 340-day mission with Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko, embodying peaceful international cooperation in outer space;

Whereas on March 1, 2016, Scott Kelly touched down on Earth, ending his 340-day space voyage; and

Whereas, the 1-year mission of Scott Kelly marks a significant step in reaching the

goals of NASA of future missions to Mars, elsewhere in the solar system, and beyond: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates National Aeronautics and Space Administration astronaut Scott Kelly for—

(A) the historic achievement in completing a 1-year mission in space; and

(B) a successful return to Earth, the United States, and his family;

(2) recognizes that—

(A) the 1-year mission of Scott Kelly contributed to research on the effects of long-duration space flight on the human body and mind; and

(B) continuing studies of human health are critical to future human exploration of space; and

(3) applauds the contributions of the 1-year journey in space of Scott Kelly to the scientific progress of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 386—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD ESTABLISH A GOAL OF MORE THAN 50 PERCENT CLEAN AND CARBON-FREE ELECTRICITY BY 2030 TO AVOID THE WORST IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, GROW THE ECONOMY, INCREASE SHARED PROSPERITY, IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH, AND PRESERVE THE NATIONAL SECURITY OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. COONS, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. NELSON, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. WARREN, Mr. KING, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. CARPER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:

S. RES. 386

Whereas failing to act on climate change will have a devastating impact on the United States economy, costing billions of dollars in lost gross domestic product;

Whereas extreme weather, intensified by climate change, has already cost taxpayers billions of dollars each year in recovery efforts and the amount will continue to grow if climate change is not addressed;

Whereas decreased economic growth and increased costs of infrastructure repairs and other recovery efforts due to climate change will significantly increase the budget deficit and undermine the fiscal stability of the United States;

Whereas climate change will have devastating public health implications, including—

(1) increased rates of asthma and other respiratory diseases, especially in vulnerable populations, including children and low income communities;

(2) the spread of infectious diseases;

(3) risks to food and water supplies; and

(4) an increased number of premature deaths;

Whereas inaction on climate change will disproportionately impact communities of color and exacerbate economic inequalities;

Whereas the Secretary of Defense has identified climate change as a threat multiplier that will increase global instability and conflict;

Whereas the transition to a clean energy economy is feasible with existing technology; and

Whereas the transition to clean energy will—

(1) create millions of jobs;

(2) increase—

(A) the gross domestic product of the United States; and

(B) household income;

(3) save—

(A) billions of dollars in avoidable health costs; and

(B) lives and improve public health;

(4) lower energy bills for businesses and consumers;

(5) help the United States achieve the international emissions reduction goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 26 to 28 percent of 2005 levels by 2025; and

(6) unlock billions of dollars in private investment: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the United States should—

(1) establish a national goal of more than 50 percent clean and carbon-free electricity by 2030; and

(2) enact legislation to accelerate the transition to clean energy to meet that goal.

SENATE RESOLUTION 387—CONGRATULATING THE HISTORIC COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY ON ITS 100TH YEAR

Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works:

S. RES. 387

Whereas June 7, 2016 marks the 100th anniversary of the Historic Columbia River Highway, a 75-mile-long scenic highway designed by Samuel C. Lancaster that runs through the Columbia River Gorge between Troutdale and The Dalles, Oregon;

Whereas the Historic Columbia River Highway, the first scenic highway in the United States and the first modern highway in the Pacific Northwest, is a National Historic Landmark;

Whereas Samuel C. Lancaster wrote that, when engineering the Historic Columbia River Highway, Lancaster aimed “to find . . . the points where the most beautiful things along the line might be seen to the best advantage, and if possible to locate the road in such a way as to reach them”;

Whereas the Historic Columbia River Highway is an engineering masterpiece that successfully used innovative engineering techniques to complement the magnificent natural landscape of the Columbia River Gorge;

Whereas the Historic Columbia River Highway showcases all aspects of the rich and diverse natural landscape of Oregon, including Multnomah Falls, the fourth-largest waterfall in the United States;

Whereas the construction of a water-level route through the Columbia River Gorge, now Interstate 84, destroyed many sections of the Historic Columbia River Highway;

Whereas, in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act of 1986 (Public Law

99-663; 100 Stat. 4274), Congress directed the Oregon Department of Transportation to prepare a program to preserve and restore the Historic Columbia River Highway for public use as a historic road;

Whereas the State of Oregon is working to connect intact and usable highway segments with recreation trails, where feasible, to create a continuous historic road route through the Columbia River Gorge that links local, State, and Federal recreation facilities; and

Whereas the continued preservation and restoration of the Historic Columbia River Highway will provide greater access to the Columbia River Gorge for recreation and tourism, which will help to boost the economies of the region: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the Historic Columbia River Highway on its 100th year;

(2) recognizes the cultural, economic, and environmental importance of the Historic Columbia River Highway;

(3) expresses support for the continued success of the restoration of the Historic Columbia River Highway; and

(4) requests that the Secretary of the Senate prepare an official copy of this resolution for presentation to Senator Wyden, Senator Merkley, and Kevin Gorman of Friends of the Columbia Gorge.

SENATE RESOLUTION 388—SUPPORTING THE GOALS OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. KIRK, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MURPHY, and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 388

Whereas, in March 2016, there are more than 3,640,000,000 women in the world;

Whereas women around the world—

(1) have fundamental rights;

(2) participate in the political, social, and economic lives of their communities;

(3) play a critical role in providing and caring for their families;

(4) contribute substantially to economic growth and the prevention and resolution of conflict; and

(5) as farmers and caregivers, play an important role in the advancement of food security for their communities;

Whereas the advancement of women around the world is a foreign policy priority for the United States;

Whereas, on July 28, 2015, in Mandela Hall at the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the President told individuals in Africa—

(1) “if you want your country to grow and succeed, you have to empower your women. And if you want to empower more women, America will be your partner”; and

(2) “girls cannot go to school and grow up not knowing how to read or write—that denies the world future women engineers, future women doctors, future women business owners, future women presidents—that sets us all back”;

Whereas 2015 marked the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration at the Fourth World Conference on Women, in September 1995, which reaffirmed—

(1) the commitment of the international community to the full implementation of the rights of women and girls as an inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of all human rights; and

(2) that local, regional, national, and global peace is attainable and inextricably linked to the advancement of women, who are a fundamental force for leadership, conflict resolution, and the promotion of lasting peace at all levels;

Whereas 2016 will mark the 5-year anniversary of the establishment of the first United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, which includes a comprehensive set of commitments by the United States to advance the meaningful participation of women in decisionmaking relating to matters of war or peace;

Whereas the first United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security states that, "Deadly conflicts can be more effectively avoided, and peace can be best forged and sustained, when women become equal partners in all aspects of peace-building and conflict prevention, when their lives are protected, their experiences considered, and their voices heard.";

Whereas there are 58 national action plans around the world, and there are 15 national action plans known to be in development;

Whereas at the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism in February 2015, leaders from more than 60 countries, multilateral bodies, civil society, and private sector organizations agreed to a comprehensive action agenda against violent extremism that—

(1) highlights the importance of the inclusion of women in countering the threat of violent extremism; and

(2) notes that "women are partners in prevention and response, as well as agents of change";

Whereas women remain underrepresented in conflict prevention and conflict resolution efforts, despite the proven success of women in conflict-affected regions in—

(1) moderating violent extremism;

(2) countering terrorism;

(3) resolving disputes through nonviolent mediation and negotiation; and

(4) stabilizing societies by improving access to peace and security—

(A) services;

(B) institutions; and

(C) venues for decisionmaking;

Whereas peace negotiations are more likely to end in a peace agreement when women's groups play an influential role in the negotiation process;

Whereas studies show that a peace agreement is 35 percent more likely to last not less than 15 years if women participate in the development of the peace agreement;

Whereas according to the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the Department of State, the full and meaningful participation of women in security forces vastly enhances the effectiveness of the security forces;

Whereas, on August 30, 2015, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom highlighted, "our goal must be to build societies in which sexual violence is treated—legally and by every institution of authority—as the serious and wholly intolerable crime that it is. We have seen global campaigns and calls to action draw attention to this issue and mobilize governments and organizations to act. But transformation requires the active participation of men and women everywhere. We must settle for noth-

ing less than a united world saying no to sexual violence and yes to justice, fairness and peace.";

Whereas, in 2014—

(1) 700,000,000 women or girls had been married before the age of 18; and

(2) 250,000,000 women or girls had been married before the age of 15;

Whereas, on October 11, 2013, the President strongly condemned the practice of child marriage;

Whereas approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are victims of physical violence;

Whereas it is estimated that 1 in 3 women around the world has experienced some form of physical or sexual violence;

Whereas according to the 2012 report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime entitled the "Global Report on Trafficking in Persons"—

(1) adult women account for between 55 and 60 percent of all known trafficking victims worldwide; and

(2) adult women and girls account for approximately 75 percent of all known trafficking victims worldwide;

Whereas according to the United Nations, women are subjected to physical or sexual violence, including rape, other forms of sexual violence, and human trafficking, as a weapon of war;

Whereas 603,000,000 women live in countries in which domestic violence is not criminalized;

Whereas, on August 10, 2012, the President announced the United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally, the first interagency strategy to address gender-based violence around the world;

Whereas, in December 2015, the Department of State released a report on the implementation of the United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally that states, "Addressing GBV is intimately tied to a range of global efforts that address gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment, whether in peacetime or in the midst of conflict. This includes addressing GBV as part of efforts to raise the status of adolescent girls and through women's economic empowerment activities.";

Whereas the ability of women and girls to realize their full potential is critical to the ability of a country to achieve—

(1) strong and lasting economic growth;

(2) political and social stability;

Whereas according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, $\frac{2}{3}$ of the 775,000,000 illiterate individuals in the world are female;

Whereas 150,000,000 children currently enrolled in school will drop out before completing primary school, not less than 100,000,000 of whom are girls;

Whereas according to the United States Agency for International Development, in comparison with uneducated women, educated women are—

(1) less likely to marry as children; and

(2) more likely to have healthier families;

Whereas a goal of the United Nations Millennium Project, to eliminate gender disparity in primary education, was achieved in most countries not later than 2015, but more work remains;

Whereas gender equality is 1 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on September 25, 2015;

Whereas according to the United Nations, women have access to fewer income earning

opportunities and are more likely to manage the household or engage in agricultural work than men, making women more vulnerable to economic insecurity caused by—

(1) natural disasters;

(2) long term changes in weather patterns; or

(3) environmental degradation;

Whereas according to the World Bank Group, women own or partially own more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of small- and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries, and 40 percent of the global workforce is female, but female entrepreneurs and employers have disproportionately less access to capital and other financial services than men;

Whereas in the United States, women account for 45 percent of the overall labor force of companies included in the Standard & Poor's 500 Index, and 37 percent of the first or mid-level officials and managers in those companies are women, but—

(1) only 25 percent of the executive and senior level officials and managers in those companies are women;

(2) women only hold 19 percent of the seats on the boards of those companies; and

(3) only 4.6 percent of the Chief Executive Officers of those companies are women;

Whereas globally women earn an average of 24 percent less than men;

Whereas despite the achievements of individual female leaders—

(1) women around the world remain vastly underrepresented in—

(A) high-level positions; and

(B) national and local legislatures and governments; and

(2) according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women account for only 22 percent of national parliamentarians and 17.7 percent of government ministers;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization, during the period beginning in 1990 and ending in 2015, global maternal mortality decreased by approximately 44 percent, but approximately 830 women die from preventable causes relating to pregnancy or childbirth each day, and 99 percent of all maternal deaths occur in developing countries;

Whereas a target of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on September 25, 2015, is to reduce global maternal mortality to less than 70 deaths for every 100,000 live births not later than 2030;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization—

(1) suicide is the leading cause of death for girls between the ages of 15 and 19; and

(2) complications from pregnancy or childbirth is the second-leading cause of death for those girls;

Whereas the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reports that approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ of—

(1) refugees and internally displaced or stateless individuals are women; and

(2) the 59,500,000 displaced individuals in the world are women;

Whereas it is imperative—

(1) to alleviate violence and discrimination against women; and

(2) to afford women every opportunity to be full and productive members of their communities;

Whereas, on October 10, 2014, Malala Yousafzai became the youngest ever Nobel Peace Prize laureate for her work promoting the access of girls to education; and

Whereas March 8, 2016, is recognized as International Women's Day, a global day—

(1) to celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of women in the past, present, and future; and

(2) to recognize the obstacles that women face in the struggle for equal rights and opportunities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of International Women's Day;

(2) recognizes that the empowerment of women is inextricably linked to the potential of a country to generate—

- (A) economic growth;
- (B) sustainable democracy; and
- (C) inclusive security;

(3) recognizes and honors individuals in the United States and around the world, including women human rights defenders and civil society leaders, that have worked throughout history to ensure that women are guaranteed equality and basic human rights;

(4) reaffirms the commitment—

(A) to end discrimination and violence against women and girls;

(B) to ensure the safety and welfare of women and girls;

(C) to pursue policies that guarantee the basic human rights of women and girls worldwide; and

(D) to promote meaningful and significant participation of women in every aspect of society and community;

(5) supports inclusive, sustainable development, including through the promotion of the access of women to each tool, skill, and bargaining power needed—

(A) to promote peace and stability in society;

(B) to sustain long term economic prosperity; and

(C) to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women; and

(6) encourages the people of the United States to observe International Women's Day with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 389—DESIGNATING MARCH 6, 2016, AS THE FIRST ANNUAL “WORLD LYMPHEDEMA DAY”

Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 389

Whereas lymphedema is a condition that—

(1) occurs when—

(A) the natural lymphatic drainage system of the body is damaged, blocked, or does not develop properly; and

(B) the lymphatic fluid within a certain area, such as the arm, leg, torso, head, or neck, is unable to drain properly;

(2) results in extreme swelling that impairs mobility and function; and

(3) can cause pain and significantly impair the quality of life of the affected individual;

Whereas the total number of individuals living with or at risk for lymphedema is difficult to establish because lymphedema is underreported and often misdiagnosed;

Whereas the underdiagnosis and undertreatment of lymphedema patients costs healthcare providers and healthcare insurers, including the Medicare program, millions of dollars each year because if lymphedema is left untreated—

(1) the potential for infection is greatly increased;

(2) infection may occur in the course of a few hours; and

(3) immediate treatment on an emergency basis is required;

Whereas the World Health Organization estimates that—

(1) more than 150,000,000 individuals worldwide have secondary lymphedema; and

(2) 120,000,000 individuals worldwide are infected with lymphatic filariasis, which leads to lymphedema;

Whereas Stanford University estimates that as many as 10,000,000 individuals in the United States are affected by lymphedema;

Whereas lymphedema can—

(1) as primary lymphedema, be inherited and either be present at birth or manifest itself later in life; or

(2) as secondary lymphedema, develop after cancer treatment, radiation therapy, major surgery, severe burn, or certain other traumatic injuries, including injuries affecting combat-tested veterans of the United States;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that a high percentage of elderly cancer survivors will develop lymphedema;

Whereas the National Cancer Institute predicts that, not later than 2020—

(1) the number of cancer survivors aged 65 or older will increase by 42 percent; and

(2) as many as 3,000,000 Medicare beneficiaries that are cancer survivors will require treatment for lymphedema;

Whereas lymphedema affects an estimated 15 percent of all cancer survivors and 40 percent of all breast cancer patients; and

Whereas, in recognition of the financial, physical, and psychological impact that lymphedema has on each individual afflicted with lymphedema, it is incumbent on the people of the United States to support—

(1) each courageous individual living and coping with lymphedema, a debilitating condition; and

(2) each caregiver, whether a professional or not a professional, of each individual afflicted with lymphedema: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) it is the sense of the Senate that each tireless advocate and healthcare provider that spends much time and many resources battling lymphedema, a painful and destructive condition that affects many individuals, should be recognized; and

(2) the Senate designates March 6, 2016, as “World Lymphedema Day”.

SENATE RESOLUTION 390—DESIGNATING MARCH 3, 2016 AS “WORLD WILDLIFE DAY”

Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 390

Whereas wildlife has provided numerous economic, environmental, social, and cultural benefits during the course of human history, and wildlife conservation will secure these gifts for future generations;

Whereas plant and animal species play an important role in the stability of diverse ecosystems around the world, and the conservation of this biodiversity is critical to maintain the delicate balance of nature and keep complex ecosystems thriving;

Whereas observation of wild plants and animals in their natural habitat provides individuals with a more enriching world view and a greater appreciation of the wonders of the natural environment;

Whereas tens of millions of individuals in the United States strongly support the conservation of wildlife, both domestically and

abroad, and wish to ensure the survival of species in the wild, such as rhinoceroses, tigers, elephants, pangolins, turtles, seahorses, sharks, ginseng, mahogany, and cacti;

Whereas the trafficking of wildlife, including timber and fish, comprises the fourth largest global illegal trade after narcotics, the counterfeiting of products and currency, and human trafficking, and has become a major transnational organized crime with an estimated worth of as much as \$19,000,000,000 annually;

Whereas increased demand in Asia for high-value illegal wildlife products, particularly elephant ivory and rhinoceros horns, has recently triggered substantial and rapid increases in poaching of these species, particularly in Africa;

Whereas trafficking of wildlife is a primary threat to many wildlife species, including elephants, rhinoceroses, tigers, pangolins, and sharks;

Whereas many different kinds of criminals, including some terrorist entities and rogue security personnel, often in collusion with corrupt government officials, are involved in wildlife poaching and the movement of ivory and rhinoceros horns across Africa;

Whereas wildlife poaching presents significant security and stability challenges for military and police forces in African nations that are often threatened by heavily armed poachers and the criminal and extremist allies of those poachers;

Whereas wildlife poaching negatively impacts local communities that rely on natural resources for economic development, including tourism;

Whereas penal and financial deterrents can improve the ability of African governments to reduce poaching and trafficking and enhance their capabilities of managing their resources;

Whereas assisting institutions in developing nations, including material, training, legal, and diplomatic support, can reduce illegal wildlife trade;

Whereas wildlife provides a multitude of benefits to all nations, and wildlife crime has wide-ranging economic, environmental, and social impacts;

Whereas, between 2010 and 2013, the number of elephants killed in Africa by poachers is estimated to have been 100,000 out of a remaining population of roughly 500,000 elephants;

Whereas, from 2007 to 2012, the number of elephants killed in Kenya increased by more than 800 percent, from 47 to 387 elephants killed;

Whereas the number of forest elephants in the Congo Basin in Central Africa declined by approximately ⅔ between 2002 and 2012, placing forest elephants on track for extinction in the next decade;

Whereas the number of rhinoceroses killed by poachers in South Africa increased by almost 10,000 percent between 2007 and 2014, from 13 to more than 1,200 rhinoceroses killed;

Whereas as few as 3,200 tigers remain in the wild throughout all of Asia;

Whereas pangolins are often referred to as the most trafficked mammal in the world and all 8 pangolin species spanning Africa and Asia are faced with extinction because pangolin scales are sought after in the practice of traditional Chinese medicine and pangolin meat is considered a delicacy;

Whereas approximately 100,000,000 sharks are killed annually, often targeted solely for their fins, and unsustainable trade is the primary cause of serious population decline in several shark species, including scalloped

hammerhead sharks, great hammerhead sharks, and oceanic whitetip sharks;

Whereas the United States is developing and implementing measures to address the criminal, financial, security, and environmental aspects of wildlife trafficking;

Whereas Congress has allocated specific resources to combat wildlife trafficking and address the threats posed by poaching and the illegal wildlife trade;

Whereas, in December 2013, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed March 3 as World Wildlife Day to celebrate and raise awareness of the wild fauna and flora around the world;

Whereas March 3, 2016 represents the third annual celebration of World Wildlife Day;

Whereas, in 2016, the theme of World Wildlife Day is “The future of wildlife is in our hands”; and

Whereas, in 2016, World Wildlife Day commemorations will “celebrate the many beautiful and varied forms of wild fauna and flora, raise awareness of the multitude of benefits that wildlife provides to people, and raise awareness of the urgent need to step up the fight against wildlife crime, which has wide-ranging economic, environmental, and social impacts”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 3, 2016 as “World Wildlife Day”;

(2) supports raising awareness of the benefits that wildlife provides to people and the threats facing wildlife around the world;

(3) supports escalating the fight against wildlife crime, including wildlife trafficking;

(4) applauds the domestic and international efforts to escalate the fight against wildlife crime;

(5) commends the efforts of the United States to mobilize the entire Government in a coordinated, efficient, and effective manner for dramatic progress in the fight against wildlife crime; and

(6) encourages continued cooperation between the United States, international partners, local communities, nonprofit organizations, private industry, and other partner organizations in an effort to conserve and celebrate wildlife, preserving this precious resource for future generations.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3417. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3418. Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3419. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3420. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra.

SA 3421. Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms.

KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3422. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3423. Mr. KIRK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3424. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3425. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3426. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3427. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. BOXER, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 2276, to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide enhanced safety in pipeline transportation, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3417. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 705. COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES STUDY ON VETERANS TREATMENT COURTS AND VETERANS JUSTICE OUTREACH PROGRAM.

(a) STUDY AND REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) complete a study on the effectiveness of Veterans Treatment Courts and the Veterans Justice Outreach Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(2) submit to Congress a report on the findings of the Comptroller General with respect to the study completed under paragraph (1).

(b) ELEMENTS.—As part of the study required by subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall assess the following:

(1) The extent to which Veterans Treatment Courts—

(A) provide a benefit to veterans with a mental illness or substance abuse problem; and

(B) provide timely access to services furnished by the Veterans Health Administration.

(2) The number of Veterans Treatment Courts in operation.

(3) The number of Veterans Treatment Courts in the process of being established.

(4) What is known about the effectiveness of Veterans Treatment Courts and what data are reported to the Federal Government about the use and performance of such courts.

(5) The number of veterans assigned to each Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist that is assigned to a Veterans Treatment Court.

(6) The method by which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs allocates the number and location of Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists and whether such method adequately ensures appropriate representation in Veterans Treatment Courts.

(7) To what extent would having additional Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists—

(A) provide veterans with better access to services furnished by the Veterans Health Administration; and

(B) allow for the establishment of additional Veterans Treatment Courts.

SA 3418. Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . REMOVAL OF INMATE LIMITATION ON BENEFITS UNDER MEDICAID.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The subdivision (A) of section 1905(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(a)) that follows paragraph (29) is amended by inserting “or in custody pending disposition of charges” after “patient in a medical institution”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the first day of the first calendar quarter beginning more than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply to items and services furnished for periods beginning on or after such date.

SA 3419. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 101, strike subsection (c)(5) and all that follows through the end of the section, and insert the following:

(5) representatives of hospitals;

(6) representatives of—

(A) pain management professional organizations;

(B) the mental health treatment community;

(C) the addiction treatment community;

(D) pain advocacy groups;

(E) groups with expertise around overdose reversal;

(F) State agencies that manage State prescription drug monitoring programs; and

(G) State agencies that administer grants under subpart II of part B of title XIX of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x-21 et seq.); and

(7) other stakeholders, as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(d) DUTIES.—The task force shall—

(1) not later than 180 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), review, modify, and update, as appropriate, best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, taking into consideration—

(A) existing pain management research;

(B) recommendations from relevant conferences and existing relevant evidence-based guidelines;

(C) ongoing efforts at the State and local levels and by medical professional organizations to develop improved pain management strategies, including consideration of alternatives to opioids to reduce opioid monotherapy in appropriate cases;

(D) the management of high-risk populations, other than populations who suffer pain, who—

(i) may use or be prescribed benzodiazepines, alcohol, and diverted opioids; or

(ii) receive opioids in the course of medical care;

(E) whether the State prescription drug monitoring programs are sufficiently available, functional, and useful to be integrated into the process for prescribing pain medication; and

(F) the Proposed 2016 Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (80 Fed. Reg. 77351 (December 14, 2015)) and any final guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(2) solicit and take into consideration public comment on the practices developed under paragraph (1), amending such best practices if appropriate; and

(3) develop a strategy for disseminating information about the best practices to stakeholders, as appropriate.

(e) **LIMITATION.**—The task force shall not have rulemaking authority.

(f) **REPORT.**—Not later than 270 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), the task force shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) the strategy for disseminating best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, as reviewed, modified, or updated under subsection (d);

(2) the results of a feasibility study on linking the best practices described in paragraph (1) to receiving and renewing registrations under section 303(f) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(f)); and

(3) recommendations for effectively applying the best practices described in paragraph (1) to improve prescribing practices at medical facilities, including medical facilities of the Veterans Health Administration.

(g) **GAO REPORT ON STATE PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAMS.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall prepare and submit to Congress a report examining the variations that exist across State prescription drug monitoring programs that have been supported by Federal funds. The Comptroller General shall review, and include in the report recommendations on, best practices to maximize the effectiveness of such programs and State strategies to increase queries to such programs by health care providers.

SA 3420. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLO-

BUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; as follows:

On page 14, line 10, insert “consumers,” after “patients.”

On page 14, line 12, strike “prescribed.” and insert “prescribed, including opioid and methadone abuse. Such education and awareness campaigns shall include information on the dangers of opioid abuse, how to prevent opioid abuse including through safe disposal of prescription medications and other safety precautions, and detection of early warning signs of addiction.”

On page 16, line 22, strike “or”.

On page 17, line 2, insert “or” at the end.

On page 17, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

“(C) a sudden increase in opioid-related deaths, as documented by local data;

On page 18, line 23, strike “1997.” and insert “1997, and may also include an evaluation of the effectiveness at reducing abuse of opioids, methadone, or methamphetamines.”

SA 3421. Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 39, line 1, strike “other clinically appropriate services,” and insert “other clinically appropriate services and through the establishment and support of treatment centers that operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to provide immediate access to behavioral health treatment.”

SA 3422. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . VOTING RIGHTS.

(a) **INFORMATION FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS.**—The Director of the Bureau of Prisons shall immediately ensure that individuals in the custody of the Bureau of Prisons are provided information regarding the voting rights restoration process upon release and return to their home State.

(b) **NOTICE IN CRIMINAL CASES.**—The Attorney General shall require that the United States attorneys provide notice to defendants in Federal criminal cases regarding the loss of the right to vote as a result of a plea agreement to any disfranchising offense, whether the offense is a misdemeanor or felony.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Com-

mittee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives a report on the disproportionate impact of Federal and State criminal disenfranchisement laws on minority populations, which shall include data on disenfranchisement rates by race and ethnicity.

SA 3423. Mr. KIRK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 504. MANDATORY DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN VETERAN INFORMATION TO STATE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE MONITORING PROGRAMS.

Section 5701(l) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “may” and inserting “shall”.

SA 3424. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . COMBAT HEROIN EPIDEMIC AND BACKLOG ACT.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Combat Heroin Epidemic and Backlog Act of 2016”.

(b) **CONFRONTING THE USE OF HEROIN AND ASSOCIATED DRUGS.**—Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3711 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“PART LL—CONFRONTING THE USE OF HEROIN AND ASSOCIATED DRUGS

“SEC. 3021. AUTHORITY TO MAKE GRANTS TO ADDRESS PUBLIC SAFETY AND HEROIN DISTRIBUTION, SALE, AND USE.

“(a) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of this section is to assist States and Indian tribes to—

“(1) carry out programs to address the distribution, sale, and use of heroin, fentanyl, and associated synthetic drugs; and

“(2) improve the ability of State, tribal, and local government institutions to carry out such programs.

“(b) **GRANT AUTHORIZATION.**—The Attorney General, through the Bureau of Justice Assistance, may make grants to States and Indian tribes to address the distribution, sale, and use of heroin, fentanyl, and associated synthetic drugs to enhance public safety.

“(c) **GRANT PROJECTS TO ADDRESS DISTRIBUTION, SALE, AND USE OF HEROIN, FENTANYL, AND ASSOCIATED SYNTHETIC DRUGS.**—Grants made under subsection (b) may be used for programs, projects, and other activities to—

“(1) reimburse State, local, or other public crime laboratories and medical examiners to help address backlogs of untested samples of heroin, fentanyl, and associated synthetic drugs as well as associated toxicology testing;

“(2) reimburse State, local, or other public crime laboratories and medical examiners

for procuring equipment, technology, or other support systems if the applicant for the grant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Attorney General that expenditures for such purposes would result in improved efficiency of laboratory testing and help prevent future backlogs;

“(3) reimburse State, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies for procuring field-testing equipment for use in the identification or detection of heroin, fentanyl, and associated synthetic drugs;

“(4) investigate, arrest, and prosecute individuals violating laws related to the distribution or sale of heroin, fentanyl, and associated synthetic drugs; and

“(5) support State, tribal, and local health department services deployed to address the use of heroin, fentanyl, and associated synthetic drugs.

“(d) LIMITATION.—Not less than 60 percent of the amounts made available to carry out this section shall be awarded for the purposes under paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection (c).

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017, 2018, and 2019.

“(f) ALLOCATION.—

“(1) POPULATION ALLOCATION.—Seventy-five percent of the amount made available to carry out this section in a fiscal year shall be allocated to each State that meets the requirements of section 2802 so that each State shall receive an amount that bears the same ratio to the 75 percent of the total amount made available to carry out this section for that fiscal year as the population of the State bears to the population of all States.

“(2) DISCRETIONARY ALLOCATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Twenty-five percent of the amount made available to carry out this section in a fiscal year shall be allocated pursuant to the Attorney General’s discretion for competitive awards to States and Indian tribes.

“(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making awards under subparagraph (A), the Attorney General shall consider—

“(i) the average annual number of part 1 violent crimes reported by each State to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the 3 most recent calendar years for which data is available; and

“(ii) the existing resources and current needs of the potential grant recipient.

“(3) MINIMUM REQUIREMENT.—Each State shall receive not less than 0.6 percent of the amount made available to carry out this section in each fiscal year.

“(4) CERTAIN TERRITORIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of the allocation under this section, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands shall be considered as 1 State.

“(B) ALLOCATION AMONGST CERTAIN TERRITORIES.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), 67 percent of the amount allocated shall be allocated to American Samoa and 33 percent shall be allocated to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.”.

SA 3425. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription

opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 36, line 12, insert “and partnerships with law enforcement agencies of a unit of local government (including an Indian tribe), the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Drug Enforcement Administration” after “collaboration”.

On page 36, line 19, insert “including through partnerships with law enforcement agencies of a unit of local government (including an Indian tribe), the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Drug Enforcement Administration,” after “activities.”

SA 3426. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VIII—ACCESS TO MEDICATION-ASSISTED THERAPY

SEC. 801. EXPANDING PATIENT ACCESS TO MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT.

Section 303(g)(2) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (iii)—

(i) by inserting “(I)” before “The total”;

(ii) by striking “30” and inserting “100”;

(iii) by striking “, unless, not sooner” and all that follows through the end and inserting a period; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

“(II) If a patient is referred by a qualifying physician to another physician that provides short-term services, such as induction or titration, the patient shall only be included in the total number of such patients of the qualifying physician that makes the referral.

“(III) In this clause, the term ‘the total number of such patients’ does not include a patient to whom a qualifying physician meeting the requirements described in clause (iv)(I), or an authorized agent of such qualifying physician, directly administers such drugs or combination drugs that are formulated to have a therapeutic effect lasting 7 days or more.”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(iv) Not earlier than 1 year after the date on which a qualifying physician obtained an initial waiver pursuant to clause (iii), the qualifying physician may submit a second notification to the Secretary of the need and intent of the qualifying physician to treat up to 500 patients, if the qualifying physician—

“(I)(aa) satisfies the requirements of subclause (I), (II), (III), or (IV) of subparagraph (G)(ii); and

“(bb) agrees to fully participate in the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program of the State in which the qualifying physician is licensed, pursuant to applicable State guidelines; or

“(II)(aa) satisfies the requirements of subclause (V), (VI), (VII), or (VIII) of subparagraph (G)(ii);

“(bb) agrees to fully participate in the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program of the State in which the qualifying physician is licensed, pursuant to applicable State guidelines; and

“(cc) has completed not less than 40 hours of training (through classroom situations,

seminars at professional society meetings, electronic communications, or otherwise) with respect to the treatment and management of opiate-dependent patients for substance use disorders provided by the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, the American Medical Association, the American Osteopathic Association, the American Psychiatric Association, or any other organization that the Secretary determines is appropriate for purposes of this subclause after providing notice and an opportunity for public comment.

“(v) The qualifying physician shall maintain records relating to the dispensing of drugs or combinations of drugs to treat patients under this paragraph, including not less than 3 of the following:

“(I) The number of patients the qualifying physician treats, as compared to the maximum number of patients the qualifying physician may treat under this paragraph.

“(II) Whether the qualifying physician provides counseling services on-site, and how frequently patients are using such services.

“(III) Whether the qualifying physician referred patients for counseling services off-site, the percentage of the patients of the qualifying physician using such services, and how frequently the patients are using such services.

“(IV) Whether the qualifying physician uses toxicology testing, if applicable, to guide therapeutic dosing and treatment decision making.

“(V) The median period during which patients being treated under this paragraph have received treatment.

“(VI) The median period during which patients being treated under this paragraph with buprenorphine have received treatment.

“(VII) The rate at which patients being treated under this paragraph terminate the treatment against medical advice.

“(vi) The qualifying physician shall—

“(I) participate in not less than 24 hours of continuing education training during the 3-year period beginning on the date of the notification; and

“(II) when the qualifying physician completes the continuing education training described in subclause (I), submit a certification to that effect to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and, if required by the State in which the qualifying physician is licensed, to the State.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(K) Notwithstanding section 708, nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to preempt any State law that—

“(i) permits a qualifying physician to dispense narcotic drugs in schedule III, IV, or V or combinations of such drugs to a total number of patients for maintenance or detoxification treatment in accordance with this paragraph that is fewer than or more than the applicable number described in clause (iii) or (iv) of subparagraph (B); or

“(ii) requires a qualifying physician to comply with additional requirements relating to the dispensing of narcotic drugs in schedule III, IV, or V or combinations of such drugs, including requirements relating to the practice setting in which the qualifying physician practices and education, training, and reporting requirements.”.

SEC. 802. DEFINITIONS.

Section 303(g)(2)(G)(ii) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)(G)(ii)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subclauses (IV), (V), (VI), and (VII) as subclauses (V), (VI), (VII), and (VIII), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subclause (III) the following:

“(IV) The physician holds a board certification from the American Board of Addiction Medicine.”.

SEC. 803. EVALUATIONS.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(1) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

(b) HHS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the effect on the amendments made by this title on the availability of evidence-based treatment and any increased risk in diversion.

(c) GAO.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Four years after the date on which the first notification under clause (iv) of section 303(g)(2)(B) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)(B)), as added by this Act, is received by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Comptroller General of the United States shall initiate an evaluation of the effectiveness of the amendments made by this Act, which shall include an evaluation of—

(A) any changes in the availability and use of medication-assisted treatment for opioid addiction;

(B) the quality of medication-assisted treatment programs;

(C) the integration of medication-assisted treatment with routine healthcare services;

(D) diversion of opioid addiction treatment medication;

(E) changes in State or local policies and legislation relating to opioid addiction treatment;

(F) the use of nurse practitioners and physician assistants who prescribe opioid addiction medication;

(G) the use of Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs by waived practitioners to maximize safety of patient care and prevent diversion of opioid addiction medication;

(H) the findings of Drug Enforcement Agency inspections of waived practitioners, including the frequency with which the Drug Enforcement Agency finds no documentation of access to behavioral health services; and

(I) the effectiveness of cross-agency collaboration between Department of Health and Human Services and the Drug Enforcement Agency for expanding effective opioid addiction treatment.

(2) REPORT.—The Comptroller General shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report regarding the evaluation conducted under paragraph (1).

SEC. 804. DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.

Section 303(g)(2) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)), as amended by section 801(2), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(L)(i) In this subparagraph, the term ‘covered provider’ includes a person that—

“(I) is not a physician; and

“(II) is authorized to dispense narcotic drugs in schedule III, IV, or V or combinations of such drugs for maintenance or detoxification treatment by the jurisdiction in which the provider is licensed.

“(ii) Notwithstanding subparagraph (B)(i), the Secretary may establish and carry out a demonstration project for the purposes of al-

lowing each covered provider participating in the demonstration project to dispense narcotic drugs in schedule III, IV, or V or combinations of such drugs for maintenance or detoxification treatment under this paragraph—

“(I) during an initial period, to be determined by the Secretary, to treat not more than 30 patients; and

“(II) after the initial period, to treat not more than 100 patients.

“(iii) The Secretary may enter into grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements with 1 or more research institutions, departments of health of a State, and public and nonprofit entities to assist in carrying out the demonstration project under this subparagraph.

“(iv) Amounts made available to the Attorney General for carrying out this section or to the Secretary of Health and Human Services for carrying out title V of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290aa) shall also be made available to carry out the demonstration project under this subparagraph.

“(v) The demonstration project under this subparagraph, including any authority to dispense narcotic drugs in schedule III, IV, or V or combinations of such drugs for maintenance or detoxification treatment under this subparagraph, shall terminate on September 30, 2021.”.

SA 3427. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. BOXER, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 2276, to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide enhanced safety in pipeline transportation, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS; REFERENCES.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Securing America’s Future Energy: Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety Act” or the “SAFE PIPES Act”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents; references.
- Sec. 2. Authorization of appropriations.
- Sec. 3. Regulatory updates.
- Sec. 4. Hazardous materials identification numbers.
- Sec. 5. Statutory preference.
- Sec. 6. Natural gas integrity management review.
- Sec. 7. Hazardous liquid integrity management review.
- Sec. 8. Technical safety standards committees.
- Sec. 9. Inspection report information.
- Sec. 10. Pipeline odorization study.
- Sec. 11. Improving damage prevention technology.
- Sec. 12. Workforce of Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.
- Sec. 13. Research and development.
- Sec. 14. Information sharing system.
- Sec. 15. Nationwide integrated pipeline safety regulatory database.
- Sec. 16. Underground natural gas storage facilities.
- Sec. 17. Joint inspection and oversight.
- Sec. 18. Response plans.
- Sec. 19. High consequence areas.
- Sec. 20. Surface transportation security review.

Sec. 21. Small scale liquefied natural gas facilities.

Sec. 22. Report on natural gas leak reporting.

Sec. 23. Comptroller General review of State policies relating to natural gas leaks.

Sec. 24. Provision of response plans to appropriate committees of Congress.

Sec. 25. Consultation with FERC as part of pre-filing procedures and permitting process for new natural gas pipeline infrastructure.

Sec. 26. Maintenance of effort.

Sec. 27. Aliso Canyon natural gas leak task force.

(c) REFERENCES TO TITLE 49, UNITED STATES CODE.—Except as otherwise expressly provided, wherever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) GAS AND HAZARDOUS LIQUID.—Section 60125(a) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “there is authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Transportation for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015, from fees collected under section 60301, \$90,679,000, of which \$4,746,000 is for carrying out such section 12 and \$36,194,000 is for making grants.” and inserting the following: “there are authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Transportation from fees collected under section 60301—

“(A) \$127,060,000 for fiscal year 2016, of which \$9,325,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$42,515,000 shall be expended for making grants;

“(B) \$129,671,000 for fiscal year 2017, of which \$9,418,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$42,941,000 shall be expended for making grants;

“(C) \$132,334,000 for fiscal year 2018, of which \$9,512,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$43,371,000 shall be expended for making grants; and

“(D) \$135,051,000 for fiscal year 2019, of which \$9,607,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$43,805,000 shall be expended for making grants.”; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “there is authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015 from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund to carry out the provisions of this chapter related to hazardous liquid and section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101 note; Public Law 107-355), \$18,573,000, of which \$2,174,000 is for carrying out such section 12 and \$4,558,000 is for making grants.” and inserting the following: “there are authorized to be appropriated from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund to carry out the provisions of this chapter related to hazardous liquid and section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101 note; Public Law 107-355)—”

“(A) \$19,890,000 for fiscal year 2016, of which \$3,108,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$8,708,000 shall be expended for making grants;

“(B) \$20,288,000 for fiscal year 2017, of which \$3,139,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$8,795,000 shall be expended for making grants;

“(C) \$20,694,000 for fiscal year 2018, of which \$3,171,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$8,883,000 shall be expended for making grants; and

“(D) \$21,108,000 for fiscal year 2019, of which \$3,203,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$8,972,000 shall be expended for making grants.”.

(b) EMERGENCY RESPONSE GRANTS.—Section 60125(b)(2) is amended by striking “2012 through 2015” and inserting “2016 through 2019”.

(c) ONE-CALL NOTIFICATION PROGRAMS.—Section 6107 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “\$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015” and inserting “\$1,060,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2019”; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking “2012 through 2015” and inserting “2016 through 2019”.

(d) STATE DAMAGE PREVENTION PROGRAMS.—Section 60134(i) is amended by striking “2012 through 2015” and inserting “2016 through 2019”.

(e) COMMUNITY PIPELINE SAFETY INFORMATION GRANTS.—Section 60130(c) is amended by striking “2012 through 2015” and inserting “2016 through 2019”.

(f) PIPELINE INTEGRITY PROGRAM.—Section 12(f) of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101 note) is amended by striking “2012 through 2015” and inserting “2016 through 2019”.

SEC. 3. REGULATORY UPDATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 90 days thereafter until a final rule has been issued for each of the requirements described under paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), the Secretary of Transportation shall publish an update on a public website regarding the status of a final rule for—

(1) regulations required under the Pipeline Safety Regulatory Certainty and Job Creation Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-90; 125 Stat. 1904) for which no interim final rule or direct final rule has been issued;

(2) any regulation relating to pipeline safety required by law, other than a regulation described under paragraph (1), for which for more than 2 years after the date of the enacting statute or statutory deadline no interim final rule or direct final rule has been issued; and

(3) any other pipeline safety rulemaking categorized as significant.

(b) CONTENTS.—Each report under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a description of the work plan for the outstanding regulation;

(2) an updated rulemaking timeline for the outstanding regulation;

(3) current staff allocations;

(4) any other information collection request with substantial changes;

(5) current data collection or research relating to the development of the rulemaking;

(6) current collaborative efforts with safety experts and other stakeholders;

(7) any resource constraints impacting the rulemaking process for the outstanding regulation; and

(8) any other details associated with the development of the rulemaking that impact the progress of the rulemaking.

SEC. 4. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS.

The Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall—

(1) rescind the implementation of the June 26, 2015 PHMSA interpretative letter (#14-0178); and

(2) reinstate paragraphs (4) and (5) of section 172.336(c) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, without the reference to “gas-ohol”, as was originally intended in the March 7, 2013 final rule (PHMSA–2011–0142).

SEC. 5. STATUTORY PREFERENCE.

The Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall prioritize the use of Office of Pipeline Safety resources for the development of each outstanding pipeline safety statutory requirement, including requirements for rulemakings and information collection requests, for a rulemaking described in a report under section 3 before beginning any new rulemaking required after the date of the enactment of this Act unless the Secretary of Transportation certifies to Congress that there is a significant need to move forward with a new rulemaking.

SEC. 6. NATURAL GAS INTEGRITY MANAGEMENT REVIEW.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the publication of a final rule regarding the safety of gas transmission pipelines (76 Fed. Reg. 53086), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to Congress regarding the natural gas integrity management program.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an analysis of the extent to which the natural gas integrity management program under section 60109(c) of title 49, United States Code, has improved the safety of natural gas transmission pipelines;

(2) an analysis or recommendations, including consideration of technical, operational, and economic feasibility, regarding changes to the program that would prevent inadvertent releases from pipelines and mitigate any adverse consequences of an inadvertent release, including changes to the current definition of high consequence area, or would expand integrity management beyond high consequence areas;

(3) a review of the cost effectiveness of the legacy class location regulations;

(4) an analysis of and recommendations regarding what impact pipeline features and conditions, including the age, condition, materials, and construction of a pipeline, should have on risk analysis of a particular pipeline;

(5) a description of any challenges affecting Federal or State regulators in their oversight of the program and how the challenges are being addressed; and

(6) a description of any challenges affecting the natural gas industry in complying with the program, and how the challenges are being addressed.

(c) DEFINITION OF HIGH CONSEQUENCE AREA.—In this section and in section 7, the term “high consequence area” means an area described in section 60109(a) of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 7. HAZARDOUS LIQUID INTEGRITY MANAGEMENT REVIEW.

(a) SAFETY STUDY.—Not later than 18 months after the publication of a final rule regarding the safety of hazardous liquid pipelines (80 Fed. Reg. 61610), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to Congress regarding the hazardous liquid integrity management program.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an analysis of the extent to which liquid pipeline integrity management in high consequence areas for operators of certain hazardous liquid pipeline facilities, as regulated under sections 195.450 and 195.452 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, has improved the safety of hazardous liquid pipelines;

(2) recommendations, including consideration of technical, operational, and economic feasibility, regarding changes to the

program that could prevent inadvertent releases from pipelines and mitigate any adverse consequences of an inadvertent release, including changes to the current definition of high consequence area;

(3) an analysis of how surveying, assessment, mitigation, and monitoring activities, including real-time hazardous liquid pipeline monitoring during significant flood events and information sharing with other Federal agencies, are being used to address risks associated with the dynamic and unique nature of rivers, flood plains, and lakes;

(4) an analysis of and recommendations regarding what impact pipeline features and conditions, including the age, condition, materials, and construction of a pipeline, should have on risk analysis of a particular pipeline and what changes to the definition of high consequence area could be made to improve pipeline safety; and

(5) a description of any challenges affecting Federal or State regulators in their oversight of the program and how the challenges are being addressed.

SEC. 8. TECHNICAL SAFETY STANDARDS COMMITTEES.

Section 60115(b)(4)(A) is amended by striking “State commissioners. The Secretary shall consult with the national organization of State commissions before selecting those 2 individuals.” and inserting “State officials. The Secretary shall consult with national organizations representing State commissioners or governors when making a selection under this subparagraph.”

SEC. 9. INSPECTION REPORT INFORMATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the completion of a pipeline safety inspection, the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, or the State authority certified under section 60105 of title 49, United States Code, shall—

(1) conduct a post-inspection briefing with the operator outlining concerns, and to the extent practicable, provide written preliminary findings of the inspection; or

(2) issue to the operator a final report, notice of amendment of plans or procedures, safety order, or corrective action order, or such other applicable report, notice, or order.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall submit an annual report to Congress regarding—

(A) the actions that the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration has taken to ensure that inspections by State authorities provide effective and timely oversight; and

(B) statistics relating to the timeliness of the actions described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a).

(2) CESSATION OF EFFECTIVENESS.—Paragraph (1) shall cease to be effective on September 30, 2019.

SEC. 10. PIPELINE ODORIZATION STUDY.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives that assesses—

(1) the feasibility of odorizing all combustible gas in transportation;

(2) the impacts of the odorization of all combustible gas in transportation on manufacturers, agriculture, and other end users; and

(3) the relative benefits and costs associated with odorizing all combustible gas in

transportation, including impacts on health and safety, compared to using other methods to mitigate pipeline leaks.

SEC. 11. IMPROVING DAMAGE PREVENTION TECHNOLOGY.

(a) **STUDY.**—The Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with stakeholders, shall conduct a study on improving existing damage prevention programs through technological improvements in location, mapping, excavation, and communications practices to prevent accidental excavation damage to a pipe or its coating, including considerations of technical, operational, and economic feasibility and existing damage prevention programs.

(b) **CONTENTS.**—The study under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an identification of any methods that could improve existing damage prevention programs through location and mapping practices or technologies in an effort to reduce unintended releases caused by excavation;

(2) an analysis of how increased use of GPS digital mapping technologies, predictive analytic tools, public awareness initiatives including one-call initiatives, the use of mobile devices, and other advanced technologies could supplement existing one-call notification and damage prevention programs to reduce the frequency and severity of incidents caused by excavation damage;

(3) an identification of any methods that could improve excavation practices or technologies in an effort to reduce pipeline damages;

(4) an analysis of the feasibility of a national data repository for pipeline excavation accident data that creates standardized data models for storing and sharing pipeline accident information; and

(5) an identification of opportunities for stakeholder engagement in preventing excavation damage.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall submit a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives regarding the study under this section, including recommendations, that include the consideration of technical, operational, and economic feasibility, on how to incorporate, into existing damage prevention programs, technological improvements and practices that may help prevent accidental excavation damage.

SEC. 12. WORKFORCE OF PIPELINE AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SAFETY ADMINISTRATION.

(a) **REVIEW.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall submit to Congress a review of Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration staff resource management, including geographic allocation plans, hiring challenges, and expected retirement rates and strategies. The review shall include recommendations to address hiring challenges, training needs, and any other identified staff resource challenges.

(b) **CRITICAL HIRING NEEDS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Beginning on the date on which the review is submitted under subsection (a), the Administrator may certify to Congress, not less frequently than annually, that a severe shortage of qualified candidates or a critical hiring need exists for a position or group of positions in the Pipeline

and Hazardous Material Safety Administration.

(2) **DIRECT HIRE AUTHORITY.**—Notwithstanding sections 3309 through 3318 of title 5, United States Code, the Administrator, after making a certification under paragraph (1), may hire a candidate for the position or candidates for the group of positions indicated in the certification, as applicable.

(3) **TERMINATIONS OF EFFECTIVENESS.**—The direct hire authority provided under paragraph (2) shall terminate on September 30, 2019.

SEC. 13. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In developing a research and development program plan under paragraph (3) of section 12(d) of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101 note), the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration, in consultation with the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology, shall—

(1) detail compliance with the consultation requirement under paragraph (2) of such section;

(2) provide opportunities for joint research ventures with non-Federal entities, whenever practicable and appropriate, to leverage limited Federal research resources; and

(3) permit collaborative research and development projects with appropriate non-Federal organizations.

(b) **COLLABORATIVE SAFETY RESEARCH REPORT.**—Section 60124(a)(6) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) research activities in collaboration with non-Federal entities, including the intended improvements to safety technology, inspection technology, operator response time, and emergency responder incident response time.”

SEC. 14. INFORMATION SHARING SYSTEM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall convene a working group to consider the development of a voluntary no-fault information sharing system to encourage collaborative efforts to improve inspection information feedback and information sharing with the purpose of improving natural gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipeline integrity risk analysis.

(b) **MEMBERSHIP.**—The working group described in subsection (a) shall include representatives from—

(1) the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration;

(2) industry stakeholders, including operators of pipeline facilities, inspection technology vendors, and pipeline inspection organizations;

(3) safety advocacy groups;

(4) research institutions;

(5) State public utility commissions or State officials responsible for pipeline safety oversight;

(6) State pipeline safety inspectors; and

(7) labor representatives.

(c) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—The working group described in subsection (a) shall consider and provide recommendations, if applicable, to the Secretary on—

(1) the need for and the identification of a system to ensure that dig verification data is shared with inline inspection operators to the extent consistent with the need to maintain proprietary and security sensitive data in a confidential manner to improve pipeline safety and inspection technology;

(2) ways to encourage the exchange of pipeline inspection information and the development of advanced pipeline inspection technologies and enhanced risk analysis;

(3) opportunities to share data, including dig verification data between operators of pipeline facilities and in-line inspector vendors to expand knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of the different types of in-line inspection technology and methodologies;

(4) options to create a secure system that protects proprietary data while encouraging the exchange of pipeline inspection information and the development of advanced pipeline inspection technologies and enhanced risk analysis; and

(5) regulatory, funding, and legal barriers to sharing the information described in paragraphs (1) through (4).

(d) **FACA.**—The working group shall not be subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

(e) **PUBLICATION.**—The Secretary shall publish the recommendations provided under subsection (c) on a publicly available website.

SEC. 15. NATIONWIDE INTEGRATED PIPELINE SAFETY REGULATORY DATABASE.

(a) **REPORT.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall submit a report to Congress on the feasibility of a national integrated pipeline safety regulatory inspection database to improve communication and collaboration between the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration and State pipeline regulators.

(b) **CONTENTS.**—The report under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a description of any efforts currently underway to test a secure information-sharing system for the purpose described in subsection (a);

(2) a description of any progress in establishing common standards for maintaining, collecting, and presenting pipeline safety regulatory inspection data, and a methodology for the sharing of the data;

(3) a description of any existing inadequacies or gaps in State and Federal inspection, enforcement, geospatial, or other pipeline safety regulatory inspection data;

(4) a description of the potential safety benefits of a national integrated pipeline database; and

(5) recommendations for how to implement a secure information-sharing system that protects proprietary and security sensitive information and data for the purpose described in subsection (a).

(c) **CONSULTATION.**—In preparing the report under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with stakeholders, including each State authority operating under a certification to regulate intrastate pipelines under section 60105 of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 16. UNDERGROUND NATURAL GAS STORAGE FACILITIES.

(a) **DEFINED TERM.**—Section 60101(a) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (21)(B), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (24), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in paragraph (25), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(27) ‘underground natural gas storage facility’ means a gas pipeline facility that stores gas in an underground facility, including—

“(A) a depleted hydrocarbon reservoir;

“(B) an aquifer reservoir; or

“(C) a solution mined salt cavern reservoir.”.

(b) **STANDARDS FOR UNDERGROUND NATURAL GAS STORAGE FACILITIES.**—Chapter 601 is amended by inserting after section 60103 the following:

“§ 60103A. Standards for underground natural gas storage facilities

“(a) **MINIMUM UNIFORM SAFETY STANDARDS.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of the SAFE PIPES Act, the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall issue minimum uniform safety standards, incorporating, to the extent practicable, consensus standards for the operation, environmental protection, and integrity management of underground natural gas storage facilities.

“(b) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—In developing uniform safety standards under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

“(1) consider the economic impacts of the regulations on individual gas customers to the extent practicable;

“(2) ensure that the regulations do not have a significant economic impact on end users to the extent practicable;

“(3) consider existing consensus standards; and

“(4) consider the recommendations of the Aliso Canyon Task Force under section 27 of the Securing America’s Future Energy: Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety Act.

“(c) **USER FEES.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—A fee shall be imposed on an entity operating an underground natural gas storage facility to which this section applies. Any such fee imposed shall be collected before the end of the fiscal year to which it applies.

“(2) **MEANS OF COLLECTION.**—The Secretary shall prescribe procedures to collect fees under this subsection. The Secretary may use a department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States Government or of a State or local government to collect the fee and may reimburse the department, agency, or instrumentality a reasonable amount for its services.

“(3) **USE OF FEES.**—

“(A) **ACCOUNT.**—There is established an underground natural gas storage facility safety account in the Pipeline Safety Fund established under section 60301, in the Treasury of the United States.

“(B) **USE OF FEES.**—A fee collected under this subsection—

“(i) shall be deposited in the underground natural gas storage facility safety account; and

“(ii) if the fee is related to an underground natural gas storage facility, may be used only for an activity related to underground natural gas storage safety under this section.

“(C) **LIMITATION.**—Amounts collected under this subsection shall be made available only to the extent provided in advance in an appropriation law for an activity related to underground natural gas storage safety.

“(d) **RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Nothing in this section may be construed to affect any Federal regulation relating to gas pipeline facilities that is in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the SAFE PIPES Act.

“(2) **LIMITATIONS.**—Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize the Secretary—

“(A) to prescribe the location of an underground natural gas storage facility; or

“(B) to require the Secretary’s permission to construct a facility referred to in subparagraph (A).”.

(c) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections for chapter 601 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 60103 the following:

“60103A. Standards for underground natural gas storage facilities.”.

SEC. 17. JOINT INSPECTION AND OVERSIGHT.

To ensure the safety of pipeline transportation, the Secretary of Transportation shall coordinate with States to ensure safety through the following:

(1) At the request of a State authority, the Secretary shall allow for a certified state authority under section 60105 of title 49, United States Code, to participate in the inspection of an interstate pipeline facility.

(2) Where appropriate, may provide temporary authority for a certified State authority under that section to participate in oversight of interstate pipeline safety transportation to ensure proper safety oversight and prevent an adverse impact on public safety.

SEC. 18. RESPONSE PLANS.

In preparing or reviewing a response plan under part 194 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration and an operator shall each address, to the maximum extent practicable, the impact of a worse case discharge of oil, or the substantial threat of such a discharge, into or on any navigable waters or adjoining shorelines that may be covered in whole or in part by ice.

SEC. 19. HIGH CONSEQUENCE AREAS.

The Secretary of Transportation shall revise section 195.6(b) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations to explicitly state that the Great Lakes are a USA ecological resource (as defined in section 195.6(b) of that title) for purposes of determining whether a pipeline is in a high consequence area (as defined in section 195.450 of that title).

SEC. 20. SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY REVIEW.

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to Congress on the staffing, resource allocation, oversight strategy, and management of the Transportation Security Administration’s pipeline security program and other surface transportation programs. The report shall include information on the coordination between the Transportation Security Administration, other Federal stakeholders, and industry.

SEC. 21. SMALL SCALE LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS FACILITIES.

(a) **DEFINED TERM.**—Section 60101(a), as amended by section 16, is further amended by inserting after paragraph (25) the following:

“(26) ‘small scale liquefied natural gas facility’ means a permanent intrastate liquefied natural gas facility (other than a peak shaving facility) that produces liquefied natural gas for—

“(A) use as a fuel in the United States; or

“(B) transportation in the United States by a means other than a pipeline facility; and”.

(b) **SITING STANDARDS FOR PERMANENT SMALL SCALE LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS FACILITIES.**—Section 60103(a) is amended to read as follows:

“(a) **LOCATION STANDARDS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe minimum safety standards for deciding on the permanent lo-

cation of a new liquefied natural gas pipeline facility or small scale liquefied natural gas facility.

“(2) **LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS FACILITIES.**—In prescribing a minimum safety standard for deciding on the permanent location of a new liquefied natural gas facility, the Secretary of Transportation shall consider—

“(A) the kind and use of the facility;

“(B) the existing and projected population and demographic characteristics of the location;

“(C) the existing and proposed land uses near the location;

“(D) the natural physical aspects of the location;

“(E) medical, law enforcement, and fire prevention capabilities near the location that can cope with a risk caused by the facility; and

“(F) the need to encourage remote siting.

“(3) **SMALL SCALE LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS FACILITIES.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of the SAFE PIPES Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe minimum safety standards for permanent small scale liquefied natural gas facilities.

“(B) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—In prescribing minimum safety standards under this paragraph, the Secretary shall consider—

“(i) the value of establishing risk-based approaches;

“(ii) the benefit of incorporating industry standards and best practices;

“(iii) the need to encourage the use of best available technology; and

“(iv) the factors prescribed in paragraph (2), as appropriate.”.

SEC. 22. REPORT ON NATURAL GAS LEAK REPORTING.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall submit to Congress a report on the metrics provided to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration and other Federal and State agencies related to lost and unaccounted for natural gas from distribution pipelines and systems.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following elements:

(1) An examination of different reporting requirements or standards for lost and unaccounted for natural gas to different agencies, the reasons for any such discrepancies, and recommendations for harmonizing and improving the accuracy of reporting.

(2) An analysis of whether separate or alternative reporting could better measure the amounts and identify the location of lost and unaccounted for natural gas from natural gas distribution systems.

(3) A description of potential safety issues associated with natural gas that is lost and unaccounted for from natural gas distribution systems.

(4) An assessment of whether alternate reporting and measures will resolve any safety issues identified under paragraph (3), including an analysis of the potential impact, including potential savings, on rate payers and end users of natural gas products of such reporting and measures.

(c) **CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS.**—If the Administrator determines that alternate reporting structures or recommendations included in the report required under subsection (a) would significantly improve the reporting and measurement of lost and unaccounted for gas or safety of systems, the

Administrator shall, not later than 180 days after making such determination, issue regulations, as the Administrator determines appropriate, to implement the recommendations.

SEC. 23. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW OF STATE POLICIES RELATING TO NATURAL GAS LEAKS.

(a) **REVIEW.**—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a State-by-State review of State-level policies that—

(1) encourage the repair and replacement of leaking natural gas distribution pipelines or systems that pose a safety threat, such as timelines to repair leaks and limits on cost recovery from ratepayers; and

(2) that may create barriers for entities to conduct work to repair and replace leaking natural gas pipelines or distribution systems.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration a report summarizing the findings of the review conducted under subsection (a) and making recommendations on Federal or State policies or best practices that may improve safety by accelerating the repair and replacement of natural gas pipelines or systems that are leaking or releasing natural gas, including policies within the jurisdiction of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. The report shall consider the potential impact, including potential savings, of the implementation of its recommendations on ratepayers or end users of the natural gas pipeline system.

(c) **CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS.**—If the Comptroller General makes recommendations in the report submitted under subsection (a) on Federal or State policies or best practices within the jurisdiction of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, the Administrator shall, not later than 90 days after such submission, review such recommendations and report to Congress on the feasibility of implementing such recommendations. If the Administrator determines that the recommendations would significantly improve pipeline safety, the Administrator shall, not later than 180 days after making such determination and in coordination with the heads of other relevant agencies as appropriate, issue regulations, as the Administrator determines appropriate, to implement the recommendations.

SEC. 24. PROVISION OF RESPONSE PLANS TO APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.

(a) **PROVISION OF PLANS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding subsection (a)(2) of section 60138 of title 49, United States Code, and subject to paragraph (2), upon the request of the Chairperson or Ranking Member of an appropriate committee of Congress, the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall provide the Chairperson or Ranking Member, as applicable, a uniquely identifiable, unredacted copy of an oil response plan under that section.

(2) **PROTECTION OF INFORMATION.**—Any information subject to exclusion under section 60138(a)(2) of title 49, United States Code, that is provided under paragraph (1) shall be afforded appropriate protection against unauthorized public disclosure, consistent with the rules and practices related to the protection of confidential information received by Congress.

(b) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed as affecting

the provision of any other report, data, or other information to Congress, or its handling thereof.

SEC. 25. CONSULTATION WITH FERC AS PART OF PRE-FILING PROCEDURES AND PERMITTING PROCESS FOR NEW NATURAL GAS PIPELINE INFRASTRUCTURE.

Where appropriate, the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall consult with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission during its pre-filing procedures and permitting process for new natural gas pipeline infrastructure to ensure the protection of people and the environment from the potential risks of hazardous materials transportation by pipeline.

SEC. 26. MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.

Section 60107(b) is amended to read as follows:

“(b) **PAYMENTS.**—After notifying and consulting with a State authority, the Secretary may withhold any part of a payment when the Secretary decides that the authority is not carrying out satisfactorily a safety program or not acting satisfactorily as an agent. The Secretary may pay an authority under this section only when the authority ensures the Secretary that it will provide the remaining costs of a safety program, except when the Secretary waives this requirement.”.

SEC. 27. ALISO CANYON NATURAL GAS LEAK TASK FORCE.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF TASK FORCE.**—Not later than 15 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy shall lead and establish an Aliso Canyon Task Force (referred to in this section as the “task force”).

(b) **MEMBERSHIP OF TASK FORCE.**—In addition to the Secretary, the task force shall be composed of—

(1) 1 representative from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration;

(2) 1 representative from the Department of Health and Human Services;

(3) 1 representative from the Environmental Protection Agency;

(4) 1 representative from the Department of the Interior;

(5) 1 representative from the Department of Commerce; and

(6) 1 representative from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(c) **REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the task force shall submit a final report that contains the information described in paragraph (2) to—

(A) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives;

(C) the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate;

(D) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives;

(E) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

(F) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives;

(G) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate;

(H) the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives;

(I) the President; and

(J) relevant Federal and State agencies.

(2) **INFORMATION INCLUDED.**—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include, at a minimum—

(A) an analysis and conclusion of the cause and contributing factors of the Aliso Canyon natural gas leak;

(B) an analysis of measures taken to stop the natural gas leak, with an immediate focus on other, more effective measures that could be taken;

(C) an assessment of the impact of the natural gas leak on health, safety, the environment, and the economy of the residents and property surrounding Aliso Canyon, on wholesale and retail electricity prices, and on the reliability of the bulk-power system;

(D) an analysis of how Federal, State, and local agencies responded to the natural gas leak;

(E) in order to lessen the negative impacts of natural gas leaks from underground storage facilities, recommendations on how to improve—

(i) the response to a future leak; and

(ii) coordination between all appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies in the response to the Aliso Canyon natural gas leak and future natural gas leaks;

(F) an analysis of the potential for a similar natural gas leak to occur at other underground natural gas storage facilities in the United States;

(G) recommendations on how to prevent any future natural gas leaks;

(H) recommendations on whether to continue operations at Aliso Canyon and other underground storage facilities in close proximity to residential populations based on an assessment of the risk of a future natural gas leak; and

(I) a recommendation on information that is not currently collected but that would be in the public interest to collect and distribute to agencies and institutions for the continued study and monitoring of natural gas storage infrastructure in the United States.

(3) **PUBLICATION.**—The final report under paragraph (1) shall be made available to the public in an electronically accessible format.

(4) **FINDINGS.**—If, before the final report is submitted under paragraph (1), the task force finds methods to solve the natural gas leak at Aliso Canyon, finds methods to better protect the affected communities, or finds methods to help prevent other leaks, the task force shall immediately submit such findings to the entities described in subparagraphs (A) through (J) of paragraph (1).

(d) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums as may be necessary.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 3, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 3, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SR—

253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 3, 2016, at 9:45 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 3, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Free Trade Agreement Implementation: Lessons from the Past."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 3, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "The Path Forward in Libya."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 3, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Dogs of DHS: How Canine Programs Contribute to Homeland Security."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 3, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room 428A of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled "The Impacts of Federal Fisheries Management on Small Businesses."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 3, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room 345 of the Cannon House Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 3, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room SH-219 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SECURITIES, INSURANCE, AND INVESTMENT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 3, 2016, to conduct a hearing entitled "Regulatory Reforms To Improve Equity Market Structure."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SAFE PIPES ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 370, S. 2276.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2276) to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide enhanced safety in pipeline transportation, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; REFERENCES; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Securing America's Future Energy: Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety Act" or the "SAFE PIPES Act".

(b) REFERENCES TO TITLE 49, UNITED STATES CODE.—Except as otherwise expressly provided, wherever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of title 49, United States Code.

(c) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; references; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Authorization of appropriations.
- Sec. 3. Regulatory updates.
- Sec. 4. Hazardous materials identification numbers.
- Sec. 5. Statutory preference.
- Sec. 6. Natural gas integrity management review.
- Sec. 7. Hazardous liquid integrity management review.
- Sec. 8. Technical safety standards committees.
- Sec. 9. Inspection report information.
- Sec. 10. Pipeline odorization study.
- Sec. 11. Improving damage prevention technology.
- Sec. 12. Workforce of Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.

Sec. 13. Research and development.

Sec. 14. Information sharing system.

Sec. 15. Nationwide integrated pipeline safety regulatory database.

Sec. 16. Underground natural gas storage facilities.

Sec. 17. Joint inspection and oversight.

Sec. 18. Response plans.

Sec. 19. High consequence areas.

Sec. 20. Surface transportation security review.

Sec. 21. Small scale liquefied natural gas facilities.

Sec. 22. Report on natural gas leak reporting.

Sec. 23. Comptroller General review of State policies relating to natural gas leaks.

Sec. 24. Provision of pipeline oil spill response plans to congressional committees.

Sec. 25. Consultation with FERC as part of pre-filing procedures and permitting process for new natural gas pipeline infrastructure.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) GAS AND HAZARDOUS LIQUID.—Section 60125(a) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking "there is authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Transportation for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015, from fees collected under section 60301, \$90,679,000, of which \$4,746,000 is for carrying out such section 12 and \$ 36,194,000 is for making grants." and inserting the following: "there are authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Transportation from fees collected under section 60301—

"(A) \$127,060,000 for fiscal year 2016, of which \$9,325,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$42,515,000 shall be expended for making grants;

"(B) \$129,671,000 for fiscal year 2017, of which \$9,418,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$42,941,000 shall be expended for making grants;

"(C) \$132,334,000 for fiscal year 2018, of which \$9,512,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$43,371,000 shall be expended for making grants; and

"(D) \$135,051,000 for fiscal year 2019, of which \$9,607,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$43,805,000 shall be expended for making grants."; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking "there is authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015 from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund to carry out the provisions of this chapter related to hazardous liquid and section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101 note; Public Law 107-355), \$18,573,000, of which \$2,174,000 is for carrying out such section 12 and \$4,558,000 is for making grants." and inserting the following: "there are authorized to be appropriated from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund to carry out the provisions of this chapter related to hazardous liquid and section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101 note; Public Law 107-355)—"

"(A) \$19,890,000 for fiscal year 2016, of which \$3,108,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$8,708,000 shall be expended for making grants;

"(B) \$20,288,000 for fiscal year 2017, of which \$3,139,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$8,795,000 shall be expended for making grants;

"(C) \$20,694,000 for fiscal year 2018, of which \$3,171,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$8,883,000 shall be expended for making grants; and

"(D) \$21,108,000 for fiscal year 2019, of which \$3,203,000 shall be expended for carrying out such section 12 and \$8,972,000 shall be expended for making grants.".

(b) EMERGENCY RESPONSE GRANTS.—Section 60125(b)(2) is amended by striking "2012 through 2015" and inserting "2016 through 2019".

(c) ONE-CALL NOTIFICATION PROGRAMS.—Section 6107 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “\$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015” and inserting “\$1,060,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2019”; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking “2012 through 2015” and inserting “2016 through 2019”.

(d) STATE DAMAGE PREVENTION PROGRAMS.—Section 60134(i) is amended by striking “2012 through 2015” and inserting “2016 through 2019”.

(e) COMMUNITY PIPELINE SAFETY INFORMATION GRANTS.—Section 60130(c) is amended by striking “2012 through 2015” and inserting “2016 through 2019”.

(f) PIPELINE INTEGRITY PROGRAM.—Section 12(f) of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101 note) is amended by striking “2012 through 2015” and inserting “2016 through 2019”.

SEC. 3. REGULATORY UPDATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 90 days thereafter until a final rule has been issued for each of the requirements described under paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), the Secretary of Transportation shall submit a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives regarding the status of a final rule for—

(1) regulations required under the Pipeline Safety Regulatory Certainty and Job Creation Act of 2011 (Public Law 112–90; 125 Stat. 1904) for which no interim final rule or direct final rule has been issued;

(2) any regulation relating to pipeline safety required by law, other than a regulation described under paragraph (1), for which for more than 2 years after the date of the enacting statute or statutory deadline no interim final rule or direct final rule has been issued; and

(3) any other pipeline safety rulemaking categorized as significant.

(b) CONTENTS.—Each report under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a description of the work plan for the outstanding regulation;

(2) an updated rulemaking timeline for the outstanding regulation;

(3) current staff allocations;

(4) any other information collection request with substantial changes;

(5) current data collection or research relating to the development of the rulemaking;

(6) current collaborative efforts with safety experts and other stakeholders;

(7) any resource constraints impacting the rulemaking process for the outstanding regulation; and

(8) any other details associated with the development of the rulemaking that impact the progress of the rulemaking.

SEC. 4. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS.

The Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall—

(1) rescind the implementation of the June 26, 2015 PHMSA interpretative letter (#14-0178); and

(2) reinstate paragraphs (4) and (5) of section 172.336(c) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, without the reference to “gasohol”, as was originally intended in the March 7, 2013 final rule (PHMSA–2011–0142).

SEC. 5. STATUTORY PREFERENCE.

The Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall prioritize the use of Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration resources for the completion of each outstanding statutory requirement, including requirements for rulemakings and information collection re-

quests, for a rulemaking described in a report under section 3 before beginning any new rulemaking required after the date of the enactment of this Act unless the Secretary of Transportation certifies to Congress that there is a significant need to move forward with a new rulemaking.

SEC. 6. NATURAL GAS INTEGRITY MANAGEMENT REVIEW.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the publication of a final rule regarding the safety of gas transmission pipelines (76 Fed. Reg. 53086), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to Congress regarding the natural gas integrity management program.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an analysis of the extent to which the natural gas integrity management program under section 60109(c) of title 49, United States Code, has improved the safety of natural gas transmission pipelines;

(2) an analysis or recommendations, including consideration of technical, operational, and economic feasibility, regarding changes to the program that would prevent inadvertent releases from pipelines and mitigate any adverse consequences of an inadvertent release, including changes to the current definition of high consequence area, or would expand integrity management beyond high consequence areas;

(3) a review of the cost effectiveness of the legacy class location regulations;

(4) an analysis of and recommendations regarding what impact pipeline features and conditions, including the age, condition, materials, and construction of a pipeline, should have on risk analysis of a particular pipeline;

(5) a description of any challenges affecting Federal or State regulators in their oversight of the program and how the challenges are being addressed; and

(6) a description of any challenges affecting the natural gas industry in complying with the program, and how the challenges are being addressed.

(c) DEFINITION OF HIGH CONSEQUENCE AREA.—In this section and in section 7, the term “high consequence area” means an area described in section 60109(a) of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 7. HAZARDOUS LIQUID INTEGRITY MANAGEMENT REVIEW.

(a) SAFETY STUDY.—Not later than 18 months after the publication of a final rule regarding the safety of hazardous liquid pipelines (80 Fed. Reg. 61610), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to Congress regarding the hazardous liquid integrity management program.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an analysis of the extent to which liquid pipeline integrity management in high consequence areas for operators of certain hazardous liquid pipeline facilities, as regulated under sections 195.450 and 195.452 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, has improved the safety of hazardous liquid pipelines;

(2) recommendations, including consideration of technical, operational, and economic feasibility, regarding changes to the program that could prevent inadvertent releases from pipelines and mitigate any adverse consequences of an inadvertent release, including changes to the current definition of high consequence area;

(3) an analysis of how surveying, assessment, mitigation, and monitoring activities, including real-time hazardous liquid pipeline monitoring during significant flood events and information sharing with other Federal agencies, are being used to address risks associated with the dynamic and unique nature of rivers, flood plains, and lakes;

(4) an analysis of and recommendations regarding what impact pipeline features and conditions, including the age, condition, materials, and construction of a pipeline, should have on risk analysis of a particular pipeline and what changes to the definition of high consequence area could be made to improve pipeline safety; and

(5) a description of any challenges affecting Federal or State regulators in their oversight of the program and how the challenges are being addressed.

SEC. 8. TECHNICAL SAFETY STANDARDS COMMITTEES.

Section 60115(b)(4)(A) is amended by striking “State commissioners. The Secretary shall consult with the national organization of State commissions before selecting those 2 individuals.” and inserting “State officials. The Secretary shall consult with national organizations representing State commissioners or governors when making a selection under this subparagraph.”

SEC. 9. INSPECTION REPORT INFORMATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the completion of a pipeline safety inspection, the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, or the State authority certified under section 60105 of title 49, United States Code, shall—

(1) conduct a post-inspection briefing with the operator outlining concerns, and to the extent practicable, provide written preliminary findings of the inspection; or

(2) issue to the operator a final report, notice of amendment of plans or procedures, safety order, or corrective action order, or such other applicable report, notice, or order.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall submit an annual report to Congress regarding—

(A) the actions that the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration has taken to ensure that inspections by State authorities provide effective and timely oversight; and

(B) statistics relating to the timeliness of the actions described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a).

(2) CESSATION OF EFFECTIVENESS.—Paragraph (1) shall cease to be effective on September 30, 2019.

SEC. 10. PIPELINE ODORIZATION STUDY.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives that assesses—

(1) the feasibility of odorizing all combustible gas in transportation;

(2) the impacts of the odorization of all combustible gas in transportation on manufacturers, agriculture, and other end users; and

(3) the relative benefits and costs associated with odorizing all combustible gas in transportation compared to using other methods to mitigate pipeline leaks.

SEC. 11. IMPROVING DAMAGE PREVENTION TECHNOLOGY.

(a) STUDY.—The Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with stakeholders, shall conduct a study on improving existing damage prevention programs through technological improvements in location, mapping, excavation, and communications practices to prevent accidental excavation damage to a pipe or its coating, including considerations of technical, operational, and economic feasibility and existing damage prevention programs.

(b) CONTENTS.—The study under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an identification of any methods that could improve existing damage prevention programs through location and mapping practices

or technologies in an effort to reduce unintended releases caused by excavation;

(2) an analysis of how increased use of GPS digital mapping technologies, predictive analytic tools, public awareness initiatives including one-call initiatives, the use of mobile devices, and other advanced technologies could supplement existing one-call notification and damage prevention programs to reduce the frequency and severity of incidents caused by excavation damage;

(3) an identification of any methods that could improve excavation practices or technologies in an effort to reduce pipeline damages;

(4) an analysis of the feasibility of a national data repository for pipeline excavation accident data that creates standardized data models for storing and sharing pipeline accident information; and

(5) an identification of opportunities for stakeholder engagement in preventing excavation damage.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall submit a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives regarding the study under this section, including recommendations, that include the consideration of technical, operational, and economic feasibility, on how to incorporate, into existing damage prevention programs, technological improvements and practices that may help prevent accidental excavation damage.

SEC. 12. WORKFORCE OF PIPELINE AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SAFETY ADMINISTRATION.

(a) **REVIEW.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall submit to Congress a review of Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration staff resource management, including geographic allocation plans, hiring challenges, and expected retirement rates and strategies. The review shall include recommendations to address hiring challenges, training needs, and any other identified staff resource challenges.

(b) CRITICAL HIRING NEEDS.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Beginning on the date on which the review is submitted under subsection (a), the Administrator may certify to Congress, not less frequently than annually, that a severe shortage of qualified candidates or a critical hiring need exists for a position or group of positions in the Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration.

(2) **DIRECT HIRE AUTHORITY.**—Notwithstanding sections 3309 through 3318 of title 5, United States Code, the Administrator, after making a certification under paragraph (1), may hire a candidate for the position or candidates for the group of positions, as applicable.

(3) **TERMINATIONS OF EFFECTIVENESS.**—The direct hire authority provided under paragraph (2) shall terminate on September 30, 2019.

SEC. 13. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In developing a research and development program plan under paragraph (3) of section 12(d) of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101 note), the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration, in consultation with the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology, shall—

(1) detail compliance with the consultation requirement under paragraph (2) of such section;

(2) provide opportunities for joint research ventures with non-Federal entities, whenever practicable and appropriate, to leverage limited Federal research resources; and

(3) permit collaborative research and development projects with appropriate non-Federal organizations.

(b) **COLLABORATIVE SAFETY RESEARCH REPORT.**—Section 60124(a)(6) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) research activities in collaboration with non-Federal entities, including the intended improvements to safety technology, inspection technology, operator response time, and emergency responder incident response time.”.

SEC. 14. INFORMATION SHARING SYSTEM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall convene a working group to consider the development of a voluntary no-fault information sharing system to encourage collaborative efforts to improve inspection information feedback and information sharing with the purpose of improving natural gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipeline integrity risk analysis.

(b) **MEMBERSHIP.**—The working group described in subsection (a) shall include representatives from—

(1) the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration;

(2) industry stakeholders, including operators of pipeline facilities, inspection technology vendors, and pipeline inspection organizations;

(3) safety advocacy groups;

(4) research institutions;

(5) State public utility commissions or State officials responsible for pipeline safety oversight;

(6) State pipeline safety inspectors; and

(7) labor representatives.

(c) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—The working group described in subsection (a) shall consider and provide recommendations, if applicable, to the Secretary on—

(1) the need for and the identification of a system to ensure that dig verification data is shared with inline inspection operators to the extent consistent with the need to maintain proprietary and security sensitive data in a confidential manner to improve pipeline safety and inspection technology;

(2) ways to encourage the exchange of pipeline inspection information and the development of advanced pipeline inspection technologies and enhanced risk analysis;

(3) opportunities to share data, including dig verification data between operators of pipeline facilities and in-line inspector vendors to expand knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of the different types of in-line inspection technology and methodologies;

(4) options to create a secure system that protects proprietary data while encouraging the exchange of pipeline inspection information and the development of advanced pipeline inspection technologies and enhanced risk analysis; and

(5) regulatory, funding, and legal barriers to sharing the information described in paragraphs (1) through (4).

(d) **FACA.**—The working group shall not be subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

(e) **PUBLICATION.**—The Secretary shall publish the recommendations provided under subsection (c) on a publicly available website.

SEC. 15. NATIONWIDE INTEGRATED PIPELINE SAFETY REGULATORY DATABASE.

(a) **REPORT.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall submit a report to Congress on the feasibility of a national integrated pipeline safety regulatory inspection database to improve communication and col-

laboration between the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration and State pipeline regulators.

(b) **CONTENTS.**—The report under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a description of any efforts currently underway to test a secure information-sharing system for the purpose described in subsection (a);

(2) a description of any progress in establishing common standards for maintaining, collecting, and presenting pipeline safety regulatory inspection data, and a methodology for the sharing of the data;

(3) a description of any existing inadequacies or gaps in State and Federal inspection, enforcement, geospatial, or other pipeline safety regulatory inspection data;

(4) a description of the potential safety benefits of a national integrated pipeline database; and

(5) recommendations for how to implement a secure information-sharing system that protects proprietary and security sensitive information and data for the purpose described in subsection (a).

(c) **CONSULTATION.**—In preparing the report under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with stakeholders, including each State authority operating under a certification to regulate intrastate pipelines under section 60105 of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 16. UNDERGROUND NATURAL GAS STORAGE FACILITIES.

(a) **DEFINED TERM.**—Section 60101(a) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (21)(B), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (24), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in paragraph (25), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(27) ‘underground natural gas storage facility’ means a gas pipeline facility that stores gas in an underground facility, including—

“(A) a depleted hydrocarbon reservoir;

“(B) an aquifer reservoir; or

“(C) a solution mined salt cavern reservoir.”.

(b) **STANDARDS FOR UNDERGROUND NATURAL GAS STORAGE FACILITIES.**—Chapter 601 is amended by inserting after section 60103 the following:

“§60103A. Standards for underground natural gas storage facilities

“(a) **MINIMUM UNIFORM SAFETY STANDARDS.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of the SAFE PIPES Act, the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall issue minimum uniform safety standards, incorporating, to the extent practicable, consensus standards for the operation, environmental protection, and integrity management of underground natural gas storage facilities.

“(b) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—In developing uniform safety standards under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

“(1) consider the economic impacts of the regulations on individual gas customers to the extent practicable;

“(2) ensure that the regulations do not have a significant economic impact on end users to the extent practicable; and

“(3) consider existing consensus standards.

“(c) **USER FEES.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—A fee shall be imposed on an entity operating an underground natural gas storage facility to which this section applies. Any such fee imposed shall be collected before the end of the fiscal year to which it applies.

“(2) **MEANS OF COLLECTION.**—The Secretary shall prescribe procedures to collect fees under this subsection. The Secretary may use a department, agency, or instrumentality of the United

States Government or of a State or local government to collect the fee and may reimburse the department, agency, or instrumentality a reasonable amount for its services.

“(3) USE OF FEES.—

“(A) ACCOUNT.—There is established an underground natural gas storage facility safety account in the Pipeline Safety Fund established under section 60301, in the Treasury of the United States.

“(B) USE OF FEES.—A fee collected under this subsection—

“(i) shall be deposited in the underground natural gas storage facility safety account; and

“(ii) if the fee is related to an underground natural gas storage facility, may be used only for an activity related to underground natural gas storage safety under this section.

“(C) LIMITATION.—Amounts collected under this subsection shall be made available only to the extent provided in advance in an appropriation law for an activity related to underground natural gas storage safety.

“(d) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section may be construed to affect any Federal regulation relating to gas pipeline facilities that is in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the SAFE PIPES Act.

“(2) LIMITATIONS.—Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize the Secretary—

“(A) to prescribe the location of an underground natural gas storage facility; or

“(B) to require the Secretary’s permission to construct a facility referred to in subparagraph (A).”

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 601 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 60103 the following:

“60103A. Standards for underground natural gas storage facilities.”.

SEC. 17. JOINT INSPECTION AND OVERSIGHT.

To ensure the safety of pipeline transportation, the Secretary of Transportation shall coordinate with States to ensure safety through the following:

(1) At the request of a State authority, the Secretary shall allow for a certified state authority under section 60105 of title 49, United States Code, to participate in the inspection of an interstate pipeline facility.

(2) Where appropriate, may provide temporary authority for a certified State authority under that section to participate in oversight of interstate pipeline safety transportation to ensure proper safety oversight and prevent an adverse impact on public safety.

SEC. 18. RESPONSE PLANS.

In preparing or reviewing a response plan under part 194 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration and an operator shall each consider, to the maximum extent practicable, the impact of a worse case discharge of oil, or the substantial threat of such a discharge, into or on any navigable waters or adjoining shorelines that may be covered in whole or in part by ice.

SEC. 19. HIGH CONSEQUENCE AREAS.

The Secretary of Transportation shall revise section 195.6(b) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations to explicitly state that the Great Lakes are a USA ecological resource (as defined in section 195.6(b) of that title) for purposes of determining whether a pipeline is in a high consequence area (as defined in section 195.450 of that title).

SEC. 20. SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY REVIEW.

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to Con-

gress on the staffing, resource allocation, oversight strategy, and management of the Transportation Security Administration’s pipeline security program and other surface transportation programs. The report shall include information on the coordination between the Transportation Security Administration, other Federal stakeholders, and industry.

SEC. 21. SMALL SCALE LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS FACILITIES.

(a) DEFINED TERM.—Section 60101(a), as amended by section 16, is further amended by inserting after paragraph (25) the following:

“(26) ‘small scale liquefied natural gas facility’ means an intrastate liquefied natural gas facility (other than a peak shaving facility) that produces liquefied natural gas for—

“(A) use as a fuel in the United States; or
“(B) transportation in the United States by a means other than a pipeline facility; and”.

(b) SITING STANDARDS FOR SMALL SCALE LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS FACILITIES.—Section 60103(a) is amended to read as follows:

“(a) LOCATION STANDARDS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe minimum safety standards for deciding on the location of a new liquefied natural gas pipeline facility or small scale liquefied natural gas facility.

“(2) LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS FACILITIES.—In prescribing a minimum safety standard for deciding on the location of a new liquefied natural gas facility, the Secretary of Transportation shall consider—

“(A) the kind and use of the facility;

“(B) the existing and projected population and demographic characteristics of the location;

“(C) the existing and proposed land uses near the location;

“(D) the natural physical aspects of the location;

“(E) medical, law enforcement, and fire prevention capabilities near the location that can cope with a risk caused by the facility; and

“(F) the need to encourage remote siting.

“(3) SMALL SCALE LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS FACILITIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of the SAFE PIPES Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe minimum safety standards for small scale liquefied natural gas facilities.

“(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In prescribing minimum safety standards under this paragraph, the Secretary shall consider—

“(i) the value of establishing risk-based approaches;

“(ii) the benefit of incorporating industry standards and best practices;

“(iii) the need to encourage the use of best available technology; and

“(iv) the factors prescribed in paragraph (2), as appropriate.”.

SEC. 22. REPORT ON NATURAL GAS LEAK REPORTING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall submit to Congress a report on the metrics provided to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration and other Federal and State agencies related to lost and unaccounted for natural gas from distribution pipelines and systems.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following elements:

(1) An examination of different reporting requirements or standards for lost and unaccounted for natural gas to different agencies, the reasons for any such discrepancies, and recommendations for harmonizing and improving the accuracy of reporting.

(2) An analysis of whether separate or alternative reporting could better measure the

amounts and identify the location of lost and unaccounted for natural gas from natural gas distribution systems.

(3) A description of potential safety issues associated with natural gas that is lost and unaccounted for from natural gas distribution systems.

(4) An assessment of whether alternate reporting and measures will resolve any safety issues identified under paragraph (3), including an analysis of the potential impact, including potential savings, on rate payers and end users of natural gas products of such reporting and measures.

(c) CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS.—If the Administrator determines that alternate reporting structures or recommendations included in the report required under subsection (a) would significantly improve the reporting and measurement of lost and unaccounted for gas or safety of systems, the Administrator shall, not later than 180 days after making such determination, issue regulations, as the Administrator determines appropriate, to implement the recommendations.

SEC. 23. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW OF STATE POLICIES RELATING TO NATURAL GAS LEAKS.

(a) REVIEW.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a State-by-State review of State-level policies that—

(1) encourage the repair and replacement of leaking natural gas distribution pipelines or systems that pose a safety threat, such as timelines to repair leaks and limits on cost recovery from ratepayers; and

(2) that may create barriers for entities to conduct work to repair and replace leaking natural gas pipelines or distribution systems.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration a report summarizing the findings of the review conducted under subsection (a) and making recommendations on Federal or State policies or best practices that may improve safety by accelerating the repair and replacement of natural gas pipelines or systems that are leaking or releasing natural gas, including policies within the jurisdiction of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. The report shall consider the potential impact, including potential savings, of the implementation of its recommendations on ratepayers or end users of the natural gas pipeline system.

(c) CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS.—If the Comptroller General makes recommendations in the report submitted under subsection (a) on Federal or State policies or best practices within the jurisdiction of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, the Administrator shall, not later than 90 days after such submission, review such recommendations and report to Congress on the feasibility of implementing such recommendations. If the Administrator determines that the recommendations would significantly improve pipeline safety, the Administrator shall, not later than 180 days after making such determination and in coordination with the heads of other relevant agencies as appropriate, issue regulations, as the Administrator determines appropriate, to implement the recommendations.

SEC. 24. PROVISION OF PIPELINE OIL SPILL RESPONSE PLANS TO CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall, upon request of the Chairman or Ranking Member of an appropriate congressional committee, provide to such committee full and unredacted copies of oil spill response plans.

(b) *APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.*—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(1) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 25. CONSULTATION WITH FERC AS PART OF PRE-FILING PROCEDURES AND PERMITTING PROCESS FOR NEW NATURAL GAS PIPELINE INFRASTRUCTURE.

The Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall consult with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission during its pre-filing procedures and permitting process for new natural gas pipeline infrastructure to ensure the protection of people and the environment from the risks of hazardous materials transportation.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be withdrawn; the Fischer substitute amendment be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported substitute amendment was withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 3427) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under “Text of Amendments.”)

The bill (S. 2276), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

WORLD LYMPHEDEMA DAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 389.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows: A resolution (S. Res. 389) designating March 6, 2016, as the first annual “World Lymphedema Day.”

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Hearing no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 389) was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. I further ask unanimous consent that the preamble be agreed to and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 390, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows: A resolution (S. Res. 390) designating March 3, 2016 as “World Wildlife Day.”

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 390) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

**ORDERS FOR MONDAY,
MARCH 7, 2016**

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m., Monday, March 7; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; finally, that at 4 p.m., the Senate resume consideration of S. 524.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

**ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY,
MARCH 7, 2016, AT 3 P.M.**

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:13 p.m., adjourned until Monday, March 7, 2016, at 3 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS

SUSAN LOUISE CASTANEDA, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NA-

TIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS FOR A TERM OF ONE YEAR. (NEW POSITION)

OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION

ROBERTO R. HERENCIA, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 17, 2018. (REAPPOINTMENT)

COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

CHRISTOPHER JAMES BRUMMER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A COMMISSIONER OF THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM EXPIRING JUNE 19, 2016, VICE MARK P. WETJEN, RESIGNED.

CHRISTOPHER JAMES BRUMMER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A COMMISSIONER OF THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 19, 2021. (REAPPOINTMENT)

BRIAN D. QUINTENZ, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A COMMISSIONER OF THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING APRIL 13, 2020, VICE SCOTT O'MALIA, RESIGNED.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

ANDREW R. MCIVER
GERARD C. PHILIP

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

MICHAEL L. HIPP

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be commander

JASON A. GRANT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUAL FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

RONALD H. NELLEN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

BRIAN D. HENNESSY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

ASHLEY A. HOCKYCKO

WITHDRAWALS

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on March 3, 2016 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nominations:

THERESE W. MCMILLAN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATOR, VICE PETER M. ROGOFF, RESIGNED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 8, 2015.

CASSANDRA Q. BUTTS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SEVENTIETH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2015.

BARBARA LEE, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SEVENTIETH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2015.

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SEVENTIETH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2015.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN RECOGNITION OF MARCH AS BLEEDING DISORDERS MONTH

HON. DAVID SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize March as the first Bleeding Disorders Awareness month. As my colleagues may know, bleeding disorders are a group of diseases which affect more than three million Americans and which have no known cure. These diseases, which include hemophilia, Von Willebrand disease or VWD, and other rare disorders, can take a heavy toll on their sufferers' standard of living and finances. However, despite these troubling realities, by raising awareness, it is my hope that through earlier diagnosis, we might prevent more complications, unnecessary procedures, and disabilities so often caused by these diseases.

The most common bleeding disorders, hemophilia and VWD, are hereditary and caused by disorders in blood proteins meant to clot and stop bleeding. According to the Centers for Disease Control, as many as 400 babies are born with hemophilia each year. For hemophilia sufferers, their illness means that they require lifelong infusions of replacement clotting factor therapies. The financial burden for individuals with severe hemophilia are often \$250,000 a year or more. While the affordable care act limits annual out-of-pocket expenses to \$6,850 for individuals and \$13,700 for families, the high cost of clotting factor therapies means that those afflicted with the disease often pay these full amounts each year.

In the past we have seen just how vulnerable sufferers of bleeding disorders are to complications. When the nation's blood supply became contaminated with HIV during the 1980's, almost 90% of severe hemophilia sufferers became infected. Of those cases of HIV transmission, over 50% have since died of the disease.

Despite these tragic outcomes, there is reason for optimism. Thanks to federally funded Hemophilia Treatment Centers (HTCs), originally authorized by Congress in 1974, as many as 70% of hemophilia sufferers take advantage of specialized treatment through the multidisciplinary, comprehensive care in a network of HTCs. According to the CDC, mortality rates and hospitalization rates for bleeding complications from hemophilia were 40% lower among Americans who received treatment at HTCs. I am proud to say that Georgia hosts a total of four HTCs.

In addition, organizations such as the National Hemophilia Foundation have made it their mission to continue to raise awareness about rare bleeding disorders in the United States and abroad. So Mr. Speaker, today I

rise to recognize those who suffer from bleeding disorders and those who continue to work to create greater awareness of bleeding disorders.

HONORING A CHAMPION FROM THE STATE OF HOCKEY

HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my friend, and Elyite, Lt. Col. David Merhar for his many athletic achievements, service to his country, and passion for helping others pursue their goals.

On February 6th his West Point number 7 jersey was retired—one of the first three jerseys to ever be raised to the rafters of Tate Rink—in honor of his many accomplishments while playing for West Point's hockey team. During his senior season, he became the first NCAA hockey player to surpass 100 points in a season. The 57 goals and 50 assists that season made him the highest scoring NCAA hockey player at the time and today his 107 points in one season remains 6th all-time in NCAA history.

After graduating from West Point, Dave went on to a fulfilling 35 year career in government service, including 23 years in active military duty and serving as a special assistant to then General Alexander Haig stationed at NATO headquarters in Belgium. Dave's hard work and dedication helped to keep our country safe.

Today Dave continues in public service by helping me select candidates for service academy nominations. I truly appreciate the time he sets aside every year to help me nominate students to service academies, such as West Point, so they can pursue their goals just like Dave.

Once again thank you Dave for your service to our country, and congratulations on this historic achievement.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIVE DAUGHTERS OF THE GOLDEN WEST PARLOR 210 IN FORT BRAGG, CALIFORNIA

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th anniversary of the Native Daughters of the Golden West Parlor 210 in Fort Bragg, California.

On March 2, 1916, twenty-seven women were initiated as charter members of the

newly formed parlor of the Native Daughters of the Golden West, a statewide fraternal and patriotic organization that has served the community and helped preserve the town's history for one hundred years.

Over the years, the Native Daughters of Fort Bragg Parlor has played an important role in raising awareness of Fort Bragg's unique history and in honoring important historical locations through plaques, volunteer work, and sharing the living history of the town with visitors and locals alike. They have helped Fort Bragg students further their education as well as countless other philanthropic efforts.

The longstanding dedication and commitment of the Fort Bragg members of the Native Daughters of the Golden West has created a legacy of service and historic preservation in Fort Bragg and Mendocino County. Please join me in acknowledging and expressing gratitude to the Native Daughters of the Golden West Parlor 210 in Fort Bragg, California, for a century of service.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF DORIS YOUNG HURLEY

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and accomplishments of Mrs. Doris Young Hurley. A beloved wife, sister, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, as well as an irreplaceable member of the community, Mrs. Hurley passed away on February 28th, 2016 at the age of 94.

Born in Buffalo, New York on May 27, 1921, Mrs. Hurley was raised on Humboldt Parkway on the East Side of Buffalo. One of nine children, she was a graduate of St. Mary Magdalene as well as St. Mary's Seminary. In her scholastic career she was extremely proud of an essay she wrote in 1933 titled "Why I am Proud to be an American" which won an Americanism Essay award.

Mrs. Hurley worked for American Airlines in the Buffalo airport after high school and during World War II, where she met her future husband Paul Bishop Hurley of Belmont, Massachusetts when he was transferred to Buffalo. They were married in January 1944, and were together sixty-two years until his passing in 2006.

In her spare time, Mrs. Hurley enjoyed many activities including sewing, crafts, dancing, and music. She was a dedicated fan of the Buffalo Bills.

A devoted mother, Mrs. Hurley's family brought her great joy. She is survived by her daughters, Mary Ann Tanski, Barbara Pacitti, Colleen Argus; sons Paul Jr., John, Daniel, Michael, William, and Timothy; 25 grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren. Paul Jr.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

served as President of Trocaire College from 1998 to 2012, and John has held the position of President of Canisius College since 2010.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to honor the memory of Mrs. Doris Y. Hurley, an adored mother, sister, and grandmother. I offer my deepest condolences to her family, friends, and loved ones.

HONORING MORGAN PARK HIGH
SCHOOL

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Morgan Park High School in Chicago, Illinois as it celebrates its 100th Anniversary.

The centennial celebration is a highly anticipated milestone for most organizations. However, only a select group gets the honor of actually celebrating one hundred years of existence and Morgan Park High School is now among them. Since its inception in 1916 when it opened its doors to less than 300 students, Morgan Park has been a champion for educational exceptionalism. Morgan Park is set apart during this momentous occasion as a bearer of academic excellence, a laboratory for stellar educators, and the training ground for talented and intellectually-stimulated students.

Mr. Speaker, the Mustang family is also a clan of notable alumni. Among them is physician, NASA Astronaut, and the first African-American woman in space Mae Jemison; Singer, songwriter, and record producer Jeremih; Actor Michael Colyar; Chicago Teachers Union and American Federation of Teachers leader Jacqueline B. Vaughn; Inventor James C. Bliss; and NFL Player Corbin Bryant—to name a few. Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if, amongst this list of notable alumni, I did not mention my dedicated and diligent Chief of Staff, Reverend Stanley Watkins.

The list of prestigious accomplishments that have emerged from the Mustang family is a testament of why Morgan Park High School is still standing 100 years strong. Mr. Speaker, 100 is a special number because it marks two significant transitions: the conclusion of one century and the beginning of a new one. While this is a time to celebrate the many victories and cherished moments of the passing century, it is also the moment in which we pause to reflect upon it critically to identify our shortcomings so that we can learn from them and better shape our future.

So, Mr. Speaker, this year we celebrate both our beginning and our becoming. We celebrate the struggles of the past 100 years and we embrace the challenge of the next 100 years. We commend the triumphant strides of the many leaders that have been birthed from this rich Mustang blood. We unleash the unbridled Mustang spirit upon those who are being groomed now and those who are still to come.

Mr. Speaker, therefore, we recognize this great achievement and commend Morgan Park High School for bestowing upon so many the opportunity of a lifetime; to pass through

its halls, to sit in its classrooms, and to play on its courts.

Go Mustangs and congratulations on reaching your centennial.

RECOGNIZING THE 75TH
ANNIVERSARY OF M&Ms

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Mars, Incorporated as they celebrate the 75th anniversary of M&Ms today, March 3, 2016.

Forrest Mars Sr., son of Mars founder, Franklin Mars, got the inspiration for M&Ms while running the family candy business in the United Kingdom. Mars encountered soldiers eating small chocolate candies encased in a hard shell as part of their rations. These hard shell chocolate candies resisted melting. Forrest Mars turned the concept into M&Ms and a world-renowned brand of candy. By the mid-1950s, M&Ms had become the number one candy in the United States.

Mars, Incorporated has five governing principles that deserve our recognition. First, they establish quality of their work as their first goal. Second, they require total responsibility from every member of their organization. Third, they seek out how to mutually serve everyone in a business relationship with them. Fourth, they strive to never waste resources. Fifth, as one of the world's largest family-owned companies, they embrace the freedom to do business with high standards.

After visiting M&Ms and Mars facilities in Central Florida and learning about their principle-based business model, I have come to respect this company. Mars is a quality, family-owned organization, and I wish M&Ms a happy 75th anniversary.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RENEE L. ELLMERS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on March 2, 2016, H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act, passed the U.S. House of Representatives with an overwhelming 406 "yea" votes. Had I been I present, I would have voted in favor of this legislation.

IN HONOR OF LIN SCHMALE

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lin Schmale, who recently retired from The Society of American Florists where she was senior director of government relations

and an advocate for flower and plant growers across the nation. Lin is someone known for tenacity and fearlessness—as well as collaboration and kindness. A walking encyclopedia of the federal bureaucracy, she has a long and well-documented history for promoting teamwork and partnerships to accomplish the sometimes seemingly impossible.

For 22 years, Lin fought for the floral industry on Capitol Hill and throughout countless federal agencies, bringing together diverse people, groups and agencies, and standing her ground on issues that directly affect the livelihood of growers, wholesalers, retailers and suppliers.

Known for her sharp intellect and her ability to grasp and then distill complex issues, Lin has played a lead role in two critically important areas: first, through her efforts, federal funds are now available to conduct important research on floral and nursery crops; and second, she has dedicated countless hours to ensure safe and efficient transportation of flowers and plants within the United States and across international borders.

When Lin started working at SAF, the Floral and Nursery Research Initiative (FNRI) had been created and was poised to be a source of needed funding for research across the country. While the structure was in place, and there was support in Congress and the USDA, the Initiative needed more visibility. However, putting her knowledge of the federal and political bureaucracy to work, and calling on a vast network of colleagues and peers on the Hill, Lin soon helped take the Initiative to the next level. What was initially a glimmer in the eyes of the industry soon became a multi-million dollar annual USDA research program that today funds a wide variety of research benefiting not only the floral and nursery industries but literally all of agriculture. And the U.S. Department of Agriculture has called the Initiative a model program for private and public sector collaboration.

As the international movement of floral products has increased, Lin's role in addressing pest and disease issues took on more importance.

When the pathogen *Ralstonia* first threatened to disrupt the country's supply of geraniums, Lin made sure the industry maintained a respectful yet loud voice in often difficult negotiations between the USDA, the Department of Homeland Security and other agricultural groups. Leveraging her deep connections in Washington, she brought interested parties together to craft a realistic and workable solution that protected the geranium industry first and foremost, but also addressed the needs of other agricultural groups and the federal government. That was no small feat, and some people have said, without exaggeration, that Lin saved the geranium industry in the United States.

Over the years, Lin has been a strong industry advocate and negotiator in many other similar situations. She has dealt with federal and state officials on a wide variety of other pest and disease issues that threatened to disrupt the flow of floral products. In working on these issues, Lin is often recognized because of her ability to get people to focus on the science of an issue and not only the politics. With that said, she knows politics in

Washington, D.C., and at the state level and uses her knowledge to help diffuse challenging situations and work toward solutions.

Through all of her interactions with government officials, Lin emphasizes candor and transparency. For that, people in both the industry and government place great trust in her word.

At The Society of American Florists, Lin dedicated herself to staging SAF's annual Congressional Action Days event, and helped to inform and educate SAF members on the key issues of the day. And she has also had a major role in developing its annual Pest and Production Management Conference, a must-see for scientists, researchers and growers. Lin was honored this year with SAF's John H. Walker Award for excellence in the field of association management and she also received the Executive Director's Award from the North American Plant Protection Organization for her collaborative work with regulatory officials from the United States, Mexico and Canada.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to rise and celebrate Lin's excellence in fighting for the floral industry every day on Capitol Hill and for her deep commitment to collaboration and partnerships.

HONORING THE BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF OSWEGO COUNTY

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the people and history of Oswego County, New York and celebrate the county's 200th Anniversary. The County of Oswego was established in March of 1816 through an act of the New York State Legislature. The county occupies 986 square miles of land on the southeastern shore of Lake Ontario.

The County of Oswego has played a significant role in the history of the Central New York region as well as our nation's history. Fort Ontario, overlooking Lake Ontario, in Oswego County, is one of our nation's most unique and historical landmarks. Fort Ontario is the only fort that has been involved in every war since the French and Indian War. During World War II, the Fort served as the nation's only Emergency Refugee Camp, sheltering nearly 1,000 refugees. The Fort is now a state historic site and operates as a museum, attracting tourists from across the country.

Fort Ontario is just one example of the great history in Oswego County. As Oswego County celebrates its bicentennial, I want to honor all who have helped make Oswego County great and thank everyone who has played a part in preserving the irreplaceable history of Oswego County.

DEBATE COACH OF THE YEAR: DAVE PRITSCHET

HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dave Pritschet, of Brainerd High School in Brainerd, Minnesota, who has been named 2016 Coach of the Year by the Minnesota Debate Teachers Association.

Dave built a great and growing debate program at Brainerd High School that has brought so much honor and recognition to his students and to our entire community. In fact, under Dave's guidance, the program has sent students to state and national debate tournaments in every year but one since 2000. So it's no wonder his fellow coaches saw fit to recognize those achievements with this year's award.

Though his students debate many things, they can all agree Coach Pritschet's knowledge and passion for the art of debate motivates them to strive for excellence. Moreover, the success Brainerd's debate team has earned and enjoyed is inspiring other schools throughout rural Minnesota to form debate teams where students learn to respectfully exchange ideas and opinions based on facts. That ability to speak clearly and eloquently will take them far in life; perhaps even to this very Chamber one day.

Once again, it is an honor to recognize with my colleagues Minnesota's 2016 Coach of the Year, Dave Pritschet.

BAKKEN U

HON. KEVIN CRAMER

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, the people of North Dakota have many admirable qualities. Throughout the history of my state, they have shown resourcefulness and perseverance as they have produced food to feed a hungry world and unlocked today's shale oil revolution.

With low oil prices bringing a slowdown in the energy sector, North Dakotans are again showing their resilience. Many are looking to improve themselves by gaining new skills and more education. Bakken U, an innovative new program from the North Dakota University System that is funded by the North Dakota Petroleum Council, is helping make that happen.

I want to congratulate Warren Logan of Dickinson, who left college a few years ago to work in North Dakota's oilfields. As the first recipient of a \$5,000 Bakken U scholarship, he will continue to work fulltime while also being a fulltime student, finishing the business administration degree he began to pursue years ago.

Warren is the first of many ambitious North Dakotans to take advantage of this unique Bakken U program. Bettering themselves with additional education is certain to benefit them and my entire state.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$19,090,880,799,021.63. We've added \$8,464,003,750,108.55 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

CELEBRATING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ART OF LIVING FOUNDATION

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Art of Living Foundation for its thirty-five years of promoting human values around the world and to wish them well as they kick off their World Culture Festival on March 11th in New Delhi, India. I'd also like to recognize all of the volunteers around the world and in New Delhi who have spent countless hours organizing this truly magnificent event.

As a United States Congresswoman, I am focused on improving the lives of girls and women across the globe. I applaud the Art of Living Foundation's programs that focus on empowering girls and women by giving them access to education, vocational skills training, and self-development programs. The vision and actions of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and the Foundation to empower marginalized girls and women is a positive force for strengthening our future.

The World Culture Festival will bring together individuals from 155 diverse countries to promote peace and unity. Thank you for your tireless work and for your commitment to making the world a more peaceful and harmonious place. Please accept my best wishes for a wonderful World Culture Festival and congratulations to the Art of Living Foundation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAN BENISHEK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 105, I was unavoidably detained and was unfortunately unable to vote in favor of H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act. As a doctor, I know how important it is to make sure that only qualified professionals are eligible for participating in health care programs

like Medicaid and CHIP. Had I been present, I would have voted aye.

BRIGADIER GENERAL SANDY BEST

HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great pride to honor my friend, Brigadier General Sandy Best, the first woman in the Minnesota National Guard to be promoted to the rank of General. In recognition of her extraordinary leadership and exemplary service to the Guard and to our Nation, she began her new command of the 133rd Airlift Wing and 148th Fighter Wing on February 25th.

In her many visits to my office, General Best has always been an outstanding advocate for the Minnesota National Guard. She exemplifies the best of what makes our National Guard so effective. In her former role as the Minnesota National Guard's Director of Government Relations she advocated for Minnesota's bases at the federal and state level, contributing greatly to making our state's bases some of America's premier defense operations.

Members of the Minnesota National Guard have been deployed around the world, and they always stand ready to help our region when natural disasters strike and people are in need of aid and assistance. I'm confident that both the 133rd Airlift Wing and 148th Fighter Wing are in strong hands under General Best's command. And I know she will continue her strong advocacy for the brilliant, highly trained and hardworking men and women of Minnesota's National Guard.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing General Sandy Best for her historic accomplishment and service to our great nation.

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATORS

HON. KEVIN CRAMER

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, one of the greatest challenges in public education is the integration of learning opportunities for exceptional children.

Dedicated parents, teachers, staff and administrators all contribute to the success of this effort. Today I congratulate Meredith Frisch, a paraprofessional at Westside Elementary School in West Fargo, who was recognized as Paraeducator of the Year by the North Dakota Council for Exceptional Children.

This award recognizes individuals who work to promote significant educational successes for students, a commitment to continued professional development and the highest standards of educational quality.

Meredith represents well all paraeducators in my state who dedicate their careers to working with exceptional students. She is known for her commitment to finding the best in all students, encouraging them to reach

above and beyond their potential all with a unique brand of compassion and humor.

She is a credit to all educators throughout North Dakota, and our state is better because of her devotion to exceptional students.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to attend House Roll Call Vote Numbers 71 through 78 on February 11, 2016. If present, I would have voted Yes on vote numbers 71, 73, 74, and 75 and voted No on vote numbers 72, 76, 77 and 78.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF OFFICER DAVID HOFFER

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life and memory of Officer David Hofer of the Euless, Texas Police Department. Officer Hofer was tragically killed while serving in the line of duty on March 1, 2016.

David's career as an officer began in 2009 after joining the New York Police Department. A native of Brooklyn, New York and a 2008 graduate of New York University, David fulfilled his lifelong dream of becoming a police officer soon after completing his degree. After dutifully serving the people of New York for five years, David relocated to North Texas where he accepted a position with the Euless Police Department.

David was an upstanding citizen of the community, and an outstanding police officer. He is remembered as a loving son, brother, fiancé, and hero. David's service and dedication to his neighbors, his community, and the City of Euless will never be forgotten. As we memorialize David's life within the halls of Congress, may we never forget his commitment and sacrifice for the safety and wellbeing of our community.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to stand here today to recognize a true hero. I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of Officer David Hofer.

IN HONOR OF JAMES KEHOE

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate James Kehoe on his recent retirement as Business Manager for the Plumbers & Pipefitters Local Union 322 of Winslow Township, New Jersey, after thirty-six years of

membership. Jim has had a lasting impact for generations to come and I would like to applaud him for his service.

Jim graduated from Rutgers University with a degree in Business Administration in 1979 and then joined the Local 322 Apprenticeship Program. He served his community tirelessly with the Camden County Improvement Authority and the Camden County United Way. As Vice President of the Southern New Jersey AFL-CIO, a board member of the Union Organization for Social Service and president of the Southern New Jersey Building Trades Council, Jim worked to improve the lives of working families in New Jersey.

As a trustee at Rowan University, a board member on the Senator Walter Rand Institute of Public Affairs at Rutgers University and as chair of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority, Jim has worked tirelessly to improve the lives of families and all of southern New Jersey. Jim has worked with multiple community service organizations, including the Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, Boy Scouts of America and the American Red Cross and I commend him for his social action and devotion to the betterment of our communities.

Mr. Speaker, James Kehoe is a great American whose dedication to community service is an inspiration to his family, friends, and our entire state. I join with his Plumbers & Pipefitters brothers and sisters and all of New Jersey in thanking him for his outstanding service and in wishing him continued success and prosperity in all his future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF H. MARIE SMITH'S 90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 90th birthday of H. Marie Smith, an institution in Monroe, Michigan.

Marie Smith, or Sweet Marie as she is known by many, was born on March 1st, 1926 in Monroe, Michigan, which remains her home to this day. She married William D. Smith on December 27th, 1947, and had four wonderful children; Mark, Paul W., Brian and Alison.

Marie Smith has been part of the fabric of the Monroe community for decades. As a young woman, she worked in the Betrus Market. This market was owned and operated by her parents for 47 years and was considered the "meeting place for the neighborhood". Marie lived in the building connected to the market until she married. In 1948, Marie and her husband cofounded the Monroe Community Players to produce theatrical productions for the people of Monroe and Southeast Michigan. To this day, the Monroe Community Players is still working as a nonprofit and volunteer organization to produce performances for the community. Even though "Sweet Marie" has retired, she still helps as a house manager for the Monroe Community Players.

To this day, she lives on her own, drives her own car, is active on social media and is critical in keeping people connected to ensure they are a part of the broader community. Her

children have made her proud. Mark was a respected attorney in Monroe. Paul W. is known throughout America as the voice of the Great Lakes on the number one radio station, WJR. Alison is well-known in the healthcare community as a senior executive with ProMedica.

H. Marie Smith has worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life for the people of Monroe through her support of and passion for the arts in Monroe. She continues the tradition of one of the staple markets and community gathering locations, serving as the glue that binds people. We celebrate her birthday with pride and gratitude for everything she has done for the good of her community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to celebrate the 90th birthday of my friend H. Marie Smith and wish her many more years of success.

MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS

HON. KEVIN CRAMER

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, North Dakota's exceptional quality of life has often been recognized by those who live in my state and those who wish they did.

The secret to this quality of life can be found in the quality of our people, the many individuals who dedicate their careers and volunteer time to making their communities better.

Today, I want to recognize Rebekah Christensen, director of the Richland-Wilkin Kinship Program. She was presented with this year's Outstanding Citizen Award by the Wahpeton Breckenridge Area Chamber of Commerce for her work as head of this program.

This Richland-Wilkin Kinship Program matches young people with volunteer adults. Its motto is "Mentors are ordinary people doing ordinary thing that produce extraordinary results." This motto holds true as well with dynamic leaders like Rebekah, her mentor volunteers and board members, and the many community members who support the program financially and with community engagement opportunities.

They are all contributing to supporting young people in the Wahpeton-Breckenridge area and helping them transition into successful adults.

55TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEACE CORPS

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join in the celebration of the 55th Anniversary of the Peace Corps.

Since the program's establishment on March 1st, 1961 by President John F. Kennedy, the Peace Corps has been working to promote peace and friendship, and to help na-

tions tackle some of the most pressing challenges they face. As we celebrate, let's remember that the Peace Corps is now active in over 130 nations and its volunteers remain committed to tackling issues such as climate change, pandemic disease, food security, and gender inequality and empowerment.

In the 55 years since its' founding, over 220,000 U.S. citizens, including current Members of Congress, have served their nation in the Peace Corps. And many more are eager to serve. In 2015, the Peace Corps received its highest number of applications (over 23,000) since 1975.

Peace Corps volunteers go abroad for deployments of 2 years aid in the social and economic developments in some of the world's poorest countries. They serve as teachers and health care providers in communities that lack access to various necessities like food, water, education, healthcare, equality and disease prevention. They also help our nation by becoming the face of America to those they interact with while themselves gaining a better understanding of the culture and people of other nations. Volunteers often immerse themselves in the communities that they are sent to and play a unique role in shaping the lives of the individuals permanently living there.

I want to take a moment to congratulate the 22 residents of my congressional district who currently serve as Peace Corps volunteers. They have been deployed to South Africa, Indonesia, Ethiopia, and Ecuador, just to name a few. I wish these young men and women the best of luck as they begin to make a difference in the communities they have been deployed to. And I have no doubt that these talented and skilled young people will make an incredible difference as Peace Corps volunteers.

I strongly support the Peace Corps. The Peace Corps represents the best of America and the undimmed potential of "soft power" initiatives that help make our world a better place. In the midst of poverty and through war and conflict, the Peace Corps has shown the world a hopeful, uplifting side of America that reflects our fundamental values of peace, prosperity, and progress. The Peace Corps will be a vital part of the U.S. diplomatic and development response and a sign of our nation's long term commitment to help alleviate suffering around the globe.

Let us work to keep this program strong and in business for another 55 years.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, on February 12, 2016, I was unable to attend House Roll Call Vote Numbers 79 through 82. If present, I would have voted Yes on vote numbers 79 and 82 and voted No on vote numbers 80 and 81.

RECOGNIZING THE ANNIVERSARY OF POGROMS AGAINST ARME- NIANS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the twenty-eighth anniversary of the pogroms against people of Armenian descent in Sumgait, Azerbaijan.

Peaceful demonstrations descended into chaos when Azerbaijani rioters attacked Armenian men and women advocating for democracy on February 27, 1988. After three days of unspeakable violence, hundreds of Armenians lost their lives and thousands more no longer had a place to call home.

Undeterred by Soviet oppression, the Armenian community and its dedication to democratic self-determination sparked a movement that finally helped bring an end to the dictatorship of the Soviet Union. The courage demonstrated by the Armenian people of Nagorno Karabakh in demanding their rights even after all of the adversity is admirable and should never be forgotten.

Today, authoritarian leaders in Azerbaijan continue to aggravate efforts by the OSCE Minsk Group to achieve lasting peace in Nagorno Karabakh and the surrounding region. This ancient Christian land has borne witness to several crimes against humanity over the years, and I have hope the United States will take on its moral responsibility to ensure the people of Armenia do not live in fear.

On behalf of the thousands of Armenian Americans living in my congressional district, I invite my colleagues to stand with me and the proud people of Nagorno Karabakh in remembering the lives lost and reinvigorating our commitment to freedom and democracy.

CELEBRATING THE CAREER AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF BILL BAILEY

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great man, and an icon of our Houston community, retired Harris County Precinct 8 Constable Bill Bailey.

Bill Bailey has been the voice of RodeoHouston for the past three decades. He has brought unparalleled enthusiasm and depth of expertise to his craft, honed by years of experience. Bill has been involved with the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo for over 50 years, where he serves as both a board member and a lifetime vice president.

Bill's iconic voice and announcing talent were honed by an equally prodigious career in broadcast radio, which saw Bill inducted into the Country Radio Broadcasters Hall of Fame in 2010. Through the medium of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, Bill Bailey has also been instrumental in raising millions of dollars for educational scholarships to benefit

Texas area youth and to enrich countless other worthy causes across Southeast Texas.

Let me extend my most hearty congratulations to Bill Bailey as he retires from RodeoHouston and turns the page on another chapter in his storied life.

RECOGNIZING YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

HON. KEVIN CRAMER

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, North Dakota's research universities are nurturing bright students in a variety of programs that encourage them to learn, grow, innovate and even change the world.

Today, I congratulate North Dakota State University student Andrew Dalman, a graduate student in the mechanical engineering program. He has been recognized by the U.S. Society of Manufacturing Engineering as one of the "30 under 30 Brightest Manufacturing Engineers." And again, Forbes magazine has put Andrew on its list of "30 Under 30 in Manufacturing and Engineering in 2016."

Andy has helped develop an affordable 3D-printed prosthetic arm for children. He was on an NDSU team designing a new shape and type of ceramic dental implant. Now he is focusing on an advanced bone technology project to make medical testing cheaper, safer and more ethical.

The talents of young entrepreneurs and innovators like Andy bring hope and promise to our world as they focus their bright minds on some of the greatest challenges and opportunities facing us today. This is the highest calling of our state's higher education system, especially our outstanding research universities, and I commend all who are part of it.

IN RECOGNITION OF ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY'S 125TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise in recognition of the 125th Anniversary of Elizabeth City State University—a public, historically black college in North Carolina's First Congressional District.

On March 3, 1891, Representative Hugh Cale, an African American member of the North Carolina General Assembly from Pasquotank County sponsored House Bill 383, which established a normal school to train African Americans to become primary school teachers. Dr. Peter W. Moore, a former slave, served as the school's first Principal, and then President until his retirement in 1928.

Dr. John Henry Bias became the school's second president in 1928 and was responsible for spearheading efforts to implement a baccalaureate program.

In 1937, the school's name was officially changed to Elizabeth City State Teachers College after receiving approval from state officials to become a four year school. The first Bachelor of Science degrees in Elementary Education were awarded in 1939.

In 1963, the school's name was changed to Elizabeth City State College and was ultimately named Elizabeth City State University in 1969 when the school began awarding graduate degrees. When the University of North Carolina System was formed in 1972, Elizabeth City State University was one of the 16 public institutions to be granted membership.

Nearly 2,500 students attend ECSU. The university now offers 28 undergraduate degrees and 4 graduate programs of study in fields like aviation, natural sciences, arts, mathematics, business, and economics. The ECSU Vikings compete in the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) Division II and have produced many star athletes over the years.

Elizabeth City State University, like many other Historically Black Colleges and Universities, has played an important part in African American culture, the history of North Carolina, and has contributed to the overall success of American higher education.

For well over a century, ECSU has lived up to its motto "To Live is to Learn" by producing lifelong learners and affording generations of North Carolinians with the tools necessary to be leaders in our global society.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and congratulating Elizabeth City State University for 125 years of serving and educating African Americans seeking higher education in my state.

RECOGNIZING DAN EARL JONES

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate Dan Earl Jones, Chairman of the South Carolina Cable Television Association from 2015–2016 and Vice President of Government Relations and Time Warner Cable of South Carolina, on his upcoming retirement.

In over 30 years as a community advocate in the state of South Carolina, Dan has achieved an exemplary and successful career. He has served with numerous organizations including the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, the Columbia and Charleston Optimist Clubs, the Brookland-Cayce High School Education Foundation, and the Lexington Medical Center Board of Directors. A graduate of Charleston Southern University, he also currently serves on its Board of Visitors. I am grateful for his admirable service and dedication to the community.

While having the opportunity to serve in the South Carolina Senate and now Congress receiving briefings from Dan, I always could count on his integrity and honesty.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and so I missed Roll Call vote number 105 regarding the "Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act" (H.R. 3716). Had I been present, I would have voted "Yes".

TRIBUTE TO BISHOP JAMES L. DAVIS

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a fifth generation African Methodist Episcopal minister, Presiding Prelate, Bishop James Levert Davis on the end of his outstanding tenure as the Presiding Prelate of the 9th African Methodist Episcopal District and for his dedicated and distinguished service to the State of Alabama.

Bishop Davis is the son of the late Mother Dorothy Lynch, the late Reverend Sam Davis and Mother Alma Davis. He is married to his partner in ministry, Arelis Beevers Davis. They are the proud parents of Dr. Nicole Davis Pass and Damarys Monique Burnett; and the proud grandparents of Patrick James Pass, Ashton James Pass, Baron Christopher Valentino Burnett and Noel Olivia Burnett.

Bishop Davis attended both public and private schools in Alabama and received the call to ministry at age 12. Bishop Davis is a graduate of Morris Brown College in Atlanta, Georgia where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree and later matriculated at Turner Theological Seminary where he earned his Master of Divinity degree. He also received a Doctorate of Ministry degree from the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia. Bishop Davis' leadership roles have included the 123rd Bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He was appointed to the 19th Episcopal District which encompassed the Republic of South Africa. Bishop Davis furthered the legacy of self-help and self-reliance through his ministry during his time living on the continent of Africa from 2004 to 2008.

Bishop Davis has preached and taught for over 45 years and has served the African Methodist church and community faithfully. His exemplary work and commitment to his call has earned the respect and admiration of fellow ministers, church members, government leaders and our community.

It was under the leadership of Bishop Davis that the 9th Episcopal District was able to purchase and renovate the District Headquarters located in downtown Birmingham, AL. It took only twenty-five months for the District to celebrate burning their mortgage while reporting \$1.8 million in budget assessments and were able to donate over \$60,000 to local churches in need.

Bishop Davis continues to demonstrate an exemplary commitment to community service through his work as the chair of the Board of Directors for the Daniel Payne College where he promoted his remarkable vision for its property which could help generate funds for the church. Under his leadership, The Daniel Payne College Foundation, Inc. of the 9th Episcopal District was able to purchase the Daniel Payne Middle School making this the largest property owned by an African American institution in the State of Alabama.

On a personal note, Bishop Davis has motivated and inspired me to utilize my gifts and talents in planting and reaping and sowing good seeds throughout Alabama's 7th Congressional District. I want to thank him for his continued support and encouragement as we both seek to serve God's people for the advancement of a better world.

On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, the State of Alabama and this nation, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the accomplishments of Bishop James Levert Davis. We pay tribute to his distinguished career and contributions for the betterment of the State of Alabama and extend deep appreciation for his exemplary service as the Presiding Prelate of the 9th Episcopal District.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on March 2, 2016—I was not present for roll call vote 105. If I had been present for this vote, I would have voted: "yea" on roll call vote 105.

RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING MATSON GUAM ON ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF SERVICE ON GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Matson Guam as the company celebrates its 20th anniversary of business and service to the people of Guam. Matson Guam began operations on February 1, 1996, during which it has provided continuous and uninterrupted service to Guam. Matson Guam has also made strong partnerships and provides services to neighboring islands in the Pacific, including the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau and Republic of the Marshall Islands. Matson Guam also served as the only U.S. carrier servicing Guam and Micronesia from 2011 to 2015.

Matson Guam is a part of a global company founded in 1882 which began carrying food and supplies from California to Hawaii. Today, Matson is a diversified company whose primary interest is in carrying freight between the

Pacific Coast and Hawaii. Matson is the leading U.S. carrier in the Pacific and provides a vital lifeline to the economies of many Pacific islands.

In addition to Matson Guam's shipping and logistics services in the region, Matson Guam also makes many contributions to the local community and throughout Micronesia through the Matson Foundation. In 2016 alone, the Matson Foundation is estimated to have contributed over \$200,000 to local causes. Additionally, Matson Guam is a key sponsor for the Festival of the Pacific Arts that will take place in Guam this summer. As part of the partnership, Matson Guam recently shipped a Sakman canoe, a traditional Chamorro fishing boat from San Diego, California to Guam. The Sakman symbolizes the tie between the company's shipping operations and Guam's seafaring heritage.

Matson Guam is also committed to environmentally friendly initiatives aimed at protecting and preserving the natural resources of the region. As part of this commitment, Matson Guam leads an environmental and community relations program called Adahi I Tano' which translates to "taking care of our island." The company donates the use of container equipment on Guam for environmental cleanup projects arranged by non-profit organizations, and pays for trucking expenses for the delivery and pickup of the containers. Matson also awards these non-profit organizations a \$500 contribution for each successful cleanup. Since 2013, over 5 dozen non-profit organizations participating in the program have conducted over 80 cleanups to help the environment and in turn help their individual organizations carry out their missions.

I thank Matson Guam for their service to the island and region over the last two decades. I congratulate Matson Guam on its 20th anniversary and commend the company's leadership and employees for their contributions to the people of Guam and communities throughout the region. I look forward to their future contributions and success.

COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF MASON COUNTY FARM BUREAU

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor a remarkable organization, the Mason County Farm Bureau. The Mason County Farm Bureau from Central Illinois is an integral organization that promotes agricultural prosperity. After many years of success and service, the Mason County Farm Bureau is celebrating their 100th anniversary.

Mason County Farm Bureau was chartered on February 16, 1916 by local farmers interested in promoting agriculture on a local, state, and national level. Today, the group has over 1,500 members supporting the agrarian community and economy throughout the county.

Not only does Mason County Farm Bureau focus on agricultural issues, but they have ef-

fectively established committees for young leaders involved in agriculture. These committees include initiatives like Farm Safety Day, Young Leaders Conference, and Farm Bureau scholarships. Programs like these greatly serve the community by ensuring that today's young aspiring farmers effectively, safely and efficiently grow a better quality and more abundant crop for future generations.

Illinois has become a major economic force within the agricultural sector because of farm bureaus like Mason County that come together and enhance opportunities for local farmers, their families, and the community as a whole. I extend my sincere congratulations to Mason County Farm Bureau for their outstanding accomplishments and contributions to Illinois. I hope the organization continues to grow and prosper for the next one hundred years.

HONORING THE PASSING OF ATTY. LINDA SARNO

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the passing of community activist and civic and religious leader, Atty. Linda Sarno, who passed away on February 1, 2016. Atty. Sarno was a beloved community organizer and leader who supported the development and professionalism of Filipino American businesses and raised awareness and appreciation for Filipino culture and cuisine in Southern California. She started initiatives in the community to promote the advantages of green technology, health, and conservation both in business and everyday life. She was co-founder and director emeritus of the Filipino American Chamber of Commerce of Orange County where she encouraged young entrepreneurship, and was also actively involved in the Asian Business Association of Orange County. Atty. Sarno will be deeply missed by her family, friends, and our community.

HONORING LIEUTENANT COLONEL CINDI FELDWSCH

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lieutenant Colonel Cindi Feldwisch, a champion of women's rights who served her country with distinction as one of the "First Five" women in the United States Air Force Honor Guard (USAFHG).

When Lt. Col. Feldwisch entered uniformed service in 1975, women did not serve in the USAFHG. This elite ceremonial unit in the United States Air Force (USAF) is charged with representing the USAF at all public and official ceremonies in the National Capital Region. These ceremonies include funerals for deceased USAF personnel, occasions for visiting dignitaries and military officials, wreath-

laying at the Tomb of the Unknowns, and White House arrival ceremonies. In 1973, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs had issued a memorandum instructing the USAF to incorporate women into the USAFHG.

In 1976 a new training program began with the intention of integrating women into the USAFHG. Lt. Col. Feldwisch and four comrades defied expectations and, in the words of their commanding officer, Captain Marcel Mayer, "they not only survived the training, they excelled." On July 15, 1976, Lt. Col. Feldwisch along with Teresa Brown, Margaret Jones, Madelyn Ritz, and Elizabeth Root graduated and became the first female members of the USAFHG. Collectively, they are known in the USAFHG as the "First Five."

Nevertheless, the First Five still endured discrimination and sexism. For example, the First Five were not initially allowed to carry M-1 rifles in ceremonies because of a ban prohibiting women from participating in combat. It would have been easy to accept this second rate status, but Lt. Col. Feldwisch and the other female members of USAFHG refused. In 1977 they penned a letter to First Lady, Rosalynn Carter, who issued a statement in their support. By January 1978, there was a change in policy allowing women to participate in all ceremonies with their M-1s.

Lt. Col. Feldwisch went on to serve four years of active duty in the USAFHG. After receiving her Bachelor of Science at the University of Northern Colorado, she returned to duty as an enlisted member of the Colorado Air National Guard, earning her commission as a Second Lieutenant, in 1991. She has risen through the ranks, and in 2006 she became a Lieutenant Colonel. From November 2000–October 2003, Lt. Col. Feldwisch served three years of active duty at the Air Force Safety Center in Kirtland, New Mexico. From July–October 2004, she deployed overseas and served in Baghdad. Currently, Lt. Col. Feldwisch is the Executive Officer for the Assistant Adjutant General, Joint Force Headquarters, New Mexico National Guard, Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico.

Col. Feldwisch is a highly decorated officer and has received numerous awards and decorations for her service to her country. These include the Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal, the Air Force Achievement Medal, the National Defense

Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and the United Nations Medal.

Our military has undertaken tremendous advancements since Lt. Col. Feldwisch entered the USAFHG. Indeed, women can now serve alongside men in combat, something that was hard to imagine when Lt. Col. Feldwisch entered the service. She was influential in expanding women's rights in the military and has paved the way for future generations of women to serve their country with distinction.

Lt. Col. Feldwisch and the other members of the First Five who bravely entered the USAFHG in 1976 are role models for all women and girls. Lt. Col. Feldwisch demonstrated that nothing is impossible so long as you are not willing to take no for an answer. For this and her years of service I honor her today.

IN RECOGNITION OF HOWARD P.
DREW

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to recognize one of Springfield's most famous residents, Olympic athlete and scholar Howard P. Drew.

Howard was born on June 28, 1890 in Lexington, Virginia but was raised in Springfield, Massachusetts. As a high school student at Springfield High School, Howard tied the world record for the 100 meter dash to qualify for the 1912 Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden. Later, as a student at the University of Southern California, he broke the record for the 100 meter and 200 meter dash. Despite having many personal problems, he persevered and was able to travel to participate in an array of competitions. Howard won numerous medals throughout the Northeast, especially in Massachusetts. His triumphs in track and field were covered by every major newspaper including the Boston Globe and the New York Times.

During his time at University of Southern California, Howard was the first African-American man to write for USC's newspaper, titled the Daily Southern Californian, as well as being the first African-American man inducted

into the Skull and Dagger Society, an exclusive academic club at USC. Before finishing his education, Howard enlisted and became a Sergeant in the Supply Company, 809th Pioneer Infantry Regiment, and the Eighty-Eighth Division of the United States Army during World War I, and during that time, he ran and coached the Army track teams in Neil, France. Once leaving the Army and finishing law school, he became a judge in Hartford, Connecticut and was elected to Justice of the Peace several times during the 1940s. Each of these positions was the first to be held by an African American in the State of Connecticut.

Mr. Speaker, as Springfield celebrates his legacy, let us remember all of Howard P. Drew's outstanding achievements, as we recall his legacy as a role model for today's high school athletes and students all over the country.

HONORING MRS. MARIAN
KRUPICKA

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Marian Krupicka as Darien, Illinois' Citizen of the Year 2016.

Mrs. Krupicka first began her support of public libraries in 1978 by volunteering with the Darien Library, which at that time was housed in a bus. What started as a small book mobile in a parking lot in Darien in 1978 has grown to the renowned award winning Indian Prairie Public Library thanks to Mrs. Krupicka and her perseverance to achieve the best.

Mrs. Krupicka's contribution to the Darien community doesn't stop at her library service; she also dedicated 30 years of her life to educating students. She was a Language Arts and Social Studies teacher at Eisenhower High School. During her teaching career, she touched many students' hearts through her "not one size fits all" teaching philosophy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mrs. Krupicka for being named Darien's Citizen of the Year and thank her for the time, service, and commitment she has given to our community.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Monday, March 7, 2016

The House met at 4 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ROONEY of Florida).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 7, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS J. ROONEY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Reverend Katrina Solter, St. Patrick's Episcopal Church, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

God of all love and understanding, You called Your prophets through a flame in the desert, in the mouth of a cave, and on the wings of a descending dove, offering Your universal love in exchange for peace between brothers and sisters, for service above self, and for the protection of the Earth.

Help us rekindle our own call to serve. Renew in our hearts the faith to make a difference for others. Guide us

to consensus, compassion, and communion.

Open our hearts to remember the suffering of the world, especially the most vulnerable, and to see all people as children of God. We thank You for this beloved country, the United States of America.

In the name of peace, of justice, and of our loving God.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(a) of House Resolution 635, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following commu-

nication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 7, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 7, 2016 at 10:03 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 2276.

Appointment:

Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(b) of House Resolution 635, the House stands adjourned until 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 10, 2016.

Thereupon (at 4 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Thursday, March 10, 2016, at 11:30 a.m.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the fourth quarter of 2015 and the first quarter of 2016, pursuant to Public Law 95-384, are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DANIEL SILVERBERG, EXPENDED BETWEEN NOV. 8 AND NOV. 12, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Daniel Silverberg	11/9	11/11	Japan		726.00		³ 23,000.00				23,726.00
	11/11	11/12	China		180.00						180.00
Committee total					906.00		23,000.00				23,906.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

³ Transportation all inclusive of trip.

DANIEL SILVERBERG, Dec. 15, 2015.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DANIEL SILVERBERG, EXPENDED BETWEEN DEC. 19 AND DEC. 23, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Daniel Silverberg	12/20	12/21	Azerbaijan		356.00		³ 15,358.00				15,714.00
	12/21	12/23	Georgia		602.00						602.00
Committee total					958.00		15,358.00				16,316.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

³ Transportation all inclusive of trip.

DANIEL SILVERBERG, Dec. 30, 2015.

☐ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., ☐ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO GERMANY, EXPENDED BETWEEN JAN. 17 AND JAN. 20, 2016

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Jared Huffman	1/17	1/20	Germany				3,884.16				3,884.16
Hon. Dan Kildee	1/17	1/20	Germany				5,171.82				5,171.82
Hon. Robert Pittenger	1/17	1/20	Germany				16,700.66				16,700.66
Committee total							25,756.64				25,756.64

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. ROBERT PITTENGER, Feb. 25, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO BELGIUM, EXPENDED BETWEEN FEB. 12 AND FEB. 16, 2016

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Michael R. Turner	2/13	2/15	Belgium		758.00		499.00				1,257.00
Hon. Loretta Sanchez	2/13	2/14	Belgium		461.00		6,536.00				6,997.00
Hon. Tom Marino	2/13	2/15	Belgium		758.00		2,348.00				3,106.00
Hon. Ted Poe	2/13	2/15	Belgium		758.00		6,694.00				7,452.00
Hon. Brett Guthrie	2/13	2/16	Belgium		1,054.00		1,812.00				2,866.00
Hon. Gerald E. Connolly	2/13	2/16	Belgium		1,054.00		11,396.00				12,450.00
Morley Greene	2/13	2/15	Belgium		758.00		499.00				1,257.00
Janice Robinson	2/12	2/16	Belgium		1,054.00		2,318.00				3,372.00
Ed Rice	2/12	2/16	Belgium		1,054.00		2,019.00				3,073.00
Committee total					7,709.00		34,121.00				41,830.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER, Feb. 25, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Visit to Turkey—October 1–6, 2015:											
Catherine Sendak			Turkey		430.00						430.00
Commercial airfare							12,870.10				12,870.10
Alexander Gallo			Turkey		430.00						430.00
Commercial airfare							12,870.10				12,870.10
Visit to Australia, South Korea, Japan—October 6–19, 2015:											
Michael Miller	10/8	10/10	Australia		244.00						244.00
	10/10	10/14	South Korea		540.00						540.00
	10/14	10/16	Japan		196.00						196.00
Commercial airfare							20,571.00				20,571.00
Brian Garrett	10/8	10/10	Australia		244.00						244.00
	10/10	10/14	South Korea		540.00						540.00
	10/14	10/16	Japan		196.00						196.00
Commercial airfare							20,571.00				20,571.00
David Giachetti	10/11	10/14	South Korea		405.00						405.00
	10/14	10/16	Japan		196.00						196.00
Commercial airfare							20,571.00				20,571.00
Craig Greene	10/11	10/14	South Korea		405.00						405.00
	10/14	10/16	Japan		196.00						196.00
Commercial airfare							20,571.00				20,571.00
Visit to Morocco, Niger—October 13–20, 2015:											
Peter Villano	10/15	10/18	Niger		219.00						219.00
	10/18	10/20	Morocco		235.00						235.00
Commercial airfare							12,394.52				12,394.52
Lindsay Kavanaugh	10/15	10/18	Niger		219.00						219.00
	10/18	10/20	Morocco		235.00						235.00
Commercial airfare							12,394.52				12,394.52
Visit to Spain, France, Norway, United Kingdom—October 9–17, 2015:											
Hon. Mike Rogers	10/10	10/11	Spain		375.17						375.17
	10/11	10/13	France		1,180.50						1,180.50
	10/13	10/15	United Kingdom		1,124.77						1,124.77
	10/15	10/17	Norway		280.01						280.01
Hon. Jim Cooper	10/10	10/11	Spain		375.17						375.17
	10/11	10/13	France		1,180.50						1,180.50
	10/13	10/15	United Kingdom		1,124.77						1,124.77
	10/15	10/17	Norway		280.01						280.01
Hon. John Garamendi	10/10	10/11	Spain		375.17						375.17
	10/11	10/13	France		1,180.50						1,180.50
	10/13	10/15	United Kingdom		1,124.77						1,124.77
	10/15	10/17	Norway		280.01						280.01
Hon. Rick Larsen	10/10	10/11	Spain		375.17						375.17
	10/11	10/13	France		1,180.50						1,180.50
	10/13	10/15	United Kingdom		1,124.77						1,124.77
	10/15	10/17	Norway		280.01						280.01
Hon. Doug Lamborn	10/10	10/11	Spain		375.17						375.17
	10/11	10/13	France		1,180.50						1,180.50
	10/13	10/15	United Kingdom		1,124.77						1,124.77
	10/15	10/17	Norway		280.01						280.01
Hon. Michael R. Turner	10/13	10/15	United Kingdom		1,124.77						1,124.77
Tim Morrison	10/10	10/11	Spain		318.74						318.74
	10/11	10/13	France		1,180.50						1,180.50
	10/13	10/15	United Kingdom		1,124.77						1,124.77
	10/15	10/17	Norway		280.01						280.01

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Leonor Tomero	10/10	10/11	Spain		318.74						318.74
	10/11	10/13	France		1,180.50						1,180.50
	10/13	10/15	United Kingdom		619.11						619.11
	10/15	10/17	Norway		280.01						280.01
Andrew Walter	10/10	10/11	Spain		318.74						318.74
	10/11	10/13	France		1,180.50						1,180.50
	10/13	10/15	United Kingdom		1,124.77						1,124.77
	10/15	10/17	Norway		280.01						280.01
Visit to Colombia—October 14–18, 2015:											
Hon. Bradley Byrne	10/14	10/18	Colombia		411.00						411.00
Commercial airfare							1,879.70				1,879.70
Hon. Ruben Gallego	10/14	10/18	Colombia		411.00						411.00
Commercial airfare							1,879.70				1,879.70
Catherine Sendak	10/14	10/18	Colombia		411.00						411.00
Commercial airfare							1,879.70				1,879.70
Michael Amato	10/14	10/18	Colombia		411.00						411.00
Commercial airfare							1,879.70				1,879.70
Visit to United Arab Emirates, Afghanistan—November 5–11, 2015 with CODEL Ros-Lehtinen:											
Hon. Donald Norcross	11/6	11/7	United Arab Emirates		85.00						85.00
	11/7	11/8	Afghanistan		12.00						12.00
	11/8	11/11	United Arab Emirates		85.00						85.00
Commercial airfare							8,694.20				8,694.20
Visit to South Korea, Japan—November 6–12, 2015:											
Alexander Gallo			Japan		749.18						749.18
			South Korea		1,090.83						1,090.83
Commercial airfare							17,383.70				17,383.70
William Spencer Johnson			Japan		749.18						749.18
			South Korea		1,090.83						1,090.83
Commercial airfare							11,608.80				11,608.80
Visit to Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong—November 7–13, 2015 with STAFFDEL Silverberg:											
Paul Arcangeli	11/9	11/11	Japan		691.29						691.29
Commercial airfare							17,495.70				17,495.70
Visit to Niger, Cameroon, Nigeria—November 9–15, 2015											
Mark Morehouse	11/10	11/12	Niger		379.38						379.38
	11/12	11/13	Nigeria		442.00						442.00
	11/13	11/14	Cameroon		144.25						144.25
Commercial airfare							25,725.50				
Michael Casey	11/10	11/12	Niger		369.60						369.60
	11/12	11/13	Nigeria		442.00						442.00
	11/13	11/14	Cameroon		144.83						144.83
Commercial airfare							26,082.50				26,082.50
Brian Garrett	11/10	11/12	Niger		369.60						369.60
	11/12	11/13	Nigeria		442.00						442.00
	11/13	11/14	Cameroon		144.25						144.25
Commercial airfare							24,150.50				24,150.50
Visit to United Kingdom, Germany—November 9–13, 2015:											
Catherine Sendak	11/9	11/11	United Kingdom		947.67						947.67
	11/11	11/13	Germany		504.92						504.92
Commercial airfare							2,177.20				2,177.20
Kari Bingen	11/11	11/13	Germany		504.92						504.92
Joseph Whited	11/9	11/11	United Kingdom		947.67						947.67
	11/11	11/13	Germany		504.92						504.92
Commercial airfare							2,177.20				2,177.20
Delegation expenses							1,369.19				1,369.19
Visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia—November 19–24, 2015:											
Hon. Michael Turner	11/20	11/22	Bosnia and Herzegovina		323.81						323.81
	11/22	11/24	Croatia		676.14						
Commercial airfare							11,544.20				11,544.20
Hon. Loretta Sanchez	11/20	11/22	Bosnia and Herzegovina		323.81						323.81
	11/22	11/24	Croatia		680.40						
Commercial airfare							11,548.90				11,548.90
Jesse Tolleson	11/20	11/22	Bosnia and Herzegovina		323.81						323.81
	11/22	11/24	Croatia		476.16						
Commercial airfare							11,548.90				11,548.90
Doug Bush	11/20	11/22	Bosnia and Herzegovina		323.81						323.81
	11/22	11/24	Croatia		476.16						
Commercial airfare							11,548.90				11,548.90
Visit to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Afghanistan—November 20–25, 2015:											
Hon. Rob Wittman	11/20	11/21	Egypt		267.00						267.00
	11/22	11/23	Afghanistan		12.00						12.00
	11/23	11/24	Saudi Arabia		459.16						459.16
Commercial airfare							3,255.80				3,255.80
Hon. Madeleine Bordallo	11/20	11/21	Egypt		267.00						267.00
	11/22	11/23	Afghanistan		12.00						12.00
	11/23	11/24	Saudi Arabia		459.16						459.16
Commercial airfare							11,234.80				11,234.80
Hon. Donald Norcross	11/20	11/21	Egypt		267.00						267.00
	11/22	11/23	Afghanistan		12.00						12.00
	11/23	11/24	Saudi Arabia		459.16						459.16
Commercial airfare							11,234.80				11,234.80
Hon. Elise Stefanik	11/20	11/21	Egypt		267.00						267.00
	11/22	11/23	Afghanistan		12.00						12.00
	11/23	11/24	Saudi Arabia		459.16						459.16
Commercial airfare							11,234.80				11,234.80
Michael Miller	11/20	11/21	Egypt		267.00						267.00
	11/22	11/23	Afghanistan		12.00						12.00
	11/23	11/24	Saudi Arabia		459.16						459.16
Commercial airfare							³ 11,234.80				11,234.80
Brian Garrett	11/20	11/21	Egypt		267.00						267.00
	11/22	11/23	Afghanistan		12.00						12.00
	11/23	11/24	Saudi Arabia		459.16						459.16
Commercial airfare							11,234.80				11,234.80
Visit to United Arab Emirates, Afghanistan, Kuwait, November 24–27, 2015 with CODEL Roe:											
Hon. Mike Coffman	11/26	11/27	Afghanistan		12.00						12.00

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Commercial airfare	11/27	11/29	Kuwait		785.00		4,558.60				785.00
Hon. Beto O'Rourke	11/26	11/27	Afghanistan		12.00						4,558.60
Commercial airfare	11/27	11/28	Kuwait		785.00						12.00
Daniel Sennott	11/26	11/27	Afghanistan		12.00		11,542.60				785.00
Commercial airfare	11/27	11/28	Kuwait		785.00						11,542.60
Michael Casey	11/26	11/27	Afghanistan		12.00						12.00
Commercial airfare	11/27	11/28	Kuwait		785.00		11,542.60				785.00
Visit to United Arab Emirates, Afghanistan, Qatar—December 10–16, 2015:											11,542.60
Kari Bingen	12/11	12/12	United Arab Emirates		183.00						12.00
Commercial airfare	12/12	12/14	Afghanistan		114.00						114.00
Stephen Kitay	12/11	12/12	United Arab Emirates		183.00		12,878.30				12,878.30
Commercial airfare	12/12	12/14	Afghanistan		12.00						183.00
Scott Glabe	12/12	12/15	Qatar		114.00						12.00
Commercial airfare	12/11	12/12	United Arab Emirates		183.00		12,878.30				114.00
Commercial airfare	12/12	12/14	Afghanistan		12.00						12,878.30
Commercial airfare	12/14	12/15	Qatar		114.00						183.00
Visit to Jordan, Germany—December 10–17, 2015 with CODEL Nunes:											12.00
Hon. William M. "Mac" Thornberry	12/12	12/15	Jordan		402.65						114.00
Commercial airfare	12/15	12/16	Germany		234.49						12,878.30
Timothy Morrison	12/12	12/15	Jordan		402.65		526.68				234.49
Commercial airfare	12/15	12/16	Germany		234.49						526.68
Committee total					54,971.08		461,691.89				449,981.71

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.³ Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

HON. MAC THORNBERRY, Chairman, Feb. 18, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Jason Chaffetz	11/11	11/12	Indonesia		272.00		17,490.00				17,762.00
Dimple Shah	11/11	11/12	Indonesia		362.00		18,219.00				18,581.00
M.J. Henshaw	11/11	11/12	Indonesia		362.00		18,219.00				18,581.00
Delegation expenses									³ 450.00		450.00
Sang Yi	12/15	12/16	UAE		548.00						548.00
Mike Howell	12/16	12/19	UK		1,292.00		11,094.00				12,386.00
Valerie Shen	12/15	12/16	UAE		548.00						548.00
Kelly Christl	12/16	12/19	UK		1,292.00		11,094.00				12,386.00
Commercial airfare	12/15	12/16	UAE		548.00						548.00
Commercial airfare	12/16	12/19	UK		1,292.00		11,524.00				12,816.00
Committee total					8,356.00		99,164.00		450.00		107,970.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.³ Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

HON. JASON CHAFFETZ, Chairman, Feb. 10, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Duncan Hunter	10/10	10/12	Latvia		465.27				670.50		1,135.77
Commercial airfare	10/12	10/13	Ukraine		131.00				676.95		807.95
Fleming Legg	10/13	10/15	Moldova		372.00				582.33		954.33
Commercial airfare	10/10	10/12	Latvia		465.27		7,252.60				7,252.60
Commercial airfare	10/12	10/13	Ukraine		131.00				670.50		1,135.77
Commercial airfare	10/13	10/15	Moldova		372.00				676.95		807.95
Commercial airfare	10/10	10/12	Latvia		465.27		8,282.50				954.33
Hon. Mark Sanford	10/12	10/13	Ukraine		131.00				670.50		8,282.50
Commercial airfare	10/13	10/15	Moldova		372.00				676.95		1,135.77
Committee total							8,509.00		582.33		807.95

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Committee total					2,904.81		24,044.10		5,789.34		32,738.25

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. BILL SHUSTER, Chairman, Feb. 5, 2016.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4579. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy for the Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of General Lloyd J. Austin III, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4580. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy for the Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Mary A. Legere, United States Army, and her advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4581. A letter from the Program Specialist, LRA, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Expanded Examination Cycle for Certain Small Insured Depository Institutions and U.S. Branches and Agencies of Foreign Banks [Docket ID: OCC-2016-0001] (RIN: 1557-AE01) received March 3, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4582. A letter from the Chairman, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting the Commission's Buy American Act Report for fiscal year 2015, pursuant to 41 U.S.C. 10a(b); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4583. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's 2014 Progress Report on Understanding the Long-Term Health Effects of Living Organ Donation, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 273b; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4584. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's report entitled "Update on the Adoption of Health Information Technology and Related Efforts to Facilitate the Electronic Use and Exchange of Health Information", pursuant to Public Law 111-5, Sec. 13113(a); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4585. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting notification that the national emergency with respect to the situation in Venezuela that was declared in Executive Order 13692 on March 8, 2015, is to continue in effect beyond March 8,

2016, pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 2432(d); Public Law 93-618, Sec. 402(d); (88 Stat. 2056) (H. Doc. No. 114-114); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

4586. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Updated Legal Authority Citations for 15 CFR Chapter VII [Docket No.: 160212107-6107-01] (RIN: 0694-AG84) received March 3, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4587. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's annual International Narcotics Control Strategy Report for March 2016, pursuant to Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, Sec. 489; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4588. A letter from the Director, Office of Economic Impact and Diversity, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4589. A letter from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting the Office's Annual Performance Plan and Performance Report for Fiscal Year 2017, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1115(b); Public Law 111-352, Sec. 3; (124 Stat. 3867); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4590. A letter from the Director, Peace Corps, transmitting the Corps' FY 2015 report on the No FEAR Act, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4591. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Protected Resources, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Species; Designation of Critical Habitat for Lower Columbia River Coho Salmon and Puget Sound Steelhead [Docket No.: 110726419-6003-02] (RIN: 0648-BB30) received March 3, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4592. A letter from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting the Department's eleventh annual report to Congress on crime victims' rights, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 3771 note; Public Law 108-405, Sec. 104(a); (118 Stat. 2265); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 4596. A bill to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements; with an amendment (Rept. 114-444). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 3797. A bill to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy (Rept. 114-445). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. McHENRY (for himself, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. CUELLAR):

H.R. 4715. A bill to exclude vehicles used solely for competition from certain provisions of the Clean Air Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. BEATTY:

H.R. 4716. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to support teacher and school professional training on awareness of student mental health conditions and suicide prevention efforts; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. HUNTER (for himself, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Ms. SPEIER, and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 4717. A bill to establish a policy against sexual abuse on all United States military installations, whether located in the United States or overseas; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Mr. BEYER, and Mrs. DINGELL):

H.R. 4718. A bill to require the Securities and Exchange Commission to establish a Gender Diversity Advisory Group to study and make recommendations on strategies to increase gender diversity among the members of the board of directors of issuers, to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require issuers to make disclosures to shareholders with respect to gender diversity, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. McNERNEY:

H.R. 4719. A bill to amend the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 to require notice

and a compliance opportunity to be provided before commencement of a private civil action related to public accommodations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SALMON (for himself, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. BUCK, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. BARLETTA, and Mr. MCCLINTOCK):

H.R. 4720. A bill to amend the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 to provide for the expedited removal of unaccompanied alien children who are not victims of a severe form of trafficking in persons and who do not have a fear of returning to their country of nationality or last habitual residence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

176. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Missouri, relative to House Resolution No. 71, urging the United States Congress to pass the Federal Reserve Transparency Act to require a complete audit of the Federal Reserve Bank of the United States in order to hold the Federal Reserve accountable to the United States Congress and the American people in accordance with Article I, Section VIII of the United States Constitution; which was referred jointly to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform and Financial Services.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. MCHENRY:

H.R. 4715.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

Because the federal government has extended Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 beyond its intended boundaries, it follows that efforts to rein in excessive federal government encroachment in this area can be justified by Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mrs. BEATTY:

H.R. 4716.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. HUNTER:

H.R. 4717.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 9 Clause 18: to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Pow-

ers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 4718.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause

By Mr. MCNERNEY:

H.R. 4719.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact this bill.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4720.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 4—"To establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States"

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 223: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 224: Ms. PINGREE and Mr. NEAL.

H.R. 225: Mr. SCHIFF and Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 358: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 563: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 592: Mr. FLEISCHMANN.

H.R. 605: Mr. BUCHANAN, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. NORTON, Ms. MENG, and Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 664: Mr. MULVANEY and Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 864: Mr. HANNA, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. KATKO.

H.R. 921: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 953: Mr. DUFFY.

H.R. 971: Mr. ROHRBACHER and Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 986: Mr. LOUDERMILK.

H.R. 995: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 1151: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.

H.R. 1221: Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 1288: Mr. GUINTA.

H.R. 1537: Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 1549: Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 1608: Mr. AMODEI and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 1652: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 1658: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 1713: Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 1854: Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 1958: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 2022: Mr. NEAL.

H.R. 2102: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 2257: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 2287: Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 2296: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 2500: Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. BUCHSON, Mr. HURD of Texas, and Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 2649: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 2713: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 2715: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. LEWIS.

H.R. 2802: Mr. HURD of Texas.

H.R. 2836: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 2887: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2894: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 2992: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. STEWART, Mr. MESSER, Mr. KNIGHT, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina,

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. KATKO, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. HARDY, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. ROSS, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BLUM, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. WHITFIELD, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 3011: Mr. WALKER.

H.R. 3012: Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, and Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 3026: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 3110: Mr. DIAZ-BALART and Ms. DUCKWORTH.

H.R. 3117: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

H.R. 3180: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 3190: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 3356: Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 3406: Mr. TURNER and Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 3423: Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 3455: Mr. HIMES.

H.R. 3481: Mr. BEYER.

H.R. 3514: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 3535: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 3551: Mr. CROWLEY and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 3591: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 3673: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 3706: Mr. WALBERG, Mr. CHABOT, Ms. BASS, and Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.R. 3797: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 3870: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. POCAN, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. BASS, Mr. AGUILAR, and Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 3872: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 4043: Ms. BASS.

H.R. 4063: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 4160: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 4294: Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. BARLETTA, and Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 4352: Mr. JOYCE and Mr. ISSA.

H.R. 4365: Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. LONG, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. KIND, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H.R. 4376: Ms. JUDY CHU of California and Mr. VISCLOSKEY.

H.R. 4400: Mr. STEWART, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 4499: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 4534: Mr. PALAZZO and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 4535: Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 4570: Mr. ENGEL, Mr. NEAL, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. BEATTY, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 4597: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 4598: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 4612: Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 4622: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 4626: Mr. FATTAH, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. SIREs, and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 4636: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, and Mr. HARPER.

H.R. 4651: Mr. KATKO and Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H.R. 4652: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 4678: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas and Mr. NUNES.

H.R. 4687: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.

H.J. Res. 83: Mr. PETERSON.

H. Res. 220: Mr. TONKO and Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

H. Res. 276: Ms. MENG.

H. Res. 616: Mr. HONDA, Mr. LEVIN, and Mr. VELA.

H. Res. 617: Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. WALKER, and Mr. MESSER.

H. Res. 629: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. MENG, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

48. The SPEAKER presented a petition of Mr. Gregory D. Watson, a citizen of Austin,

TX, relative to urging Congress to propose, for ratification by special conventions held within the individual states, an amendment to the United States Constitution which would authorize Congress, by a simple majority vote in both houses thereof, to nullify an Executive Order of the President; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE—Monday, March 7, 2016

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JONI ERNST, a Senator from the State of Iowa.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, accept our thanks and praise for all You have done for us. Thank You for the splendor of creation, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love. Thank You for family and friends and for the love that surrounds us on every side. Lord, thank You for work that demands our best efforts and for the satisfaction of a job well done. Thank You also for disappointments and failures that teach us to depend on You. Thank You for our lawmakers; endue them with courage and loyalty, inspiring them to glorify You in every action, both large and small.

And, Lord, thank You for the influential life and legacy of former First Lady Nancy Reagan.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING NANCY REAGAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, Nancy Reagan was one of the most powerful First Ladies in recent memory. For instance, sometimes she spoke out on issues like substance abuse, but more often Nancy wielded her power with calm confidence and quiet steel. It was an attitude that helped guide Nancy through so many challenges in her own life: getting an acting career off the ground, leaving it to raise a family, riding the ups and downs of a life in politics, watching her husband brave the bullet of a would-be assassin or face the threat of cancer, and then confront the same reality herself.

Nancy Reagan may have been a star in Hollywood and a force in the rough-and-tumble of Washington, but it was the challenges to come that would reveal her true strength.

In 1994, former President Reagan addressed a letter to his fellow Americans. He said: "I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life."

Nancy shared her very personal experience with that cold and cruel disease, telling Americans of the "terrible pain and loneliness" that accompanied Alzheimer's "very long goodbye," but she never gave in or gave up. Nancy was strong for her husband, she was a rock for her family, and she was an example for a nation that looked to her for inspiration.

One day, after many long and difficult years, Ronald Reagan opened his eyes and looked at Nancy. "He hadn't done that in well over a month," she recalled. "But he looked at me and closed his eyes. And went. And that was a wonderful gift."

We felt Nancy's immense pain when she leaned over his casket, kissed it, and mouthed her tearful farewell.

From "Morning in America" to a sunset in Simi Valley, the Reagan love story was classic Hollywood, but it was also unmistakably human. Nancy said her life had only really begun after she met Ronald Reagan. Now she joins her best friend to dance together once more.

We in the Senate join our Nation in mourning the loss of Nancy Reagan. We offer every condolence to the family members left behind.

Let us remember the rest of what President Reagan wrote to the Nation in 1994. "I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life," is what he wrote then, but—but—"I know that for America there will always be a bright dawn ahead."

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, as I noted earlier, combating substance abuse was an issue close to Nancy Reagan's heart. It is fitting that we will have an important opportunity this afternoon to address the prescription opioid and heroin epidemic sweeping our Nation. We can do so by advancing the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.

Just a few months ago, we appropriated \$400 million to opioid-specific programs. We are glad that all of those funds remain available to be spent today, and now we can pass comprehensive, bipartisan legislation that will help build upon the progress being made in this fight.

This CARA bill would expand education and prevention. It would bolster

law enforcement efforts. It would improve treatment initiatives. This bill has also received broad bipartisan backing and the support of nearly 130 groups dedicated to ending this crisis.

We appreciate the work of the senior Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY, who worked to move this bill swiftly out of the Judiciary Committee. We thank Senator PORTMAN, Senator AYOTTE, along with the junior Senator from Rhode Island and the senior Senator from Minnesota, for all the work they have done to advance CARA. We recognize the continuing efforts of Senators on both sides of the aisle who have put party labels aside to build support for this much needed legislation.

So let's continue that work by voting for cloture on CARA so we can take an important step forward to address this national epidemic.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 7, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JONI ERNST, a Senator from the State of Iowa, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. ERNST thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING NANCY REAGAN

Mr. REID. Madam President, I join the Republican leader in extending my sympathies to the entire Reagan family. Nancy Reagan was a wonderful First Lady. She was also an incredible individual in her own right. She was always gracious and charming.

The last time I saw Nancy Reagan, she was here in the Rotunda of the Capitol dedicating a statue of her husband, President Ronald Reagan. At that time, she was already well into her late eighties, but there she was,

standing next to his statue with a big smile on her face. Her very presence brightened the entire Hall—she and Ronald Reagan standing together, he in the form of a statue, she standing next to him, together. It really was a fantastic picture.

Nancy, of course, will be missed. I say, though, my mind returns to a different time. It reminds me of the years Ronald Reagan was in the White House—a card-carrying conservative, yet a very pragmatic Republican.

The Nation will miss First Lady Nancy Reagan and miss her partner, the President of the United States, Ronald Reagan.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Madam President, from the Des Moines Register. Two former Lieutenant Governors of the State of Iowa—and I am sure the Acting President pro tempore knows both of them, one a Democrat and one a Republican—here is what they said, among other things: “This isn’t the CHUCK GRASSLEY we thought we knew.” Again, I repeat, this is two Iowans, former Lieutenant Governors Joy Corning, a Republican, and Sally Pederson, a Democrat.

Last week former Lieutenant Governors Corning and Pederson coauthored an op-ed in the Des Moines Register criticizing the senior Senator from Iowa for abdicating his constitutional duties by blocking consideration of President Obama’s Supreme Court nomination. The op-ed reads, among other things:

Iowans are known for being hard workers, and we appreciate that quality in our elected officials. We wake up every day, ready to do our part, and get the job done. We are also politically astute, understand the U.S. Constitution, and know when an elected official is more eager to find excuses than create solutions. Unfortunately, Sen. CHUCK GRASSLEY is refusing to do his job as described in Article 2 of our Constitution, giving “advice and consent” on the president’s upcoming nomination to the Supreme Court.

GRASSLEY is threatening to use his powerful post as chairman of the Judiciary Committee to block a hearing on any nominee, regardless of how well qualified he or she is. His recent column and public statements regarding the vacancy on the Supreme Court are troubling and harmful to our courts. Moreover, this isn’t the CHUCK GRASSLEY we thought we knew.

“This isn’t the CHUCK GRASSLEY we thought we knew.” I agree with these Iowans. This isn’t the Senator I have come to know over the last three decades. The Senator I knew would not cede the independence of the powerful Judiciary Committee he has served on for many decades to the Republican leader. The Senator I knew would not ignore his constitutional duties for the sake of election-year politics, but for whatever reason the Senator from Iowa made a fateful decision in the hours

after Justice Antonin Scalia’s death. He is allowing himself and his committee to be manipulated by the Republican leader for narrow, partisan warfare. He is taking his orders from the Republican leader and, sadly, Donald Trump. When asked about this issue, Donald Trump’s words were three: delay, delay, delay. Senator GRASSLEY must have been listening.

The people of Iowa, without question, are displeased with their Senator. The Des Moines Register quoted one of Senator GRASSLEY’s disappointed supporters as follows:

He seems to be doing what other people are saying, not what he thinks is best. That has really colored my opinion of him in the past week.

Another Iowan who supports the Senator told the newspaper:

I think he’s making a bad mistake. . . . It’s purely a political party play, and there isn’t any space for that in this situation.

Now, as each day passes, the senior Senator from Iowa is trying desperately to justify his blind loyalty to the Republican leader and to Donald Trump. Senator GRASSLEY is grasping for a rationale—any rationale—that will excuse him for not doing his job. That desperation is now taking Senator GRASSLEY down a very dark path.

Last Thursday, the senior Senator from Iowa addressed the Conservative Political Action Conference, CPAC, which took place here in Washington. In his speech to them, here is what Senator GRASSLEY said: “I feel it’s about time that we have a national debate on the Supreme Court and how it fits in with our constitutional system of government.”

The chairman of the Judiciary Committee is suggesting that we reevaluate the Founding Fathers’ work, reevaluate the Constitution of the United States, and change the Constitution of the United States. Why is Senator GRASSLEY debating what the Constitution makes clear? The Senate must provide its advice and consent on nominees appointed by the President to the Supreme Court. Think of the irony. Justice Scalia was a strict constitutionalist. Yet now, in the weeks following his death, Senator GRASSLEY wants to throw out the Constitution just because President Obama gets to pick Scalia’s replacement.

The former Senator from Iowa Tom Harkin said it best yesterday. This appeared in the Des Moines Register: “The position taken now by the majority leader and majority members of the Senate Judiciary Committee is simply astounding, and not in keeping with a ‘strict,’ or even ‘loose,’ construction of the Constitution.”

The Constitution isn’t some ball you pick up and take home just because you are still mad that Barack Obama is the President. If Senator GRASSLEY and Republicans find themselves on the wrong side of the Constitution, it is

their policies that should change, not our Nation’s founding document, the Constitution of the United States. If Republicans are uncomfortable with not performing their duties, the answer isn’t to take an eraser to the Constitution. No, we don’t need to take an eraser to the Constitution. The answer is to do your job.

If the Senator from Iowa wants to extricate himself from the situation he created, there is a way. All he needs to do is wrest back his chairmanship from the Republican leader and give President Obama’s nominee a meeting, a hearing, and a vote. In short, he needs to do his job. It is that easy. No changes to the Constitution are required. If he does his job, the people in Iowa will not have reason to say: “This isn’t the CHUCK GRASSLEY we thought we knew.”

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. REID. Madam President, on another subject, last Thursday, the Department of Health and Human Services released updated statistics about the number of Americans who now have health insurance. This is ObamaCare. The numbers are incredible.

Since enactment of the Affordable Care Act, 20 million Americans have gained health care coverage—20 million; 6.1 million adults, ages 19 to 25, now have health insurance.

Remember, it wasn’t long ago that everyone said they wouldn’t sign up. Now, 6.1 million have. Before we passed ObamaCare, some 50 million people in this Nation were without health care. Now, because of the Affordable Care Act, 91 percent of Americans are now insured. That is stunning. It is only getting better. Every day, more and more people who were previously without health insurance are now covered. That is true across racial and ethnic lines.

Listen to these stunning statistics. The uninsured rate for African Americans has dropped by more than 50 percent. That is the equivalent of 3 million newly insured people. The uninsured rate for Hispanics dropped by more than 25 percent, representing 4 million insured Americans.

The evidence is clear: The Affordable Care Act is working. From Nevada to Kentucky, our constituents are getting the quality health care they were promised when Congress passed the Affordable Care Act. It is time for Republicans to stop following Donald Trump’s lead by clamoring for repeal.

It is really nervy for Republicans to come down here, as they do all the time in the Senate—they have been quiet lately—and as they do on the campaign trail. This large number of Republicans, which is narrow, still all say the same thing: The American people should listen to what we are saying;

we have to get rid of the Affordable Care Act. We have to get rid of it.

How disappointing. It is time for Republicans to face the facts. ObamaCare is helping tens of millions of Americans and will continue to do so.

Madam President, I ask the Chair to announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, as my colleagues in the Senate just heard, the tantrums from the other side continue, but I guess it shouldn't surprise anybody because everyone around here knows that nothing makes the minority leader more mad than when his side is forced to play by its own rules.

The American people are divided, and the divided government the American people delivered over the last several election cycles reflects those divisions.

Our constitutional Republic was designed with a series of checks and balances. As any branch gets too powerful or exceeds its authority and tries to impose policies the American people don't want, the people express their will through the electoral process, and that is what we have witnessed during the last several election cycles.

Over the last few years, our current President has engaged in a systematic and very massive overreach of his executive power, way beyond what the Constitution has ever considered, and—thank God for checks and balances—the courts have said as much, and that is why I am here today. I am here today to tell you how the courts have interceded and curbed this massive overreach of Executive power. But as he has done so, the people have responded.

Since he was first sworn into office in 2009, nearly 70 additional Republicans have been elected to the People's House. And there are 13 more Republican Senators today than there were in January of 2009.

In January of 2014, frustrated that the people's representatives wouldn't enact his liberal policies, the President famously said that he would use “a pen and a phone” and impose his agenda anyway even though Article One of the Constitution is very clear. It states that the legislative powers of the United States shall be vested in the Congress, not with the President of the United States.

Just a few months later, in November of 2014, the people spoke and sent nine additional Republicans to the U.S. Senate.

This is the beauty of our system of checks and balances, and the Framers of our Constitution designed it that way. The Framers knew a thing or two about Executive overreach, because they had to deal with somebody called George III. They had firsthand experience with an Executive, King George III, who imposed his will on the people unilaterally.

So you wonder why our Constitution has checks and balances? The President holds the Executive power, the Congress writes the laws, and the Supreme Court interprets them. That is what we call separation of powers. That's why we have checks and balances. That's why we have separation of powers. And that is why our Constitution is designed so that no President can appoint a Supreme Court Justice with a pen and a phone.

As we continue to discuss what is at stake during this Presidential election and whether the American people want to elect a President who will appoint yet another liberal Justice, I wanted to take a few minutes to review some of this President's efforts to expand the reach of his power and impose his will on the American people. This President has pushed the envelope at every turn. He has sought to impose his will on the American people in ways and to a degree that this Nation has never before witnessed.

What is striking about this President's record before the Supreme Court is that even with a Court as liberal as ours, the Obama administration still has the lowest winning record of any President going back to at least the Truman administration. When presented with this undeniable fact, the President's apologists quickly grasp for the nearest bogus defense. Most notably, they claim that the Supreme Court is more ideologically hostile to this President than previous Courts were to other Presidents. Now that is a very crafty argument, but it is what Justice Scalia would have called “pure applesauce.”

Leading Supreme Court analysts declared the last term of the Supreme

Court, even with Justice Scalia on that Court, as the most liberal since the 1960s. So the President's defenders can't blame the Court's makeup for its rebuke of his expansive claims of power. And of course this explanation fails to account for the fact that President Eisenhower took office and litigated in a Supreme Court with eight Justices who were appointed by Democrats or that President Nixon's administration began with an even more liberal Court than Eisenhower. No, this President hasn't lost cases because the Court is ideologically hostile to this President and his policy; the Court has rejected this President's power grabs because they are based on ideology and an unwillingness to recognize that the law constrains that power.

All too often the President's claims are supported by an Office of Legal Counsel and a Solicitor General's Office that seem unwilling to tell the President that his impulse for expanded power is flatly contrary to the law. I'd like to describe a few examples. The President's lawyers argued that he could ignore the Senate's determination—this body's determination—of when it was in session in order to make recess appointments. No President in our history ever claimed that recess appointments were permissible in that situation. But the Office of Legal Counsel—once considered the crown jewel of the Department of Justice—offered a tortured justification to sanction that assertion of power.

If this view of Presidential power were allowed to stand, the President could bypass the Senate with ease to install individuals in powerful government positions with no check from the Senate, as the Constitution envisions. Fortunately, the Supreme Court disagreed 9 to 0. That means even this President's appointments to the Supreme Court said that he violated the Constitution with those recess appointments. The Constitution clearly says that the Senate shall determine when we are in session and in recess.

That isn't the only example. The Obama administration argued that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission could resolve an employment discrimination case between a minister and the church that fired her. The Supreme Court found the Obama administration managed to violate two different provisions of the First Amendment at the same time. It violated the free exercise of religion clause because if the President's argument carried the day, the government could interfere with a church's doctrine. Additionally, it violated the establishment clause of the First Amendment because if this President had his way, the Federal Government could get into the business of selecting a church's ministers. The Supreme Court rejected those claims 9 to 0.

On the regulatory front, in a series of rulings, the Supreme Court rejected

the President's arguments that agencies can deny the ability of private citizens to seek relief against regulatory overreach. For instance, the Court rejected the Environmental Protection Agency's powers to force a homeowner, through escalating fines, to comply with an order while at the same time denying that homeowner the ability to challenge the order in court. The Supreme Court rejected Obama's EPA's claims 9 to 0.

In another case, the Court held—contrary to the position advanced by the Army Corps of Engineers—that a landowner could sue in court for just compensation for a taking when the government-caused flooding of his property is temporary and recurring. Again, the Supreme Court rejected the government's position 8 to 0.

When the Internal Revenue Service attempted to enforce a taxpayer's summons while at the same time denying the taxpayer the right to question the IRS official about their reasons for the summons, the Supreme Court rebuked the administration 9 to 0.

In still another case, the Court rejected the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's argument that its decisions aren't subject to judicial review when that agency concludes by its own estimation it fulfilled its duties to attempt conciliation under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Once again, the Supreme Court rejected that claim by this administration 9 to 0.

Similarly, when a veteran's benefits were denied and the appeal wasn't filed within a certain time period, the Department of Veterans Affairs turned around and denied that veteran the ability to seek judicial review. The Supreme Court rejected the position of the Department of Veterans Affairs 8 to 0.

And when the Federal Communications Commission changed its policies midstream regarding isolated examples of indecent language, the Supreme Court found 8 to 0 that the FCC had violated due process.

These are important rulings. Far too often, this administration imposes government power against the people while brushing aside important procedural safeguards. Remember, the Constitution is to protect the people from its government—something we learned from George III.

Justice Frankfurter spoke to this point. He once wrote: "The history of liberty has largely been the history of the observance of procedural safeguards."

Consider as well areas in criminal law where the Obama administration pressed positions that erode individual freedom. This President's lawyers argued that the police could install a GPS device on a vehicle, and then use that device to monitor the car's movements without a search warrant under the Fourth Amendment. I don't know

what would be left of the Fourth Amendment if the Supreme Court had upheld the President's claim that the government could operate in that manner. Thankfully, the Supreme Court rejected that argument as well. The vote tally was 9 to 0.

The Court blocked the Justice Department's prosecution of a person under the Chemical Weapons Convention because the convention didn't reach the defendant's simple assault. Again, the Supreme Court rebuked the President 9 to 0.

These are not the rulings of a Supreme Court that is ideologically hostile to the Obama administration. Every one of these rulings was unanimous—every one. And there are still other Supreme Court decisions rejecting this President's power grabs where the vote tallies were much closer.

The President and his lawyers made utterly baseless arguments for executive and regulatory power in case after case. In so many of these cases, the unifying thread underlying this President's litigating position is the notion that the people are subservient to the Federal Government and, of course, subservient to its agencies, rather than the other way around. So far the Supreme Court has not agreed.

But during this Presidential election, the American people should consider whether they want to elect a President who may nominate a Justice who will embrace such a vast expansion of executive and regulatory power. This is what I've called for in a number of speeches, both in Iowa and here as well. This is an opportunity for the American people to have their voices heard. Letting the people decide in the election isn't just about who the next Justice on the Supreme Court is going to be. It is about the role of the Supreme Court and the judicial branch in our constitutional process.

We heard just a little while ago the floor leader of the minority party saying that somehow I want to rewrite the Constitution. This isn't about rewriting the Constitution. The Constitution is pretty clear: The Supreme Court interprets law, not makes law. And with the approval rating of the Supreme Court going down from about 50 percent to 28 percent in polls ever since this President took office, and the tendency for some Republican appointees as well as Democrat appointees to make the law the way they want it, that is just getting back to the basics—that the Supreme Court is an interpreter of the law, not a maker of the law.

So I think having a basic debate similar to what people learn in high school isn't a bad thing.

Now, will an election change what the Supreme Court, the people who are on it now, decide to do? I don't know—probably not. But it will allow for the next elected President to have the op-

portunity to choose which direction they want it to go. Do they want a Justice who is going to interpret the law or a Justice who is going to make the law?

Before the passing of Justice Scalia, we had four conservative justices, four liberal justices, and one in the middle—Justice Kennedy—who could go either way in some cases. We know what kind of judicial activists this President puts on the Supreme Court. Do you want to change the direction so that the Second Amendment rights of guns are in jeopardy or like when we saw attempts by this administration to say who a church can hire or not hire—and violate the freedom of religion—and other very important issues that are at stake?

It is pretty fundamental what is at stake, and I think having this debate is very important. And I think letting the people decide is very important.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CALLING FOR APPOINTMENT OF A SPECIAL COUNSEL

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I have come to the floor several times to talk about the ongoing investigation into the private email server of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

While serving as the top diplomat for the United States, she plainly believed she could play by her own set of rules. Instead of using a government server with all of the attendant protections from cyber attacks and intelligence gathering by our adversaries, Secretary Clinton paid a staffer thousands of dollars to set up a private, unsecure email server at her home in New York. So it is pretty clear, based on published reports, that Secretary Clinton went out of her way by paying money out of her own pocket to avoid important laws that Congress has passed to guarantee that the American people actually know what their government is doing. I am talking particularly about the Freedom of Information Act.

I haven't heard of any other example of someone in the Federal Government—accountable to the people of the United States—setting up a separate private email server just to conduct official business, not to mention the Secretary of State. It is simply unprecedented.

Her actions also put our country at risk, as her private email server was reportedly unsecure. We have heard

time and again from those in the intelligence community that her use of an unsecure, private email server left her emails—some highly classified—vulnerable to hacking and cyber attack from our Nation's enemies.

We may never know the full extent to which her irresponsible actions have affected our military endeavors, our diplomatic efforts, our overall national security or the lives and safety of those who serve in the intelligence community or are in harm's way trying to keep our country safe. We don't know to what extent her recklessness and irresponsibility have jeopardized the lives of people who are engaged in keeping our country safe. We do know that it has jeopardized the security of our country at large.

To this day, Secretary Clinton refuses to accept full responsibility for her actions and denies the serious nature of the FBI's ongoing investigation, calling it only a "security review." Well, it is pretty clear that the Justice Department is doing an investigation. Just this last week, it was reported that the Justice Department granted immunity to the staffer who set up Secretary Clinton's server. So this further confirms that Secretary Clinton is misrepresenting to the public when this inquiry is dismissed as some routine "security review."

We don't grant immunity from criminal prosecution to someone in order to gain their cooperation to testify in a case where they otherwise would claim the Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination. That is why immunity is granted—so they no longer can claim a belief that they might be prosecuted for being a witness against themselves. That is why immunity is granted.

So this indicates what I have said all along, which is that this is a serious investigation that may determine that classified information has been mishandled—a serious crime. The Justice Department should pursue this case as aggressively as it would any other case involving any other person where there has been concern about the mishandling of classified information because the American people deserve nothing less.

Secretary Clinton is not just some random citizen or former government employee; she was a member of this President's Cabinet and Secretary of State. In light of this extraordinary case and the unavoidable myriad of conflicts of interest, I have called repeatedly on the Attorney General to appoint a special counsel to fully and fairly conduct the investigation. It is not just important that a thorough and independent investigation be conducted; it is important that the American people have confidence and believe that a fair and independent investigation is being conducted. One simply can't reach that conclusion, given the

fact that the Attorney General, who is the political appointee of this President and who serves at his pleasure, is loathe to have this investigation proceed, and I will get to that in a moment. The President has inappropriately made comments while this investigation is ongoing. I asked the Attorney General last fall—she is the only one who can make this decision—to appoint a special counsel to give some semblance of independence from the political operation at the Department of Justice and the White House. Unfortunately, almost 6 months later, no independent counsel has been appointed. I think the necessity for such a person to be appointed is even more critical than ever.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, we will soon end the debate and vote on a bill known as the CARA Act, a piece of legislation that will help restore families and communities across America that have been harmed by addiction and drug abuse. This is a serious piece of legislation that has been done on a bipartisan basis and is a good illustration of how we in the Senate ought to be doing our jobs as representatives of the American people. We identify a problem, and we work across the aisle to come up with a solution. We consider it on the floor of the Senate so that all 100 Members can have an opportunity to discuss it.

An essential part of getting this legislation considered and passed on the floor is the hard work that happens in the respective committees, and the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act is no exception. It is not only the result of bipartisan work but also the leadership of the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the senior Senator from Iowa. We would not be here today considering this important legislation without Chairman GRASSLEY's leadership. So it has been particularly disappointing for me to hear the Democratic leader and some across the aisle disparage this good man and say that he and other Republicans are not doing their jobs. I think the evidence is to the contrary. It is our job to advance commonsense legislation that will benefit the entire country. That is exactly what this legislation does and exactly what the chairman has been diligently pursuing.

I would like to remind our friends across the aisle that the legislation we will soon advance is a bill the chairman diligently guided through the Judiciary Committee. I am thankful for his leadership and look forward to moving this bill along.

Madam President, I see no other Senator wishing to speak.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 524, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 524) to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Pending:

Grassley amendment No. 3378, in the nature of a substitute.

Grassley (for Donnelly/Capito) modified amendment No. 3374 (to amendment No. 3378), to provide follow-up services to individuals who have received opioid overdose reversal drugs.

Mr. CORNYN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, before I begin, as we discuss the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, I would like to take a moment to thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his role in developing the bill and bringing it this far. I also convey my gratitude to Minority Leader REID and the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, Senator LEAHY, for their excellent staffs and for urging that my amendments—which I will address momentarily—be a part of the discussion and for managing the negotiations on this bill. I also thank Senator MURRAY, the ranking member of the HELP Committee, for help and counsel on amendments.

Let us pause for a moment and consider the causes of the prescription opioid and heroin epidemic gripping our country. Understanding the causes will help us focus on the right solutions. Three distinct parties bear much of the blame for this public health crisis.

First, there is Big Pharma. In the mid-1990s, the seeds of this epidemic were planted with the aggressive, misleading, and ultimately criminal marketing of the powerful opioid painkiller, OxyContin by Purdue Pharma. Purdue claimed OxyContin was not addictive and couldn't be abused. Neither of those claims turned out to be true. Purdue Pharma built a massive marketing and sales program for OxyContin. From 1996 to 2000, Purdue

Pharma's sales force more than doubled from more than 300 sales representatives to almost 700 sales representatives. In 2001 alone, Purdue gave out \$40 million in bonuses to its burgeoning sales force. As a result of these sales and marketing efforts, from 1997 to 2002, OxyContin prescriptions increased almost tenfold, from 670,000 in 1997 to 6.2 million in 2002.

Purdue's marketing of OxyContin broke the law. In 2007, Purdue Pharma paid \$600 million in fines and other payments after pleading guilty in Federal court to misleading regulators, doctors, and patients about the risks of addiction to OxyContin and its potential for abuse.

Second, Purdue Pharma's criminal wrongdoing did not occur in a vacuum. The Federal Government helped to enable this epidemic. The Federal Drug Enforcement Administration is responsible for approving the annual production quotas for pharmaceutical companies to manufacture oxycodone, the principal ingredient in OxyContin. From 1996 to 2016, the Drug Enforcement Administration obliged Big Pharma and increased by almost 150 percent the amount of oxycodone authorized for manufacture. In 1996, the DEA authorized U.S. pharmaceutical companies to make the equivalent of 6 billion 10-milligram OxyContin pills. By 2016, that figure had increased to almost 14 billion 10-milligram pills. That is right. Today the Drug Enforcement Administration is telling Big Pharma it is OK to make 14 billion OxyContin pills to sell in the United States in 1 year.

The Federal Food and Drug Administration was also complicit, approving new opioid after new opioid. In the process, the FDA, charged with ensuring the safety of all prescription drugs on the U.S. market, began turning a blind eye to outside experts who were warning of the dangers these drugs posed.

In 2013, an expert panel established to review the powerful new opioid painkiller Zohydro, voted 11 to 2 against recommending its approval, but the FDA approved the drug anyway, overruling the concerns voiced by experienced physicians on the panel.

In 2014, in the wake of the Zohydro decision, the FDA twice skipped the advisory committee process altogether when it approved two new prescription opioids.

Then, in August of 2015, the FDA did it again. This time it bypassed an advisory committee of outside experts on the question of a new use for OxyContin for children aged 11 to 16. The FDA even ignored its own rules that specifically call for advisory committee advice when a committee of pediatric dosing is involved. It was clear that the FDA was intentionally choosing to forgo advisory committees in order to avoid another overwhelming

Zohydro-like vote, recommending against approval of a prescription opioid and in order to avoid any impediments to new opioids being sold in the United States.

Finally, the medical profession must bear its fair share of responsibility for this crisis. Doctors are prescribing opioids at an alarming rate. In 2012, America's doctors wrote 259 million prescriptions for opioid pain relievers, enough pills for every single American adult to have a bottle of opioid pills given to them in the year 2012.

And America's doctors are dangerously uninformed about the drugs they are prescribing. A recent survey of 1,000 physicians nationwide found that "only two-thirds correctly reported that the most common route of abuse was swallowing pills whole." It is unconscionable that our doctors are so ill-informed. Nearly half of the doctors surveyed also erroneously reported that so-called abuse-deterrent formulations of opioids were less addictive than their counterparts. Abuse-deterrent opioids are supposed to be harder to crush, so they are harder to snort or to mix with liquid and inject, but abuse-deterrent formulations of opioids are just as addictive as non-abuse-deterrent opioids. Whether an opioid is abuse-deterrent or not hasn't prevented tens of thousands of people who have had their wisdom teeth removed or experienced lower back pain from getting addicted to these painkillers simply by swallowing them.

So what is the result of the combination of Big Pharma's marketing of prescription opioids, the Federal Government's repeatedly approving them in ever-increasing numbers, and our doctors writing millions of prescriptions for them? Today, the United States is less than 5 percent of the world's population but we consume 80 percent of the world's opioid painkillers. We have become the United States of Oxy.

When prescriptions run out or the price of Oxy pills on the street become too high for those who have become addicted, they turn to cheaper heroin, which shares the same molecular structure as OxyContin. Eighty percent of the people suffering from heroin addiction started with opioid pain medications approved by the FDA and prescribed by doctors.

In 2014, nearly 33,000 people died of an opioid overdose in this country. Almost 1,300 of those deaths were in my home State of Massachusetts.

I had hoped to offer amendments to CARA to address both the causes of this epidemic and to provide treatment for those suffering from the results. One of my amendments would have required the FDA to convene advisory committees for all prescription opioid approval questions.

After I placed a hold on the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf to serve as FDA Commissioner, the agency an-

nounced it would only commit to convene advisory committees for non-abuse-deterrent opioids. The FDA refused to agree to convene advisory committees to inform all of its opioid-approval decisions.

We need legislation requiring the FDA to seek expert advice about the risk of addiction before it approves any and all opioids, and I will continue to fight to require advisory committees at the FDA.

We also need legislation requiring doctors to get and stay educated about the dangers of the pills they are prescribing in record numbers. Stopping the overprescription of opioid painkillers is a critical step.

We need to ensure that all prescribers of these opioid painkillers are educated in the dangers of these drugs, how easily individuals can become addicted, and when and how to appropriately prescribe. The doctors say that they do not want education to be mandated, that it should be voluntary. Well, the FDA has had voluntary education for opioid prescribers in place since 2013 and has been actively encouraging doctors to take these voluntary education programs, but in more than 2 years, only 12 percent of prescribers have actually completed FDA's voluntary education program.

It is imperative that any provider who is applying for a Federal DEA license to prescribe opioids have completed mandatory education on the basics of opioid prescribing and the inherent risk of addiction. My amendment would have done just that. It would have required basic education as a condition of a DEA license to prescribe these painkillers, and I will continue to fight to require prescriber education.

Finally, we need to remove the barriers to effective treatment, including outdated Federal restrictions on medication-assisted therapies such as Suboxone. Medication-assisted therapy for opioid addiction is cost effective, decreases overdose deaths, and reduces transmission of HIV and hepatitis C. Unlike other treatment regimens for any other disease, physicians are severely limited in the number of patients they can treat with medication-assisted therapies such as Suboxone, contributing to long wait-lists and an inability of patients to get treatment for their addiction when they need it. Of approximately 2.5 million Americans who abused or were dependent on opioids, fewer than 1 million received treatment for their condition, partly because of the already existing Federal instructions.

Senator RAND PAUL of Kentucky and I have a bipartisan bill, the Recovery Enhancement for Addiction Treatment Act, or TREAT Act, which has broad stakeholder support, including the American Medical Association and nurse practitioners. It emphasizes quality of care and closes this gaping

hole in our addiction treatment system. We had hoped to offer TREAT as an amendment to CARA. We will continue to fight for it and are hopeful the HELP Committee will include it in the substance abuse legislation the committee will soon consider.

My collaboration with Senator PAUL shows that whether it is the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the Commonwealth of Kentucky, this crisis is the same. It doesn't discriminate by geography, by age, by race, by socioeconomic status, or by employment. It requires a bipartisan effort.

Thirty years ago, Nancy Reagan told us to just say no to drugs. Today we have to go further. We have to say enough is enough. We have to recognize what has worked and what hasn't worked. In the past, we believed we could incarcerate our way out of the problem. That did not work. So instead of ignoring and incarcerating, let's avow and act. Let's destigmatize, not criminalize. Let's treat, not retreat. Let's have a comprehensive plan which we put in place that deals with the pharmaceutical companies, the physicians, and the kinds of treatment patients need across our country so that they get the help they need. That is our job.

I continue to believe we can do this in a bipartisan fashion as long as we understand the magnitude of the problem and what the causes of it were and continue to be and will be into the future unless and until we put these safeguards in place. So I am looking forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I compliment them for the work they have done so far in bringing this bill to the floor of the Senate this week, but I do believe there is more to be done.

As long as this many Americans are addicted, as long as this much OxyContin and opioids are put into our system, then we are going to find that this heroin epidemic we have in our country, which is directly related, will continue to spiral out of control.

I want to work with all my colleagues. I thank my colleagues for all the work they have done so far, but there is much work to be done in the future.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I would like to talk for a few minutes about the crime problem we have in America today, the dramatically increasing problem of heroin abuse. Over the last week, we have had a lot of discussion about this crisis, which I am afraid we are just on the cusp of. I think it is going to get worse, based on my experience and my best judgment, but the effort to understand and address it has been going on for a while.

In January, we had a good hearing on this issue in the Senate Judiciary Com-

mittee, and I want to mention a few things I think we ought to keep in mind as we address this very important problem.

Just as background, I served 15 years as a prosecutor, 12 as a U.S. attorney, a Federal prosecutor, and 2½ as an assistant U.S. attorney. So that was my background when I came here. I was very active and studied the drug and crime problem in America, and I learned some things.

There are cycles in this, and people wrote about it over the years. I think we are, unfortunately, moving into another cycle, and we have to be very careful. It is so painful to have a large prison population. We don't want to have that. Year after year, everybody wants to look for alternatives to prison, and we have tried, but if you go too far, you end up not having sufficient consequences for crime, not detaining dangerous offenders, and you end up increasing crime, increasing deaths of Americans from murders and other things, increasing heroin and serious drug problems that destroy families, destroy lives, destroy communities, and result in violence and death. It is a very real problem.

A lot of people think, well, if you want to use heroin, so be it. Well, these people can't function. How are they going to survive? They either steal or they get on welfare or they have to go to treatment. And who pays for it, since they do not have any money?

We have proven and seen for decades that drug use can be brought down, fewer people can become addicted. In the early 1980s, Nancy Reagan, as President Reagan's wonderful wife, formed the "Just Say No" program, and hundreds of thousands of volunteers nationwide in every community in America got together in their communities—they got the treatment community, the law enforcement community, the prevention community, the education community, and the schools—and they worked and worked and crafted policies that would create a climate of hostility for the use of dangerous drugs. The idea was to bring down the use. As a result, the use of illegal drugs dropped by half. It took us 15 or more years, but it dropped by half steadily. What a tremendous victory.

In 1980, half of our high school seniors admitted they had used an illegal drug sometime in that year. What an unbelievable number. It had been going up steadily, it peaked, and then it began to go down under this sustained effort.

What I have been worried about for some time, and have warned about it, is that if you don't maintain that but start going in the other direction, you can expect drug use to increase. It is that simple. And it is happening. Lives—and young people's lives—will be destroyed by this, families will break up, and children will be scarred.

Drug use is no fun, innocent thing. It is destructive. If this Nation is using half as much illegal drugs as before, it is a better nation. It just is. And if we double the amount of drug use in America, it will be a more dangerous Nation and not as good a nation.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, over 47,000 people died from drug overdoses in the United States in 2014. In 2014, 47,000 died. That is one drug overdose death for every 12 minutes. And 61 percent of those overdoses involved opioids. The rate of all opioid overdoses in the United States has tripled since 2000. Overdoses have tripled since 2000.

Heroin overdose deaths specifically have increased sixfold since 2001—600 percent—and have more than tripled in just the past 4 years alone. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, there were approximately 169,000 new heroin users in 2013.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, in 2004, approximately 589,000 people in the United States had an opioid use disorder. We used to call that addiction—a problem. It is affecting their lives.

The Drug Enforcement Administration's 2015 National Drug Threat Assessment noted that "drug overdose deaths have become the leading cause of injury death in the United States, ahead of motor vehicle deaths and firearms."

This is a significant matter. As DEA Acting Administrator Chuck Rosenberg, a bright, young mind appointed by President Obama, noted last July that "[a]pproximately 120 people die each day in the United States of a drug overdose."

Some argue that the increase in heroin abuse is due to over-prescription of opioids from prescription drugs—you get addicted from a prescription drug, and then you move to heroin. I am sure that has some validity, but according to a January 14, 2016, study published in the New England Journal of Medicine, one of the premier authoritative medical journals in the world:

In the majority of studies, the increase in the rates of heroin use preceded the change in prescription-opioid policies, and there is no consistent evidence of an association between the implementation of policies related to prescription opioids and increases in the rates of heroin use or deaths, although the data are relatively sparse. Alternatively, heroin market forces—

Please hear this, colleagues—

Alternatively, heroin market forces, including increased accessibility, reduced price, and high purity of heroin appear to be major drivers of the recent increases in rates of heroin use.

So it is purity, price, and accessibility. While treatment and accountability are critical to breaking the cycle of addiction, it is not the whole solution. We must also reduce the availability of heroin—we simply have to do that—and other illicit opioids.

In December of last year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Tom Frieden said it is important “that law enforcement”—a lot of people don’t want to talk about this. We have police officers, sheriffs’ deputies, Federal agents, drug enforcement agents, and Border Patrol agents. He said it is important “that law enforcement intensify efforts to reduce the availability of heroin, illegal fentanyl, and other illegal opioids.” Similarly, Drug Enforcement Administration Acting Administrator Rosenberg said in the DEA’s National Drug Threat Assessment that, in addition to providing treatment to addicted opioid abusers, “law enforcement must continue to have the tools it needs to attack criminal groups who facilitate drug addiction.”

I have been there. I was part of law enforcement’s efforts. I invested a tremendous amount of my time in the Coalition for a Drug Free Mobile, the Partnership for Youth, Bay Area Drug Council—groups like that—working on a volunteer basis to change the use of drugs in the community. Law enforcement was always a critical part of it, and law enforcement does have the capability in ways that others don’t to reduce the availability, make purity levels less, and otherwise restrict, raising the price of an illegal drug. The DEA’s 2015 National Drug Threat Assessment confirms this. They studied the price of the drugs. One thing that tells us whether or not law enforcement and interdiction are effective is to discover if the price is going up or down.

Mexican drug cartels are flooding the United States with cheap heroin and methamphetamine. When I was a young prosecutor, it was coming from Turkey, the Middle East, and that was pretty much shut off. President Carter did some good things. I was an Assistant U.S. Attorney and came back a few years later as a U.S. Attorney, but during that time they somehow reduced the supply of heroin from the Middle East. As a result, heroin addiction dropped all over the country, and very little heroin was in the heartland of America—mainly just in the big cities.

We are also getting cheap methamphetamine from across the Mexican border, which is wide open. The statistics from the DEA Drug Threat Assessment confirm that, from 2010 to 2014, the amount of heroin seized every year at the southwest border has more than doubled. Well, are we catching that much more? No, we are not catching, I am sure, any substantially larger percentage. We are just having a larger amount moving across the border. The price has fallen, so we know we have more. If prices stay low, more people will try it more often, and as the purity level is higher, more people will get addicted sooner and often die quicker.

These drug cartels are partnering with criminal gangs and fueling violence in our cities and communities. According to DEA’s 2015 Threat Assessment, Mexican drug cartels “control drug trafficking across the Southwest Border and are moving to expand their presence in the United States, particularly in heroin markets.” They import, transport, and are now actually selling it in our cities instead of just bringing it in across the border.

In 2013, the heads of the Chicago Crime Commission and the Chicago Office of the Drug Enforcement Administration both named El Chapo Guzman, the infamous leader of the Sinaloa Cartel, as Chicago’s “Public Enemy #1.” So a man in Mexico, moving heroin and methamphetamine into the United States and hammering Chicago with it—Chicago named him as their No. 1 public enemy. It cannot be a coincidence, as the FBI’s uniform crime statistics show, that the murder rate in Chicago increased by approximately 18 percent during the first 6 months of 2015. At that rate, it is a 36 percent increase in murders in Chicago in 1 year. This is an unbelievably dramatic surge in murders.

Another example is Atlanta. DEA’s Atlanta office reported an increase of heroin availability from a rating of “stable” in the first half of 2013 to “high” just a year later. According to the FBI’s uniform crime statistics, the murder rate in Atlanta increased by approximately 15 percent in the first 6 months of 2015. This is an unsustainable thing. The old rule is a 7-percent increase and your money doubles in 10 years. When you get 15- and 18-percent increases in 6 months—that’s 30 percent in 1 year—you are doubling the crime rate, the murder rate, in 3 years.

At a November hearing of the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, I asked DEA Deputy Administrator Jack Riley about these drug distribution networks and the people in local communities pushing the drugs, selling the drugs, and collecting the money. This money eventually ends up back in Mexico, Colombia, and South and Central America, funding the evil, violent drug cartels that are destabilizing whole nations. He responded that it is “almost as big a problem as the cartels themselves.”

When I asked him whether these drug traffickers are the ones causing the violence and death on our streets, he responded that “they are the ones that regulate themselves by the barrel of a gun.” If you want to collect a drug debt, you can’t file a lawsuit in Federal court. You collect it by the barrel of a gun.

By its very nature, drug distribution networks are violent criminals. It has always been so, and it will always be so. Conducting an illegal enterprise, they have to maintain discipline, and

they use threats and violence to maintain it and collect their debts. We must not forget what became obvious in the early 1980s, when I was a U.S. Attorney: Drug dealers and their organizations are not nonviolent criminals. These are violent crimes.

Rather than enforcing the law and making it tougher on drug cartels by keeping our border secure, the Obama administration has done exactly the opposite. Our unsecured borders make it easy for the cartels to flood our country with cheap heroin, and the administration has made it clear that officers are not to deviate from the President’s lawless immigration policy. They are blocked from doing their job and following their oath.

Just last week—and as someone who has worked closely with Federal Drug Enforcement officers and immigration officers as a Federal prosecutor—Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Gil Kerlikowske testified before the House Committee on Appropriations that “if you don’t want to follow the directions of your superiors, including the president of the United States and the commissioner of Customs and Border Protection, then you really do need to look for another job.”

Do you hear what he is saying there, colleagues? What he is saying is that if you want to do your job and enforce the laws as the laws are written, which we have ordered you not to do, and you go on and do it anyway, then look for another job. It is one of the most amazing things I have seen in my entire law enforcement career. ICE officers—Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers—who enforce drug laws, along with immigration laws, these officers sued their supervisors. They sued their supervisors, alleging that they were being ordered to violate their oath to enforce the immigration laws of the United States by these restrictive policies.

It is hard to overestimate the destruction the Obama administration’s policies—their Executive amnesty, their refusal to sufficiently fund and man the border—are causing to law enforcement. A big part of this now is the openness to heroin, methamphetamine, marijuana, and other drugs that are being imported. I take that statement by the Commissioner of Customs and Border Protection as a direct threat to those officers who want to follow their oath and do their duty.

In August 2013, a dramatic event occurred that was too little appreciated. Attorney General Holder, the Attorney General of the United States, ordered Federal prosecutors not to charge certain drug offenders with offenses that carry mandatory minimum sentences that are in law. If you have so much drugs, you have a minimum penalty. You can get more than that, but you at least have to serve this minimum penalty. He ordered them not to charge

those crimes. This is directing prosecutors not to follow the law. It has contributed to a decrease in the number of traffickers being prosecuted and convicted. According to data from the Executive Office for United States Attorneys, at the end of 2015—in December—the 6-month average of drug prosecutions was down 21 percent compared to 5 years ago. And what are we seeing? A surge in crime, particularly drugs. Excluding prosecutions in magistrate courts, the 6-month average was nearly 32 percent lower at the end of 2015 than 5 years ago. We haven't cut the number of drug prosecutors. We haven't cut the number of DEA agents. This is policy that softens the enforcement of drug crimes against what we have been doing for 25 years, and it is having an impact. I am afraid it is going to continue.

Meanwhile, State and local law enforcement agencies are not given the tools they need to continue taking these dangerous drug traffickers off of the streets.

On December 21, 2015, the Department of Justice chose to stop all equitable sharing payments to State, local, and tribal partners under the Asset Forfeiture Program. These are seized proceeds, moneys that are seized from drug dealers, big fancy cars and boats that they seize. For the last 20 years, Federal and State officers worked together. The Federal Government has a good system for forfeiting the money. Then, when the forfeiture is over, it is divided among the agencies. As a result, State and local people are willing to commit law officers to participate in these local task forces because they are helping clean up drugs in their community, helping identify and prosecute nationally significant drug dealers, and they get some compensation back from it when they find a truck full of money.

I personally have seen cases where \$1 million, \$500,000, \$800,000 in cash was seized from these people. Some people think, oh, this is wrong; you shouldn't take their cash. This is the ill-gotten gain of an illegal enterprise and they should be able to keep it? They have no proof of any lawful source of this money. Virtually every time, in addition, there is evidence to prove it is connected to drugs. Half the time, they don't even show up to contest the seizure because they know they have no defense to it. This stops this sharing, and it is undermining the unity of effort that we really need to be successful.

A joint letter signed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Association of Police Organizations, the Major County Sheriffs' Association, the National Sheriffs' Association, the National District Attorneys Association, and the Major Cities Chiefs Association, pointed out that "the suspension of equitable sharing

payments may cause some agencies across the country to reconsider their ability to participate in joint task forces with the Federal Government."

In other words, they are going to stop participating.

"The effects of this decision are far reaching and not only a disservice to law enforcement, but also to the public they are sworn to protect."

Mr. President, if there is a limit on my time or others are waiting to speak, I will wrap up. Otherwise, I have about 5 minutes to wrap up. I see my colleague Senator LEAHY, the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee. I don't want to block him. If my time is up, I will yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). There is no time limit in place.

Mr. SESSIONS. While law enforcement resources are being cut off, law enforcement officers are being blocked from doing their jobs, and drug prosecutions are being reduced, the administration and some in Congress want to push and advance a criminal justice "reform" bill. But these proposals will have a tendency, I am afraid, to worsen the current problem by allowing for more reductions in sentences than are already occurring and early release of thousands of dangerous drug traffickers, and the weakening of penalties for those prosecuted under our drug trafficking laws, which have already been weakened—sending the wrong message at exactly the wrong time.

I am very concerned about this. I love my colleagues, and I know their hearts are in the right place, but I am convinced we should not be heading in this direction at this time.

Make no mistake, Federal prisons are not filled with low-level, nonviolent drug possessors. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 99.7 percent of drug offenders in Federal prison at the end of fiscal year 2012 were convicted of drug trafficking offenses, not drug possession. Drug trafficking is inherently violent activity, and it only serves to fund the drug cartels while fueling violence in our cities.

According to the FBI, violent crime overall increased across the United States during the first half of 2015, by 6.2 percent for murders and 17 percent in the larger cities for murder—the largest single-year increase since at least 1960. Already this year, homicides in Chicago are double what they were all of last year.

This is a complex subject. It is too soon to know the total reason for this increase, but it cannot go unnoticed that over the last decade the Sentencing Commission, which sets standards for sentencing in the United States—outside of the minimum mandatorys that are set by our law passed by Congress—has unilaterally imposed reductions in the sentences for drug inmates currently in prison. So we reduced the sentences for those in

prison and they are getting out earlier. The most recent reduction in sentences resulted in the release of more than 46,000 drug traffickers—not drug possessors, drug traffickers—which has been wholeheartedly supported by the Obama administration.

According to Bureau of Justice Statistics, 77 percent of drug offenders released were rearrested within 5 years. Hear this now: 77 percent of these drug offenders were rearrested within 5 years, with 25 percent of those rearrested being rearrested for a violent crime—somebody hurt, maybe dead. Maybe that is part of the murder rate increase.

Take Wendell Callahan, a Federal drug felon who was convicted of trafficking in crack cocaine and released early pursuant to the Sentencing Commission's directives. Upon his early release, he proceeded to brutally murder his ex-girlfriend and her two little girls, 7 and 10. He would have been deep into a 12½-year Federal sentence if it had been maintained, but the Sentencing Commission reduced it. The judge granted his petition for early release because of his "good behavior" in prison, and that led the judge to conclude he did not pose a danger to the safety of the public, even though in his background—when he was convicted and got the 12 years, he had previously been convicted in connection with a shooting offense and another drug offense. This is why you have to have some controls on judges. I have been there, and I saw it before the sentencing guidelines were passed.

The Federal prison population is at its lowest level since 2008. We are already on a downward course of the drug Federal prison population being reduced. There are only 160,000 inmates in Bureau of Prisons custody today, well below its peak. The Bureau of Prisons has stated that this "downward population trend is expected to continue into Fiscal Year 2017," bringing the Federal prisons population to the lowest level since 2005.

The population is up. Crime is going up. The prison population is falling rather rapidly. Admissions to Federal prison have declined every year since 2011.

You hear: We are filling our prisons. We are doing more and more.

Actually, there are other things that are already happening. It is happening in State prisons, too, where larger numbers are incarcerated than in the Federal prisons. One of the reasons we are having this large decline in State prisons is not public safety but tight budgets. They are cutting back on the prison population to save money.

We can be smarter. Some people can be released early. I worked with my Democratic colleague, Senator DURBIN, 6 years ago, I believe, and we reduced the crack penalties more significantly than a lot of people know. I thought

that was justified. But we are now proceeding well beyond that, and it is causing me great concern.

The Attorney General has ordered the prosecutors to not charge certain criminal offenses. Reducing sentences and releasing felons is equivalent to reducing the cost to the criminal enterprise of their criminal activity. It reduces the cost, the risk. Thus, crime—it is already rising—would further increase as a result of the criminal justice “reform” bill that would further reduce penalties.

Can we take a breath, and let’s think about this? I don’t say there aren’t some things we can do that will allow for some reduction in the Federal prison population. Some people probably serve more time than is absolutely necessary. But in truth, we have seen dramatic improvements over nearly 30 years, 25 years, in the reduction of crime. Until this surge, murder rates were less than half what they were in 1980 when I became a Federal prosecutor. Drug use dropped dramatically when Nancy Reagan started the “Just Say No” program, and drug use began to steadily decrease. It is now beginning to steadily increase.

You have to have leadership from Washington. You can’t have the President of the United States of America talking about marijuana like it is no different than taking a drink, saying I used marijuana when I was in high school and it is no different than smoking.

It is different. And you are sending a message to young people that there is no danger in this process. It is false that marijuana use doesn’t lead people to more drug use. It is already causing a disturbance in the States that have made it legal. I think we need to be careful about this.

What if this is the beginning of another surge in drug use like we saw in the sixties and seventies that led to massive problems in our communities? The solution? Well, we have to control the border. All the heroin and a big chunk of the methamphetamine is coming across the Mexican border. We need barriers. We need more agents. People need to be arrested. They need to be deported. They don’t get to be taken to some city in the United States they would like to go to and get released and asked to show up on bail, which they never do. That is an open invitation to illegality and illegal entry.

We need to enforce our laws, and we have to make the consequences of drug trafficking a deterrent. We can do this. We have done it before, and it is all part and parcel with prevention programs, education programs, and treatment programs. All that has to be done, but it cannot be denied, in my opinion, that law enforcement plays a critical role in it. This means supporting, not blocking the efforts of law

enforcement to do their jobs and giving them the tools to arrest drug traffickers and be effective at the border, putting them in jail, not giving them early release so they can commit more crimes.

In January, a woman from Ohio named Tonda DaRe testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee at a hearing on the heroin and prescription opioid epidemic. She shared the powerful story of her daughter, who died from a heroin overdose. She said this:

One of the things that I see happening in our little town that frustrates me is . . . our officers have worked so diligently to arrest people that they know are bringing this [heroin] in. Just [to] have them go in front of our judges and our judges just slapped these people on the wrist and sent them right back out the door. . . . The boy that sold my daughter the heroin that killed her just recently went back in front of a judge for his fourth offense for trafficking heroin. [It was the] fourth time he’s been arrested for this and he was given five months. How [is] that possible?

We can talk about making sure we have treatment and recovery for people who have been addicted, although many people never ever recover from addiction—except by the grave. That is the sad truth. We should make that a priority. But we cannot hope to solve these problems by only treating people on the back end of addiction without reducing the availability of those drugs and keeping the purity down and the cost up, not continuing to fall. We have to stop people from becoming addicts in the first place, and we can’t let the fact that we have a heroin abuse epidemic cause us to forget that we have a drug trafficking epidemic too.

Law enforcement is prevention. Experts tell us that the price, purity, and availability of drugs, especially heroin, fuels more consumption, more addiction, more crime, more death, and more human and family destruction. I wish it were not true. I wish there were more options, but law enforcement is a central part of this effort, and history proves it.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

51ST ANNIVERSARY OF BLOODY SUNDAY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today is the 51st anniversary of Bloody Sunday—a horrible abuse of American citizens that occurred in Selma, AL. Each year we commemorate the events of that fateful day, because it helped transform our Nation and proved to be a catalyst for the passage of the Voting Rights Act. For the last two years, this commemoration has been a sad reminder of what five justices did to that cornerstone civil rights law. In *Shelby County v. Holder* a narrow majority of the Court drove a stake through the heart of the Voting Rights Act when it struck down the coverage formula for its preclearance provision in Section 5.

I mentioned that because under section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, the

Federal Government has the authority to examine and prevent racially discriminatory voting changes from going into effect before those changes disenfranchise voters in covered jurisdictions. By striking down the coverage formula that determined which States and jurisdictions were subject to Federal review, the Court rendered Section 5 unenforceable.

Unfortunately, even though almost every single Republican and Democrat in the House and Senate voted for the Voting Rights Act, the Supreme Court, by a 1-vote margin—notwithstanding that 535 of us had voted—drove a stake through the heart of the Voting Rights Act by striking down the coverage formula for its preclearance provisions in Section 5.

Since then Republican Governors and State legislatures have exploited Shelby County by enacting sweeping voter suppression laws that disproportionately prevent or discourage black Americans from voting. This includes the State of Alabama, which not only enacted a burdensome photo identification law after the decision, but then they made it even harder for many of its black citizens to obtain identification when the State closed more than 30 DMV offices in mostly poor, minority neighborhoods last October.

It is hard to fathom that in 2016, well over 100 years after the Civil War and passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution, and after transformative moments, such as Bloody Sunday, that States would continue to pass laws and take actions that would undermine black Americans’ rights to vote.

This past weekend, Congresswoman TERRI SEWELL, who represents the 7th District of Alabama—which includes Shelby County, Birmingham, and Selma—held a public forum in Birmingham to examine the harm caused by the Supreme Court’s Shelby County decision. Several witnesses at that forum testified that the State had made it harder for their citizens to vote, and that a disproportionate number of those citizens were minorities. They also spoke about the urgent need to restore the protections of the Voting Rights Act. Congressman JOHN LEWIS, our great civil rights hero, was in attendance, and it is heartbreaking to realize that so many of the gains that he was able to help secure through his civil rights activism are being undone today.

Despite the compelling testimony about the urgent need for Congress to address voting rights, most Republicans in Congress continue to disregard the urgency of this issue. More than two and a half years since the Shelby County decision, and despite the introduction of two separate bipartisan bills that would restore the protections of the Voting Rights Act, the Republican chairs of the Judiciary

Committee from both houses of Congress refuse to even hold a hearing on this issue. Instead, Republican leaders have only paid lip service to the issue, supporting the award of congressional medals for brave civil rights leaders. That is not enough.

Recently, the Speaker of the House stated that he was supportive of one of the bipartisan voting rights restoration bills. In the same statement he explained that nothing could be done because the Republican chair of the House Judiciary Committee refuses to take up the bill or to have a hearing. This is not leadership. The American people expect more than talk.

This pattern of Republican obstruction reached unprecedented heights recently when a few Senate Republicans declared that they would not even hold a hearing for the next Supreme Court nominee even before the President has even announced a nominee.

Republicans have apparently decided that rather than be transparent and hold public hearings and votes on the most significant issues of the day—including voting rights, comprehensive immigration reform, and the next Supreme Court nominee—they would simply shut down the process. Instead they are making important and timely decisions affecting hundreds of millions of Americans behind closed doors. It is not good for our democracy and it is not good for the American people.

We need hearings and a vote on the voting rights bills. And we need a hearing and a vote on the next Supreme Court nominee. We remember what came to be known as Bloody Sunday because the blood that was shed led to greater democratic participation and a more inclusive union. What Republicans are doing now undermines the hard-fought legacy of Bloody Sunday and the Civil Rights Movement. For the good of the Nation, I urge that Republican leaders in the Senate and the House change that shameful course.

Mr. President, the Senate will soon vote to bring us one step closer to passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act or CARA. Last week I suggested that we stay in session and do our job on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday so we could finish the bill, but I understand the Republican leadership wanted to take a long weekend, so we did not finish it, but now we can.

I am a cosponsor of this bill because it addresses the growing problem of prescription opioid and heroin addiction that has had devastating impacts on communities all over the country, including my home State of Vermont.

This bill represents an important shift in the way we approach the issue of substance abuse and addiction. It sets a comprehensive framework to reduce opioid deaths, prevent addiction, and improve treatment. It will also help those who suffer from opioid use disorders achieve recovery, and perhaps

most importantly this bill reflects the consensus of this body that the Nation cannot arrest or jail its way out of this addiction problem.

Since my first field hearing in Rutland, VT, on this topic in 2008, I have been inspired by how my fellow Vermonters across the political spectrum have shaped the discussion about this public health crisis and how they have served as a model for communities across the Nation.

I certainly feel this bill represents important progress, but we cannot be satisfied with just passing this one bill. We also need a significant commitment of targeted funding so we can carry out and implement the programs authorized by this bill.

It is one thing to say we are going to authorize these great programs even though we are not going to pay for them, but don't you feel good that we authorized them. Now we can all go home and tell our constituents we care. We authorized it, but we will not pay for it.

At least Senator SHAHEEN stood and proposed an amendment that would have provided emergency funding to do just that. Her vital amendment had the support of a majority in this body, but Republican Senators blocked it from being considered and adopted. It is unfortunate because Senator SHAHEEN's amendment would have provided the resources to strengthen both the law enforcement and public health components that would have delivered the necessary resources to health care professionals all over the country who are overwhelmed by a need they cannot meet.

I believe there is bipartisan agreement that we have to stop the loss of life caused by opioid abuse. There should be a bipartisan agreement to provide the money necessary to do so.

There is an opportunity to make the bill better. Many Members have filed amendments to improve CARA. A number of amendments were filed by both Republicans and Democrats. Unfortunately, the Republican leader has not allowed us to have an open amendment process, and contrary to what he said earlier, a number of Senators have been blocked from offering their amendments. I tried to work—and did in a bipartisan way with Senators GRASSLEY, WHITEHOUSE, and KLOBUCHAR—to consider this bill and report it to the Senate floor. We have continued our bipartisan effort to reach agreement on a number of amendments that could improve the bill. I hope those important bipartisan efforts will continue this week so we can consider these amendments and have final passage this week.

Let us have an open process. These amendments can be voted on up or down or adopted by consent. It is one thing for us to talk about what we want to do, it is another thing to have

the courage to vote for it. If we do not vote for it, we are just voting maybe. Let us vote yes or no.

As we work toward Senate passage of CARA, our goal should be to make this the best bill possible. Addiction is nothing less than an epidemic and CARA treats it like one. This bill demonstrates that Congress now sees addiction for what it is—a public health crisis all over our country. We need to equip our communities with both the programs and resources they need to get ahead of addiction.

CARA will save lives. It is worth putting the money in there to make sure it works.

Mr. President, I see the distinguished senior Senator from West Virginia on the floor, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I wish to thank the senior Senator from Vermont, who is a dear friend of mine. As he knows, this is a problem. It is an epidemic all over this country. No State is immune from it. It doesn't matter whether you are a Democrat or Republican. It has no home. It attacks and literally eradicates all of us, and it causes extreme hardships for all the families.

I know the Presiding Officer, who is from Indiana, is aware of this problem. Every week I have come to the floor to read letters from people who have been affected by addiction in West Virginia and other States. I have a letter from the Presiding Officer's home State of Indiana, and I have a letter from my State too.

This is something we have been fighting. The CARA Act is a bipartisan piece of legislation. It is not going to be a cure-all, but it starts in the right direction for us to start looking at opioid addiction and prescription drug abuse, not as much as we have in the past as a crime but as an illness, and an illness needs to have treatment. I think we are moving in that direction. Politically we are accepting this, and we are going to basically meet that need of treatment which is so few and far between.

We have 51 people dying every day. In my little, beautiful State of West Virginia, just last year we lost over 600 lives to prescription drug abuse, and I have a State with less than 2 million people. From 1999 to 2013 there has been an increase of over 700 percent.

This is a product which has come on the market that is greater than anything we have ever seen. We hope the FDA gets serious about this. They are hearing us loud and clear. Dr. Califf was not someone whom I supported. I

am very hopeful he will do a great job, and I will support him. He needs to step up to the plate and change the culture of the FDA. The reason I say that is because the FDA has to take their role seriously and not just approve drugs because it meets a certain criteria but also needs to realize the impact it has on the well-being of the families who have been addicted and affected. They need to consider the devastating public health impacts of its repeated decisions to approve all of these drugs that don't need to be on the market. We are very hopeful for that.

The thing that brings that to mind is that it took us forever to get Vicodin and Lortab from a schedule III to a schedule II. It took us over 3 years. Once we did, it took about 1 billion pills off the market, which resulted in a 22-percent decrease in Vicodin and Lortab, which were being passed out like M&Ms. We know it can save lives. Yet they came right back with Zohydro, which was against the wishes of their advisory committee.

We believe it is imperative that they have an advisory committee for every opioid they want to bring to the market. They must listen to the advisory committee. If the FDA—the Commissioner and his staff—wishes to go ahead and put a product on the market that is recommended not to be on the market from their advisory committee, they should come before us in Congress and tell us why they believe this potent drug such as Zohydro is needed when it is against the recommendations of these experts and specialists.

We have been flooded with these stories. I will read a story from the Presiding Officer's State of Indiana first.

The girl's name is Danielle. She says: I live in Southern Indiana and work as a server. About 2½ years ago a customer by the name of Josh Harvey left me his number. At the time, he told me he was living in Chicago for school. Little did I know he was in rehab there. Granted, I didn't know about his addiction for over a year because we hadn't stayed in constant contact. About a year or so ago I found out about his heroin addiction. He still told me little about it. I do know it started out with prescription pills and later went into heroin when the pills became harder to get. He served a month in jail in Michigan, for the entire month of this past July, over a heroin-related charge. He came home immediately after and overdosed that same weekend. Luckily, his dad saved him that time. Now he got enrolled in college and was going to an outpatient program doing better—or so we all thought. School let out for break and I guess it all went downhill. He came to me on November 4 telling me he had used a couple of times and wanted my advice. I suggested an inpatient program. He went to Wellstone after he

left my house, sat for several hours and finally was given a room. I went and checked on him two different times while he waited to make sure he was there. Thursday I didn't receive any calls. Friday nothing either. Then, Saturday morning, the 7th of November, his mother called me to break my heart. He had passed away that Friday the 6th over in Louisville and they didn't know who to contact until that Saturday morning, I guess. He had checked himself out of Wellstone, broke into his house, and took his Xbox, which he later either pawned or traded for heroin. Never in a million years did I think I would become close to anybody addicted to heroin. It doesn't discriminate. It can get a hold of anyone and everybody. Never in my life have I been so depressed or heartbroken. All I want is his story shared. He was my happy ending gone way too soon.

That was from our friend in Indiana who wanted to share her story with us.

Let me tell you about Amanda, who lives in West Virginia.

Amanda said: I walked into our new apartment. Although we had only spent 2 nights there, it already felt like home. I was so excited to move in with Nate. We had been on the fence between being best friends and a couple, and making the decision to move in together had finally settled years of uncertainty. As I turned the corner, I was surprised to see that he was in the exact same position as when I had left for my morning classes. I knew it had been a rough night of "partying," but I thought he would be up to start our busy day of painting and moving. I touched his chest to feel the rise and fall, something that, as a mother, I had been doing to sleeping children for years. There was movement. He was breathing. I breathed a quick sigh of relief. I walked to the back of the apartment to set down my things, and that is when I realized I needed to go and get some things from my old apartment, and I started to leave. My hand was on the doorknob, but something stopped me in my tracks. To this day, I don't know why I turned around. I laid down beside Nate, and I put my arm on his chest. He was not breathing, and when I looked up at his face, his eyes were wide open, but it was obvious that he was not there. The paramedics revived him to the point that he survived in a coma for 1 week. At one point while in the hospital, his eyes opened, and I thought that our nightmare was over, but it was just a muscle reflex and false hope. On January 30, 2007, prescription drugs took the life of Nathan Keith Dunn, age 24.

Tall, dark, and handsome is what the world saw. Intelligent, funny, witty, loving, and kind were the qualities seen by those who knew Nate best. He was my best friend, my musical soulmate, and my sounding board. We

were inseparable, and I began to experience an ache in my heart that, 9 years later, still occasionally brings me to my knees. But that is just who Nate was to me. He was also the older son of a mother who had left years of abuse at the hands of her husband in order to find a better life for her sons. He was the brother to—and the only soft spot of—a boy who had been hardened growing up on the streets of a town outside of Houston, TX. It seemed as if the only thing that ever kept him grounded was Nate's love. They had one another's back in the best and worst of times. Nate was also the instant crush of any girl who ever laid her eyes upon him. He was the best friend of anyone who knew him. I often wonder who and where he would be today. But I guess I will just have to wonder forever.

I wish this was the end of my story about how prescription drugs have affected my life, but it is not even close to the end. For longer than I care to admit, drugs have been part of my everyday life. Shortly after Nate's death, I became addicted to prescription opiates. At first, they were prescribed by my doctor. Eventually, I couldn't get through a day without them. I was what is sometimes referred to as a "functioning addict," although it is fair to say that such a thing does not exist. To the outside world, I appeared to be fine, normal even. I held a job. I cared for my young sons. I kept a tidy home. Meanwhile, my tolerance was building, and I began to require more and more of the drugs just to feel normal, just to get through each day. Can you imagine living this life in which you wake up each day wondering if you have enough of the drug you need just to be OK for that day?

So many people are facing this every single day. It could be the person sitting next to you. It could be your child's teacher. Even worse, it could be your own child.

The first thing to suffer was my financial situation. Every dime I had was spent on the drugs that would allow me to function today, tomorrow, and if I am lucky, the next. Then, my relationships with friends and family began to fail. It was painfully obvious that I was stealing from them. Next, I couldn't keep a job—a record that will haunt me for the rest of my life. How could I go to work? How could I continue on?

Then, a catalyst walked into my life. I met a very good man. As we became closer, I realized that I couldn't bring myself to tell him that I was a drug addict.

This is a silent killer. Nobody speaks; they all keep it very quiet.

Mr. President, if I may have about 1 minute to finish up, I would appreciate it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANCHIN. Thank you, Mr. President.

Very few people know what is actually happening in your life. In order to get help, you have to be willing to openly talk about your issues, and most of us fear being harshly judged—and rightfully so.

Trying to treat a person with addiction issues by using medication only or therapy only is like trying to extinguish a raging house fire with a garden hose.

She said: I was fortunate enough to have found a medication-based treatment program in my area, which is paid for by my insurance.

She is going to move forward, and she wanted this story to be told. She said she wanted people to know how difficult it is.

What we need to know as policymakers is how hard it is for people in our States who realize they need help and can't find it.

So what I ask all of us to do—this CARA bill is a step in the right direction. It is a piece of legislation that is much needed. As we move forward today on this piece of legislation, I hope we will find basically the support that people are needing to fight this opiate addiction.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Senate amendment No. 3378, the substitute amendment to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Deb Fischer, John Barrasso, Shelley Moore Capito, Roy Blunt, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Mike Crapo, David Vitter, Mike Rounds, Bill Cassidy, James E. Risch, Lindsey Graham, John McCain, Thom Tillis, Orrin G. Hatch.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on amendment No. 3378, as amended, offered by the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY, to S. 524, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY),

and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 86, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 32 Leg.]

YEAS—86

Alexander	Feinstein	Murphy
Ayotte	Fischer	Murray
Baldwin	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Franken	Perdue
Bennet	Gardner	Peters
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Reed
Booker	Grassley	Reid
Boozman	Hatch	Risch
Brown	Heinrich	Roberts
Burr	Heitkamp	Rounds
Cantwell	Heller	Schatz
Capito	Hirono	Schumer
Cardin	Hoeven	Scott
Casey	Inhofe	Sessions
Cassidy	Isakson	Shaheen
Coats	Johnson	Shelby
Cochran	Kaine	Stabenow
Collins	King	Sullivan
Coons	Kirk	Tester
Corker	Klobuchar	Thune
Cornyn	Lankford	Tillis
Cotton	Leahy	Udall
Crapo	Manchin	Warner
Daines	McCain	Warren
Donnelly	McConnell	Whitehouse
Durbin	Menendez	Wicker
Enzi	Merkley	Wyden
Ernst	Moran	

NAYS—3

Lee	Markey	Sasse
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NOT VOTING—11

Boxer	Mikulski	Sanders
Carper	Murkowski	Toomey
Cruz	Nelson	Vitter
McCaskill	Rubio	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 86, the nays are 3.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, that is good news. The Presiding Officer just announced the results of the vote, and that is good news because it means the Senate has just taken another step toward the passage of CARA, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.

I see my colleague Senator WHITEHOUSE is on the floor. I thank him and thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for moving forward on this legislation that will help us to save friends, family members, our neighbors, and communities that are struggling with addiction.

This is a very important opportunity for us to be able to move forward on

legislation that is comprehensive, that is bipartisan, and that has a companion bill on the House side, so there is a very good chance we could get this to the President's desk. It is the only bipartisan legislation that is comprehensive and evidence based, and it is critical we move forward with it.

In addition to Senator WHITEHOUSE, I also thank Senator AYOTTE, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and 42 bipartisan cosponsors for their support.

Frankly, more important to me is the support around the country this legislation has. I think Senator WHITEHOUSE and I now have over 130 groups around the country that are supporting this legislation. This includes doctors, nurses, health care professionals, also law enforcement, people who are in the trenches dealing every day with treatment and recovery, and those who are focused on prevention and how to ensure people cannot just be treated for addiction but try to keep people out of the funnel of addiction.

We started working on this legislation about 3 years ago. We started by hearing from experts around the country. We had five conferences in Washington where we looked at all the issues, including criminal justice, women and addiction, the science of addiction, youth prevention, recovery issues, substance abuse impacting our veterans—a number of issues that enabled us to write legislation that actually makes sense, that will make a difference in our communities. These 130 groups around the country are focused on getting this bill passed because they know it is going to make a difference in our communities.

If enacted, this will help States and communities develop and implement these evidence-based practices that we have looked at from around the country. It expands prevention and educational efforts to prevent prescription opioid abuse and the use of heroin and increases drug disposal sites to keep medications out of the hands of youth.

It also authorizes law enforcement task forces to combat heroin and methamphetamine and expands the availability of the overdose reversal drugs such as naloxone, which are miracle drugs. It provides not just naloxone but also more training to our law enforcement officials, to firefighters, and to other emergency responders.

In the criminal justice system, CARA will help promptly identify and treat individuals suffering from substance abuse and expand diversion and education efforts to give individuals a second chance. Frankly, it is going to help to get people into treatment rather than going into the criminal justice system. Locking up people hasn't worked. If people are being arrested for possession alone, for using, this legislation will help to divert those people into the treatment to get them back on their feet.

CARA also authorizes resources to expand treatment in general, including medication-assisted treatment—again based on the research that has been done around the country.

It allows veterans who were discharged for a substance abuse disorder to use drug courts as they recover. So it provides actual grants to these veterans treatment courts. They are doing a terrific job. I have toured these in Ohio and talked to some of these veterans who have been through these programs. Again, it helps get our veterans back on the right track. Rather than ending in jail, they end up in a treatment program with other veterans helping them and supporting them, where they can begin to deal with their addiction and mental health issues.

CARA supports recovery programs, including those focused on youth and building communities of recovery. This happens now at our colleges and universities increasingly. We want to support that. It also creates a task force on recovery to improve ways to address the collateral consequences imposed by addiction.

One of the most important aspects of this legislation expands drug treatment for pregnant women who struggle with addiction and provides support for babies born with neonatal abstinence syndrome, babies who are born with addiction.

Recently, my wife Jane and I visited Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital in Cleveland, OH. We toured the neonatal unit. If you haven't done this, it will break your heart because you will find there an increasing number of babies who are born, again, with this addiction, the neonatal abstinence syndrome. Unfortunately, when you look at what has happened in Ohio, we have had a 750-percent increase in the number of babies who are diagnosed with this neonatal abstinence syndrome just since 2004—a 750-percent increase. I am told in some of our States now 10 percent of the babies are being born addicted.

I have also been at other hospitals around our State, including Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and St. Rita's Special Care Nursery in Lima, OH. Last week my wife went to Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus. Every single one of these children's hospitals is experiencing the same thing. What I have learned from these incredibly compassionate nurses and doctors who take these newborns through a withdrawal process is that the numbers of babies who have been exposed to heroin or prescription drugs continue to grow. The problem is getting worse, not better. These hospitals serve as yet another reminder that addiction is a disease. It is a disease that has to be treated like other diseases, and it is a disease that can impact anyone.

It is wonderful that these caring nurses, doctors, and others are working

to try to ensure that these babies become healthy. We don't know what the long-term consequences are, but we need to do more to avoid the addiction in the first place and better treat it when it occurs, and that is what this legislation does. Specifically, the measure takes steps to help women and babies by expanding treatment for expectant and postpartum women and authorizing the Department of Health and Human Services to award grants to ensure that these women have access to evidence-based treatment services. That is in this legislation. It also reauthorizes residential treatment programs for pregnant and postpartum women struggling with addiction.

There is a great center in Columbus, OH, called Amethyst. I had the opportunity to visit it. It is a treatment center, and the average length of stay there is almost 2 years. Their results are unbelievable. They allow women to come with their babies, with their children, to go through treatment together. So there is hope. There are treatment centers doing a great job. We want to hold those up and encourage more of that around the country.

Finally, the legislation also creates a pilot program for State substance abuse agencies that allows funds to be used to target women who are addicted to opioids and provide family-based services to those women in nonresidential settings. So it helps on the residential side but also with the nonresidential outpatient side.

Helping these women and helping these babies is just one aspect of this bill, but it is a very critical one. As we work to turn the tide in the struggle against addiction, it is one on which we should all be focused.

The good news is that the bipartisan momentum we have seen here tonight is building. I think the Senate is ready to move on this legislation this week. There are other amendments that have been filed. The deadline was today. I hope we will have the opportunity to go through some more amendments, as we did last week, but meanwhile, we have strong support and strong momentum, as we saw tonight, on both sides of the aisle. Both Republican and Democratic leaders have lined up to support this legislation. We need to pass this bill and get it signed into law so it can begin to make a real difference in the lives of people we represent.

As the heroin epidemic in Ohio and around the country has reached crisis level, I look forward to working with my colleagues to get this bill over the finish line here in the Senate and then get it passed in the House, where there is companion legislation, and then on to the President's desk and enable this Congress to play a role as a better partner with State and local governments and with our nonprofits around this country to address this growing

heroin epidemic around our entire country.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

MINERS PROTECTION ACT

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, last week I met with Rita Lewis of Westchester, OH, in southwest Ohio. She was here to testify in front of the Senate Committee on Finance in honor of her late husband Butch.

Butch worked as a trucker for 40 years with the promise that the pension he earned would be there to care for his family after he retired.

I would also add that Butch had been drafted by the Pittsburgh Pirates to play baseball some 45 years ago. Instead, he enlisted to go into the U.S. Army and on to Vietnam. He was injured and could never play baseball again competitively. He came back and became a trucker and joined the Teamsters.

As I said, he worked as a trucker for 40 years with the promise that the pension he earned would be there to care for his family after he retired. But for Butch and Rita and thousands more Ohio retirees, that promise is under threat. Truckers and mine workers in Ohio and across the country are facing crippling cuts to the benefits they have earned.

The Multiemployer Pension Reform Act that Congress passed 2 years ago allows pension trustees to propose massive cuts to the earned benefits of retirees when a plan is running low on funds. This is disgraceful. If a pension fund is in bad shape, it is our job to fix it, not break promises to American workers who have worked their whole lives to earn that pension. I believed that 2 years ago when I voted against that law which allowed these proposed cuts, and I believe it more strongly now. That is why I am calling on the Treasury Department to reject and to reject immediately the proposed cuts to the Central States Teamsters' pension. I am calling for us to immediately mark up and pass the Miners Protection Act, which will protect the benefits Ohio workers earned over a lifetime of work.

Under MEPRA, the bill I talked about a moment ago, multiemployer pension trustees such as Central States are now able to propose massive cuts to the earned benefits of participants and retirees if the plans are in "critical and declining status." Pension trustees for plans in "critical and declining status" may submit an application for proposed benefit cuts to the U.S. Treasury Department.

The Central States pension plan trustees used the authority of MEPRA to propose cuts of as much as 70 percent, but in their own application, they admit that even with these drastic cuts, their plan—get this—still only has a 50.4-percent chance of remaining

solvent. In other words, they are asking Treasury to approve massive, life-shattering cuts to hundreds of thousands of workers for what amounts to a coin flip. Treasury should immediately reject this application.

Put yourself—this is something we don't do well around here—put yourself in the place of a worker who has planned for her retirement with her family. She expected a \$2,000-a-month pension on top of \$1,200 a month in Social Security, and she all of a sudden finds out her pension is cut 30, 40, 50, 60, 70 percent. That was the money she planned to live on. She has some savings, but all that was calculated because it was a promise from this pension plan to honor that commitment of decades earlier.

As I said, Treasury should immediately reject this application.

The mine workers' pension plan and the others are too far gone to use MEPRA. The United Mine Workers of America's 1974 pension plan covers 100,000 mine workers, including thousands of miners in eastern and southern Ohio. It was almost completely funded before the financial collapse of 7 years ago brought on by Wall Street overreach and greed, but the plan was devastated by the recession. It has too few assets, too few employers, and too few union workers paying in. If Congress fails to act, thousands of retired miners could lose their health care this year and the entire plan could fail as early as next year.

There is a bipartisan solution that is proposed by Senator MANCHIN, Senator CASEY, me, and others and supported by leaders of both parties. If it were brought to the floor today, it would pass with an overwhelming majority. It is time for the Senate to act. The Committee on Finance should mark up this legislation this week. The Senate should bring it to the floor immediately.

Miners worked in dangerous jobs—dangers from a mining accident, an explosion, or a collapse every day when they went to work, and dangerous in the sense that so many mine workers die early because of premature bronchial illnesses and heart ailments brought on by working in the mines. They have worked underground their whole lives to put food on the table, to send their kids to school, and to help power this country. Truckers criss-cross the State and country to pay their bills and support their families and drive our economy forward. They all deserve the full pension and health benefits they were promised and they worked a lifetime to earn.

Butch Lewis led the Southwest Retirees Pension Committee's fight against cuts to their earned benefits. He passed away on New Year's Eve due to a stroke, which doctors have attributed at least in part to the stress he faced over the proposed pension cuts not just

to him and his family but to the workers he was fighting for as a union activist. The benefits to his widow, his wife Rita, have already been cut. She faces an additional 40-percent reduction because of the proposed cuts put forth by Central States. Butch said the cuts being forced on retirees—his words—“amount to a war against the middle class and the American dream.” He is right. Ohio's retired workers have earned their pensions and their retirement savings over a lifetime of hard work. It was promised to them, whether they worked behind a desk, on the factory floor, down in the coal mines, or behind a wheel.

We should honor Butch's memory by continuing his work. That means coming together to support a bipartisan solution to protect Rita's benefits and the pensions of tens of thousands of retired Teamsters and retired mine workers.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO JACQUELYNE BRADY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and honor the career of Jacquelyne “Jackie” Brady, as she retires from her position as town manager for Laughlin, NV.

For more than 20 years, Jackie Brady has been dedicated to serving the residents of Clark County. As the Laughlin town manager, Jackie has managed municipal services that Laughlin residents depend on and enjoy. Throughout her tenure, Jackie has worked to build partnerships that spur economic progress and positively impact Laughlin and southern Nevada. Under her steadfast and innovative leadership, her office created the first economic development plan in the city, supported the improvement of Needles Highway, and helped develop the Colorado River Greenway Heritage Park and Trails, among other accomplishments.

Jackie's success is hard-fought and well-earned. She was born and raised in east Texas in a segregated community where she was not even allowed to use

the local library. Instead, Jackie and her peers had to learn from textbooks that were outdated and out of circulation. Despite this, Jackie went on to receive her bachelor's degree from East Tennessee State University, and she later returned to Texas to attend the newly established Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, where she graduated with a master's degree.

In addition to her role as Laughlin town manager, Jackie has served as the county liaison to the town of Searchlight, NV, for more than 17 years. In 2014, Jackie was named a Distinguished Woman in Nevada, and in 2015, she was awarded Woman of the Year by the Real Life Church in Las Vegas. Jackie also sits on the Laughlin Chamber of Commerce board and has been involved with the Rotary Club, United Way Allocations Committee, Family Resource Center Board, and the former Laughlin Kiwanis Club.

I congratulate Jackie on her many successes and decades of public service. I appreciate and commend her dedication to the Silver State, and I wish Jackie the best in her retirement and future endeavors.

51ST ANNIVERSARY OF BLOODY SUNDAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today marks the 51st anniversary of what has come to be known as Bloody Sunday. On March 7, 1965, JOHN LEWIS and Reverend Hosea Williams led 600 brave civil rights activists in a march over the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, AL. These courageous men, women, and children gathered to draw attention to the systematic disenfranchisement of African Americans in Alabama and throughout much of the Deep South. They marched in pursuit of the most fundamental right, the right preservative of all others—the right to vote.

What they received that day, however, were brutal beatings from police batons as State troopers turned them back and chased them down. More than 50 of the demonstrators were injured. JOHN LEWIS was beaten unconscious and nearly killed.

Ten days later, Federal district court Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr., granted protection to the activists, ruling that they were permitted to march from Selma to the State capitol in Montgomery. In the historic order he issued, Judge Johnson wrote: “The law is clear that the right to petition one's government for the redress of grievances may be exercised in large groups. Indeed, where, as here, minorities have been harassed, coerced and intimidated, group association may be the only realistic way of exercising such rights. . . . These rights may be exercised by marching, even along public highways.”

Days later, the march proceeded with a crowd of approximately 3,200 marchers—which swelled to 25,000 by the time they reached the capitol. Within months, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law—guaranteeing that the right to vote would not be restricted through clever schemes, like poll taxes and literacy tests, devised to keep African Americans from voting.

Last month, the foot soldiers of the 1965 voting rights marches were recognized with a Congressional Gold Medal. JOHN LEWIS, who since 1987 has been Congressman JOHN LEWIS, along with Reverend Frederick D. Reese, accepted the medal on behalf of the foot soldiers. At the ceremony, Congressman LEWIS said: “It was their determined marching feet that led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act. . . . They were just ordinary people with an extraordinary vision, to build a true democracy in America.”

In 2005, I was proud to join Congressman LEWIS on a trip to Selma for a ceremonial walk across the Edmund Pettus Bridge to mark the 40th anniversary of Bloody Sunday. As we marched in recognition of that extraordinary vision to build a true democracy, we celebrated the marchers’ achievement—a bill that has often been called the most significant civil rights law ever passed by Congress. Little did we know that, 8 years later, in 2013, the Supreme Court would strike down a major provision of that landmark legislation.

In *Shelby County v. Holder*, on a 5–4 vote, a divided Supreme Court struck down the provision of the Voting Rights Act that required certain jurisdictions to preclear any changes to their voting laws with the Department of Justice. This decision effectively gutted the Voting Rights Act. Since the decision, States like Texas, North Carolina, Alabama, and Mississippi have put in place restrictive State voting laws—which all too often have a disproportionate impact on lower-income and minority voters.

In order to truly honor the foot soldiers of Bloody Sunday and repair the damage done by *Shelby County*, Congress must restore the Voting Rights Act by passing the bipartisan Voting Rights Advancement Act. This bill, which Senator LEAHY, Senator COONS, and I introduced last year, would ensure that the Federal Government is once again able to fully protect the fundamental right to vote.

I wish that, 51 years after Bloody Sunday, America had reached a point where the protections of the Voting Rights Act were no longer necessary. But we have not, and the Voting Rights Act is still very much needed today.

In 2006, Congress reauthorized the Voting Rights Act with an overwhelming bipartisan vote in both the House and the Senate. It is time to

once again come together on a bipartisan basis and recognize the ongoing challenges that minority voters all too frequently face. Congress must take action to repair the Voting Rights Act and ensure the legacy of those who marched 51 years ago.

REMEMBERING NANCY REAGAN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, yesterday the American people lost an icon. Nancy Davis Reagan died at the age of 94.

Years ago, during an event at the White House, Nancy once serenaded her husband, singing: “together we are going a long, long way.” And boy did they ever.

Born in New York and raised in Chicago, Nancy studied theater at Smith College in Massachusetts before moving westward to California to pursue a career in acting. She appeared in 11 motion pictures, but her life changed forever when her name appeared on the infamous list from the House Un-American Activities Committee. This was a list of people suspected of having ties to the Communist Party.

Worried that she may be blacklisted, she demanded to meet with the president of the Screen Actors Guild in an effort to remove her name. And guess who was serving as president of the Screen Actors Guild—Ronald Reagan.

They met and fell in love. The rest is history.

This month, 64 years ago, Ronald Reagan and Nancy Davis married, and in Nancy’s words: “my life really began when I married my husband.” And what a life it was.

From the Governor’s mansion in California to the White House, one thing was clear, Nancy was always on Ronald Reagan’s mind.

Straight out of a Hollywood script, their 52-year marriage was a true American love story. Their mutual love and devotion is a beautiful reminder of what a marriage should look like. We should all be so lucky.

Fiercely loyal to her husband and America, you didn’t want to get on the wrong side of Nancy Reagan. She had grit and was one tough lady when she had to be.

Nancy was a passionate protector of her husband and the Presidency. And during talks with the Soviet Union, she constantly encouraged her husband to stay with it and not give up. She understood that nothing is more important than peace, and the historic START I arms reduction treaty may not have been possible had it not been for Nancy.

After her husband’s Presidency, she championed issues such as drug and alcohol abuse and afterschool programs. In 1994, after announcing his diagnosis with Alzheimer’s, Ronald Reagan wrote: “I only wish there was some way I could spare Nancy from this painful experience.”

But Nancy endured by working to stamp out Alzheimer’s and tirelessly advocated for embryonic stem cell research for the rest of her life. She was determined to save other families from the pain she had gone through and she raised millions of dollars for research.

She praised President Obama when he removed restrictions on the Federal funding of embryonic stem cell research and even teamed up with Ted Kennedy to work on these issues that were so close to her heart. Nancy had a special friendship with Ted Kennedy—who would call her every year on her birthday and sing an old Irish song to his dear friend.

That type of bond between the two political parties is missing today in Washington.

In an era when the political discourse can overwhelm the real problems we work to solve, Nancy Reagan’s legacy can offer a path forward that we all can learn from. Before her death, Nancy reflected on the state of American politics and the inflammatory rhetoric we hear on the campaign trail, saying: “Do you believe this? Do you believe this?”

Like many of us, she was disappointed by the lack of civility between the candidates. It certainly does not reflect a saying she made famous: “Dignity should be at the center of everything we do.”

In honor of Nancy Reagan, I hope we all take that message to heart.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:08 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4557. An act to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1826. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James “Maggie” Megellas Post Office.

The message further announced that pursuant to section 161(a) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2211), and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives as Congressional Advisors on Trade Policy and Negotiations: Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. REICHERT of Washington, and Mr. NUNES of California.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 4557. An act to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Assistant Secretary of the Senate reported that on March 4, 2016, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 1596. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, as the "Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building".

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. GRASSLEY, from the Committee on the Judiciary:

Report to accompany S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-220).

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, without amendment:

S. 1518. A bill to make exclusive the authority of the Federal Government to regulate the labeling of products made in the United States and introduced in interstate or foreign commerce, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-221).

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2361. A bill to enhance airport security, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-222).

H.R. 2843. A bill to require certain improvements in the Transportation Security Administration's PreCheck expedited screening program, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-223).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. UDALL (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 2643. A bill to improve the implementation of the settlement agreement reached between the Pueblo de Cochiti of New Mexico and the Corps of Engineers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. THUNE:

S. 2644. A bill to reauthorize the Federal Communications Commission for fiscal years 2017 and 2018, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 2645. A bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BURR (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. DAINES, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. MORAN):

S. 2646. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Veterans Choice Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve health care provided to veterans by the Department, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 2647. A bill to strengthen parity in mental health and substance use disorder benefits; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 386

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 386, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 386, *supra*.

S. 469

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 469, a bill to improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to severely wounded, ill, or injured members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their spouses or partners, and for other purposes.

S. 524

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

S. 681

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 681, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes.

S. 911

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from California

(Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 911, a bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue an order with respect to secondary cockpit barriers, and for other purposes.

S. 924

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 924, a bill to require the National Credit Union Administration to hold public hearings and receive comments from the public on its budget, and for other purposes.

S. 1014

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1014, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to ensure the safety of cosmetics.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 2068

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2068, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include automated fire sprinkler system retrofits as section 179 property and classify certain automated fire sprinkler system retrofits as 15-year property for purposes of depreciation.

S. 2185

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2185, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

S. 2248

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2248, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to coordinate Federal congenital heart disease research efforts and to improve public education and awareness of congenital heart disease, and for other purposes.

S. 2390

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2390, a bill to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

S. 2427

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2427, a bill to prohibit discrimination against individuals with

disabilities who need long-term services and supports, and for other purposes.

S. 2473

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2473, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide veterans the option of using an alternative appeals process to more quickly determine claims for disability compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 2499

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2499, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve access to health care through expanded health savings accounts, and for other purposes.

S. 2505

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2505, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2540

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2540, a bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations.

S. 2595

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2595, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 2604

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2604, a bill to establish in the legislative branch the National Commission on Security and Technology Challenges.

S. 2616

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2616, a bill to modify certain cost-sharing and revenue provisions relating to the Arkansas Valley Conduit, Colorado.

S.J. RES. 16

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 16, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relative to equal rights for men and women.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from California

(Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

S. RES. 385

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 385, a resolution recognizing the historic achievement of astronaut Scott Joseph Kelly of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as the first person of the United States to complete a continuous 1-year mission in space.

S. RES. 386

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 386, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States should establish a goal of more than 50 percent clean and carbon-free electricity by 2030 to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, grow the economy, increase shared prosperity, improve public health, and preserve the national security of the United States.

AMENDMENT NO. 3329

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3329 intended to be proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

AMENDMENT NO. 3411

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3411 intended to be proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3428. Mr. CORNYN (for Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. CORNYN to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3429. Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. PETERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3430. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3431. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. COR-

NYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3432. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3433. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3434. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3435. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. TESTER, Mr. COCHRAN, and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3436. Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3437. Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3438. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3439. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3440. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3441. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3442. Mr. CASSIDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3443. Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3444. Mr. BLUNT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr.

PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3445. Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3446. Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3447. Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3428. Mr. CORNYN (for Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. CORNYN to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VIII—IMPROVEMENTS TO OPIOID ADDICTION TREATMENT

SEC. 801. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 303(g)(2)(B) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)(B)) is amended—

(1) by striking clause (ii), and inserting the following:

“(ii) With respect to patients to whom the practitioner will provide such drugs or combinations of drugs, the practitioner complies with the following requirements:

“(I) The practitioner provides, either directly or through referral, biopsychosocial counseling services for their patients’ opioid addiction on a regular basis. The practitioner shall not prescribe medications listed in this subparagraph to any patient who does not receive biopsychosocial counseling services regularly. For the purposes of this subclause, ‘regularly’ means weekly for the first 2 months of the treatment of the patient and monthly for each month thereafter during the treatment, unless otherwise established by the State in which the physician is licensed for the purposes of programs established under paragraph (1). The practitioner shall regularly consult with the practitioner providing the counseling, which shall be provided by a program counselor, qualified by education, training, or experience to assess the psychosocial and sociological background of patients, to contribute to the appropriate treatment plan for the patient and to monitor patient progress.

“(II) The practitioner conducts toxicology tests to determine presence of illicit drugs, to ensure patient is taking prescribed medication and to guide clinical decision making including not fewer than 8 random drug abuse tests per year, per patient in maintenance treatment, in accordance with generally accepted clinical practice. For patients in short-term detoxification treatment, the practitioner shall perform not less

than 1 initial drug abuse test. For patients receiving long-term detoxification treatment, the practitioner shall perform initial and monthly random tests on each patient.

“(III) The practitioner fully participates in and consults the prescription drug monitoring program of the State in which the qualifying practitioner is licensed, pursuant to applicable State guidelines, to ensure patient is not being prescribed opiates elsewhere.

“(IV) The practitioner evaluates the patient in the office setting not less frequently than once per month to determine patient’s individual needs to address the patient’s opioid addiction.

“(V) The practitioner uses the American Society of Addiction Medicine Patient Placement Criteria to guide patient assessment, service planning and level of care decisions.

“(VI) The practitioner follows the Treatment Improvement Protocols of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for best practice guidelines, which shall be updated, not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this clause, to fully incorporate all opioid addiction treatment medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

“(VII) The practitioner has completed—

“(aa) not less than 24 hours of training (through classroom situations, seminars at professional society meetings, electronic communications, or similar mediums) with respect to the treatment and management of opiate-dependent patients for substance use disorders provided by the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, the American Medical Association, the American Osteopathic Association, the American Psychiatric Association, or any other organization that the Secretary determines is appropriate for purposes of this subclause; and

“(bb) not less than 8 hours of continuing medical education training in addiction medicine on an annual basis.

“(VIII)(aa) The practitioner—

“(AA) educates patients about the full range of opioid addiction treatment medications that are approved by the Food and Drug Administration; and

“(BB) based on the medical judgement of the practitioner, patient preference, and clinical assessment using validated, evidenced-based assessment tools, provides all opioid addiction treatment medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration, except schedule II substances, directly or by referral, as permitted and available.

“(bb) Nothing in this subclause shall be construed to allow a practitioner registered under this subsection to prescribe or dispense schedule II substances to treat opioid addiction.”; and

(2) by striking clause (iii) and inserting the following:

“(iii) The total number of patients of the practitioner at any one time will not exceed the applicable number. For the purposes of this clause, the applicable number is 45, unless not sooner than 1 year after the date on which the practitioner submitted the initial notification, the practitioner submits a second notification to the Secretary of the need and intent of the practitioner to treat up to 150 patients. A second notification under this clause shall contain the certifications required by clauses (i) and (ii).”.

(b) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, as the case may be, shall promulgate rules to carry out the amendments made by subsection (a).

SEC. 802. DATA COLLECTION.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, shall establish procedures to require that a physician who have received a waiver under section 303(g) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)) submit to the Administration the following information on a quarterly basis:

(1) The number of patients the physician is treating relative to the licensed maximum capacity of the physician.

(2) With respect to the health facility in which the physician is providing services, the percentage of physicians providing counseling services on-site and the percentage of patients in counseling and how frequently patients are utilizing such services.

(3) With respect to the health facility in which the physician is providing services, the percentage of physicians referring patients for counseling services off-site and the percentage of these patients in counseling and how frequently the patients are utilizing such services.

(4) The frequency with which the physician utilizes toxicology testing to guide therapeutic dosing and treatment decision making.

(5) The median patient length of time in treatment.

(6) The rate of patient dropout against medical advice.

(7) The rate and type of illicit drug use (opiate and non-opiate) by patients of the physician in the past 30 days.

(8) With respect to the health facility in which the physician is providing services, the percentage of physicians employing medication diversion control strategies.

(9) The median duration per buprenorphine prescription written by the physician.

(10) Patient demographics including age, gender, and payer source (such as Medicaid, private insurance, or other types of payment).

(11) Other information that the Secretary determines to be relevant to determine the quality of care being provided to opioid-addicted patients.

SEC. 803. GAO REPORT ON OPIOID ADDICTION TREATMENT IN THE PHYSICIAN OFFICE SETTING.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report on the impact the amendments made by section 801 have had on the quality of care being delivered by physicians who have received a waiver under section 303(g) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)) and the impact such amendments have had on access to care.

(b) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include recommendations to improve opioid addiction treatment outcomes in the physician office setting.

(c) REQUIRED CONSULTATION.—In developing the methodology of and considering recommendations to be included in the report required under subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the United States shall consult with interested parties who specialize in addiction treatment, such as—

(1) the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry;

(2) the American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence;

- (3) the American Osteopathic;
- (4) the Academy of Addiction Medicine;
- (5) the American Psychiatric Association;
- (6) the American Society of Addiction Medicine;
- (7) the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors; and
- (8) the National Council for Behavioral Health.

SEC. 804. OFFSET.

If the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines that the amendments made by section 801 will result in an increase in Federal spending, the Secretary shall reduce the funds available under section 4002 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 300u-11) by such sums necessary to fully offset the cost associated with the amendments made by section 801.

SA 3429. Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. PETERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 66, line 2, strike “under dishonorable conditions” and all that follows through line 5 and insert the following: “, if the reason for that discharge or release, if known, is attributable to a substance use disorder, service-connected post-traumatic stress disorder, military sexual trauma, or a service-connected traumatic brain injury, as determined on a case-by-case basis.”.

SA 3430. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . STUDY ON OPIOID TRAFFICKING THROUGH NORTHERN BORDER STATES.

(a) **STUDY.**—The Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall conduct a study on the trafficking of narcotics, specifically opioids, through States that border Canada.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report on the study conducted under subsection (a), which shall include—

- (1) a description of—
 - (A) the patterns and trends in the trafficking of opioids;
 - (B) trafficking transportation and delivery methods;
 - (C) detection efforts and countermeasures used by the United States and Canada;
 - (D) opioid user trends in the United States and Canada; and
 - (E) any opioid user awareness campaigns in the United States or Canada;

(2) a discussion of what efforts, if any, the Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security are coordinating with Canadian officials to combat opioid trafficking and use; and

(3) recommendations on—

(A) to how best to combat narcotics trafficking between the United States and Canada; and

(B) needed legal authorizations, funding levels, or international agreements in order to help facilitate better interdiction and prevention efforts.

SA 3431. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 101(c)(1), insert after subparagraph (H) the following:

(I) the Indian Health Service;

SA 3432. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 101(d)(1), insert after subparagraph (C) the following:

(D) the management of populations who have both a pain and a mental health diagnosis, including post-traumatic stress disorder and acute stress disorder;

SA 3433. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 2999C(b) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 304, insert after “community organizations” the following: “, and nonprofit organizations that demonstrate the capacity to provide recovery services to veterans.”.

SA 3434. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to

the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 101(c)(5), insert after subparagraph (D) the following:

(E) organizations recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code (commonly referred to as “veterans service organizations”); and

SA 3435. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. TESTER, Mr. COCHRAN, and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 104. ENHANCING BASIC AND APPLIED RESEARCH ON PAIN TO DISCOVER THERAPIES, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVES TO OPIOIDS, FOR EFFECTIVE PAIN MANAGEMENT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Director of the National Institutes of Health (referred to in this section as the “NIH”) may intensify and coordinate fundamental, translational, and clinical research of the NIH with respect to—

- (1) the understanding of pain;
- (2) the discovery and development of therapies for chronic pain; and
- (3) the development of alternatives to opioids for effective pain treatments.

(b) **PRIORITY AND DIRECTION.**—The prioritization and direction of the Federally funded portfolio of pain research studies shall consider recommendations made by the Interagency Pain Research Coordinating Committee in concert with the Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force, and in accordance with the National Pain Strategy, the Federal Pain Research Strategy, and the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2016-2020, the latter which calls for the relative burdens of individual diseases and medical disorders to be regarded as crucial considerations in balancing the priorities of the Federal research portfolio.

SA 3436. Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 11, line 25, strike “and”.

On page 11, after line 25, insert the following:

(6) rural community health professionals; and

On page 12, line 1, strike “(6)” and insert “(7)”.

SA 3437. Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use;

which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ ESTABLISHING MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER CURRICULUM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart I of part C of title VII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 293K et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 747A, the following:

“SEC. 747B. ESTABLISHING MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER CURRICULUM.

“(a) SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER TRAINING PROGRAMS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make grants to, or enter into contracts with, a school of medicine or osteopathic medicine, a nursing school, a physician assistant training program, a school of pharmacy, an accredited public or nonprofit private hospital, or a public or private nonprofit entity which the Secretary has determined is capable of carrying out such grant or contract to establish, maintain, or improve—

“(A) academic units or programs that include content and clinical experiences related to mental health and substance use disorder fields, with a special focus on addiction;

“(B) programs that enhance interdisciplinary recruitment, training, and faculty development for the purposes of improving clinical teaching and research in mental health and substance use disorder fields, including addiction;

“(C) programs that develop, assess, and disseminate evidence-based practices for the design of academic units, training programs, and faculty development initiatives in mental health and substance use disorder fields, including addiction; and

“(D) recommendations for medical education curriculum content standards regarding mental health and substance abuse, including addiction, to ensure that medical students are able to recognize, diagnose, and treat mental health and substance use disorders.

“(2) PARTNERSHIP REQUIRED.—To be eligible to receive a grant or contract under paragraph (1), an entity shall enter into a partnership with a medical education accrediting organization (such as the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation, the Accreditation Commission For Education in Nursing, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, or the accreditation review commission on education for the physician assistant).

“(b) PREFERENCE IN MAKING AWARDS UNDER THIS SECTION.—In making awards of grants and contracts under subsection (a)(1), the Secretary shall give preference to any qualified applicant for such an award that agrees to expend the award for the purpose of—

“(1) establishing academic units or programs in mental health and substance use disorder fields, including addiction medicine; or

“(2) substantially expanding such units or programs.

“(c) PRIORITIES IN MAKING AWARDS.—In awarding grants or contracts under subsection (a), the Secretary shall give priority to qualified applicants that—

“(1) have a record of training the greatest percentage of mental health and substance use disorder providers, including addiction

providers, who enter and remain in these fields;

“(2) have a record of training the greatest percentage of providers, or that have demonstrated significant improvements in the percentage of providers trained, who enter and remain in settings with integrated primary and mental health and substance use disorder health care service, or have a record of establishing multidisciplinary addiction medicine fellowship training programs;

“(3) have a record of training individuals who are from underrepresented minority groups, including native populations, or from a rural or disadvantaged background;

“(4) provide training in the care of vulnerable populations such as children, pregnant and post-partum women, older adults, homeless individuals, victims of abuse or trauma, and other groups as defined by the Secretary;

“(5) teach trainees the skills to provide interprofessional, integrated care through collaboration among health professionals; or

“(6) provide training in cultural competency and health literacy.

“(d) DURATION OF AWARDS.—The period during which payments are made to an entity from an award of a grant or contract under this section shall be 5 years.

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For purposes of carrying out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022.”.

(b) INCREASING TRANSPARENCY REGARDING GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS.—Not later than 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to Congress a report that describes the activities that hospitals receiving funding under the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.) have underway to promote interdisciplinary care teams and provide training for all medical residents, medical students, and faculty in mental health and substance abuse disorders, including addiction medicine.

SA 3438. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 504. ELIMINATION OF COPAYMENT REQUIREMENT FOR VETERANS RECEIVING OPIOID ANTAGONISTS OR EDUCATION ON USE OF OPIOID ANTAGONISTS.

(a) COPAYMENT FOR OPIOID ANTAGONISTS.—Section 1722A(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) Paragraph (1) does not apply to opioid antagonists furnished under this chapter to a veteran who is at high risk for overdose of a specific medication or substance in order to reverse the effect of such an overdose.”.

(b) COPAYMENT FOR EDUCATION ON USE OF OPIOID ANTAGONISTS.—Section 1710(g)(3) of such title is amended—

(1) by striking “with respect to home health services” and inserting “with respect to the following:

“(A) Home health services”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(B) Education on the use of opioid antagonists to reverse the effects of overdoses of specific medications or substances.”.

SA 3439. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VIII—CLOSING THE REVOLVING DOOR

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Close the Revolving Door Act of 2016”.

SEC. 802. LIFETIME BAN ON MEMBERS OF CONGRESS FROM LOBBYING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 207(e)(1) of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(1) MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.—Any person who is a Senator, a Member of the House of Representatives, or an elected officer of the Senate or the House of Representatives and who, after that person leaves office, knowingly makes, with the intent to influence, any communication to or appearance before any Member, officer, or employee of either House of Congress or any employee of any other legislative office of the Congress, on behalf of any other person (except the United States) in connection with any matter on which such former Senator, Member, or elected official seeks action by a Member, officer, or employee of either House of Congress, in his or her official capacity, shall be punished as provided in section 216 of this title.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 207(e)(2) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking “OFFICERS AND STAFF” and inserting “STAFF”;

(2) by striking “an elected officer of the Senate, or”;

(3) by striking “leaves office or employment” and inserting “leaves employment”; and

(4) by striking “former elected officer or”.

SEC. 803. CONGRESSIONAL STAFF.

Paragraphs (2), (3)(A), (4), (5)(A), and (6)(A) of section 207(e) of title 18, United States Code, are each amended by striking “1 year” and inserting “6 years”.

SEC. 804. IMPROVED REPORTING OF LOBBYISTS’ ACTIVITIES.

Section 6 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1605) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) JOINT WEB SITE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives shall maintain a joint lobbyist disclosure Internet database for information required to be publicly disclosed under this Act which shall be an easily searchable Web site called lobbyists.gov with a stated goal of simplicity of usage.

“(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection \$100,000 for fiscal year 2017.”.

SEC. 805. LOBBYIST REVOLVING DOOR TO CONGRESS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “foreign principal” has the meaning given that term under section 1(b) of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938 (22 U.S.C. 611(b));

(2) the terms “lobbyist” and “lobbying contact” have the meanings given such terms under section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1603); and

(3) the term “registered lobbyist” means a lobbyist registered under the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.).

(b) **PROHIBITION.**—Any person who is a registered lobbyist or an agent of a foreign principal may not, within 6 years after that person leaves such position, be hired by a Member or committee of either House of Congress with whom the registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal has had substantial lobbying contact.

(c) **WAIVER.**—This section may be waived in the Senate or the House of Representatives by the Select Committee on Ethics of the Senate or the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct of the House of Representatives, respectively, based on a compelling national need.

(d) **SUBSTANTIAL LOBBYING CONTACT.**—For purposes of this section, in determining whether a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal has had substantial lobbying contact within the applicable period of time, a Member or committee of either House of Congress shall take into consideration whether the individual’s lobbying contacts have pertained to pending legislative business, or related to solicitation of an earmark or other Federal funding, particularly if such contacts included the coordination of meetings with the Member or committee, involved presentations to employees of the Member or committee, or participation in fundraising (except for the mere giving of a personal contribution). Simple social contacts with the Member or committee of either House of Congress and staff, shall not by themselves constitute substantial lobbying contacts.

SEC. 806. REPORTING BY SUBSTANTIAL LOBBYING ENTITIES.

The Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 6 the following:

“SEC. 6A. REPORTING BY SUBSTANTIAL LOBBYING ENTITIES.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—A substantial lobbying entity shall file on an annual basis with the Clerk of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate a list of each employee of, individual under contract with, or individual who provides paid consulting services to the substantial lobbying entity who is—

“(1) a former Senator or a former Member of the House of Representatives; or

“(2) another covered legislative branch official who—

“(A) was paid not less than \$100,000 in any 1 year as a covered legislative branch official;

“(B) worked for a total of not less than 4 years as a covered legislative branch official; or

“(C) had a job title at any time while employed as a covered legislative branch official that contained any of the following terms: ‘Chief of Staff’, ‘Legislative Director’, ‘Staff Director’, ‘Counsel’, ‘Professional Staff Member’, ‘Communications Director’, or ‘Press Secretary’.

“(b) **CONTENTS OF FILING.**—The filing required under this section shall contain a brief job description of each individual described in subsection (a) and an explanation of their work experience under subsection (a) that requires this filing.

“(c) **IMPROVED REPORTING OF SUBSTANTIAL LOBBYING ENTITIES.**—The Joint Web site being maintained by the Secretary of the

Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives, known as lobbyists.gov, shall include an easily searchable database entitled ‘Substantial Lobbying Entities’ that includes information on all individuals described in subsection (a).

“(d) **LAW ENFORCEMENT OVERSIGHT.**—The Clerk of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate shall provide a copy of each filing under subsection (a) to the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, to allow the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia to determine whether a substantial lobbying entity is underreporting the lobbying activities of its employees, individuals under contract, or individuals who provide paid consulting services.

“(e) **SUBSTANTIAL LOBBYING ENTITY.**—In this section, the term ‘substantial lobbying entity’ means an incorporated entity that employs more than 3 registered lobbyists during a filing period.”

SEC. 807. ENHANCED PENALTIES.

Section 7(a) of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1606(a)) is amended by striking “\$200,000” and inserting “\$500,000”.

SA 3440. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ NORTHERN BORDER THREAT ANALYSIS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Northern Border Security Review Act”.

(b) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

(D) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives;

(E) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(F) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

(2) **NORTHERN BORDER.**—The term “Northern Border” means the land and maritime borders between the United States and Canada.

(c) **NORTHERN BORDER THREAT ANALYSIS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit a Northern Border threat analysis to the appropriate congressional committees that includes—

(A) current and potential terrorism and criminal threats posed by individuals and organized groups seeking—

(i) to enter the United States through the Northern Border; or

(ii) to exploit border vulnerabilities on the Northern Border;

(B) improvements needed at and between ports of entry along the Northern Border—

(i) to prevent terrorists and instruments of terrorism from entering the United States; and

(ii) to reduce criminal activity, as measured by the total flow of illegal goods, illicit

drugs (including opioids, fentanyl, heroin, and the illegal movement of prescription drugs), and smuggled and trafficked persons moved in either direction across the Northern Border;

(C) gaps in law, policy, cooperation between State, tribal, and local law enforcement, international agreements, or tribal agreements that hinder effective and efficient border security, counter-terrorism, anti-human smuggling and trafficking efforts, and the flow of legitimate trade along the Northern Border; and

(D) whether additional U.S. Customs and Border Protection preclearance and preinspection operations at ports of entry along the Northern Border could help prevent terrorists and instruments of terrorism from entering the United States.

(2) **ANALYSIS REQUIREMENTS.**—For the threat analysis required under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall consider and examine—

(A) technology needs and challenges;

(B) personnel needs and challenges;

(C) the role of State, tribal, and local law enforcement in general border security activities;

(D) the need for cooperation among Federal, State, tribal, local, and Canadian law enforcement entities relating to border security;

(E) the terrain, population density, and climate along the Northern Border; and

(F) the needs and challenges of Department facilities, including the physical approaches to such facilities.

(3) **CLASSIFIED THREAT ANALYSIS.**—To the extent possible, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit the threat analysis required under paragraph (1) in unclassified form. The Secretary may submit a portion of the threat analysis in classified form if the Secretary determines that such form is appropriate for that portion.

SA 3441. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ LAWFUL PRESENCE OF PRACTITIONERS REGISTERED UNDER THE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT.

Section 303(f) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(f)) is amended by adding at the end the following: “In the case of an applicant who is an individual, the Attorney General may not register the applicant under this subsection unless the applicant demonstrates that he or she is a national of the United States or is otherwise lawfully present in the United States under the immigration laws.”

SA 3442. Mr. CASSIDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address

the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . PRESCRIBER EDUCATION.

Section 301 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 821) is amended—

(1) by striking “The Attorney General” and inserting “(a) Except as provided in subsection (b), the Attorney General”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) A fee charged by the Attorney General under subsection (a) relating to dispensing narcotic drugs in schedule III, IV, or V or combinations of such drugs in accordance with section 303(g)(2) shall be reduced by 50 percent if the practitioner has completed not less than 24 hours of training during the 3-year period ending on the date that is 30 days earlier than the date on which an application for registration under section 303(g)(2) is submitted (through classroom situations, seminar at professional society meetings, electronic communications, or otherwise) with respect to the treatment and management of substance use disorders, including opiate-dependent patients, provided by the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, the American Medical Association, the American Osteopathic Association, the American Psychiatric Association, or any other organization that the Attorney General determines is appropriate for purposes of this subsection after providing notice and a period for public comment.”.

SA 3443. Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 27, line 19, strike “and”.

On page 28, line 20, strike the period and insert “; and”.

On page 28, between lines 20 and 21, insert the following:

(3) a State that requires all licensed prescribers of schedule II and III narcotic substances to complete training on, at a minimum—

(A) the best practices for pain management, including alternatives to prescribing controlled substances and other alternative therapies to decrease the use of opioids;

(B) responsible prescribing of pain medications as described in the Federal prescriber guidelines for nonmalignant pain;

(C) methods for diagnosing, treating, and managing a substance use disorder, including the use of medications and evidence-based non-pharmacological therapies approved by the Food and Drug Administration;

(D) linking patients to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders; and

(E) tools to manage adherence and diversion of controlled substances, including prescription drug monitoring programs, drug screening, informed consent, overdose education, and the use of opioid overdose antagonists.

On page 39, line 20, strike “and”.

On page 39, line 23, strike “program.” and insert “program; and”.

On page 39, after line 23, insert the following:

“(5) with respect to States, give preference to a State that requires all licensed prescribers of schedule II and III narcotic substances to complete training on, at a minimum—

“(A) the best practices for pain management, including alternatives to prescribing controlled substances and other alternative therapies to decrease the use of opioids;

“(B) responsible prescribing of pain medications as described in the Federal prescriber guidelines for nonmalignant pain;

“(C) methods for diagnosing, treating, and managing a substance use disorder, including the use of medications and evidence-based non-pharmacological therapies approved by the Food and Drug Administration;

“(D) linking patients to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders; and

“(E) tools to manage adherence and diversion of controlled substances, including prescription drug monitoring programs, drug screening, informed consent, overdose education, and the use of opioid overdose antagonists.”.

On page 42, line 19, strike “and”.

On page 43, line 10, strike the period and insert “; and”.

On page 43, between lines 10 and 11, insert the following:

(3) requires all licensed prescribers of schedule II and III narcotic substances to complete training on, at a minimum—

(A) the best practices for pain management, including alternatives to prescribing controlled substances and other alternative therapies to decrease the use of opioids;

(B) responsible prescribing of pain medications as described in the Federal prescriber guidelines for nonmalignant pain;

(C) methods for diagnosing, treating, and managing a substance use disorder, including the use of medications and evidence-based non-pharmacological therapies approved by the Food and Drug Administration;

(D) linking patients to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders; and

(E) tools to manage adherence and diversion of controlled substances, including prescription drug monitoring programs, drug screening, informed consent, overdose education, and the use of opioid overdose antagonists.

On page 67, between lines 18 and 19, insert the following:

(A) mandatory training for all licensed prescribers of schedule II and III narcotic substances on, at a minimum—

(i) the best practices for pain management, including alternatives to prescribing controlled substances and other alternative therapies to decrease the use of opioids;

(ii) responsible prescribing of pain medications as described in the Federal prescriber guidelines for nonmalignant pain;

(iii) methods for diagnosing, treating, and managing a substance use disorder, including the use of medications and evidence-based non-pharmacological therapies approved by the Food and Drug Administration;

(iv) linking patients to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders; and

(v) tools to manage adherence and diversion of controlled substances, including prescription drug monitoring programs, drug screening, informed consent, overdose education, and the use of opioid overdose antagonists;

On page 72, line 8, strike “and”.

On page 72, line 12, insert “and” after the semicolon.

On page 72, between lines 12 and 13, insert the following:

(III) is trained on—

(aa) the best practices for pain management, including alternatives to prescribing controlled substances and other alternative therapies to decrease the use of opioids;

(bb) responsible prescribing of pain medications as described in the Federal prescriber guidelines for nonmalignant pain;

(cc) methods for diagnosing, treating, and managing a substance use disorder, including the use of medications and evidence-based non-pharmacological therapies approved by the Food and Drug Administration;

(dd) linking patients to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders; and

(ee) tools to manage adherence and diversion of controlled substances, including prescription drug monitoring programs, drug screening, informed consent, overdose education, and the use of opioid overdose antagonists;

On page 94, after line 17, insert the following:

SEC. 705. GAO REPORT ON TRAINING FOR PRESCRIBERS.

Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on—

(1) the number of States that have a mandatory training program for prescribers of opioids;

(2) when each State that has mandatory training for prescribers of opioids implemented the training program;

(3) the differences between the mandatory training programs for prescribers of opioids from State to State; and

(4) whether, in each State with a mandatory training program for prescribers of opioids, the number of deaths related to opioid abuse has changed since the implementation of the training program.

SA 3444. Mr. BLUNT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . TELEHEALTH GRANTS FOR PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF OPIOID ABUSE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 330I of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254c-14) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by inserting “, which may include telehealth opioid abuse prevention and treatment grant programs” before the period;

(2) in subsection (d)(1)(A), by inserting “, including health care services for the prevention and treatment of opioid abuse” after “health care services”;

(3) in subsection (f)(1)(B)(iii)—

(A) in subclause (IX) by inserting “, including community mental health centers meeting the criteria specified in section 1913(c) and located in rural areas” after “outpatient mental health facilities”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(XIII) Drug abuse and opioid abuse treatment specialists.

“(XIV) Drug treatment and detoxification centers located in rural areas, as identified by the Secretary.

“(XV) Clinics or hospitals of the Indian Health Service, including hospitals and clinics operated by Indian tribes or tribal organizations.”; and

(4) in subsection (k)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting “, including prevention and treatment services for opioid abuse or addiction,” after “clinical telehealth services”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) TELEHEALTH OPIOID ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT.—The recipient of a telehealth opioid abuse prevention and treatment grant referred to in subsection (b) may use funds received through such grant to—

“(A) provide prevention and treatment services to rural communities and coordinate care for individuals in such communities receiving treatment for opioid abuse or addiction;

“(B) provide continuing education to rural clinicians on emerging treatment options for individuals suffering from opioid addiction, including through the use of electronic health records linking rural providers with specialists and other opioid prevention and treatment experts in order to improve health care outcomes;

“(C) provide continuing education to rural emergency medical service providers to improve capacity to respond to opioid overdoses;

“(D) coordinate broader clinical services for individuals suffering from opioid addiction or recovering from such addiction;

“(E) focus primarily on opioid prevention and addiction services and providing other clinical services as needed in rural settings; and

“(F) develop best practices in delivery of opioid abuse prevention and treatment through telehealth services.”.

SA 3445. Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. PRESCRIPTIONS.

Section 309(a) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 829(a)) is amended—

(1) by inserting “(1) IN GENERAL.—” before “Except”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) PARTIAL FILLING OF PRESCRIPTIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A prescription for a controlled substance in schedule II may be partially filled if—

“(i) it is requested by—

“(I) the patient; or

“(II) the practitioner that wrote the prescription, if the practitioner wrote the prescription in accordance with paragraph (1);

“(ii) the pharmacist partially filling the prescription makes a notation of the partial filling and records it in the same manner as a filling of the prescription, in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Attorney General;

“(iii) the total quantity dispensed in all partial fillings does not exceed the total quantity prescribed; and

“(iv) the partial filling is not prohibited under the law of the State in which it occurs.

“(B) REMAINING PORTIONS.—Remaining portions of a partially filled prescription—

“(i) may be filled; and

“(ii) must be exhausted not later than 30 days after the date on which the prescription is issued, except in the case of a partially filled emergency prescription, the remaining portions of which must be exhausted not later than 72 hours after the prescription is issued.”.

SA 3446. Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 9, between lines 10 and 11, insert the following:

(2) the term “Indian tribe” has the meaning given the term in section 901(a) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3791(a));

On page 9, line 11, strike “(2)” and insert “(3)”.

On page 9, line 16, strike “(3)” and insert “(4)”.

On page 9, line 21, strike “(4)” and insert “(5)”.

On page 12, line 14, strike “State and local” and insert “State, tribal, and local”.

On page 14, line 5, insert “and the Indian Health Service” before the period.

On page 16, line 1, insert “or tribal” after “local”.

On page 16, line 22, insert “or tribal” after “local”.

On page 17, line 2, insert “or tribal” after “local”.

On page 22, line 12, insert “or tribal” after “State”.

On page 22, line 13, insert “or tribal” after “State”.

On page 23, line 7, insert “, and tribal if applicable,” after “local”.

On page 23, line 11, insert “, including tribal law enforcement agencies if applicable” before the semicolon.

On page 23, between lines 17 and 18, insert the following:

(D) demonstrate consultation with affected Indian tribes, if applicable;

On page 23, line 18, strike “(D)” and insert “(E)”.

On page 23, line 22, strike “(E)” and insert “(F)”.

On page 27, line 17, insert “or the agencies and tribal governments,” after “the agencies,”.

On page 32, line 15, insert “, and tribal if applicable,” after “State”.

On page 35, line 1, strike “tribal law” and insert “tribal, or Bureau of Indian Affairs law”.

On page 36, line 9, insert “and tribal” after “State”.

On page 36, line 9, insert “, or Indian tribes served by the Bureau of Indian Affairs,” after “agencies”.

On page 41, line 19, insert “and, if applicable, affected Indian tribes” before the semicolon.

On page 42, line 24, strike “and”.

On page 43, line 16, strike the period and insert “; and”.

On page 43, between lines 16 and 17, insert the following:

(3) consults, if applicable, with Indian tribes for the purposes of this section.

On page 45, line 20, strike “or”.

On page 45, line 21, strike the period and insert “; or”.

On page 45, between lines 21 and 22, insert the following:

“(F) a Bureau of Indian Education-funded school.

On page 52, line 19, strike “and”.

On page 52, line 20, insert “, and tribally controlled colleges or universities (as defined in section 2(a) of the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1801(a)))” after “providers”.

On page 56, line 4, strike “or State” and insert “, State, or tribal”.

On page 57, line 10, insert “, tribal,” after “State”.

On page 57, line 21, strike “or State” and insert “, State, or tribal”.

On page 60, line 7, insert “AND TRIBAL” after “STATE”.

On page 60, line 11, insert “and Indian tribes” after “agencies”.

On page 60, line 18, insert “and Indian tribes” after “agencies”.

On page 60, line 23, strike “a”.

On page 60, line 24, strike “State system managed by State” and insert “State and tribal systems managed by State and tribal”.

On page 61, line 24, strike “and”.

On page 62, line 3, strike the period and insert “; and”.

On page 62, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

“(F) shall apply requirements described in this section for State substance abuse agencies to participating Indian tribes to the maximum extent possible.

On page 62, line 22, insert “tribal governments,” after “agencies,”.

On page 66, line 6, insert “AND TRIBAL” after “STATE”.

On page 66, line 11, insert “AND TRIBAL” after “STATE”.

On page 67, line 17, insert “and Indian tribes” after “States”.

On page 67, line 20, insert “or Indian tribe” after “State”.

On page 68, line 5, insert “or, if applicable, Indian tribe” after “State”.

On page 68, line 11, insert “and, if applicable, Indian tribes” after “States”.

On page 68, line 14, insert “or Indian tribe” after “State”.

On page 68, line 17, insert “or Indian tribe” after “State”.

On page 70, line 2, insert “or Indian tribe” after “State”.

On page 70, line 23, strike “and”.

On page 71, line 3, strike the period and insert “; and”.

On page 71, between lines 3 and 4, insert the following:

(V) if applicable, a plan for how the State will consult with Indian tribes and integrate tribal health programs (as defined by section 4 of the Indian Healthcare Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)) and tribal or Bureau of Indian Affairs law enforcement into planning.

On page 71, line 6, insert “or Indian tribe” after “State”.

On page 71, line 9, insert “or Indian tribe” after “State”.

On page 71, line 14, insert “or Indian tribe” after “State”.

On page 71, line 21, insert “or Indian tribe” after “State”.

On page 74, line 15, insert “and, if applicable, affected Indian tribes” before the semicolon.

On page 76, line 22, strike “and”.

On page 77, line 3, strike the period and insert “; and”.

On page 77, between lines 3 and 4, insert the following:

(G) if applicable, ensures consultation with affected Indian tribes.

SA 3447. Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. REQUIREMENTS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OR EXPANSION OF NATIONAL MONUMENTS IN THE STATE OF UTAH.

Effective during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date that is 1 year after that date, no establishment or expansion of a National Monument in the State of Utah shall be car-

ried out unless expressly authorized by Act of Congress.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY,
MARCH 8, 2016

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow, Tuesday, March 8; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, equally divided, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and with the Democrats controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half; further, that following morning business,

the Senate resume consideration of S. 524; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings; finally, that all time during morning business, recess, and adjournment of the Senate count postcloture on amendment No. 3378.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:38 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 8, 2016, at 10 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING NICHOLAS JAMES KUNELS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Nicholas James Kunels. Nicholas is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Nicholas has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Nicholas has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Nicholas has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Nicholas James Kunels for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING RYAN LAFFERTY FOR HIS RECOGNITION AS A MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARD WINNER

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mr. Ryan Lafferty, a teacher in the Bellevue School District who has been recognized as a winner of the prestigious Milken Educator Award.

The Milken Educator Awards are bestowed upon educators by the Milken Family Foundation to celebrate, elevate, and activate excellence in the teaching profession. The award is given to teachers who exhibit exceptional educational talent as evidenced by effective instructional practices and educational accomplishments beyond the classroom.

Mr. Lafferty has been a teacher at the International School in Bellevue for six years and is highly praised for his interdisciplinary project-based teaching style, which incorporates seemingly unrelated subjects like math, history, and the arts. He has developed a problem-based curriculum for Advanced Placement Physics where students build Roman arches, projectile instruments such as slingshots and catapults, and a single-string instrument called a Diddley bow. Mr. Lafferty's classes are in high demand due to his track record of implementing creative lesson plans and for his infectious positive attitude.

Mr. Lafferty is also beloved for the positive influence that he provides for his students. He makes himself available to students outside of class time if they need academic help, or if they need to talk for any other reason. He prioritizes the success of his students by regularly hosting meetings with students to determine what works in his class, and what can be improved. It is for these reasons that Mr. Lafferty is considered a role model by many of his students.

Mr. Lafferty, who grew up in Redmond, graduated from the University of Washington in 2008 and received a Master's Degree in Teaching from Seattle University in 2010. He has worked with the Bellevue School District, the University of Washington and the George Lucas Educational Foundation to further develop his AP Physics curriculum in hopes of the program being implemented nationally. Lafferty is a National Honors Society advisor who serves on the school's middle and high school science clubs and travels to the state science bowl.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I congratulate teacher Ryan Lafferty for being honored with the Milken Educator Award. It is my great pleasure to recognize his dedication and service to his students and to the community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on roll call numbers 102, 103, and 104, I was in Texas on District Business.

Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

HONORING MATTHEW BAYS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Matthew Bays. Matthew is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1412, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Matthew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Matthew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Matthew led his troop as an Assistant Patrol Leader. Matthew has also contributed to

his community through his Eagle Scout project. Matthew constructed a life jacket loaner board for the Smithville Lake swim beach, providing life jackets for those who may not have their own.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Matthew Bays for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I want to state that on March 2, 2016, I was detained in my district and missed the one roll call vote of the day. Had I been present I would have voted:

AYE—Roll Call No. 105—H.R. 3716—Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act.

HONORING RARE DISEASE WEEK

HON. TOM MARINO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to rare diseases as we recognize "Rare Disease Week."

A "rare disease," also referred to as an orphan disease, is any disease that affects a small percentage of the population. The National Institute of Health defines a rare disease as one that affects less than 200,000 people in the United States. The impact of rare diseases is certainly not small; there are over 7,000 rare diseases that affect 30 million people, or 10% of the United States population.

As the father of someone who suffers from Cystic Fibrosis, a rare disease affecting only 30,000 people in the United States, I know the difficulty of living with a rare disease and the financial burdens of care and treatment for families. Cystic Fibrosis requires specialized care that can cost upwards of \$15,000 a year and hundreds of thousands of dollars over the course of a lifetime. I have done everything I can to make sure that my daughter receives the highest quality care as she continues her fight against Cystic Fibrosis.

Thanks to advancements in medicine, the average life expectancy of someone who suffers from Cystic Fibrosis is now 37. This is much different than 50 years ago when a child diagnosed with the disease would be lucky to live to their teens.

Every year we recognize rare disease week as a way to raise awareness and to stress the

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

importance of funding rare disease research. It is my hope one day we can make rare, incurable diseases a thing of the past.

RETIREMENT OF BISHOP T. LARRY KIRKLAND FROM THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

HON. KAREN BASS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to make note of the retirement of The Right Reverend Theodore Larry Kirkland, Sr. from active service after over a half century of ministry, as he steps down at the African Methodist Episcopal Church Fifth District General Conference today.

Bishop Kirkland's ministry of over 50 years has often placed him in the public eye and in the company of dignitaries. For example, he presided over the Homegoing Services of Deaconess Rosa Parks at Brown Chapel AME Church in Montgomery, Alabama, an event broadcast worldwide, and he welcomed then-Senator Barack Obama to the Ninth District's observance of Bloody Sunday, in Selma. He is the author of several books on church growth and he has become known for developing strong relationships across denominational and cultural lines.

Educated at Alcorn State University, University of Mississippi, Claremont School of Theology, and California School of Theology, Bishop Kirkland was the founding pastor of Brookins Community AME Church in Los Angeles, California. Arriving in 1977, he grew the congregation from twelve early members to over eight thousand during his twenty-year tenure.

Elevated in 1996, he became the 114th elected and consecrated bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. His first assignment was to the Seventeenth Episcopal District encompassing the countries of Zaire, Zambia, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Malawi and Zimbabwe. In 2000 he returned to appointment as Ecumenical Officer for the Denomination, served a term as President of the Council of Bishops, and from 2002 led the Ninth Episcopal District in Alabama, where he sought to support the community beyond the pulpit through a range of programs including computer literacy training and high-quality health services for the needy.

For the past eight years, Bishop Kirkland has presided over the Fifth Episcopal District which includes fourteen western states. During this time, Bishop Kirkland has focused on inspiring ministry and serving the greater community. I would like to salute Bishop Kirkland and his family, especially his wife Mrs. Mary Kirkland, and thank him for his service to the faith and the community.

HONORING MICHAEL IRWIN SEARS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Michael Irwin Sears. Michael is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Michael has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Michael has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Michael has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Michael Irwin Sears for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING THE 28TH ANNIVERSARY OF VIOLENCE AGAINST THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY SUMGAIT, AZERBAIJAN

HON. KATHERINE M. CLARK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, February 27 marked the 28th anniversary of harrowing violence against the Armenian community in Sumgait, Azerbaijan.

I am proud to stand today with the Armenian-American community, including many of my constituents in Massachusetts, in remembrance and mourning of this unspeakable tragedy.

In February of 1988, anti-Armenian rallies through Azerbaijan gave way to waves of ethnically-motivated violence, death and destruction. In the aftermath of these terrible events, Azerbaijan's Armenian community all but disappeared, with thousands displaced, culminating in a war against the people of Nagorno Karabakh.

That war resulted in almost 30,000 dead on both sides. Hundreds of thousands of refugees were forced to flee their homes. And to this day, those who lost their lives or were displaced by this violence still seek resolution and justice.

Many displaced Armenian families have sought refuge in America, and are now making vital contributions in the Fifth District of Massachusetts. Proudly, our diverse District is home to one of the largest Armenian communities in the nation. Together, our community is a thriving example of strength and perseverance in the face of extreme adversity.

Like the persecution of too many others before it, the lessons of the Sumgait Pogrom must not be forgotten.

We have a moral obligation to promote tolerance and justice, and we have a duty to recognize the atrocities that have kept us from our common goal.

ognize the atrocities that have kept us from our common goal.

RECOGNIZING KIRK ADAMS FOR HIS YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND, INC.

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mr. Kirk Adams, President and CEO of the Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc., for his contributions and service to the blind community as he brings his leadership to his new role as President and CEO of the American Federation for the Blind.

In 2008, Kirk became the first blind CEO and President of the Lighthouse for the Blind, an organization which provides independence and self-sufficiency through employment for people who are blind, deafblind, and blind with other disabilities. During his tenure as CEO, Kirk oversaw significant growth of the Lighthouse for the Blind's footprint across the country by expanding to eleven new locations. Each location added to the sustainability of the Lighthouse, while also empowering new groups of individuals to be gainfully employed.

Prior to his executive role at the Lighthouse for the Blind, Kirk served as the General Manager of Administration and as the Director of Public Relations and Resource Development at the Lighthouse. Kirk is credited for crafting the Lighthouse's successful fundraising strategy, which has greatly magnified their range of services offered and the number of individuals who are lifted up through employment opportunities.

Outside of his work at the Lighthouse for the Blind, Kirk is deeply involved in the community. He is a member of the Governor's Task Force on Disability and Employment and the Seattle Public Library's Strategic Plan Advisory Committee. He has served on the boards of the Aerospace Futures Alliance, the Association of Washington Business, and the American Federation for the Blind. He is also the former Treasurer and member of the Board of the National Association for the Employment of People Who Are Blind.

Kirk graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelors of Arts degree in Economics from Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington. He earned his Master's Degree in Not-For-Profit Leadership from Seattle University, and is working toward his doctorate in Leadership and Change at Antioch University.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I recognize Kirk Adams for his admirable leadership and congratulate him on his role as President and CEO of the Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. His unrelenting dedication to the blind community serves as an example of the tremendous impact one person can have.

HONORING MATTHEW C. GAGER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Matthew C. Gager. Matthew is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1412, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Matthew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Matthew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Matthew led his troop as the Senior Patrol Leader and has earned the rank of Warrior in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say and become a Brotherhood member of the Order of the Arrow. Matthew has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Matthew installed a concrete pad under a shelter house in a city park in Smithville, Missouri, and worked with the Smithville Parks Board and the Smithville Board of Alderman to secure funding for the project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Matthew C. Gager for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF PATRICIA BRESEE

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor my good friend Patricia Bresee, a highly respected and recognized expert in juvenile law, who has served on the Board of Directors of the California Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for nine years as a remarkable leader with exceptional integrity and the capacity to inspire everyone around her. Pat Bresee's devotion to children is unmatched and she has dedicated her entire professional life to advocate for those in need. We are very fortunate that she will continue her advocacy for children in the dependency system through service on the Board of Directors for National CASA.

Pat served as a Superior Court Commissioner in San Mateo County for 15 years. She was assigned to sit as a Juvenile Court Judge, handling dependency and delinquency issues and adoptions and guardianships. She was one of the original members of the California Judicial Council's Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee and served as the chair of the Juvenile Law Rules and Forms Committee. She teaches at the California Center for Judicial Education and trains attorneys and judicial officers in Juvenile Delinquency Law. She still manages to find time to be a regular presenter at Beyond the Bench and fills in as

a judge at the Juvenile Court in San Mateo County.

Her commitment to fight for justice is unwavering and she has freely volunteered her expertise and time to a number of organizations including the American Leadership Forum Silicon Valley, the Peninsula Community Foundation, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, the San Mateo County First Five Commission, and most importantly, California CASA. I had the great honor and pleasure of working with Pat in her role at the San Mateo County Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission and the San Mateo County Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care. Both commissions made recommendations on ways in which the courts could improve safety, permanency, well-being and fairness for children and families in our state.

Pat's outstanding work has been proclaimed by the California Judges Association in 1994 when she was named Juvenile Court Judge of the Year and again in 1998 by National CASA as Judge of the Year. Judge Bresee graduated from Purdue University and earned her law degree from San Francisco Law School. She was admitted into the State Bar of California in 1972. When she is not fighting for justice, Pat likes to travel, attend the theater, read and lift weights.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the truly remarkable legal career of Patricia Bresee who continues to dedicate her life to advocate for children and thereby improves society as a whole. She is an outstanding example of a person with a moral compass who brings out the best in others.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I was absent on Thursday, March 3, 2016, in order to attend a funeral of a dear friend. I was unable to cast my floor vote on roll call vote numbers 106, 107, 108, 109, and 110.

Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted NAY on roll call votes 106, 107, and 109.

Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted AYE on roll call votes 108 and 110.

HONORING GEORGE ANTHONY DONNELLI

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize George Anthony Donnelly. George is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop

1351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

George has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years George has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, George has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending George Anthony Donnelly for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GLENN THOMPSON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 109, I was absent during the roll call on final passage of H.R. 4557 because I was meeting with constituents from Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District.

Had I been present, I would have voted "YES."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, on roll call nos. 103 and 104, I was unable to vote, as I was attending a memorial program honoring Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, Antonin Scalia, who was a constituent and neighbor of mine. Roll no. 103 was H.R. 136, which designated a post office at Camp Pendleton, CA as the "Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office"; and Roll no. 104 was H.R. 3735, which designated a post office in Winston Salem, NC as the "Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office".

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on both.

IN RECOGNITION OF FRED SCHEA

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a lifetime of dedicated community service.

Fred Schea of New Britain Township has been a fixture in local banking for decades, but is equally as recognizable as a champion of Habitat for Humanity of Bucks County and an advocate for its mission of providing affordable housing for those in need.

It is with great pride that I recognize him as the recipient of Habitat for Humanity's Lifetime

Achievement Award. This well-deserved recognition highlights Fred's staunch support for the organization's laudable mission as well as his commitment to countless other community and civic organizations that benefit from his involvement.

Congratulations to Fred on this tremendous accomplishment and I thank him for his years of selfless effort.

HONORING ETHAN ALLEN
VENTRESS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ethan Allen Ventress. Ethan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Ethan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Ethan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Ethan has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Ethan Allen Ventress for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF RARE
DISEASE WEEK

HON. ROD BLUM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. BLUM. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Rare Disease Caucus, I rise today in recognition of Rare Disease Week and those in the First District of Iowa suffering from rare diseases.

This week, activists from all across the country have come to Capitol Hill to educate Members of Congress on the struggles of all rare diseases and advocating for science-driven public policy to bring life-saving treatment, drugs, and procedures to the numerous individuals suffering from rare diseases.

Last July, I voted in favor of H.R. 6, the 21st Century Cures Act and have been a strong advocate for the National Institutes of Health and their mission. On behalf of all Americans suffering from rare diseases, I will continue to advocate for the passage of legislation which drives innovation, research, and treatment for the community.

I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to stand with me in the fight to cure rare diseases.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF DESALES UNIVERSITY

HON. CHARLES W. DENT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to bring the 50th Anniversary of DeSales University to the attention of the House.

Named in honor of Saint Francis de Sales, DeSales was founded after Bishop Joseph McShea organized a survey of Catholic education opportunities in the Allentown Diocese. The study indicated there was a need for a Catholic College in the Lehigh Valley area of the Allentown Diocese.

The Oblates of St. Francis de Sales broke ground for the new college in May of 1964 on a 500 acre tract located in Lehigh County's Upper Saucon Township. DeSales accepted its first class of freshmen in September 1965 under its original name—Allentown College of St. Francis de Sales.

The ensuing decades brought growth—both in the number of students enrolled and in the curriculum offered.

In March 2000, Allentown College proudly became DeSales University.

Currently, DeSales has a total enrollment of over 3,000 traditional, graduate and evening students and nearly 1,600 full-time undergraduate students. The school offers 41 majors and 31 minors and boasts over 100 faculty members.

DeSales plays an integral role in the Lehigh Valley's educational network and within the community. DeSales' graduates have enjoyed tremendous success across the fields of business, medicine, philosophy, literature, science and teaching.

It is my pleasure to congratulate the students, alumni, faculty and staff of DeSales University as they celebrate their 50th Anniversary. It is my hope that a future member of this House will be able to enter a congratulatory record on their behalf fifty years from now as well.

THE GROWING THREAT OF CHOLERA AND OTHER DISEASES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, during the last several years, conflicts in the Middle East have cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, primarily in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. As a result of conflicts in these countries, as well as the influx of refugees from conflict zones into surrounding countries such as Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon, many of those who die are the victim of disease.

Almost 17 million people in the region are in need of humanitarian assistance, including roughly four million refugees who have fled their countries and an additional 13 million people who have left their homes but are internally displaced within their countries.

A hearing I convened last week examined the scope of the cholera and other disease threats to determine what can and should be done to control it and minimize their spread beyond the Middle East.

The World Health Organization reported the spread of a cholera epidemic that first began in Iraq in 2007 that crossed over into Iran, Syria and is considered the region's greatest, although not only, health threat. These threats are worsened by the targeting of health workers in Syria and an Islamic State that has no experience and little interest in providing social services. Thus, cholera and other diseases are untreated, often unreported and pose a significant health threat in the region due to poor sanitation and overcrowding in areas such as refugee camps.

Cholera is an acute diarrheal disease that can cause death within hours if left untreated. Roughly 80% of those who contract the disease do not develop symptoms, leaving some uncertainty about precisely how many people contract the disease annually. Scientists estimate that between 1.4 and 4.3 million people contract cholera annually, of whom 28,000 to 142,000 die. Cholera bacteria are present in the feces of infected people for one to ten days after infection and can be spread to others if they ingest food or water that is contaminated with their fecal matter. The spread of cholera is mostly facilitated by inadequate water and sanitation management and outbreaks are common in areas where basic infrastructure is unavailable, such as urban slums and camps for internally displaced persons and refugees.

As devastating as this cholera epidemic has been and can be going forward, we must also remember the MERS epidemic of three years ago. The Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, or MERS, is a respiratory illness. It is caused by a virus called Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus, or MERS-CoV. This virus was first reported in 2012 in Saudi Arabia. It is different from any other coronaviruses that have been found in people before.

MERS-CoV, like other coronaviruses, is thought to spread from an infected person's respiratory secretions, such as through coughing. However, the precise ways the virus spreads are not currently well understood. MERS-CoV has spread from ill people to others through close contact, such as caring for or living with an infected person. Infected people have spread MERS-CoV to others even in healthcare settings, such as hospitals. This transmission pattern is more likely when medical facilities and health workers are in short supply.

The conflicts and political crises in the Middle East have brought anguish, suffering, and severe declines in health to people throughout the region. The most catastrophic case by far is Syria, where more than a million people have experienced traumatic injuries, once-rare infectious diseases have returned, chronic disease goes untreated, and the health system has collapsed. In Yemen, Libya, Gaza, and Iraq violence has limited access to health care and grievously harmed the population.

According to Physicians for Human Rights last summer, at least 633 medical personnel had been killed and more than 270 illegal attacks on 202 separate medical facilities had

taken place since March 2011 in Syria. Of the attacks on medical facilities, at least 51, or 19 percent, reportedly were carried out with barrel bombs. Almost all the assaults were inflicted by the regime of President Bashar al-Assad.

In the Middle East, threats against as well as arrests and intimidation of health workers extends beyond armed conflict to situations of political volatility, as evident in Bahrain, Egypt, and Turkey. In most of these cases, doctors and nurses who treat victims of violence are, by the very act of providing treatment, deemed guilty of anti-government activities. In Bahrain, almost 100 doctors and nurses were arrested and 48 originally charged with felonies for having offered medical care to wounded people in the wake of the 2011 Arab Spring uprising.

Cholera can be treated and its spread can be prevented, but diseases such as MERS pose a danger of spreading beyond the region. However, beyond the global health implications, we must consider the compounded suffering of people in the Middle East. Not only are they often in threat of violence through no fault of their own but they face preventable, treatable diseases that have gotten out of control due to conflicts.

Our panel at the hearing included health experts who helped us think through the health challenges our government faces in considering how to provide the most effective assistance to people in the Middle East. The two keys to success are: remain vigilant and sustain commitment. The hearing last week was intended to demonstrate our vigilance and commitment to addressing this situation.

TRIBUTE TO HELEN LEUNG—28TH
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Helen Leung, of Elysian Valley, a unique neighborhood in Los Angeles, California.

Helen grew up in Elysian Valley and attended local public schools. After high school, she moved east to attend the University of Pennsylvania, where she received her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and Communications, after which she attended Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government and obtained a Master's Degree in Public Policy and Urban Planning.

With a passion for redefining the connection of social equity and community development, Helen worked at Living Cities in Washington, D.C., a national funders collaborative focused on systemic impact in low-income communities. She then served as a White House Intern in 2010, a Fellow at the Department of Housing and Urban Development in 2012, and gained extensive community-based experience

working for former Los Angeles City Council President Eric Garcetti, in policy, planning and neighborhood development. Currently she is Co-Executive Director of LA-Más, a non-profit community design organization headquartered in Elysian Valley. In this role, Ms. Leung ensures that all LA-Más projects, such as the Futuro de Frogtown and Elysian Valley Knowledge Hub projects, are grounded in community need and policy potential.

Helen's past volunteer involvement includes serving on the boards of the Elysian Valley Riverside Neighborhood Council and the Wildwood Foundation. Currently she serves on the Los Angeles Police Commission's Police Permit Review Panel, the Community Advisory Board of Genesis LA and the board of the Elysian Valley Arts Collective.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Helen Leung, for her extraordinary service to the community.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF LOUISIANA STATE REP. RONNIE EDWARDS

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Louisiana State Representative Ronnie Edwards, a dear friend and model public servant. Rep. Edwards passed away on February 24, 2016, at the age of 63 after a two-year battle with pancreatic cancer.

Rep. Edwards was born in Woodville, Mississippi on July 20, 1952, and was a long time resident of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. An administrator with over 40 years of experience in government and industry, Rep. Edwards formed lasting relationships and partnerships with education institutions, nonprofits, faith leaders and elected officials to effect change through her community development work.

In 1992, Rep. Edwards founded the Urban Restoration Enhancement Corporation (UREC) as a trusted and credible community development organization. With the assistance of many community leaders and supporters, her tenacity resulted in: safe and affordable housing for families; the establishment of Louisiana's first home for grandparents raising grandchildren in Baton Rouge; innovative youth enrichment initiatives; small business training and development; and the development of the Security Dads initiative to combat violence.

Rep. Edwards was elected to represent District 5 on the Baton Rouge Metro Council in 2009. She served on the Council for six years before being elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives in November 2015.

In December 2013, Rep. Edwards was diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer. But for the first year and a half, she did not stop her work at the local level and maintained perfect attendance at Metro Council meetings, where she was a strong advocate of health living initiatives, cancer screenings and affordable housing. Rep. Edwards' diagnosis and experi-

ence in the health care system was motivation for her to run for State Representative because she wanted to be an advocate for ways to bring health care access to more citizens.

Ronnie was a talented and compassionate legislator, but more importantly she was a friend. The news of her passing is not only devastating to me, it is a tremendous loss for the entire state. She committed her life to serving her constituents and fighting for those who needed it the most.

As we mourn her loss we must honor her legacy by renewing our commitment to the work she fought so hard to complete. Louisiana has lost a lion, but her memory will live on forever.

Mr. Speaker, my deepest condolences are with her family as they go through this difficult time.

HONORING WORLD WAR II VETERAN & CIVIL ENGINEER HELIAS DOUNDOULAKIS

HON. KATHLEEN M. RICE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Miss RICE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary life of Helias Doundoulakis, who passed away on February 29th, 2016 at the age of 92. A longtime resident of New York's fourth congressional district, Mr. Doundoulakis was a decorated veteran of World War II and an accomplished civil engineer who played a critical role in developing some of the greatest aeronautic achievements of the 20th century.

Born in Ohio and raised in Crete, Greece, Mr. Doundoulakis was still in high school when Axis forces invaded Crete in 1941. Nevertheless, he joined the Cretan resistance and worked alongside the British Special Operations Executive, collecting vital intelligence for allied forces and sabotaging Axis military operations across the Mediterranean. When it became too dangerous for Mr. Doundoulakis to remain in Crete, he and his brother fled to Egypt, where they immediately rejoined the fight and enlisted in the United States Office of Strategic Services. Despite overwhelming danger, Mr. Doundoulakis' commitment to liberating Crete and defeating the Axis powers never wavered.

After the war, Doundoulakis returned to the United States and settled in New York, where as a civil engineer for Grumman Aerospace Corporation, he helped develop several groundbreaking aeronautic innovations, including the Apollo Lunar Module, the Space Shuttle and the F-14 Tomcat fighter jet. One of Mr. Doundoulakis' most notable achievements was his patent for a radio telescope, used in the design for the largest of its kind at the NAIC Arecibo Observatory, in Arecibo, Puerto Rico, which is the world's largest single-aperture telescope and has played a crucial role in atmospheric and astronomical research. Mr. Doundoulakis served his country both as a courageous soldier and a bold innovator who helped propel the United States to the forefront of aviation and space exploration.

While those who knew Mr. Doundoulakis mourn his passing, we also celebrate his incredible life and all that he achieved. It was truly an honor to serve as Mr. Doundoulakis' representative in Congress and I extend my sincere condolences to his wife Rita Doundoulakis, his children, grandchildren and to all those whose lives he touched.

TRIBUTE TO KELLY ERICKSON—
28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Kelly Erickson, of Echo Park, a unique neighborhood in Los Angeles, California.

Born in Oakhurst, California, Kelly attended Oakhurst Elementary School, Oak Creek Intermediate School and Yosemite High School. She moved to Southern California to attend Pitzer College, where she obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Political Journalism. Because of the college's environment of social and community activism, Kelly credits Pitzer College for guiding her into volunteering and community activism.

Ms. Erickson's involvement in Echo Park community organizations is extensive. She served on the Outreach Committee of the Greater Echo Park Elysian Neighborhood Council, is Chair of the Echo Park Community Parade Committee, a member of the Echo Park Chamber of Commerce, and is active in the Echo Park Improvement Association, where she serves as Secretary and on the Neighborhood Issues Committee. In addition, Kelly has worked on several neighborhood projects, including promoting local small businesses and her most current project, which is the documentation and preservation of Echo Park area murals.

Several years ago, Kelly founded the website: Echo Park Now, to help increase community awareness and involvement. When she is not writing or attending community meetings, she is running her graphic design and marketing services business, Craft Media Los Angeles. Kelly frequently donates her business' services to assist in community efforts.

Kelly is married to Bennett Erickson and they have two rescue dogs, Aja and Josie.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Kelly Erickson, for her extraordinary service to the community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE GENDER
DIVERSITY IN CORPORATE
LEADERSHIP ACT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to introduce the Gender Diversity in Corporate Leadership Act, common-sense legislation to address the striking gender disparity in America's corporate boardrooms.

A recent GAO report found that women hold only about 16 percent of board seats at S&P 1500 companies, up from 8 percent in 1997. While this is progress, even if women comprise half of new board members from this point forward, the report estimated it would take over 40 years to reach gender parity.

My legislation would take a few simple steps to collect data to better define this disparity and encourage businesses to take steps to diversify their boards. By requiring publicly-traded companies to report the gender composition of their boards, we will make it easy for investors and other organizations to evaluate board diversity.

The evidence is clear, companies with diverse leadership are better-positioned to succeed. Indeed, a recent report published by MSCI found that companies with "strong female leadership" (either above-average board representation or a female CEO and at least one female board member) generated a higher return on equity and valuation than companies lacking female leadership. That finding follows a 2014 Credit Suisse report that found companies with at least one woman on their board outperformed other companies by 5 percent from the start of 2012–June 2014.

I am proud that the Gender Diversity in Corporate Leadership Act is supported by a strong coalition of business leaders like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce as well as leading voices to promote workplace diversity like Catalyst and the National Women's Law Center. I want to commend these groups for their work on these issues, as well as my original co-sponsors Reps. DON BEYER and DEBBIE DINGELL for their partnership on this important legislation.

HONORING SOUTHEAST FLORIDA
HEAD HUGGERS

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Southeast Chapter of Florida Head Huggers, also known as "Caps and Wraps," as they celebrate their five-year anniversary.

This wonderful group of ladies meets every Thursday to knit and crochet caps, wraps and blankets, which are donated to adult and pediatric cancer patients who are undergoing treatment.

Since the group began in January 2011, Caps and Wraps has donated more than

20,000 "handmade hugs" to local hospitals and oncology offices to ensure that cancer patients are provided with warmth and comfort.

As a cancer survivor, I offer my heartfelt appreciation to Chapter founder, Aline Zucker, for her kindness and generosity.

I commend the Southeast Chapter of Florida Head Huggers for their commitment and compassion to the cancer community.

TRIBUTE TO DOLORES DIAZ-
CAREY—28TH CONGRESSIONAL
DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Dolores Diaz-Carey, of Pasadena, California.

Born in Los Angeles, Dolores attended Sacred Heart Elementary School and Sacred Heart High School. She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Spanish Literature from Holy Names University and her Master's Degree in Education from the University of Southern California. In addition, Dolores obtained a Counseling Credential from the University of California, Los Angeles and an Administrative Credential from California State University, Los Angeles.

A consummate educator, Ms. Diaz-Carey's long career in education began as a teacher at the elementary and junior high school levels in Northern California, after which she moved to Mexico City to teach. In 1969, Dolores joined the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) where she worked for 35 years. In LAUSD's Division of Adult and Career Education, she worked in many capacities, including as an ESL (English as a Second Language) instructor, teacher advisor, counselor, assistant principal, and principal. From 1973 to 1975, Ms. Diaz-Carey was Executive Producer of the first bilingual ESL television series for adults, "POCHTLAN", for which she was awarded an Emmy from the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. From 1987 to 1998, she was Principal of Garfield Community Adult School and while there, founded a family literacy program for adults and their children. In 1998, Dolores became Director of the Adult Instructional Services Unit where she was responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of all the curricula for adults, including ESL, high school diploma, basic education, parenting, and nursing programs—during this time, she was also Program Director of the Community Based English Tutoring program.

Dolores is a longtime member of the East Los Angeles Rotary Club, where she serves as the Rotarian advisor for a youth club, and is the incoming club president. In 2011, she received the Rotarian Foundation District Service Award. Dolores is a member and past

President of the San Rafael Library Associates, a support group for the San Rafael Library in Pasadena, and is a generous supporter of the arts, including the Los Angeles Music and Art School, and the Youth Orchestra Los Angeles.

A forty-year resident of Pasadena, Dolores enjoys traveling, daily walks with her dog, Dodger, long-distance cycling, and attending Los Angeles Philharmonic concerts and events at the Hollywood Bowl.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Dolores Diaz-Carey, for her extraordinary service to the community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I want to state that on March 3, 2016, I was detained in my district and missed roll call votes. Had I been present I would have voted:

1. NO—Roll Call No. 106—Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4557.

2. NO—Roll Call No. 107—H. Res. 635—Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4557—Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns (BRICK) Act of 2016.

3. AYE—Roll Call No. 108—S. 1826—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James "Maggie" Megellas Post Office.

4. NO—Roll Call No. 109—H.R. 4557—Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns (BRICK) Act of 2016.

RECOGNIZING THE 90TH BIRTHDAY OF CHARLES EDWARD DUBOIS

HON. KAREN BASS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor the 90th birthday of my friend and mentor, Charles Edward DuBois.

Charlie was born to Vernon and Edna DuBois in New Jersey on February 26, 1926 and raised with his three siblings during the Depression by his loving parents.

Young Charlie showed a fighting spirit from early in life, and learned his values at his father's knee, including when W.E.B. DuBois (no relation) would stop by his home to argue and discuss issues of race and justice. Now four generations of the DuBois family have dedicated themselves to lifting up working people.

Charlie enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1944 and served honorably in the Pacific theatre. After returning from the war, Charlie often provided security services for those speaking out and demanding social change, including Paul Robeson, Hortensia Bussi and Angela Davis.

Charlie moved to Los Angeles in the 1960s, where he met and married his wife, Viki. They

both worked at Kaiser Permanente for years. He and Viki were blessed with two sons.

Charlie and Viki were organizers and leaders of Black Women United (which evolved into Black Women and Men during the 1970s). Through these organizations, they fought (among other things) for criminal justice reform. These groups also worked to support those who were incarcerated, helping their families during the time they were in prison, and working to aid their adjustment when they returned to the community.

Charlie often mentored youth in the justice movement, and he was instrumental in my own decision to pursue medical training as an effective way of seeking change and providing service to others.

I would like to salute Charles Edward DuBois for his longstanding commitment to serving others and for remaining true to his principles throughout his long life.

TRIBUTE TO DR. CHERYL REVKIN—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Dr. Cheryl Revkin, of Silver Lake, a unique neighborhood in Los Angeles, California.

Cheryl Revkin was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. After obtaining her Bachelor's Degree at the University of Wisconsin, she attended the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic where she received both her Bachelor's of Science and Doctor of Chiropractic degrees. A compassionate chiropractor, Dr. Revkin made a commitment to donate one-third of her practice to individuals with no chiropractic insurance, such as the six patients a week that she treated who were referred to her from the Hollywood Sunset Free Clinic, patients with HIV, and many children. A community activist while running her practice in Silver Lake, after thirty-three years, Cheryl retired and devoted all of her time and talents to helping her community.

Dr. Revkin's involvement in Silver Lake community organizations is extensive. She was the Founder and President of the Silver Lake Chamber of Commerce, where she was active for more than two decades, and now acts as a consultant to the chamber. Currently, Cheryl serves as Co-Chair of the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council History Collective Committee, a position she has held for over a decade, is a board member of the Friends of the Silver Lake Library, and volunteers with CollegePath LA at John Marshall High School. In addition, Dr. Revkin is on the Los Angeles City Disability Access Review Board Commission, helps out in the Los Angeles Neighborhood Justice Program and the Center for the

Study of Political Graphics, and serves on the Board of Automata, a puppet theatre in Los Angeles. For her efforts, Cheryl received the Pioneer Woman of the Year Award from then-Los Angeles City Councilman Eric Garcetti.

Dr. Revkin has one daughter, Casey Revkin and one grandchild, Emil Ryan, who also live in Silver Lake.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Dr. Cheryl Revkin, for her extraordinary service to the community.

CHRONICLING THE PRESIDENT'S UNCONSTITUTIONAL ACTIONS

HON. KEITH J. ROTHFUS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 7, 2016

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, when our Founders wrote the Constitution, they had the wisdom to create a system of checks and balances among the three branches of government.

They knew this would limit power, protect against abuses, and promote liberty under the Constitution.

The President has the right to nominate justices to the Supreme Court, but the Senate has the co-equal right to consent to such an appointment.

One branch has a power; another has a check.

Today, with a vacancy on the Supreme Court, we have a chance to see this system of checks and balances in action.

In deciding to exercise its consent to an appointment to the Supreme Court, the Senate should assess whether the President has been acting consistent with the Constitution.

The chart below highlights just a few of the President's unconstitutional actions since he was reelected in 2012.

July 2013: President disregards employer mandate.

February 2014: President disregards employer mandate again.

June 2014: SCOTUS rules 9-0 President violated Appointments Clause.

November 2014: President announces executive amnesty.

May 2015: Court of Appeals stops executive amnesty.

February 2016: Stops Clean Power Plan.

These actions have been frequent, repeated, and grave.

These actions have poisoned the well of deliberation for this appointment.

In that light, why shouldn't the Senate withhold consent? It is a game the President chose to play, and now he must face the consequence.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference.

This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, March 8, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED MARCH 9

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine cooperative federalism, focusing on state perspectives on Environmental Protection Agency regulatory actions and the role of states as co-regulators.

SD-406

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Justice.

SD-226

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Indian Health Service.

SD-124

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of General Joseph L. Votel, USA, for reappointment to the grade of general and to be Commander, United States Central Command, and Lieutenant General Raymond A. Thomas III, USA, to be general and Commander, United States Special Operations Command.

SD-G50

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider S. 1878, to extend the pediatric priority review voucher program, S. 1077, to provide for expedited development of and priority review for breakthrough devices, S. 1101, to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for the regulation of patient records and certain decision support software, S. 2055, to amend the Public Health Service Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to national health security, S. 1767, to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to combination products, S. 1597, to enhance patient engagement in the medical product development process, S. 2512, to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus, and the nomination of John B. King, of New York, to be Secretary of Education.

SD-106

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Defense Health Program.

SD-192

2 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Agriculture.

SD-124

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the enforcement of the antitrust laws.

SD-226

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for Indian Country.

SD-628

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Energy.

SD-138

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To hold hearings to examine the Department of Defense security cooperation and assistance programs and authorities.

SR-232A

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold closed hearings to examine military space threats and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SVC-217

MARCH 10

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

To hold hearings to examine the Affordable Care Act health insurance Consumer Operated and Oriented Plan program.

SD-342

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Education.

SD-138

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States Strategic Command, United States Northern Command, and United States Southern Command programs and budget in review of the Defense

Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session following the open session in SVC-217.

SD-G50

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine HealthCare.gov, focusing on a review of operations and enrollment.

SD-215

Committee on Foreign Relations

Business meeting to consider S. 1252, to authorize a comprehensive strategic approach for United States foreign assistance to developing countries to reduce global poverty and hunger, achieve food and nutrition security, promote inclusive, sustainable, agricultural-led economic growth, improve nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children, build resilience among vulnerable populations, S. Res. 375, raising awareness of modern slavery, S. Res. 368, supporting efforts by the Government of Colombia to pursue peace and the end of the country's enduring internal armed conflict and recognizing United States support for Colombia at the 15th anniversary of Plan Colombia, S. Res. 378, expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the courageous work and life of Russian opposition leader Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov and renewing the call for a full and transparent investigation into the tragic murder of Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov in Moscow on February 27, 2015, an original resolution that expresses profound concern over the prosecution and conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed without due process and urges the Government of the Maldives to take all necessary steps to redress this injustice, release all political prisoners, and to ensure due process and freedom from political prosecution for all the people of the Maldives, and the nominations of Catherine Ann Novelli, of Virginia, to be Alternate Governor of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and Karen Brevard Stewart, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Amos J. Hochstein, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary (Energy Resources), Robert Annan Riley III, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia, Matthew John Matthews, of Oregon, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Senior Official for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum, and routine lists in the Foreign Service, all of the Department of State; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the nominations of Stephen Michael Schwartz, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Somalia, Kelly Keiderling-Franz, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, Elizabeth Holzhall Richard, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Lebanese Republic, and Christine Ann Elder, of Kentucky, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Liberia, all of the Department of State, Mark Sobel, of Virginia, to be Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund for a term of two years, and R. David Harden, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Administrator of the

United States Agency for International Development.

SD-419

Committee on the Judiciary

Business meeting to consider S. 247, to amend section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to deem specified activities in support of terrorism as renunciation of United States nationality, S. 2390, to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, S. 2613, to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006, S. 2614, to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism, and the nominations of Elizabeth J. Drake, of Maryland, Jennifer Choe Groves, of Virginia, and Gary Stephen Katzmman, of Massachusetts, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade, and Clare E. Connors, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

SD-226

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold hearings to examine the commercial applications of unmanned aircraft for small businesses.

SR-428A

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for

fiscal year 2017 for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

SD-192

11 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 and fiscal year 2018 for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

SD-124

2 p.m.

Select Committee on Intelligence

To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH-219

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

SD-192

MARCH 15

10 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support

To hold hearings to examine the current state of readiness of United States forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the security of United States visa programs.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine late-term abortion.

SD-226

MARCH 16

10 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine the 2016 Water Resources Development Act, focusing on policies and projects.

SD-406

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations.

SD-G50

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office report on telecommunications, focusing on the need for additional coordination and performance measurement for high-speed Internet access programs on tribal lands.

SD-628

MARCH 17

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the Department of Defense budget posture in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

SENATE—Tuesday, March 8, 2016

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God of grace and glory, You are the source of all life. You have challenged us to number our days, not our weeks, months or years. Give us the wisdom to comprehend the brevity and uncertainty of our life's journey, motivating us to plan not only for time but eternity.

Lord, forgive us when we boast about tomorrow, forgetting that our times are in Your hands.

Today, bless our lawmakers and their staffs. Remind them that they belong to You and that You will order their steps. As they wrestle with complex issues, help them seek Your wisdom and guidance. Empower them as stewards of Your bounty to serve You and humanity, striving to be faithful in the vocation to which You have called them.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the junior Senator from New Hampshire delivered a powerful address to our Nation this weekend. She spoke about the need to tackle a heroin and prescription opioid epidemic that is impacting not just her State, not just my State, but communities all across our country.

Senator AYOTTE correctly called this a "life or death issue" and talked about what she has been doing to address it. She also talked about important legislation the Senate is considering that would help address the problem.

I was proud to see the Senate vote yesterday to advance the Comprehen-

sive Addiction and Recovery Act. It is bipartisan legislation that colleagues in both parties—like the junior Senator from New Hampshire, her colleague from Minnesota, and, of course, the lead sponsors from Ohio and Rhode Island—have worked hard to advance.

I want to especially thank the lead Republican sponsor of this bill, the junior Senator from Ohio, Mr. PORTMAN, for all the work he has done on this critical legislation. The same is true for the senior Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY, who worked to move this bill quickly through the committee that he chairs.

Let's not forget the Senators in both parties who worked with the bill managers to process the kind of amendments both sides agree would make a good bill even better. Because of the dedicated leadership of Senators from both sides of the aisle, we will soon have the opportunity to actually pass this important legislation.

I urge colleagues to join me in voting to do so. The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act is important legislation that will help tackle this crisis at every level. It is a good bill, it enjoys strong bipartisan support, and it builds upon a foundation we laid just a few months ago when we appropriated \$400 million to opioid-specific programs—money that still remains available to be spent.

This bipartisan legislation also comes at a time when our Nation needs it most. My home State of Kentucky has been among the hardest hit by this epidemic, with more people dying from drug overdoses than car crashes.

As the junior Senator from New Hampshire reminded us in her address this weekend, these are not just numbers. "Behind every statistic and behind every headline is a life that has been lost," Senator AYOTTE said. "This is not a Republican or Democratic issue—it affects all of us."

I want to thank her and the lead Republican sponsor from Ohio for their important work. I thank their colleagues across the aisle from Rhode Island and Minnesota and the Judiciary Committee chairman from Iowa as well. Let's keep working together to pass the bipartisan CARA bill and take another step towards ending this devastating epidemic.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, under the Republican leader's direction, this Senate continues to make history for all the wrong reasons. Despite proclaiming that the Senate is back to work, the Republican majority is on pace to become one of the least productive Senates ever.

By now, most Americans are aware of the Republican leader's decision to block consideration of the Supreme Court nomination that President Obama will soon make. But the historic obstruction of a Supreme Court nominee is the most recent and prolific example of the Republican leader's abdication of his constitutional duties and that of the whole Republican caucus. What is that? To provide advice and consent to Presidential nominations.

Since his party assumed the majority in the Senate last January, the Republican leader and his colleagues have ground the nominations to a halt. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service, the pace of judicial nominations being confirmed this Congress is the worst. To date, this Republican-controlled Senate has confirmed a total of 16 judicial nominations. That is about one a month. Since the beginning of the year, we have confirmed just five judges.

We have 11 judges pending on the Senate calendar, and there would be a lot more, but the chairman of the committee simply is not holding any hearings. He canceled the meeting last week. Maybe they will have one the day after tomorrow. They are not even holding hearings for the people in the pipeline whom the President has nominated. The 11 judges pending on the Senate calendar is not definitive of the real problem we have in this country. But even on the 11, the Republicans refuse to schedule votes—even on judges such as Waverly Crenshaw from Tennessee, who is supported by the two Republican Senators from Tennessee.

If the Republican leader will not even schedule votes on consensus judges recommended by Republican Senators, how can Democrats expect a vote on their recommendations?

While the Republican leader and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee seem content not to do their jobs, the American people are being robbed of justice. There has been a spike in judicial emergencies. If there aren't enough judges to hear the cases that arise, it is deemed to be an emergency because the judges there are unable to do the work because there are too few judges.

When the Republicans assumed control of the Senate last year, there were 12 judicial emergencies nationwide. Now there are 31—1 year later, 31. They are going up almost by the week. As I have indicated, that number will only grow as Republicans continue to refuse to process important judicial nominations. But the obstruction isn't limited to Supreme Court nominees or judges to fill these judicial emergencies. There are other matters that we should be concerned about.

Take, for example, the Banking Committee. It is setting records for doing nothing. The committee has been operating under the leadership of the senior Senator from Alabama. In that time, the committee has not yet reported a single nomination. This is unprecedented.

According to the Congressional Research Service, which is a nonpartisan group, the Banking Committee has reported out at least one nomination every year for the past 50 years—not now. It is the only Senate committee not to consider a single nomination last year. When asked why, he said he had other things to do.

What are those nominations that the Senator has put a hold on? What positions have gone unfilled as the chairman pursued his political career with the primary election just having been completed? The Under Secretary of Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence is really important and two seats on the Securities and Exchange Commission. We know that Wall Street needs to be monitored very closely. We have two seats that need to be filled. There are two seats on the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, and we know how important that is. There are the Director of the U.S. Mint and the Export-Import Bank Board of Directors. They can't do their work now because we need to fill those spots. There are the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, the inspector general, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and others.

From the Republican leader to his committee chairs and the rank and file, we continue to hear that the Senate is working again. This is a figment of the Republicans' imagination. It is not working again. It appears the Republican Senate isn't interested in doing its job. There no longer seems to be a voice of reason coming from the Republican side.

Isn't there a single Republican who will stand against the Republican leader's nominations blockade? Isn't there a single Republican willing to put an end to this historic obstruction? Providing advice and consent on the President's nominees is a constitutional duty. I say: Do your job.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have an article here from CNN. It is quite illuminating.

When I was a boy growing up in the town of Searchlight, we didn't have people of color—no one, ever. When I went away to high school, we did have people of color. There were not many, but certainly we had African Americans, and we had Hispanics. It wasn't until then, when I went to high school, that I had a wonderful Spanish teacher, Marlan Walker. I was able to visit with him when I went home last time to see him. He had lost his wife Colleen. He made such a difference in my life. But he is a fine man and was a great Spanish teacher. It was the first time I had ever heard anything about piñatas. What is a piñata? Traditionally, they have them in Mexico, where they have a figure. It can be all kinds of things, but let's say it is a horse. You blindfold young people. They have a stick in their hand, and they can't see. They know it is hung there; they saw it before they were blindfolded. They try to find the piñata so they can hit it because presents come out of it. Things come out of the piñata. But, boy, the piñata gets beaten until it starts dumping little presents on everyone's head.

This article, which came from what happened on CNN, would be illuminating for people to read. It is written by Ted Barrett, dated yesterday. When asked about Presidential nominees to the Supreme Court, the assistant Republican leader said: "I think they will bear some resemblance to a piñata."

Think about that. They don't know who the nominee is. They don't know anything about the person, but they already have in their mind that they are going to beat this person like a piñata. These are his words, not mine. Direct quote: "I think they will bear some resemblance to a piñata."

Think about that. He is saying Republicans are going to do all they can to hurt this person's reputation, to beat on them, like a piñata. He went on to say: "Because there is no guarantee, certainly, after that time they're going to look as good as they did going in." Think about that: to say to the American people that they refuse to meet with somebody they don't know, refuse to have a committee hearing on someone they don't know, refuse to have a vote in the committee, and refuse to have a vote on this floor.

Now the assistant Republican leader has told us that it doesn't matter who it is. It doesn't matter if the nominee is a man, woman, old, or young. It doesn't matter what their education is or what their experience is, they are going to beat that person like a piñata. I think they have been listening to Donald Trump too much. The Repub-

licans need to stop and listen to the disgusting rhetoric they are spewing. They are going to treat someone they don't even know like a piñata?

Now the Republicans are reduced to acting like big, tough people and threatening to destroy the reputation of someone they don't even know. They haven't even seen them yet. This is vile behavior that is beneath the dignity of this institution. If Republicans continue down this path of destruction while working on this process, it is going to reverberate in the wrong direction for decades to come. They have to get their senses back.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the CNN article written by Ted Barrett, to which I referred, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From CNN, Mar. 7, 2016]

SUPREME COURT NOMINEE WOULD BE A 'PIÑATA,' CORNYN SAYS

(By Ted Barrett)

The No. 2 Senate Republican warned Monday that potential nominees to the Supreme Court should consider the battle they will be forced to endure if they are picked for the post, suggesting a high-stakes slugfest could damage their reputations in a fruitless pursuit of the top court.

"I think they will bear some resemblance to a piñata," said Sen. John Cornyn of Texas.

"What I don't understand is how someone who actually wants to be confirmed to the Supreme Court would actually allow themselves to be used by the administration in a political fight that's going to last from now until the end of the year," Cornyn told a small group of reporters in the Capitol.

He added: "Because there is no guarantee, certainly, after that time they're going to look as good as they did going in."

Cornyn, a member of the Judiciary Committee, adamantly opposes confirming President Barack Obama's Supreme Court pick to replace the late Justice Antonin Scalia, a conservative stalwart on the bench who died last month.

Obama is expected to name a replacement any day.

"There is no question Democrats would do the same thing if the shoe was on the other foot based on their prior conduct and I don't think the voters are really interested in seeing the ideological balance of the court changed for the next 30 years by a lame duck president," Cornyn said.

The tension between the parties was on full display on the Senate floor when Democratic Leader Harry Reid continued his weeks-long tirade against the Republican chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Chuck Grassley of Iowa, for vowing not to schedule a confirmation hearing for an eventual nominee.

"He is allowing himself and his committee to be manipulated by the Republican leader for narrow, partisan warfare. He is taking his orders from the Republican leader and, sadly, Donald Trump," Reid said. "Donald Trump on this issue, when asked about it, his words were three: 'Delay, delay, delay.' Grassley must have been listening."

Democrats believe that under enough pressure Grassley, who is up for re-election, could crumble and open the door to a hearing

and a vote for a nominee. But Grassley didn't sound like he was ready to fold when he responded to Reid.

"The tantrums on the other side continue," said Grassley. "But I guess it shouldn't surprise anybody as everyone knows around here nothing makes the minority leader more mad than when his side is forced to play by its own rules."

Grassley also compared Obama to King George III for "executive overreach," which he said frustrated the founding fathers then and frustrates the Senate Republicans now.

Also Monday, Reid met in his Capitol office with Patty Judge, a Democrat and former lieutenant governor of Iowa who just announced she will challenge Grassley this fall.

Cornyn said he has no doubts about the 82-year-old Grassley's ability to withstand political pressure from Democrats.

"They don't know Chuck Grassley," Cornyn said. "He's like a rock."

Interest groups on the left and right are lined up to champion their causes in what is expected to be an expensive and protracted battle that could undermine the candidate, no matter how well qualified or liked he or she is.

"As a practical matter, there would be no requirement on the part of a Democratic president to reappoint the same person. So I think they need to realize we're serious about the position we've taken," Cornyn said.

Mr. REID. I yield the floor and ask the Chair to announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, equally divided, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the Democrats controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, several weeks ago, the untimely passing of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia created a vacancy on the Supreme Court, which now has only eight Justices. It called into question the constitutional responsibility of the President of the United States when such a

vacancy exists and the constitutional responsibility of this Senate.

This morning in the Washington Post, there was speculation about six possible nominees the President could send to the Senate. It was speculation in the paper, and we don't know if any one of those would actually be the nominee suggested by the President, but it is very obvious—and having spoken with the President personally on this issue, I know he is carefully weighing the options.

Why will the President move forward on this nomination? Because the Constitution requires it. In article II, section 2, it says the President shall appoint a nominee to fill a vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court—shall; not may, shall appoint—and the Senate shall perform its advice and consent duties with respect to that nomination. So there are two constitutional responsibilities: for the President to suggest a nominee and for the Senate to act on that nominee.

There have been instances in American history where argument could be made that that constitutional responsibility should be ignored or at least delayed. One that comes to mind dates back to 1942. On October 3, 1942, a vacancy arose on the Supreme Court of the United States. On that day, Justice James Byrnes on the Supreme Court resigned his seat to become Director of the Office of Economic Stabilization in the Roosevelt administration.

On January 11, 1943, President Roosevelt nominated Wiley Rutledge, a Kentucky native and former dean of the University of Iowa College of Law, to fill that vacancy. At this point in 1943, the United States was fully engaged in the Second World War. When the President sent up this nomination, battles were raging in Europe, Asia, Africa, and in the Atlantic and the Pacific. It was unclear whether we would prevail or the enemy would prevail. Each day brought alarming, stunning news about developments in the war.

Three days after making his Supreme Court nomination, President Roosevelt flew to Morocco to join Churchill and de Gaulle at a Casablanca conference on the future of the war. At this conference, the Allies coordinated their strategy against the Axis powers and decided to launch an offensive in Sicily and in Italy.

On January 27, 1943, American bombers from the Eighth Air Force conducted the first American air raid over Germany. On January 30, Japanese aircraft torpedoed and sank a cruiser named the USS *Chicago* in the South Pacific. Sixty-two men lost their lives. Over a thousand survived due to a daring and swift rescue.

The Nation was clearly engaged in war. There was every reason in the world for the President and even the Senate to say: This is no time to talk about a Supreme Court vacancy. In-

stead, the President and the Senate, even in the midst of World War II, understood their obligation under the Constitution. The Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing for Rutledge on January 22, 11 days after his nomination had been sent to the Hill by President Roosevelt. The committee reported Rutledge's nomination to the floor on February 1, and he was confirmed by the full Senate on February 8, 1943, 28 days after his nomination.

Mr. President, I wanted to put this set of facts on the record to make it clear that there is absolutely no excuse for what the Senate Republicans are doing with this vacancy. There is no excuse for the Senate Republicans to ignore their constitutional responsibility, a Constitution which they have sworn to uphold and defend. We are not in the midst of a world war; we are in the midst of a Presidential campaign. And that in and of itself explains why Senator McCONNELL, just hours after the announcement of the death of Antonin Scalia, made it clear that the Senate would not accept its responsibility under the Constitution to fill this vacancy on the Supreme Court.

It is a sad reality that the Republicans have made this decision to leave the Supreme Court for over a year with this vacancy. When was the last time the Senate left the Supreme Court with a vacancy for over a year? It goes back to the Civil War, when we were at war with ourselves, with thousands being killed on a daily basis. It was in that turmoil that we left a vacancy on the Supreme Court for over a year.

Now the Senate Republicans point to the turmoil of a Presidential election campaign as their reason for not accepting their constitutional responsibility. They make a vacuous argument that we should wait and pick a new President and let this new President, in his next term or her next term, fill this vacancy. Well, that is an empty argument because in the year 2012, in November of 2012, there was a Presidential election. The two major party nominees were, of course, President Obama running for reelection and Mitt Romney running on the Republican side. In that election, the American people made a clear choice. By a margin of 5 million votes, they reelected President Barack Obama, and they reelected him for a 4-year term. So it turns out that even in this year of 2016, Barack Obama is still the President of the United States. This may come as news to those on the Republican side of the aisle, but he was reelected for 4 years by a 5 million-vote margin, and their refusal to give this President due consideration of his nominee is a rejection of that verdict of the American people in that election.

So for the first time in history, we find a nominee presented by the President about to come to Capitol Hill, and the promise of the Senate Republicans?

They will not even hold a hearing, will not even consider this nominee, and won't bring it to a vote. In fact, Senator MCCONNELL went further. He said he would refuse to even meet with any nominee sent by the President. That is unheard of, unprecedented, uncalled for, and an embarrassment to this institution of the United States Senate.

I call on the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, on which I am proud to serve, to step back and reassess the letter they signed 2 weeks ago. It was a letter accepting Senator MCCONNELL's strategy, saying they would not do their job. They would, in fact, walk away from their job, walk away from their constitutional responsibility. I would hope they would realize they are leaving a mark in history which is indefensible, a mark in history which is unprecedented, and one which sadly will leave the Supreme Court with only eight Justices.

The American people have spoken. They have chosen the President. The President has accepted his constitutional responsibility. The Senate, under Republican leadership, can do no less.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am pleased to be on the floor to speak again in support of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which the Senate will consider and I hope approve this week. It is a long overdue measure to address the public health hurricane, a crisis we face in this country. It is every bit as real and threatening as threats from abroad. In fact, I have just now come from a hearing of the Armed Services Committee, where I had the opportunity to question some of our Nation's leading military experts, including the head of our Special Operations Command, General Votel, about the threat posed by illicit substances, such as heroin, to this country. The testimony was that those substances, when they come to this country, follow the same route as terrorists, illicit arms, and other military threats to this Nation.

The bipartisan support for the measure before us is a sign of the meaning-

ful strides that this Nation has taken, but more is necessary to be done toward ending the epidemic of heroin addiction and prescription drug abuse. It is a danger to every community across the country, big cities and towns in Connecticut, suburban and urban. Every race and religion, ethnic group, and demographic is potentially a victim.

I have heard from our colleagues across the country that this crisis truly has proportions on a par with any of the tornadoes, floods or hurricanes we have seen as natural disasters. Abuse and addiction are crippling communities around the country, shattering families, and imposing enormous financial and human costs.

In my home State of Connecticut, overdose deaths have steadily increased, as they have throughout the Nation, and they now surpass automobile crashes as the leading cause of injury-related death for Americans between the ages of 25 and 64. Connecticut saw more than 700 overdose deaths in 2015. Without a doubt, we must act.

Many communities across Connecticut and our country already have taken steps and have dedicated resources to stopping the epidemic of heroin addiction and prescription drug overuse. I am very privileged to welcome a number of those communities to the Senate today. They are represented by mayors from major cities in Connecticut: Mayor Joe Ganim of Bridgeport, Mayor O'Leary of Waterbury, Mayor Moran of Manchester, along with local officials from Bridgeport, Groton, Manchester, New Haven, South Windsor, and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a list of officials I just referred to.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

BRIDGEPORT CITY COUNCIL

Joe Ganim (mayor), Evette Brantley, Scott Burns, Milita Feliciano, Tom Caudett, Jeanette Herron, Michelle Lyons, Gina Malheiro, Tom McCarthy, Aides Nieves, John Olson, Anthony Paoletto, Richard Salter, Neenah Smith, AmyMarie Vizzopaniccia.

GROTON

Bonnie Nault, Harry Watson.

MANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Jay Moran (mayor), Margaret Hackett, Patrick Greene.

NEW HAVEN CITY COUNCIL

Delphine Clyburn, Frank Douglass, Alberta Gibbs, Rosa Ferraro Santana, Brian Wingate.

SOUTH WINDSOR TOWN MANAGER

Matt Galligan.

CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF MUNICIPALITIES

Ron Thomas, Kevin Maloney.

WATERBURY

Neil O'Leary (mayor).

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. They have shown by their actions they are willing

to not only talk the talk but actually walk the walk. I participated with Mayor Ganim over the weekend in a public press conference, noting the truly extraordinary and excellent work by their drug task force to stop, apprehend, arrest, and prosecute a major drug ring in the city of Bridgeport.

I have talked to Mayor O'Leary about efforts in Waterbury and throughout his region—a very responsible and effective action he took as police chief of Waterbury—but we know we are not going to arrest our way out of this crisis. Law enforcement needs more effective support and resources. There is no way around the need for supporting and enhancing the operations of our local, State, and Federal law enforcement officials—in fact, increasing the partnership and cooperation among them, as was so dramatically shown by the successful law enforcement in the city of Bridgeport against this drug ring last week. All have a role and all of their cooperation is necessary.

All of us have a responsibility to support their work, but the bill before us also recognizes that we are not going to arrest or jail our way out of this crisis. In fact, it provides resources for treatment and services and a more effective means of delivering Narcan, which can literally be a lifesaver, bringing overdose victims back from the brink of death.

What I have heard in roundtables I have conducted around the State of Connecticut is the need for those additional steps, not focusing on any one of them but a multifaceted effort, as this bill reflects. In the roundtables I have conducted, I have heard from law enforcement professionals, first responders, doctors, addiction specialists, elected officials, and many others, including recovering addicts and their families. Their stories are riveting and heartbreaking about the effects of addiction, beginning with powerful prescription painkillers for routine surgery, broken ankles or wrists, and wisdom teeth that have been removed. There was overprescription of 20 pills, 30 pills, when 2 pills or 3 pills would have been sufficient, and those pills are the gateway to more serious addiction or they find their way onto the street where they fuel the addiction of others and lead to addiction to heroin, which often is cheaper than the prescription pills.

Those stories I have heard from around our State, stories from people struggling with addiction or who have lost a loved one to this disease, add to the public record that exists. That record includes a story that appeared within the past week or so in the New London Day. It talks about two childhood friends, Nat and Joe. Both of them struggled with heroin addiction, but they are now in recovery. Between them, they have lost several friends, a

former girlfriend, and a stepbrother to overdoses, and each has a sibling who has also become an addict. Nat is now 27 and the father of two. He said:

I started taking pills when I was 19 or 20 and was stressed out when I was going through a custody battle over my son. Somebody said to try one, and then I was taking them a couple of times a week and then every day I was buying off the street. It was out of control. It got so that I couldn't work without drugs.

The same happened to Nat's friend Joe with Percocet. He described how he took a few pills, liked the feeling, and rapidly began to take drugs with other friends, including OxyContin and heroin.

Another article in the Waterbury Republican American told the story of Thomas Obst, who was prescribed OxyContin for an eye injury. When he later suffered from withdrawal symptoms, he turned to heroin to keep himself from suffering. He explained:

You never know what a street drug is mixed with, but it's less expensive . . . someone mentioned heroin. I thought I could control it.

Thomas eventually overdosed, but his life was saved by a brave State Trooper named Josh Sawyer, who was able to administer naloxone. This drug can be a lifesaver if it is available to police—as it was in this instance—and first responders and firefighters. Unfortunately, its price has skyrocketed, and it is increasingly in short supply.

These stories from Connecticut are hardly unique. Our colleagues know they are happening in their communities. They know overdose deaths are skyrocketing, that addiction is increasing, and that the toll taken on their States and our communities is absolutely horrendous.

During our roundtable in Bridgeport last Friday, a manager of the Bridgeport Recovery Community Center explained the obstacles that people afflicted with addiction face in trying to obtain treatment this way:

Insurers will dictate what they will and will not pay for. You have to continually prove that this person is allowed to stay. You must make daily phone calls to plead your case.

When treatment is made available, there should be no wrong door; there should be no harassing need to demonstrate the problem and the need for treatment. We need more availability of insurance and increasing recognition that addiction is not a stigma, it is an affliction, a disease, every bit as much so as any other disease. And supplies of the drugs that can help treat that addiction—SUBOXONE, for example—have to be made available.

The legislation before us would provide more treatment, more beds, but it is only a down payment, only a beginning. There is truly a need for recognition that we face a public health hurricane and that this crisis, a spreading epidemic, will only become worse if we fail to provide more assistance.

This bill strengthens State programs like Connecticut's that are already in place, including State prescription drug monitoring programs as well as training for law enforcement and emergency responders in the use of Narcan. It provides important recovery support services for those struggling with addiction, and it would strengthen existing Federal programs, such as the DEA's drug take-back program.

The bill also provides more support for substance abuse treatment services for incarcerated individuals. We know a lot of people in prison today are there because of their addiction. If they are to emerge successfully from incarceration, they need that support and assistance to break the grip of addiction.

As important as this bill is, I agree with many of my colleagues—and they have spoken on the floor—that it is far less effective than it could be without the \$600 million supplemental appropriations that I have advocated and fought to pass. I am disappointed the amendment of Senator SHAHEEN, which I spearheaded and cosponsored, was not included in this measure, and I look forward to continuing to fight for the resources necessary to make this fight real.

I want to thank all of my colleagues, including Senator WHITEHOUSE and others, for incorporating a bipartisan provision I wrote with Senator COATS called the Expanding Access to Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs Act. This provision will allow nurse practitioners and physician assistants to access the information they need. Specifically, they would be able to access State prescription drug monitoring programs to consult a patient's prescription opioid history and thereby determine if a patient has a history of addiction or receiving multiple prescriptions from multiple sources.

I know from my decade and a half of work in this area how doctor shopping and other abuses can in fact exacerbate this problem of addiction and prescription drug abuse. Although nurse practitioners and physician assistants wrote over 7 million opioid prescriptions in 2013, few States permit them to consult and submit prescribing data to these important State databases. Allowing these providers to access more information about patient history enables them to address potential addiction before—and I stress “before”—it becomes a serious problem.

I hope this body will adopt a number of other amendments that I have proposed, including the one Senator MARKEY and I have spearheaded, amendment No. 3382, prescriber education. Prescriber education is crucial.

In a roundtable I held at the Yale medical school, a number of the docs told me that now—only recently—are there sufficient education and training and specific courses devoted to pain management and prescription dis-

cipline. Many doctors now lack that education, and our amendment would require that training as a condition for continued—Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for a few more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. It would provide as a condition that this training be conducted before any doctor receives a renewal of his or her license by the Drug Enforcement Administration.

To help our veterans, an amendment that I have offered, No. 3438, would eliminate naloxone copays for our veterans. As ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I have seen how the opioid epidemic has affected our veterans. It is truly devastating. Safe prescribing of opioids is vital because many veterans, especially those returning from combat, have serious pain issues that must be addressed, but they must be addressed safely, with care and caution about the dangers of addiction.

I appreciate our dedication to addressing this problem. I hope that it will be bipartisan and that our approval this week will match the urgency of this problem in communities around the State of Connecticut and around this country. The solution to this problem is long overdue for action, and I look forward to this next step—only one of many that have to be taken—in aiding our law enforcers, our health care providers, our public officials, such as our representatives today on the Hill, in moving forward and addressing this problem.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 524, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 524) to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Pending:

Grassley amendment No. 3378, in the nature of a substitute.

Grassley (for Donnelly/Capito) modified amendment No. 3374 (to amendment No. 3378), to provide follow-up services to individuals who have received opioid overdose reversal drugs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as the entire country knows, it was about 1

month ago that we lost Justice Antonin Scalia. Our country is still dealing with the loss of this man, whose contribution to our highest Court and the health of our Constitution cannot be overstated.

Justice Scalia understood the actual words in the Constitution were important. He famously said that if the American people realized what the Supreme Court did on occasion, which was to substitute their value judgments instead of interpreting the Constitution and laws—rather to substitute their value judgments for those of the people and their elected representatives—they might well feel their values were superior and preferable to those of an unelected life-tenured member of the United States Supreme Court. That is an important reminder.

Justice Scalia was known for expressing himself very colorfully and clearly, and he clearly was no fan of making it up as you go along, which, unfortunately, can happen when the Supreme Court chooses to substitute their values for those of the American people rather than interpret the law and the Constitution.

Justice Scalia was also a key figure when it came to making sure the Court policed the check of Executive power on legislative power. In other words, he believed in the separation of powers and checks and balances. I don't think it is an exaggeration to say that Justice Scalia helped resuscitate our constitutional principles and inspired the next generation of lawyers and legal scholars and judges to care deeply about our Constitution as originally written. Because of Justice Scalia, our Republic is stronger.

Mr. President, I have listened to and read about comments made by our friends across the aisle who are questioning our intention to allow the American people to help choose who the next Justice on the Supreme Court is going to be by selecting the next President who will make that appointment. It is abundantly clear that the Constitution gives the President the authority to make a nomination, but it is just as clear that the Constitution gives the U.S. Senate the authority to determine how or whether to move forward with any nominee proposed by President Obama. There is ample precedent to support the decision made by Senate Republicans to withhold consent on the President's nominee and to allow the American people's voices to be heard.

That is not to say it will not be a Democratic President making that appointment or it could be a Republican President. We don't know at this early stage in the Presidential election. But we do know it would be improper to allow a lameduck President to forever change the balance on the Supreme Court for perhaps the next 30 years as he is heading out the door.

There is a lot of precedent for what we have decided to do. Not since 1932 has the Senate, in a Presidential election year, confirmed a Supreme Court nominee to a vacancy arising in that same year—1932. One would have to go back even further—to 1888—to find an election-year nominee who was nominated and confirmed under a divided government, as we have today. So what Senate Democrats are actually insisting on, and the President is insisting on, is that we do something we haven't done for 130 years.

Of course, the position being taken by Senate Republicans is not a new idea either. As a matter of fact, the Democratic leader in 2005 said this—of course, this was when President George W. Bush was President. Senator REID said:

The duties of the Senate are set forth in the U.S. Constitution. Nowhere in that document does it say the Senate has a duty to give presidential appointees a vote.

Senator REID was entirely correct. That is what the Constitution says. As I mentioned earlier, the President can nominate anybody he wants, but the Constitution does not say the Senate is obligated to give a vote to that nominee.

I would note that I read some of the remarks of the Democratic leader this morning, and I just want to say he was apparently critical of a story written that included my name and the word “piñata” included in the story, suggesting this was somehow a threat.

I would be surprised if any person who actually aspired to be on the U.S. Supreme Court—a current judge or a legal scholar or lawyer—would allow themselves to be used by this administration in making a nomination to the Supreme Court for a seat that will not be filled during the remainder of President Obama's term, knowing they will not be confirmed. And even if a member of the same political party as the President is elected President next year, there is no guarantee that same person will be renominated. So I likened the nomination process and confirmation process to a piñata, which is only to say the confirmation process around here has gotten pretty tough.

But I am not going to be preached to by the Democratic leader, by the Democrats who have been responsible for filibustering judges, creating a new verb in the English language—“Borked”—when they blocked Robert Bork's appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court, when the Democratic leader invokes the nuclear option, breaking the Senate rules for the sole purpose of packing the DC Circuit Court of Appeals with like-minded judges so that the President wouldn't have to worry about judges who might question overreaching his authority under the Constitution by issuing Executive orders or otherwise circumventing the role of Congress. This is a

playbook that has been written by the Democratic leader and our colleagues across the aisle. Do they expect us to operate under a different set of rules than they themselves advocated for?

Here is what Senator REID's successor in the Democratic caucus said in 2007. This was 18 months before President George W. Bush left office. Senator SCHUMER, the Senator for New York, said: “For the rest of this President's term [18 months] we should reverse the presumption of confirmation.”

I don't really know what he is talking about. There never was a presumption of confirmation. But I guess he is assuming the deference some people show when a President does nominate a Supreme Court Justice. We haven't seen much of that deference lately, I might add. But this is what Senator SCHUMER goes on to say: I will “recommend to my colleagues that we should not confirm a Supreme Court nominee except in extraordinary circumstances.”

Essentially, what Senator SCHUMER was saying is that 18 months before President George W. Bush left office, if there were a vacancy created, they would presume not to confirm that nominee.

Of course, we know that back in 1992 when he was chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Vice President BIDEN said: “The Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination until after the political campaign season is over.” That is what Vice President JOE BIDEN said in 1992.

I see the distinguished chairman of the Judiciary Committee here on the floor, and I want to tell him how much I appreciate his steadfastness in supporting the decision we have made collectively to allow the voters in November, who choose the next President, a voice in who is actually nominated to fill this important vacancy.

I wasn't in the room when Chairman GRASSLEY and Majority Leader MCCONNELL were there with the Vice President and the President; Senator LEAHY, the ranking member; and HARRY REID, the Democratic leader, but I have heard that the question came up: How can you do this? How can you not allow President Obama to fill this vacancy?

I heard that it was pointed out to the President, to the Vice President, to the ranking member, and to the Democratic leader that they were the ones who filibustered judicial nominees by a Republican President. They are the ones who created this environment in which what used to be fairly routine confirmation hearings have become so polarized.

Again, I believe it would be foolish of us to say, “Well, these are the policies the Democrats, when they are in the majority, will employ when there is a

Republican President” but somehow to act aghast or surprised when we say, “Well, if the rules are going to apply to you like this, then they ought to apply when Republicans are in the majority and we have a Democratic President.”

At the end of a lameduck Democratic President’s time in the White House, all three of these individuals—the Vice President; the Democratic leader, Senator REID; the heir apparent to the Democratic leadership, Senator SCHUMER—all three of them are quick to criticize Republicans on the Judiciary Committee, insisting that different principles ought to apply. But that is hypocritical. It is the height of hypocrisy to say: Well, one set of rules applies to us and a different set of rules applies to you.

This is more than just about hypocrisy; this is really about an important principle. It is important to allow the voters, in choosing the next President of the United States, to make that decision and make sure their voice is heard rather than just 100 Members of the Senate. I don’t know why that should be objectionable.

So it is pretty clear to me—it is absolutely clear to me that Senate Republicans stand firmly behind the idea that the people should have a say in this critical issue when they vote in November because there is a lot at stake here—a lot. Depending on who ultimately fills this vacancy next year, the next Supreme Court Justice could tip the ideological direction of the Court for a generation—Justice Scalia served for 30 years—and thus fundamentally reshape American society in the process.

Given President Obama’s previous Supreme Court nominees, the question before the American people is whether they want someone with the same or similar ideology to dramatically change the current balance on the Supreme Court, because if President Obama were allowed to nominate someone who is confirmed in the same mold as those he has already nominated and who have been confirmed, it would for a generation change the ideological balance of the U.S. Supreme Court.

You have to wonder whether the real goal—much like it was when the nuclear option was invoked and we saw nominees to the District of Columbia Court of appeals, which some people call the second most important court in the Nation—when there was literally a packing of nominees on that court because they wanted to tip the ideological balance of the DC Court of Appeals because most of the important legal decisions made which ultimately go to the U.S. Supreme Court go through that court.

I have no doubt in my mind that the President and his allies wanted somebody who is going to rubberstamp the President’s actions. This Court with

Justice Scalia I think has rebuked the President on numerous occasions when he overreached his authority—for example, on recess appointments. We have seen an injunction granted by a district court in Brownsville, TX, upheld by the Fifth Court of Circuit Appeals, on the President’s Executive action on immigration. The Court has often—led by Justice Scalia—stood strong against attempts by the President to grab power for the executive branch away from Congress and, more importantly, from the American people.

So at this critical juncture in our Nation’s history, the American people should have a voice in deciding who selects the next Justice on the Supreme Court. I and my colleagues are absolutely committed to making sure they have that voice.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I am on the floor today to speak on the same subject, but before I do, I want to very briefly discuss two other subjects.

REMEMBERING DYLAN HOCKLEY

First, Mr. President, I noticed online today that today would be Dylan Hockley’s 10th birthday. Dylan Hockley was one of the 20 first graders who were gunned down in a flurry of bullets at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012.

Dylan’s mother Nicole has become a crusader for this body to do something, anything in the wake of that tragedy to lessen the possibility that it might visit another community.

Dylan was an amazing little kid, struggling with a fairly severe learning disability but loving every day that he went to school under the care of a great special education professional who died that day as well with Dylan in that classroom.

Dylan would have been 10 years old today. In the 3 years since his death, we have done nothing, absolutely nothing to honor his memory.

MENTAL HEALTH LEGISLATION AND THE TREAT ACT

Second, Mr. President, I want to note that we are moving forward in the HELP Committee on a very important markup next week on a mental health bill Senator CASSIDY and I have been working on for over a year, and we hope that will eventually find its way to the floor of the Senate and in some measure be a very partial answer but an answer nonetheless to this epidemic of gun violence. We hope we will be able to have that debate this year.

I also note that we have a bill in the HELP Committee that I think is a very important complement to the discussion we are having now on the opioid crisis all across the country. As my colleagues know, there is a limit on the number of patients to whom providers can prescribe Buprenorphine, which is

really the most effective, least addictive of the heroin substitutes. As a physician, you can only prescribe this drug to 100 clients. If you are a physician assistant or a nurse practitioner, you are not allowed to prescribe. In Connecticut, that is the biggest obstacle we have—we don’t have enough physicians who can prescribe this very effective drug.

The TREAT Act, which is a bipartisan bill, removes that cap for physicians and allows nurses with higher levels of training and PAs to prescribe that drug as well. I hope the HELP Committee will take up this bill as part of our markup next week. If it were up to me, we would include it as part of our mental health initiative and move it to the floor en bloc. The CARA bill is very important this week, but let’s be honest: There is no money in it, so there are a bunch of new programs but no new resources for us in Connecticut to try to take on this fight.

If we were to pass the TREAT Act next week in the HELP Committee and move it to the floor, that would be real, tangible relief for communities in Connecticut. It would mean that more addicts coming out of detox would have access to true elements of recovery—in particular, this very effective drug.

I am hopeful that the HELP Committee will move on this bill next week and that we can bring it to the floor perhaps as part of this broader mental health package. In one fell swoop, we could have a partial answer to the epidemic of gun violence that plagues this country and a passage of the TREAT Act or a version of it that by itself might actually be more substantive than anything in the piece of legislation that is before us today.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. President, I do want to spend a few moments talking about this crisis that is gripping the U.S. Senate with respect to a vacancy that looks to remain for the next year on the Supreme Court.

I have only been in the Senate for 3 years. This is my first term. I can’t claim to hold any special status as a guardian of this institution, which has stood the test of time for over 200 years, but I am a student of history, and I did choose to run to be a Member of this body because of the enormous respect I have for it and its unique role in the unique system of U.S. Federal governance. That is why I do believe we are at a moment of crisis right now in which the Republican majority is blocking President Obama’s constitutional responsibility to name a Supreme Court nominee, a ninth Justice.

I think this is a watershed moment for the U.S. Senate. I say that with a connection to a State that has had a particularly important role in the creation of this body. Right outside this Chamber, there is a relatively new

painting above the door leading into the Reception Room of Oliver Ellsworth and Roger Sherman, who were delegates to the Constitutional Convention. They were the authors of what is referred to today as the Connecticut Compromise. Roger Sherman was the primary author of it; it is sometimes called Sherman's Compromise. This was the compromise that established the U.S. Senate, established the premise that this body would be made up of two Members from each State and that because of its 6-year term would be much more immune to the political tempest of the moment that often grips the Chamber down the road, that we would have a unique ability to rise above the partisan fray and make decisions that are in the best long-term interests of this country.

Frankly, those have been the best traditions of this body going back to the fifties and sixties when this Senate led the fight to expand civil rights laws or just 2 years ago when we were able to come together and pass an immigration reform bill, with the Presiding Officer's leadership, that I think will set the platform for resolving that issue in a commonsense way down the road. But the crisis that is gripping this place today, I fear, has no end because of the new rule that is being established. I just heard Senator CORNYN talk about the illegitimacy of a lame-duck President making a nomination to the Supreme Court. Once something like that is established, it will be difficult to unravel.

If you accept that argument, then this Senate will never again act on the nomination of a President in his second term. I suppose a second-term President will be perceived by his lame-duck status to be illegitimate for the purposes of nominating Justices to the Supreme Court, and by that argument, likely illegitimate for the purposes of nominating anyone to the Court because he is a lame-duck, and thus the people need to have their say in the next election.

That is a radical transformation of the U.S. Constitution, and it sets up perpetual crises in which there could be long stretches of time equaling 4 years where we will have eight, seven or six Justices.

Just simply accepting the assistant leader at his word, we would be establishing a new precedent in which the Supreme Court would have less than nine individuals for enormous stretches of time. But I think this is about something more. This is about an unwillingness to allow this President, a Democratic President, to replace a Justice on the Supreme Court while Republicans are in charge. They say it is because it is the last year of his term—or perhaps the last 4 years of his term. But if this is simply about a Democratic President replacing a Justice on the Supreme Court who tended to be

more conservative, then that precedent has no end either. I think Republicans are naive to believe that Democrats wouldn't avail themselves of the same precedent at some point in the future and hold up nominees being offered by Republican Presidents. That is certainly not our hope nor is it the stated intention of anyone on this side of the aisle. But once you cross that Rubicon, I think it would be very hard to come back. All of a sudden we will have entered an era in which no Senate will want to take up the nomination of a President of the opposite party.

Senator CORNYN talked about how there is very little precedent for this. Well, there is very little precedent because there are very few instances over the course of the last 100 years in which there has been a vacancy created in an election year. It is not because there is a history of past Senates blocking the replacement of a Supreme Court Justice when a vacancy occurs in an election year. It is because the very scenario we are faced with today has not happened. In fact, over the course of the last 100 years, the only time in which the Senate has not acted on a vacancy created in an election year was, A, very late in an election year and, B, with respect to the elevation to the position of Chief Justice. The reality is that in the last 100 years the Senate has taken action on every pending Supreme Court nominee to fill a vacancy, regardless of whether the nomination was made in a Presidential election year.

Over the course of our Nation's history, there have been 17 Justices confirmed in a Presidential election year. Not since the Civil War has it ever taken more than a year to confirm a nominee for a Supreme Court vacancy. The average, of course—we heard it over and over—has been 67 days from nomination to the final Senate vote.

But what Senate Republicans are proposing is that this President—with over 300 days left in his term—will not even get the courtesy of a vote in the Judiciary Committee, never mind a vote on the Senate floor. They contend that this nominee will be rejected sight unseen, which is why we think all America is saying to Senate Republicans: Just do your job. Go through the hearing process, meet with the nominee, and bring that nominee to a vote on the Senate floor.

There were lots of Democratic Senators who opposed Clarence Thomas when he was nominated, but that didn't stop them from allowing a vote on the Senate floor. You can oppose this nominee once you take a look at their credentials and assess their suitability for the Court, but do your job and show the respect for the institution of the Presidency such that his choice will at least get a fair hearing in the Judiciary Committee and on the floor of the Senate.

I hope that for my sons' sake the effect of our actions over the next year doesn't effectively rewrite the Constitution and that pages don't need to be added to their textbooks in order to place caveats on the obligations of the President and the responsibilities of this body. I hope we don't all of a sudden create a new rule in which you only get a vacancy filled if the Senate and the Presidency happen to be of the same party or you only get a vacancy filled, as Senator CORNYN would suggest, when you have a nomination in the first 4 years of your potential 8-year tenure.

Lastly, what I worry about most greatly is the effect of this decision giving credence to the belief among some that this President is illegitimate. I don't think that is held by Members of this body, but I do know there are many in this country who don't recognize the legitimacy of this President, and the way in which we treat this office often gives purchase to those arguments. There is a standard of review that we have created for diplomatic agreements that we never held previous Presidents to. There is a furor over the Executive actions taken by this President even though previous Presidents have taken similar Executive actions—such as with the issue of immigration—and have taken far more Executive actions than this President has. I worry that, by disrespecting the institution and not even allowing for meetings to be held between this nominee and Members of the Republican majority, we feed this belief that this particular President doesn't share the legitimacy of previous Presidents.

For all of those reasons, I hope we can just make a commitment to do our jobs and begin the process of considering the Supreme Court nominee once the President makes this nomination.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

MR. UDALL. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the prescription drug crisis. Every day someone in our Nation dies—a son, daughter, a parent—from a drug overdose. Most overdoses are from prescription drugs, such as opioid painkillers. Too often drugs that were intended to bring comfort end up bringing tragedy. Oxycodone, hydrocodone, OxyContin—we have an epidemic of these prescription drugs and the abuse of them. These drugs wreck lives, wreck families, and wreck entire communities.

In my home State of New Mexico, we know this all too well. We have the second highest rate of drug overdose deaths. We are in a crisis, and it is getting worse. More New Mexicans are dying from drug overdoses than ever before. It touches home and it hits hard.

One of those we lost was a young man named Cameron Weiss. According to

the Albuquerque Journal, Cameron was 18 years old, an athlete, a poet, and then became addicted to painkillers for the treatment of sports injuries. That led, as it often does, to heroin. Within 2 years this promising young man with his whole life ahead of him was dead from a heroin overdose.

His mom, Jennifer Weiss, took her grief and put it to work to help others. After Cameron's death, she founded a group called Healing Addiction in Our Community so she could help other young people struggling with addiction. She told the Albuquerque Journal the following:

Something tragic has to happen before change happens. Unfortunately, when it comes to heroin, that tragedy happens all the time.

Most of us know young people like Cameron. A similar story of another young life that was lost to a heroin overdose was shared with me last week. This young man's father who visited my office is a medical professional in New Mexico. With all of the resources and knowledge available to him, he was still not able to prevent his son's tragic death last year at the age of 22.

One of my own staff members who was raised in Albuquerque lost four of his friends at Cibola High School. All four turned to heroin after abusing prescription drugs. One was his best friend, Michael, whose life was cut short at 30 years old.

We see this pattern time and again. A person becomes addicted to painkillers and then turns to another prescription or to heroin, which is cheaper and easier to get. It is a lethal combination and a downward spiral.

We have all heard the numbers, and they are chilling. Opioid-related deaths quadrupled nationally from 2002 to 2013. In 2014, nearly 30,000 Americans died from prescription opioid and heroin overdose. More Americans die each year from drug overdoses than from car crashes. Addiction knows no boundaries of race, gender or background, but our Hispanic and tribal communities in places such as Rio Arriba County, NM, are ground zero. Year after year, Rio Arriba County has the highest rate of overdoses in the Nation, more than five times the national average.

Just a few weeks ago KOB-TV reported on the toll that this has taken, generation after generation casting a long shadow over the beautiful Espanola Valley.

A young man named Rufus Billy said: "Growing up here, they'd say this was the heroin capital of the world."

For many, prescription painkillers come first and heroin comes later. According to KOB, prevention groups report that 2 million opioid prescriptions were filled in New Mexico in 2014, double the number from 10 years ago.

The abuse is so severe, according to Rio Arriba County Sheriff James

Lujan, that "6 and 7-year-olds are talking about grandma and grandpa being addicts. . . . It's like a never-ending cycle."

New Mexico is on the ropes and so many other States are as well. I listened to my colleagues from both sides of the aisle. The stories are heart-breaking, and, sadly, we are losing the fight.

This is not just about numbers. It is about families and communities torn apart. Too often it is a story of those looking for help and not finding it. We can change that, but it will take more than words, more than handwringing. It will take a real commitment, and, let's be clear, real money.

Rehab saves lives—not always, and that is a tragedy all its own for some families. But treatment certainly can't help when you can't get it. People are desperate and trying to get treatment and help. We see this every day, especially in rural States like New Mexico. That is why we need to pass the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, because this isn't just about addiction. It is about recovery and giving hope to those who feel hopeless.

I am proud to cosponsor this bill, and I thank Senators WHITEHOUSE and SHAHEEN for their leadership. CARA will help States and local communities fight this battle for prevention, education, treatment, and law enforcement efforts. CARA is a step forward, and we urgently need to move forward. We can't keep falling behind.

In Spanish, C-A-R-A, "cara," means face. We should remember the faces and remember our loved ones. These are not just statistics. That is why I have also introduced legislation to improve monitoring of prescriptions and to have a better referral for addicts to treatment services. It also directs the FDA to review naloxone, which is an important lifesaving medication for over-the-counter use.

There is no doubt we have a crisis. We can't just say what works. We need to pay for what works. Our commitment has to be equal to the challenge, so I am quite disappointed that last week we did not adopt a key amendment for additional emergency funding. Let us step up to the plate and get this done.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, a couple of weeks ago, a small agency in New York State took a very big step that I think is very dangerous. The State Board of Regents said it will

start giving some illegal immigrants a license to practice medicine in the State of New York. This is a State agency that grants certificates and licenses for more than 50 different professions. You need this board's permission if you want to be a nurse in New York, a pharmacist, a dentist or a doctor. I think it is a terrible idea to grant licenses to illegal immigrants because doctors, dentists, and others are entrusted to prescribe powerful medications. That is the point of the bill we are on right now. These include these very opioid painkillers we have been talking about for the past few weeks.

Right now the Senate is debating what we can do to help communities and families who are struggling with abuse of these drugs. I think a big part of the problem is that these powerful medications are just too widely available. I can tell you that, as somebody who practiced medicine in Wyoming for 25 years, I worry that there are physicians and dentists who may be too free in prescribing opioids, very addictive medicines.

There are pharmacists who maybe haven't been as careful as they could be about making sure the drugs are used appropriately by the people who come to pick up prescriptions, and families across the country have been hurt by this abuse of these opioids, including many in New York State itself. Senator GILLIBRAND came to the floor last week to talk about it. She talked about the problem of opioids being overprescribed in New York.

So then the question is: Why is New York State so eager to allow these drugs to be prescribed and dispensed by people who we know have already broken the law? The legislation we are debating today tries to reduce the flow of opioids, to reduce the ways that they might be prescribed improperly. It includes language that would help States monitor and track prescriptions. That is a very important part of this legislation which I support.

Senator MARKEY of Massachusetts has actually offered an amendment that would do even more. It would tighten the process for registering people to dispense powerful drugs like these opioids. Under the rules today, the Drug Enforcement Administration registers doctors before it allows them to write these prescriptions. Senator MARKEY's amendment says that before anyone could even get this registration, they would have to complete additional training.

We all want to make sure people who have been handing out these medications can be trusted to do it responsibly. We all should have to be very careful about giving a prescription pad to someone who, by history and maybe even their identity, may be unclear. So I am submitting an amendment to this Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act that will help us do this. This

amendment actually takes the same approach as Senator MARKEY's does. It adds a simple requirement, a requirement that before the Drug Enforcement Administration can register someone to prescribe or dispense these powerful addictive medications, that this applicant must be able to prove that they are either a U.S. citizen or a legal resident. That is it.

There is actually a Federal law already on the books that requires this. It was signed into law and passed by Congress and signed by Bill Clinton in 1996, but there was a loophole in the law that allowed States—like what New York is doing—States to come around later and exempt illegal immigrants from the requirement in their State.

New York is doing that right now through its board. It is not the State legislature that is doing it in New York. It is not the citizens of New York who are doing it. They are not the ones saying they are willing to take a chance and loosen the standards of those who can prescribe these powerful, addictive medications. This is being done, and this decision is being made by a very small State agency acting on its own authority. I think this decision is much too important to be left to a small group of people in Albany, NY.

I want to be clear. This is not about immigrants. This is about the threat that comes from the misuse of opioid painkillers. It is about maintaining the standards of the law. My grandfather came to this country. He did it legally like millions of others. He followed the rules. He worked hard. He continued to obey the law. We all know this is a country of immigrants, and we know America still proudly welcomes legal immigrants today.

We also know that being a doctor is not like other jobs. When a patient goes to her doctor, she may literally be placing her own life in that doctor's hands. People need to have complete confidence that their doctor is ethical, honest, and can be trusted with life-and-death decisions. How can a patient have this kind of faith in someone who broke the law and is in the country illegally at this time? This action by the New York Board of Regents could seriously undermine the doctor-patient relationship and the trust that needs to be there.

Doctors are held to the highest possible standards. They need to be outstanding members of their community. In the State of New York, a doctor can actually lose their license if convicted of a crime. What is it being in the country illegally? Why would we then give a license to someone who already knows they have committed a crime by being in the country illegally? It makes no sense.

As a doctor, I will tell you these opioid medications are very powerful. They can be abused, and they have

been abused, especially if they fall into the hands of someone who is not up to the highest moral professional and legal standards who is writing the prescription in the first place.

We in Congress have a responsibility to make sure such dangerous medications can be given out only by people who meet the standards. I think it would set a terrible precedent if we allow people who are in this country illegally to begin prescribing these highly addictive drugs, but that is what New York wants to do. I don't think we can allow someone who has broken the law to serve as the gatekeeper for those potentially dangerous medications. We owe every American the peace of mind that the doctor treating their sick child is who that doctor claims to be and that their doctor is in the country legally.

The New York Board of Regents is ignoring, absolutely ignoring, this important public health and public safety concern. If New York will not act to protect its people, then Congress must.

Thank you.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:30 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today the Senate continues to work on legislation that addresses the heroin epidemic affecting our communities all over the country. Every State represented by a Senator in this Chamber is affected by it. I am pleased to see that yesterday we had a strong vote on

an important step forward to consider more amendments, with the hope we will consider them today or tomorrow and then have a vote on this legislation before the end of the week and send it over to the House of Representatives, where there is similar legislation, a companion bill that has already been drafted and is also bipartisan.

I thank SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, who is on the floor now, my coauthor, and also Senators AMY KLOBUCHAR, KELLY AYOTTE, and the 42 other bipartisan coauthors of our legislation. This is bipartisan, but it is also comprehensive and evidence based. It is not just supported by a lot of Senators, but it is also supported by a lot of groups. That is very important.

Over the past few years, Senator WHITEHOUSE and I have worked with groups around the country and in our own States to come up with the right answers; in other words, evidence-based solutions to prevention and education to help people not make the mistake and get into the funnel of addiction but also, once those people are addicted, to help them more with better treatment, better recovery, and to ensure we are treating addiction like a disease, which it is. We are also helping law enforcement and helping to keep prescription drugs off the bathroom shelves and helping to monitor people's prescription drug use because a lot of this comes from the overprescribing of prescription drugs for pain medication.

I am pleased to see we are making progress, and I want to talk about one specific issue that is included in the legislation but which we have yet to talk about, at least at length on the floor.

Over the last few years, we have had five forums in Washington, DC, to talk about issues related to addiction. Some have been with regard to the science of addiction, some about our youth, some about prevention, and some about better treatment options, but we had one that was particularly interesting, I thought. It was about a very special issue; that is, how to treat substance abuse impacting our veterans and servicemembers and how to prevent our veterans and servicemembers from becoming subject to this addiction.

In the legislation we are considering on the floor, we focus on this issue. This came out of the expert testimony we had and the work that has been done around the country on this issue. CARA allows veterans who were discharged for a substance abuse disorder to use drug courts as they recover.

Too often our men and women come home from serving our country with untreated trauma and PTSD, which often manifests itself in an addiction. We know from the research that has been done that more than 20 percent of veterans with PTSD also suffer from an addiction or dependence on drugs like heroin or a dependence on alcohol. So

post-traumatic stress disorder is related very much to this addiction issue.

A few weeks ago, I was in Columbus, OH, and met with our veterans court there. We had a roundtable discussion with some of the veterans who had been through it. It was actually a very inspiring experience hearing from veterans, many of whom had been serving our military in combat roles and had come home, gotten into some trouble. They were in and out of the court system, and then they found these veterans courts. These courts actually helped divert these veterans from prison, into treatment, and then into a support network with other veterans.

For veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, going to jail can be a major hurdle in their recovery. Yet for many who turn to drugs and alcohol in an attempt to self-medicate, that is exactly where they end up.

Ryan is a combat veteran. He served in Iraq. He had a distinguished career. He got home and found himself in a situation where he had trouble readjusting to life back at home outside of the military. He got into some trouble and ended up in jail. That didn't work for him. His quote was this:

You send me to jail and all you're doing is sending me back to the jungle. All those coping skills I've learned, they go out the window. I'm the type of person that you put me in there and all hell breaks loose.

That is Ryan. Fortunately for Ryan, he was able to participate in a veterans treatment court and get on the path to recovery. I am very proud of him today. He is a student at a major university in Ohio and about to graduate. He has his life back together and his family back together. Again, it was an inspirational story because he has taken it upon himself to focus on his addiction and get the help he needed through this veterans court.

There are 17 veterans treatment courts in the State of Ohio. The program Ryan went through is a 2-year program that offers mental health and substance abuse treatment to veterans as an alternative to incarceration. These veterans also have to make regular court appearances, so it is not as though they are not connected to the criminal justice system. They are. They know if they test positive for drugs, they will end up back in that system. They are subject to random drug testing.

As Ryan and the other veterans I talked to told me that day in Columbus, OH, this combination of accountability and support—accountability and support—was the right combination for them to get back on the right track. It made a difference for them in getting their lives back together, their families back together, and to once again be contributing to their country.

CARA will expand veterans treatment courts and will also ensure vet-

erans who are discharged for substance abuse issues are also eligible to go through these programs. This is a critical change that will help allow more veterans to get the help they need and again get at the root cause of their addiction.

CARA—the legislation we are considering right now—has the support, as I said, of a lot of groups—130 national stakeholders in public health, law enforcement, criminal justice and drug policy fields, doctors, nurses, and others working in the trenches on prevention and treatment. It is designed to fight prescription drug opioid abuse and heroin use holistically, from expanding prevention to supporting recovery.

In addition to the specific provisions I discussed that help our veterans, CARA also expands prevention and educational efforts to prevent prescription opioid abuse and the use of heroin. It increases drug disposal sites to keep medications out of the hands of young people. It helps with regard to drug monitoring to know when people are being prescribed drugs, even if they cross State lines, by having an interstate drug monitoring system.

The legislation also authorizes law enforcement task forces in some of our toughest areas around the country to combat heroin and methamphetamine and expands the availability of the overdose reversal drug naloxone—really a miracle drug—so that our law enforcement agencies and other first responders—our firefighters—have the training for using this drug but also have access to it.

In the criminal justice system, CARA will help to promptly identify and treat individuals suffering from substance abuse disorders and expand these diversion efforts and these education efforts to give these people a second chance.

CARA also authorizes resources to expand treatment, including medication-assisted treatment, based on the evidence that it supports what has worked around the country. So we are trying to hold up some of the best treatment programs in the country where there has been success on a very tough issue, which is taking people through this process of getting back on their feet and recovered.

CARA supports those recovery programs that are strictly focused on youth and building communities of recovery, including at our colleges and universities. It also creates a national task force on recovery to improve ways to address the collateral consequences imposed by addiction.

So this is a comprehensive bill that will help to reverse this tide. Again, this is something that is affecting us all. The numbers are overwhelming. In the United States of America today, there will be about 20 people who will die from overdoses. In Ohio, this hap-

pens every week. About 25 people are now dying from overdoses, but that is just part of the problem. Many are not dying from the overdose. Naloxone is working in many cases, for instance. Others aren't overdosing. Yet their lives are ruined, their families are torn apart, and the communities are bearing the brunt of it. Many more crimes are being committed. I was with a prosecutor in Ohio last weekend, and he told me 80 percent of the crime in his county is related now to this issue of heroin and prescription drug abuse.

We need to pass this bill and get it signed into law so it can help reverse this tide, help our State and local governments and our nonprofits that are doing a great job trying to address this issue, and help individuals who are suffering from this addiction, which is a disease, to get the treatment they need and the recovery efforts that are needed to truly make a difference. This is an epidemic. It has now reached that kind of level—this kind of crisis level.

I am hopeful we will again have a series of amendments that can be included and voted on in the next 24 hours; that we can move forward with this legislation and get a strong vote. We can then send it over to the House with a strong message that it is time for us to do what we can to address this issue and make a difference in the lives of our constituents.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to complete these remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, the Constitution is the primary way the American people set rules for government. America's Founders made sure those were also written down so that as the Supreme Court said more than two centuries ago, they may be neither mistaken nor forgotten.

The U.S. Constitution is one of the shortest and currently the oldest national charter in the world, but while public officials, including every Member of this body, swear an oath to support and defend the Constitution, it appears some are paying very little attention to it.

One of the most popular slogans in the debate over filling the vacancy left by the death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia is "Do your job."

Never have so few words been so misleading for so many. Those who use this slogan insist that the Senate's job is to conduct the confirmation process, including hearings and confirmation votes, in a certain way whenever the President makes a nomination. In other words, the Senate should be at the President's beck and call, configuring the confirmation process around a particular timeline that he prefers.

There is some irony here, Mr. President. A few years ago, President Obama wanted to stall certain members of the National Labor Relations Board. The Senate was unlikely to confirm his nominee so the President bypassed the Senate altogether and made so-called recess appointments. The Supreme Court eventually, and unanimously, ruled those appointments were unconstitutional.

Now that the President intends to send a nominee to the Senate, he feels he can dictate how the Senate evaluates that nominee. The President would, no doubt, be the first to say the Senate cannot tell him whom to nominate but apparently feels he can insist on whatever Senate confirmation process that will suit his purpose.

Colleagues on the other side of the aisle insist the Constitution requires timely hearings and prompt floor votes for every nominee. I don't know what Constitution they are using because the real one says nothing of the kind. The real Constitution gives to the President the power to nominate and to the Senate the separate power of advice and consent, leaving to each the judgment of how to exercise their respective power.

Actually, I should say that my Democratic colleagues are currently insisting that the Constitution requires timely hearings and votes, because they were singing a very different tune only a few years ago.

The minority leader, the minority whip, and the Judiciary Committee ranking member each voted dozens of times to deny any confirmation vote whatsoever for President George W. Bush's judicial nominees—dozens of times. Were they voting to defy the Constitution then, or are they referring to a made-up, fictional Constitution now?

When they served in this body, Vice President BIDEN and former Secretary Hillary Clinton voted, respectively, 29 and 24 times to deny the very confirmation votes they now say the Constitution itself requires. The shape-shifting Constitution they use apparently means whatever then suits their political objectives. A coincidence, I am sure, but a very convenient coincidence.

The President himself, when he was a Senator, tried to deny confirmation votes to multiple nominees, including Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito. While President Obama recently said he now regrets voting to filibuster Justice Alito, he did not explain why it took him 3,670 days to reach that conclusion. Cynics might even suggest that his desire now to appoint another Supreme Court Justice may have contributed in some small way to this epiphany.

So when Democrats in this body and their equally confused liberal allies call on the Senate to do its job, they

really mean that the Senate should do what they want. I, too, want the Senate to do its job, but I don't find our job description in anyone's political agenda. The Senate's job is to determine the best way to exercise its advice and consent power in each particular situation, and the Senate has done so in different ways, at different times, under different circumstances.

When he was Judiciary Committee chairman in the 107th and 110th Congress, for example, the distinguished Senator from Vermont, Mr. LEAHY, denied a hearing to nearly 60 judicial nominees. Yet those are the hearings he now says the Constitution requires. I don't think he can have it both ways.

On May 19, 2005, the minority leader said that nowhere in the Constitution does it say the Senate must vote on Presidential nominees. He called that notion rewriting the Constitution and reinventing history. Today, he says the opposite: that the Constitution actually does require a vote. Was he wrong in 2005, or is he, in his own words, rewriting the Constitution and reinventing history today?

No, Mr. President, the Constitution does not dictate how the Senate must exercise its power of advice and consent; the Constitution leaves that up to us in each situation.

The Senate has never allowed a term-limited President to fill a Supreme Court vacancy that opened up this late in his term. In fact, this vacancy is only the third in the last century to occur after Presidential election voting has started. In 1956 and 1968, the Senate did not confirm the nominee until after the next inauguration.

As a member of the Judiciary Committee for 39 years and a chairman for 8 of those years—I am now in my 40th year—I have watched the judicial confirmation process disintegrate. Conservatives and liberals have very different views about the kinds of judges America needs. Several Supreme Court nominees in the last few decades have been subject to intense, confrontational campaigns. In addition, the current Presidential election cycle is already more hostile and divisive than in the past. These are among the circumstances we face today and must consider when deciding how to exercise our power of advice and consent. It would be irresponsible to follow a process suitable for a different situation or, worse, a process designed only to produce a desirable political outcome.

Combining a high-stakes confirmation fight with a no-holds-barred Presidential campaign will produce a storm that will do more harm than good. The better course would be to defer the appointment process until the next President takes office and let the people make this determination. We are not without guidance in making this decision. In June 1992, then-Judiciary Committee Chairman JOSEPH BIDEN argued

that if a Supreme Court vacancy occurred in that Presidential election year, the appointment process should be deferred until the election season was over. By combining an increasingly divisive appointment process and a Presidential election that is already underway, he said, "partisan bickering and political posturing" would overwhelm the serious debate necessary to make such an important decision. He could have been talking about 2016 instead of 1992.

This vacancy also presents the American people with a rare opportunity to address the direction of the judiciary. The percentage of Americans concerned about that direction has risen steadily for years, and while voters do not appoint judges, they do elect the President who nominates and the Senate that gives advice and consent.

Elections, after all, have consequences. The 2012 election had consequences for the President's power to nominate, and the 2014 election had consequences for the Senate's power of advice and consent. With this Supreme Court vacancy on the table, the 2016 election can similarly have consequences for the American people's voice on this important issue. Deferring the appointment process also minimizes partisanship and maximizes fairness.

No one knows the party of the next President, the makeup of the next Senate, or the identity of the nominee the Senate will eventually consider. Choosing the appropriate process for the current circumstances, rather than for partisan advantage, can prevent a nominee from being perceived as a political pawn.

The Constitution leaves nominations to the President and leaves advice and consent to the Senate. That division of responsibility is written down for all to see and, hopefully, for none to forget.

Deferring the process for filling the Scalia vacancy until the next President takes office and leaving it up to the American people is the best approach for the Senate, the judiciary, and the country.

Before I close, I have to say a word about the disgraceful attacks on my friend and colleague, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee. I have served with him on the Finance Committee for nearly 25 years and on the Judiciary Committee for 35 years. I have served 40 years on the Judiciary Committee but 35 of them have been served with Senator GRASSLEY. If anyone knows his own mind, it is Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY. He has served on the Judiciary Committee longer than all but four Senators in the committee's history. No one is more dedicated to the Judiciary Committee and to the Senate than CHUCK GRASSLEY is.

Each of us is entitled to our own opinions or positions on issues that

come before this body, even controversial ones. Each of us can feel as strongly as we want about those issues. But I want to categorically reject the notion that a difference of opinion means that someone such as Senator GRASSLEY is compromising the integrity or independence of the Judiciary Committee. That comes very close to impugning his character, and that sort of attack is beneath the dignity of this body because everybody in this body knows that CHUCK GRASSLEY is a man of great character, great honesty, great service, hard work, and cares for this wonderful country.

It is irritating to me to see the personal attacks that have been made. I don't think we should be personally attacking each other. We can find fault with each other. We can criticize each other on the issues. We can differ with each other. We can be politically different from each other, as we are. But to personally attack somebody with the prestige of the chairman of the Judiciary Committee is beneath the dignity of this body, and it is beneath the dignity of the attackers. It really bothers me.

We have had wide differences of opinion on the Judiciary Committee. Let's face it: It is a tough committee. It is a very partisan committee. The Democrats on that side in the committee are extremely partisan, and the Republicans on our side of the committee are extremely partisan too. That is not necessarily bad as long as people are honest and people respect the opinions of others.

We can have downright bitter battles and bitter exchanges, but we don't have to malign each other in doing that. It is a tough committee. These are tough issues the Judiciary Committee handles. I know, I was chairman of this committee. I have to say it is a wonderful committee, and it is probably good that it is a diverse committee where you have a lot of liberal Democrats on one side and you have a lot of conservative Republicans on the other. We can bat up against each other, and sometimes we even come up with very good legislation.

Most of the time, everybody on that committee is concerned about having the best judges we can possibly get. Even though there have been some pains between various members of the committee from time to time—this naturally occurs when you have people who feel very deeply about these subjects—there is still no excuse for maligning the current chairman of this committee, CHARLES GRASSLEY.

I don't think you are winning a debate when you challenge somebody as a person of the highest integrity that this body has to offer. Senator GRASSLEY is one of those persons. There are others here too. I hope I am one. The fact is, CHUCK GRASSLEY is one of the best people we have in the Senate, he is

one of the most noble people in the Senate, and he is one of the most honest people in the Senate. He is one of the people who are more at ease around the common people in this country and in the State of Iowa than many of us in the Senate, and he is a person of dignity and capacity. He is also a person who doesn't forget, and I would prefer to have people treat him with dignity so that he can forget.

All I can say is that there is not a better person on the committee than CHUCK GRASSLEY, and I call on my colleagues on the other side to be gentlemen and to treat him with the respect he certainly deserves. The fact that they disagree with his position on the Supreme Court right now is irrelevant in some ways when it comes to characterizing him as somebody less than who he is.

That committee is a committee of deep feelings on both sides, and thank God it is because that is what makes it a great committee. That is what makes it so people really want to be on it. We have really good debates in that committee, and we have really good people on both sides, not the least of whom is CHUCK GRASSLEY, and I want him treated with dignity and respect. I want people to know that he doesn't take positions he doesn't believe in. There are some who do in this body, but he doesn't.

I expect people in this body to show the proper decorum, to show friendship even when we have deep differences. Show respect for somebody who certainly deserves it. I hope we don't have any more of this idle chatter that can destroy any kind of rapport we have in the Senate, and that goes for both sides. Senator GRASSLEY is being maligned unfairly, and I don't like it and neither would anybody else who has any brains or any thought about what is decent and honorable.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I rise today to share my support for the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015.

This legislation, of course, that we have been debating for well over a week now aims to address the growing drug addiction crisis facing our country by not only promoting prevention and education, but by increasing efforts to improve treatment and recovery for those who have fallen to this growing epidemic.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that from 2002 to 2013, the number of heroin-related over-

dose deaths nearly quadrupled, with approximately 8,200 deaths in 2013. The CDC furthermore found that 44 people die every day due to prescription drug overdoses.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse estimates that the abuse of alcohol, illegal drugs, and tobacco costs the United States roughly \$700 billion every year because of increased criminal activity, loss of employment, and health care costs associated with drug use.

Colorado, unfortunately, is no exception to the increase in drug overdose deaths. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that drug overdose deaths in Colorado have risen in every single county except for one over the last 12 years. The Colorado Health Institute found that Colorado's 2014 rate of 16.3 drug-related deaths per 100,000 people exceeded the U.S. average of 14.7 deaths per 100,000 people. This same study by the Colorado Health Institute found that drug overdose deaths climbed 68 percent in Colorado between 2002 and 2014—a 68-percent increase in drug overdose deaths in 12 years.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism found that nearly 23 million adults in the United States have struggled with drug use. However, the National Institutes of Health found that only 10 percent of U.S. adults who need treatment are receiving it. So only 2.3 million people out of the 23 million they have identified with some kind of a drug use problem—only 10 percent, 2.3 million out of the 23 million—are receiving some kind of treatment.

So what are we going to do to move forward from here? We are on an unsustainable path when it comes to addiction and when it comes to its treatment.

It is imperative that States are empowered with the resources needed to address the unique needs of each individual State, and the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act does just that. The bill leaves behind the idea that the one-size-fits-all program out of Washington, DC, can fix everything. It encourages States to develop their own strategies because what works in Colorado may not work in New Jersey and what works in New York may not work in Texas or California.

It encourages these strategies to prevent, treat, and reduce the growing addiction epidemic by, No. 1, creating an interagency task force to develop best practices for prescribing pain medication and pain management. The CDC found in a National Survey on Drug Use and Health conducted from 2011 to 2013 that individuals addicted to opiate painkillers are 40 times more likely to be addicted to heroin. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that in 2012, health care providers wrote 259 million prescriptions for

opioid pain relievers. That is nearly one bottle of pills for every single American—certainly every single American adult.

It is absolutely imperative that best practices are established to ensure health professionals are being trained properly to identify patients who require prescription pain relievers for chronic pain management and those who do not, in an effort to treat this system and to better identify.

The consequences of this addiction, we have seen in our communities, are devastating to individuals and their families. It is vital that States establish best practices to minimize the devastating effects that our communities have seen and our families have seen.

No. 2, this bill expands disposal sites for unwanted prescription medications. Community pharmaceutical drug take-back programs, as they are called, allow individuals to dispose of unwanted or expired medications in a safe and responsible way. Many households in our country don't safely and securely store unused pharmaceutical medications, leaving open the door for abuse by teenagers and young adults who might find the prescription drugs, the unused or expired pharmaceuticals—they might find them in the household.

According to the CDC, the abuse of prescription drugs has become the second leading cause of death among individuals between the ages of 25 to 64. Furthermore, the abuse is strongly linked to heroin addiction.

According to the Drug Enforcement Administration, four out of five new heroin users started with prescription medications. Unfortunately, the vast majority of medication take-back programs in Colorado are in the Denver metro area, but we are not simply dealing with a metro problem. Getting unused drugs out of the communities eliminates the potential for misuse and decreases drastically the potential for addiction. The expansion of these programs is a step in the right direction to reduce the accessibility of dangerous prescription medication, especially in rural Colorado.

Third, this legislation also aims to identify and to treat incarcerated individuals who suffer from addiction by implementing medication-assisted treatment programs for use by criminal justice agencies. Statistics show that imprisonment has a small impact on future drug use when addiction goes untreated. The National Association of Drug Court Professionals found that 95 percent of those who committed drug-related crimes returned to drug abuse after release from prison. We know that addiction is treatable, and it is important that these individuals have access to addiction and recovery services so that they don't continue to cycle in and out of our Nation's prisons.

I would like to share a success story from an adult recovery program in the Denver area about a young woman who went to a treatment facility to turn her life around. I am not using her real name.

Sarah was admitted to our program in Denver in September of 2015. Outside of the first week, she has been clean and sober. Sarah found a job and has received positive performance reports, and she also received a raise at the place of employment she sought out after treatment. She has begun to do additional volunteer work in her spare time as a way to give back to her community that took care of her through these programs. She has reconnected with her family. Remembering every holiday since she started this program, Sarah reports that it is the first time she can remember being sober for that holiday. She reports that she is loving her life and that there is no turning back for her.

This bill will create more of these success stories to help people get back on their feet, to reconnect with their families, to engage in community service, and to receive raises at work because they do a good job when they make sure their addiction is broken.

Fourth, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act takes a step in the right direction by strengthening prescription drug monitoring programs aimed to identify and treat drug-seeking individuals. State electronic databases that collect data on substances dispensed throughout the State have been incredibly effective in tracking the movement of prescription opiates throughout the country. Utilizing these programs allows States to identify drug diversion, prescription drug fraud, doctor shopping, and forgery. Prescription drug monitoring programs also identify drug-seeking individuals more easily to get them into treatment facilities so they can receive the care they need, just as Sarah did in Denver. Tracking and minimizing drug diversion is absolutely vital, and this legislation takes a step in the right direction to strengthen this policy.

As we talk about this legislation, I think it is important that we have these stories that have been told on the Senate floor about what has happened to friends and family members, about drug overdose and opioid abuse, about heroin addiction, the fact that we had doctor shopping, and the fact that we had forgery of prescriptions or perhaps unused drugs sitting around somebody's house without a take-back program. Improper ways to dispose of it mean that teenagers and young adults are getting their hands on it. We recognize in these stories that it is not just the metro area, not just our urban centers that are facing these challenges. In fact, it was recently reported in the Denver Post under this headline: "Drug overdose deaths hit record levels in

rural southern Colorado." There is a comment from the San Luis Valley Behavioral Health Group. The San Luis Valley is in southwestern Colorado, in the Western Slope of Colorado.

"We are getting more referrals for heroin, along with prescription drug abuse," said Kristina Daniel, chief operating officer of the San Luis Valley Behavioral Health Group. "We have a need for services in our area for sure."

Among Colorado counties, the most striking increase in drug deaths occurred in Baca County in the southeast part of the State, an agriculture community bordering the Presiding Officer's home State of Oklahoma. They are talking about the death rate having quintupled in 12 years. This is a small rural community bordering both Kansas and Oklahoma in the corner of our State—a rural community that has seen its death rates quintuple in 12 years. The amount of hardship that has been placed on families and friends is unimaginable and unacceptable. With this legislation we can help work through these challenges to overcome them and to start putting an end to the tragedies that we have talked about now for this past week, because this is an epidemic in our country. Drug overdose and heroin opioid abuse don't discriminate against race, gender, or economic status. It has hit some of the most unsuspecting in our country.

I am proud to join my colleagues to support this broadly bipartisan legislation. I heard overwhelming support from my constituency in Colorado. Everyone from local law enforcement, families, victims of addiction, recovery specialists, and mental health providers have joined together to voice their support.

I would like to commend my colleagues Senators PORTMAN and AYOTTE for their extensive efforts to advocate on behalf of those who do not have a voice. I am proud to join my colleagues, and I urge the Senate to support this legislation.

HONORING CORPORAL NATE CARRIGAN

Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life of Corporal Nate Carrigan and the work of Master Patrol Deputy Kolby Martin and Captain Mark Hancock of the Park County Sheriff's Office.

On the morning of February 24, while serving an eviction notice, the resident of the home they were serving the eviction notice to opened fire on the officers. Master Patrol Deputy Martin and Captain Hancock suffered injuries from the exchange and Corporal Carrigan tragically lost his life. Combined, these three men had served the citizens of Park County for over 35 years.

Corporal Carrigan was a pillar of the Park County community. His work led to the successful conclusion of many cases during his time with the sheriff's office. Park County was always home for him, growing up among the green

hills and blue skies of Colorado, where he took on the role of serving his community.

As a teenager, he was a wrestler and the catcher for the Platte Canyon High School baseball team. Twenty years later he was coaching the same baseball team he had played on, and he was the assistant coach for the high school football team. It was the future of his community that he cared so deeply for and that he stood ready on that thin blue line to protect.

Residents of this small town recognize the value and importance of a close-knit community. It provides a source of comfort and strength during a difficult time such as this. In this quiet mountain town, colleagues, store owners, and schoolmates are often friends and neighbors as well. They come together to lift one another up as they honor a member who has fallen in service. It is a place where those surrounding you naturally feel like family.

The officers who were dispatched with Corporal Carrigan were not only coworkers but friends and even coaches of the very same sporting teams. This loss reminds us of the difficult and dangerous situations that our first responders are placed into each and every day.

My deepest sympathy is with those at the Park County Sheriff's Office who not only lost a team member but a comrade as well and to Corporal Carrigan's loved ones who are mourning the loss of a friend and family member so near and dear to their hearts. We honor law enforcement, who, in the spirit of selfless sacrifice, honor their communities through their service. Their work to protect our State never finishes, their bravery never waivers, and our gratitude will never cease.

This is the second time in a week that I have come down to the floor and mourned the loss of a brave law enforcement officer in Colorado, and I pray that we never have to do this again.

Our prayers go to Corporal Carrigan's family.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. AYOTTE). The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I wish to speak for 5 to 10 minutes about an important matter, and so I appreciate being recognized.

Madam President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is postcloture on the substitute amendment to the CARA bill.

Mr. WICKER. We will let the time run on that issue.

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Madam President, at this point I wish to talk about Alzheimer's and an opportunity that we have to cure this most serious disease. We could find a

cure for Alzheimer's, Madam President and my colleagues, and we could do it through American ingenuity.

No obstacle has ever been too great for American ingenuity. We have defied seemingly impossible odds in the past. We have eradicated polio from the entire North American Continent and from most of the globe. We have mapped the human genome. We have been to the Moon. We are going to send somebody to Mars. We can conquer Alzheimer's.

Alzheimer's was first discovered more than a century ago. When you think about it, we only began human flight about 100 years ago. Think of what we have done in human flight. It just boggles the imagination.

We need to cure Alzheimer's here at the beginning of the second century of this disease. We have made progress in understanding the disease. Yet we still do not know how to stop it. We don't know how to slow it, and we certainly don't know how to prevent it from happening.

Alzheimer's continues to cause profound human suffering. It affects 5 million Americans who have the disease, but not only them. It takes a toll on family and friends forced to watch their loved ones slip away. I could tell you from personal experience I know what I am talking about.

Last month Time magazine featured Alzheimer's on the cover: "A radical new drug could change old age," "The Longevity Issue." There is an article in here entitled "Alzheimer's from a New Angle." I think we need a new angle to address Alzheimer's in using innovative drug trials, as the magazine indicates, but also in a new angle concerning the use of prize competitions. I propose that Congress should look at Alzheimer's from the angle of using the XPRIZE Foundation and using a suggestion that has been endorsed by a number of organizations that have thought long and hard about this.

I introduced the EUREKA Act last fall as a way to reinvigorate the fight against Alzheimer's and related dementias. EUREKA stands for Ensuring Useful Research Expenditures is Key for Alzheimer's—EUREKA. We have found it, and we can find a cure for Alzheimer's. This bill could be the beginning of finding a cure.

Finding a cure is our ultimate goal, but it will take steps to get there. My bill would create prize competitions to reward breakthroughs in Alzheimer's research. I want to assure my colleagues who are very interested in NIH funding that EUREKA would not be a substitute for any dollars that are going to current research funding for Alzheimer's. That would continue, it ought to continue, and we ought to do whatever we can to expand that.

EUREKA would be in addition to what we are doing at the National Institutes of Health. Prizes would be

awarded for a number of advancements, perhaps drug treatments to early detection methods. The best part is there would be nothing for us to lose because with a prize competition you pay only for success. Without success, the American taxpayer pays nothing when it comes to the EUREKA bill.

I am grateful for the bipartisan support that my bill has already received in the Senate. Thirty-five of our colleagues have sponsored the bill. I believe by the end of the day I will be able to announce 36. I hope even more will lend their support. Alzheimer's is certainly not a partisan issue. It is a national issue and one of the great challenges of our time, not only from a human standpoint but from a budget standpoint.

Alzheimer's is a major spending issue. It is responsible for \$226 billion a year. The estimates are that by the year 2050, those costs will be \$1 trillion per year. We have a \$19 trillion debt right now. Think of the additional debt that will be piled up unless we tackle this issue and get to a cure. Think of the savings. Think of the other areas we would be able to address if we didn't spend so much of our Medicaid budget on Alzheimer's patients, so much of our Medicare budget on Alzheimer's patients.

Experts say \$2 billion in research funding is needed to prevent and treat Alzheimer's by the year 2025. This remains the goal of the Alzheimer's plan, and it remains my goal, but that is a much higher number than we can afford at the NIH level right now.

However, by fostering public-private partnerships, as the EUREKA bill would do, we could build on current resources in new and exciting ways. These partnerships would help unleash the power of American innovation and the power of American competition to encourage people from different backgrounds and sectors to work together in pursuit of a life-changing discovery. This could work. Prize competitions have worked in the past. When Charles Lindbergh achieved a nonstop flight between New York and Paris, he won a \$25,000 prize and helped inspire the aviation industry that we know today.

Another example of success in this concept is the XPRIZE. The competition is currently sponsored by the XPRIZE Foundation. The XPRIZE Foundation has been promoting technological breakthroughs for more than two decades. In 2004 it offered \$10 million for the first reusable manned spacecraft. This XPRIZE competition generated \$100 million in investments by competitors. A \$10 million prize generated \$100 million in investments by competitors. In 2011, a skimmer that accelerates the cleanup of oilspills was awarded a \$1 million XPRIZE.

So this can work and it will work if we give it a chance. The bottom line is that we need America's best and

brightest minds working on Alzheimer's right away. We need a way to reward success. Deaths from Alzheimer's are on the rise. Its costs already exceed those for cancer and heart disease. Think about that. The costs for Alzheimer's per year exceeds the cost for heart disease and cancer put together. So we need to put our emphasis where the need is.

I thank all of the organizations that have come together and endorsed this concept. I thank my friends at the XPRIZE Foundation. They stood with me last fall and endorsed this concept. This legislation was designed with the help of the XPRIZE Foundation, in consultation with the XPRIZE Foundation, and they know what they are talking about. I thank the foundation for doing that.

I also thank the following organizations that have endorsed this concept and specifically endorsed the EUREKA bill: a group called UsAgainstAlzheimer's, the Alzheimer's Association, the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, the BrightFocus Foundation, the MIND Center at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in my capital city of Jackson, and also a group called Leaders Engaged on Alzheimer's Disease. They all agree that by unleashing this—the concept of a prize competition—we can cure Alzheimer's disease and I hope we will try. This bill is generating support and dialogue for finally putting an end to this devastating disease.

Let's pass this bipartisan legislation.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, as we consider the CARA bill on the floor at this time—the bill that deals with the opioid epidemic in our country—I thought it might be useful to bring a few statistics forward so we can consider the nature of the epidemic we are dealing with.

In 2014, 29,267 people died from prescription opioid and heroin overdoses in our country, with 10,574 of those people dying from heroin. That is a 28-percent increase from 2013. Can I say that again? There was a 28-percent increase in heroin deaths in our country in 1 year. That is the trendline we are talking about with this epidemic.

Deaths from synthetic opioids like fentanyl increased 79 percent from 2013 to 2014. Can I say that again? A synthetic opioid, fentanyl, had an increase of 79 percent in deaths from 2013 to 2014.

Here is another statistic: Today's young White adults age 25 to 34 are experiencing the highest death rates since the Vietnam war. Can I say that again? White adults between the ages of 25 and 34 are experiencing the highest death rates since the Vietnam war.

In 2014, an estimated 1.9 million people had an opioid use disorder related to prescription pain relievers and an estimated 586,000 had an opioid use disorder related to heroin use.

This is the profile of the epidemic we have in our country right now.

In the 5-year period between 2008 and 2013, overdose deaths from prescription painkillers and heroin combined increased 37 percent.

In 2010, enough opioid painkillers were sold to medicate every American adult with a typical dose of hydrocodone every 4 hours for 1 month.

In 2012, health care providers wrote 259 million prescriptions for opioid painkillers—enough for every American adult in our country to have a bottle of opioid painkillers in 2012. Can I say that again? Enough of these opioid painkillers were prescribed so that every adult could have a bottle on their shelf in 2012.

Pick a number of how many 10-milligram opioid painkillers were approved by the Drug Enforcement Agency in the year 2014. Just pick a number in your brain of how many pills were authorized to be manufactured in our country in 2014. Just pick a number in your brain of 10-milligram pills, of opioids. Here is the answer. You were wrong. The number is 14 billion 10 milligram-equivalent pills that were authorized to be manufactured in our country by the Federal Government—by the Drug Enforcement Agency—in the year 2014.

Again, all this is part of the recipe. Stir well, ignore it for about 15 years, and let our country finally recognize that there is an epidemic in their house, on their street, with their relative, with their friend that should never have happened because we know what the cause of this issue is.

This unparalleled rise in overdose deaths in the United States parallels a fourfold increase from 1999 to 2010 in the sale of opioid painkillers. We know there has been a tripling in the number of overdose deaths from 1999 to 2012 in our country, but we also know this: America is only 5 percent of the world's population, and yet we now consume 80 percent of all of the opioid painkillers on the planet.

Again, this is not some big puzzle in terms of what has caused this problem. This is all very simple, easy-to-understand stuff that ordinary families have been grappling with, especially over the last 10 years, beginning with their understanding that OxyContin and Percocet and all these other drugs that are allegedly “abuse-deterrent” in fact, when they are swallowed pursuant to a

prescription, if done on an extended basis, can cause an addiction that is worse than the underlying problem of the individual taking these painkillers.

Roughly 480,000 emergency room visits in 2011 were attributable to the misuse and abuse of opioid painkillers in our country—488,000 emergency room visits on that one issue.

The prescription painkiller epidemic is killing more women than ever before, and it is estimated that about 18 women die every day from a prescription painkiller overdose.

The numbers are staggering.

We should create a requirement that if the DEA is going to license physicians to prescribe opioids—and every physician in America must go to the DEA to get a license—if they are going to be allowed to prescribe, the physician must prove he or she has been educated to do so.

Two years ago, the FDA authorized their voluntary education program for physicians. Pick a number in your mind of what percentage of all physicians in America have taken advantage of a voluntary education program for opioids. You are wrong, whatever number you just picked. Only 12 percent of all physicians have actually taken the voluntary education program.

The FDA continues to authorize new opioids on the market without even having an expert advisory panel to deal with the issue, even as the DEA continues to authorize 14 billion 10-milligram pills per year.

This issue is one that we have to deal with. We should have physician education. We should have tighter standards for what the FDA does in allowing for new drugs to go out on the market. We have to ensure that they are safe, and we have to ensure there is a proper understanding of their abuse potential. We have to have a day of reckoning with the costs of all of this.

We have to make sure that the funding level is there for families who are already suffering. We have to provide the help for them. We just have to. This is an epidemic that was largely created at the Federal level, largely created by physicians and pharmaceutical companies. It is time for us to finally begin to provide the help these families so desperately need.

Here is what I know most: It will not even be those who have the problem right now, although those families will get the help they need; it is all the families who will never need the help because we did put the right recipe on the books. We did put the right prevention measures on the books. We did put the preventative measures on the books so that their families never even knew this day arrived in their history.

I hope as we go through this whole process that we can keep those thoughts in mind. That is what we can do from the Federal Government. We should strive to do this. We should try

our best to stand up and provide the help that these families need at the local level.

Madam President, I yield the remainder of my time.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I am in strong support of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act and its supplemental funding amendment. I have to say I wish we weren't in this position today. I wish we didn't have a persistent and growing drug epidemic in this country that is ravaging our communities and tearing apart our families.

The issue of opioid abuse and heroin addiction is not a Republican or Democratic issue. It is an American issue. It touches every corner of our society: wealthy, middle class, and poor; rural, urban, and suburban; moms, dads, children, and grandchildren; our friends and our neighbors.

It is devastating that today more Americans are dying from drug overdoses than from car accidents. In looking at the facts, there are two things we can point our finger to: prescription opioid painkillers and heroin. Prescription opioids are increasingly to blame for overdose deaths. These drugs include hydrocodone, oxycodone, and morphine, to name a few. Their numbers are hard to believe—in 2014, 6.5 million Americans over the age of 12 abused controlled substance medications. The second factor, heroin, is even worse in what it has done to our Nation. Heroin use has increased 79 percent nationwide in just 5 years.

These two factors are connected. When people are injured and prescribed painkillers, what is given as help for pain can easily become an addiction. These painkillers are frequently and liberally distributed by medical practitioners for all kinds of issues—acute pain, PTSD, recovery from surgery, recovery from accidents, the list goes on.

However, when those prescriptions run out but the addiction has already set in, people turn to heroin for their fix. Why heroin? Heroin provides similar effects to the drugs they are already taking, is highly addictive, and readily available on the street. It is also incredibly inexpensive—\$10 or less for a hit. When you have something like that at your disposal, it is not hard to see how people can continue their addictions to the point of dying.

Every day, 120 Americans are dying as a result of drug overdoses. It is time to take a hard look at what we can do to fight back and stop these drugs from taking over our communities. I look to my home State as a prime example.

In my home State, we recognize that heroin and opioid abuse are serious problems that must be addressed. In recent years, deaths from heroin have risen 88 percent. In 2014 alone in Maryland, we had 578 heroin-related deaths and 1,070 drug-overdose deaths. This problem reaches to the far ends of my State.

I met a woman on the Eastern Shore of Maryland who lost everything when one of her family members became addicted to opioids. He resorted to stealing from his family and their family store, and they ended up declaring for bankruptcy because of his addiction and the consequences of it. They lost everything due to one member's addiction, and I can't imagine the strength it took to try to put their family back together after all that.

We have all heard stories of friends, neighbors, and family that have faced addiction. Some have lost that battle; some have made it to recovery and continue to fight every day. There are examples everywhere in our community of both those who have lost their fight and those who, with the help of family and community, have put their lives back together.

When thinking of this problem in Maryland, many people's minds go directly to Baltimore. I can understand why—Baltimore was once characterized as the "heroin capital" of the U.S. It, too, has battled this problem for too many years, with insufficient results to show. In 2014 alone in Baltimore, 303 people died from drug and alcohol overdose. That is more than the number of people who died from homicide.

Today in Baltimore, we have 60,000 people addicted to opioids. That is 1 in every 10 residents of the city. Baltimore has the highest rate of heroin addiction in the country and many more who are abusing prescription opioid medication. While people like Dr. Leana Wen, the director of the Baltimore City Department of Health, have been actively taking steps to turn the tide, there are many more out there who would see this problem continue so they can profit off of it.

But this problem is not just about Baltimore, nor is it just about drug addiction. Widespread addiction leads to other problems in society. Addicts commit crime to get money in order to get drugs, like theft and fraud. Gangs are trafficking and selling these drugs to those who haven't been able to quit. The worst of our society is brought out because of these drugs and their effects, and those effects are being seen in every corner of my State and every level of society.

As I have traveled around Maryland meeting with county executives, every single one talked about the problem of heroin and opioid abuse. Both Republicans and Democrats have told me time and time again, they can't solve this problem themselves. They have asked me to help. They need multiple resources to fight. They need everyone standing up saying, "enough is enough." It is time to take back our communities, and we can start with this bill and its supplemental funding.

This bill does five things that I think will really help us start going in a more positive direction. First, it ex-

pands prevention and educational efforts to prevent opioid abuse and promote treatment and recovery. Second, it expands the availability of lifesaving options to provide for first responders and law enforcement to save lives and reverse overdoses. Third, the bill expands the resources to treat those already in prison who are suffering from addiction and look at alternatives to incarceration for those arrested with substance abuse issues. Fourth, it strengthens programs to monitor prescription drugs to cut down their widespread misuse and expands disposal sites for unwanted medication to keep it out of the hands of our children. Last, it creates an interagency task force with experts in all fields to look at the best practices for prescribing painkillers.

I would like to add that I also support the Shaheen supplemental funding amendment. The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act is the authorizing bill here. It makes the promises for services to help Americans in need through education, prevention, and treatment across geographical and economic lines. The Shaheen supplemental amendment is the appropriations that cuts the check for the services. It is tailored to the bill, providing \$240 million to the Department of Justice and \$360 million to the Department of Health and Human Services. Both the bill and its amendment are needed to get help to Americans and to Marylanders who don't have the resources to solve these problems on their own.

We can't enforce our way out of this, and this bill recognizes that. We must look at it from the standpoint of addiction and mental health services as well. The impact that addiction has had on our society has created an urgent and desperate situation. Both this bill and its funding need to be passed immediately.

As chair and vice-chair of the Appropriations Committee, I have fought very hard to get funding in the Federal checkbook to help combat this epidemic. Through a bipartisan effort in the fiscal year 2016 omnibus, we were able to secure record funds to combat drug abuse and provide services to Americans.

As vice chair of the Commerce, Justice, and Science Subcommittee, cracking down was a priority in the omnibus bill. We provided \$2.45 billion for the Drug Enforcement Agency, who targets and dismantles criminal narcotics activities and regulates and combats prescription drug abuse. This was a \$52 million increase over fiscal year 2015.

The Department of Justice received \$7 million for anti-heroin task forces, \$12 million for residential drug treatment grants, \$13 million for prescription drug monitoring grants, and \$42 million for drug courts.

Additionally, we were able to allocate significant funds for treatment

and recovery of substance abuse disorders, including instituting some new programs. Funds include: \$70 million for the CDC Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention program, more than triple the Fiscal Year 15 level; \$12 million for new Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, SAMHSA, grants to equip first responders with overdose-prevention drugs; \$5.6 million for new CDC funding for heroin surveillance; \$10 million for new SAMHSA funding to promote prevention strategies; and \$25 million for SAMHSA medication-assisted treatment programs.

We recognize that our veterans can suffer more than most in opioid abuse, whether from injuries sustained in combat or mental health issues when they return. In further protecting our veterans, we added reforms at the Veterans Administration. These include adopting the CDC guidelines for safe opioid prescriptions for chronic pain, protections against double-prescribing, establishing a working group focused on opioid therapy, ensuring all facilities are prepared with opioid blocking drugs, and providing training to all employees that prescribe controlled substances.

Lastly, we required a multiagency report on heroin from the Department of Justice and 25 other Federal agencies. This report included recommendations and best practices for combating this crisis in our country. These experts said that there is hope to mitigate the issue, but that law enforcement and public health must work together to educate and intervene with effective treatments. They gave us a road map to take action, and several of their recommendations can be found in this bill.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act is a first step toward stemming the tide of the harm that opioids and heroin have wreaked on our country. Along with the appropriations supplemental from Senator SHAHEEN, it will provide immediate action and a comprehensive response. Unfortunately, my colleagues voted against this amendment, meaning we have to wait another day to put money for these expanded services in the Federal checkbook.

This bill recognizes that the problem won't be solved just by the Federal Government or local governments acting alone. We must come together with a multipronged solution working on all levels of government and including our allies in the public and private sector.

We all share the same goal in this instance. We must do more and do better to reduce prescription drug abuse, to help those struggling with addiction, to keep heroin and opioids out of the hands of children, to stop those who are trafficking and selling these dangerous drugs, and to better train and equip those on the front lines of this battle to save lives. I urge the adoption

of this bill and I pledge to do my best to provide the Federal funding needed in the appropriations bills for fiscal year 2017.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I was necessarily absent for yesterday's vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Grassley-Leahy amendment No. 3378 to S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Bill. I would have voted yea.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Mrs. McCASKILL. Madam President, I was necessarily absent for yesterday's cloture vote on the Grassley-Leahy amendment No. 3378 in the nature of a substitute to S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015. I would have voted yea. •

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO ZAK BAIG

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I rise today with enormous pride, but also real sadness, to honor one of my most talented and longest serving staff members, Zak Baig, as he departs the Senate and starts an exciting new career.

Zak has worked his way up the ranks in my office. He started working for me on the House side and in the process has filled almost every role in sight, starting with chief bottle washer and going up from there. He actually started in 2001, shortly after I was elected to the U.S. House, as an intern back in Hammond, LA. He did a great job there.

In 2002, he was an intern in DC and showed even greater progress and promise, and then he came on full time as a legislative correspondent at the end of 2002.

In 2004, I ran for the U.S. Senate. It was a big undertaking and an enormous challenge to take on a statewide campaign. Zak moved onto the campaign side and was in charge of the grassroots effort, which was enormously important and helped lead to our success. He truly helped guide us to victory that year.

After that, as we started working in the Senate, he became an integral member of the Senate staff. In those first 3 years, he served as our projects director and then in 2008 became legislative director.

In 2013, Zak served as a Republican staff director for the EPW Committee, while I was the ranking Republican.

In 2015, after we took the majority and I became chair of the Small Busi-

ness Committee, Zak became the full staff director there, as well as acting chief of staff for a period of time.

As I said, he has absolutely worked his way up the ranks and merited each and every step of the way, doing a better and better job as he progressed. You can tell that in his body of work, which is very impressive and which, of course, I benefited from.

At the EPW Committee, as a Republican staff director, Zak helped navigate the legislative waters and shepherd through some major infrastructure legislation in the Senate.

At the staff level, he was able to lead the negotiations of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014, starting from drafting bipartisan legislation with Senator BARBARA BOXER and her staff—the chair of the committee—to negotiating with the House of Representatives in conference, to ultimately getting the bill signed into law. It was a major legislative accomplishment. Shortly after that, he turned around and helped do the same thing with the highway bill reauthorization.

Under his leadership, we also conducted some really important oversight of the administration, particularly the EPA, the Department of Transportation, and other agencies under the jurisdiction of the EPW Committee. When we moved to the majority and chairmanship of the Small Business Committee, Zak served as staff director, just as, if not more, effectively. He helped lead the way as we passed 22 bipartisan bills out of the committee in just 1 year, 8 of which have become law. To put that in some perspective, our predecessor on the committee only passed 10 bills out of the committee over 5 years. So it really was making the committee work in an effective, bipartisan way—as it should. And just in general, in the office Zak was behind a lot of our major efforts and achievements and was always effective at whatever he put his mind to.

A lot of that success is directly attributed to his never-ending energy, his drive to see things through from start to finish, and, maybe even more importantly, his personality, his attitude, his sense of humor, his being able to do tough things and always getting along with those he was occasionally battling with because he always did it with a smile and a friendly attitude, and he probably had a friendly joke or two mixed in.

It is at that personal level that I am most saddened to say goodbye to Zak—at least working with him day to day professionally—although we will obviously keep in close touch.

I have been honored to have been a mentor to so many younger folks who have worked in the Senate office. I have been honored to mentor Zak through the years, and it really has

been a personal privilege and honor. Through those years, I have literally seen him grow up from a young student—a boy, really—to a consummate professional, a wonderful husband, and a great father. I like to think I had a little bit to do with that as well, because Zak met his wonderful wife Wendy when they both worked for me in the Senate office. In fact, their marriage is one of four that came out of our Senate office, which, as I look back at my service in the Senate, is probably the statistic and fact I will be most proud of—the young people I helped mentor and served with and those marriages that directly came out of the office.

In that sense—through that mentoring and through those years—I gained not just a great staff leader but a true and dedicated friend, and for that I will always be grateful. It is at that personal level that I will think back about fights, struggles, work, challenges, and a lot of jokes and fun we had along the way.

In that spirit, I want to leave Zak with three parting gifts. One has to do with a day when I carried something with me from committee hearing to floor activity and then to actually giving a speech on the floor with it next to me. It is a funny photograph which will not be described in more detail. It is perfectly PG-rated, but it is an inside joke. After that day, Zak got a hold of that framed photograph, and I think it has been completely destroyed. But there was a file of the originals involved, and so I will hand that to him as a parting gift as part of the inside joke.

On another occasion, commemorating his enormous devotion to Syracuse sports—he went to Syracuse as an undergraduate—a prized basketball of his was hijacked. This was a basketball signed by Coach Jim Boeheim after their national championship season in 2003. It was hijacked and moved locations. It sent ransom notes from all around the country for quite a protracted period before Zak got it back.

I was going to have the basketball with me to help tell the story today only to find out that it has been hijacked again. So my second parting gift to Zak is to get in contact with the abductors and return the prized basketball for yet a second time.

The third, and probably the most important parting gift, is to give Zak the true credit he deserves. One fight I took on in the last several years is to have Members and staff health care handled appropriately as was intended under ObamaCare—the so-called Washington exemption of ObamaCare—ending that. I just want to give Zak full and public credit that that crusade and idea was really his and his alone—not. I just wanted to give him one last heart attack, thinking for a split second that his promising lobbying career had just ended before it even began.

I know that Zak's Senate peers and our constituents in Louisiana will miss his tireless service, but no one will miss that and his camaraderie, good humor, and friendship more than my wife Wendy and our four children. We have all become very close with him and his wife Wendy and their two sons. We also know his parents very well and are friends with them back home in Louisiana. We wish them all the best.

I know Zak's greatest achievements are ahead of him, not behind, and I can tell him to count me in as a cheerleader and fan as he takes on those new challenges.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

• Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, Antonin Scalia entered the world as the son and grandson of Italian immigrants in 1936. When he unexpectedly departed this life last month, he was the patriarch of a large American family and the intellectual father of the most important legal movement in generations. Between those points, he lived an extraordinarily full life that helped shaped the course of our country.

By 1980, Scalia had already accomplished more at the age of 44 than most can ever hope to in a lifetime. He had been a distinguished lawyer, served at the highest levels of the government, and taught at the country's best law schools. He might have continued to develop a reputation as the Nation's brightest law professor and scholar, but providence had still more to ask of him.

Upon his election, President Ronald Reagan came to Washington with a mission to restore a country that seemed divided and in decline. He promised to rebuild our military, revive our economy, and restore our sense of purpose. Just as critical as these efforts, Reagan was determined to bring new life to our Founders' vision of our Constitution, which provided for carefully limited government,

separation of powers, and the rule of law. In accordance with that determination, Reagan appointed Scalia first to the critical D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals and then to the Supreme Court of the United States. The three-decade judicial career that followed would establish Justice Scalia as one of the most influential American jurists—and one of the most consequential Americans—in our Nation's history.

The Federal judiciary that Scalia joined in 1982 had, for too long, both abused and shirked its proper role. It had stripped the American people and their elected representatives of their legitimate powers by inventing brand-new “constitutional rights” practically out of thin air. Just as troubling, it had failed to uphold the very real constitutional limits on government. The courts too often treated the text of statutes as mere suggestions and often appointed themselves as a kind of super-legislature.

Scalia would not stand for this. He saw this prevailing approach of judges as an abuse of power and a threat to a free and self-governing people. For Scalia, the rule of law was the touchstone of liberty, and judges had an important role in upholding it. He understood that America has a written Constitution for clear reasons: to restrict government and preserve liberty. As a judge, Scalia insisted that the Constitution be applied as written and originally understood, not freely interpreted by unelected judges. If the Constitution must change, as it has needed to throughout our history, the document itself offers an amendment process.

Justice Scalia had a sharp and well-articulated legal philosophy that put the text and meaning of the Constitution and law front and center. A judge, Scalia believed, must put aside his policy preferences in order to say what the law is. “The judge who always likes the results he reaches is a bad judge,” he said.

Justice Scalia lived out this approach on the bench. His majority opinions established clear and well-articulated precedents. His sharp and colorful dissents brilliantly exposed moments when too many of his colleagues preferred to put policy preferences and outcomes above the Constitution and the rule of law. For conservatives, the words “Scalia dissents” always offered a silver lining—they meant that a likely damaging legal precedent would at least come pre-packaged with a wonderfully readable corrective.

Whether he was on the majority or minority side of a decision, the forceful logic and clear phrasing of Scalia's opinions commanded attention and engagement. Over time, his most reliable intellectual adversaries found themselves increasingly forced to fight on the ground he established. While Justice Scalia did not win every argument,

he changed the conversation forever. Judicial activism no longer has a free hand because Scalia challenged it and inspired an entire generation of legal minds to follow his example.

His judicial writing alone would have changed American law and advanced the cause of liberty, but Justice Scalia went further than that. He wrote books, lectured, and mentored students. He traveled around the country, engaged the media, and debated colleagues and critics. His many law clerks now distinguish themselves throughout the legal profession. The Federalist Society, which he helped nurture in its fledgling years, now provides a lively forum for a variety of conservative and libertarian perspectives on law. Antonin Scalia has left us a legal culture absolutely transformed from the one he found.

Justice Scalia's judicial opinions, legal philosophy, and forceful advocacy for the rule of law inspired me as a law student and continue to inspire me to this day. While a wide array of life experiences and values have shaped the way I see America and the world, Antonin Scalia has been the single most important influence on my view of the Constitution and the proper role of judges in our Republic as men and women who should put the original meaning of our Constitution ahead of their policy preferences.

Justice Scalia's life is a testimony to the fact that ideas matter. It is proof that a person of principle, with the willingness to invest in debate and persuasion, can change history. His life also reminds us of another important truth. Particularly in these sharply divided partisan times, we can lose sight of the fact that the things that unite us are more important than the things that divide us. Justice Scalia never did. He knew the Constitution was his sole guide in his professional life, but he was also a devout Catholic who accepted that God has a plan for all of us. He took evident joy in living out his faith, in loving his family, and in nurturing countless friendships, even with his ideological foes. We should all be grateful that God's plan for our Nation, especially the people whose paths he crossed, included having Justice Scalia on the Court for the past 30 years. He was a role model for all of us and particularly for Christians in public life.

As a U.S. Senator, I led a bipartisan group of colleagues in filing an amicus brief in the Supreme Court. The brief, submitted in the case of *Town of Greece v. Galloway*, defended the practice of legislative prayer. It argued that the original meaning of the First Amendment clearly did not require the purging of religious expression from the public square. I attended the oral argument in the case and will forever be grateful for having had the opportunity to watch Justice Scalia's sharp and incisive questioning from the bench.

Although I did not have the good fortune to get to know Justice Scalia personally, he had a profound impact on me. All those who cherish the Constitution and limited government mourn this great loss. Justice Scalia was a brilliant legal mind who served with honor, distinction, and only one legal objective: to interpret and defend the Constitution as written. He is a model for exactly what his successor and all future Justices should strive to be on the highest Court in the land.

Antonin Scalia left us far too soon, but his legacy will remain with us as long as we remain a republic under law.●

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, it is an honor to pay tribute to the late Justice Antonin Scalia. Justice Scalia was a staunch defender of the Constitution who, above all, sought to uphold the original meaning of its text. He steadfastly adhered to his oath of office, which directed him to "administer justice without respect to persons, [to] do equal right to the poor and to the rich, and [to] faithfully and impartially discharge and perform all [his] duties . . . under the Constitution and laws of the United States." In doing so, he recognized this approach to judicial interpretation might conflict with popular opinion. As Justice Scalia once stated: "If you're going to be a good and faithful judge, you have to resign yourself to the fact that you're not always going to like the conclusions you reach. If you like them all the time, you're probably doing something wrong."

A few years ago, I had the privilege of visiting the Supreme Court to listen to oral arguments in the case of *National Labor Relations Board v. Noel Canning*, which concerned the scope of the President's authority to make recess appointments. I recall being struck by Justice Scalia's probing questions and his ability to immediately get to the crux of an issue; yet Justice Scalia never lacked civility when making an argument. As he once said, "I attack ideas. I don't attack people. And some very good people have some very bad ideas."

Justice Scalia was known for more than his jurisprudence. The son of immigrants and the first Italian American to serve on the Supreme Court, he is remembered by many for his strong belief in the American dream. A former law clerk recalled how he introduced Justice Scalia to his grandfather, a Holocaust survivor. The clerk's grandfather was nervous to meet a member of the Court, but Scalia embraced the man. He said he was honored to meet a man who represented everything that made him proud to be an American.

Justice Scalia was also a loving husband to Maureen, his wife of 56 years, and the father of nine children and many grandchildren. Scalia often noted that his wife deserved all the credit for

their children's accomplishments. Each year, the ranks of Scalia alumni would grow, and he would visit with each of them and their families, even nicknaming their children as his "grandclerks." Justice Scalia was also a man of faith and looked to the Roman Catholic Church as a guiding force in his life. One of the Justice's former law clerks recalled that Scalia's faith inspired the clerk to deepen his own embrace of religion.

Scalia loved hunting, the opera, anchovy pizza, and red wine. He was known for taking law clerks to lunch at A.V. Ristorante, an Italian restaurant in Washington that has since closed down. He insisted they order anchovy pizza and red wine, and he was said to be dismayed when a clerk declined one or the other. After A.V. Ristorante closed, he would lead clerks in a hunt for a worthy replacement.

Of course, as Justice Breyer once noted, Justice Scalia "loved nothing better than a great argument." Although he frequently disagreed with his colleagues on the Court, Justice Scalia formed deep bonds and friendships with his fellow Justices and respected their views. As Justice Breyer recalled:

We both would hope that the audience of students or senators would leave not with a better sense of who was right, but with a greater respect for the institution we represented. They would see that sometimes we disagreed, that we nonetheless understood and paid attention to each other's points of view, that those views were serious views, and that we were friends. And we were good friends.

When Justice Elena Kagan joined the Supreme Court the two became hunting buddies. A few times a year, they would go hunting together to enjoy a shared appreciation for this sport. But it was his deep friendship with Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg that was well known to many. She stated recently: "How blessed I was to have a friend of such brilliance, high spirits, and quick wit . . . we were different, yes, yet one in our reverence for the court and its place in the U.S. system of governance."

Justice Scalia will be remembered for his brilliant legal mind and faithful dedication to the Constitution. We will also remember his humor, his spirituality, his love for his family, and his ability to find common ground even in the face of disagreement. Let us pray for his family and friends as we proudly celebrate his service to our country.

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, on February 13, 2016, the Supreme Court not only lost one of its Justices, our Nation lost a true legal giant.

Justice Antonin Scalia was described by his colleagues as "extraordinary," "treasured," and "a stylistic genius." Beyond his unwavering dedication to upholding the originalist viewpoint of the Constitution, Justice Scalia was also whole-heartedly committed to his

family. He was a husband, father of nine, and grandfather to 36 grandchildren. His son Paul said of him during his homily that “God blessed Dad with a love for his family . . . He was the father that God gave us for the great adventure of family life . . . He loved us, and sought to show that love. And sought to share the blessing of the faith he treasured. And he gave us one another, to have each other for support. That’s the greatest wealth parents can bestow, and right now we are particularly grateful for it.”

Justice Scalia was nominated to the United States Supreme Court in 1986 by President Reagan and was confirmed by the Senate in a unanimous vote. While his time on the Court often led to criticism of his legal opinions and colorful dissents, he remained respected by his colleagues, even those at the opposite end of the judicial spectrum. This is a sign of true character—to have the ability to have an open, honest debate about a particular issue, while respecting the individual person holding an opinion different from your own.

Justice Scalia said, “I attack ideas. I don’t attack people. And some very good people have some very bad ideas. And if you can’t separate the two, you gotta get another day job.”

This sentiment was best portrayed through his friendship with Justice Ginsburg. Of her friend, she said, “We are different, we are one. Different in our interpretation of written texts, one in our reverence for the Constitution and the institution we serve. From our years together at the D.C. Circuit, we were best buddies. We disagreed now and then, but when I wrote for the Court and received a Scalia dissent, the opinion ultimately released was notably better than my initial circulation.”

Justice Scalia was known for his wit and sarcasm in his writings, famously referring to the legal interpretations of his colleagues as “jiggery-pokery,” “pure applesauce,” and “a ghoul in a late horror movie.” Yet it was these same criticisms that Justice Ginsburg said nailed the weak spots in her opinions and gave her what she needed to strengthen her writings.

Justice Scalia represented a consistent, constitutional voice on the Court. Just as the Constitution is a pillar of our legal system, so too was his affirmation to this foundational document of our Nation.

He said, “It is an enduring Constitution that I want to defend. It’s what did the words mean to the people who ratified the Bill of Rights or who ratified the Constitution, as opposed to what people today would like.”

As Justice Kennedy said, “In years to come any history of the Supreme Court will, and must, recount the wisdom, scholarship, and technical brilliance that Justice Scalia brought to the Court. His insistence on demanding

standards shaped the work of the Court in its private discussions, its oral arguments, and its written opinions. Yet these historic achievements are all the more impressive and compelling because the foundations of Justice Scalia’s jurisprudence, the driving force in all his work, and his powerful personality were shaped by an unyielding commitment to the Constitution of the United States and to the highest ethical and moral standards.”

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF CASEY FAMILY PROGRAMS

• Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, today I wish to acknowledge the 50th anniversary of Casey Family Programs, the Nation’s largest operating foundation focused on safely reducing the need for foster care and building communities of hope for children and families across America. Casey Family Programs works to influence long-lasting improvements in the safety and success of children, families, and the communities where they live. I am proud that Casey is based in Seattle, WA.

March 15 is Casey’s Founders Day, a time for its leaders to reflect on the history of Jim Casey and his vision for the foundation and its mission.

Jim Casey, the founder of United Parcel Service, saw a critical need 50 years ago to ensure that our Nation’s most vulnerable children had safe and stable families who would provide the opportunities and support they needed to succeed in life. After Jim’s father died when he was just 14, he felt responsible for taking care of his mother and three younger siblings. As he was building the bicycle messenger service he started in 1907 into the world’s largest delivery and logistics company, Jim also noticed that his most effective workers came from strong families, while those who did not thrive came from unstable backgrounds.

Those experiences and his vision led him to generously invest his resources to create Casey Family Programs in 1966 to provide direct services to vulnerable children and families. The foundation now works with all 50 States, as well as tribal, county, and other child welfare jurisdictions, to safely reduce the need for foster care and help create and sustain safe and stable families. It also educates policymakers at all levels of government about effective policies and evidence-based interventions that improve the lives of families and children.

From 2009 to 2015, Casey Family Programs invested \$45 million in Washington State. It has helped support the child welfare system, courts, tribes, policymakers, and other organizations

to improve stability for children and build communities of hope.

Casey Family Programs provides education, research, and information that is valuable in policy discussions as well as for Washington State and other States participating in the Federal IV-Waiver Program. For instance, Casey Family Programs has provided specific research to track which evidence-based programs States are using under their Federal waivers so that States can learn from and replicate these practices.

As the ranking member of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, I am committed to supporting policies to improve the lives of children and families. In particular, I was proud to include provisions in the Every Student Succeeds Act to increase educational stability for foster children and homeless youth. I appreciate Casey’s commitment to these important issues as well.

I truly value the contributions of Casey Family Programs to Washington State and our country. Jim Casey once said that “inspiration and enthusiasm are of little value unless they move us to action and accomplishments.” I believe that the current leadership of Casey Family Programs has embraced the vision of their founder. I look forward to working with Casey Family Programs in the years ahead.●

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4630. A communication from the Chief of the Planning and Regulatory Affairs Branch, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC): Implementation of Electronic Benefit Transfer-Related Provisions” (RIN0584-AE21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4631. A communication from the Assistant Director, Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary of the Air Force, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4632. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Suspension of Community Eligibility” ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2015-0001)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4633. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant

to law, the report of a rule entitled “Export Control Reform: Conforming Change to Defense Sales Offset Reporting Requirements” (RIN0694-AG38) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4634. A communication from the Assistant to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Expanded Examination Cycle for Certain Small Insured Depository Institutions and U.S. Branches and Agencies of Foreign Banks” (RIN7100-AE45) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4635. A communication from the Assistant to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Reserve Bank Capital Stock” (RIN7100-AE47) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4636. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, the continuation of the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13692 on March 8, 2015, with respect to Venezuela; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4637. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13694 of April 1, 2015, with respect to significant malicious cyber-enabled activities; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4638. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to South Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13664 of April 3, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4639. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Expanded Examination Cycle for Certain Small Insured Depository Institutions and U.S. Branches and Agencies of Foreign Banks” (RIN3064-AE42) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4640. A communication from the United States Trade Representative, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 2016 Trade Policy Agenda and 2015 Annual Report of the President of the United States on the Trade Agreements Program; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4641. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report prepared by the Department of State on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period October 1, 2015, through November 30, 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4642. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15-124); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4643. A communication from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Benefits Payable in

Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits” (29 CFR Part 4022) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4644. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Unique Device Identification System; Editorial Provisions; Technical Amendment” (Docket No. FDA-2011-N-0090) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4645. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Update on the Adoption of Health Information Technology and Related Efforts to Facilitate the Electronic Use and Exchange of Health Information”; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4646. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Annual Report to Congress on the Use of Mandatory Recall Authority Submitted Pursuant to Section 206 of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act, Public Law 111-353”; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4647. A communication from the Director, Office of Economic Impact and Diversity, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department’s fiscal year 2015 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4648. A communication from the Director of the Peace Corps, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Peace Corps’ fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4649. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “U.S. Department of Education Fiscal Year 2015 Annual Performance Report and Fiscal Year 2017 Annual Performance Plan”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4650. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Acquisition Regulation; Information on Corporate Contractor Performance and Integrity” ((RIN9000-AM74) (FAC 2005-87)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4651. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Acquisition Regulation; Technical Amendments” (FAC 2005-87) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4652. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition

Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Acquisition Regulation; Small Entity Compliance Guide” (FAC 2005-87) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4653. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Acquisition Regulation; Introduction” (FAC 2005-87) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4654. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP) for Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4655. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, “Report to Congress on the Social and Economic Conditions of Native Americans: Fiscal Year 2013”; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC-4656. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “2015 Report to the Congress on the Native Hawaiian Revolving Loan Fund”; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC-4657. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Removal of Exemption from Registration for Persons Authorized Under U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission or Agreement State Medical Use Licenses or Permits and Administering the Drug Product DaTscan” ((RIN1117-AB38) (Docket No. DEA-394F)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 4, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4658. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Schedules of Controlled Substances: Extension of Temporary Placement of 10 Synthetic Cathinones in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act” (Docket No. DEA-386) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 4, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4659. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report on crime victims’ rights; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4660. A communication from the Chief Privacy Officer, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “2015 Data Mining Report to Congress”; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4661. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Establishment of the Lamorinda Viticultural Area”

(RIN1513-AC17) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4662. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Promoting Diversification of Ownership in the Broadcasting Services, Review of Media Bureau Data Practices, and Amendment of Part 1 of the Commission's Rules, Concerning Practice and Procedure, Amendment of CORES Registration System" ((MB Docket No. 07-294, MB Docket No. 10-103, and MB Docket No. 10-234)(FCC 16-1)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4663. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Vessels Using Pot Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska" (RIN0648-XE419) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 3, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 779. A bill to provide for Federal agencies to develop public access policies relating to research conducted by employees of that agency or from funds administered by that agency (Rept. No. 114-224).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. UDALL:

S. 2648. A bill to assist entrepreneurs, support development of the creative economy, and encourage international cultural exchange, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ROUNDS:

S. 2649. A bill to modify the treatment of the costs of health care furnished under section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to veterans covered by health-plan contracts; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 2650. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income any prizes or awards won in competition in the Olympic Games or the Paralympic Games; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KING (for himself and Mr. PAUL):

S. 2651. A bill to amend the Federal Meat Inspection Act to exempt from inspection the slaughter of animals and the preparation of carcasses conducted at a custom slaughter facility, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 2652. A bill to extend the authorization of the Highlands Conservation Act; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 2653. A bill to direct the Secretary of Education to establish an award program recognizing excellence exhibited by public school system employees providing services to students in prekindergarten through higher education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 2654. A bill to make funds available for Dungeness crab and rock crab emergency disaster assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. BLUNT, and Mr. MORAN):

S. Res. 391. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate to oppose the transfer of foreign enemy combatants from the detention facilities at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to the United States homeland; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. REED, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. MARKEY, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. Res. 392. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the prosecution and conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed without due process and urging the Government of the Maldives to take all necessary steps to redress this injustice, to release all political prisoners, and to ensure due process and freedom from political prosecution for all the people of the Maldives; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. MORAN):

S. Res. 393. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 590

At the request of Mr. BENNET, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 590, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act to combat campus sexual violence, and for other purposes.

S. 629

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 629, a bill to enable hospital-based nursing programs that are affiliated with a hospital to maintain payments under the Medicare program

to hospitals for the costs of such programs.

S. 901

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 1074

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1074, a bill to clarify the status of the North Country, Ice Age, and New England National Scenic Trails as units of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

S. 1455

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1455, a bill to provide access to medication-assisted therapy, and for other purposes.

S. 1679

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1679, a bill to amend the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 to require that certain buildings and personal property be covered by flood insurance, and for other purposes.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 2070

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2070, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 2217

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2217, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A.

S. 2426

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Montana

(Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2426, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

S. 2487

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of S. 2487, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

S. 2502

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2502, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2505

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2505, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2551

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2551, a bill to help prevent acts of genocide and mass atrocities, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States civilian capacities to prevent and mitigate such crises.

S. 2571

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2571, a bill to provide for the eligibility for airport development grants of airports that enter into certain leases with components of the Armed Forces.

S. 2584

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2584, a bill to promote and protect from discrimination living organ donors.

S. 2621

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 2621, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to genetically engineered food transparency and uniformity.

S. 2646

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2646, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Veterans Choice Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve health care provided to veterans by the Department, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 388

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 388, a resolution supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

AMENDMENT NO. 3359

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3359 intended to be proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

AMENDMENT NO. 3376

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3376 intended to be proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

AMENDMENT NO. 3438

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3438 intended to be proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 2650. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income any prizes or awards won in competition in the Olympic Games or the Paralympic Games; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, with 150 days until the start of the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, I am proud today to introduce S. 2650, the United States Appreciation for Olympians and Paralympians Act. This bill would en-

sure that America rewards the sacrifice and hard work of Team USA by exempting from Federal tax the medals and cash prizes they win at the Olympics and Paralympics.

Our Olympians and Paralympians represent America with distinction because they epitomize our greatest values—determination, hard work and a competitive spirit. These athletes and their families sacrifice years of their lives for the opportunity to represent the United States on the world's greatest stage—the Olympics and Paralympics games. Most countries not only compensate their Olympic and Paralympic athletes, but also subsidize their training expenses with taxpayer dollars. Our athletes make considerable financial sacrifices to train for the Olympics and Paralympics, and as amateurs, receive no compensation for their training. Unfortunately, America's athletes are penalized with a tax burden for the medals and awards they receive at these games. That shouldn't be the case. We should be celebrating their achievements rather than taxing their success.

I want to thank Senator SCHUMER, Senator GARDNER, Senator GILLIBRAND, and Senator ISAKSON for working with me on this legislation. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting the USA Olympians and Paralympians Act to protect and encourage the success of our athletes competing in the upcoming Rio Games as well as future Olympic and Paralympic Games. I look forward to watching Team USA compete and win later this year, and I wish all of our Olympians and Paralympians the best of luck.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 391—EX-PRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE TO OPPOSE THE TRANSFER OF FOREIGN ENEMY COMBATANTS FROM THE DETENTION FACILITIES AT UNITED STATES NAVAL STATION, GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA, TO THE UNITED STATES HOMELAND

Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. BLUNT, and Mr. MORAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. RES. 391

Whereas, on January 22, 2009, President Barack Obama issued Executive Order 13492, requiring that the detention facilities housing foreign enemy combatants at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, "shall be closed as soon as practicable, and no later than 1 year from the date of this order";

Whereas Executive Order 13492 states that "[t]his order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations";

Whereas the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act,

2011 (Public Law 112-10), the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112-55), the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112-74), the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 (Public Law 113-6), the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113-76), the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2015 (Public Law 113-164), the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Public Law 113-235), the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2015 (Public Law 114-4), and the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2016 (Public Law 114-53) explicitly prohibit the transfer, release, or assisting in the transfer or release, of detainees at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, to the United States homeland;

Whereas the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (Public Law 112-239), the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113-66), the Carl Levin and Howard P. “Buck” McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113-291), and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (Public Law 114-92) explicitly prohibit the transfer, release, or assisting in the transfer or release, of detainees at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, to the United States homeland;

Whereas the detention facilities at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, are legal, safe, and humane, and have been found consistent with international conventions regarding the laws of war;

Whereas, on February 23, 2009, a Department of Defense review found that the detention facilities at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, complied with the requirements of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 regarding the treatment of prisoners of war;

Whereas in 2015, teams from the Department of Defense visited Federal, military, and State-owned prisons in Kansas, Colorado, and South Carolina for the express purpose of relocating detainees at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, to the United States homeland;

Whereas Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, serves as the intellectual center of the United States Army as home to the Army University, the Command and General Staff College, and the Combined Arms Center;

Whereas Fort Leavenworth operates the United States Disciplinary Barracks and Midwest Joint Regional Corrections Facility, which holds convicted members of the Armed Forces;

Whereas section 812 of title 10, United States Code (article 12 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), states that “[n]o member of the armed forces may be placed in confinement in immediate association with enemy prisoners or other foreign nationals not members of the armed forces”;

Whereas the facilities at Fort Leavenworth do not provide a legal alternative for detainment of enemy combatants currently held at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay;

Whereas the sites visited by the Department of Defense teams in Colorado are in close proximity to the densely-populated civilian areas of Pueblo and Colorado Springs, Colorado;

Whereas Colorado Springs is home to the United States Air Force Academy, Peterson Air Force Base, Schriever Air Force Base, and Fort Carson Army Post;

Whereas Peterson Air Force Base hosts the United States Northern Command

(NORTHCOM) and the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), which are strategic military installations, vital to our national defense and military readiness;

Whereas Pueblo is home to the United States Army Pueblo Chemical Weapons Depot;

Whereas the Consolidated Naval Brig, Hanahan, South Carolina, has been visited by Department of Defense teams for consideration as a potential site to relocate dangerous international terrorists currently held in the detention facilities at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay;

Whereas the Consolidated Naval Brig is located less than a mile from an elementary school, and is near other schools and residential neighborhoods;

Whereas the Consolidated Naval Brig is also in close proximity to one of the busiest ports in the United States, the Port of Charleston, as well as the City of Charleston, one of the most popular tourist destinations in the country;

Whereas the Consolidated Naval Brig is also located near the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR) Systems Center Atlantic and the Navy Nuclear Power Training Command, which are strategic military installations, vital to our national defense and military readiness;

Whereas Department of Defense efforts to scout locations for the express purpose of transferring detainees at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, to the States of Kansas, Colorado, or South Carolina are in violation of current law, which explicitly prohibit the transfer, release, or assisting in the transfer or release, of such detainees to the United States homeland;

Whereas, on November 17, 2015, Attorney General Loretta Lynch stated to Congress that “[w]ith respect to individuals being transferred to the United States, the law currently does not allow that”;

Whereas, on January 26, 2016, Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter stated in an interview that “it’s against the law now to establish another detention facility [in the U.S.], so therefore we have to get the support of Congress”;

Whereas, on February 23, 2016, the Department of Defense issued a report pursuant to section 1035 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, entitled “Plan for Closing of the Guantanamo Bay Detention Facility”;

Whereas the report states that “the Administration will work with Congress to relocate [detainees] from the Guantanamo Bay detention facility to a secure detention facility in the United States”;

Whereas the report does not address or attempt to mitigate the risks posed to local communities by the potential transfer of foreign enemy combatants from United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, to United States soil, including to communities in Kansas, Colorado, and South Carolina: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) rejects the “Plan to Close Guantanamo Bay Detention Facility”, presented by the President on February 23, 2016, to transfer, release, or assist in the transfer or release of detainees at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to the United States homeland;

(2) determines that any attempt by the President to transfer, release, or assist in the transfer or release of detainees at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, to the United States homeland is in direct violation of the Department of Defense and

Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (Public Law 112-10), the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112-55), the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112-74), the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 (Public Law 113-6), the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113-76), the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2015 (Public Law 113-164), the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Public Law 113-235), the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2015 (Public Law 114-4), and the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2016 (Public Law 114-53);

(3) finds that the detention facility at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, is the optimal location to house dangerous foreign enemy combatants and should not be closed;

(4) asserts that any potential transfer or release of detainees at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, to the United States homeland represents a threat to United States national security due to the risk of providing law of war detainees with rights and protections under the United States Constitution, including the potential for release into the United States, and, particularly, a threat to the safety and security of local communities in the States of Kansas, Colorado, and South Carolina; and

(5) demands that the President immediately abandon any ill-conceived and illegal plans to transfer detainees at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, to the United States homeland without explicit authorization from Congress.

SENATE RESOLUTION 392—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE PROSECUTION AND CONVICTION OF FORMER PRESIDENT MOHAMED NASHEED WITHOUT DUE PROCESS AND URGING THE GOVERNMENT OF THE MALDIVES TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY STEPS TO REDRESS THIS INJUSTICE, TO RELEASE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, AND TO ENSURE DUE PROCESS AND FREEDOM FROM POLITICAL PROSECUTION FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE MALDIVES

Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. REED, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. MARKEY, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 392

Whereas the Maldives is strategically important due to its location, which straddles major trade routes in the Indian Ocean;

Whereas increasing civil rights violations in the Maldives fuel instability and pose a threat to regional security;

Whereas since January 2015, President Abdulla Yameen of the Maldives has increasingly cracked down on dissent within his own party and the political opposition, presided over the erosion of judicial impartiality, and put increasing pressure on civil society;

Whereas the arrest of former President Mohamed Nasheed in March 2015, was widely condemned as politically motivated, and his conviction and sentence of 13 years in prison has been condemned by Amnesty International as a “travesty of justice”;

Whereas in his speech in Sri Lanka on May 2, 2015, Secretary of State John Kerry stated, “[W]e’ve seen even now how regrettably there are troubling signs that democracy is under threat in the Maldives where the former President Nasheed has been imprisoned without due process. And that is an injustice that must be addressed soon.”; and

Whereas on September 14, 2015, in his opening statement at the 30th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad said—

(1) “In the Maldives, the rule of law continues to be manipulated for political ends.”; and

(2) in reference to former President Mohamed Nasheed’s detention, “Given the deeply tainted nature of this case, I urge the Government to release him, and to review several hundred pending criminal cases against opposition supporters in relation to protests in recent months.”;

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses profound concern over the prosecution and conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed without due process; and

(2) urges the Government of the Maldives to take all necessary steps—

(A) to redress this injustice;

(B) to release all political prisoners; and

(C) to ensure due process and freedom from political prosecution for all the people of the Maldives.

SENATE RESOLUTION 393—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. MORAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 393

Whereas multiple sclerosis (referred to in this preamble as “MS”) can impact individuals of all ages, races, and ethnicities but is at least 2 to 3 times more common in women than in men;

Whereas there are approximately 2,300,000 individuals worldwide who have been diagnosed with MS;

Whereas MS is typically diagnosed in individuals between the ages of 20 and 50, but it is estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 children and adolescents are living with MS in the United States;

Whereas MS is an unpredictable neurological disease that interrupts the flow of information both within the brain and between the brain and the rest of the body;

Whereas symptoms of MS range from numbness and tingling in the extremities to blindness and paralysis, and the progress, severity, and specific symptoms of MS in any 1 person cannot yet be predicted;

Whereas there is no laboratory test available that can definitively diagnose MS;

Whereas, while MS is not directly inherited, studies show that there are genetic and, most likely, environmental factors that make certain individuals, such as Caucasians

of Northern European ancestry, more susceptible to the disease than others;

Whereas the exact cause of MS is still unknown and there is no cure;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition, a national network of independent MS organizations dedicated to the enhancement of the quality of life for all those affected by MS, recognizes and supports Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

Whereas the mission of the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition is to increase opportunities for cooperation among MS organizations and to provide greater opportunity for the effective use and development of resources for the benefit of individuals and families affected by MS;

Whereas the United States plays a critical role in coordinating MS research globally and amplifies the impact of research in the United States through which results are delivered to MS patients;

Whereas, in 2012, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society was a founding member of the Progressive MS Alliance, which coordinates research to accelerate the development of treatments for progressive MS by removing international scientific and technological barriers and which now includes MS societies from 15 countries;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition recognizes and supports Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week during March of every calendar year;

Whereas the goals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week are to invite people to join the movement to end MS, encourage everyone to do something to demonstrate a commitment to moving toward a world free of MS, and acknowledge those who have dedicated time and talent to help promote MS research and programs; and

Whereas, in 2016, Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week is recognized during the week of March 7 through March 11: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(2) encourages States, localities, and the territories and possessions of the United States to support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week by issuing proclamations designating Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(3) encourages media organizations to—

(A) participate in Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week; and

(B) help provide education to the public about multiple sclerosis;

(4) commends the efforts of States, localities, and the territories and possessions of the United States to support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(5) recognizes and reaffirms the commitment of the United States to ending multiple sclerosis by—

(A) promoting awareness about individuals that are affected by multiple sclerosis; and

(B) supporting multiple sclerosis research and education programs;

(6) recognizes all individuals in the United States living with multiple sclerosis;

(7) expresses gratitude to the family members and friends of individuals living with multiple sclerosis, who are a source of love and encouragement to those individuals; and

(8) salutes the health care professionals and medical researchers who—

(A) provide assistance to individuals affected by multiple sclerosis; and

(B) continue to work to find ways to stop the progression of the disease, restore nerve function, and end multiple sclerosis forever.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3448. Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3448. Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 39, line 5, strike “opioids.” and insert “opioids. Such activities may include supporting the availability of medication assisted treatment and other clinically appropriate services provided by treatment centers that operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to provide immediate access to behavioral health treatment.”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 8, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 8, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SR-253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a Subcommittee hearing entitled “The State of the U.S. Maritime Industry: The Federal Role.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 8, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 8, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “State Department Reauthorization: An Opportunity to Strengthen and Streamline U.S. Diplomacy.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 8, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "The Homeland Security Department's Budget Submission for Fiscal Year 2017."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 8, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SH-219 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Airland of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 8, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 8, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to a member of my staff, Lauren Arias.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY TO OBTAIN OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 358, S. 2426.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2426) to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill

be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 2426) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:
S. 2426

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PARTICIPATION OF TAIWAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Safety, security and peace is important to every citizen of the world, and shared information ensuring wide assistance among police authorities of nations for expeditious dissemination of information regarding criminal activities greatly assists in these efforts.

(2) Direct and unobstructed participation in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) is beneficial for all nations and their police authorities. Internationally shared information with authorized police authorities is vital to peace-keeping efforts.

(3) With a history dating back to 1914, the role of INTERPOL is defined in its constitution: "To ensure and promote the widest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities within the limits of the laws existing in the different countries and in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

(4) Ongoing international threats, including international networks of terrorism, show the ongoing necessity to be ever inclusive of nations willing to work together to combat criminal activity. The ability of police authorities to coordinate, preempt, and act swiftly and in unison is an essential element of crisis prevention and response.

(5) Taiwan maintained full membership in INTERPOL starting in 1964 through its National Police Administration but was ejected in 1984 when the People's Republic of China (PRC) applied for membership.

(6) Nonmembership prevents Taiwan from gaining access to INTERPOL's I-24/7 global police communications system, which provides real-time information on criminals and global criminal activities. Taiwan is relegated to second-hand information from friendly nations, including the United States.

(7) Taiwan is unable to swiftly share information on criminals and suspicious activity with the international community, leaving a huge void in the global crime-fighting efforts and leaving the entire world at risk.

(8) The United States, in the 1994 Taiwan Policy Review, declared its intention to support Taiwan's participation in appropriate international organizations and has consistently reiterated that support.

(9) Following the enactment of Public Law 108-235, a law authorizing the Secretary of State to initiate and implement a plan to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan at the annual summit of the World Health Assembly and subsequent advocacy by the United States, Taiwan was granted observer status to the World Health Assembly for six consecutive years since 2009. Both prior to and in its capacity as an observer, Taiwan has contributed significantly to the international community's collective efforts in pandemic control, monitoring, early warning, and other related matters.

(10) INTERPOL's constitution allows for observers at its meetings by "police bodies which are not members of the Organization".

(b) TAIWAN'S PARTICIPATION IN INTERPOL.—The Secretary of State shall—

(1) develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in INTERPOL and at other related meetings, activities, and mechanisms thereafter; and

(2) instruct INTERPOL Washington to officially request observer status for Taiwan in INTERPOL and to actively urge INTERPOL member states to support such observer status and participation for Taiwan.

(c) REPORT CONCERNING OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN IN INTERPOL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall transmit to Congress a report, in unclassified form, describing the United States strategy to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan in appropriate international organizations, including INTERPOL, and at other related meetings, activities, and mechanisms thereafter. The report shall include the following:

(1) A description of the efforts the Secretary has made to encourage member states to promote Taiwan's bid to obtain observer status in appropriate international organizations, including INTERPOL.

(2) A description of the actions the Secretary will take to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan in appropriate international organizations, including INTERPOL, and at other related meetings, activities, and mechanisms thereafter.

COMPETITIVE SERVICE ACT OF
2015

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate a message to accompany S. 1580.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 1580) entitled "An Act to allow appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates," do pass with amendment.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate concur in the House amendment to S. 1580 and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EDWARD "TED" KAUFMAN AND
MICHAEL LEAVITT PRESIDENTIAL
TRANSITIONS IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2015

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate a message to accompany S. 1172.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 1172) entitled "An Act to improve the process of presidential transition," do pass with an amendment.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate concur in the House amendment to S. 1172 and the motion to reconsider be

considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MAKING CERTAIN IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CONGRESSIONAL CHARTER OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1755 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title. The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1755) to amend title 36, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the congressional charter of the Disabled American Veterans.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 1755) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

RECOGNIZING THE HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT OF ASTRONAUT SCOTT JOSEPH KELLY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 385 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 385) recognizing the historic achievement of astronaut Scott Joseph Kelly of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as the first person of the United States to complete a continuous 1-year mission in space.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 385) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 3, 2016, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

AUTHORIZING USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 113, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 113) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal collectively to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the "Borinqueneers."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 113) was agreed to.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 393, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 393) supporting the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 393) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2016

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, March 9; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, equally divided, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and with the majority controlling the first half and the Democrats controlling the final half; further, that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of S. 524; further, that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, all postcloture time on amendment No. 3378 expire at 12 noon; finally, that the time following morning business until 12 noon be equally divided between the two managers or their designees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:32 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, March 9, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

SENATE—Wednesday, March 9, 2016

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, our God, we honor Your Name. You continue to guide our Nation, and we trust the unfolding of Your prevailing providence. Help us to effectively tell this generation about Your mighty works so that Your Name will be known by those not yet born. Use us to inspire people to celebrate Your matchless mercy and Your power to save. Thank You for keeping Your word, for extending to us Your daily blessings, and for picking us up each time we fall.

Guide your Senators with Your love today. Be for them a shade by day and a defense by night. Lord, keep them on the road that leads to life.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 9, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. PAUL thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate will soon have a chance to come together in support of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, a bill designed to help address the prescription opioid and heroin epidemic that is spreading across our country.

We have seen the impact this crisis is having in all 50 States, how it is affecting people of all different ages and backgrounds. We know that heroin and prescription opioid addiction devastates communities, destroys families, and claims thousands of lives each year, but we also know there are steps we can take here in the Senate that can help heal our Nation. For instance, just a few months ago we appropriated \$400 million to opioid-specific programs—which is nearly one-third more than what the Senate appropriated the preceding year—and all \$400 million of those funds remain available to be spent today.

We can take another step forward now—a big step—with the passage of this authorization bill. Just listen to what some officials are saying about CARA's potential impact: Northern Kentucky's top anti-drug official said this bill can help “allow individuals, families, and communities to heal from this scourge.” The president and CEO of a nonprofit organization with programs in Kentucky noted that CARA can “create lasting impact in Kentucky” and ultimately help lead to more Kentuckians “receiv[ing] the treatment they desperately need. A group that provides overdose prevention training in the Commonwealth said that CARA can give them a “stronger foundation to move from training to action.” President Obama's own drug czar noted that provisions like those in CARA are “critically important to make headway” in this epidemic.

The bill before us, with all of its important provisions, is the result of hard work and leadership from many colleagues on both sides of the aisle. Of course, there is the lead Republican sponsor of this bill, the junior Senator from Ohio, Mr. PORTMAN, who has worked closely with colleagues in both parties, such as the junior Senator from New Hampshire, Ms. AYOTTE, as well as the junior Senator from Rhode Island and the senior Senator from Minnesota. There is the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, who worked to move this bill quickly out of committee by voice vote.

I also thank the many Senators who worked with the bill managers to proc-

ess the kinds of amendments both sides agreed would make this bill even better. That includes the senior Senators from Iowa and California, whose amendment would aid in targeting illegal drug importation. It includes the senior Senator from West Virginia, whose amendment will build upon education and awareness efforts in an effort to underline the dangers of opioid abuse. It includes the junior Senator from Pennsylvania, whose amendment would allow Medicare Advantage and Part D plans to implement a prescription drug abuse prevention tool, a tool similar to what is already available and used in Kentucky in the Medicaid Program and in private plans.

The bipartisan collaboration we have seen thus far shows what we can achieve on behalf of the American people when we work together toward important shared priorities. The passage of CARA would bring us one step closer to ending prescription opioid and heroin addiction and overdose, so let's keep working together to pass it.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Republican leader and I have worked together in leadership capacities in the Senate for almost 20 years. He has been the whip and I was the whip. I was majority leader, he was minority leader, and vice versa. My presentations the last few weeks do not take away from the fact that MITCH MCCONNELL and I are friends. We have worked together for a long time, and we have done our best to move the Senate forward. But that does not take away from my need as a Senator to pronounce publicly when he and I disagree. So I want to make sure the record is reflective of that.

As each day passes, the Republican leader continues to transform his caucus into the party of Donald Trump. That is not good. You can see it in the Republicans' rhetoric. The Senators are using increasingly extreme and disturbing language in defending their unprecedented obstruction of President Obama's Supreme Court nominee, who yet is unnamed.

The assistant Republican leader said the President's eventual nominee “will bear some resemblance to a pinata.”

We talked about, in the past, what a pinata is. He is comparing a Supreme Court nominee to a children's party favor that gets smashed repeatedly with a baseball bat or something similar to a baseball bat. That is nothing more than a thinly veiled threat from Senator CORNYN, serving notice on the coming assault on the President's nominee.

We should not forget that we don't know who this nominee will be. We know nothing about this person, whether it is a man or a woman, educated at Harvard or Stanford or the University of Utah or the University of New Mexico. We don't know. But the Republican leader doesn't care who the eventual nominee is. It appears that is the case. He doesn't want his Senators to care either. All he cares about is appeasing the Trump wing of the party—which is getting pretty big—and Trump's radical followers.

After all, this is the same Republican leader who yesterday again refused to distance himself from Donald Trump. He refused to condemn his hateful campaign for President. Instead, he pledged to support the Republican nominee. It is really shocking to see this transformation. Republicans have not always been this irrational and vicious.

Even Senator CORNYN used to know better. During Justice Alito's confirmation hearings, the then-junior Senator from Texas was also talking about pinatas as he decried personal attacks on Supreme Court nominees. Here is what he said:

I'm happy Judge Alito survived these unwarranted attacks. I'm also sorry that his family had to be subjected to them, as well. At some point, however, we as a committee will need to come to terms with our confirmation process. The current regime treats Supreme Court nominees more like pinatas than human beings. And that's something none of us should be willing to tolerate.

The Republican whip gave this pinata talk the day the Senate Judiciary Committee approved the Alito nomination. Now that President Obama is the one putting forth a Supreme Court nominee, it seems the assistant Republican leader is willing to tolerate, even promote, these "unwarranted attacks" he once denounced. Why the change? The answer is very simple: The senior Senator from Texas, like every other member of his caucus, is simply obeying the Republican leader's orders as he leads them to become the party of Trump, the caucus of Trump, the conference of Trump. This is the path the Republican leader has chosen for his party—a path of demagoguery and lapsed constitutional duties, a path which he forged and which led to the rise of Donald Trump. I do not understand why so many of my Republican colleagues are blindly following this path down a very bumpy road. Where are the moderate Republicans—however few there may be—who see that they are being used by the Republican

leader to appease the Trump wing of the party? Where are the voices of reason from within the Republican caucus who will take a stand against this unprecedented dereliction of duty?

Keep in mind, a decade ago the Senator from Texas was decrying a Republican nominee being treated like a pinata. Now, fast-forward 10 years, and he is saying: I am going to make a pinata out of whoever it is, even though they don't know who it is.

I know there have to be some moderate Republicans, or Republicans, because outside of this building, there are Republicans urging their colleagues to forgo this ludicrous obstruction.

A person I enjoyed working with right here, a very conservative Senator from Mississippi, Trent Lott, was the majority leader, and I worked with him very closely. He was a conservative, I repeat, but he was very pragmatic. Yesterday or the day before, he lamented his party's handling of the Supreme Court vacancy. Here is what he said:

I probably would've handled it differently. My attitude, particularly on the Supreme Court, was that elections do have consequences, sometimes bad, and I tried to lean toward being supportive of the president's nominees, Democrat or Republican.

That is how we should do things around here. It was the standard that if a President put forward a nominee and that person did not have some ethical problems and was basically qualified, we would take care of that. There is no better example of that than Clarence Thomas. I didn't vote for Clarence Thomas. I wish he hadn't gotten enough votes. But we did not stop that matter from going forward. He just barely made it. He got 52 votes. But there was no filibuster. He was nominated by a Republican President. The President liked him. On paper, he was qualified. He was a graduate of Yale Law School. But that isn't how they are doing things around here anymore.

What Trent Lott said—he is not alone. Former Republican Senator from Indiana—someone we all liked a lot—Dick Lugar is urging Senate Republicans to do the right thing and honor their constitutional duty. Here is what he said:

I can understand their reluctance given the controversy that surrounds all of the debate that has already occurred. But that is not sufficient reason to forgo your duty.

What Richard Lugar is saying is: Do your jobs. You have a constitutional obligation to do that.

Those are two quotes I just gave from strong Republican leaders telling Senate Republicans to do their jobs. So why won't they? Of the six nominations made to vacancies that have existed during Presidential election years since 1900—more than 100 years ago—each of the six has been confirmed by the Senate. That is what the Senate has done in the past and should do now.

I say to my friends across the aisle: Listen to reason. Heed your constitutional duties. Listen to what the American people are saying. They are not taking a popular stand. It is wrong. Don't fall on your sword for Donald Trump and his kind. Don't sacrifice your integrity as a Senator. Stand up and do the right thing. Promise to give President Obama's nominee a meeting, a hearing, and a vote. That is your job, so do it.

Mr. President, I see no one on the floor. I ask that the business of the day be announced.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, equally divided, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the majority controlling the first half and the Democrats controlling the second half.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, there is a vacancy on the Supreme Court, and this Chamber and the American people must fully understand what is at stake in choosing the person to fill that vacancy. For a generation, Justice Nino Scalia was the conservative heart of the Supreme Court. Whoever takes his seat will not replace him because there is no replacement, but his passing has the potential to dramatically shift the delicate balance of the Court. Should Justice Scalia be replaced by a philosophically liberal Justice, the implications for the rights of Americans and the direction of our Nation would be profound.

A liberal Justice may mean that the individual right to keep and bear arms will be nullified and laws that deprive Americans of the means to protect themselves and their families will proliferate. A liberal Justice may mean that the President's extraconstitutional Executive order to grant amnesty to

illegal immigrants will be upheld, trampling the separation of powers and the will of the American people. A liberal Justice may mean that President Obama's plan to destroy America's coal industry will survive, destroying thousands of jobs and steady income for American families.

A liberal Justice may mean that the government will be empowered to force people of faith to violate their deeply held beliefs to subsidize abortifacients they abhor, and these are only the issues we can foresee. Novel issues that strike at the core of our constitutional order will continue to arise and how they are settled will hinge greatly on the next Justice. Because so much depends on who the next Justice is, we cannot rush into this decision. Because the law may take such a dramatic turn, the Members of this Chamber must first get the input of the American people on what the direction of our country should be, and because the next Justice will guide American law for the next generation, the Senate should not subordinate our constitutional responsibility to advise and consent on a Supreme Court nominee to a lameduck President with a stale mandate.

This is the way forward that the majority leader and Chairman GRASSLEY have charted, and it is the right one. After all, we have an election in November. In a few short months, we will have a new President and new Senators who can consider the next Justice with the full faith of the American people.

Why would we cut off the national debate about this next Justice? Why would we squelch the voice of the people? Why would we deny the voters a chance to weigh in on the makeup of the Supreme Court? There is absolutely no reason to do so or at least no principled reason to do so. That is why no Congress in our history has confirmed a Supreme Court nominee of a lameduck President of either party for a vacancy that arose in an election year.

Abiding by this practice this year is even more pressing. Some of my Democratic colleagues argue that the American people have already weighed in on the Supreme Court by reelecting President Obama in 2012, but I will remind those who make this argument that the Constitution requires two institutions, the President and the Senate, to agree upon a new Justice, and in 2014 the voters overwhelmingly chose to send Republicans to the Senate, making clear their dissatisfaction with this President's cavalier attitude toward the Constitution and his duty to execute the laws as written. If the 2014 election meant anything, it meant that Americans do not want this President to determine alone the course of American law for a generation in the Supreme Court. When Arkansas elected me in 2014 to represent them, they sent

me to Washington with the mandate to act as a check on the President, and I will carry out that mandate.

Many of my Democratic colleagues have come to this floor to demand that the Senate's longstanding practice of declining to confirm Supreme Court Justices in an election year be discarded and a nominee considered right away. Perhaps the most impassioned of these pleas come from the senior Senator from Nevada; that the minority leader would wish to discard a longstanding practice of the Senate—particularly one related to the judicial nominations—is not a surprise. He was, of course, the person in 2013 who detonated the so-called nuclear option, discarding the 60-vote threshold for appellate and district court judicial nominees that existed in this Chamber for 200 years. He did so in order to steamroll the institutional rights of the minority party and pack the lower courts with as many liberal Obama nominees as possible.

In terms of dignity and public esteem, such as he had, that ill-considered move cost the minority leader dearly. He could only exercise the nuclear option if he flip-flopped on his prior vehement opposition to it. In 2005, the minority leader stood steadfastly against the nuclear option when it served his political interests. He called the nuclear option wrong, illegal, and even un-American. He was—to adapt a familiar saying—against the nuclear option before he was for it.

In the current debate over filling Justice Scalia's seat, we are seeing the minority leader perform a similarly brazen flip-flop, not that we should be surprised by that. Today the minority leader claimed that the Constitution compels the Senate to immediately take up any nominee President Obama sends our way, but 10 years ago, again, he sang a much different tune. The minority leader came to this very same floor to speak passionately in defense of the constitutional prerogative of the Senate to defer a vote on the President's Supreme Court pick. He forcefully stated that nowhere in the Constitution does it say the Senate has a duty to give Presidential nominees an up-or-down vote. It says appointments shall be made with the advice and consent of the Senate, and that is very different than saying that every nominee receives a vote.

What has changed in the 10 years since the minority leader uttered those words? Well, of course, merely the politics of the situation.

I ask, if the current President were a Republican, would the minority leader be taking the position he is today?

If the current President were not a fellow Democrat, would the minority leader still be inclined to trash the constitutional prerogatives of the Senate and abandon its longstanding customs?

In light of what you might call the diversity of the minority leader's views over time, I think it is understandable that questions have been raised about the sincerity of his position. In the quiet moments following the rambling jeremiads that the minority leader directs at Republicans on the Senate floor, I think my colleagues might be forgiven if they entertain the thought that the principled ground on which he claims to stand is slightly less than firm.

In the coming months, there is much work for Congress to do. We must pass a bill to fund and rebuild our military. We must continue to improve the conditions for wage growth and the creation of new jobs. We must conduct stringent oversight to rein in the excesses of the President on a quixotic pursuit of a legacy, but with regard to a Supreme Court nomination, the only task for this Senate is to wait passionately and listen to the American people.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MOBILE NOW ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, over the last 20 years we have seen incredible advancements in computing, telecommunications, and information technology. The United States has led the world in this innovation thanks to our brilliant entrepreneurs, scientists, world-class universities, massive private sector capital investment, a culture that rewards risk-taking, and a favorable regulatory environment, but increasingly our lead in innovation is threatened as American businesses are forced to contend with an ever-growing number of outdated laws and regulations. While our businesses have often managed to succeed anyway, American industries deserve better from our government.

Congress has a responsibility to ensure that our statutes and regulations are appropriately and narrowly tailored for today's economy and for the future. My Commerce Committee colleagues and I have been eager to do our part in ensuring our Nation's communications laws keep pace with innovation. Last week, we unanimously passed the bipartisan MOBILE NOW Act, which I introduced, along with the committee's ranking member Senator BILL NELSON. This legislation will give a boost to American innovators who are looking to make the next generation of wireless technology, known as 5G, a reality.

Mr. President, 5G wireless will obviously mean things like faster movie downloads and more advanced smartphones, and it will also mean massive leaps forward in areas like technology, entertainment, public safety, and health care, as well as other economic benefits that will make American lives better.

One of the best examples I have heard came from former FCC Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker. She pointed out that right now a Smart Car communicating with 4G wireless technology takes 4½ feet to brake in response to an obstacle. By contrast, a Smart car with 5G technology would travel only 1 inch before braking, which could be the difference between life and death. In order to make 5G wireless technology a reality, we have to put the right policies in place. Policies that maximize the efficiency of the airwaves that transmit wireless broadband signals and the bands of electromagnetic spectrum that make up our Nation's airwaves are in limited supply. While we can't make more airwaves to carry additional spectrum, we can make changes to how they are used and who uses them in order to improve efficiency and to do more of what we have.

The MOBILE NOW Act will require the government to make at least 255 megahertz of spectrum available for private sector broadband use by the year 2020. That is a lot of spectrum, but MOBILE NOW doesn't stop there. The bill also directs government to assess more than 12,000 megahertz of superhigh frequency spectrum for wireless broadband suitability. For technical reasons, that spectrum has seen only limited use to date, but as new technologies come online in the next few years, this spectrum will become increasingly viable.

Indeed, most people expect that these superhigh bands will become critical for our 5G future. Making spectrum available is important, but freeing up spectrum does not help our digital economy unless and until we put it to good use. This is why several of MOBILE NOW's provisions focus on speeding up the deployment of the communications facilities at the heart of our Nation's broadband networks. One way to do that is by putting a shot clock on Federal agencies to force them to make speedy decisions on companies' applications to place wireless facilities on Federal property. This is critical for rural States like South Dakota and Nevada where placing wireless facilities on Federal lands could bring more high-speed Internet service to underserved communities.

The MOBILE NOW Act is an example of what is possible when Members put aside their partisan differences and work together to come up with commonsense proposals to spur economic growth. In addition to the provisions

Senator NELSON and I wrote, MOBILE NOW also includes all or part of six other bills which represent the work of Senators BOOKER, DAINES, FISCHER, GARDNER, KLOBUCHAR, MANCHIN, MORAN, RUBIO, SCHATZ, and UDALL. We also adopted important amendments from Senators HELLER and PETERS. Even the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee—Senator INHOFE, as well as a longtime former member of the Commerce Committee, Senator BOXER—made key contributions to the bill's "dig once" section.

The MOBILE NOW Act would not have been possible without the collaboration of these Senators. So it is my hope that this spirit of bipartisanship will also carry over to the Commerce Committee's efforts to reauthorize the Federal Communications Commission. Compared to other Federal agencies, the FCC is relatively small. But as the regulator of the communications and technology industries, both of which are central to America's modern economy, the Commission has significant influence over the direction of our country.

Given the importance of the FCC, my colleagues might be surprised to learn that Congress has not reauthorized it in more than a quarter of a century. You have to go back to 1990 to find the last time that the FCC, or the Federal Communications Commission, was reauthorized.

The work of the FCC has continued during that period, of course, but reauthorizing this agency every 2 years ensures that Congress will be able to make sure that the FCC has all the tools it needs to keep up with our rapidly changing digital landscape. Some 26 years ago—I think it is safe to say—none of us in this Chamber knew anything about the Web, let alone about smartphones or streaming videos.

Since then, the communications landscape has been fundamentally transformed by digital technology, mobile services, and the Internet. Yet the FCC in that entire time has gone unautho- rized, making it the oldest expired authorization in the Commerce Committee's broad jurisdiction. I hope we can change that.

On Monday I introduced the FCC Reauthorization Act of 2016, which includes a handful of noncontroversial, good-government reforms to go with a 2-year reauthorization window. By restarting the FCC's regular authorization cycle, the bill will ensure that necessary congressional oversight of the FCC's budget and procedures occur routinely.

As indicated by the FCC Commissioners themselves at our oversight hearing last week, a consistent legislative reauthorization process will produce a more responsible and a more productive relationship between Congress and the Commission. This will re-

sult in better outcomes for both consumers and the rapidly growing broadband-based economy.

Telecom policy was once considered to be one of the least partisan issues in Congress. While the campaign for net neutrality has certainly changed the political playing field over the last decade, I believe there is still a lot of room for bipartisanship on tech and telecommunications issues. The MOBILE NOW Act and the FCC Reauthorization Act are two bills that can make a real difference. I look forward to working with colleagues on the Commerce Committee and in the full Senate to pass both of these bills in the coming months.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, today the Senate is taking a second step to deal with a public health crisis that is destroying lives and damaging communities across the Nation, the epidemic of opioid and heroin abuse. Step 1 late last year was to reduce spending in other programs and increase the dollars available to deal with this addiction.

An estimated 1.9 million American adults have an opioid-use addiction or disorder related to prescription drug pain relievers. Another 500,860 have an opioid-use disorder related to heroin. Some 2.5 million Americans are dealing with this problem. Our Nation's veterans are particularly at risk for developing a dependency on opioids. A study published in 2014 found a high prevalence of chronic pain among veterans because of their service. The chronic pain among veterans was 44 percent compared to 26 percent in the general public.

There was a higher prevalence of opioid use, at 15.1 percent, in the U.S. military after a combat deployment, after possible injuries in training or injuries from an IED attack, compared to just 4 percent in the general public. In 2014, more than 1,000 Missourians died from an opioid overdose. In St. Louis alone, deaths related to opioid abuse have increased nearly three times since 2007.

Member after member has come to the floor, just as they came to me last year as the chairman of the funding committee for health and human services and explained what a problem this is in their State. The majority leader made a point to me the other day that in Kentucky more people died last year from drug overdoses than died from car accidents.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 4 people every day die from an overdose of opioid pain relievers, and 78 people die every day from a combination of pain reliever overdoses or heroin overdose.

Many times those prescription opioids have been the pathway to heroin. Deaths from prescription opioids have quadrupled in the past 14 years. These are stunning statistics. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has rightly labeled this an "epidemic." This should get a good vote on the Senate floor today or tomorrow. But just because it gets a good vote, it does not mean it was not an important debate to have.

Just because it gets a good vote and is now better funded than it has been in the past, that does not mean the Senate and the House don't need to weigh in and say: Here is more specific ability to deal with these problems in new ways. The good news is that addiction is a treatable disease. Those who receive treatment can recover and go on to lead full, healthy, and productive lives.

In Missouri 72 percent of the individuals who had gone through our State's opioid treatment program in random tests test drug-free. The problem with addiction is that only about 10 percent of individuals who are battling drug addiction receive treatment. That is why I am proud to be a cosponsor of this bill. That is why it is important that we commit ourselves to win the fight against addiction.

We need to make sure that all of the stakeholders are involved. As to first responders, if you are a first responder attached to a fire department, for instance, the odds are that you are going to respond to three times as many drug overdoses as you do to fires. So whether it is first responders, paramedics, or the law enforcement community, we need to use all of our resources to try to be sure that we are doing what needs to be done here.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act that we are debating provides grants from multiple government agencies to encourage State and local communities to pursue strategies that we know work. The only thing you have to do is be sure and implement those strategies.

The bill expands the educational efforts to understand addiction as a chronic illness. That promotes treatment and recovery and prevents opioid abuse from going forward. The bill also expands resources to identify and to treat the incarcerated population suffering from addiction disorders with evidence-based treatment.

Finally, it expands disposal sites for unwanted prescription medications to help them out of the hands of children and adolescents. Way too many unused painkillers are still in people's medicine cabinets or their dresser drawer,

waiting for somebody else to find them and, once they know they are there, to find them again.

This bill represents a strong bipartisan effort to address this epidemic. I filed two amendments that I think will improve the bill. I hope to see them in the managers' package. The first amendment will just simply expand the efforts that we have already made in a bill that Senator STABENOW and I introduced a couple of years ago and that got a significant pilot project in the Excellence in Mental Health Act.

What that does is to provide 24-hour access for people living with behavioral health issues—with mental health issues. That would include substance abuse disorder. Excellence in Mental Health creates a demonstration program that really just simply, in the right kind of facilities, requires that mental health is dealt with like all other health—that behavioral health is dealt with like all other health.

When we started that debate, there was a belief that no more than 20 States would implement Excellence in Mental Health if every State in the country were allowed to do it if they wanted to. We now have 24 States that have applied to be one of the eight State pilots. The administration said: Why don't we increase the 8 States to 14 States? We have an amendment to this bill that would say: Let's go ahead and increase the 14 States to all 24 States, because not only is this the right thing to do but what these States will find out is that when you deal with mental health like all other health, you probably save money because the other health issues that people with behavioral health issues have are so much more easily dealt with.

It has been long said that we have really turned over, in an outrageous way, the mental health obligations of our society to the local police departments and the emergency rooms. That is no way to do this. It is no way to solve this problem. We are about 50 years behind. We are beginning now to catch up in the ways we should.

I also filed an amendment to authorize the Department of Health and Human Services to use telehealth to allow this program to work more effectively, to allow telehealth to be one of the specifically reimbursable opportunities here.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, individuals in rural communities are more likely—not as likely, not less likely, but more likely—to overdose on prescription painkillers than people in the cities, people in urban areas. In fact, death rates from overdoses in rural areas now greatly outpace the rate in large metropolitan areas, which historically had higher rates.

So what do you do to connect those individuals with the kind of help they might need on a basis that they can

turn to that help when they need to? One way to do that, certainly, is telehealth treatment options. Telehealth allows individuals in rural or medically underserved areas—many of whom just simply don't have other treatment options—to receive the care they need, to receive the attention their issue needs remotely.

Additionally, telehealth can be an important component in ensuring that those patients receiving treatment for pain management use opioids effectively and appropriately and don't get started down the wrong path and the wrong way.

In July 2014, the Journal of the American Medical Association published a study that followed patients who reported moderate to intense chronic musculoskeletal pain. Of the 250 patients in the study, half received the normal standard of care and half received a year of telephone monitoring in addition to normal care.

Patients who were monitored via telehealth were twice as likely to report less pain after 12 months, having someone to talk to or being able to ask a question about whether they should increase the medicine because their pain was worse that day. Researchers have clearly noted that fewer telehealth patients started taking escalated doses of opioids than people who were simply taking medicine on their own. Telehealth holds promise in lots of areas. I believe this happens to be one of them. As chairman of the Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee, I was proud to see us increase funding at a 284-percent increase. I will say again that we did that by cutting funding in other areas. One of the things the government has to start doing is to truly prioritize. If everything is a priority, nothing is a priority.

Today, with this piece of legislation, the Senate is telling our friends on the other side of the Capitol and around the country that this is an epidemic we intend to deal with. I look forward to the continuation of this debate, the end of this debate, and passing this bill.

Thank you.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FREEDOM FOR BOB LEVINSON

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I wish to speak about Bob Levinson, a retired FBI agent who 9 years ago today disappeared in Iran. He was on the tourist

island of Kish. It is a little island off the coast of Iran, and it is Iranian territory. It is in the Persian Gulf. It is just a few minutes' flight from Dubai. Bob Levinson was there. There is conflicting information, but in the process of checking out from his hotel and getting into a cab and going to the airport to return—I think to Dubai—he disappeared 9 years ago today.

There is a lot of mystery surrounding the disappearance, and there is a lot of mystery surrounding what has happened ever since. There is a mystery as to why the FBI, shortly after his disappearance, was somewhat lackadaisical about pursuing it. It is a mystery as to why the CIA was not coordinating with the FBI in pursuing vigorously the disappearance of Bob. There is no mystery surrounding the fact that, finally, the two agencies got their act together and started to vigorously pursue the disappearance of Bob Levinson. I wish to give great credit to the agency, since they tried to get to the bottom of it, but that has led us nowhere, and here we are 9 years later.

It is particularly troubling to all of us, including all of our negotiating team for the Iranian nuclear agreement, because at every meeting, both high level and low level, at the direction of our Secretary of State, first Hillary Clinton and then John Kerry, over and over it was brought up to the Iranian Government. It is frustrating for this Senator, being the Senator from Florida where a wife and seven children are left behind, and for Christine Levinson, whom I have met with many times, as well as her sons and daughters and most recently both Christine and her son, as they plead for help, for just any information.

About 5 years ago there was proof of life, and it was a video, and Bob was looking very gaunt. He had been gone several years at this point. He was pleading: Don't forget him. Sometime after that, but within a year, the last proof of life was a photograph showing an even more emaciated Bob with a huge beard and unkempt hair. Again, the picture says all we need to know. Why is he being left behind? Here, 9 years later, supposedly we don't know anything.

This Senator, on behalf of Christine and her family, went years ago to the Iranian mission at the United Nations—the only place that Iran had an ambassador here in the United States, since we do not have diplomatic relations—and made the case on humanitarian grounds. That case has been made over and over and over again, including directly with Foreign Minister Zarif and the new Iranian Ambassador last September, in a meeting of a handful of Senators on behalf of all of those who have been kept by Iran. Subsequently, some have been released, including the fellow from Michigan, the former marine, and so forth, whom we

know about—but nothing about Bob Levinson.

Of course, the Government of Iran always says: We don't know anything about it. Oh, we thought he was in Pakistan.

Those are always the answers. But he disappeared in Iran, and with the very strict state-controlled Iranian security apparatus, obviously, they know what happened. Certainly, 9 years later, they should know what happened or at least have the capacity to be able to find out what happened to Bob Levinson. The rest of us keep searching in every possible way.

A couple of years ago it became apparent to this Senator that the Associated Press was about to publish a story talking about Bob Levinson's clandestine activities. This Senator called the executive editor and pled that they not publish the story, that they do what the responsible New York Times had done. New York Times investigative reporter Barry Meier sat on the story for over 3 years, knowing that if the story about clandestine activities were published, it could jeopardize Bob's life. To no avail, the Associated Press executive editor said to this Senator: Well, they already know this. Despite my pleading to them, the answer was no, and they went ahead and published the article. I vigorously disagreed with the Associated Press's conclusions, and I think that jeopardized Bob's whereabouts as well as his safety.

Here we are, several years later, 9 years after the apparent disappearance, and still there is nothing about Bob Levinson. So it is the conclusion of this Senator that if the Government of Iran—namely, President Ruhani, as told to us by his Foreign Minister Zarif—knows nothing about it, well, somebody in Iran does. Maybe that tells us something about Iranian society and the Iranian Government—that there are these different power centers, one being the Revolutionary Guard and another the exclusive Quds Force. But there is one person that is over all of this in Iran, and that is the Supreme Leader, and he should know. All the pleas that have been made on the basis of a humanitarian plea for a family—a wife and seven children—thus far have been ignored.

This brings us to the next point. According to New York Times investigative reporter Barry Meier, a meeting took place in 2011 in Paris in the Iranian Embassy with the Iranian Ambassador by a group of private American citizens who were doing what they could to facilitate the location of Bob or any information about Bob, and the Iranian Ambassador told them that, yes, Iran had Bob Levinson. This is according to a story published in the New York Times by Barry Meier a few months ago.

This Senator called Barry Meier and asked: "Are you sure of your facts?"

And he said yes. This Senator then called one of the people that was associated with this audience of private citizens, and that person, when I met with him, confirmed that what the New York Times had published was accurate and true, and that, in fact, the FBI had been called and the FBI had met with representatives of the Iranian Embassy in Paris right across the street from the Embassy in a cafe in Paris.

This Senator called the former Deputy Director of the FBI—a man of impeccable reputation—Sean Joyce, who before he was Deputy Director had spearheaded the efforts on trying to find Bob Levinson and continued that in his new role as the No. 2 in the FBI. Just last week this Senator talked to Sean Joyce, and he said that he didn't know anything about this. Well, if an investigative reporter has found out this information and it has been confirmed by people who were there or knew of that meeting and, at the time in 2011, the top guy in the FBI who is spearheading the efforts to try to get Bob Levinson, a former FBI agent, doesn't know about it, what does this suggest? It suggests that there is a huge disconnect in the FBI, which leads this Senator, who has been on this case for 9 years on behalf of a grieving wife and seven children, to wonder what in the world is going on.

Until this turmoil is sorted out, the bottom line is that we want Bob Levinson home with his family for humanitarian reasons. I know John Kerry is doing all he can, but we have to find another way to get to the Supreme Leader. Maybe it is through some of these private contacts. Why has that not been coordinated? I know the White House is involved in this, but do they know about that 2011 meeting? If FBI agents were there on the case, why was the White House not informed along with the leadership of the FBI? Something is terribly amiss, and we need to get to the bottom of it.

Sadly, on this ninth year of Bob Levinson's disappearance, a patriotic American who—poof—on the way to the airport disappeared from Kish Island, Iran—sadly, 9 years later, there is no information about bringing Bob Levinson home.

To the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, the head of the FBI, the head of all of our alphabet agencies: It is time to get the information about Bob and bring him home.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING
BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND
RECOVERY ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 524, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 524) to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Pending:

Grassley amendment No. 3378, in the nature of a substitute.

Grassley (for Donnelly/Capito) modified amendment No. 3374 (to amendment No. 3378), to provide follow-up services to individuals who have received opioid overdose reversal drugs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12 noon will be equally divided between the two managers or their designees.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE SCALIA

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, on February 13, 2016, the Supreme Court lost one of its Justices, our Nation lost a true legal giant.

Justice Scalia was described by colleagues as “extraordinary,” “treasured,” and “a stylistic genius.” Beyond his unwavering dedication to upholding the originalist viewpoint of the Constitution, Justice Scalia was also wholeheartedly committed to his family. He was a husband, father of 9, and grandfather to 36 grandchildren.

His son Paul said of him during his homily:

God blessed Dad with a love for his family. . . . He was the father that God gave us for the great adventure of family life. . . . He loved us, and sought to show that love. And sought to share the blessing of the faith he treasured. And he gave us one another, to have each other for support. That's the greatest wealth parents can bestow, and right now we are particularly grateful for it.

Justice Antonin Scalia was nominated to the Supreme Court in 1986 by President Reagan and was confirmed by the Senate in a unanimous vote. While his time on the Court often led to some criticism of his legal opinions and his very colorful dissents, he remained respected by his colleagues, even those of the opposite end of the judicial spectrum. This is a sign of true character—to have an open, honest debate about a particular issue while respecting the individual person holding an opinion different from your own.

Justice Scalia said:

I attack ideas. I don't attack people. And some very good people have some very bad ideas. And if you can't separate the two, you gotta get another day job.

The sentiment was best portrayed through his friendship with Justice

Ginsburg. As one of his friends, she said:

We are different, but we are one. Different in our interpretation of written texts. One in our reverence for the Constitution and the institution we serve. From our years together on the D.C. Circuit, we were best buddies. We disagreed now and then, but when I wrote for the Court and received a Scalia dissent, the opinion ultimately released was notably better than my initial circulation.

Justice Scalia was known for his wit and his sarcasm in his writings, famously referring to legal interpretations of his colleagues as “jiggery-pokery,” “pure applesauce,” and “a ghoul in a late horror movie.” Yet it was these same criticisms that Justice Ginsburg said nailed the weak spots in her opinions and gave her what she needed to strengthen her writings.

Justice Scalia represented a consistent, constitutional voice on the Supreme Court. Just as the Constitution is the pillar of our legal system, so too is his affirmation to this foundational document of our Nation. He said:

It is an enduring Constitution that I want to defend. . . . It's what did the words mean to the people who ratified the Bill of Rights or who ratified the Constitution, as opposed to what people today would like.

Justice Kennedy said:

In years to come any history of the Supreme Court will, and must, recount the wisdom, scholarship, and technical brilliance that Justice Scalia brought to the Court. His insistence on demanding standards shaped the work of the Court in its private discussions, its oral arguments, and its written opinions. Yet these historic achievements are all the more impressive and compelling because the foundations of Justice Scalia's jurisprudence, the driving force in all his work, and his powerful personality were shaped by an unyielding commitment to the Constitution of the United States and to the highest ethical and moral standards.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. President, with Justice Scalia's passing, we have a vacancy on the Court to fill.

The question is, When?

I would submit, with only months left until the Presidential election, that we should let the people decide.

I have heard over and over for the past 7 years that elections have consequences, but apparently some people seem to only think elections have consequences on Presidential elections. The American people elected a brand new Senate in 2014 because of their incredible frustration with the operation of the previous Senate and because of the direction that we are now heading under this President.

I have heard this argument for years: The President should be able to do what he wants. He is the President. But may I remind everyone of a document in our National Archives called the U.S. Constitution, which gives divided power to our Nation. The President is not over the Senate, not over the House, and not over the Supreme Court.

Hyperbole of this has been overwhelming to me in the debate of the past few weeks. I have heard that unless we replace Justice Scalia right now, we will “shut down the court.” I have heard on this floor people say that if we don't replace Justice Scalia immediately, it is “dangerous,” it is “unprecedented,” it is unheard of. I have heard: “Do your job”—a failure to do your duty. I even heard one Senator say: “The Constitution says the President shall appoint and the Senate shall consent.”

Well, let me show you article II, section 2 of the Constitution where that comes up. It says that the President “shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate”—the President shall nominate. That is his constitutional responsibility. But it is not the constitutional responsibility—it never says the Senate shall give consent to the President. Why? Because the Constitution gives the role of selecting a Supreme Court nominee in a 50-50 responsibility between the Senate and the President of the United States.

The President shall nominate; that is his responsibility. But that only moves forward with the advice and consent of the Senate. There is no “shall give consent.” There is no requirement how it moves.

In fact, Alexander Hamilton in *The Federalist Papers*, on this very issue, said that the “ordinary power of appointment is confided to the President and Senate jointly.”

This is a 50-50 agreement. What we are facing right now are incredible attacks on the chairman of the Judiciary Committee because he dares to do what Vice President BIDEN, Senator SCHUMER, and Senator REID recommended years ago. I even heard that we shouldn't listen to the words of Vice President BIDEN. I would understand why people would say that, because when you go back to Vice President BIDEN's words, when he was a Senator and chairman of the Judiciary Committee, in the same spot Chairman GRASSLEY is in now, this is what, at that time, Senator BIDEN said. Senator BIDEN, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, arguing on this same issue, said: “Arguing from constitutional history and Senate precedent, I want to address one question and one question only: What are the rights and duties of the Senate in considering nominees to the Supreme Court?”

This is from Vice President BIDEN—then Senator BIDEN:

Some argue that the Senate should defer to the President in the selection process. They argue that any nominee who meets the narrow standards of legal distinction, high moral character, and judicial temperament is entitled to be confirmed in the Senate without further question. . . . Apparently, there are some in this body and outside this body who share that view.

I stand here today to argue that opposite proposition.

This is from Vice President BIDEN. He stated at that time:

We have quashed the myth that the Senate must defer to a President's choice of a Supreme Court Justice, the men and women at the apex of the independent third branch of Government.

Can our Supreme Court nomination and confirmation process, so wracked by discord and bitterness, be repaired in a Presidential election year?

Vice President BIDEN, as Senator BIDEN, said:

History teaches us that this is extremely unlikely. Some of our Nation's most bitter and heated confirmation fights have come in Presidential election years.

The Senate too, Mr. President, must consider how it would respond to a Supreme Court vacancy that would occur in the full throes of an election year.

Vice President BIDEN at that time said this:

It is my view that if the President goes the way of Presidents Fillmore and Johnson and presses an election-year nomination, the Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination until after the political campaign season is over.

He said, instead:

It would be our pragmatic conclusion that once the political season is under way, and it is, action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over. That is what is fair to the nominee and is central to the process. Otherwise, it seems to me, Mr. President, we will be in deep trouble as an institution.

This past week Senator REID came to the floor to discuss Senator GRASSLEY and what he is doing, which is exactly what then-Senator BIDEN recommended to be done, and he made this statement. Senator REID said this past week:

Last Thursday, the senior Senator from Iowa addressed the Conservative Political Action Conference, CPAC, which took place here in Washington. In his speech to them, here is what Senator Grassley said: "I feel it's about time that we have a national debate on the Supreme Court and how it fits in with our constitutional system of government."

Then Senator REID continued:

The chairman of the Judiciary Committee is suggesting that we reevaluate the Founding Fathers' work, reevaluate the Constitution of the United States, and change the Constitution of the United States. Why is Senator Grassley debating what the Constitution makes clear? The Senate must provide its advice and consent on nominees appointed by the President to the Supreme Court. Think of the irony. Justice Scalia was a strict constitutionalist. Yet now, in the weeks following his death, Senator Grassley wants to throw out the Constitution just because President Obama gets to pick Scalia's replacement.

That is what Senator REID said this week.

Let's look at what Senator REID said in 2005 on this exact same issue. In 2005, on this floor, Senator REID said: "The President of the United States has

joined the fray to become the latest to rewrite the Constitution and reinvent reality."

This is speaking of President Bush at the time. Senator REID continued, "Speaking to fellow Republicans Tuesday night, 2 days ago, he said the Senate 'has a duty to promptly consider each . . . nominee on the Senate floor, discuss and debate their qualifications and then give them the up-or-down vote that they deserve.' Referring to the President's words, duty to whom? The duties of the Senate"—this is from Senator REID in 2005:

The duties of the Senate are set forth in the U.S. Constitution. Nowhere in that document does it say the Senate has a duty to give Presidential appointees a vote. The fact was even acknowledged by the majority leader that a vote is not required. Senator Byrd asked the majority leader if the Constitution accorded each nominee an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor. The answer was no. Senator Frist was candid. The answer was no. The language was not there, Senator Frist said. He is correct. Senators should read the same copy of the Constitution Senator Frist had memorized.

Continuing with what Senator REID said:

It is clear that the President misunderstands the meaning of the advice and consent clause. That is not how America works. The Senate is not a rubber stamp for the executive branch.

So earlier this week, Senator REID chastised Senator GRASSLEY, saying he wants to rewrite the Constitution. In 2005 Senator REID stood on this floor and encouraged all Members to read the Constitution—that it nowhere requires that we take an up-or-down vote. So I don't know which one to take on this—the current statements from Senator REID or the previous statements from Senator REID—because they are in direct contradiction.

Senator SCHUMER, on July 27, 2007, speaking about the last 18 months of President Bush's term as President, said:

For the rest of this President's term and if there is another Republican elected with the same selection criteria let me say this: We should reverse the presumption of confirmation. The Supreme Court is dangerously out of balance. We cannot afford to see Justice Stevens replaced by another Roberts; or Justice Ginsburg replaced by another Alito.

Given the track record of this President and the experience of obfuscation at the hearings, with respect to the Supreme Court, at least: I will recommend to my colleagues that we should not confirm a Supreme Court nominee except in extraordinary circumstances.

I have also heard: Don't look at the words but the actions. Senator REID, Senator SCHUMER, and, when they were here, Senator Obama and Senator BIDEN have all filibustered Supreme Court nominees when they were Senators—all four of them have. Suddenly, now this is a dangerous idea that will shut down justice and is completely unconstitutional, and there are shouts of "Do your job" that come from the

same Senate leaders who blocked untold nominations from untold Republican Presidents and didn't allow amendments on basic bills.

There is a lot of emotion in this body. I get that. There are a lot of politics in this process. I would hope to bring some facts to light and to turn down the hyperbole and all the rhetoric. So let me bring some basic facts to this.

The last time a Supreme Court vacancy arose in an election year and the Senate approved a new appointee to the Court in that same year was 1932. Since there is no nominee right now, it would not be possible to fill the vacancy in time for that individual to hear cases in the spring session of the Supreme Court. That means any nomination selected now would only be able to serve—in our colleagues' arguments—in the fall, which is a much shorter session of the Supreme Court, before this President actually leaves. So we are talking about the final session at the end of this fall—a very few number of cases.

Justice Stephen Breyer, just a few weeks ago, stated this about the passing of Justice Scalia:

We'll miss him, but we'll do our work. For the most part, it will not change.

The Supreme Court is open and is working this week. In fact, the Court hasn't halted at all. The Court has heard 10 cases already since Justice Scalia's passing, and they are continuing to release decisions.

It is a myth that there needs to be an uneven number of Justices for the Supreme Court to actually work. In the past 6 years, 80 percent of the cases were decided 6 to 3 or greater. So it is a small minority of the cases that ever get to a 5-to-4 decision. And we don't know that a 5-to-4 would end up not being a 5-to-3 at this point.

Eight members can operate the Court. In fact, the Constitution doesn't even give a specific number to the Justices. How many Justices are on the Supreme Court has always been a decision of the President and the Congress together. The first Congress, for example, enacted the Judiciary Act of 1789, which stated the Supreme Court consists of "a chief justice and five associate justices." If you are counting right, that is six Justices on the early Supreme Court.

The size of the Court varied during the 19th century, with the Court shrinking to 5 Justices for a while, following the passage of the Judiciary Act of 1801, growing to as large as 10 Justices in 1863. Then in 1869, Congress changed the number to nine, where it has remained.

But the Court doesn't need nine Justices to actually decide a case. In fact, Congress has established the quorum requirements to be only six. If the Court ends in a tie decision, 4 to 4, or in the case of six justices, 3 to 3, the

Court will not write an opinion but will affirm the lower court, or it will ask for a reargument of the case.

In other words, the Court is already set up to function and is functioning, and it will continue to function with eight people.

I would say what is really happening is that the Democrats, who implemented the nuclear option while they were leading the Senate and packed all the lower courts, urgently want to be able to pack the Supreme Court as well. That will not happen.

We will also not allow a recess appointment, as has been floated multiple times in the media—the President will just do a recess appointment and go around us. The Senate chooses when the Senate is in recess, not the President. So we can do this: We can remain in continuous session without recess to prevent a recess appointment by this President through the rest of this year. Many of my Republican colleagues and I have already agreed to be in Washington every 3 days for the rest of this year to gavel in this body in pro forma session so this President cannot put in a recess appointment judge.

Ironically enough, this right of the Senate was approved by the Supreme Court just a few years ago by a 9-to-0 ruling when this President tried to force in new members on the National Labor Relations Board through a recess appointment, and this Supreme Court kicked those out, saying the President cannot choose when the Senate is in recess.

Our Nation faces really big issues: accelerating debt, threats from terrorism, a struggling economy, major education, and health care reform issues. This is a moment when the people of the United States should speak about the direction of our Nation. We are still a nation of the people, by the people, for the people. And for the next President and for the next Supreme Court nomination, we should let the people decide.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, last month we all learned with great sadness of Justice Antonin Scalia's passing after nearly 30 years on the Court. He would have turned 80 years old on Friday, March 11.

In recent weeks, foremost on people's minds as they reflect on Justice Scalia's legacy and his life is his dedication to the letter of the law, his respect for constitutional and statutory

text, his view that the U.S. Constitution is a sacred document which must be read and adhered to.

His decisions and opinions were aimed to follow the Constitution wherever it took him, even if it may not have been to a place where he would agree politically. Justice Scalia not only understood the importance of not legislating from the bench, but he also cared deeply about the lesson being taught by the work of the Court. Through his writings, his opinions, including his dissents, he taught us great lessons.

Now all of this is very important and relevant, ironically, as we consider our role and path forward in the decision to fill his vacancy. Instead, unfortunately, we have seen rhetoric and arguments which fly in the face of that dedication to the text, to the Constitution, to statutory law and rules, and following that letter.

My esteemed Democratic colleagues have taken to the Senate floor, and they have encouraged outside groups to storm committee rooms—all arguing that somehow there is a legislative or constitutional mandate that the Senate have hearings, take a vote now, and not allow the American people to weigh in through the election. They argue that somehow the Senate is constitutionally obligated to hold hearings and vote right now before the election, but as Justice Scalia would surely point out: Read the text. Look at the Constitution. Look at all relevant statutes and rules. That is not the case. It is clear, otherwise. In fact, it is crystal clear. So let's do that in homage to Justice Scalia.

He wrote many opinions arguing for exactly what I am saying: Read the clear language that is at issue—either the Constitution or a statute or whatever is at issue. He wrote opinions against what before his time was rampant use of so-called legislative history, looking at the history of how a law was passed really to give people fodder to make it up as they go along and reach almost any conclusion and interpretation they want to. Justice Scalia taught us—and he had a real impact on the Court through his decisions—that we need an unwavering commitment to principle and respect to statutory text as written.

As he often said in so many different ways, “Legislative history is irrelevant when the statutory text is clear.” In one opinion he noted that “if one were to search for an interpretive technique that, on the whole, was more likely to confuse than to clarify, one could hardly find a more promising candidate than legislative history.” He said directly that “our cases have said that legislative history is irrelevant when the statutory text is clear.”

Again, that is a big part of his legacy and very relevant in this discussion about how the Senate should fulfill its

duties. Let's look at the text of the Constitution and any relevant text like our rules below the Constitution.

In the U.S. Constitution, article II, section 2, clause 2 says clearly: The President “shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by law.”

That is what it says on the issue. That is all it says on the issue. Those words are straightforward, and those words do not mandate a hearing or a vote in any certain timeframe. It is very clear from the Founders and from numerous Court decisions since then that within the constraints of those words, the Senate sets its rules of how to proceed on all Senate matters, including confirmations. So another very important and very clear text that we should read word for word and adhere to are the standing Senate rules. Senate rule XXXI states: “When nominations shall be made by the President of the United States to the Senate, they shall, unless otherwise ordered, be referred to appropriate committees; and the final question on every nomination shall be, ‘Will the Senate advise and consent to this nomination?’ which question shall not be put on the same day on which the nomination is received, nor on the day on which it may be reported by a committee, unless by unanimous consent.”

It only says when the vote cannot be taken. It doesn't say that a hearing has to happen or a vote has to be taken within a certain amount of time.

Another part of rule XXXI is even more direct on this point: “Nominations neither confirmed nor rejected during the session at which they are made shall not be acted upon at any succeeding session without being again made to the Senate by the President.”

So this is even more direct and makes crystal clear that there is no requirement of a hearing or a vote on any particular nomination in any particular timeframe during a session. Again, that is very straightforward, very crystal clear, but the Congressional Research Service has a report which validates and confirms the obvious. Upon their review of all of this text, they say:

A committee considering a nomination has four options. It can report the nomination to the Senate favorably, unfavorably, or without recommendation, or it can choose to take no action.

So they say the obvious from reading the relevant text. Those are the options. There is no requirement for a hearing or for a vote within any certain timeframe.

There are other “authorities”—I will put that in air quotes—which confirm

this view, and ironically those authorities I am referring to are Democrats who are taking exactly the opposite view now. When the shoe was on the other foot, time and time again, they said: There is no requirement to move forward on any certain timeframe.

The minority leader, HARRY REID, said: "Nowhere in [the Constitution] does it say the Senate has a duty to give Presidential [nominees] a vote. It says appointments shall be made with the advice and consent of the Senate. That is very different than saying every nominee receives a vote." That is a direct quote.

In June of 2003, Senator PATRICK LEAHY—he is significant because he is ranking member of the Judiciary Committee—said clearly:

The Constitution divides the appointment power between the president and the Senate. It expects senators to advise the President, not just rubber stamp his choices. It says advise and consent, not nominate and rubber stamp.

Even further back, in June of 1992, then-Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, now-Vice President JOE BIDEN argued for the need to set aside partisanship and work to bring unity forward in the Senate by saying: "President Bush should consider following the practice of a majority of his predecessors and not name a nominee until after the November election is completed." He said that during a Presidential election year, just like we are in the midst of a Presidential election year right now.

CHUCK SCHUMER, another leader of the Judiciary Committee, said much the same thing in the past, making crystal clear that there is no requirement—in fact, he said 18 months before the expiration of President Bush's term. So not during his last year, but 18 months before the end of that term that the Senate shouldn't confirm any Bush nominee, except in extraordinary circumstances.

It is very clear from their own words that there is no obligation to use any certain timeframe to have any absolute committee hearing or vote within a certain period of time. So then the question is, What is the best thing to do for the American people? I firmly believe the best thing to do for the American people is to put the American people in charge, to put them in the lead, to maximize their role, their power, and their vote. That is what the opportunity of a major Presidential election gives us.

Of course, if you have a vacancy early on in the term of a President, you are not going to have another big election for some time, but that is certainly not the case right now. We are in the midst of a huge election with enormous consequences for the future, and it is very clear the choices—whatever the final two choices may be—would offer very different options in

terms of the type of Supreme Court Justice they would appoint.

I think we best serve the American people in almost all cases—certainly in this case—by maximizing their voice, their role, and their power. They often feel absolutely shunned, put to the side, ignored by Congress, by Washington now. We need to put them in charge, and in this Presidential election year we have a unique opportunity to do that. That certainly is what I am committed to doing.

I can tell you, as I travel Louisiana, the huge majority of my fellow citizens whom I have talked to agree with that approach. I just finished doing four townhall meetings in all different parts of the State. In a few weeks I am going to do four more, all different parts of the State. That is not a scientific survey, but nobody came to those townhall meetings who didn't agree with that path forward. A great majority of calls and emails and letters from my fellow Louisiana citizens on this issue absolutely confirm and support that path forward.

Let's put the American people in charge. They are crying for a voice. They are crying with frustration over not being listened to by Washington. This is a major decision. Let's put them in charge. Let's let them lead in this Presidential election year on this very important issue.

Of course, whoever is elected, the next President will have a big impact on our country. That person will serve for 4, maybe 8 years and make decisions that are enormous on a whole host of issues, but this appointment to the Supreme Court could have an even more lasting impact, could have an impact for decades to come, and it is even more important in that frame of mind, in that viewpoint, to put the American people in charge, to maximize their role and their voice about what direction we should take.

So many Louisianians feel as I do. The Court has strayed from Justice Scalia's proper philosophy of actually reading the Constitution and reading statutory text and applying it as written. So many Louisianians feel as I do; that they are making it up, in many cases, as they go along; that they are legislating from the bench; that they are using clever techniques, such as looking to legislative history—something Justice Scalia, as I noted, railed against—as ammunition to get to whatever endpoint they desire to get to. That is not the role of any court, certainly not the role of the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court should apply the Constitution and the law as written, not make it up as they go along, not legislate from the bench, not get to some political endpoint through clever legal arguments—just as we in understanding our role should read the Constitution, should read the Senate rules

and not suggest what is clearly not the case; that somehow there is a mandate to have a hearing, to have a vote in some set period of time.

I urge my colleagues to put the American people in charge. This is a big decision, and I think we will do far better putting them in charge than allowing some insider Washington game to control and manipulate the process without hearing their voice, which we have every opportunity to properly hear through this important election this year.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I am so pleased we are making strong progress on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, and I hope we will get this bill done within a day. It is very important, especially to States with rural areas, such as the Presiding Officer's and mine, and I am glad we are starting to make headway.

U.S.-CANADA RELATIONS

Today, Mr. President, I am here to talk about something else, and that is the importance of the U.S. relationship with Canada. Senator CRAPO and I co-chair the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group and have been working in the trenches on everything from softwood lumber, to the Detroit-Windsor bridge crossing, to issues of intellectual property, to dairy, to beef, and with the arrival of Prime Minister Trudeau, this work has suddenly gotten a little more glamorous. We are excited about that and excited about the Nation's newfound interest in our important relationship with Canada. In fact, Canada is one of our largest trading partners. There is so much business that goes on between the Presiding Officer's State and Canada, as well as my State and Canada. Prime Minister Trudeau is bringing a newfound interest in this work.

Many of our two countries' priorities, which include national security, infrastructure, and energy, align closely. During this visit, I expect our relationship will deepen, and we will hear more about how our two nations will work together on our shared priorities. We hope they will discuss hockey, which is something that is very important to Minnesota and Canada. A number of our hockey players have actually come from Canada, and a number of the Canadian hockey players have come from Minnesota. But we think there are other important topics as well.

First, I will start with our economic relationship—a relationship that supports 9 million U.S. jobs. Canada purchases more goods from America than any other nation. If you asked people what country in the world is the biggest purchaser of U.S. goods, I think they might not predict that the answer is Canada. Canada is the No. 1 buyer of goods produced in 35 out of 50 States, including Minnesota. Last year Canadians bought \$376 billion worth of goods made by American businesses, and it is a two-way street. The United States imports more than \$300 billion in Canadian goods every year.

Over the years, to enhance this relationship, we have taken many important steps to improve the flow of travellers and goods across our common border. In the wake of September 11, we created a U.S. passport card, which is a secure but less expensive and more convenient alternative to a traditional passport. We removed unnecessary double screening of luggage—a bipartisan bill I passed with Senator ROY BLUNT of Missouri—and then expanded the number of preclearance airports, which allows American security personnel to be in those airports. I think we are up to eight now.

We have agreed to build a new bridge connecting Windsor, Ontario, and Detroit, MI. It is a source of great concern. The bridge that is there now is privately owned and has huge lines. It is not a very good situation. So a new bridge is in the works, and we are very excited that our two countries worked on that together.

I especially want to acknowledge Ambassador Doer, the longtime Ambassador from Canada to the United States who worked on that with our two Ambassadors. I also want to acknowledge the newly named Canadian Ambassador, Ambassador David MacNaughton, who will continue the strong diplomatic relations between our countries.

Our national security partnership is also incredibly important. We share the longest border in the world with Canada. Obviously border issues are important, but more than that, Canada, as part of NATO, has worked with us not only in Afghanistan, where they supplied many troops and now provide funding there, but they are also on the frontline with ISIS. They actually have hundreds of trainers working on the frontline there. I would be remiss not to mention them standing up to Russian aggression in Ukraine. Believe it or not, Canada has a major Ukrainian population, and they have been our friend in dealing with Ukraine as well.

Prime Minister Trudeau has also been a leader in welcoming refugees to the country. Right after his election, he showed up at the airport to greet Syrian refugees. It was not just a symbol; they actually brought in 25,000 Syrian refugees during the last year

and are expected to take in 10,000 more this year, which is significantly more in total than the United States has been able to bring in. We know the vetting process is incredibly important, but we do want to thank Canada for taking part in what is a travesty internationally.

They are working on combating Ebola with initiatives such as Power Africa and are also working with us on the climate change numbers.

By the way, our two countries are working together with Mexico. We have formed a very powerful trading block, and we want to encourage that with our standards and other things that we do in terms of building electrical capabilities to allow us, as a North American block, with a new day in North America, which was agreed to among the three Presidents of countries in the last 2 years, to compete in the block in an increasingly competitive global economy, including harmonizing emission standards and doing other work together.

As one of the cochairs of the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group, we welcome the new Prime Minister to Washington. When I was sworn in as a U.S. Senator in 2013, my friends and colleagues celebrated at the Canadian Embassy. I am the first person I have found to have my swearing-in at the Canadian Embassy, but I chose it to make a point—that we should not forget one of our best trading partners. For years it was the only Embassy draped in banners that read “friends, neighbors, partners, allies.” So many other countries do not acknowledge their friendship with the United States in a way that I think they should. Canada doesn’t hide it. Canada is proud of it. And we welcome the Prime Minister today.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time on amendment No. 3378 is expired.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 3374, AS MODIFIED

The question occurs on amendment No. 3374, offered by the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY, for the Senator from Indiana, Mr. DONNELLY.

Hearing no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the amendment. The amendment (No. 3374), as modified, was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 3378, AS AMENDED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question occurs on amendment No. 3378, offered by the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY.

Hearing no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 3378), as amended, was agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Deb Fischer, John Barrasso, Shelley Moore Capito, Roy Blunt, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Mike Crapo, David Vitter, Mike Rounds, Bill Cassidy, James E. Risch, Lindsey Graham, John McCain, Thom Tillis, Orrin G. Hatch.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 93, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 33 Leg.]

YEAS—93

Alexander	Feinstein	Murphy
Ayotte	Fischer	Murray
Baldwin	Flake	Nelson
Barrasso	Franken	Paul
Bennet	Gardner	Perdue
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Peters
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Booker	Grassley	Reed
Boozman	Hatch	Reid
Boxer	Heinrich	Risch
Brown	Heitkamp	Roberts
Burr	Heller	Rounds
Cantwell	Hirono	Schatz
Capito	Hoehn	Schumer
Cardin	Inhofe	Scott
Carper	Isakson	Sessions
Casey	Johnson	Shaheen
Cassidy	Kaine	Shelby
Coats	King	Stabenow
Cochran	Kirk	Sullivan
Collins	Klobuchar	Tester
Coons	Lankford	Thune
Corker	Leahy	Tillis
Cornyn	Manchin	Toomey
Cotton	McCain	Udall
Crapo	McConnell	Vitter
Daines	Menendez	Warner
Donnelly	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Wyden

NAYS—3

Lee	Markey	Sasse
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NOT VOTING—

Cruz Rubio
McCaskill Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 93, the nays are 3.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Utah.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, the opening words to the preamble of the Constitution of the United States are familiar to all of us: "We the People." But what do those words mean?

It was "the People" who established the U.S. Constitution. We established, among other things, the Senate in article I, section 1, of the Constitution. It is for "the People" that my colleagues and I, along with every other public official across these United States, now serve.

And it was on behalf of "the People" that the Constitution established "one supreme Court," consisting of judges appointed "by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate."

Since the tragic passing of the late Justice Antonin Scalia, there has been a great deal of debate about this particular provision of the Constitution. But there should be no controversy. The text of our founding charter is clear.

The President has full and complete power to nominate individuals to the Supreme Court, and the Senate has full and complete power to reject or confirm the nominee. It is as simple as that. Indeed, the Senate retains complete discretion with respect to whether it should even consider—much less accept or reject—Presidential nominees.

This should not be controversial. It is how virtually every student of the Constitution—and how nearly every Member of Congress—has understood the Senate's power of advice and consent for the past 228 years since the Constitution was ratified.

Senator HARRY REID said in 2005: "Nowhere in that document does it say the Senate has a duty to give presidential nominees a vote."

Senator PAT LEAHY in 2003 acknowledged that the power of "advice and consent" included the power to withhold consent.

Then-Senator JOE BIDEN in 1992 argued from the floor of this Chamber that the Senate should refuse to consider a Supreme Court nominee until the people had spoken in the upcoming Presidential election.

But now, with the Presidential election in full swing, some of my friends on the other side of the aisle maintain that the opposite is true. Some argue instead that the Senate is constitutionally obligated to hold hearings and to vote on any candidate President Obama might eventually nominate to replace Justice Scalia on the Supreme Court. I respectfully dissent.

If this a-textual and a-historical account of the Constitution were accurate—and it is not, but if it were—then prior Senates violated the Constitution when they did not cast up-or-down votes on Supreme Court nominees. Even the Standing Rules of the Senate would be themselves suspect under this theory, contemplating as they do that "[n]ominations neither confirmed nor rejected during the session at which they are made shall not be acted upon at any succeeding session without being again made to the Senate by the President. . . ."

Neither does the prospect of a temporary eight-member Supreme Court raise any significant constitutional concern or even any significant pragmatic concern for the Supreme Court of the United States.

For instance, during the Supreme Court's 2010-to-2011 term, the Court decided over 30 cases with 8 or fewer Justices participating, almost entirely as a result of recusals arising, as they often do in this circumstance, from Justice Kagan's nomination. Similarly, following the retirement of Justice Powell in 1987, the Court acted on 80 cases with 8 or fewer Justices. In short, the sky does not fall when the Court operates with only eight Justices. As Justice Breyer recently stated, the work of the Court "[f]or the most part . . . will not change."

Now, we have to remember that any Supreme Court nominee made by President Obama would not be seated until weeks before the people choose the next President. Let me explain what I mean by that. Even if the President of the United States were to nominate someone today to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States to replace Justice Scalia, using historical averages, under any calculation of the amount of time that it typically takes to confirm a Supreme Court Justice, that confirmation could not be completed until after the Supreme Court is scheduled to have heard its last oral arguments for this term—the term that began in October of 2015. What does that mean? Well, it means that for the rest of this year, the Justice couldn't participate in cases being argued this year. What that also means is that by the time the Court resumes its work and begins its next session starting in October of this year, we would be just weeks before the next Presidential election. Yet that would be the first moment at which any newly confirmed Justice would start hearing cases being argued before the Court—cases being argued on their merits for consideration before the Court—just weeks before the next Presidential election.

Consider also that since the nomination of Justice Scalia to the Supreme Court in 1986, nearly 30 years ago, it has taken more than 70 days, on average, for the Senate to confirm or reject

a nominee after that nominee has been submitted to the Senate for its advice and consent.

So, again, based on that historic average, even if the President nominated somebody today and assuming that nominee were confirmed, that individual would not be seated in time to hear or rule on any of the cases the Court is considering on the merits for its docket this year, and that would, of course, mean that the next time arguments were heard, the first time this particular Justice could participate in such arguments on the merits before the Court would be just weeks before the Presidential election.

This is a lifetime appointment to the highest Court in the land—a Court that considers not only the interpretation of Federal laws, statutes, and regulations in operation within the Federal Government, but also the very meaning of the Constitution itself. In light of the fact that this is a lifetime appointment to that Court and in light of the fact that the people are about to speak this November to decide who ought to occupy the Oval Office, we should, in respect and deference to the people of this great country, wait until the American people have spoken. They deserve a voice.

In my view, the future of the Supreme Court is now at stake, and the election for our next President is also, of course, well underway already. So it is the people who should determine what kind of Supreme Court they wish to have.

Now, the President is entitled, of course, to discharge his own constitutional authority to nominate. No one can take that from him. That belongs to him. But the Senate is equally entitled to withhold consent and to protect the people's voice. We have to remember that it was considered at the Constitutional Convention the possibility that the Senate would itself have the exclusive power to nominate executive branch officials. It was also suggested that the Senate be given a veto power over the President's appointment prerogative. Neither of those ended up in the Constitution. Instead, what ended up in the Constitution, based, I believe, on the Massachusetts Constitution, was a shared power—one in which the President has the power to nominate but does not have the power to appoint, unless or until such time as the Senate chooses to grant its advice and consent and thereby confirm a nominee put forward by the President.

As James Madison wrote in *The Federalist Papers*, ambition must counteract ambition, and the people should decide.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, there is a vacancy on the most important Court in America, and the message from Senate Republicans is crystal clear: Forget the Constitution. It doesn't matter who President Obama nominates because the Republicans will allow no votes on that nominee. They will hold no hearings on that nominee.

Their response to one of the most solemn and consequential tasks that our government performs—the confirmation of a Supreme Court Justice—will be to pretend that that nominee and President Obama himself simply do not exist—cannot see them, cannot hear them.

At the same time they are blocking all possible Supreme Court nominees, Senate Republicans are in a panic because their party seems to be on the verge of nominating one of two extremists for President—two candidates who think nothing of attacking the legitimacy of their political opponents and demeaning millions of Americans, two candidates whose extremism, Republicans worry, will lead their party to defeat in November.

These are not separate issues. They are the same issue. If Republican Senators want to stand up to extremists running for President, they can start right now by standing up to extremists in the Senate. They can start by doing what they were elected to do right here in the Senate. They can start by doing their jobs.

The refusal of the Republican Senators to execute the most basic constitutional duties of their office is shocking, but it is not new. Article II, section 2 of the Constitution says that the President of the United States “shall nominate” judges, executive officials, and Justices to the Supreme Court with the “Advice and Consent of the Senate.” There is no secret clause that says “except when that President is a Democrat,” but for 7 years that is how Republicans in the Senate have acted. Since the first day of the Obama Presidency, Republican Senators have bowed to extremists who have rejected the Obama Presidency and abused the rules of the Senate in an all-out effort to cripple his administration and to paralyze the Federal courts. The Constitution directs Senators to provide advice and consent on the President's nominee, and every Senator swore an oath to uphold the Constitution. If Senators object to a nominee's qualifications, they can vote no and they can explain themselves to the American people. President Obama and I are members of the same political party, but I haven't agreed with every single nomination he has made, and I haven't been shy about it. That is how advice

and consent works. Learn about the nominee and then use your best good-faith judgment about their qualifications, but Republican extremists aren't voting against individuals based on a good-faith judgment about a specific person. No. They are blocking votes wholesale in order to keep those jobs vacant and undermine the government itself.

For years Republicans have executed a strategy to delay votes on confirming government officials across the board. In 2013, only 1 year into President Obama's second term, Republican leaders flatly rejected his authority to confirm any judges to fill any of the three open seats on the second highest court in the country, and Democrats had to change the filibuster rules in order to move those nominees forward. Once Republicans took over the Senate in 2015, judicial confirmations nearly ground to a halt.

It is not just judges. For months after the President won reelection, Republicans held up his nominees to run the Department of Labor and Environmental Protection Agency, largely on the suspicion that those highly qualified individuals might actually help those agencies do their work. For years Republicans held up nominees to the National Labor Relations Board—even Republican nominees—in order to cripple the ability of that 80-year-old agency to resolve disputes between workers and their bosses. For years Republicans held up the President's choice to run the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, refusing to confirm anyone unless the President would agree to gut the agency.

Republicans regularly hold up the confirmation of dozens of Ambassadors, undermining our national security and our relationships with other nations. Last year Republicans blocked confirmation of the Attorney General, the highest law enforcement official in this country—blocked her for 166 days—longer than it took the Senate to consider the prior seven Attorneys General combined.

For more than a year the Republican chairman of the Banking Committee hasn't held a single vote on any of the 16 Presidential nominees sitting on his desk, not even nominees who are critical to maintaining the financial stability of this country or the ones who are responsible for choking off the flow of money to ISIS.

The message couldn't be clearer. No matter how much it damages the Nation, no matter how much it undermines the courts, no matter whether it cripples the government or lays waste to our Constitution, Senate Republicans do pretty much everything they can to avoid acknowledging the legitimacy of our democratically elected President. For too long the Republicans in the Senate have wanted to have it both ways. They want to feed

the ugly lies and nullify the Obama Presidency while also claiming they can govern responsibly. Well, that game is over. Candidates motivated by bigotry and resentment, candidates unable to govern, candidates reflecting the same extremism that has been nursed along for 7 years right here in the U.S. Senate are on the verge of winning the Republican Party's nomination for President.

Now Republican Senators must make a decision because here is the deal: Extremists may not like it, but Barack Obama won the Presidency in 2008 by 9 million votes. He won reelection in 2012 by 5 million votes. There were no recounts and no hanging chads, no stuffing the ballot box or tampering with voting machines, no intervention by the U.S. Supreme Court. No. President Obama was elected the legitimate President 7 years ago, and he is the legitimate President right now. So if it is true that some Republican Senators are finally ready to stand up to the extremism that denies the legitimacy of this President and of the Constitution, I say to you: Do your job. Vote for a Supreme Court nominee. Do your job. Vote on district court judges and circuit court judges. Do your job. Vote on Ambassadors. Do your job. Vote on agency leaders and counterterrorism officials. If you want to stop extremism in your party, you can start by showing the American people that you respect the President of the United States and the Constitution enough to do your job right here in the U.S. Senate.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, today I rise to address the responsibility of the Senate in its advice and consent role under the Constitution. Of course, the President's duty is to nominate a Justice when the vacancy exists for a Justice, and that responsibility is very clearly written into our Constitution. The Constitution also very clearly conveys the Senate's role in providing advice and consent. This is the vision of our founding document. Actually, our Founding Fathers wrestled with exactly how to best construct this nomination and confirmation process. They knew there had to be a way to appoint judges in the judiciary and certainly ambassadors and directors in the executive branch, how to go about that. In those early efforts to craft the Constitution, some argued that this responsibility should be with the Executive, with the President; others argued

that, no, no, it is better given to the assembly, to the body. Well, that conversation went back and forth. We can read a little bit about the thinking through Alexander Hamilton's *The Federalist Papers* 76 because he laid out the conversation as it went back and forth. They recognized that there were certainly advantages to having the President make the appointments.

I quote from Alexander Hamilton's paper:

The sole and undivided responsibility of one man will naturally beget a livelier sense of duty and a more exact regard to reputation. He will under this account feel himself under stronger obligations and more interested to investigate with care the qualities requisite to the stations to be filled.

In short, direct your accountability to one individual who would be responsible for carrying that out.

But they were also concerned about some disadvantages of the Executive making appointments. Giving absolute power of appointment to the President could lead to unwarranted favoritism, as it was put, or incompetence in those appointed.

Well, then again they thought, how about the assembly? They recognize that you have certainly a rich makeup of views in an assembly and perhaps that could be of value. On the other hand, they also felt that there would be a lot of horse-trading over appointments and that they would just never get the job done, and indeed, as Hamilton noted, "the intrinsic merit of the candidate will be too often left out of sight."

So that was the dilemma, and they came up with a strategy to take the strength of the Executive and the strength of the assembly; specifically, that you would indeed have the power invested in one person, and of course the Executive, in creating nominations for the executive branch, wanted to make sure those—there was an inherent desire to make sure those folks were competent, but there was also still this concern about, what if there was too much favoritism and what if individuals of unfit character were appointed to the bench? So give the Senate the chance to review and provide consent or, as Hamilton wrote, "to prevent the appointment of unfit characters." That is what it boiled down to. So the strength of the Executive and the strength of the Senate combined in order to solve this knotty problem of how you filled the key posts in the judiciary and the key posts in the executive.

All of this led to the exact crafting of article II, section 2, of the Constitution. It referred that the President—"and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court," and so on and so forth. Of course, this isn't,

when there is a vacancy, the President can if he or she desires; no, it is shall. This is a responsibility. You have to fill the position. So the President has an obligation under this clause, and we in the Senate have an obligation to follow up with the advice and consent function.

That is where we stand and why this esteemed Chamber has operated now throughout the more than 200-year history in providing that check and balance on the Executive. It is the President's responsibility to nominate, and it is our responsibility to vet those nominees, to examine them, to see if they have the fit, the characteristics of both their own qualifications and their character. That is the basis: qualifications and character. That is the question that we have addressed in this Chamber century after century.

But here we are today with a unique circumstance in which the leadership of this body has said: We are not going to fulfill the responsibility that is given to us under the Constitution. We are going on strike. We don't want to do our job.

I think the American people are saying the opposite: Senate, do your job. Senate, you were assigned a job in the Constitution. Senators, you signed an oath to abide by that Constitution. You have a responsibility under the vision of our Government to make it work. You have a responsibility to fulfill that job, to do that job.

The Supreme Court is only the latest manifestation of the challenges we have had with nominations for the executive and for the judicial. I hope we can come together and develop a much more rapid system of vetting nominees and, if there is not a major objection, having those at lower levels essentially conveyed quickly into their posts, because this is something that we know will be the case.

We know that over time, there will be Republican administrations and there will be Democratic administrations. We know that under the vision of three co-equal branches of Government, it is not the role of Congress to systematically undermine the other two branches. That was not the design of our Constitution. So we wield a particularly sacred responsibility not to use our partisan inclinations as a tool to try to destroy the Presidency of a different political party or to pack, basically, the courts according to our own philosophy. We are not doing that now. As a body, we are failing our responsibility.

The Constitution says: Do your job. The people of America say: Do your job. The leadership here in the Senate is saying: We refuse to do our job. That is just wrong.

Our Court does play this critical role in making sure that our laws and regulations stay within the bounds of the Constitution. It is not since the Civil

War that the Supreme Court has been left with a vacancy of more than a year. The Civil War is a very unique circumstance. Since the 1980s, every person appointed to the Supreme Court has been given a prompt hearing and a vote within 100 days. Since 1975, it has taken on average only 67 days to confirm Supreme Court nominees.

We can look at the list: Justice Kagan, 88 days; Justice Sotomayor, 67 days; Alito, 83; Roberts, 63; Breyer, 74; Ginsburg, 51; Thomas, 99; Souter, 69; and, on through the list, Kennedy, 65; Scalia, who just passed away, 85; and Rehnquist, 89.

You notice that these are nominations by both Democratic Presidents and Republican Presidents. And in each case, the Senate—regardless of the party in control of the Senate—did their job, vetted these nominees, held a vote on them, and proceeded. But now we have more than 317 days still left in this administration, and the leadership of this body is saying that they are not going to do their job for 317 days. They are not going to meet with a nominee, not going to hold a committee meeting on the nominee, not going to report that to the floor, not going to hold a floor debate—not because of the standards set up in the Constitution, not because of this standard: Is this a fit character? Is he or she fit by qualifications? Is he or she fit by judicial temperament? The standard of unfit character—no, this is a strike, a job strike based solely on partisan politics. This is bringing partisan politics into the very place it should never be—confirmation of our judges not at 100 days but more than 300 days, which is totally out of sync with the history of this Nation, totally out of sync with the responsibility that each of us is assigned to help provide advice and consent.

More than a dozen Supreme Court Justices have been confirmed in the final year of a Presidency. I want to emphasize that because there have been folks here in the Chamber who have said: Well, there should be some special rule. In fact, they even thought there was some special rule that you don't confirm a Supreme Court Justice in the final year of a Presidency.

That simply is not the case. More than a dozen Justices have been confirmed in the final year of a Presidency. Most recently, Justice Kennedy was confirmed in the last year of President Reagan's final term. It was not a Republican-led Senate that did that confirmation. It was a Democrat party-led Senate that did that confirmation because the Democratic Party leadership and Members said: This is not partisanship. This is a responsibility we have, and we are going to execute it.

But, unfortunately, we are hearing a very different story at this moment from the Republican leadership in this body, and it is an embarrassment. It is

an embarrassment to this Chamber. It is an embarrassment to our responsibility. I certainly am appealing that it be remedied. There is time to remedy it. The President hasn't put forward his nomination yet. It is time to recognize that perhaps those comments that were put forward in the heat of the moment can be set aside and we can still do our job.

When people elect a President, they don't say to the President: Do your job for 3 years, but you get the last year off. When they elect us, they don't say: Well, do your job for 5 years, but you get the last year off. They certainly don't say: And by the way, after a couple of years, you can take a year off from your constitutional responsibilities. A President is elected for all 4 years. Our responsibility is to provide advice and consent, and it goes on continuously.

In the last 200 years, the Senate has carried out its duty to give a fair and timely hearing and a floor vote to the President's Supreme Court nominees—whether the President was a Democrat or a Republican, whether this body was led by a Democratic majority or a Republican majority. Let's not change that tradition. Let's not fail our responsibility. In fact, let's honor our constitutional responsibility.

I will close by calling on my colleagues: Let's work together to diminish the partisanship and improve the problem-solving. Let's turn down the rhetoric in terms of our back and forth during this campaign year and, certainly, turn it down enough that we can fulfill that core responsibility that provides advice and consent on nominations and certainly on what is probably the most significant and important nomination—that of an individual to the Supreme Court of the United States of America.

To summarize, the Constitution lays out the job before us. The American citizens expect us to do our jobs. Let's do our job.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD

Mr. President, I am going to shift gears here to discuss a bill that has recently come out of committee and the way that we should consider responding to it. This conversation is all about defending Americans' right to know what is in the food they buy and Americans' right to know what is in the food they feed to their family and they feed to their children. I will also discuss the legislation I am putting forward to attempt to be a bridge between some very different visions on that topic.

Let me start by saying this is all about genetically modified food and the information provided to citizens on the package about that. This often turns into a debate: Well, GMO has done some wonderful things over here. Others say: Well, it has created some problems over here.

I am going to acknowledge that both of those are true. It has done some very

positive things, and I will mention some in specific. But it has also created some challenges, some problems, and I will mention some of those. But after we recognize that that is the case, where do we come back to? Here is where we come back to: We should enable the individual in our beautiful Republic to make the decision and not have Big Government make the decision or suppress information. That is what happens in the non-“we the people” world. That is what happens in dictatorships. That is not what should happen here in the United States of America, where individuals have the right to know what is in their food.

Let me go ahead and explain some of the benefits and some of the challenges. Let's start with the example of golden rice. Golden rice was developed by the International Rice Research Institute. It provides greater amounts of vitamin A in the rice to reduce the deficiency that exists in many diets around this planet for that essential vitamin.

That is a pretty positive development. I don't know at this point of any side effects or other things that have been brought to light. Nature is complicated, but for now, let's recognize that providing vitamin A where it is needed is a pretty positive thing.

Let's take a look at carrots. Carrot cells have been transgenically modified to produce a chemical that treats Gaucher's disease. Gaucher's disease is a metabolic disorder where people lack a specific enzyme which helps rid the body of certain fatty substances. Those fatty substances then accumulate, causing enlarged livers, spleens, bone damage, bruising, and anemia. These transgenic carrots are part of the answer, part of the solution.

Let's turn to sweet potatoes. Researchers are genetically modifying sweet potatoes to withstand multiple viral infections commonly encountered in South Africa, making this a much more successful crop and providing more food to people who need more food. So that is a positive development.

All of this is not a one-sided scientific picture. There are also scientifically documented concerns. We can call them scientifically documented problems that have occurred with transgenic crops.

Let me start by noting that the most common transgenic crops in America are crops that have been modified to be resistant to glyphosate. That is an herbicide. After the introduction of these resistant crops, which means you can put more herbicides or weed killers—you can put a lot more weed killer onto the acreage—you basically knock out the weeds much more easily and less expensively than with other strategies.

What happened? Well, basically, since 1994—early 1990s—several major crops have become almost 100-percent transgenic-glyphosate tolerant. The

amount of glyphosate put on the crops has grown from 7.4 million pounds in 1994—let's round it off—to 160 million pounds in 2012, and the number keeps climbing. This is a huge amount of herbicide. Try to picture in your head 160 million pounds of herbicide. Well, it is so effective in killing everything except the GM corn, GM soybeans, and GM sugar beets. It is so effective in killing everything else that very few weeds survive. One of the weeds that doesn't survive, because most don't, is milkweed. Milkweed happens to be the food for the monarch butterfly. As we have seen the enormous increase of glyphosate applied to our fields, we have seen a crashing of the monarch butterfly ecology. It is not the only thing affecting the monarch. Several other things are affecting them as well, but it is—in scientific study after study—a very significant factor.

Let's also take a look at something else; that is, that all of this glyphosate doesn't stay on the fields. When it rains, it gets washed into our waterways. Our waterways are full of things that are affected by our herbicides, and so it has a big impact on the ecology of our streams and rivers. That is a serious scientifically documented issue that we are continuing to learn more about as time passes.

Let's turn to another issue. This is a fascinating story. It is about a pest that bores into the roots of corn. It is called the corn rootworm. The corn was modified so it would have a pesticide in the cells and would kill the rootworm when it bored into the corn, but guess what happened. If you do this on a vast scale, Mother Nature comes along and has a few genetic mutations here and there and suddenly that rootworm starts to propagate with others that are now resistant to this pesticide that has been put into the roots. So now more pesticide has to be added to the corn, and as a result of that we have an opposite outcome than what was expected.

The hope was that this would reduce pesticides, but now you have to put the pesticides back in it, and so now we have the evolution of superbugs. Here we have the adult beetle, and the rootworm is a reference to the larvae stage of this beetle. These are the type of concerns that are raised.

I say all of this just to explain that while there are benefits of transgenic crops, there are also issues that are raised in the natural world. So anyone who takes this floor and says that nobody should be concerned about bio-engineered crops is simply refusing to look at the scientific literature that says, no, there are things we should be concerned about. That is why it comes back to the right of the individual to know what is in their food. They want to know if it is a transgenic crop, and they can look up the details and make their own decision. Why have Big Government say that we are going to make

the decision for you? Why have Big Government say that we don't trust you with information and we are not going to allow you to know what is in your food? No. That should be in some dictatorship, not in the United States of America.

Well, we have a big battle now because out of committee last week has come a bill, and this bill is known as the DARK bill. It stands for Deny Americans the Right to Know because Big Ag says that we don't believe in this whole "we the people" model of a republic. No, we like to have a government that makes decisions for people and that denies information to people because we don't trust them, as consumers, to decide what they want to eat. We don't want them to know what they are feeding their children and their family. We want to make the decision for them. Well, 90-plus percent of Americans disagree. They want the information to make the decision on their own. They can find out about the benefits over here. They can find out about the concerns over here. Different foods have different transgenic crops in them. They should get to make the decision and not have Big Government making the decision for them.

This bill, the DARK Act, prohibits counties, cities, and States from any decision to provide information on a package to their citizens about what is in their food regarding transgenic crops.

I got together with the representatives of the food industry and advocates for consumer information. I tried to find out if there is an overlap so we can craft a bill that will bring these two communities together, and we made some progress on that, and so I will share that with everyone.

Basically, a big concern of the food industry—totally legitimate—is that they don't want 50 different standards in 50 different States or to have a bunch of counties decide to make up their own rules, which would result in hundreds or thousands of rules. If you operate a warehouse, you can't send different cans of soups to grocery stores across the country. No. So that makes sense. They want a 50-State solution. Furthermore, they want to have it acknowledged that there is nothing pejorative about the concept of bioengineering or transgenic. They want to know that people know this is a situation where there are some positive benefits, and I have mentioned some of those positive benefits. They don't want a label on the front of the package because they think it would be scary to consumers, and they want flexibility as to exactly what system they use to alert consumers.

The bill I put forward provides all of those goals for a 50-State solution. There is nothing on the front of the package, nothing pejorative, and provides flexibility for the food industry.

It does not go to the final step that much of the food industry wants, which is no unpackaged labeling because then there is no compromise between the two sides.

The consumer side would like to have something mandatory so it is on each package of food. They want it clear so a person can pick up the food or the can or the sack and have it easy to identify on the package. That is the compromise bill I have put forward. It enables the food industry to either put an asterisk on an ingredient that is bioengineered and have it explained below or it enables an industry to put a symbol in parentheses after the ingredient or it enables an industry to just put a symbol on the ingredients panel. In Brazil they use a "t." It is a very simple "t." It is not scary, but for those who want to know, it is identified.

This approach of simplicity—nothing scary, simple access that is easy to see—this is the bulk of what both sides want to accomplish so we can have a 50-State standard.

It has been endorsed by a number of groups. Over the last few days my bill has been endorsed by Campbell's, Stoneyfield, and Nature's Path. It has been endorsed by Amy's Kitchen and Ben & Jerry's and Just Label It.

We can give up the ability of each State to have a separate labeling system if we do this simple symbol or parentheses or asterisk on the ingredients panel so a person who cares can look it up.

I think about it this way. My daughter has always wanted to buy products that don't have highly enriched corn syrup or high fructose corn syrup. Along the way, she read something and said: I am just not sure that is something I want to buy. So she picks up a package, turns it over, and often the ingredients on the package have tiny print, but she can figure it out. It is the same for this. Enable the consumer who is willing and wants to make the effort to be able to pick up a can—again, it doesn't have to be on the front—and find out what is going on.

This is the world standard. There are 64 other countries, including 28 members of the European Union, Japan, Australia, and Brazil, that all require some type of indication on the ingredients panel or on the package. Do you know who else is in that group? China. China is a dictatorship. China doesn't deny its citizens the right to know. How is it possible that a bill in this Chamber has been introduced to take away the right of Americans to know what is in their food? Even China doesn't do that, and we must not do it either.

I appreciate the folks who have already signed up to sponsor this bill. Senator LEAHY, Senator TESTER, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator SANDERS, Senator MURPHY, Senator GILLIBRAND, and

Senator BLUMENTHAL, thank you. Thank you for standing up for your citizens' right to know. Thank you for standing up for a fair compromise that solves the big problem the food industry is facing with the potential of 50 different States having 50 different standards. Thank you for finding the area of compromise that works on both sides of this equation.

I appreciate the endorsements. I appreciate the sponsors, but what I really appreciate is that we have freedom of speech in our country to be able to carry on this conversation, but how is it consistent to have freedom of speech and then say that we want to ban information from our consumers? How is that consistent? This is like the mob that says that we don't want our citizens to read certain books so we are going to burn them, we are going to ban them—and that is what this DARK Act does. It has been introduced and went through the Agriculture Committee. It bans the ability of States to provide information to their consumers. That is just wrong. Even China doesn't go there, and we should not go there either.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, earlier this afternoon we had a very strong vote here in the U.S. Senate to move forward on the legislation we are currently considering. It is called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. It is legislation that is intended to make the Federal Government a better partner with State and local governments, with our nonprofits who are in the trenches around the country, and with all of our States dealing with this now-epidemic level of heroin addiction, prescription drug addiction, and overdoses.

Today, as we are here in the Senate, on average, we will lose over 100 people a day in the United States of America to deaths from overdoses. Frankly, that is just part of the problem, as horrible as that is. So many people are being saved by this miracle drug called naloxone or Narcan. Also, others who may not be overdosing are not working. Their families are broken apart. They are committing crimes to support their addiction. So many Americans are not achieving their God-given purpose because of this addiction issue that is gripping our country. Our legislation is meant to address it in a very direct way.

The debate on the floor that we had over the past week has been very interesting to me. It is the first time in decades that this Congress has taken up

this issue in this manner. We have had a very open debate on addiction policy. What does it mean? I think what you heard Members say on both sides of the aisle is that we have learned a lot about addiction over the years and that addiction now is viewed by most as a disease, an illness. Like other illnesses, it needs treatment.

I think that is a very important change in terms of how we address this issue, and the policy before us today on this floor that I hope we will vote on in the next 12 hours or so represents a change in thinking about this, that indeed we want to do everything we can to prevent the addiction in the first place, to keep people out of the funnel of addiction, to have better efforts in education and prevention, and that is in this legislation. But also, once we have people who are addicted, we need to get them into treatment. And for people who are arrested for possession, who are users of drugs, it is better to get them into treatment and recovery than just getting them into jail or prison because we have found that hasn't worked. So the criminal justice system has a role to play here—legalization is not a good idea—but that ought to be, in part, diverting people into treatment that works better for them to be able to get at this problem. Otherwise, folks will continue to see these incredibly high levels of use, addiction, and all the negative consequences that stem from that.

I thank my coauthor of this legislation, Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE. He and I have worked together over the past few years on this legislation, bringing in experts from all over the country and getting expertise from our home States. In Ohio, we had a number of roundtable discussions that added a lot of important input to be able to come up with legislation that actually works, that is actually going to direct funding to evidence-based programs and prevention and treatment and recovery that work.

We talked a lot to our law enforcement community. That is one reason the Fraternal Order of Police supports our legislation. So does the Sheriffs' Association, so do the prosecutors, and so do the attorneys general, because we have actually worked with them to say: How can you be more effective in dealing with this very real problem you have in your community? And if you talk to law enforcement, you talk to firefighters, you talk to emergency medical folks, they will tell you this issue is at the top of their list. They are frustrated by it. They are looking for a solution, and this legislation helps to come up with the solution.

I also thank Senator AYOTTE, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and 42 bipartisan cosponsors for their support of this legislation. It is comprehensive, it is evidence-based, and it is going to make a difference.

Not only has it had a lot of support here in the Senate—and I hope we will see that again in the final vote—but it also has support in the House of Representatives. There was a companion bill at one time that was identical to our legislation, also called CARA, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. Ours has changed a little bit through the process, but it is very similar to the House companion bill. There are over 80 cosponsors to that legislation. It is a bipartisan bill on the House side as well.

So this is one of those issues where if we pass it here in the Senate, we have a very good chance of passing it in the House and getting it to the President for his signature so it can begin to make a difference in our communities.

The reason we are here today talking about this is, again, because so many people are suffering. There are 23 million Americans, it is said—23 million Americans—who are in recovery from addiction. Think about that. We are doing this for them, to ensure that they can have successful recoveries, to help them to ensure that they can keep their lives together and not fall back into this struggle of addiction.

With 23 million people recovering, think of the millions who are still struggling. Together, those who are recovering and those who are addicted have begun to stand up and let their voices be heard. That is one of the differences I have seen in this debate, is that the stigma that has been associated with addiction has begun to be removed.

There was a rally here on the Capital Mall several months ago. It was called the Unite to Face Addiction rally. There were people there from all over the country. Thousands of people came to Washington, DC—thousands. And the message from them was, one, pass CARA, this legislation—and I appreciate their help. We wouldn't be here today on the floor talking about this issue if they hadn't engaged with their elected representatives in the House and the Senate and our leadership to help us get this moving. Second, there message was, look, addiction is a disease and it has to be treated like other illnesses, and we have to have legislation that helps break the stigma associated with drug addiction so that we can address it and we can begin to get people out of the grip of addiction and get our communities and families out of the grip of addiction. This is a cause, and it is one that requires law enforcement and the criminal justice system, but it also requires love and faith and communities coming together. It is one that we can only carry out together—all of us, not as Republicans or Democrats or Independents but as Americans, as fathers and mothers, family members and friends and coworkers who care about those who are facing this great challenge of addiction.

CARA now has the support of over 130 groups around the country. These are criminal justice groups. These are people who are in the trenches every day dealing with treatment and prevention. These are folks who are in public health. These are people who are in law enforcement and understand the importance of this. They have all come together to say: Let's pass this legislation so we can begin to implement this evidence-based program to respond to this epidemic.

It does add prevention and education efforts. It does do a lot to get prescription drugs off the shelves and get the medication out of the hands of our youth. It does allow us to monitor drugs. It authorizes law enforcement task forces to combat heroin and methamphetamine in areas that are particularly hard hit. It expands the availability of the miracle drug we talked about earlier—it doesn't always work, but it has saved a lot of lives—called naloxone or Narcan.

In the criminal justice system, it does identify and treat individuals suffering from substance abuse disorders and expands diversion and education efforts to give those individuals that second chance.

We give special help in this legislation to our veterans. We establish more funds for these veterans treatment courts. I have been to them in Ohio. They are incredible. Yesterday, I talked about the story of one of the veterans who had been in and out of the prison system. Now he not only has his life back together, he has his family back together. He is back in school getting a degree. He is one example of many who got off track because of PTSD, because of an addiction, used self-medication to deal with his PTSD, was in the prison system and is now back out. We are supporting that effort.

We do help women who are postpartum and suffer from addiction. We do help babies who are born addicted. We have this incredible situation where in Ohio we now have a 750-percent increase in the number of babies who are born with this syndrome—with addiction. They have to be taken through withdrawal. I have gone to these neonatal units with my wife, and we have seen these incredibly compassionate doctors and nurses. What I hear from them is, you have to do something. This legislation takes that important step to the Federal level.

CARA supports recovery programs focused on youth and building communities of recovery. It creates a national task force on recovery to get the experts really engaged to help us to improve ways to address some of the collateral consequences caused by addiction.

Economists will tell us that addiction now costs this country about \$700 billion every year. Think about that.

That is lost productivity. That is more expensive health care. If you go to the emergency room in your community to find out what is going on, you will see a lot of people coming in because of addiction. There is the cost of policing and incarceration. Law enforcement tells me that most of the crime being committed in our communities is now being committed because of this issue.

So \$700 billion every single year is a lot of money, no doubt, but addiction costs us something else too: It costs us in dreams that are never fulfilled, in families who are torn apart, in lives that are lost. We don't just measure our success in dollars and cents. We measure it in safer neighborhoods, less crime, in empty jail cells, and by the number of people who never have to struggle with drug abuse in the first place because of more effective prevention and education. We measure it in the moms and dads who beat addictions so they can come back to be with their kids and bring their families back together. We measure it in the families who are not torn apart but instead are healed.

As we move forward to pass this legislation—the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act—our message is a really simple one. To those who struggle with addiction, to those who think they cannot overcome, to those who believe there is no one out there who cares about them or can help them: You are not alone. We are with you. There is hope. I have seen people beat this. I have known people who have beat this. You can beat this.

And we can be a better partner here at the Federal Government to be able to help people overcome this struggle. We need to pass this bill and get it signed into law to begin to make a real difference for the families we represent.

The House has companion legislation also called CARA. They have a big bipartisan group supporting it. After we pass this legislation here—because I am confident we will based on the vote this afternoon—I hope the House will take it up, take up CARA, and get it passed. Let's get it to the President for his signature, and let's truly begin to deal with this epidemic—it is at crisis levels, it is urgent, and it can't wait—so that we, all of us, can begin to make a real difference for those we represent.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). The Senator from Maryland.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, Senator CARDIN of Maryland, my colleague, and I are here on the floor today to ask that two nominations for the Federal bench, the district court, be confirmed. They are the next two judges in line on the Executive Calendar for the Federal district courts.

One is Mr. Waverly D. Crenshaw, Jr., a highly qualified nominee from the State of Tennessee. The other is Ms. Paula Xinis from our own State of Maryland, a brilliant, talented lawyer who also is ready to be confirmed. Both have been approved by the Judiciary Committee. Mr. Crenshaw was approved in July and has been waiting for a vote. Ms. Xinis was approved by the Judiciary Committee in September. So it has been more than 6 months to allow Senators to be able to evaluate the excellent work done by the Judiciary Committee on whether these nominees should be confirmed.

We think it is time that the full Senate did its job and gave these two outstanding candidates for the bench a vote. Therefore, I come to the Senate floor with Senator CARDIN and I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar No. 215 and Calendar No. 307; that the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on these nominations in the order listed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I would just point out to my friends from Maryland, and the senior Senator who has made this consent request asking that we move off of the current legislation—the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act—off of that important legislation into executive session to consider these nominations, that it is the prerogative of the majority leader to set the agenda. If every Senator could come to the floor and cherry-pick different nominations from the calendar and ask consent that we move to executive session and then consider those, it would result in some chaos. For those reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I am certainly disappointed by the Senator from Texas objecting to the request of the senior Senator from Maryland, Ms. MIKULSKI.

The request of Senator MIKULSKI is for us to consider two article III judges who are next in line for consideration before the U.S. Senate. They have cleared the committee. They have both been approved by the committee by voice vote, a unanimous vote within the Judiciary Committee.

I know Paula Xinis—the vacancy to be filled in Maryland at University

Park. She joined the law firm of Murphy, Falcon & Murphy in Baltimore. She is a senior trial attorney, well qualified to take the seat of the former chief justice, Deborah Chasanow. She was appointed by President Obama in March of 2015. We are now approaching the 1-year anniversary of her appointment—1 year anniversary for a non-controversial, well-qualified appointment to the district court.

Let me just talk a little bit about fairness. I heard what the Senator from Texas said about the majority leader scheduling the votes on the floor of the Senate, but I think my colleagues should be aware of the facts in regard to filling judicial vacancies.

We have completed the confirmation process on 16 article III judges since the beginning of this term of Congress. The comparable number in the last 2 years of a Presidential term where the President was of the Republican Party and the Senate was controlled by the Democrats—just the opposite of what we have today—was the year 2007 and 2008 under President George W. Bush. The Judiciary Committee was chaired by Chairman LEAHY. That year, by March 9, we had cleared and confirmed 40 judicial appointments—40 compared to 16 in this Congress. By the end of the year, we had approved 68 of President Bush's nominees.

Going back to the other time with a Republican President and with a Democratically controlled Senate—President Reagan—in 1987 and 1988, under Chairman BIDEN, by March 9 of the last year, the Senate had confirmed 47 of his nominations, compared to 16 this year, and by the end of the year, we had confirmed 85 nominees, including a Supreme Court Justice, Justice Kennedy.

We have pending right now on the floor of the Senate that have cleared committees—every single one by voice vote unanimously—we have 12 article III judges who are ready for action and 5 other judicial appointments, for a total of 17. But that is not the whole story. We have 25 nominees who are still pending before the Judiciary Committee, including Stephanie Gallagher of Maryland, to fill a vacancy. This is not the only vacancy we have in Maryland. We now have two in Maryland waiting for action by the U.S. Senate.

So there is a matter of fairness here. There is also a matter of respect for the judicial branch of government in allowing the courts to be able to function.

The district court is where most individuals get their justice. That is the trial court. That is the court where most of our citizens will go for their judicial relief. We have vacancies where appointments have been made that are noncontroversial, well-qualified people, and we can't get a vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate? My friend from Texas tells me this is the prerogative of the

majority leader. It is our responsibility to act on these nominations.

Senator MIKULSKI has set up a process in Maryland where we take an interview process to get the very best talent to serve on our courts. I am honored to work with her as we go through the process of finding the very best to serve on the courts. How do you expect to allow their name to come forward when it takes a year to consider a nomination? If you want to get the very best on the courts, we have to act, and we have to be responsible.

Let me just say something. We have to take up these nominations. I appreciate that we always have a lot of work that we have to do. We have time today to get these nominations done. I call on the majority leader and I call on my friends to say: Look, let's get our court vacancies filled. Let's carry out our responsibility and vote on these nominations.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, why am I here today on the floor asking for these two nominations to be confirmed? They are the next two judges in line on the Executive Calendar for our Federal district courts: Waverly Crenshaw, Jr., a highly qualified and talented nominee from the great State of Tennessee; and Paula Xinis, nominated from my State of Maryland. Both Mr. Crenshaw and Ms. Xinis have been waiting for months to have their day and get their vote. Mr. Crenshaw has been waiting since July, Ms. Xinis since September. I think 6 months is enough time to provide our advice and evaluate these nominees. It is time to do our jobs and give these candidates a vote. I urge the Republicans to allow these nominations to move forward.

We are easily on pace to be the least productive Senate in recent history. Last year Republicans confirmed the fewest judges in almost 50 years: a total of 11 in 2015. Since Republicans took over the Senate the number of judicial emergencies has nearly tripled, which leaves courts overworked and understaffed.

Now some Republicans say there is precedent for their obstructionism. Some Republican Senators have tried to fudge their numbers, saying the judges confirmed during our lameduck session at the end of 2014 should count toward their abysmal numbers for 2015. Well, what about those numbers? I didn't realize that's how the Senate worked: that we take credit for work that others did. Some Republican Senators specifically asked for lameduck passage of their nominees. They didn't want to wait for the next Congress—but they're stalling now, before we are even in lameduck. They are already talking about stopping nominations with 9 months left to do work.

A lack of judges has real consequences for the American people. Due

to our constitutional protections, criminal trials must happen with a "speedy and public trial." What does this mean in our courts? Criminal trials end up prioritized, protecting those charged with crimes, but civil trials are put on hold—sometimes for years—while we wait for judges to have time for them. What does this mean for the American people? Judges spend less time on cases, judges have to encourage cases to settle instead of getting their day in court, judges have to encourage defendants to consider plea deals rather than wait out a lengthy trial process. Justice delayed is justice denied, which is what is happening around our country right now.

For Marylanders to receive their day in court, we need Judge Paula Xinis to be on the bench. I was extremely proud to nominate Paula Xinis to President Obama with Senator CARDIN. She is a brilliant litigator and public servant. When I consider nominees for the Federal bench, I have four criteria: absolute integrity, judicial competence and temperament, a commitment to core constitutional principles, and a history of civic engagement in Maryland. Ms. Xinis exceeds these criteria. She has dedicated her career to the rule of law. The persistence and character she has shown in advocating for her clients and in her activities in the community make her truly an outstanding nominee. She has a deep respect for the law and what it means to every American. She will ensure that everyone who comes before her truly feels that they have been heard and have received equal justice under the law.

It is absolutely critical that we have judges in our courts to make sure that the judiciary is strong, independent, and that all Americans get their days in court. The President has made dozens upon dozens of judicial nominations. Now the Senate must do its job. Enough time has passed on these two nominees. It is time to have our say. I do not take this duty lightly, but I will do my job. I carefully evaluate nominees and render an independent judgment based on my commitment to core constitutional principles. These candidates deserve timely hearings and timely votes. We have had the hearings. We have had plenty of time to evaluate their merits. Now is the time to vote.

Mr. President, I would like to compliment once again my very able colleague from Maryland for his statement, in which he laid out facts and he laid out the historic precedent, and I want to associate myself with those remarks.

I also want to add that I am really frustrated. I am so frustrated that, No. 1, President Obama doesn't get to be President Obama. His job as President is to nominate competent people for an independent branch of government, the Federal judiciary. He did his job. Then

it came to the Senate. Really, we thank the Judiciary Committee because they did hold a hearing and did their due diligence to examine the worthiness of whether these nominees should be brought to the Senate. Do they have the judicial temperament? Do they have the judicial experience? Are they of sound character to truly be independent and render impartial justice, which our Constitution mandates? The Judiciary Committee said yes.

It comes to the Senate on something called the Executive Calendar. That is Senate-speak for the nominating calendar. It means they are on the calendar, waiting their turn to have a vote, but this is just a slowdown.

We don't want to be in a slowdown here. I didn't bring this up with Senator CARDIN to disrupt consideration of the opioid bill. We have a terrible problem in Maryland with opioids and heroin. We are for this bill. We are for bipartisan action, but we are driven to taking action, asking for unanimous consent because we are not getting action.

I would have yielded to a compromise if the gentleman from Texas, himself a member at one time of the Texas Supreme Court, had said: How about Mr. Crenshaw first and Ms. Xinis after the break that will be coming up? You know, we are like college kids; we get spring break. Well, we would agree to that. All we are looking for is for Mr. Crenshaw, who was on the calendar before Ms. Xinis, to go first.

We are not pushing, but we are persistent. All we want is a time certain when we could get a vote on Ms. Xinis. We are now in the business of discouraging people from coming into public service. They are willing to put their career on hold and their life on examination to be able to serve on the Federal bench or other nominations. She did it. Our nominee did it. She is in a law firm. Her career is on hold.

We also have Ms. Stephanie Gallagher, who is a Federal magistrate judge, waiting for a hearing. What are we doing here? People are finally going to say: I don't want the hassle. I don't want the harassment. I don't want to go through all this just to wait, wait, wait, wait.

The Senate needs to move in an orderly way. When a nominee has been moved through the process, nominated by the President, gone through the due diligence of the Judiciary Committee, and is waiting, I think we ought to do it. I think we ought to take a couple of days and just vote on these nominations.

I believe our courts are overwhelmed. There are backlogs in the courts. There are people waiting for their ability to have a trial. We need good judges. We need to be able to make sure that the people are willing to serve and they have the credentials, the judicial temperament, and the character to serve.

We need to be able to at least give them a vote. Now, if you don't like the Obama nominees, vote them down. Vote them down, but don't slow down the process.

We have a constitutionally mandated process. Let's follow it. Let's do our job. We have Mr. Crenshaw and Ms. Xinis. We are happy to have Mr. Crenshaw go first, but we sure would like a date for Ms. Xinis.

We call out to our colleagues to give us a date, give us a vote. Give it to us now.

Mr. CARDIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Arizona.

OMNIBUS AND DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, last night we saw another unusual election result. We see a "businessman" now in a very significant lead for the nomination of the Republican Party, the party of Abraham Lincoln and Ronald Reagan.

As I watched the postmortems last night and this morning, we see again that many of those who voted cite as one of their primary—if not the primary—reasons distaste, anger, and frustration about Washington, DC, specifically the Congress of the United States, as well as the President. They believe they need somebody who is an outsider, someone who is not "of the establishment." I guess that applies to anyone who is in elected office.

Some of us have been surprised. Certainly no one predicted these outcomes, not only on the Republican side but on the Democratic side. We saw our colleague from Vermont engineer quite a stunning upset in the State of Michigan last night. But he also—even though a Member of the Senate, Senator SANDERS clearly is speaking in opposition to the machine, the business as usual in Washington.

Sometimes we ask ourselves why the American people give us such a low approval rating. I see polls show that the approval rating of Congress is 12 percent, 13 percent, 14 percent, sometimes as high as 15 percent. I would inform and remind my colleagues that it wasn't always like that. We didn't always have such a low approval rating in the Congress by the American people.

I think it is worthy of note that in the last year since regaining the ma-

jority, we have enacted some legislation that I think we could be proud to go back and talk to our constituents about, whether it be education reform, where we did away with common core, or whether it be a highway bill that was much needed to provide infrastructure for our States, counties, and towns. We passed a budget. We passed a defense authorization bill that has some of the most significant reforms in history. But the fact is, those numbers haven't changed, and they haven't changed sometimes for good reason.

That is why I come to the floor today, because I am ashamed and embarrassed, as a representative of the people of my State, to talk about billions of dollars of unnecessary wasteful spending of their taxpayer dollars, and it happened on the Omnibus appropriations bill—omnibus. A lot of my constituents don't know what "omnibus" means. What it means is, we are required to take up 13 appropriations bills. We don't do it—and I would put the responsibility for that on the other side of the aisle, but it doesn't matter, really, because we end up, at the end of the year, with a massive, hundreds of billions of dollars bill that is about this high, that none of us have seen or read and there is no amendment to it, and we have approximately 48 to 72 hours in which to vote yes or no, with the option being the government not continuing to function. That is not the way to do business. That doesn't inspire any confidence in us on the part of the American people, and it is disgraceful.

So the omnibus, again, was passed with votes from both sides, actually, but the fact is that our responsibility was to take up these bills one by one, to examine them, to have amendments, and to have the Congress—in this case, the Senate—work its will. We didn't do that.

Here it was. We walked in, and here was this bill—not that size but this size—that no one had read, no one had a chance to peruse, and even if we had, we couldn't do anything about it because the bill was not amendable because if we amend it, then it bounces back to the other side of the Capitol, and we run out of time, and the government shuts down. That is the wrong way to do business.

One of the major reasons for what happened is it is open to incredible abuse. I came to the floor today to talk about the abuse of the most sacred responsibility we have, which is the defense of this Nation.

I am proud to be chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, a post I aspired to for many years. We work hard on the Defense authorization bill. We work hard in the Senate Armed Services Committee. We work on a bipartisan basis. We have hearings, we examine the issues, and we examine the programs. We are talking

about, again, hundreds of billions of dollars, of taxpayers' dollars, whether it be pay and benefits for the men and women who are serving or whether it be the equipment they need or many of the policies that govern the defense of this Nation. And I am proud of the work we do.

So after producing a bill with an overwhelming majority vote—90-some votes—with the authorization for all of this to do with our Nation's defense, the Appropriations Committee decides to overrule what we have authorized, in violation not only of the way the Senate is supposed to function but in violation of a resolution adopted by the Republican conference, which I will read:

Earmark Moratorium

Resolved, that it is the policy of the Republican Conference that no Member shall request a congressionally directed spending item, limited tax benefit, or limited tariff benefit, as such items are used. . . .

Et cetera.

So what was in this omnibus bill? Let me give you the best example: \$225 million for a ship called a joint high-speed vessel, for a ship the Navy did not want. No one asked for this.

We had hearings in the Armed Services Committee on shipbuilding. We examined all of the proposals. Some of them we didn't accept. Others we did. Others, through votes in the committee, debate, and discussion, came up with our shipbuilding authorization.

So what was done in this Omnibus appropriations bill by the Appropriations Committee? For the second year in a row, \$225 million the Navy did not request and did not need.

By the way, my friends, I would not take too much time in the Senate, but building a ship is just the beginning of the expense. You have to man it, you have to put the ammunition on it, you have to put the equipment on it, and you have to operate it for as long as 30 years, and the Navy did not want it. The Navy has lots of unmet military requirements. So what was put in there and why? Because, frankly—and I use these words without reservation—it is made in Mobile, AL. It is made in Mobile, AL. It is blatant. It is blatant. And then, of course, there were so many other items in it.

It is like any other evil. First you condemn things. Then you condone them. Then you embrace them. There is no better example of that than the so-called money for "medical research." In fact, years ago somebody decided: Hey, we will spend some money for medical research on some of the illnesses that affect the men and women in the military. I don't take exception to that. But it grew and grew and grew and grew and grew.

Now, in this bill, \$1.2 billion extra—not million but billion dollars—is asked for. Let me give examples: \$120 million for breast cancer, \$12 million

for lung cancer, \$6 million for multiple sclerosis, \$20 million for ovarian cancer, \$7.5 million for epilepsy, \$12.9 million for HIV/AIDS. My friends, all of those are worthy causes. All of those should probably be funded.

We should do all those things, but not on the Defense bill. It was not authorized and was jammed in for the Willy Sutton syndrome. The Willy Sutton syndrome is about the famous bank robber who, when asked why he robbed banks, said: That is where the money is. Well, the defense appropriations is where the money is.

So here we have, over the last 23 years, as it has grown and grown and grown, just \$2.4 billion of the \$10 billion spent on these congressionally directed medical research programs being relevant to the military. In other words, \$7 billion went to research things such as osteoporosis and mad cow disease instead of training, equipment, and care for our troops and their families.

We do not have enough money to care for the men and women in the military and take care of their families and take care of their medical needs. We don't have enough money for that as a result of sequestration. So what did they do? They put in \$1.2 billion more in medical research.

There are a few other examples. There is an additional \$7 million in funding for a machine gun. These guns are made with a 500-percent increase. There is \$750 million for a National Guard and Reserve equipment fund and \$600 million in additional funding for DOD's science and technology budget.

This is very interesting, my friends, this science and technology budget. Here is what happens. They put out \$600 million, and it is supposed to be for "scientific and technology research." But it doesn't say for what specific item. So what happens is the members of the Appropriations Committee then write to the Department of Defense and tell them to spend certain money on certain projects. That is the way of getting around the letter of the earmark ban if not the spirit of it.

Then, of course, there is the Russian rocket. Today we are having to use for space launches Russian rocket engines. The company that makes these Russian rocket engines happens to be run by cronies of Vladimir Putin. In fact, two of the cronies of Vladimir Putin are such thugs and gangsters that they have been on our sanctions list. We have sanctioned them. Yet our friends on the Appropriations Committee, again, with ULA—the people who are buying these rocket engines—are based in Alabama and, of course, headquartered in Chicago, IL. The engines, as I mentioned, are manufactured by this Russian company that is controlled by a guy name Chemezov and a guy named Rogozin, who have been sanctioned. Yet we are sending tens of millions of dollars to them.

What we did was we restricted the cost and encouraged the competition, and we had hearings on it. It was a big issue. We had votes in the committee on it, we discussed it and we debated it. And so what did the appropriators do? They put a provision into this bill reversing what we authorizers did. That is in complete violation of the rules of the Republican conference.

So I have talked very often with our twelve freshmen. I can't be more proud of what these freshmen Senators have brought to this conference. They have brought enthusiasm, they have brought knowledge, they have brought youth, they have brought military experience—people like Senator ERNST and Senator COTTON and others who bring their military experience. I am so proud to have many of them serving on the Armed Services Committee. I have asked them to get together and condemn this. I campaigned for almost all of them. They promised the people of their States, as I promised the people of my State, that I wouldn't allow this waste of billions of their tax dollars, that I would fight against it. So I am asking our freshmen Senators to join together—and I hope they will because I have had conversations with them—to reject this, and, if we go into another appropriations omnibus, that they will not allow this to happen.

Why did I focus my comments on defense? It is for two reasons. No. 1 is obvious. I am chairman of the Committee on Armed Services. So I take strong exception when the men and women who are serving in the military are having to leave the military involuntarily because we don't have enough money, yet they are wasting billions—billions—of taxpayer dollars. Second of all, it is not right. It is not right. And thirdly, we authorize—we authorize—and our bill is passed by the Senate and the House, for 53 straight years, and signed by the President of the United States.

This bill is important to defend the Nation. When our careful deliberations, our votes, our hearings, our debates day after day on the floor of the Senate as we consider the authorization bill is then overturned—overturned—and pork barrel projects such as a \$225 million extra vessel the Navy neither needs nor wants are added to it, then, my friends, do not be surprised when we have an approval rating of 12 or 13 or 14 percent.

The American people are smart. Our constituents are smart. When they see billions of dollars wasted in this fashion, it is no wonder we receive their condemnation and their sarcasm and their disapproval.

So I am asking my freshmen colleagues to take the lead—to take the lead because they are the ones who are closest to the people—and to help me reject this corrupt process. And it is corrupt.

I want to also assure all of my colleagues that if they try this again—if they try this again—I will do everything in my power—everything in my power—to make sure it is reversed or that it never happens to start with. We owe the American people much better than the process I just described.

Mr. President, I note the presence of the senior Senator from Texas, and I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I thank my friend, the senior Senator from Arizona, for his great work over the years, and particularly now in the Committee on Armed Services, which he chairs. He has been tenacious in his attempt to make sure that no dollars are inadvertently or unknowingly wasted, especially when it comes to the Pentagon.

I, for one, believe this is the No. 1 priority of our country. I know he shares that view. But it is pretty hard to make the argument that we ought to continue to give more money to the Pentagon if the money is not being used efficiently, either because of their internal administrative problems or for some other reason.

I know, because I happened to be at the Pentagon this morning, that many of our military chiefs are concerned that the things that are being put in appropriations bills are not things they actually want or need and that there are other priorities. The best way to get those vetted is through the Senate Committee on Armed Services and working with the Appropriations Committee to make sure the money is being used as efficiently as possible and not wasted—certainly not on things the military doesn't want or doesn't need.

So I thank my colleague for his continued leadership.

Mr. President, I wanted to talk about a few topics here. No. 1 is the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, the legislation we have been working on now for 2 weeks. Anybody who has been listening understands the importance of this legislation, which will help stem the tide of the massive epidemic of opioid prescription drug abuse and heroin abuse that continues to claim lives across our country.

This bill is actually a good example of how the Senate can work in a bipartisan fashion to advance good policies that positively impact the lives of ordinary American citizens. I know most people in this polarized environment are not aware of this bipartisan work we have been able to do over this year and last year, but we have actually done a number of good things. Some, if you told them, they might not even believe it, but to the people who are open to the facts, I think this is another good example. Of course, in this instance, it has been the result of the strong leadership of the junior Senator

from New Hampshire, Ms. AYOTTE; Senator PORTMAN of Ohio; the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the senior Senator from Iowa, Mr. CHUCK GRASSLEY; along with our Democratic counterparts, people like Senator WHITEHOUSE.

I am hopeful this legislation will contain an amendment I offered last week to help those who struggle with both substance abuse and mental illness. It is estimated that more than 10 million Americans suffer from both addiction and mental health disorders. These are called co-occurring disorders. It is a fact that many people who don't otherwise get treatment for their mental health problems try to self-medicate, making their lives even more complicated and worse, and that is what this amendment is designed to address.

Many mental health and substance abuse services, like specialty courts, have operated on separate tracks, and they only treat one part of the problem. This amendment really isn't all that earth-shaking. All it would do is make the commonsense link between mental health and substance abuse, something that we direct our existing criminal justice programs to apply to these coexisting disorders as well. That way people who struggle with both addiction and mental health problems can have both of those problems addressed using the money we are already appropriating and already spending in grants to local law enforcement and medical providers.

It would also expand substance abuse and transitional services to help those suffering from co-occurring disorders to receive the treatment they need to recover. So I look forward to voting on this legislation and getting it passed soon.

I would note that we are having a few bumps along the way, in terms of our Democratic friends allowing votes on amendments. There are apparently about 25 different amendments that have been negotiated between the Republicans and Democrats, but I am told our Democratic friends are objecting to any amendments by Senators who happen to be running for election in 2016.

Now, the Democratic leader, in a fit of candor the other day, said they were going to object to an amendment authored by the Senator from Wisconsin, Mr. JOHNSON, because he is running for election. Well, I would ask them to back off of that sort of political hardball and to let us get our work done.

It doesn't help when they object to noncontroversial amendments or they take certain amendments hostage because they do not want somebody to score points by getting something done. I mean that is why we are sent here; it is to get things done for our constituents.

Regarding the amendment I mentioned just a moment ago, that appar-

ently is one of those being held hostage. I would like to share a letter from the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the American Correctional Association, and the National Association of Police Organizations that supports the amendment I just talked about. If the Democratic leadership will not listen to me, maybe they will listen to them. I hope they will listen to the voices of the families who suffer from mental illness and to law enforcement officials.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MARCH 2, 2016.

Hon. JOHN CORNYN,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR CORNYN, On behalf of the undersigned mental health, substance abuse and criminal justice organizations, we are writing to express our support of the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Act amendments to S. 524, the Comprehensive Addictions and Recovery Act (CARA).

Approximately 65% of persons incarcerated in jails and prisons across the United States have substance use disorders. Many of these individuals have co-occurring mental illnesses such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, or schizophrenia.

It is further estimated that 2 million people with serious mental illness are admitted to jails across the U.S. each year. Twenty percent of all inmates in state and federal prisons, approximately 314,000 individuals, have serious mental illness. Many of these individuals also have drug or alcohol use problems.

Historically, mental health and substance abuse services have been operated separately, and coordination in addressing the needs of people with co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders has proven challenging. This has been true as well with specialty courts established to address the unique needs of non-violent offenders with substance use disorders (drug courts) or mental illness (mental health courts). Drug courts have frequently not been equipped to address the needs of people with mental illness and mental health courts have frequently not been equipped to address the needs of people with substance use disorders.

The provisions included in the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Amendments would be helpful in addressing these problems.

Section 802 would add "mental health treatment and transitional services for those with mental illnesses or with co-occurring disorders" among those prioritized for assistance when transitioning out of criminal justice systems.

Section 803 would include "training for drug court personnel . . . on identifying and addressing co-occurring substance abuse and mental health problems" to federal criminal justice training priorities.

Section 804 would add grants for developing and implementing specialized residential substance abuse treatment programs that "provide appropriate treatment to inmates with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders or challenges."

Inclusion of these provisions in CARA would be very helpful in fostering positive

treatment outcomes and in reducing recidivism among offenders with mental illness and substance use disorders.

Senator Cornyn, we greatly appreciate your strong leadership on these issues and stand ready to help in any way we can to move them forward.

Please contact Ron Honberg with NAMI with any questions or if we can provide further support.

Sincerely,

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), American Correctional Association, National Association of Police Organizations, TASC, Inc. (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities—Illinois), The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health, American Orthopsychiatric Association.

CALLING FOR APPOINTMENT OF A SPECIAL COUNSEL

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, separately, earlier this morning I joined my colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee to hear testimony from the Attorney General of the United States, Loretta Lynch.

As a former attorney general of my State, I have always taken a great interest in our system of justice at the State level and now certainly at the national level, and I have tried to do everything I can to help strengthen the rule of law and help keep the American people safe, and that includes transparent and fair investigations.

I spent a little bit of time asking the Attorney General this morning about her Department's investigation into the former Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, and her use of a private email server during her tenure. I have talked many times on the floor about my concerns surrounding her use of an unsecured email server. The former Secretary did refuse to use the government server and decided to basically play by her own rules, setting up a server at her home in New York. But the fact is, this sort of reckless conduct put our country at great risk. Several experts from the intelligence community have outlined how her unsecured server left her emails—some highly classified—vulnerable to hacking in cyber attacks. So this is a very serious matter.

Last fall, about 6 months ago, I asked the Attorney General to appoint a special counsel to fairly and fully conduct an investigation. That is because Secretary Clinton is not just a random citizen or former government employee; her case is awfully high-profile. As a result, I think there are many questioning whether she is being treated in exactly the same way as any other citizen would be treated under similar circumstances or whether she is getting some sort of preferential treatment. Because the Attorney General is a political appointee of the President of the United States and given Ms. Clinton's high profile, there are real conflicts of interest and real concerns about politics ahead of justice. Those could be addressed and mitigated by providing a

special counsel, as the law provides, to provide some measure of independence from the Attorney General so the public can have confidence that this case is being treated just like every other case and not with some sort of political favoritism based on a conflict of interest.

This morning, I questioned the Attorney General about recent reports that the Department has granted immunity to the staffer who set up Secretary Clinton's private server.

So anybody listening understands, the only reason immunity would be granted in a criminal investigation is if somebody invokes their Fifth Amendment rights against self-incrimination. But if given immunity, then that individual must cooperate with law enforcement authorities and cannot refuse to answer questions because they no longer have any likelihood or any chance of being convicted of that crime, having been granted immunity.

This does indicate that this investigation has taken on a new level of seriousness, and I suspect the FBI continues to be hard at work trying to get to the bottom of this, as I would expect them to do. I hope this indicates that the Department of Justice is treating this case with the great care and gravity it requires. They are integral to this grant of immunity because the FBI can't do this on their own, and it takes the prosecutors of the Department of Justice to agree to a grant of immunity as part of an investigation.

I still believe the American people deserve an independent investigation, and I will continue to press for the appointment of a special counsel to that end.

MENTAL HEALTH REFORM LEGISLATION

Finally, Mr. President, I want to address another issue I questioned the Attorney General about, and that is about needed reforms to our mental health system. I believe I repeated to her today—I have repeated this story so many times, I sometimes forget when I have said it before. But I recently had a chance to meet with a number of major county sheriffs, and somebody asked me: Would you like to meet the largest mental health provider in America?

I said: Well, sure.

He said: Well, he is over here. It is the sheriff of Los Angeles County.

So the fact is, many people incarcerated in our jails are suffering from mental illness, and they may have committed petty crimes, such as trespassing and the like, but they are not getting their condition treated as long as they are warehoused in jails. Many communities, such as my hometown of San Antonio, TX, have created a model of how to divert people from jail to get their mental health issues treated and at the same time make sure we don't continue this turnstile of people com-

ing in and out of our jails when their underlying mental illness problems are not being treated.

I asked her to take a look at a bill I introduced, the Mental Health and Safe Communities Act, which is designed to help communities and families who are struggling to help their loved ones who are mentally ill. Many families don't have access to adequate treatment or lack the resources to comply with doctors' orders.

The fact is, back in the nineties, back when a major policy change was made in America and people were essentially turned out of institutions where the mentally ill were treated, there wasn't any followup to make sure there was some sort of safety net or some follow-on treatment to make sure their needs were taken care of.

Today, any of us who have walked down the street in a major American city know we have a lot of homeless people living on our streets who are essentially suffering from some form or another of mental illness, and their needs are not being addressed. Some of them, perhaps because they abused alcohol or other drugs in order to try to medicate or take care of their problems on their own, end up committing crimes of one type or another, not necessarily what I would call a serious crime but serious enough to get them arrested and put in jail.

I am hopeful that we will take this opportunity, as we are looking at our criminal justice system at large, along with prison reform and legislation that passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee—which I hope will soon come to the floor of the Senate—to deal with issues like this confluence of mental health and criminal justice in a way that is more enlightened, in a way that is cheaper, and in a way that is more humane and more efficient than simply warehousing people who are mentally ill in our criminal justice system.

We can do better, and I am hopeful that models like those in Bexar County, TX, where mentally ill persons are able to find programs that actually help them solve their underlying problem—those kinds of models are helpful to the rest of the country and to us as we try to craft means for our communities to better care for those suffering from mental illness.

I look forward to moving this legislation soon. The chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, Senator ALEXANDER, tells me he has been working with Senator MURRAY, his ranking member, along with Senator CASSIDY and Senator MURPHY, on another piece of legislation that they are proposing on mental health. My hope is that the group of us who are interested in this issue can cobble together a consensus piece of legislation which the majority leader could then bring to the floor of the

Senate to let us do some additional important bipartisan work to help address this problem.

I don't see any Senator wishing to speak, so I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. TOOMEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CUBA

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, after decades of isolation, we are seeing a measured shift in our policy toward Cuba. We have resumed diplomatic relations, expanded travel opportunities, lifted caps on financial assistance between families, and eased trade restrictions.

I congratulate the administration for spearheading these changes. It took courage to embark on this path. These policy changes are supported by the vast majority of Cuban Americans. They are applauded by sector after sector of the U.S. business community, and they are welcomed by Americans at large, but still it took someone to lead and President Obama did. I applaud him and his administration for doing so.

Make no mistake, conditions are improving for the Cuban people because of these changes. There are some who do not fully appreciate the meaningfulness of this opening to Cuba. They maintain that we have somehow offered concessions to the Cuban Government without benefit to the United States or to the Cuban people. Some contend that we have moved prematurely when human rights issues remain unresolved in Cuba.

To be clear, human rights abuses persist in Cuba. We all seek to remedy these abuses. Yet extending 50 years as the Cuban Government's convenient scapegoat for the failure of socialism is unlikely to yield gains in human rights in the future any more than our policies have done in the past. Instead, this opening to Cuba takes full advantage of the opportunities presented by the failures of socialism. Recognizing the inherent right of Americans to travel to Cuba isn't a concession to dictators. It is an expression of freedom. It is Americans who are penalized by our travel ban, not the Cuban Government.

During my first visit to Cuba in 2001, I told the Cuban Foreign Minister in a meeting in Havana that I was attempting to lift the U.S. travel ban. I added, if the Cuban Government didn't improve its human rights effort, I would seek to lift the entire trade embargo. It was taken as an attempt at humor, of course, but for me it was no joke. I have always believed that denying Americans the ability to travel to and trade with Cuba has done more to extend dictatorial rule on that island

than any other policy we could have adopted.

For far too long U.S. administrations, both Republican and Democratic, have insisted that U.S. measures, such as ending the travel ban or easing the trade embargo, must be met by moves by the Cuban Government to improve the human rights condition of the citizenry. I understand this instinct, but I will submit that ending the travel ban and easing the trade embargo, even when done unilaterally, leads to better human rights conditions in Cuba.

Milton Friedman wrote that economic freedom is “an indispensable means toward the achievement of political freedom.” Far from being concessions to dictators, changes in our policy toward Cuba are reinforcing and advancing opportunities for Cubans in the private sector. Citizens who are totally dependent on government for their livelihood are subject to the whims of all-powerful leaders in a way that those who are economically independent are not.

In a very real sense in Cuba, the economic agenda is the human rights agenda. Recognizing its precarious economic position in recent years, the cash-strapped Castro regime has laid off thousands of government workers and expanded legal opportunities in the private sector. This has given way to a dramatic rise in the number of entrepreneurs on the island who are running restaurants, bed and breakfasts, taxi services, barbershops, beauty salons, and much more. In fact, it is estimated that as many as one-third of Cuba’s 5 million workers are now operating in Cuba’s private sector. This exponential expansion of Cuba’s entrepreneurial class would not have happened were it not for U.S. policy changes in 2009 that has led to an explosion of travel and remittances among Cuban Americans. Some suggest that remittances to the island are responsible for 70 to 80 percent of the capital used in small businesses in Cuba.

Recent changes to U.S. regulations allowing for additional travel and remittances have further expedited the expansion of the private sector in Cuba. Additional regulatory changes, such as allowing the so-called people-to-people exchanges to be conducted on an individual as opposed to a group basis, would propel this movement even further. Again, this entrepreneurial expansion in Cuba has not only given scores of Cubans a better quality of life, it has lessened their dependence on the Cuban Government in a way that has improved their human rights condition.

The recent bilateral air service agreement also represents a key piece to ensuring the continued travel of Americans to the island. This agreement will, for the first time in 50 years, provide scheduled air service between

the United States and Cuba. Frequent and regular travel between the two countries will continue to open economic ties, and it will lead to private sector economic opportunities on the island.

I should note that the administration has done just about all that its authority permits to affect change on the island. In the coming months, it will be up to Congress to take the next steps.

I hope that we—particularly those of us on this side of the aisle who believe so strongly in the value of free markets and free enterprise—will remember these principles as we promote democracy and human rights in Cuba.

Margaret Thatcher famously said: “There can be no liberty unless there is economic liberty.” This statement is as true in Cuba as it is anywhere in the world. It is my hope that this principle will guide our actions as we endeavor to promote freedom and liberty in Cuba.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I am here this afternoon on the floor to join with colleagues as we discuss the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA. I would suggest that from the perspective of families across the country, many would look at this and say this is probably one of the more important pieces of legislation that this Senate could be taking up this year.

If we think about this crisis, this epidemic that we are seeing across the country with opioid addiction, it is probably one of the most pressing public health issues facing American families all across the country. As we have heard from colleagues, this is not just one single State’s issue. This is not just one region of the country. This is across all 50 States. I always like to think that in Alaska, because we are so far away, we are so remote, perhaps we might be insulated from some of the negative aspects of this modern society. In fact, we cannot isolate, we cannot insulate ourselves from the scourge of the drugs and the drug addiction we are seeing.

This addiction does not discriminate. It doesn’t discriminate against any demographic, any group. Again, it can’t be confined to a single geographic region. It impacts young people. It impacts our older people, the lower income people, the middle-income people, and the higher income levels. Those of us who have served our Nation

as our honored veterans, pregnant women, and even newborn babies can suffer from addiction.

The stories we hear when we are back home visiting with our constituents, talking with friends, talking with neighbors, and then hearing these stories recounted on the floor—these are heartbreaking stories that come from all over the country, from the east coast, again, all the way to the most remote villages of Alaska. We have seen and we have heard the pain that opioid addiction causes. It is important that we take action and that we address this issue now before it worsens. Unfortunately, as we see the statistics, that is where it is going, that is the trend, and that is the direction.

The rates of addiction and hospitalization will only continue to skyrocket unless we can throttle this back, unless we can get our hands around it. This is our opportunity not only to treat but to prevent opioid addiction. Lots of numbers have been discussed on the floor about this epidemic that we are seeing, and the numbers really are horrifying. In Alaska, the mortality rates related to opioid and heroin abuse have more than tripled since 2008. In 2015, we had 33 Alaskans die from heroin overdose—perhaps even more that we just haven’t been able to identify. The rates on inpatient hospitalization for heroin and opioid poisoning have nearly doubled since 2008. The cost is over millions of dollars.

As we know, it is often our young people who suffer from addiction the most, and certainly the most directly. Between 2008 and 2013, the rate of individuals between 21 and 29 years old being admitted to treatment centers has doubled. Again, we are talking about numbers, and we are talking about statistics. But we are really not. We are talking about our friends, we are talking about family, and we are talking about neighbors. But we can make a difference if we provide the resources and if we provide the education and the outreach, not just to young people but to all, so that they understand the dangers of opioid addiction.

Unfortunately, some of what we have seen with this addiction is that somehow or another, opioids are viewed as less a health threat because they are prescription. What CARA does, what this legislation in front of us does, is to help address the educational need, provide States and communities with grant options and resources to ensure that all in the community—the educators, the parents, the doctors, other members of the community—have the knowledge and have the tools they need to guide and support young people and the community at large. But it is just so hard; it has been so hard to see families and friends lose their loved ones to addiction.

Over the past several months in the community of Juneau, our State capital, there have been a series of newspaper articles that have chronicled how that community has been impacted by the loss of young people due to heroin. Six young people, all under the age of 30, were lost last year. In September, a young man who was a softball player lost his life due to heroin overdose. Two weeks after that, another family lost a son who was going to film school.

You read the stories, you read the details about the lives of these young people, who could be like any of us until something happens. And what that something is is an exposure to opioids and an addiction that, again, cuts a life short. Those parents of these young people, as parents in States all across the Nation, grieve for the loss of their children and wonder what they could have done to perhaps help save their child's life. Again, the community of Juneau is recounting that, but it is all over our communities.

This drug addiction knows no boundaries. It seeps into and corrodes Alaska's most remote and rural communities. These are communities, I will remind you, where it is not like there is easy access to them. These are communities—80 percent of the communities in the State of Alaska are not connected by road. In order to get to them, particularly this time of year, the only way to get in is to fly in. It is expensive to fly in. In the summer, there are water options, but that too is expensive. So while it is difficult for people to move in and out, somehow or another the drugs are coming in and out. The heroin and the opioid addiction have found their way into these remote communities, leaving families and loved ones scrambling and desperate as they try to help those whom they love.

Unfortunately, the resources we have in terms of any form of treatment centers are so incredibly limited. In one of the communities that is on the road system, the community of Palmer, just north of Anchorage, our largest city, I was at an event this summer. Lots of people wanted to talk to me at this picnic. There was a woman with her daughter who was in her early twenties, and that woman waited patiently, patiently, patiently to be able to speak with me alone. She asked to go off into a corner of the outdoor area that we were in so that she could speak to me about her daughter's situation. Her daughter was an addict. She had been in and out of jail. She had been in and out of treatment. Nothing had worked, and this mother had no place else to go, no place else for her daughter to go. So she, as one mom who cared, was trying to help raise awareness of the lack of facilities, the lack of treatment, and the lack of options for so many in her situation. You lis-

ten to stories like that, and you realize that we must attempt to do all we can.

Granted, we are sitting here in Washington, DC. The Federal Government doesn't always know what is best. We know that for a fact, but how is it that we can help these families, these communities, as they deal with, again, this scourge that has afflicted so many?

We have had some good news in the State of Alaska. Just this week, the Alaska State House of Representatives passed a bill that will remove civil liabilities for providing or administering the drug naloxone to treat opioid and heroin overdose. It was actually the representative from Juneau, Representative Munoz, who spoke to the need for reform and helped lead this important measure. That is on its way to the Governor's desk. Again, I think it is an important option for lifesaving treatment.

As we work together—those of us who have cosponsored the CARA bill and all who have expressed their concern—we know we need to keep the pressure on. We need to keep the momentum up to address this, not only in Alaska but around the country, to fight back, to deal with this addiction we are seeing, and to really attack the issue from every degree. From mental health to criminal justice reform, community programs, educational resources, tools for veterans and pregnant women, addressing this widespread issue with a widespread response is important.

I thank my colleagues who have led on this issue, and the Presiding Officer here today has clearly done just that. I thank the Presiding Officer for his leadership on this.

As I have spoken this afternoon on opioid addiction, and perhaps more specifically to heroin addiction, I always feel compelled to mention that in my State, and particularly in Anchorage, we have seen a spike of "spice" abuse. This is a synthetic marijuana. More and more, we are seeing individuals who are being sent to the hospital. It is our firefighters who seemingly are responding to more spice and more heroin incidents than they are responding to fire calls. Recognizing that it is not just heroin, but it is other drugs that are truly wreaking havoc on our families and our communities, we need to unite together to make a difference.

So I think what we are doing here in this body is a first step. Passing this legislation is an important response, and through what we are doing, we can work to change the direction in which, unfortunately, we have been going.

With that, I yield the floor.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mrs. McCASKILL. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for today's cloture vote on S. 524, the Comprehensive

Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015. I would have voted yea.●

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, today marks the 36th edition of my "Waste of the Week." For those who have been listening I have been down here every week, while the Senate is in session, addressing what has been documented as waste, fraud, and abuse.

I took on a major role when first coming back to the Senate starting in 2011 to deal with the larger issue of our plunge into debt through deficit spending year after year after year. Despite numerous attempts, many of them bipartisan, all blocked by decisions made at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, we have not been able to put in place a reasonable plan—or any plan whatsoever—that would reduce our spending, balance the budget and begin to chip away at this ever-deepening cesspool of debt. It is hurting our economy, and laying a burden on future generations that will have enormous negative consequences.

Given the fact that those larger efforts came to naught, I have decided to start chipping away from the other end of the fiscal spectrum to identify waste, fraud, and abuse, a much more efficient, effective Federal Government and not waste taxpayer dollars that these days are hard-earned and pretty scarce.

This "Waste of the Week" deals with not as substantive an issue as many of these. The speeches talk about a whole range of issues that are taking a lot of taxpayer dollars out of the purses and wallets of our constituents, sent to Washington and simply wasted.

Every once in a while I try to present something that is so ridiculous, so unnecessary, that it catches the public's attention and ought to embarrass every Member of this body. Some arguments can be made about, well, perhaps the Social Security Disability Trust Fund could be adjusted so we wouldn't do this or that. But every fourth or fifth time down here I like to throw out something where people say: Are you kidding me? We are actually using our hard-earned tax dollars to do this?

One that caught the most attention was the grant that amounted to hundreds of thousands of dollars to determine whether a massage made you feel better after an expenditure of physical effort. If they were asked that question, there is probably no one in America who would not conclude that. They

would say, yes, that works. I'd prefer a massage over no massage at all. But this grant was used to determine that.

Rather than take a human subject, they used mechanical massages on the backs of white rabbits. Actually, these rabbits were from New Zealand. Then they looked at the grin on the rabbit's face—I don't know how they determined it. Rabbits can't turn around and say: Yes, that feels good. Apparently they made some kind of measurement, and after spending about \$400,000, came to the conclusion that, yes, it really works. Well, that caught people's attention.

There are a lot of people who are outraged at the way we are spending their money. There are people trying to make their mortgage payment, trying to get to the end of the week for the next check, to buy groceries, or to set aside money for their kids to go to school.

This is one of those weeks where I want to bring forward yet another issue of "Can you believe this is how the Federal Government is spending your money?"

I am told by my staff that there is a new word around called "hangry." It means that if you are hungry, you tend to get a little bit disjointed, and you are more angry than you would be if you were not hungry. I suppose that is something we could easily prove by all of us just asking: What is our disposition when we are hungry? Are we a little more tense or a little more quick to trigger in terms of getting upset about what someone may say to us or something like that—a little more irritable.

So this new generation has taken this condition called hangry, which is hungry and angry, and turned it into the term "hangry." The National Science Foundation said: Well, we better find out whether this is true. So they issued a \$331,000 grant for researchers to study whether "hanger" actually occurs. If you get hungry, do you end up feeling "hangry"? That was the question. So researchers issued a \$331,000 grant for the study on married couples. Listen, you can't make this stuff up. They came up with the idea of giving each spouse a voodoo doll, and if they felt they were angry, they were to take a pin and stick it into the voodoo doll. They each had their own voodoo doll. Like I said, you can't make this stuff up. It only cost \$331,000.

So whenever a spouse made the other spouse angry, the other spouse grabbed the voodoo doll and grabbed a pin and stuck it in. The conclusion was after a 3-year study and \$331,000 spent—yup, we proved it. "Hanger" occurs when you are hungry.

There are some Senate pages who are trying to hold back their laughter. I see a lot of smiles on the faces of people in this Chamber saying: Surely, this can't be true. Surely, this is made up. Surely, this is a spoof to try to

prove a point. This actually happened, folks. This actually happened.

The serious part of this is that the taxpayer paid for it. At a time when we are trying to repair roads and bridges, when we are trying to put money forward for health care research, when we are dealing with terrorist issues to make sure our national security is strong, when our military is underfunded, when we are trying to deal with all the issues of the day, we are taking this money—and of all things the National Science Foundation could do, they do this.

We take the \$331,000 and add it to our ever-growing accumulation of documented waste, fraud, and abuse of taxpayer dollars. We have now risen to a position of \$157,591 million and change. It is not small stuff. It adds up. This is what your Federal Government is doing, and we wonder why the American people are frustrated. We wonder why they are angry when they hear issues like this.

I am not trying to stoke the flames and make the American people more "hangry." I am simply trying to expose this so we will be so embarrassed with these kinds of things that people will come down to this Chamber and offer legislation to clean up this stuff. We have already made some progress but we can make more.

MIGRATION CRISIS IN EUROPE

Mr. President, I would like to reserve some time to talk about something that I think is very serious, to discuss an issue that I think has an impact on all of us, particularly our national security.

Last week NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Gen. Philip Breedlove, whom I have had the opportunity to talk to a number of times, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee about how he views the threats facing us today and what the most serious threats are to the United States. Featured among them was a serious migration crisis that is destabilizing our European allies. He said:

Europe faces the daunting challenge of mass migration spurred by state instability and state collapse. The influx of people is masking the movements of criminals, terrorists, and foreign fighters. Within this mix, ISIS [or ISIL] . . . is spreading like a cancer, taking advantage of paths of least resistance, threatening European nations and our own [nation] with terrorist attacks.

Each day as we watch on television or read in the papers, this migration crisis continues to grow worse. Efforts by the European Union to stem the tide have failed to even slow down the flow of refugees and migrants. These repeated failures, now moving into its second year, are threatening to break the European Union apart as each member country resorts to a "fortress Europe" mentality, enforced by national means. These include new razor wire barriers along internal EU bor-

ders. They encourage divergent national policies on refugee admissions that make almost a mockery of EU policy consensus or even common efforts.

The EU agreement on common borders—described as the Schengen Agreement of 1985—has been considered the bedrock of European unity. If this fundamental agreement is crushed by the unsupportable weight of hundreds of thousands of desperate migrants, how can the European Union itself be saved? That is the question.

Many of our European friends are asking that question. I was recently in Munich at a security conference, and representatives from all the European nations were there. The No. 1 topic was the flow of migration and the destabilization of Europe and the unity of Europe, nations not abiding by their earlier commitments to receive migrants, nations raising barriers and building walls—whether they are razor wire or concrete walls—around their borders. It is creating a major crisis in Europe.

The political stability and social cohesion of individual European states are clearly under strain. We have seen street riots and police suppression. Growing hostility between citizens and migrant groups is spreading like wildfire. Extremist political groups are feeding on this chaos and further threatening democratic institutions. Even in Germany, an extremist right-wing, basically fascist party has grown its population from zero 4 years ago to 15 percent to 20 percent today, taking over in many places as the third largest party in Germany. We all know that after key state elections this weekend, this may be growing.

The latest EU effort to come to grips with this enormous problem is continuing at a summit meeting this week in Brussels, with attendance by Turkey. The draft agreement on the table shows how desperate the Europeans have become. Without discussing the detailed items here, it is sufficient to note that the central proposition under consideration is this: a convoluted system to send some migrant refugees from Greece back to Turkey in exchange for other migrants to be resettled directly from Turkey to European countries. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other refugee organizations have denounced this proposal as unworkable and illegal. Some EU countries, such as Hungary, have even promised to veto this scheme.

Without entirely prejudging a proposal still under consideration, I nevertheless have to guess that even if it is accepted and enacted, it is unlikely to address meaningfully the real dimensions of this migration problem. Something else clearly has to be done. The numbers that are coming in show an ever-expanding number of migrants

seeking relief by taking treacherous routes—many of them guided by criminal elements—into Europe and the European resistance and the instability all of that has provided.

The draft EU-Turkey agreement does include a commitment to pursue another idea, and that is what I want to talk about on the floor this afternoon. I have long advocated this as hopefully a more workable condition; that is, to create conditions in and near Syria that will permit people to remain there in humane conditions of relative safety near their home country, within their own culture. To my knowledge, European leaders as a group have not before committed to pursue this solution, but I have raised it with European leaders personally. The response has often considered the caution that Europe would not be willing to commit the resources necessary for such a solution. I agree that the resources required would be considerable and that the political courage required would be even greater, but, I have argued, what is the alternative? Until political leaders in Europe, and here as well, see that creating safe areas in and near Syria is the only possible solution to this migration crisis, the political courage and vision to take it up will be absent. But now, at least, the Europeans, having failed at a number of other efforts to address this destabilizing problem, are talking about it.

It has always been clear to me that such a solution is far beyond the capacity of Europe alone. It will require the United States and other cooperating powers to work with our European partners to create areas in and near Syria where Syrians can find safety and humanitarian relief.

As difficult as this task sounds—and surely it is—it has been done before. There is a precedent here. The manner in which the international community eventually came to deal successfully with the Bosnian war in the 1990s gives us a useful template for how we can approach the safe-area task in Syria. That template, derived from our Bosnia experience, includes two essential components: the U.N. Security Council and NATO, North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

First, we are going to have to have a clear mandate from the U.N. Security Council creating U.N.-designated safe areas.

Secondly, the U.N. Security Council would have to create a new U.N. protective force. “UNPROFOR” is the term that was used in the Balkans. In the Balkan example, that force was comprised of 40,000 troops from 42 contributing countries. In Syria, I would suggest that such a course would include most NATO countries and especially neighboring Islamic countries. Russia should also be pressed to participate. NATO could take on primary planning and organization tasks.

When I discussed this proposal with Europeans, the first response has been that no one is willing to put troops in the field to fight this war. It is important to emphasize that this UNPROFOR would not be in Syria to fight the war; rather, it would exist to protect the designated safe areas. The force would have policing functions intended to protect and secure the borders and keep radical elements out or under control. That was the model that was put in place in the Balkans. It succeeded. There were some glitches, there were some problems, but it succeeded.

Third, it is obvious that safe areas in Syria would require rigidly enforced no-fly zones authorized by the UNSC.

Mr. President, I have presided a number of times, and when the clerk turns and discusses the timeframe—may I ask whether I am under a time limitation? If so, I ask unanimous consent to extend that for just a few moments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, as I said, it is obvious that safe areas in Syria would require rigidly enforced no-fly zones authorized by the U.N. Security Council. I suggested that with its planning and leadership capabilities and massive resources, NATO should take on that job, as it did in the Balkans. In this role, too, NATO must work creatively to bring in the regional powers in a broad, coordinated effort under NATO leadership.

Fourth, as in Bosnia, the U.N. must mobilize a massive relief effort within Syria led by the UNHCR and similar humanitarian organizations.

The international community must be willing to pay for this important humanitarian effort. We should call for major contributions from the regional states, European countries, and other traditional donor countries long committed to the humanitarian crisis.

Dealing with so many refugees in safe, humane conditions will be expensive, yes, but it cannot be more expensive than the costs already being borne by those destination countries burdened with uncontrolled migration.

In the current discussions of Turkey, the EU has offered 6 billion euros to help them deal with refugees, and Turkey has reportedly demanded as much as 20 billion euros. With such sums being discussed—and they almost certainly are underestimates—the costs for caring for these desperate people humanely, in conditions of safety, and in or near their homeland, are easily justified.

Far greater costs will be incurred if this problem is not dealt with effectively. For example, a collapse of the Schengen system and reimposition of border controls in Europe—a process now underway—could cost as much as 1.4 trillion euros over the next 10 years, according to a recent European Com-

mission report. This is the cost in reduced economic outlook for the region, not including the costs for infrastructure and personnel if the Schengen system is abandoned.

In returning to where I began, the extra security gained by such a solution is beyond price.

I strongly believe the time has now come for us to press vigorously for the safe-area solution to the migrant crisis. The problem is growing far worse with each passing month. Efforts to identify other solutions have failed, and the safe-area proposal may be the only one left standing. Those who are discouraged by the admitted obstacles and great difficulties in pursuing this solution must simply be persuaded to take it up with creativity, determination, courage, and leadership.

I have discussed this proposal directly with Vice President BIDEN, Secretary of State Kerry, Supreme Allied Commander and NATO Commander General Breedlove, and senior European leaders. The Vice President, based on his own experience with the Balkan wars, agrees that the Bosnia precedent could be a useful guide. The general agrees that there are sufficient resources if there is sufficient political will. The European leaders I have spoken with agree that no other alternative is visible at this time. That they included this idea in the negotiations with Turkey is a positive sign. I intend to keep these discussions going in coming days.

In conclusion, I am under no illusions about how difficult this task would be for either us or our allies. It is an enormous undertaking, and even when it does not address the underlying conflict in Syria, which has so far defied all of our best efforts, it is something we must pursue. However, the continuing flow of millions of refugees and migrants is completely unsustainable, posing serious threats to our European friends and ultimately to all of us.

I will continue to press for this and talk to European leaders and others in our country to see this as a necessary, viable, and doable solution to a crisis situation that is having enormous impacts on the stability of Europe and even on the United States in terms of this humanitarian crisis.

With that, I thank my colleague for his patience and allowing me to conclude.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am on the floor for the 130th time in my “Time to Wake Up” series urging us to wake up to the threat of climate change here.

Time and time again, peer-reviewed science demonstrates that carbon pollution from burning fossil fuels is causing unprecedented climate and oceanic

changes. We see the effects already in our farms, our forests, and our fisheries. Yet the Republican-controlled Congress continues to hit the “snooze” button every time an alarm goes off.

Every major scientific society in our country, upon examining the data, says climate change is real and it is caused by our carbon pollution. So do all of our National Laboratories. So do our leading home State universities. The Presiding Officer is from Nebraska, so let me read what the University of Nebraska says on its Web site: “Climate change poses significant risks to Nebraska’s economy, environment, and citizens.”

Another quote: “The magnitude and rapidity of the projected changes in climate are unprecedented.”

The fundamental science of climate change is settled, and the stakes of the climate crisis loom large. In poll after poll, Americans demonstrate they understand the connection between climate change and the role humans play in affecting climate. A recent poll shows that 64 percent of Americans support enacting policies to address climate change and 78 percent of Americans think Federal Government should curb the release of greenhouse gases.

In spite of the overwhelming science demonstrating that climate change is real and the growing awareness and determination of the American public to do something about it, Congress continues to prevaricate. The reason is simple: the power and threats of the fossil fuel industry. But is this strategy, the fossil fuel industry strategy of obstruction and denial, actually self-injurious?

Let’s look at coal. The coal industry—longtime provider of inexpensive yet dirty energy—is in economic decline. Between 2008 and 2014, coal production and consumption have decreased by 15 percent and 18 percent respectively. Analyses by the U.S. Energy Information Administration suggest 2015 U.S. coal production was likely down a further 10 percent, the lowest level since 1986. Coal is losing its share of the electricity market to natural gas and to wind power. From 2002 to 2012, net generation from coal declined by 22 percent and coal-fired electricity, which just 15 years ago constituted 50 percent of the electricity on the grid, now makes up only 33 percent, roughly, and falling. Gas-fired powerplants generated more energy than coal in 7 of the 12 months of 2015. Prior to 2015, gas-fired electricity generation never exceeded coal.

The top four U.S. coal companies—Peabody Energy, Arch Coal, Cloud Peak Energy, and Alpha Natural Resources—produce approximately half of the domestic volume of coal in this country. In the past 5 years, all four companies’ stock prices have crashed. According to a recent report from the

Niskanen Center, a Libertarian-leaning think tank, the combined total revenue of these top producers between 2010 and 2014 declined by approximately 18 percent.

Wall Street giant Goldman Sachs recently delivered more bad news for the global coal market. According to its analysis, “the industry does not require new investment given the ability of existing assets to satisfy flat demand, so prices will remain under pressure as the deflationary cycle continues.”

The coal industry seems divorced from this reality. Consider what Peabody’s CEO Gregory Boyce argued in his company’s 2014 annual report: “[T]hermal coal consumption from the low-cost U.S. regions . . . is likely to increase 50 to 70 million tons over the next 3 years as natural gas prices recover, demand from other regions is displaced, and expected coal plant retirements are offset by higher plant utilization rates.”

Well, the Energy Information Administration disagrees, projecting thermal coal demand growth of just 4 million tons between 2012 and 2018. And remember, this was Peabody Energy’s CEO speaking last week. Wyoming’s *Star Tribune* reported that Peabody Energy’s senior lenders are recommending that America’s largest coal company file for bankruptcy, as Arch Coal, the second largest coal miner in the United States, did in January. Patriot Coal Corporation, Walter Energy, and Alpha Natural Resources have also all filed for bankruptcy in the past year.

The fossil fuel strategy of political obstruction for coal is looking more and more like economic suicide.

In some corners, light is dawning. Appalachian Power president and CEO Charles Patton told a meeting of energy executives last fall that coal is losing a long-term contest with natural gas and renewables. He said this: “If we believe we can just change administrations and this issue is going to go away, we’re making a terrible mistake.”

Well, what if there is an answer to this terrible mistake that is also an answer to climate change. What if we could reduce the amount of carbon pollution we dump into the atmosphere and oceans while helping communities to transition from coal-based economies to clean energy ones, helping coal miners. More and more conservative and libertarian economists are making the case that the ailing coal industry should embrace a fee on carbon.

The idea is simple. You levy a price on the thing you don’t want—carbon pollution—and you use the revenue to pay for things you do want. Greg Ip, chief economics commentator for the *Wall Street Journal* wrote:

The most reliable way to limit the bushing of fossil fuels is to alter market signals so as to divert demand toward cleaner sources of

energy or conservation. We know how to do that: Put a price on carbon dioxide emissions via a tax, or via tradeable emission allowances in a cap-and-trade system. Both incentivize the market to find the least economically harmful way to reduce emissions.

Dr. Aparna Mathur of the conservative American Enterprise Institute conducted an analysis with a colleague from the Brookings Institution showing a carbon fee could reduce emissions, shore up the country’s fiscal outlook, and play an important role in broader tax reform. Dr. Mathur points out: “The fact that we understand better the burden of a carbon tax and how to offset it for low-income households should make us more likely to adopt this policy, not less so.”

In fact, even the fossil fuel industry knows a carbon tax is an effective mechanism to help shift toward a low-carbon energy future. Six of the world’s major oil and gas companies, including BP Group and Royal Dutch Shell, wrote the United Nations last summer saying they could take faster climate action if governments work together to put a proper price on the environmental and economic harms of greenhouse gas emissions. Here is what they said:

[W]e need governments across the world to provide us with clear, stable, long-term ambitious policy frameworks. We believe that a price on carbon should be a key element of these frameworks.

Harvard Professor N. Gregory Mankiw was chair of the Council of Economic Advisers for President George W. Bush, and he served as an economic adviser to Republican Presidential nominee Mitt Romney. He agrees: “The best way to curb carbon emissions is to put a price on carbon.”

With a robust price on carbon, Congress could help coal mining companies, help coal mine workers, and help States and communities with significant coal mining activity. A carbon fee could be used to help coal companies by supplanting current taxes and fees and funding carbon capture for existing operating coal plants. A carbon fee could help coal workers by retraining them for high-paying jobs and providing pension and health care security not available from bankrupted employers. A carbon fee can provide assistance to coal mining communities to help them transition through all the challenges I have described.

A report by David Bookbinder and David Bailey of the Niskanen Center said this:

The coal industry is facing terminal decline. . . . An unfettered chaotic decline of the coal industry would create major social and economic issues such as deep regional unemployment and a multitude of unfunded liabilities, particularly for coal-dependent States.

They point out that there is a way to solve these problems:

Compensation for the losers from government policy action is an important conservative principle.

It is in this spirit that I introduced, along with Senator SCHATZ, the American Opportunity Carbon Fee Act of last year. I call it a carbon fee because none of the revenues would go to fund Big Government. The bill is a simple proposal to cut emissions while raising over \$2 trillion in revenue, all of which would be returned to the American people—no bigger government.

In addition to slashing the corporate tax rate, which the revenues would let us do, and providing families with tax credits beginning at \$1,000 per couple, which the revenues also would allow us to do, the bill would provide \$20 billion of flexible annual funding back to the people through their States to be used to help them through this inevitable transition—this inevitable transition. In coal-heavy States, this money could make the difference for communities that have been reliant on coal jobs.

Arthur Laffer, economic adviser to President Reagan, called our bill a “game-changer.” He said of my proposal: “I applaud Senator Whitehouse’s efforts to reduce carbon emissions while simultaneously offsetting—through pro-growth marginal tax rate decreases—the harm done to the economy by the carbon tax.”

I introduced my bill to start a conversation with Republicans on how best to design a carbon fee to help the economy. I would welcome the opportunity to sit down with any colleague to discuss ways to improve our proposal.

The coal industry in particular has a clear choice: either to keep fighting climate action, keep obstructing, keep their head in the sand, continue to be truculent and obtuse until they crash into more bankruptcy in that unfettered chaotic decline the Niskanen Center predicts or they could embrace a carbon fee and use it to provide for coal communities, to provide for coal workers, to provide for carbon recovery, and to provide for retirees burdened with unfunded pension obligations.

Mr. President, I have put a ladder into the water, and I urge the coal industry, before it goes under, to grab hold.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, our Nation’s Founders fought the British Empire to create an independent nation governed by laws. They fought so their children could be freed from the callous fiats of a monarchy on the other side of the ocean.

Our Founders learned from the excesses and mistakes of European powers and came together to design a new system of government, a carefully balanced system, one of distributed powers and responsibilities, checks and balances. American schoolchildren

learn about the three coequal branches of government and the unique roles they play in maintaining that carefully crafted balance of power.

A strong, independent, and fully functioning judiciary is inseparable from a healthy American democracy. Our Founders wisely reached consensus to create a system wherein the President designates judicial nominees and the Senate provides advice and consent. This prevents undue influence or control by either the White House or the Congress over the Supreme Court. Simply put, the Senate has a constitutional duty to provide timely consideration of any President’s Supreme Court nominees.

Today, I would like to focus on three distinct and complementary reasons why we must fulfill this obligation. First, we should examine the ample historical records available to determine the intent of our Nation’s Founders. Second, we should look at the actual text of the Constitution and the plain meaning of the words in the document we all agree represents the highest law in the land. Finally, we can look at the Senate’s track record and traditions when it comes to considering Supreme Court nominees.

As Senators, we raise our hand and take a solemn oath to defend the Constitution of the United States and faithfully discharge the duties of our office. One of the core constitutionally mandated duties of serving as a Senator is to advise and consent on Supreme Court nominees, and it is not one we can take lightly.

We are fortunate that many of our Nation’s forefathers were prolific writers who left us reams of documents that now help us understand the debates and the discussions that led to our current system of government.

Our Nation’s fourth President and the youngest member of the Constitutional Convention, James Madison, kept a record of the debates that occurred during those formative months of our Nation in the summer of 1787. I urge my colleagues to revisit this record as they consider how to proceed with our Nation’s next Supreme Court nominee.

On June 4, 1787, James Wilson of Pennsylvania—a signatory of the Declaration of Independence and a member of the Continental Congress—argued that justices should be appointed by the executive branch alone and strongly opposed appointments made by the Federal legislature. Madison disliked the appointment of judges by the legislature but also wasn’t satisfied with a unilateral Executive appointment. He ultimately suggested that judicial appointments should be made by the Senate. This issue of judicial appointments was debated vigorously and continued over multiple sessions as delegates traded proposals. Charles Pinckney of South Carolina and Roger Sherman of

Connecticut opposed Wilson and pushed for the legislative appointment of Justices.

Madison, however, moved us closer to our present system by suggesting that only the Senate should have the power to appoint Justices to the Supreme Court and not the House of Representatives.

Nathaniel Gorham, a delegate from Massachusetts, first introduced the concept of appointment by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. This balanced approach resolved the concerns of delegates who believed unilateral Presidential appointments bordered on monarchy, while also addressing the concern that legislative appointments were simply too vulnerable to the fleeting parochial interests that may dominate the discussion on any given day.

Months later, on September 7, 1787, the delegates unanimously agreed on the final language that governs the nomination and confirmation of Supreme Court Justices to this day. Our Founders’ focus on the appointment and confirmation of the Supreme Court Justices was not an academic exercise, nor was it an intergovernmental turf war. It was an iterative, deliberative process with a clear goal: a strong and independent judiciary.

Alexander Hamilton, probably the most prolific of our Founders when it comes to the written word, directly addressed the independence of the judiciary in *The Federalist Papers*. He argued: “Liberty can have nothing to fear from the judiciary alone, but would have everything to fear from its union with either of the other departments.”

Hamilton was concerned that a Supreme Court too heavily influenced by Congress or the White House would not adequately protect the rights and freedoms of the American people. He wrote that an independent judiciary “will always be the least dangerous to the political rights of the Constitution; because it will be least in a capacity to annoy or injure them.”

Tying the hands of the Supreme Court by keeping an empty seat on the nine-member bench amounts to the union between the departments that Hamilton warned us about. Refusing to even consider a Supreme Court nominee strengthens the Senate to the detriment of the executive and judicial branches, throws off a carefully crafted balance of power, and contravenes our Founders’ intent. Some legal scholars, Senators, and members of the judiciary argue that intent is irrelevant and that we should strictly construe the words on the page.

Let’s look at the plain meaning of the constitutional text. Article 3, section 1, states that “The judicial Power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish.”

While lower courts could be established by Congress, the Supreme Court resolves issues between and among the States. It is the highest Court in the land, a Court of finality.

The Constitution specifically addresses the appointment of Justices to the Supreme Court.

Article 2, section 2, states the President “shall nominate”—and I repeat “shall nominate”—“and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall”—and I repeat “shall”—“appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court.”

“Shall” is not a word that is considered ambiguous. Its meaning hasn’t evolved over time. It is not open for interpretation. It is not permissive in nature. It is instructive, and it is clear.

There are many modern-day issues we face that our Founders could have never imagined. We will grapple with novel constitutional questions for as long as this Nation exists. But the question of how Supreme Court Justices are appointed is something our Founders debated, decided, and they enshrined in the Constitution.

The President is required to nominate a Justice, and the Senate has the job of confirming or rejecting that appointment. If the Senate attempts to undermine the President’s constitutional responsibility to nominate a Justice and this body fails to provide advice and consent on that nomination—well, we then have abdicated one of the Senate’s most important and sacred constitutional obligations.

The Senate has a longstanding tradition of swiftly considering and confirming judicial nominees. Presidents and the Senate have historically taken their responsibility to fill the Supreme Court very seriously, even when they were at odds over who that nominee may have been. I am surprised and also disappointed that so many of my colleagues seem to be ignoring their constitutional obligations in a stark departure from the history of the U.S. Senate.

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service, since the Judiciary Committee’s creation 200 years ago, they have typically reported Supreme Court nominations that were opposed by a committee majority to allow the full Senate to make the final decision on whether the nominee should be confirmed.

Let me repeat this very important fact. Even if a nominee was opposed in committee, their nomination was still brought to the floor of the Senate for a vote.

Let’s also consider recent history. Since 1975, the time from a President’s formal nomination to hearing has averaged 42 days. The time from a nomination to committee vote has averaged 57 days. The time from a nomination to floor vote has averaged 70 days.

The current vacancy we are dealing with occurred 269 days before the 2016 election and with 342 days remaining in President Obama’s term in office. Without doing a whole lot of math, it is safe to say that there is more than enough time to nominate, consider, and confirm a Supreme Court Justice before the November election if we move at a deliberate, average pace, on par with what has existed for over four decades.

If the Senate waits for a new administration before even considering a nominee, we will be approaching a full year with an empty seat on the highest Court in the land. Not since the American Civil War has the Senate taken longer than a year to fill a Supreme Court vacancy.

There is a reason that Presidents and the Senate work together and historically do not drag out Supreme Court nominations: An eight-member Supreme Court simply cannot fully do its job. The cases in which the Supreme Court relies on having all nine Justices to break a deadlock are often those that are most contested. They involve timely, novel legal issues and resolve splits between Federal circuit courts.

Legal scholar Justin Pidot recently cited Chief Justice William Rehnquist regarding situations where the court of appeals had arrived at different conclusions about the resolution of legal issues. Rehnquist said: “Affirmance of each of such conflicting results by an equally divided Court would lay down ‘one rule in Athens, and another in Rome,’ with a vengeance.”

Over 30 constitutional law scholars recently echoed that sentiment, writing: “A vacancy on the Court for a year and a half likely would mean many instances where the Court could not resolve a split among the circuits. There would be the very undesirable result that the same federal law would differ in meaning in various parts of the country.”

Federal law is just that: It is Federal. We cannot have one interpretation of Federal law in Michigan, Ohio, and Kentucky and a whole different interpretation of law in Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana.

Previous Presidents have weighed in on the importance of a fully operational Court. President Reagan said: “Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people’s business in that crucially important body.”

I know many of my colleagues in the Senate revere President Reagan, and I wish to repeat his important words that have so much relevance to what we are debating here today. He said: “Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people’s business in that crucially important body.”

In fact, President Reagan was able to make a Supreme Court appointment in

his final year in office. The Senate fulfilled its duties by providing timely consideration of that nominee, Justice Anthony Kennedy.

Forcing lower courts to serve as the courts of last resort empowers congressionally created courts and weakens the Supreme Court in a way that was never intended by the Framers of the United States Constitution.

I wish to remind my colleagues that the Constitution allows Congress to decide how to organize the lower courts. But the Constitution requires—it requires—the advice and consent of the Senate for confirmation of Supreme Court Justices. We must do our job so that the Supreme Court can do theirs.

The American people have elected President Obama to office twice, and he has a constitutional obligation and clear authority to nominate a candidate to succeed Justice Scalia on the Supreme Court.

The Senate has previously confirmed six Supreme Court nominees in Presidential election years, including most recently under President Reagan. There is no reason we should not consider any nominee put forward by the President with a fair hearing and a vote. Each and every Member of this body has the responsibility to thoroughly scrutinize and decide whether or not to confirm the President’s nominee.

I ran for the U.S. Senate because of my desire to serve the people of the State of Michigan. I took an oath, as did every Member of this body, swearing to defend the Constitution and faithfully discharge the duties of our office.

The Senate must honor the thoughtfulness of our country’s forefathers and respect the independence of each of the branches of our Nation’s government. We must also respect the United States Constitution. The role of the Supreme Court is simply too important to our democracy for the Senate to ignore the Constitution and wait nearly a year to do its job.

Members of this body must fulfill their obligations. The Members of this body must honor their duty and uphold their constitutional oath. And the Members of this body must fully consider and evaluate the qualifications of any nominee the President submits.

I look forward to doing my own thorough review of the President’s nominee and working with my colleagues to fulfill our essential constitutional duties.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, last year the law everybody wanted to fix was named No Child Left Behind. Despite many different opinions and many different political attitudes, we got it done. I give great credit to the Senator from Washington, Mrs. PATTY MURRAY, and to the members of our Education Committee, 22 Senators of widely divergent political views, for their willingness to do that.

I often say if all you want to do is announce your opinion, you can do that at home. You can stand on the street corner and preach or you can get your own radio program, but if you want to be a U.S. Senator, after you announce your opinion, you are supposed to get a result, and that means work with other people to identify common areas of interest and see if you can, and we were able to do that with the bill that fixed No Child Left Behind. Not only did we reach a consensus that needed to be fixed, we reached a consensus on how to fix it. The President signed it on December 10. He called it a Christmas miracle. It passed broadly in this body and it had the effect of reversing the trend toward a national school board, of repealing the common core mandate, and of, according to the Wall Street Journal, being the largest devolution of power from Washington to local control of schools in 25 years. So it was a significant bill, and I would argue that no bill that the Congress enacted last year was more important.

This year, I would suggest that if we are successful, that the most important bill that passes this body will be a bill to advance biomedical research, a companion bill to the 21st century cures bill the House of Representatives already passed. That is because this is the opportunity that everybody wants us to take. It is the opportunity to take advantage of the tremendous advances in scientific discovery that have created an environment where we have opportunities to help virtually every American.

We are able to cure some cancers instead of just treat cancers. Children with cystic fibrosis are beginning to be actually cured of their disease, a disease that was completely debilitating. Remarkable advances are being made because of genomic research. We have exceptionally talented people in charge of the agencies in dealing with this; for example, Dr. Francis Collins with the National Institutes of Health and now the recently confirmed Dr. Califf at the Food and Drug Administration. So this is the best opportunity we have to make a mark in the Senate this year to help virtually every American, and we have some catching up to do.

It is rare that I would admit the House of Representatives is ahead of us, but they are. They called their bill the 21st century cures bill. We have a common objective; that is, to get cures, drugs, and treatments through the regulatory process and the investment process more rapidly and into the medicine cabinets of the doctors' offices so they can help people. They finished their work last year. The President has taken the lead. He has called for a Precision Medicine Initiative. It is one of his major initiatives. I talked with him about it last year. I said: Mr. President, we will help you do that, and the way to do it is through our Biomedical Innovation Initiative. What he wants to do, to begin with, is to get a million genome sequenced so that when the Senator from Arizona is sick—which he rarely is, he is in such good health—or I am sick, the doctor may prescribe medicine that fits our own individual genome and not just a medicine that is, in effect, one-size-fits-all. That is just part of the excitement of precision medicine. And then more recently the President has announced the Cancer Moonshot to try to make further advances in that.

There is additional interest on both sides of the aisle in a surge of new funding for the National Institutes of Health, possibly including mandatory funding, if it is properly done, which means replacing other mandatory funding. There is bipartisan interest in that.

But none of that will happen unless we move through our committee and on to the floor and to a conference with the House and on to the President's desk our biomedical research bill, our companion bill to the 21st century cures.

The only way to get support for the President's Precision Medicine Initiative, the only way to get the Cancer Moonshot, the only way to get a surge of funding that may include mandatory funding for the NIH is to pass this bill. Let's be blunt about it.

The good news is, we are making good progress. We are making good progress. I wanted to report to the Senate that this morning we had our second markup, our second meeting of our full committee where we discussed the measure we have been working on for more than a year for our biomedical innovation bill. We have come up with 50 bipartisan proposals that Members have been working on to get patients access to more drugs, cures, and treatments in a safe and effective way. We have held 10 bipartisan hearings on our innovation project, and 6 of those 10 hearings have been on an electronic health care records system. That program, we found, was in a ditch. The taxpayers have spent \$30 million on it to try to draw into it doctors and hospitals to use electronic medical records so that you could take—so you know

what your records are and the doctors could prescribe and diagnosis more easily. The problem was, it wasn't done very well. Stage one was helpful, most of the hospitals and doctors said to me. Stage two was difficult, and stage three, in their words, was terrifying.

Precision medicine will not work unless we have an interoperable electronic health care records system that has as its goal simplifying what happens in the doctor's office or the patient's bedroom in such a way—both with devices and with data—that people can make sense of it. It will improve the practice of medicine. It will reduce the huge amount of time doctors are spending on documentation. Some doctors say they spend 40 or 50 percent of their time doing that. If they are doing that, either they are doing something wrong or the government is doing something wrong, and my guess is we are. That is my guess. So we set out this year to take several steps to change that.

The administration—and I will give them credit—has gotten the message as well, and they, including Dr. DeSalvo and Secretary Burwell and Andy Slavitt, the head of CMS, have made a priority of trying to take this electronic medical records system and get it back on track so that doctors and physicians will see it as an opportunity and not as a burden.

We have several steps in our legislation that will help make electronic medical records work better. They include giving agencies more flexibility for alliances like the Vanderbilt-Google partnership that was announced the other day. They include dealing with the privacy issues that occur when you get a million genomes sequenced. They include encouraging interoperability and data sharing that is essential to doing this. So we are all working together to do that, but it will be necessary to pass our bill for electronic medical records to move more rapidly, and it will be necessary for the electronic medical records system to work if the President's Precision Medicine Initiative is to work.

Last month we had a markup in our committee where we considered 15 of our bipartisan proposals and 7 bills, and we passed them all. The bills will mean better pacemakers for Americans with heart conditions, better rehabilitation for stroke victims, more young researchers entering the medical field, and better access for doctors to their patients' medical records, as I just described. And for the parents of a child suffering from a rare disease like cystic fibrosis, the bill from Senators BENNET, BURR, WARREN, and HATCH increases the chances that researchers will find a treatment or cure for your child's disease. That was the good work in the committee last month.

Today, we met all morning and we considered 7 more bills, and about 15

more proposals were incorporated in those bills. Each of those bills, the Senators feel, is an important step forward. For example, Senators CASEY, ISAKSON, BROWN, and KIRK offered a bill, which was passed, to create drugs to treat or cure rare diseases in children.

Senators BURR, BENNET, HATCH, and DONNELLY proposed, and it was passed, to create a new system for breakthrough devices that is similar to the breakthrough for drugs that Senator BURR and Senator BENNET and others worked on in 2012, and that has shown such promise and such results. Everyone is pleasantly—I wouldn't say surprised, but maybe surprised by how many new drugs have been approved by the FDA using the breakthrough process from 2012. We hope the same will be true with the breakthrough process for devices.

Senators BENNET and HATCH offered a bill that will remove the uncertainty in the definition of "medical devices" that was adopted in 1976. Most people didn't even know what software was in 1976.

Senators BURR, CASEY, ISAKSON, and ROBERTS had a bill to spur the development to save the lives of victims of bioterror.

Senators ISAKSON, CASEY, DONNELLY, and ROBERTS offered a bill to prevent the promising new field of combination products from getting caught in red-tape at the FDA. By combination products, I mean devices and drugs together.

A bill from Senators WICKER, KLOBUCHAR, BENNET, COLLINS, and FRANKEN would increase the say patients would have in the FDA approval process about treatments received in a clinical trial.

Senators FRANKEN, NELSON, ISAKSON, and BROWN had a bill to encourage companies to develop a treatment, cure, or vaccine for the Zika virus.

These were all adopted, but for these to become law, we have to pass our bill. We have to bring it to the floor this year, and we have to do it in a bipartisan way and pass our bill.

At 3 markups—our third one will be in April—we will consider 50 proposals, and every single one of them has bipartisan support. There are two or three areas where we have a difference of opinion. I am glad to see the Senator from Illinois is here because one of the areas we discussed this morning is one where he has been very important, and that is to have a surge of additional funding for the National Institutes of Health. Numbers of us were very proud of the work Senator MURRAY, Senator BLUNT, Senator DURBIN, and others did to make sure that we had \$2 billion more in the regular appropriations last year for the National Institutes of Health—very important.

A number of us believe that it would be appropriate in connection with this

innovation legislation to have a surge of additional funding for specific projects at the National Institutes of Health but not at the expense of a steady increase in the regular discretionary funding. There are a variety of reasons for that. I won't go into them all today because the Senator from Illinois may want to speak. But if we are talking about mandatory funding, mandatory funding is already out of control, and the President's new budget has \$682 billion of mandatory funding in it. It also has new taxes to pay for it, which the Congress isn't going to adopt. The more responsible proposal would be to reduce mandatory funding by \$682 billion.

In any event, if we have any mandatory funding, it needs to replace other mandatory funding. And we don't want to create a situation where anyone gets the idea that mandatory funding is a substitute for steady increases in discretionary funding, which has happened before. As Senator BLUNT pointed out this week in our appropriations hearing, when the Congress put in the mandatory funding for community health centers and the National Health Service Corps, the discretionary funds started to dry up.

So we have different proposals for how to deal with this. The Democratic Senators on our committee have recommended \$50 billion over the next 10 years. I recommended an NIH innovation fund which would create a surge of funding for high-priority initiatives at NIH, including the President's Precision Medicine Initiative, the Cancer Moonshot, the BRAIN Initiative, Big Biothink Awards, and a Young Investigator Corps. It would be in addition to discretionary funds, not a replacement for them.

So my hope is that Senator MURRAY and I and our committee can work together over the next 2 or 3 weeks and complete our work on our biomedical research legislation by our markup on April 6. I hope we can come to the floor and present to Senator MCCONNELL, the majority leader, along with that, a bipartisan consensus for an additional surge of funding, including mandatory funding for medical research in the areas I have suggested. I have said that we will need to replace other mandatory funding in order for it to be considered. I hope we can work that way in the committee, and I hope the Senate will look forward to receiving this.

I will conclude by simply saying that last year I believe no bill was more important than we worked on in the Senate than the bill to fix No Child Left Behind. It affected 50 million children, 3.5 million teachers, and 100,000 public schools. The only reason it happened was because we had Senators of very different backgrounds and attitudes and political differences who agreed that a result was more important. The same here. The opportunity everybody

wants us to take this year is to take advantage of this magnificent scientific revolution and encourage the research and the other steps we need to take to move treatments and cures and drugs into the medicine cabinets and the doctors' offices more rapidly, in a safe and effective way. I believe we can do that. I hope our work is finished by early April. I hope it is bipartisan.

I look forward to the opportunity of being able to say later this year that the most important bill the Senate worked on with the House and the President is this 21st century cures idea. The House has done its job. The President is out front. We need to catch up. I am convinced we can.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

MR. DURBIN. Mr. President, having followed my friend and colleague from Tennessee, Senator ALEXANDER has spelled out an exciting possibility, and I know it won't be easy. It is a heavy political lift. But what he is talking about is coming up with a dramatic commitment of funds for medical research for the next 8, 9, or 10 years, over and above the ordinary budget of the National Institutes of Health.

We have sat down and talked about this several times, and I wholeheartedly endorse not only his concept but also when he gets down to specifics. Some of the things he wants to focus on, including the Moonshot for Cancer, for example, is one, of course, the President and the Vice President and the vast majority of Americans would endorse because there isn't a single one of us who hasn't been touched by the threat or the actual disease of cancer among our families and friends.

I won't go through the entire list, but whether we are dealing with the issues involving the brain, including Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, neurological issues—there are so many needs there, and I wholeheartedly endorse what he is setting out to do. On a bipartisan basis, I will work with him and Senator MURRAY and Senator BLUNT and Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM. We all share these feelings, that this is something that will be a legacy item for this Senate.

I thank the Senator from Tennessee for his leadership and his cooperation in building up the budget for the National Institutes of Health research this year. The \$2 billion will make a difference. I thank the Senator for being on the floor.

LEAD CONTAMINATION

MR. President, I would like to address a couple of issues.

The contaminated water crisis in Flint, MI, is a wake-up call across America. We have to have protections

in place when it comes to lead contamination. My heart goes out to people in Flint, MI, dealing with the consequences of this preventable, man-made crisis. The Senate needs to do something to help the people of Flint. We must also recognize that children across America are poisoned every day by lead, and we need to do something about it to protect these families.

A Chicago Tribune reporter, Michael Hawthorne, recently authored some articles on this issue, revealing hundreds of cases of childhood lead poisoning stemming from different sources in Flint, such as lead-based paint in federally subsidized housing. That's right—housing we own as taxpayers, housing we manage as the Federal Government, and housing which is dangerous to the children who are living there. Exposure to high levels of lead poisoning can be devastating to a child, causing irreparable damage. Because the children who live in this housing are from low-income families—many minority families—lead poisoning can further trap these kids in the cycles of poverty, violence, and inequality. Families are often stuck in the homes even after the lead is discovered with no place to go.

That is why Senator MENENDEZ from New Jersey and I joined together to offer the Lead-Safe Housing for Kids Act, to ensure safe and affordable housing by reducing the threat of lead exposure and lead poisoning. Congressional Representatives KEITH ELLISON, MIKE QUIGLEY from my State of Illinois, BRENDA LAWRENCE, and DAN KILDEE have introduced companion legislation in the House.

Since the enactment of Federal lead policies in the early 1990s, lead poisoning rates have fallen. This is a big success story. However, the risk of lead poisoning from lead-based paint hazards found in homes continues to threaten kids who are living in homes built before 1978. This is especially true in Illinois. It is a problem in Cleveland, Baltimore, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and many other cities.

HUD regulations are outdated, ineffective, and based on old scientific discoveries that haven't been updated. Under current HUD regulations, a landlord is not required to remediate a home to make it safe where lead-based paint hazards have been found until a child's blood lead level is 20 micrograms of lead per deciliter. That standard from HUD is four times the standard of the Centers for Disease Control. When I asked Secretary Castro of Housing and Urban Development why would we have such a disparity—why would you allow lead contamination in a child four times the level of what the Centers for Disease Control says is acceptable? He said: I have no answer, and we are going to change it. It is just wrong. I salute him for acknowledging that, and I hope to help him in any way I can to change this regulation.

We also need better inspections. Inspections to qualify to be a part of a Federal housing program are cursory visual inspections. There is no way to discover lead paint that can be dangerous to household members or kids unless you have a thorough inspection. In addition to that, once we discover there is lead in the residence, we have to find another place for the family to live unless that lead can be remediated quickly.

No one knows this better than Lanice Walker. She moved out of public housing in 2012 and into a home with a housing choice voucher. What an opportunity for her family—a new home. Less than 5 months after she and her family moved in, her 4-year-old daughter was diagnosed with lead poisoning. Lanice was aware of the dangers of lead in kids. She asked the Chicago Housing Authority for permission to move. They said no. Why? Because her daughter's blood level hadn't met the HUD standard. It met the CDC standard, which was one-fourth, but hadn't met the HUD standards. So despite her daughter having a blood lead level twice that of what the CDC considers to be dangerous, they wouldn't move her out of her house. So she stayed. Within the next year, another child in the house was diagnosed with lead poisoning, too, and then another one. Before she moved out, all nine of Lanice's children had elevated blood lead levels. Even so, she received permission to move only after legal advocates intervened. This could have been avoided if the home had been properly inspected.

Sadly, this isn't an isolated incident. Since 2012, in Chicago alone at least 180 kids in section 8 housing have fallen victim to this mismatch in the blood level standards. After hearing Lanice's story, the Chicago Housing Authority said it would voluntarily recognize the CDC guidelines, even though HUD didn't require them to. That is a good step. However, families all across America need the same relief that will come when HUD standards are changed. That is what this bill is all about. I commend it to my colleagues and hope they would look at it carefully in an effort to ensure that public housing is safe.

What did we learn in Flint, MI? We think 9,000 children were exposed to the lead in the water that has had an impact on them—for some, brain damage that cannot be reversed. Who will answer for the poisoning of 9,000 children? How can we answer to the next generation that faces this hazard if we don't take this important step?

We need to ensure that Federal lead standards are updated in accordance with the best available science, and adopt primary prevention measures to protect children from lead exposure in low-income housing. That means aligning HUD standards with the CDC's standards and requiring a risk assess-

ment before a family moves into a home, and allowing mothers like Lanice Walker to move her family without the fear of losing assistance when a lead hazard is identified.

We all know how destructive lead poisoning is on children and our society. Yet, our federal policies are actually allowing young children to stay in unsafe homes for months after they have been diagnosed with lead poisoning. By updating HUD's regulations, we can protect the most vulnerable children from the harmful, irreversible effects of lead poisoning.

I hope my colleagues will join me in this important effort. American children are depending on it, and they cannot afford to wait.

Mr. President, we have a bill before us to deal with opioids and the heroin crisis. It is a crisis that hit Illinois and hit it hard. Across Illinois we suffered from over 1,700 drug overdose deaths in 2014—a 30-percent increase over 2010; 40 percent were associated with heroin.

Last October in Chicago, in a weekend, we had 74 people die from fentanyl-laced heroin overdoses in 72 hours. The Chicago metro area ranked first in the country, sadly, for total number of emergency department heroin visits. This is higher than New York, which has three times the population. This epidemic demands our attention. We need a comprehensive solution.

First, look at Pharma flooding America with opioids such as OxyContin, hydrocodone, and similar opioid products. In the last year, there was a calculation that there were some 14 billion opioid pills manufactured by pharmaceutical companies in America. That is enough to give every adult person in America a 1-month prescription of opioids. Naturally, everyone doesn't need it, but they keep generating these volumes because the demand is there—not for medicinal purposes, sadly, but for narcotic purposes. The pharmaceutical industry has a responsibility, and doctors have a responsibility. Those pills don't move from the pharmaceutical companies to the end user except with a doctor and a pharmacy in most instances.

Many doctors are too loose in their prescriptions when it comes to painkillers. They prescribe too many pills. I guess somebody makes more money that way, or maybe doctors are not bothered on weekends that way, but, sadly, it puts into circulation a lot of medications that are not needed for pain. Some pharmacies know exactly what is going on as people walk in with scrip after scrip for opioids. They fill them without question. Many States don't have laws to monitor these sales.

Then comes the devastation of opioid addiction followed by heroin addiction. I have seen it across my State. There isn't a city too small or a suburb too wealthy or any corner of my State that

hasn't been touched by this crisis. It is everywhere. Many of the kids that I have seen at these roundtables who have survived it and tell their heroic stories of coming back from heroin addiction—you look in their eyes and say: I would never have picked that kid out of a high school class to be a heroin addict. Some of them have been addicts for years before they finally get the treatment they need.

We need a comprehensive solution to address this crisis. We must prevent drug companies from flooding the market with excessive amounts of addictive pills. We must encourage the Drug Enforcement Administration to use their existing authority to keep unnecessary drugs off the market. We must crack down on doctors who over-prescribe and pharmacies that over-dispense. We must remove barriers to substance use disorder treatments, which is why Senator KING and I introduced legislation ensuring that lower-income patients suffering from substance abuse disorders are able to get the care they so desperately need. And we must put our money where our mouth is. We cannot expect real change to come about through good intentions. We can authorize all the programs we want, issue all the directives we want, cite all the statistics we want, but nothing will change unless we give our Federal agencies and local governments the resources necessary to tackle this complex problem head on.

This bill before us is a step in the right direction. It requires the establishment of a Federal interagency task force to develop best practices for pain management and pain medication prescribing, creates a national drug awareness campaign on the risks of opioid abuse, and authorizes grants to States, locals, and nonprofits to address opioid abuse and fund treatment alternatives.

This bill could have a positive impact on communities in need if we are able to provide the necessary funding. That is why in addition to supporting the underlying bill I also strongly supported the amendment that Senator SHAHEEN offered last week. That amendment would have provided \$600 million in emergency supplemental appropriations to address the heroin and opioid abuse epidemic. These funds would have helped ramp up law enforcement efforts, drug treatment and enforcement programs, and prevention programs through the Justice Department. They would have enhanced prescription drug monitoring programs. They would have improved access to medication assisted treatment services to high-risk areas as well as support school and community partnerships to create safe and drug-free environments and provide additional assistance to States to help pay for prevention and treatment care.

Unfortunately, Senator SHAHEEN's amendment was defeated when a ma-

jority of Republicans decided to vote against it. If we fail to provide the needed resources to help communities and families in need, we may be back here a year from now saying we should have done more. Families in Illinois and across the country can't wait that long.

I support both the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act and the Shaheen amendment. But the bill should also address some of the many issues I have learned about at roundtable discussions in Illinois while talking to families, doctors, law enforcement, and those who have overcome substance abuse addiction.

That is why I introduced several amendments that would have helped improve the underlying bill, from requiring greater consideration at FDA before new opioids can come onto the market, to creating incentives for States to improve their prescription drug monitoring programs, to removing existing barriers to substance abuse treatment for lower-income patients, to requiring greater transparency on how many opioids are being manufactured in the United States annually. I am disappointed that many of these amendments will not receive a vote this week, but I will continue working with my colleagues in the Senate to advance these important proposals.

Let me say that one of the things that has helped is the fact that years ago here in the U.S. Senate, two of my colleagues who no longer serve really did something historic. One was Paul Wellstone of Minnesota, who passed away in an airplane crash, and the other, Pete Domenici, a retired Senator from New Mexico. They required that every health insurance policy in America cover two things that weren't covered by many: one, mental health counseling and the other, substance abuse treatment.

We built that into ObamaCare, so when you buy a health insurance policy in America today, it covers substance abuse treatment as well as mental health counseling. Luckily for many families, when their kids end up being addicted, they can turn to their health insurance, and their health insurance can help pay for substance abuse treatment. We need other sources, as well, when it comes to treatment for Medicaid, but for those who want to repeal ObamaCare and get rid of it, that is another provision to ask them about. Do they really want to get rid of a requirement that health insurance policies cover mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment? I think it is important that we have it. I am not sure what we would do without it.

The opioid abuse and heroin epidemic is a national public health emergency that requires a comprehensive response coupled with the necessary funding to

actually make a difference. The amendments I have filed, as well as the Shaheen amendment, would make important improvements and provide emergency funding to help families in Illinois and across the country. Our communities need us to come together as partners to help solve this problem. I hope we do not let them down.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. President, I see my colleague from Oklahoma is here. This is the last statement I want to make, and it relates to the Supreme Court vacancy.

A group of historians and scholars sent a letter to President Obama about the Supreme Court vacancy occasioned by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia. The signers of the letter include Robert Dallek, Doris Kearns Goodwin, David M. Kennedy, Thomas E. Mann, Norman Ornstein, Geoff Stone, and numerous others.

The letter provides a helpful historical perspective on the decision by the Senate Republican majority to refuse any nominee to fill this vacancy a hearing before the U.S. Senate—something that has never happened in the history of the U.S. Senate.

The Senate Republicans have said to keep that Scalia vacancy right where it is—a 4-to-4 Supreme Court for at least a year longer. We haven't had a vacancy in the Supreme Court for over a year since the Civil War tore this Nation apart over 150 years ago.

This letter that has been sent to the President will be shared here. It makes clear that the actions that are being called for by the Republican majority are unprecedented—unprecedented. They have never happened—the fact that they would refuse to have a hearing for a nominee to fill the Scalia vacancy or a vote on that nominee.

One only has to go back to 1988, not that long ago, when President Ronald Reagan, a Republican outgoing President in the last year of his Presidency sent a name to the U.S. Senate, then in control by a Democratic majority, to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court. Did the Democrats in the Senate in 1988 say to President Reagan: Oh, you are a lameduck. You are going to be gone in a year. We will wait until after the election. No. They said the Constitution requires President Reagan to send the Senate a name, and it requires the Senate to advise and consent, and they did. They had a hearing and they had a vote and Anthony Kennedy, a Ronald Reagan appointee to the Supreme Court, was sent to the Supreme Court by President Ronald Reagan with the support of the Democratic Senate majority. That is consistent with the Constitution.

I hope we can return to that, and I hope that future generations will judge that this Senate under the control of the Senate majority party is going to live by the words of our Constitution.

As I mentioned, a number of prominent historians and scholars from

across the political spectrum sent a letter to President Obama about the current vacancy on the Supreme Court.

This letter provides a helpful historical perspective on the decision by Senate Republicans not to give any consideration to the forthcoming Supreme Court nominee.

The letter begins by saying:

We express our dismay at the unprecedented breach of norms by the Senate majority in refusing to consider a nomination for the Supreme Court made by a president with 11 months to serve in the position. . . .

It is standard practice when a vacancy occurs on the Supreme Court to have a president, whatever the stage in his term, nominate a successor and have the Senate consider it. And standard practice (with limited exception) has been for the Senate, after hearings and deliberation, to confirm the president's choice, regardless of party control, when that choice is deemed acceptable to a Senate majority.

The letter notes that history is, "replete with instances where a vacancy on the Supreme Court was filled during a presidential election year."

This includes 1988 under President Reagan; 1940 under President Roosevelt; 1932 under President Hoover; 1916 for two nominees named by President Wilson; and 1912 under President Taft.

The letter also discusses how President Eisenhower used his recess appointment power in the presidential election year of 1956 to appoint Justice William Brennan. Eisenhower, a Republican, made that recess appointment on October 16 while the Senate was under Democratic control.

The letter says, "there was no objection to Eisenhower's use of the recess appointment—there was instead a widespread recognition that it was bad to have a Supreme Court operate for months without its full complement of nine members."

The letter then shifts from the lessons of history to the logical fallacies of the Republicans' position that a nominee of a so-called lameduck President should not be considered. Here's what it says:

If we accept the logic that decisions made by "lame duck" presidents are illegitimate or are to be disregarded until voters make their choice in the upcoming election, that begs both the questions of when lame duck status begins (after all, a president is technically a "lame duck" from the day of inauguration), and why senators up for reelection at the same time should not recuse themselves from decisions until the voters have decided whether to keep them or their partisans in office.

The letter ultimately concludes that, "the refusal to hold hearings and deliberate on a nominee at this level is truly unprecedented and, in our view, dangerous."

I hope my Republican colleagues heed the words of these preeminent historians.

There will be real consequences if the Senate fails to do its job and leaves a

Supreme Court vacancy open for an extended time.

As President Ronald Reagan said in 1987, quote, "Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body."

Major legal and constitutional questions are constantly brought before the Supreme Court for national resolution. When a case ends up with a tie vote among the Justices, the Supreme Court's ruling has no precedential impact and important questions go unresolved.

As Gregory Garre, former Solicitor General under President George W. Bush, recently said, "the prospect of numerous 4-4 ties or dismissals would be undesirable to the Court."

Millions of Americans are awaiting resolution of the questions that are before the Court. It is not fair to leave them twisting in the wind.

Consider the impact on the efforts of law enforcement to protect our communities.

On February 23, four former United States Attorneys wrote an op-ed in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*.

They said:

For federal prosecutors, agents and criminal investigations, a year is a lifetime. We have seen real threats, whether it is the heroin epidemic or the threat of ISIS recruitment, facing the people in our communities each day. While law enforcement stands ready to protect the public from those threats, they need to know the rules of the road.

The op-ed continues:

The Supreme Court is the ultimate arbiter of the hardest and most important questions facing law enforcement and our nation. Even as we write today, unsettled legal questions regarding search and seizure, digital privacy and federal sentencing are either pending before the Supreme Court or headed there. It is unfair and unsafe to expect good federal agents, police and prosecutors to spend more than a year guessing whether their actions will hold up in court. And it is just as unfair to expect citizens whose rights and liberties are at stake to wait for answers while their homes, emails, cell phones, records and activities are investigated.

We expect our law enforcement agents and prosecutors to do their job every day, even in election years. We should expect Senators to do their jobs as well and fill this Supreme Court vacancy.

Earlier this week, 356 constitutional law scholars wrote a letter to the Senate, explaining that "a long term vacancy jeopardizes the Supreme Court's ability to resolve disputed questions of federal law, causing uncertainty and hampering the administration of justice across the country."

Justice Scalia, in a 2004 memorandum discussing the Supreme Court's recusal policy, noted the problems the Court faces when only eight Justices hear a case. He said that when the Court proceeds to hear a case with eight Justices, it "rais[es] the possi-

bility that, by reason of a tie vote, it will find itself unable to resolve the significant legal issue presented by the case." He then went on to note that under the Supreme Court's Statement of Recusal Policy, "even one unnecessary recusal impairs the functioning of the Court."

Why would the Senate purposefully try to impair the functioning of the Supreme Court by leaving it with only eight Justices?

The Senate should do its job and consider a Supreme Court nominee so the Court can function like it's supposed to. I urge my Republican colleagues to do their job. Give the President's nominee a hearing and a vote.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORPHAN DRUGS

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, in light of recognition of Rare Disease Day, I wish to speak about orphan drug exclusivity and trade promotion authority.

Congress enacted the bipartisan Orphan Drug Act, "ODA", of 1983, Pub. L. 97-414, to address a longstanding unmet need to develop new treatments, diagnostics, and cures for rare diseases and disorders. I am proud to be one of the lead Senate sponsors of the ODA, which was passed with overwhelming bipartisan support. This act and the Rare Diseases Act of 2002—which I also championed—created financial incentives for the research and production of orphan drugs, including 7 years of market exclusivity, tax credits, and research grants, and also established the Orphan Products Board at FDA and the Office of Rare Diseases under the National Institutes of Health.

The purpose of these acts was to encourage the development of new "orphan" treatments, diagnostics, and cures for the millions of Americans with rare disease who lacked access to effective medicines because the existing incentives were insufficient to develop and market drugs for such small groups of patients.

The ODA has been enormously successful. Before Congress enacted the ODA in 1983, the Food and Drug Administration, FDA, approved only 38 drugs in the United States specifically to treat orphan diseases. From the passage of the ODA in 1983 until May 2010, the FDA approved 353 orphan drugs and granted orphan designations to 2,116 compounds. As of 2010, 200 of the roughly 7,000 officially designated orphan diseases have become treatable.

Yet, despite the benefits of these policies, the incentives and access guarantees found in the ODA are not yet part of any free trade agreement negotiations.

The Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015, or TPA, contain a number of negotiating objectives for the administration to follow. For example, the TPA law's negotiating objectives require that U.S. trade agreements provide a standard of intellectual property rights protection that is similar to that found in the United States, which includes providing incentives for biopharmaceutical innovation that are similar to those in the United States. The language in the TPA law is necessarily broad, and although it does not explicitly reference critical incentives for orphan drug development, I want to make it clear that these incentives, including the 7-year market exclusivity at the heart of the ODA, are consistent with the TPA law's requirement that U.S. trade agreements provide a standard of intellectual property protection that is similar to U.S. law.

This is especially important because vital incentives for orphan drug development are lacking in many markets outside the United States, hindering the development of treatments, diagnostics, and cures for rare diseases—particularly diseases endemic to those markets. A lack of incentives for orphan drug development in any one country can have a very real impact on the likelihood of investment into a research or cure for a given disease. Particularly in the case of ultra-rare diseases, those affecting fewer than 1 in 50,000 individuals, there may only be a handful of patients around the world who would benefit from a particular treatment or cure, and removing a number of them from the pool of potential patients may render investments in these therapies untenable and could drive up costs for rare disease patients in the United States.

Therefore, I want to make it clear that I believe it is appropriate for the administration to negotiate ODA incentives and access guarantees, including the 7-year market exclusivity period, in future U.S. trade agreements and that the intent of Congress is that TPA's negotiating objectives are consistent with that goal.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that in the Senate the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA, March 9, 2016.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 15-81, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to Indonesia for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$95 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-81

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

- (i) Prospective Purchaser: Indonesia.
- (ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment *	\$ 80 million.
Other	15 million.
Total	95 million.

- (iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services Under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Thirty-six (36) AIM-120C-7 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAMs), One (1) Missile Guidance Section.

Non-Major Defense Equipment (non-MDE): Control section support equipment, spare parts, services, integration activities, logistics, technical contractor engineering and technical support, loading adaptors, technical publications, familiarization training, test equipment, and other related elements.

- (iv) Military Department: Air Force (X7-D-YAB).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: March 9, 2016

* as defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Indonesia-AIM-120C-7 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAMs)

The Government of Indonesia has requested a possible sale of thirty-six (36) AIM-120C-7 AMRAAMs and one (1) Missile Guidance Section. Also included in this possible sale are: control section support equipment, spare parts, services, logistics, technical

contractor engineering and technical support, loading adaptors, technical publications, familiarization training, test equipment, and other related elements. The total estimated value of MDE is \$80 million. The overall total estimated value is \$95 million.

This proposed sale contributes to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a key partner that has been, and continues to be, an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Asia-Pacific region.

The proposed sale improves Indonesia's capability to deter regional threats and strengthen its homeland defense. Indonesia is able to absorb this additional equipment and support into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support does not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be determined by competition. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Indonesia.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15-81

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology

1. AIM-120C-7 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air (AMRAAM) is a radar-guided missile featuring digital technology and micro-miniature solid-state electronics. AMRAAM capabilities include look-down/shoot-down, multiple launches against multiple targets, resistance to electronic countermeasures, and interception of high flying, low flying, and maneuvering targets. The AMRAAM All Up Round is classified CONFIDENTIAL. Major components and subsystems are classified up to CONFIDENTIAL, and technology data and other documentation are classified up to SECRET.

2. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures or equivalent systems that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

3. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification. Moreover, the benefits to be derived from this sale, as outlined in the Policy Justification, outweigh the potential damage that could result if the sensitive technology were revealed to unauthorized persons.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to Indonesia.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I wish to remember Justice Antonin Scalia and thank him for his service to the Supreme Court and the country.

Justice Scalia was a first-generation American, and his life was a testament to the American dream. A student of

history and the law, Antonin Scalia had a commitment to public service that culminated in his appointment as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court by President Ronald Reagan in 1986.

Justice Scalia served on the Court for almost 30 years and in that time made many important contributions to our legal system. While he had firm convictions, he also loved people and never let ideas get in the way of friendship, most notably with fellow Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Senator Margaret Chase Smith once said: "Public service must be more than doing a job efficiently and honestly. It must be a complete dedication to the people and to the nation."

Justice Scalia believed in that complete dedication. Our thoughts and prayers remain with his family at this time, and we thank him and them for his service.

REMEMBERING SHANE N. YATES

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Shane N. Yates. Shane was the executive director of the Ohio Society of Association Executives. Shane had a fierce commitment to his organization and his profession. Shane had a relentless drive to serve all those he represented and lead all whom he worked with.

Shane was a graduate of Ashland University and earned his certificate in nonprofit executive leadership from Indiana University. Shane was also a chapter adviser for his fraternity, Phi Kappa Psi; a past board member for Meeting Professionals International Ohio Chapter; and a volunteer for the United Way of Central Ohio.

A passionate and high-energy executive with more than 15 years of achievement in association leadership, Shane was named a 40 Under 40 honoree in 2014 by the Association Forum of Chicagoland and USAE. While serving as the director, Shane helped the Ohio Society of Association Executives achieve many milestones while never settling with the status quo.

Shane N. Yates will forever leave a mark on the Ohio Society of Association Executives and all who knew him.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO GORDON STONER

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Gordon Stoner, a wheat grower from Outlook, MT, on his newly elected position serving as the president of the National Association of Wheat Growers, NAWG.

Gordon comes from a long history of farming, managing his own fourth-generation farm near Outlook. Stoner Farms practices no-till farming techniques and grows lentils, corn, oil

seeds, flax, peas, and durum, a high-protein variety of hard wheat that is a rare crop raised in select parts of the world.

Gordon has expressed enthusiasm about NAWG's plan to partner with organizations in an effort known as the National Wheat Action Plan to help come up with new strategies for bringing the wheat industry back to increased profitability.

Gordon has also served in leadership roles with his church, Montana Grain Growers Association, served as chairman of U.S. Wheat Associates Joint International Trade Policy Committee and as director and chairman of NAWG.

Our great State depends on farmers, ranchers, and producers who contribute greatly to the flourishing of our rural communities. On behalf of Montana, I thank Gordon Stoner for his paramount leadership and look forward to seeing the positive impact he continues to have on the wheat industry.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. MARK FOLEY

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Dr. Mark Foley, who has served with great distinction and honor at the University of Mobile for more than 17 years. Dr. Foley has served as president of the University of Mobile since 1998 and is the third president of the university since its founding in 1961. He will be retiring from his post on July 31, 2016.

Dr. Foley came to the University of Mobile during a critical transitional time and led the school through a period of significant growth. Under his guidance, the university has flourished. Facilities have been updated, the school is on more solid financial footing, and programs and the stature of the university have improved.

During his time at the University of Mobile, Dr. Foley led the university to invest \$44.8 million in capital projects, including a recent \$7 million campus enhancement program that thoroughly revitalized the campus. Under Dr. Foley's leadership, the university gained national recognition from U.S. News & World Report, America's Best Christian Colleges, America's Best College Buys, and many more.

Dr. Foley helped to integrate a Christian worldview into all aspects of academics, campus life, and university operations at this quality Baptist-affiliated institution. The university now has more than 1,500 students enrolled in over 40 undergraduate and graduate programs.

A former truckstop operator, Dr. Foley was ordained as a Baptist minister in 1990 after receiving his master of divinity degree from the New Orleans seminary. He received his doctorate from that same institution in 1992 and completed postdoctoral studies in education. Though the university

was struggling with a variety of financial problems when Dr. Foley took over in 1998, he turned the school around. The University of Mobile has continued to thrive under Dr. Foley's tenure.

As a native of Mobile, AL, it has been my honor to work with Dr. Foley and witness the great accomplishments he has achieved at the University of Mobile. His hard work and genuine passion for higher education is apparent and the students of the University of Mobile will miss his leadership. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for all he has done for the university, for Mobile, and for Alabama.

I thank the Chair.●

REMEMBERING SHILOH FOREST SUNDSTROM

• Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the contribution of a young Oregonian whose life was cut far too short, but whose impact will stay with my State forever.

Shiloh Forest Sundstrom, a young leader in the field of conservation-based rural development, was tragically killed by a hit-and-run driver in November at age 34.

Shiloh was a child of Oregon. He was born in the coastal mountains of western Lane County and lived much of his life enjoying all that rural upbringing had to offer. He loved the horses and cows on his parents' ranch and attended school in the small town of Mapleton.

A gifted student, Shiloh was his high school class valedictorian in 2000 and was accepted to Brandeis University. As an undergraduate, he spent a semester abroad at the School for Field Studies in Kenya, where he saw that the struggles of rural communities in Kenya paralleled the problems facing rural Oregon communities.

Studying the ways in which the Maasai people of Kenya struggled to balance their efforts to maintain a traditional resource-based economy while benefiting from wildlife conservation and tourism, Shiloh saw that the positive lessons being learned there could be applied back home in Oregon.

After graduating with honors from Brandeis, Shiloh came back to his beloved Oregon for his master's degree in forestry at Oregon State University. He then moved to the geography department to work toward a doctorate and returned to Kenya several times to pursue his research.

However, Shiloh was much more than a gifted student. He had the rare ability to take his research out of the classroom and work to implement positive change in the broader world. His work with the Siuslaw Institute, founded by his father John Sundstrom, and with the Siuslaw Watershed Council, injected a reasonable approach to often contentious natural resource issues, always with a focus on positive outcomes.

Shiloh always strived for success through collaboration—what I like to call the Oregon way. He was involved in the Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition, RVCC, a network that seeks common ground between diverse interests on conservation-based challenges facing rural areas in the West.

Shiloh's deep ties to rural Oregon, his stellar scholarship, and his worldwide experience gave him a uniquely powerful voice in demonstrating that conservation and economic development can go hand in hand.

The powerful outpouring of sadness at his death shows how deeply Shiloh impacted his community. The lessons that he taught and his leadership will not be forgotten. Shiloh's thoughtful, collaborative approach, his love of the land, and his dreams of a better world will live on in everyone he touched in the short time we were blessed to know him.●

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4664. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fluopyram; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9943-21-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4665. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; New Mexico; and Albuquerque/Bernalillo County; Revisions to Establish Small Business Stationary Source Technical and Environmental Compliance Assistance Programs" (FRL No. 9943-43-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4666. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Base Year Emission Inventories for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone Standard" (FRL No. 9943-46-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4667. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Recovery and State Grants, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife; Designation of Critical Habitat for Lower Columbia Coho Salmon and Puget Sound Steelhead; Final Rule" (RIN1018-BB28) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4668. A communication from the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a re-

port entitled "Third Report to Congress: Highlights of the Diesel Emissions Reduction Program"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4669. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the fiscal year 2015 report of the Department of Health and Human Services' Federal Coordinated Health Care Office; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4670. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2016-0323); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4671. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2016-0324); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4672. A communication from the Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's response to the GAO report entitled "WATER AND SANITATION ASSISTANCE: USAID Has Increased Strategic Focus but Should Improve Monitoring"; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4673. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; HHS Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters for 2017" ((RIN0938-AS57) (CMS-9937-F)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-133. A petition by a citizen from the State of Texas urging the United States Congress to propose, for ratification by special conventions held within the individual states, an amendment to the United States Constitution which would require that at least one of the two houses of Congress approve, by majority vote of all members elected and serving in that body, a reprieve or pardon granted by the President of the United States to a person earlier having been properly found guilty of committing an offense against the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

POM-134. A petition by a citizen from the State of Texas urging the United States Congress to propose, for ratification by special conventions held within the individual states, an amendment to the United States Constitution which would authorize Congress, by a simple majority vote in both houses thereof, to nullify an Executive Order of the President; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BARRASSO, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, without amendment:

S. 1443. A bill to amend the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 to facilitate the ability of Indian tribes to integrate the employment, training, and related services from diverse Federal sources, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-225).

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. ALEXANDER from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

*John B. King, of New York, to be Secretary of Education.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2655. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve the historic rehabilitation tax credit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2656. A bill to prohibit air carriers from imposing fees that are not reasonable and proportional to the costs incurred by the air carriers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. GARDNER):

S. 2657. A bill to require consultations on reuniting Korean Americans with family members in North Korea; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Ms. AYOTTE, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2658. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2016 through 2017, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BURR (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. HELLER):

S. 2659. A bill to reaffirm that the Environmental Protection Agency cannot regulate vehicles used solely for competition, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. REED, Mr. PETERS, Mr.

DONNELLY, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. BROWN):

S. Res. 394. A resolution recognizing the 195th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. Res. 395. A resolution supporting the designation of March 2016, as "National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 553

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 553, a bill to marshal resources to undertake a concerted, transformative effort that seeks to bring an end to modern slavery, and for other purposes.

S. 591

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 591, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the new markets tax credit, and for other purposes.

S. 911

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 911, a bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue an order with respect to secondary cockpit barriers, and for other purposes.

S. 1455

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1455, a bill to provide access to medication-assisted therapy, and for other purposes.

S. 1597

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1597, a bill to enhance patient engagement in the medical product development process, and for other purposes.

S. 1715

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1715, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Pilgrims.

S. 1795

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1795, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax relief for major disasters declared in any of calendar years 2012 through 2015, to make certain tax relief provisions permanent, and for other purposes.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Virginia

(Mr. WARNER), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 2067

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2067, a bill to establish EUREKA Prize Competitions to accelerate discovery and development of disease-modifying, preventive, or curative treatments for Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, to encourage efforts to enhance detection and diagnosis of such diseases, or to enhance the quality and efficiency of care of individuals with such diseases.

S. 2147

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2147, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 with respect to participant votes on the suspension of benefits under multiemployer plans in critical and declining status.

S. 2226

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2226, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the residential treatment programs for pregnant and postpartum women and to establish a pilot program to provide grants to State substance abuse agencies to promote innovative service delivery models for such women.

S. 2426

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2426, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

S. 2441

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2441, a bill to provide that certain Cuban entrants are ineligible to receive refugee assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 2468

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2468, a bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a 5-year demonstration program to provide grants to eligible Indian tribes for the construction of tribal schools, and for other purposes.

S. 2473

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr.

GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2473, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide veterans the option of using an alternative appeals process to more quickly determine claims for disability compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 2487

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2487, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

S. 2596

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2596, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit veterans who have a service-connected, permanent disability rated as total to travel on military aircraft in the same manner and to the same extent as retired members of the Armed Forces entitled to such travel.

S. 2621

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2621, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to genetically engineered food transparency and uniformity.

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2621, *supra*.

S. 2645

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 2645, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

S. RES. 383

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 383, a resolution recognizing the importance of the United States-Israel economic relationship and encouraging new areas of cooperation.

S. RES. 391

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 391, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate to oppose the transfer of foreign enemy combatants from the detention facilities at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to the United States homeland.

AMENDMENT NO. 3411

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3411 intended to be proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

AMENDMENT NO. 3435

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3435 intended to be proposed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 394—RECOGNIZING THE 195TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF GREECE AND CELEBRATING DEMOCRACY IN GREECE AND THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. REED, Mr. PETERS, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. BROWN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 394

Whereas the people of ancient Greece developed the concept of democracy, in which the supreme power to govern was vested in the people;

Whereas the founding fathers of the United States, many of whom read Greek political philosophy in the original Greek language, drew heavily on the political experience and philosophy of ancient Greece in forming the representative democracy of the United States;

Whereas Petros Mavromichalis, the former Commander in Chief of Greece and a founder of the modern Greek state, said to the citizens of the United States in 1821, "It is in your land that liberty has fixed her abode and . . . in imitating you, we shall imitate our ancestors and be thought worthy of them if we succeed in resembling you.";

Whereas the Greek national anthem, the "Hymn to Liberty", includes the words, "most heartily was gladdened George Washington's brave land";

Whereas the people of the United States generously offered humanitarian assistance

to the people of Greece during their struggle for independence;

Whereas Greece heroically resisted Axis forces at a crucial moment in World War II, forcing Adolf Hitler to change his timeline and delaying the attack on Russia;

Whereas Winston Churchill said, "if there had not been the virtue and courage of the Greeks, we do not know which the outcome of World War II would have been" and "no longer will we say that Greeks fight like heroes, but that heroes fight like Greeks";

Whereas hundreds of thousands of the people of Greece were killed during World War II;

Whereas Greece consistently allied with the United States in major international conflicts throughout the 20th century;

Whereas Greece is a strategic partner and ally of the United States in bringing political stability and economic development to the volatile Balkan region, having invested billions of dollars in the countries of the region and having contributed more than \$750,000,000 in development aid for the region;

Whereas the Government and people of Greece actively participate in peacekeeping and peace-building operations conducted by international organizations, including the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe;

Whereas Greece received worldwide praise for its extraordinary handling during the 2004 Olympic Games of more than 14,000 athletes and more than 2,000,000 spectators and journalists, a feat the government and people of Greece handled efficiently, securely, and with hospitality;

Whereas Greece, located in a region where Christianity meets Islam and Judaism, maintains excellent relations with Muslim countries and Israel;

Whereas European Council President Donald Tusk stated during a press conference in Athens on February 16, 2016, "The migratory crisis we are currently witnessing is testing our Union to its limits. And Greece is among the most affected countries. It is no coincidence that the Greek citizens on the islands have been nominated to the Nobel Peace Prize for their generosity in helping people in need.";

Whereas the Government of Greece has taken important steps in recent years to further cross-cultural understanding, rapprochement, and cooperation in various fields with Turkey, and has also improved its relations with other countries in the region, including Israel, thus enhancing the stability of the wider region;

Whereas the governments and people of Greece and the United States are at the forefront of efforts to advance freedom, democracy, peace, stability, and human rights;

Whereas those efforts and similar ideals have forged a close bond between the people of Greece and the United States; and

Whereas it is proper and desirable for the United States to celebrate March 25, 2016, Greek Independence Day, with the people of Greece and to reaffirm the democratic principles from which those two great countries were founded: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) extends warm congratulations and best wishes to the people of Greece as they celebrate the 195th anniversary of the independence of Greece;

(2) expresses support for the principles of democratic governance to which the people of Greece are committed; and

(3) notes the important role that Greece has played in the wider European region and

in the community of nations since gaining its independence 195 years ago.

SENATE RESOLUTION 395—SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF MARCH 2016, AS "NATIONAL COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH"

Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 395

Whereas colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death among men and women combined in the United States;

Whereas, in 2016, more than 134,000 individuals in the United States will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer and approximately 49,000 more will die from it;

Whereas colorectal cancer is one of the most preventable forms of cancer because screening tests can find polyps that can be removed before becoming cancerous;

Whereas screening tests can detect colorectal cancer early, which is when treatment works best;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that if every individual aged 50 or older had regular screening tests, as many as 60 percent of deaths from colorectal cancer could be prevented;

Whereas the 5-year survival rate for patients with localized colorectal cancer is 90 percent, but only 39 percent of all diagnoses occur at that stage;

Whereas colorectal cancer screenings can effectively reduce the incidence of colorectal cancer and mortality, but 1 in 3 adults between the ages of 50 and 75 are not up to date with recommended colorectal cancer screening;

Whereas public awareness and education campaigns on colorectal cancer prevention, screening, and symptoms are held during the month of March each year; and

Whereas educational efforts can help provide to the public information on methods of prevention and screening, as well as symptoms for early detection: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of March 2016, as "National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month" and the goals and ideals of that Month; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month with appropriate awareness and educational activities.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3449. Mr. FRANKEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3369 submitted by Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER) and intended to be proposed to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3449. Mr. FRANKEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3369 submitted by Mr.

CORNBY (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER) and intended to be proposed to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE IX—COMPREHENSIVE JUSTICE AND MENTAL HEALTH ACT

SEC. 901. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act of 2015”.

SEC. 902. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) An estimated 2,000,000 individuals with serious mental illnesses are booked into jails each year, resulting in prevalence rates of serious mental illness in jails that are 3 to 6 times higher than in the general population. An even greater number of individuals who are detained in jails each year have mental health problems that do not rise to the level of a serious mental illness but may still require a resource-intensive response.

(2) Adults with mental illnesses cycle through jails more often than individuals without mental illnesses, and tend to stay longer (including before trial, during trial, and after sentencing).

(3) According to estimates, almost ¾ of jail detainees with serious mental illnesses have co-occurring substance use disorders, and individuals with mental illnesses are also much more likely to have serious physical health needs.

(4) Among individuals under probation supervision, individuals with mental disorders are nearly twice as likely as other individuals to have their community sentence revoked, furthering their involvement in the criminal justice system. Reasons for revocation may be directly or indirectly related to an individual’s mental disorder.

SEC. 903. SEQUENTIAL INTERCEPT MODEL.

(a) REDESIGNATION.—Section 2991 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa) is amended by redesignating subsection (i) as subsection (n).

(b) SEQUENTIAL INTERCEPT MODEL.—Section 2991 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa) is amended by inserting after subsection (h) the following:

“(i) SEQUENTIAL INTERCEPT GRANTS.—

“(1) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term ‘eligible entity’ means a State, unit of local government, Indian tribe, or tribal organization.

“(2) AUTHORIZATION.—The Attorney General may make grants under this subsection to an eligible entity for sequential intercept mapping and implementation in accordance with paragraph (3).

“(3) SEQUENTIAL INTERCEPT MAPPING; IMPLEMENTATION.—An eligible entity that receives a grant under this subsection may use funds for—

“(A) sequential intercept mapping, which—

“(i) shall consist of—

“(I) convening mental health and criminal justice stakeholders to—

“(aa) develop a shared understanding of the flow of justice-involved individuals with mental illnesses through the criminal justice system; and

“(bb) identify opportunities for improved collaborative responses to the risks and needs of individuals described in item (aa); and

“(II) developing strategies to address gaps in services and bring innovative and effective

programs to scale along multiple intercepts, including—

“(aa) emergency and crisis services;

“(bb) specialized police-based responses;

“(cc) court hearings and disposition alternatives;

“(dd) reentry from jails and prisons; and

“(ee) community supervision, treatment and support services; and

“(ii) may serve as a starting point for the development of strategic plans to achieve positive public health and safety outcomes; and

“(B) implementation, which shall—

“(i) be derived from the strategic plans described in subparagraph (A)(ii); and

“(ii) consist of—

“(I) hiring and training personnel;

“(II) identifying the eligible entity’s target population;

“(III) providing services and supports to reduce unnecessary penetration into the criminal justice system;

“(IV) reducing recidivism;

“(V) evaluating the impact of the eligible entity’s approach; and

“(VI) planning for the sustainability of effective interventions.”.

SEC. 904. VETERANS TREATMENT COURTS.

Section 2991 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa) is amended by inserting after subsection (i), as so added by section 903, the following:

“(j) ASSISTING VETERANS.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) PEER TO PEER SERVICES OR PROGRAMS.—The term ‘peer to peer services or programs’ means services or programs that connect qualified veterans with other veterans for the purpose of providing support and mentorship to assist qualified veterans in obtaining treatment, recovery, stabilization, or rehabilitation.

“(B) QUALIFIED VETERAN.—The term ‘qualified veteran’ means a preliminarily qualified offender who—

“(i) served on active duty in any branch of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard or Reserves; and

“(ii) was discharged or released from such service under conditions other than dishonorable.

“(C) VETERANS TREATMENT COURT PROGRAM.—The term ‘veterans treatment court program’ means a court program involving collaboration among criminal justice, veterans, and mental health and substance abuse agencies that provides qualified veterans with—

“(i) intensive judicial supervision and case management, which may include random and frequent drug testing where appropriate;

“(ii) a full continuum of treatment services, including mental health services, substance abuse services, medical services, and services to address trauma;

“(iii) alternatives to incarceration; and

“(iv) other appropriate services, including housing, transportation, mentoring, employment, job training, education, and assistance in applying for and obtaining available benefits.

“(2) VETERANS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, may award grants under this subsection to applicants to establish or expand—

“(i) veterans treatment court programs;

“(ii) peer to peer services or programs for qualified veterans;

“(iii) practices that identify and provide treatment, rehabilitation, legal, transitional, and other appropriate services to

qualified veterans who have been incarcerated; and

“(iv) training programs to teach criminal justice, law enforcement, corrections, mental health, and substance abuse personnel how to identify and appropriately respond to incidents involving qualified veterans.

“(B) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this subsection, the Attorney General shall give priority to applications that—

“(i) demonstrate collaboration between and joint investments by criminal justice, mental health, substance abuse, and veterans service agencies;

“(ii) promote effective strategies to identify and reduce the risk of harm to qualified veterans and public safety; and

“(iii) propose interventions with empirical support to improve outcomes for qualified veterans.”.

SEC. 905. PRISON AND JAILS.

Section 2991 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa) is amended by inserting after subsection (j), as so added by section 904, the following:

“(k) CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—

“(A) CORRECTIONAL FACILITY.—The term ‘correctional facility’ means a jail, prison, or other detention facility used to house people who have been arrested, detained, held, or convicted by a criminal justice agency or a court.

“(B) ELIGIBLE INMATE.—The term ‘eligible inmate’ means an individual who—

“(i) is being held, detained, or incarcerated in a correctional facility; and

“(ii) manifests obvious signs of a mental illness or has been diagnosed by a qualified mental health professional as having a mental illness.

“(2) CORRECTIONAL FACILITY GRANTS.—The Attorney General may award grants to applicants to enhance the capabilities of a correctional facility—

“(A) to identify and screen for eligible inmates;

“(B) to plan and provide—

“(i) initial and periodic assessments of the clinical, medical, and social needs of inmates; and

“(ii) appropriate treatment and services that address the mental health and substance abuse needs of inmates;

“(C) to develop, implement, and enhance—

“(i) post-release transition plans for eligible inmates that, in a comprehensive manner, coordinate health, housing, medical, employment, and other appropriate services and public benefits;

“(ii) the availability of mental health care services and substance abuse treatment services; and

“(iii) alternatives to solitary confinement and segregated housing and mental health screening and treatment for inmates placed in solitary confinement or segregated housing; and

“(D) to train each employee of the correctional facility to identify and appropriately respond to incidents involving inmates with mental health or co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders.”.

SEC. 906. ALLOWABLE USES.

Section 2991(b)(5)(I) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa(b)(5)(I)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(v) TEAMS ADDRESSING FREQUENT USERS OF CRISIS SERVICES.—Multidisciplinary teams that—

“(I) coordinate, implement, and administer community-based crisis responses and long-term plans for frequent users of crisis services;

“(II) provide training on how to respond appropriately to the unique issues involving frequent users of crisis services for public service personnel, including criminal justice, mental health, substance abuse, emergency room, healthcare, law enforcement, corrections, and housing personnel;

“(III) develop or support alternatives to hospital and jail admissions for frequent users of crisis services that provide treatment, stabilization, and other appropriate supports in the least restrictive, yet appropriate, environment; and

“(IV) develop protocols and systems among law enforcement, mental health, substance abuse, housing, corrections, and emergency medical service operations to provide coordinated assistance to frequent users of crisis services.”

SEC. 907. LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING.

Section 2991(h) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa(h)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end the following:

“(F) ACADEMY TRAINING.—To provide support for academy curricula, law enforcement officer orientation programs, continuing education training, and other programs that teach law enforcement personnel how to identify and respond to incidents involving persons with mental health disorders or co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) PRIORITY CONSIDERATION.—The Attorney General, in awarding grants under this subsection, shall give priority to programs that law enforcement personnel and members of the mental health and substance abuse professions develop and administer cooperatively.”

SEC. 908. FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall provide direction and guidance for the following:

(1) TRAINING PROGRAMS.—Programs that offer specialized and comprehensive training, in procedures to identify and appropriately respond to incidents in which the unique needs of individuals who have a mental illness are involved, to first responders and tactical units of—

(A) Federal law enforcement agencies; and

(B) other Federal criminal justice agencies such as the Bureau of Prisons, the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, and other agencies that the Attorney General determines appropriate.

(2) IMPROVED TECHNOLOGY.—The establishment of, or improvement of existing, computerized information systems to provide timely information to employees of Federal law enforcement agencies, and Federal criminal justice agencies to improve the response of such employees to situations involving individuals who have a mental illness.

SEC. 909. GAO REPORT.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall submit to Congress a report on—

(1) the practices that Federal first responders, tactical units, and corrections officers are trained to use in responding to individuals with mental illness;

(2) procedures to identify and appropriately respond to incidents in which the unique needs of individuals who have a mental illness are involved, to Federal first responders and tactical units;

(3) the application of evidence-based practices in criminal justice settings to better address individuals with mental illnesses; and

(4) recommendations on how the Department of Justice can expand and improve information sharing and dissemination of best practices.

SEC. 910. EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICES.

Section 2991(c) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “or” at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (6); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (3), the following:

“(4) propose interventions that have been shown by empirical evidence to reduce recidivism;

“(5) when appropriate, use validated assessment tools to target preliminarily qualified offenders with a moderate or high risk of recidivism and a need for treatment and services; or”

SEC. 911. TRANSPARENCY, PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY, AND ENHANCEMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2991(a) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (7)—

(A) in the heading, by striking “MENTAL ILLNESS” and inserting “MENTAL ILLNESS; MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER”; and

(B) by striking “term ‘mental illness’ means” and inserting “terms ‘mental illness’ and ‘mental health disorder’ mean”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (9) and inserting the following:

“(9) PRELIMINARILY QUALIFIED OFFENDER.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘preliminarily qualified offender’ means an adult or juvenile accused of an offense who—

“(i) previously or currently has been diagnosed by a qualified mental health professional as having a mental illness or co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders;

“(ii) manifests obvious signs of mental illness or co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders during arrest or confinement or before any court; or

“(iii) in the case of a veterans treatment court provided under subsection (i), has been diagnosed with, or manifests obvious signs of, mental illness or a substance abuse disorder or co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorder;

“(ii) has been unanimously approved for participation in a program funded under this section by, when appropriate—

“(I) the relevant—

“(aa) prosecuting attorney;

“(bb) defense attorney;

“(cc) probation or corrections official; and

“(dd) judge; and

“(II) a representative from the relevant mental health agency described in subsection (b)(5)(B)(i);

“(iii) has been determined, by each person described in clause (ii) who is involved in approving the adult or juvenile for participation in a program funded under this section, to not pose a risk of violence to any person in the program, or the public, if selected to participate in the program; and

“(iv) has not been charged with or convicted of—

“(I) any sex offense (as defined in section 111 of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (42 U.S.C. 16911)) or any offense relating to the sexual exploitation of children; or

“(II) murder or assault with intent to commit murder.

“(B) DETERMINATION.—In determining whether to designate a defendant as a preliminarily qualified offender, the relevant prosecuting attorney, defense attorney, probation or corrections official, judge, and mental health or substance abuse agency representative shall take into account—

“(i) whether the participation of the defendant in the program would pose a substantial risk of violence to the community;

“(ii) the criminal history of the defendant and the nature and severity of the offense for which the defendant is charged;

“(iii) the views of any relevant victims to the offense;

“(iv) the extent to which the defendant would benefit from participation in the program;

“(v) the extent to which the community would realize cost savings because of the defendant’s participation in the program; and

“(vi) whether the defendant satisfies the eligibility criteria for program participation unanimously established by the relevant prosecuting attorney, defense attorney, probation or corrections official, judge and mental health or substance abuse agency representative.”

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 2927(2) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797s-6(2)) is amended by striking “has the meaning given that term in section 2991(a).” and inserting “means an offense that—

“(A) does not have as an element the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against the person or property of another; or

“(B) is not a felony that by its nature involves a substantial risk that physical force against the person or property of another may be used in the course of committing the offense.”

SEC. 912. GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY.

Section 2991 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa) is amended by inserting after subsection (k), as so added by section 905, the following:

“(1) ACCOUNTABILITY.—All grants awarded by the Attorney General under this section shall be subject to the following accountability provisions:

“(1) AUDIT REQUIREMENT.—

“(A) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the term ‘unresolved audit finding’ means a finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of the Department of Justice that the audited grantee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within 12 months from the date when the final audit report is issued.

“(B) AUDITS.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this subsection, and in each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall conduct audits of recipients of grants under this section to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

“(C) MANDATORY EXCLUSION.—A recipient of grant funds under this section that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive grant funds under this section during the first 2 fiscal years beginning after the end of the 12-month period described in subparagraph (A).

“(D) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this section, the Attorney General shall give

priority to eligible applicants that did not have an unresolved audit finding during the 3 fiscal years before submitting an application for a grant under this section.

“(E) REIMBURSEMENT.—If an entity is awarded grant funds under this section during the 2-fiscal-year period during which the entity is barred from receiving grants under subparagraph (C), the Attorney General shall—

“(i) deposit an amount equal to the amount of the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

“(ii) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

“(2) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this paragraph and the grant programs under this part, the term ‘nonprofit organization’ means an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

“(B) PROHIBITION.—The Attorney General may not award a grant under this part to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

“(C) DISCLOSURE.—Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a grant under this section and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees, and key employees, shall disclose to the Attorney General, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, the Attorney General shall make the information disclosed under this subparagraph available for public inspection.

“(3) CONFERENCE EXPENDITURES.—

“(A) LIMITATION.—No amounts made available to the Department of Justice under this section may be used by the Attorney General, or by any individual or entity awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under this section, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than \$20,000 in funds made available by the Department of Justice, unless the head of the relevant agency or department, provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host the conference.

“(B) WRITTEN APPROVAL.—Written approval under subparagraph (A) shall include a written estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food, beverages, audio-visual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and entertainment.

“(C) REPORT.—The Deputy Attorney General shall submit an annual report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives on all conference expenditures approved under this paragraph.

“(4) ANNUAL CERTIFICATION.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Attorney General shall submit, to the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, an annual certification—

“(A) indicating whether—

“(i) all audits issued by the Office of the Inspector General under paragraph (1) have been completed and reviewed by the appropriate Assistant Attorney General or Director;

“(ii) all mandatory exclusions required under paragraph (1)(C) have been issued; and

“(iii) all reimbursements required under paragraph (1)(E) have been made; and

“(B) that includes a list of any grant recipients excluded under paragraph (1) from the previous year.

“(m) PREVENTING DUPLICATIVE GRANTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Before the Attorney General awards a grant to an applicant under this section, the Attorney General shall compare potential grant awards with other grants awarded under this Act to determine if duplicate grant awards are awarded for the same purpose.

“(2) REPORT.—If the Attorney General awards duplicate grants to the same applicant for the same purpose the Attorney General shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives a report that includes—

“(A) a list of all duplicate grants awarded, including the total dollar amount of any duplicate grants awarded; and

“(B) the reason the Attorney General awarded the duplicate grants.”.

SEC. 913. REAUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Subsection (n) of section 2991 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa), as redesignated by section 903(a), is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) \$18,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) LIMITATION.—Not more than 28 percent of the funds authorized to be appropriated under this section may be used for purposes described in subsection (j) (relating to veterans).”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 9, 2016, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 9, 2016, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Cooperative Federalism: State Perspectives on EPA Regulatory Actions and the Role of States as Co-Regulators.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 9, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 9, 2016, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:15 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “The President’s FY2017 Indian Country Budget.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 9, 2016, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Oversight of the U.S. Department of Justice.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ANTITRUST, COMPETITION POLICY AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 9, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Oversight of the Enforcement of the Antitrust Laws.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 9, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 9, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask that my intern, Anastasiya Parvankin, be conveyed the privileges of the floor for the remainder of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL ASBESTOS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 376.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 376) designating the first week of April 2016 as "National Asbestos Awareness Week."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 376) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of February 25, 2016, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF MARCH 2016, AS "NATIONAL COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH"

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 395, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 395) supporting the designation of March 2016, as "National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 395) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY,
MARCH 10, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 10; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 11:15 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; further, that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of S. 524; further, that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, all postcloture time on S. 524 expire at 11:30 a.m.; finally, that the time following morning business until 11:30 a.m. be equally divided between the two managers or their designees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senators INHOFE and SULLIVAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for up to 15 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT
VACANCY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I am rising now to respond to a statement that was made by our good friend from Illinois a few minutes ago, to clarify. It is kind of interesting that we look back and we find that when the Republicans had someone in the White House and the Democrats were trying to block a nomination, it was just the opposite as it is today. In fact, at that time, the Senators in the leadership of the Democrats—Obama, BIDEN, Clinton, SCHUMER, and REID—all made the statement, a joint statement that the Senate does not have to confirm Presidential nominations and urged that the Senate refuse to do so, especially in an election year.

Now, it is just the opposite of what the Senator said, but I don't blame them. I don't blame any Democrat for trying their best to get a nominee from this President because, as a Democrat, they are more liberal than Republicans

are, and they would like very much to have a chance to change the balance of the U.S. Supreme Court, which has been consistent in recent years in objecting to some of the extremist left programs. So I can't blame them for trying, but nonetheless that is not going to work.

I applaud the leader. At the time the death—the sad death—of Scalia took place, he was in a position where we were in recess and so he had to make a decision and the decision was the right decision.

Anyway, I wish to share a couple of letters with you that came from my State of Oklahoma.

I will give the names and addresses, if anyone wants to check. This is what real people—you get outside the beltway, get out of Washington, DC, and get back to States such as Oklahoma, these are the concerns they have.

I want to read the first one. This is from a guy named Robert from Tulsa, OK. It came right after the sad death of Justice Scalia. He said:

Dear Senator Inhofe,

I have just learned of the death of Justice Scalia. I should only be feeling sadness at the death of this great patriot and man of the law. I am terrified of what I am sure is now already in the works, his replacement by President Barack Obama.

The person who replaces Justice Scalia will have the potential to change the balance of power on the bench for decades and may have the possibility to reshape the political landscape immediately and unalterably.

I, therefore, beg you and all of your fellow Senators to not vote to affirm any candidate put forward by President Obama. This is an election year and the people should be given a chance to choose which direction this country will go and not have it decided by President Obama as he leaves the White House.

Please, do not vote for any candidate offered by this administration.

Another letter just came from Chickasha, OK, from Donald. He says:

Dear Senator Inhofe,

I have just received word of the death of Supreme Court Justice Scalia. His death is a loss for the conservative movement, but I fear it also puts our country in peril.

With Scalia gone, President Obama will certainly present a nominee for his seat. If it is a justice that holds to Obama's progressive ideals and agenda, it could mean grave danger for our Constitution.

I urge you to hold fast and refuse to confirm ANY Obama appointee to the Court. Hold out until he is out of office. I feel the future of our nation depends on it.

That is from Donald of Chickasha, OK.

Next is a letter from Matthew of Claremore, OK. Claremore is one of the towns where our famous Will Rogers spent his childhood. Everyone has heard of Will Rogers—a great guy. Matthew said:

Senator Inhofe,

I am contacting you in regards to the loss of Justice Scalia and his replacement. Justice Scalia was a brilliant man and a true patriot. Unfortunately, I do not feel any appointee by the President would follow the

Constitution and serve with the same virtue as Justice Scalia. I am asking that you and the other members of the Senate do not confirm a new Justice until after the election, when the newly elected President can make the appointment. We have sent you to Washington to stop the agenda of the President that runs contrary to the wishes of the country. Please stand on your principles and do not allow the President to appoint another Justice that may be detrimental to our freedoms for decades to come. Thank you.

That is Matthew from Claremore, OK. Let me assure you, of the hundreds of letters we have received, I have read them. I have no intention of changing the pattern that has been in existence since 1888 and allow a President, during an election year, to make such a nomination.

So I think we did the right thing. I think it would have been inappropriate to say we are going to have hearings, knowing that we were not going to confirm a nominee. I don't think that would be fair to the nominee.

So these are just a few examples of the hundreds of letters and calls from constituents that I have received, asking that the Senate wait to confirm the next Supreme Court nominee until we have a new President.

We have heard from our colleagues and pundits on the other side—the Democrats, the other side of the aisle—that it is our constitutional duty to confirm President Obama's nominations.

The Constitution says, and it says very clearly, that the President "... shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint ... Judges of the supreme Court."

The Senate clearly has a role in this process, and the Senate can either give its consent or it can withhold its consent and completely fulfill its constitutional duties. So it doesn't make any difference. We have the latitude of making a determination, and we are going to do it. It wasn't long ago when the Democrats were singing a different tune when the Republican was in the White House, and that would have been President Bush at that time. Some of the Democrats on the floor said that the Senate does not have to confirm Presidential nominations and urged that the Senate refuse to do so, especially in an election year.

The Democrats were saying that, so it is just the opposite of what they are saying today. In fact, the leadership who was saying that at the time was none other than Senators Obama, he was a Senator at that time; BIDEN, he was a Senator at that time; Clinton, she was a Senator at that time; and Senators SCHUMER and REID. They all made the same statement. They said the Senate does not have to confirm Presidential nominations and urged that the Senate refuse to do so, especially in an election year.

Now, that is where there is a difference of opinion because actually the

last time it was done in an election year was 1888. You have to go all the way back to 1888—128 years before you find a similar situation to the one we are in today. That is the last time a vacancy arose during an election year and was filled by the Senate from a party on the opposite side of the President. That is the last time that happened, 1888, and we are not about to change that now.

Furthermore, even if this were not true, this President hasn't worked with Congress on much of anything. So why should we work with him on this?

That is not the point. The point is, we don't have to do that, and when the Democrats were in control of the Senate and the Republicans had the White House, they made it very clear the leadership said the Senate does not have to confirm a Presidential nomination, and they urged us not to do it. And so the tables are turned now.

Now why is this important? We have seen time and again when President Obama is not able to get his liberal agenda through Congress, he has turned to Executive action and to agency rulemaking to implement priorities. These regulations are actually making their way through our courts and are either going to be heard by the Supreme Court or have already been heard by the Supreme Court.

President Obama's Executive amnesty was stayed by the lower courts, and the Supreme Court will decide this term if that injunction will stand or not.

What we are saying is this: The President has a very liberal agenda on almost every social issue, every fiscal issue, every military issue. It is a very liberal agenda. So when the President can't get things done through legislation, he then turns around and tries to do it through regulation.

I will give an example. If you talk to the American Farm Bureau right now, they will tell you the greatest problem farmers and ranchers have—I know this because I am from the farm State of Oklahoma—is not anything in the Agriculture bill. It is the overregulation of the EPA. Of all the regulations that are damaging to farmers and ranchers in America, the one they single out as being the worst is the WOTUS rule; that is, the waters of the United States.

Historically, it has always been in the jurisdiction of the States as to how to control and manage the waters of the United States, except in cases where it is navigable waters. Well, we understand that. We understand that is where the Federal Government should be involved. But 6 years ago there was a lot of legislation and one bill in particular that was offered in the House and the Senate that would take the word "navigable" out. That being the case, that would mean all the waters in a jurisdiction would go from the States

to the Federal Government, and we weren't going to let that happen. But this is what is going on right now. Things they have tried to get passed through legislation and haven't been able to do, they are trying to do through regulation.

If the Supreme Court is split 4 to 4 in these two cases I just mentioned, the injunctions of the lower courts will stand until the underlying issues are fully litigated. That is what they are waiting for right now. The Court has said that until the litigation is cleared up, we are not going to act on this rule. Well, as you know, that is going to take a long time for that to happen.

The Clean Power Plan is the other one. You might remember—to give a little background—that going back to the year 2000, which is when all this global warming started and the end of the world was coming, they were introducing legislation at that time to have cap and trade and regulate the emissions of CO₂ throughout America.

When people realized how much that would cost and the fact that the science was not yet settled, it was defeated. Every time they brought it to the Senate, it was defeated. I am talking about through legislation trying to do a cap and trade in America.

One of the interesting things was that the first Director of the EPA that was appointed by this President was Lisa Jackson. I asked her a question in a hearing that was on the record and live on TV. I said: If we were to pass either this legislation or cap and trade or do it by regulation in the United States, would that have the effect of lowering the emissions of CO₂ worldwide? She said: No, because this isn't where the problem is. The problem is in China. The problem is in India. The problem is in Mexico.

So we went through that whole thing, and the President, when he came into office, decided: Well, they are never going to pass this by the elected representatives of the people, so we will do it by regulation. So he came out with the Clean Power Plan.

The Clean Power Plan is what President Obama came up with, and it essentially does the same thing as legislation would do when it would perform cap and trade for the States. We remember the trip to Paris. When he got to Paris, he was unable to get anyone to do anything.

The deal they came up with was kind of humorous because China said: No, we are going to continue our emissions until 2025; at that time, we will start lowering our emissions. They were not going to do it, and they are not going to do it. But nonetheless, that was the Clean Power Plan that came up, and it was essentially the same thing that was killed by legislation.

The Clean Power Plan would cost about \$292 billion, and it mandates carbon dioxide cuts from the power sector

to meet the President's standards. President Obama said in Paris that we are going to lower our CO₂ emissions between 26 and 28 percent by 2025. Now, he never said how we would do that—never. He never did say how we were going to comply with that. But nonetheless, he was going to try to do that and, obviously, that was something that would not have worked.

These and other Executive actions and regulations will have a big impact on our people and our economy and will all likely be decided by the Supreme Court. That is where I get back to the Supreme Court. The Clean Power Plan would then be decided. Right now on the Clean Power Plan there is a stay in the U.S. Supreme Court on the Clean Power Plan until all of the litigation that is pending right now can be settled. That could be a long time—certainly way past this particular Presidency.

It is not just the Executive actions he has taken but the moral direction of our country too. Just last week, the Supreme Court heard a case challenging the State of Texas on its new abortion regulations that require that clinics meet the standard of other outpatient surgical clinics and mandate that abortion doctors have admitting privileges at nearby hospitals. That is the Supreme Court. That is the type of thing you would see if the liberals would have their way and if the Supreme Court would change its direction.

Many of these decisions are 5-to-4 decisions, and that is why I say this is an important decision. It is the American people who will bear the burden of these decisions and, therefore, they should have a say in who would fill Justice Scalia's vacancy. So this decision should be made by the next President. Let a new President decide who should replace Justice Scalia. That is exactly what is going to happen.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMERICAN LEADERSHIP

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I know today we have been focusing on a really important bill, the CARA bill, which has been led by Senator PORTMAN, Senator AYOTTE, and many others. It is a very important bill for our country, for States like Alaska that are seeing this explosion of opioid use, heroin use, and drug addiction that is impacting so many families. I had the opportunity to talk about this,

when I was home in Alaska last week down in Juneau, in front of our State legislature.

This legislation is showing bipartisan work, which is very important to the country and very important to States like Alaska. I am certainly proud to be a cosponsor of that bill. We are going to continue to try to get that over the goal line.

I think it is important to focus on issues not only domestically, of course, but issues beyond our borders as well. What I want to talk about in terms of these kinds of issues this afternoon is the issue of American leadership in the world today.

A lot of us in the Senate have experience in foreign policy and national security issues. There have been Members who have served in the State Department, decades in the military—the Presiding Officer has a lot of experience in international business—and so we have a fair amount of experience here. Certainly, it is part of our responsibilities under the Constitution, as Senators, to be very focused on these issues—these important issues of national security, of foreign policy. Attending hearings, codels, and meetings with foreign leaders are all part of our responsibilities.

One thing is very clear. Foreign policy and national security issues are almost always messy, complicated, never really have easy solutions, and are often very opaque in terms of what is happening in the world and how it impacts the United States. We recognize that. That is usually the case. But sometimes in the world of foreign policy, sometimes in the world of national security, there are moments of clarity when big issues come into focus. It doesn't happen often. It is rare. But when it happens, you know it. When it happens, you sense it.

I was recently part of a bipartisan congressional delegation led by one of the foremost experts on foreign policy and national security in the Senate, Senator JOHN MCCAIN. We all went to the Munich Security Conference in Munich, Germany. For over 50 years, this has been where leaders have come together—Americans, certainly, Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers, Defense Ministers, international affairs experts—to discuss national security and foreign policy issues, usually as it relates to the Atlantic partnership—NATO, the EU.

My experience there led to one of these clarifying moments, and I think I am speaking for many of the people who were at Munich about 3 weeks ago. Here is the clarifying moment: The United States is withdrawing from its traditional leadership role in the world. Our allies know it, they feel it, and they are desperately worried about it.

In meeting after meeting, in speech after speech, if you were in Munich a

month ago, listening, paying attention, discussing the state of the world's security with our allies, you heard it. You heard it. Sometimes it was subtle, sometimes it was direct, and, occasionally, it was even pleading—pleading from our allies, pleading for American leadership in the world again. We saw that.

One of the meetings we had was with an important leader of an important country in Europe. The Presiding Officer and I were there. At the end of the meeting, this leader was asked: What can the United States do to help your country in terms of security—aid, military cooperation? What can we do? This leader looked at a group of several Senators, bipartisan, and said: The United States has to lead in the world again. You are not leading, and the world is becoming a much more dangerous place because of the lack of American leadership. Whoever the next leader of your great country is, please tell that person that the United States has to lead again.

Think about that. That was the message. That was the message from Munich. Our friends are worried. They have certainly lost confidence in us, and our adversaries are taking advantage of the vacuum that we have left all around the world. That was the message of Munich, and anyone who went there heard it.

Now, I know some of my colleagues might be thinking: Well, this is a Republican Senator on the floor of the Senate, criticizing the Obama administration. That is probably a partisan criticism. But there were many people at Munich. There were Republicans and Democrats at Munich. Just a perusal of newspaper articles from those who went—and some who weren't there—shows that all are writing about the same issue—that one of the principal foreign policy issues facing the world, facing the United States right now, is what the lack of U.S. leadership globally is doing to the national security of our country and to that of our allies.

Let me just provide a few examples. Senator Joe Lieberman, who graced this body with his knowledge and expertise and wisdom for many, many years—a Democrat—was in Munich. Not too long after coming back, he wrote in the Washington Post:

The world has never seemed as dangerous and leaderless as it does now. Only the extremists and bullies act badly, and therefore have seized the initiative.

It's a moment in history that invokes the haunting words of W.B. Yeats: "The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity."

That was Senator Lieberman, who was with us in Munich just a couple of weeks ago.

Former Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns, who has worked for Democrats and Republicans, was also there. I served under Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice with Under

Secretary Burns—a great career foreign service officer. He also stated: “We are being humiliated. We’ve lost our strategic foothold”—he is talking about the Middle East—“and we’ve abdicated our leadership.” That is not a Republican partisan saying that.

GEN John Abizaid—in my view one of the premier military leaders our country has seen in a generation, whom I had the honor of serving with as a marine major—recently stated: “Without American leadership, we’re not going to move in a direction that’s going to produce effective results.”

There was another recent article in the Washington Post by another observer, an expert on foreign policy issues, Fred Hiatt, who wrote about what he saw at Munich. What he stated was that the endless negotiation by our Secretary of State “that perpetually, and falsely, holds out the prospect of imminent progress” on so many different issues ends up “providing cover” and “is an excuse for inaction,” an “anesthetic,” he said, where the Congress and the American people don’t even have to feel about focusing on these issues, what is going on in the Middle East or the South China Sea or North Korea or the Korean Peninsula because we have endless diplomacy that covers it.

Finally, another participant in Munich, former Senator Bill Cohen, who worked as the Secretary of Defense for President Clinton, stated: “We no longer seem to know what our role should be in the new century.”

He was interviewed on the radio a couple of weeks ago right after Munich:

Are we going to lead from behind? The truth is that President Putin has been bombing and the United States has been dithering.

That is former Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen, former U.S. Senator Bill Cohen.

It is very clear, whether you are Democratic or Republican, that anyone who spent time at the Munich security conference a few weeks ago came away with a similar conclusion: Our allies are extremely worried about what is clearly happening—the withdrawal of U.S. leadership from the world. They are seeing it, and we are seeing it in almost every region of the world. It is leaving a vacuum. Other countries that don’t share our interests and don’t share our values are filling that vacuum. We know the list. We have been debating it on this floor. Russia, certainly. Whether it is in the Middle East, Syria, Ukraine, the Arctic, Iran, the world’s largest state sponsor of terrorism—our diplomats and Secretary of State seem to spend more time with their diplomats and their Foreign Minister than almost any other country in the world—China and the South China Sea.

In the face of these challenges, we are also starting to see something that

is truly alarming. The postwar structure, the national security structure of the world that the United States was instrumental in building, is beginning to crumble in different parts of the world.

So what should we do? What can we do? I think there is a lot we can do. We can certainly bolster the American-led order that was established after World War II. It certainly does not have to crumble. This is what our colleague Senator MCCAIN laid out in his outstanding speech in Munich. He talked about how this is one of our most important inheritances, this world order, this American-led order, and how we need to focus on it—not with speeches but with action.

What else can we do? We can look at the changing landscape of the world and see if we need to devise new political structures that address new challenges in places such as the Middle East, where borders seem to be being erased on a daily basis by terrorist groups like ISIS. This is something General Abizaid has written about recently.

Both of these alternatives require American leadership. They are not going to happen without the United States in the lead. If you went to Munich, you realize their allies want us to lead.

What can we do in the Senate? Well, we can certainly press for a more assertive and leading role for the United States of America from this body. The Constitution gives the U.S. Senate significant power in national security matters and foreign affairs, and we should be using that. We are using that.

Under the new leadership of the Senate, we have been moving forward in many areas of foreign policy and national security. There are the North Korea sanctions that were passed by this body 2 weeks ago, and now the world is following our lead on that. Senators GARDNER and CORKER did an outstanding job in that regard. There is the bipartisan approach to Ukraine that we see on the Armed Services Committee. Every Member of that body, Democratic and Republican, thinks we should be doing more to help the Ukrainians defend themselves against Russian aggression. Afghanistan, the same thing—bolstering the need for troops there to guard America’s security. The President has seemingly wanted to take all our troops out of there, as he wanted to do in Iraq, but again a bipartisan group of Senators have been questioning that strategy on a daily basis. In the South China Sea, we have been encouraging the administration to do what we have been doing for 70 years—conducting freedom of navigation operations to keep the seelanes of the world open. These are all things the Senate has been doing—in essence, trying to give this administra-

tion backbone, to assert the leadership we know is so important to our security and the security of the world.

But there is another thing, another option that might be out there. We can ignore the problem of what is happening in the world.

I hate to say this, but if you saw Secretary of State Kerry’s speech in Munich, certainly compared to Senator MCCAIN’s keynote address, what the Secretary of State seemed to be doing was that fourth option. He seemed to be saying: Hey, things aren’t going that badly. Things in Syria aren’t that bad.

He cautioned against pessimism and said that we have good reasons to be optimistic about what is happening. He talked about how fewer people are dying in conflict today than ever before. You literally heard a gasp in the audience in Munich when that was stated. That is not true.

What this does when you have the Secretary of State making these kinds of statements at important security conferences with all our allies, it further undermines the credibility of the United States in terms of foreign policy and national security.

We need to lead again. Our allies want us to. Most importantly, I believe the American people want us to.

Why? Why shouldn’t we just withdraw from the world and let everything catch on fire? Bring the troops home and have the two oceans protect us—the Atlantic and Pacific.

We need to lead, and I believe the American people want the United States to lead because they know that when the United States leads in the world, it is a safer place abroad and it is a safer place at home. They know what Senator Lieberman said recently in his op-ed after Munich: “The absence of American leadership has certainly not caused all the instability, but it has encouraged and exacerbated it.” The American people also know that when there is a lack of U.S. leadership in the world, it not only turns to undermining our national security interests, but it turns to humiliation for our own citizens. Just think of the photos that we saw recently of U.S. sailors on their knees at Iranian gunpoint with their hands raised in surrender and what that does in terms of how Americans are thinking about our role in the world, the security of the world, and what is happening with regard to U.S. leadership. We have to change these policies of leading from behind.

I will conclude by mentioning in terms of this lack of U.S. leadership what I fear the most. I started by saying that we were at a conference where our allies directly, indirectly were asking for American leadership once again. But what I fear the most is the day that a group of bipartisan Senators goes to another conference like Munich

or the Shangri-la Dialogue and we don't hear from our allies, we don't hear them asking for us to lead once again, because such silence will truly be dangerous indeed because that is when we will know that our traditional allies have given up on the United States; that is when we will know that our traditional allies have lost faith in

America and have begun the process of making accommodations with our adversaries. We in the Senate must do all in our power to make sure that situation where we lose our allies, where they don't ask for our leadership, does not happen.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow morning.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:40 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 10, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 10, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED
MARCH 15

10 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support

To hold hearings to examine the current state of readiness of United States forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Matthew Rhett Jeppson, of Florida, to be Director of the Mint, Department of the Treasury, and Lisa M. Fairfax, of Maryland, and Hester Maria Peirce, of Ohio, both to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

SD-538

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the presidential memorandum issued on November 3, 2015 entitled, "Mitigating Impacts on Natural Resources from Development and Encouraging Related Private Investment."

SD-366

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine Ukrainian reforms two years after the Maidan Revolution and the Russian invasion.

SD-419

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the security of United States visa programs.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine late-term abortion.

SD-226

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the United States Agency for International Development.

SD-124

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Navy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SH-216

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine the future of self-driving cars.

SR-253

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine pending calendar business.

SR-418

3 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Library of Congress and the Architect of the Capitol.

SD-192

MARCH 16

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 2658, to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2016 through 2017, S. 2644, to reauthorize the Federal Communications Commission for fiscal years 2017 and 2018, and a routine list in the Coast Guard.

SR-253

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine the 2016 Water Resources Development Act, focusing on policies and projects.

SD-406

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider S. 1455, to provide access to medication-assisted therapy, S. 2256, to establish programs for health care provider training in Federal health care and medical facilities, to establish Federal co-prescribing guidelines, to establish a grant program with respect to naloxone, S. 480, to amend and reauthorize the controlled substance monitoring program under section 3990 of the Public Health Service Act, an original bill entitled, "Mental Health Reform Act of 2016",

and an original bill entitled, "Plan of Safe Care Improvement Act".

SD-106

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine Department of Homeland Security management and acquisition reform.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest

To hold hearings to examine the impact of immigration on United States workers.

SD-226

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations.

SD-G50

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the National Guard and Reserve.

SD-192

2 p.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine preventing a fiscal crisis in America, focusing on a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

SD-226

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office report on telecommunications, focusing on the need for additional coordination and performance measurement for high-speed Internet access programs on tribal lands.

SD-628

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the National Nuclear Security Administration.

SD-138

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Airland

To hold hearings to examine Army Unmanned Aircraft Vehicle and Air Force Remotely Piloted Aircraft Enterprises in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

MARCH 17

9 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management

To hold hearings to examine agency use of deference.

SD-342

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the Department of Defense budget posture in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine HealthCare.gov, focusing on a review of operations and enrollment.

SD-215

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the Administration's nuclear agenda.

SD-419

3 p.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Subcommittee on National Parks

To hold hearings to examine S. 2177 and H.R. 959, bills to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the Medgar Evers House, located in Jackson, Mississippi, S. 651 and H.R. 1289, bills to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire certain land in Martinez, California,

for inclusion in the John Muir National Historic Site, H.R. 1949, to provide for the consideration and submission of site and design proposals for the National Liberty Memorial approved for establishment in the District of Columbia, S. 1329 and H.R. 2288, bills to remove the use restrictions on certain land transferred to Rockingham County, Virginia, H.R. 2880, to redesignate the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, S. 1930 and H.R. 3371, bills to adjust the boundary of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park to include the Wallis House and Harriston Hill, S. 119, to amend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to provide for a lifetime National Recreational Pass for any veteran with a service-connected disability, S. 718, to modify the boundary of Petersburg National Battlefield in the Commonwealth of Virginia, S. 770, to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, S. 1577, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of East Rosebud Creek in Carbon County, Montana, as components of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, S. 1943, to modify the boundary of the Shiloh National Military Park located in the State of Tennessee and Mississippi, to establish Parker's Crossroads Battle-

field as an affiliated area of the National Park System, S. 1975, to establish the Sewall-Belmont House National Historic Site as a unit of the National Park System, S. 1982, to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance, S. 1993, to establish the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps to place youth and veterans in the United States in national service positions to protect, restore, and enhance the great outdoors of the United States, S. 2039, to designate the mountain at the Devils Tower National Monument, Wyoming, as Devils Tower, S. 2061, to designate a National Memorial to Fallen Educators at the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kansas, S. 2309, to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish within the National Park Service the U.S. Civil Rights Network, S. 2608, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to place signage on Federal land along the trail known as the "American Discovery Trail", S. 2620, to facilitate the addition of park administration at the Coltsville National Historical Park, S. 2628, to authorize the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Foundation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs.

SD-366